

# CELEBRATING Natrona County High School

A LOOK AT THE PAST,  
PRESENT, AND FUTURE  
OF EDUCATION IN  
NATRONA COUNTY



# This place matters

**STEVE HOPKINS**  
Superintendent

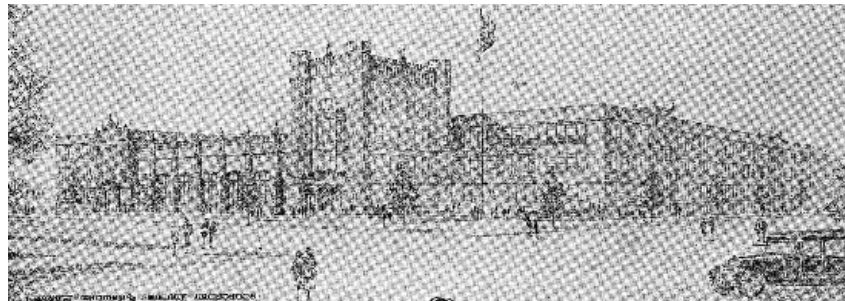
**T**he Natrona County High School has played a significant role in the lives of many Natrona County residents throughout the generations. Opened in 1924, nearly 100 years of memories have been made within its walls.

NCHS is an institution within our community; generations of students have graduated from the school, and generations of staff members have positively impacted the lives of these students. Friends were made. Education was delivered. As Principal Shannon Harris, a 1984 NCHS graduate who returned to Casper in 2015 to lead one of Wyoming's largest high schools, often says with conviction, "This place matters."

Students today are far more mobile than they were in 1924. They are digitally connected, and while they are receiving traditional instruction in a bricks and mortar building, they are anxious to find a relevance and engagement in their classroom. School environments need to be updated from time to time because the methodology of delivering instruction to students evolves and changes over time. The environment, classrooms or the building itself necessarily must evolve with that change in instruction.

NCHS had reached a stage in its life where it needed a refresh: the environment, classrooms and the building itself necessarily needed to evolve to meet the changing needs of students in the 21st century. Over a period of years, the NCSD school board, state construction officials and legislators came up with a plan and found the finances to keep the grand institution that is the original NCHS building, and yet at the same time give students and staff the modern learning and teaching environment you see celebrated in this booklet today.

The renovation and construction of NCHS is a phased project where students continue to attend school while ongoing construction happens around them. This project is a stunning example of "when there is a will, there is a way." There are two phases yet to complete; however, given the most public spaces, including the auditorium will be returned to service this month, it is an appropriate time to begin a celebration. This booklet provides us the opportunity to take a look at the past, present and future of this wonderfully historic, yet very modern, Casper institution, a place that matters to us all.



COURTESY OF THE WESTERN HISTORY CENTER AT CASPER COLLEGE

# Singular to Sublime

Originally called Casper High, Natrona County High School is a community landmark – a place of special significance for legions of Casperites. The original cornerstone ceremony in 1924 coincided with the emergence of the modern high school in America. Tradition, embodied in the experience of shared space and shared values, connects both community and family to the beautiful old school. Constructed after the 1920s Salt Creek oil boom at Midwest, the school and community would be the beneficiaries of another energy boom nearly a century later.

Although NCHS had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994, there was some concern that the historic school might be replaced at a new location rather than remodeled when funds became available. Long-serving school board trustee Don McCall was on a mission to both save the historic school and also ensure outstanding high school facilities across the district. McCall strongly supported an integrated high school system, an idea that found final form in the Pathways Innovation Center, or P.I.C.: a campus where students from all four district high schools can attend part-time for career or project-based instruction. Without P.I.C. and the integrated concept it supports, the high schools in Casper would likely not have been remodeled or rebuilt at the same time. Who knows, perhaps one of the high schools would have missed out on this most recent wave of energy monies that have powered over \$3.5 billion in State of Wyoming educa-



Dave Applegate

tion-related construction over the last fifteen years.

State House Representative Steve Harshman, an NCHS teacher and coach, was a champion for new school construction in Casper as a 10-year member of the House's school facilities committee, while McCall helped convince the Natrona County Board of Trustees to set monies aside each year from their annual operating budget to pay for aspects of the construction for which the State of Wyoming would not pay. Harshman and McCall were foundational by their early efforts to initiate the school construction projects – living cornerstones, so to speak, for the hundreds of individuals who would later make contributions to the building of new Casper high schools. Their collaboration also set the stage for one of the more remarkable spaces at the new NCHS.

The first challenge facing the district was where to put

**“Tradition, embodied in the experience of shared space and shared values, connects both community and family to the beautiful old school.”**

students during the phased remodeling of the existing school. Use of offsite facilities with busing was explored, but the primary option on the table was constructing a village of portable classrooms on the NCHS campus. Harshman and McCall brought forth a cost-saving alternative that would place

the temporary classrooms into a permanent building that will eventually be converted into auxiliary gyms and an indoor track. The idea gathered momentum when the school district and state agreed on a funding model where the state would pay for two-thirds of the building, given its short-term use as “swing space” to house students during the construction period, and more importantly, its longer-term use as permanent physical education space housing basketball courts, wrestling room, weight room and exercise room. The school district would pay the last third of the construction cost to increase the size of the space so that an indoor track would fit into the building.

This district-level decision to make a space at the new NCHS “better” served as both example and rationale for like-minded, district-funded improvements to the Kelly Walsh High School indoor athletic spaces and to locker rooms; welding, wood and welding labs; commons space; and classroom equipment spread across the high school campuses. The selected swing space concept also meant several graduating classes at NCHS would experience a modified, but still positive, on-campus experience while their school was under construction.

If the aforementioned swing space, now called the Mustang Activities Community Center, or “the MACC,” is singular, spacious, and significant, the remodeled John F. Welsh Auditorium is simply sublime.

NCHS's original architectural style is Collegiate Gothic, which is highlighted by a dramatic entry tower and the extensive use



COURTESY PHOTO

This window at NCHS was renovated in fine detail as part of a careful restoration of the John F. Welsh Auditorium in 2016.

of terra cotta in its distinctive facade. The school theater is the highest expression of this architectural form and arguably one of the most historic spaces in Wyoming. Named for inspirational theatre and English teacher John F. Welsh, the auditorium at NCHS has served as a gathering place for the school's students, a performance space for the drama and music departments and a focal point for civic performances. Since the 1920s it has had relationships with groups that would eventually

evolve into the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra and Artcore.

Its renovation would be complex, involving complete removal of the existing concrete floor, deep excavation for new stage lifts and complete replacement of ornate plaster on both ceiling beams and portions of the stage. Window replacement and repair in the remodeled theater would once again bring life and light to the old space, and patrons will find satisfaction from larger seats with more legroom.

In the spirit of excellence and self-reliance so characteristic of NCHS's culture, school alumni and theater teacher Zach Schneider spearheaded in both words and action the raising of private monies to add a second lift to the theater and to enhance sound and lighting in the theater classroom. The most significant contributor was the Goodstein Foundation, for which the new Goodstein Theater Classroom is named. Schneider, a 1994 graduate says, "Of all the historic spaces in

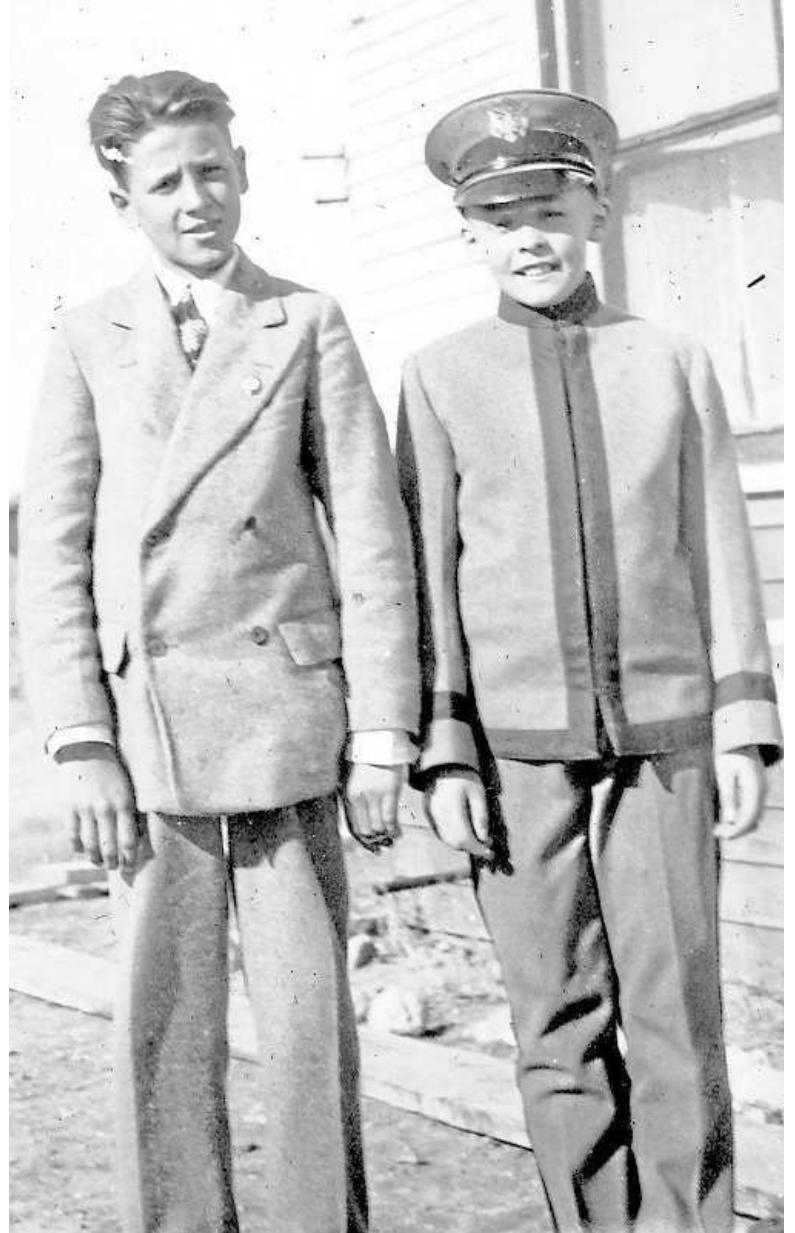
this school, the auditorium is the one that needed to be done right. We had one shot do it, and I am so very moved by the care and support this project has received."

Care indeed; that describes the feeling so many have for both the historic school and the collective experiences shared for nearly a century within its walls. Those foundations and walls of Casper High survive, still solid after all these years, and excellence marches onward in the new NCHS.

# Looking back

A history of Natrona County High School

This undated photo may have been taken on Cedar Street around 1914. The boy on right is in a Natrona County High School cadet uniform. All students were required to wear the West Point Cadet Gray uniforms that year.



MARTHA HORN COLLECTION, WESTERN HISTORY CENTER AT CASPER COLLEGE

First Casper school,  
Wells Fargo area

**1889**

High school classes were held in  
Old Central. Prof. S.E. Notson was in  
charge with and enrollment of 24.

**1895-96**

**1890s**

Salt Creek oil hauled in wagons pulled by  
string teams of 12-18 horses. Wagons carried  
supplies to oil field on return trip.



DAVID MEMORIAL COLLECTION, CASPER COLLEGE WESTERN HISTORY CENTER

**The NCHS senior class of 1915.** Front, l-r: Mildred Kieth; Bob Blackmore; Orland Ormsby; Gladys Fisher; Hedwig Beyer; Gladys Phillips; Isabel Crawford; Peter Nicolaysen; Back, l-r: Rene Inman; Frances Heagney; Blanche Wagner; Doris Bruce; Royce Wagner; Doris Million; Marvin Bishop; Margaret Longshore; Margaret McDermott." School uniforms. Natrona County High School.

Emmet became principal of NCHS

**1913**

**1901**

First Casper High School Constructed, inner courtyard area

**1912-13**

First NCHS annual printed



**WYOMING HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT (NCHS) COLLECTION,**  
CASPER COLLEGE WESTERN HISTORY CENTER

The Salt Creek highway, used primarily for oil transportation, became the first paved road in Natrona County in 1913.

The first paved road in Natrona County, between Casper and the Salt Creek oil field, was used to bring crude oil into town by truck and wagon. The side of the road from Casper to Salt Creek, which was used to take supplies to the field, remained unpaved.

## 1913

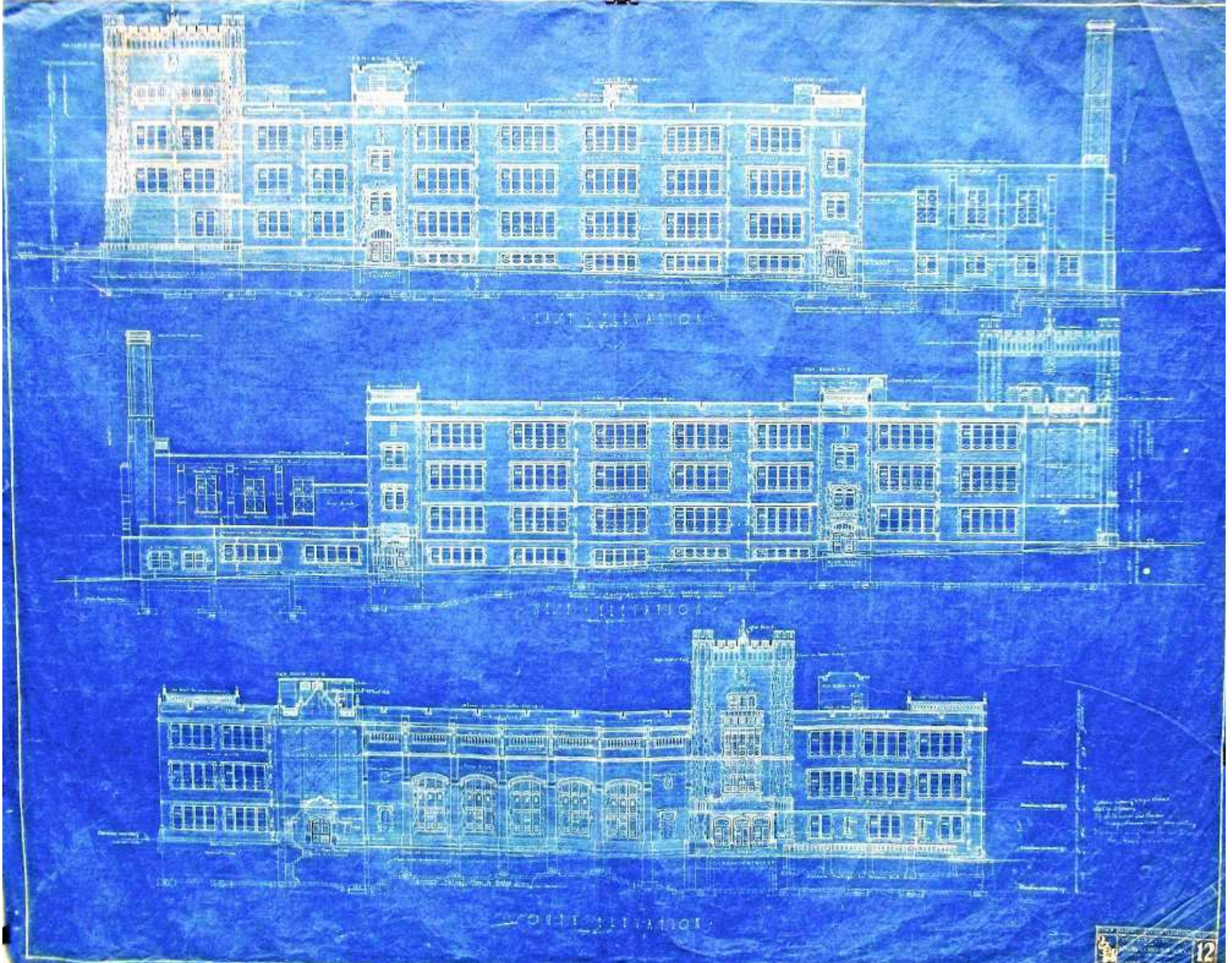


**PHOTO BY WISWALL. FRANCES SEELY WEBB COLLECTION,**  
CASPER COLLEGE WESTERN HISTORY CENTER.

This undated photo shows part of a panorama of Casper looking south, with the Natrona County High School building on the left. Photo by Wiswall (Denver) for the Casper Townsite Company.

## 1915

Casper's population grew to 20,000, causing a severe housing shortage.



CASPER COLLEGE WESTERN HISTORY CENTER

Architectural blueprints for the NCHS building are displayed in this photo.

Architects Garbutt, Weidner and Sweeney  
commissioned to design NCHS

**1922**

**1922**

Annex constructed

**1923**

Voters pass \$1 million bond issue  
to construct NCHS



HOLT-GRAY COLLECTION, CASPER COLLEGE LIBRARY.

Cars are parked outside NCHS in this undated photo, likely in the late 1920s.

NCHS opened in 1924 with  
850 students and 30 instructors

**1924**

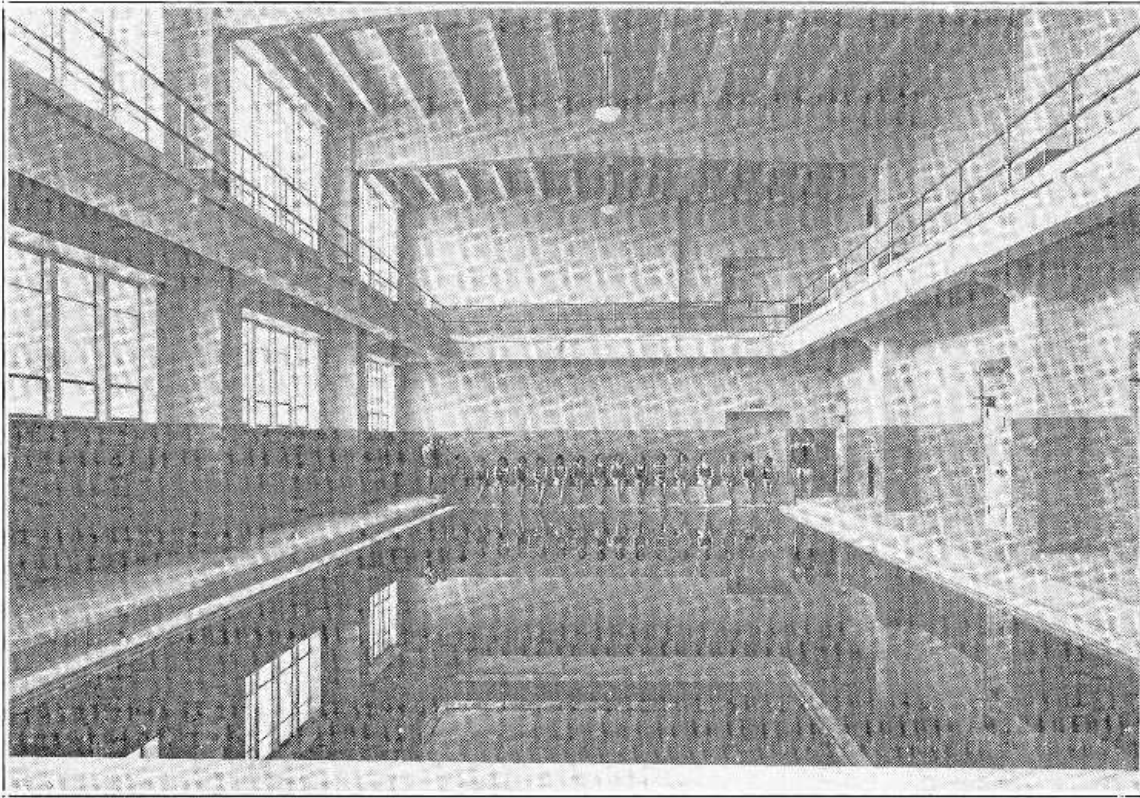
Wyoming's Nellie Tayloe Ross becomes  
first woman governor in the U.S.

**1925**

**1924**

10 millionth car rolls off  
Ford assembly line

## THE GUSHER



N. C. H. S. \$75,000.00 SWIMMING POOL

“THE 1933 GUSHER,” NCHS ANNUAL

Swimmers are reflected in the pool, constructed for \$75,000 in 1930.

Recession-depression leads to worldwide glut of oil

**1928-30**

New swimming pool constructed

**1930**

New gym constructed with help of WPA

**1932**

**1929**

NCHS enrollment is 1,029

**1931**

First ROTC rifle team

**1932**

NCHS enrollment is 1,300

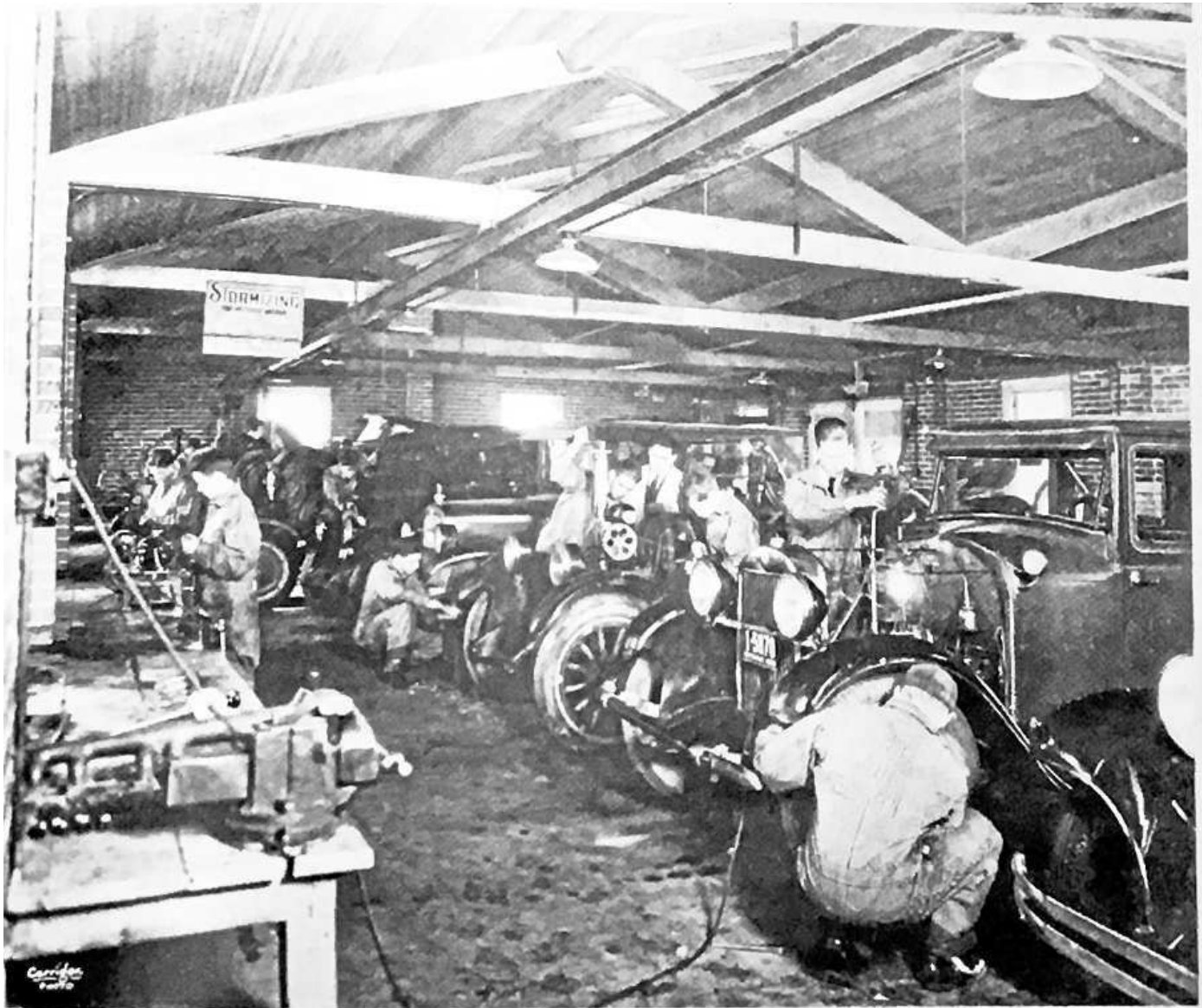


PHOTO FROM THE NCHS GUSHER 1931

Auto mechanics department as pictured in the 1931 NCHS annual, The Gusher.

Depression hits Wyoming.  
Retail sales drop 46 percent

## 1933

Kelly Walsh is principal  
of NCHS

## 1936-58

## 1936-58

Dean Morgan is Superintendent  
of Natrona County schools

## 1940-41

Houses on 9th and 10th  
street moved and campus  
is expanded to CY Avenue

December 2, 1945, it is only paper that we have

Religious Ex. was killed December 21, 1944.

**Ray D. Leonard**

Dr. Ray D. Leonard, son of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Leonard, was graduated from N.H.S. in 1928 and from Syracuse University in 1931. At least seven years later, a part of a 1938 wedding, Ray was a member of the Hot Flapline group, 1944-45. This is specified in Camp. He was married to a Connecticut Flap

Donald W. Looney

Walter C. Minton, Jr.  
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. Minton, was graduated June 1, 1942, from the United States Army Medical School at Fort Monmouth, N. J. He was killed in action in the European theater, July 14, 1945.

Robert J. Minton  
Minton was the youngest Minton son of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Minton, was graduated from MCHS in 1936.

[illegible]

He was recorded as having died in 1894 by the census of a make shell in 1944.

Dr. G. M. McQueen

Dr. G. M. McQueen, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. G. McQueen, was graduated from MCHS June 1, 1921, and from Kentucky in 1925. He was killed in the crash of Kearsarge in August, 1942.

Walter McQueen

Walter McQueen, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. G. McQueen, married

**George H. McMillan**  
SOS: George W. McMillan, son of the late C. K. McMillan and Mrs. Mabel McMillan, graduated from high school in 1935-36. He registered with the Wyoming Workmen's Union in March, 1937. He was killed in a plane crash Dec. 21, 1937.

Lee Mink, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Mink, was graduated from MCHS in 1936. He attended the U. of Wyoming and the American Academy of Art in Chicago. His interest in the natural world of the alps and was first developed in

**Victory Mahoney**  
Lt. Vincent J. Mahoney, son of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Mahoney, was graduated from U.S.M.A. in 1943 and from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., in 1945. He served in the Pacific during the war. He received his commission December 1944 and served with the 1st. averaged divi-

you in 1943 while in Germany for almost a year before his death. He was killed in action in Germany, April 24, 1945. At a ceremony at Fort Warren his memory was presented with the Golden Star.

(Continued on Page 41)

Robert Werner  
Mr. Werner, son of Mr. and  
Theresa Werner, attended

William E. Welch, son of Mrs. W. E. Welch, was born June 22, 1905, in 1929 and was sent to the University of Michigan, where he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees. He joined the army in 1942, and was sent overseas in 1944, arriving in April '45. He served with the 4888 Central Postal Directory, and was killed in action July 12, 1944. He is buried in Germany. 25 miles from

WYOMING'S BEST KNOWN

"The Man in the Iron Mask"  
from 1963  
Home of Best Believers &

COME TO  
*Universa*

$$F$$

Ticket: 35x

CHRISTMAS C

To Alastair, in Harrods H

Noted

CLEAN — SAFE — SOUND

Northern Union  
Company

TO COURTESY OF

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High School

High School

SEE

Utilities  
by

PHOTO COURTESY OF DON GALLES

World War II ends

## 1944

## 1944-55

Casper College  
is housed at NCHS

September 7, 2016

Celebration of Natrona County High School | 13

President Truman  
departs from NCHS,  
May 9, 1950, with  
Gov. and Mrs. Crane.

**CHUCK MORRISON  
COLLECTION**, CASPER  
COLLEGE WESTERN  
HISTORY CENTER



Casper population: 17,000;  
NCHS enrollment 1,100  
students in grades 9-12

**1948**

**1950**

President Harry S. Truman  
visits Casper and NCHS



PHOTO COURTESY OF  
DAVID HARRINGTON  
John F. Welsh sits at  
a desk in 1971.

For more than 90 years, the NCHS auditorium has been used for academic and honor assemblies, school plays and musicals, the crowning of homecoming queens and kings, student council election speeches, Mr. Mustang competitions and other extracurricular activities. Presidents Truman, Nixon and Bush have visited NCHS. And the auditorium has been of significant benefit for community concerts by groups like the Casper Children's Chorale, Casper College's Kinser Jazz Festival,

ARTCORE, Casper Chamber Music Society and the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra.

In the discussions leading up to the school's renovation, the biggest concern was honoring the history of the building while at the same time creating a school where students could be given an outstanding education employing always advancing modern technology.

The Wyoming School Facilities Commission funded renovations and additions to the school, including a

\$15 million total restoration of the auditorium. As you will see, the history of generations is preserved in the painstakingly renovated auditorium. A group of former students raised more than \$400,000 in additional funding to install special stage lifts in the auditorium named for their drama teacher, John F. Welsh. As part of the remodel, the traditional drama classroom has been replaced with the Goodstein Theater Classroom, a black box theater complete with lights and sound.

John F. Welsh becomes  
drama teacher

**1956-57**

Bill Reese is  
principal of NCHS

**1958-77**

Auditorium renamed  
for drama instructor  
John F. Welsh

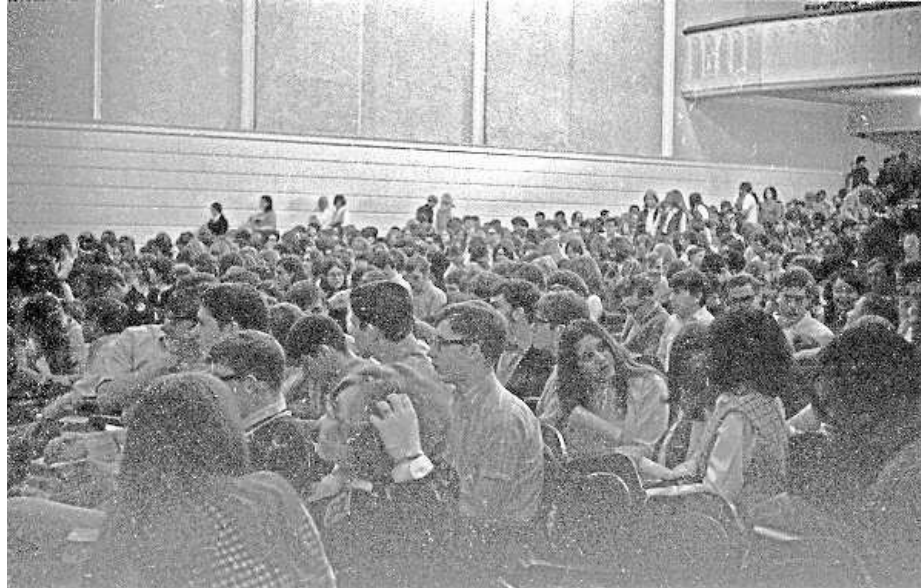
**1984**

**1957**

NCHS enrollment is  
1,100 in grades 9-12

**1961**

Basement rooms formerly used  
for maintenance and storage  
are finished for classroom use



These pages reflect the rich history of excitement and personal growth

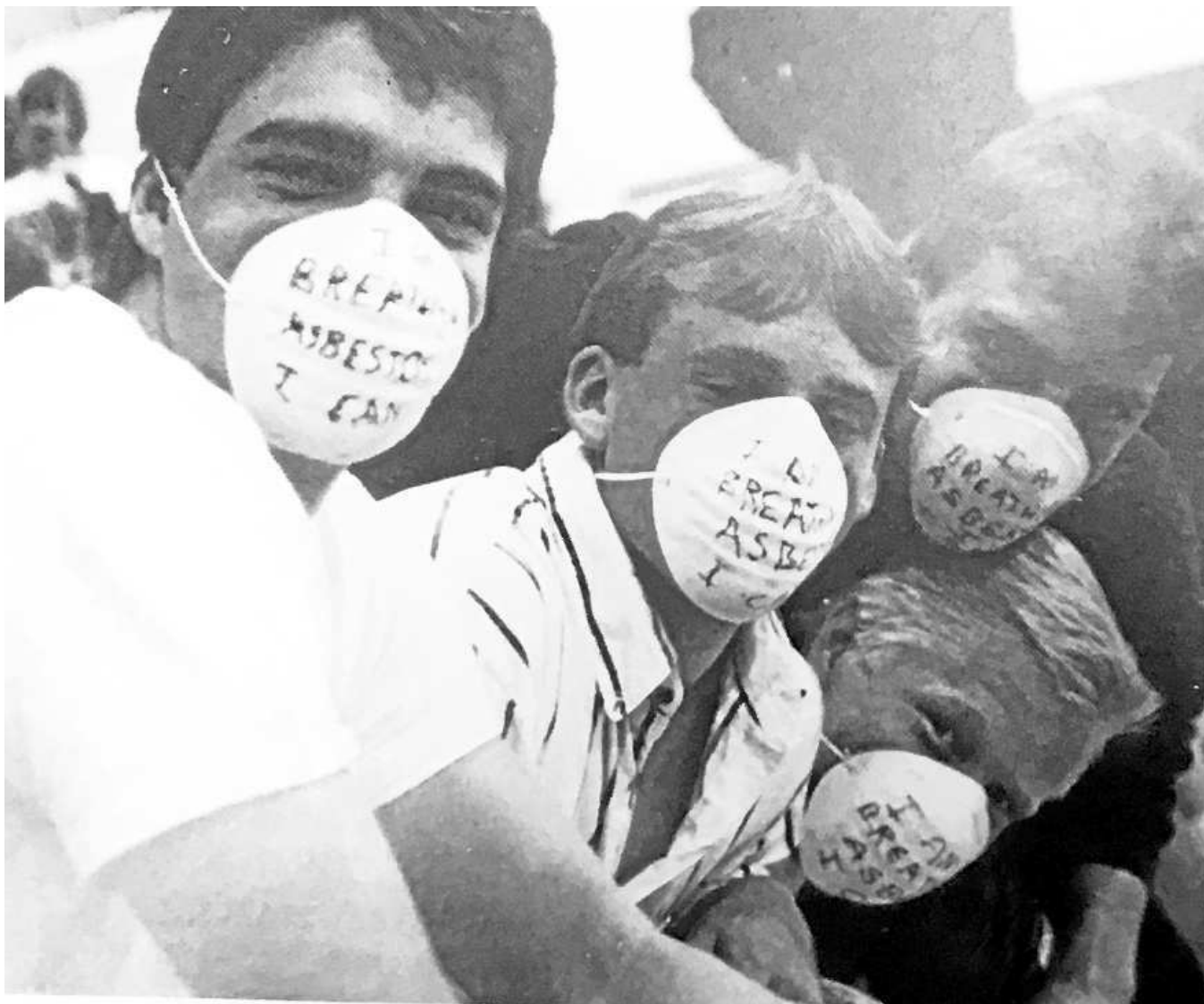


experienced by generations of Natrona County students in the John F. Welsh Auditorium.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAVID HARRINGTON

Students make light of sharing their school for the year when asbestos was removed from cross-town rival Kelly Walsh High School.

PHOTO FROM THE  
1990 MUSTANG  
ANNUAL



Stadium receives repairs and renovation

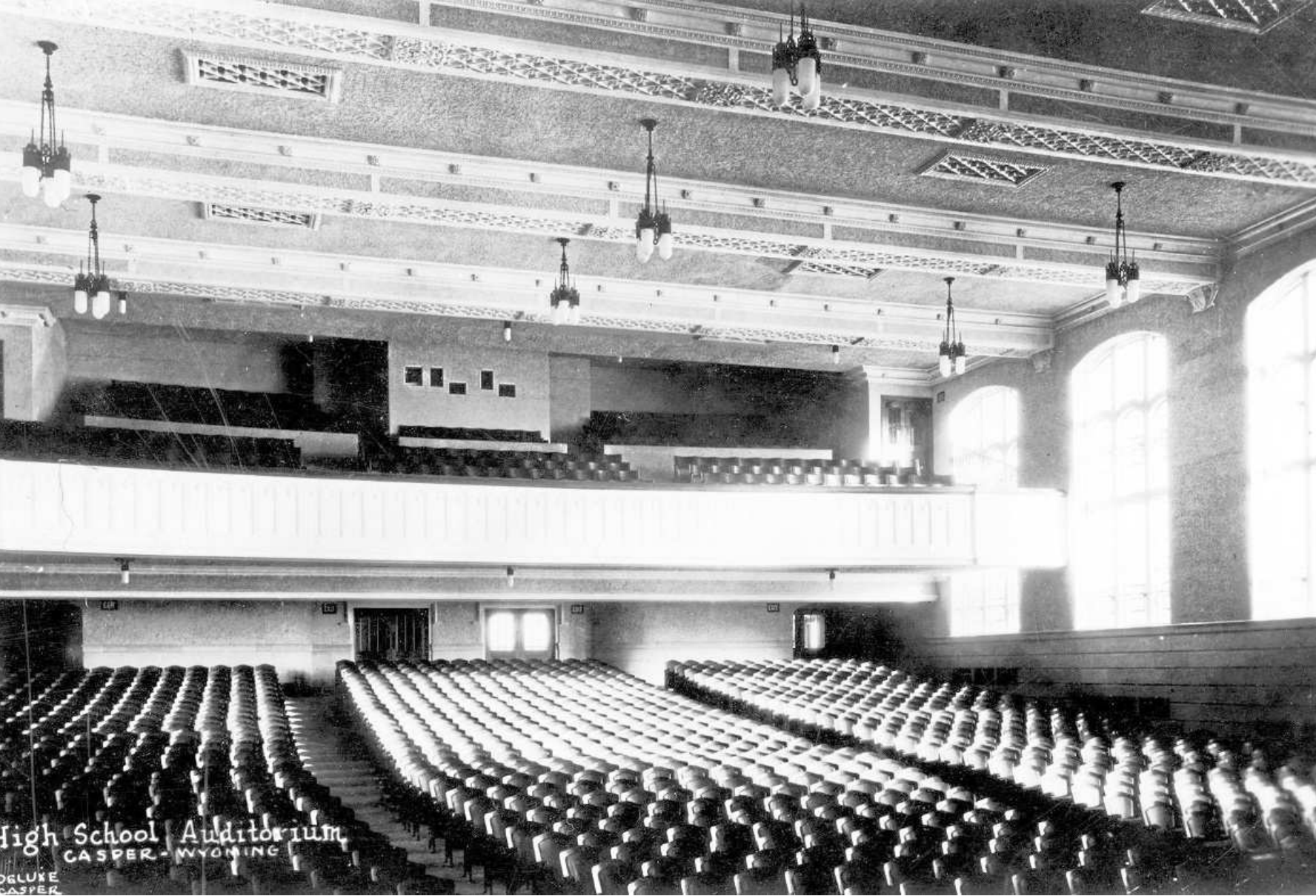
**1983**

NCHS added to National Register of Historic Places

**1994**

**1989-90**

Crosstown rivals Kelly Walsh and Natrona County both attend school at NCHS while asbestos is removed from KW.



WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTION, CASPER COLLEGE WESTERN HISTORY CENTER

This undated photo shows the old NCHS auditorium.

First International  
Baccalaureate program  
students graduate

**2004**

Renovated John  
Welsh Auditorium  
reopens to public

**2016**

**2001**

First year of International Bac-  
calaureate program

**2015**

Shannon Harris, class  
of 1984, becomes  
Principal of NCHS

**2016**

Enrollment is  
nearly 1,600 plus  
200 staff



ROD A. KNOWLTON PHOTO, COURTESY OF AP WYOMING

Builders excavated the floor of the John F. Welsh auditorium during renovation to allow for state-of-the-art stage upgrades.

# FACTS & STATS

## Natrona County High School

930 S. Elm St., Casper, WY

### Capital Cost:

#### MAIN BUILDING

Design: \$12,323,923

Construction State-Funded:  
\$95,345,809

Construction NCSD-Funded: \$712,000

MUSTANG ACTIVITIES AND  
COMMUNITY CENTER (MACC)  
Design-NCSD-funded: \$772,052

Construction State-Funded:  
\$11,600,160

Construction NCSD-Funded:  
\$3,507,230

#### TOTAL NCHS PROJECT

Construction State-Funded:  
\$106,945,969

Construction NCSD-Funded:  
\$4,219,230



ALAN ROGERS, STAR-TRIBUNE

The Gothic architecture of the original Natrona County High School meets modern construction at the new east entrance.

### Architect:

**MAIN BUILDING**  
Bassetti Architects, Seattle, WA, and  
Amundsen Associates, Casper, WY

**MUSTANG ACTIVITIES COMMUNITY  
CENTER (MACC)**  
GSG Architecture, Casper, WY  
Construction Manager At Risk: A-P  
Wyoming, Cheyenne, WY

### Timeline:

**March 2012**—Appropriation of funding 364,729 sq. ft.—1805 student capacity

**March 2013**—Architecture contract  
signed

**June 2013**—Construction begins on-  
site (MACC)

**June 2014**—Construction  
begins on-site (main building)

**August 2018**—Scheduled  
completion of construction

**Summer 2018**—Start of scheduled  
renovation of MACC interior  
(transforming it into permanent  
athletics/activities space)

### Square Footage

364,729 sq. ft.—1805 student capacity

### Interesting Facts:

- 26 pieces of property adjacent to NCHS were purchased for the current renovation/addition project, at a cost to the state of \$3.9 million.
- At the conclusion of the project there will be 722 parking spaces at NCHS, an increase of 88 spaces.



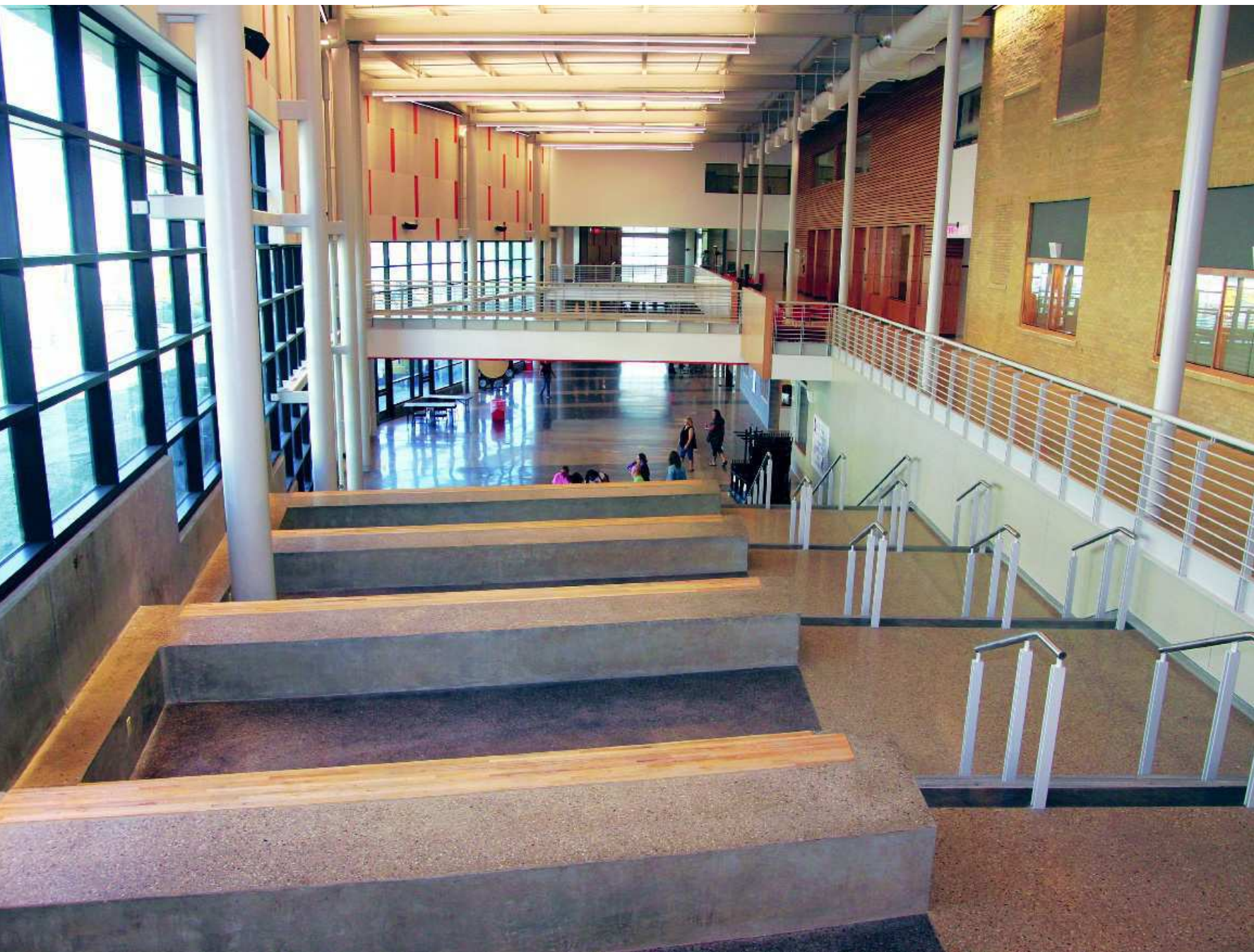
**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

The historic lobby serves as an entry to the newly renovated building, visible through an archway.



**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

The historic lobby of the John F. Welsh Auditorium can be seen through the entrance of the new addition at NCHS.



**DALE BOHREN**, STAR-TRIBUNE

Skywalks over the commons area in the new NCHS will eventually lead to the gym when it's completed in 2018.



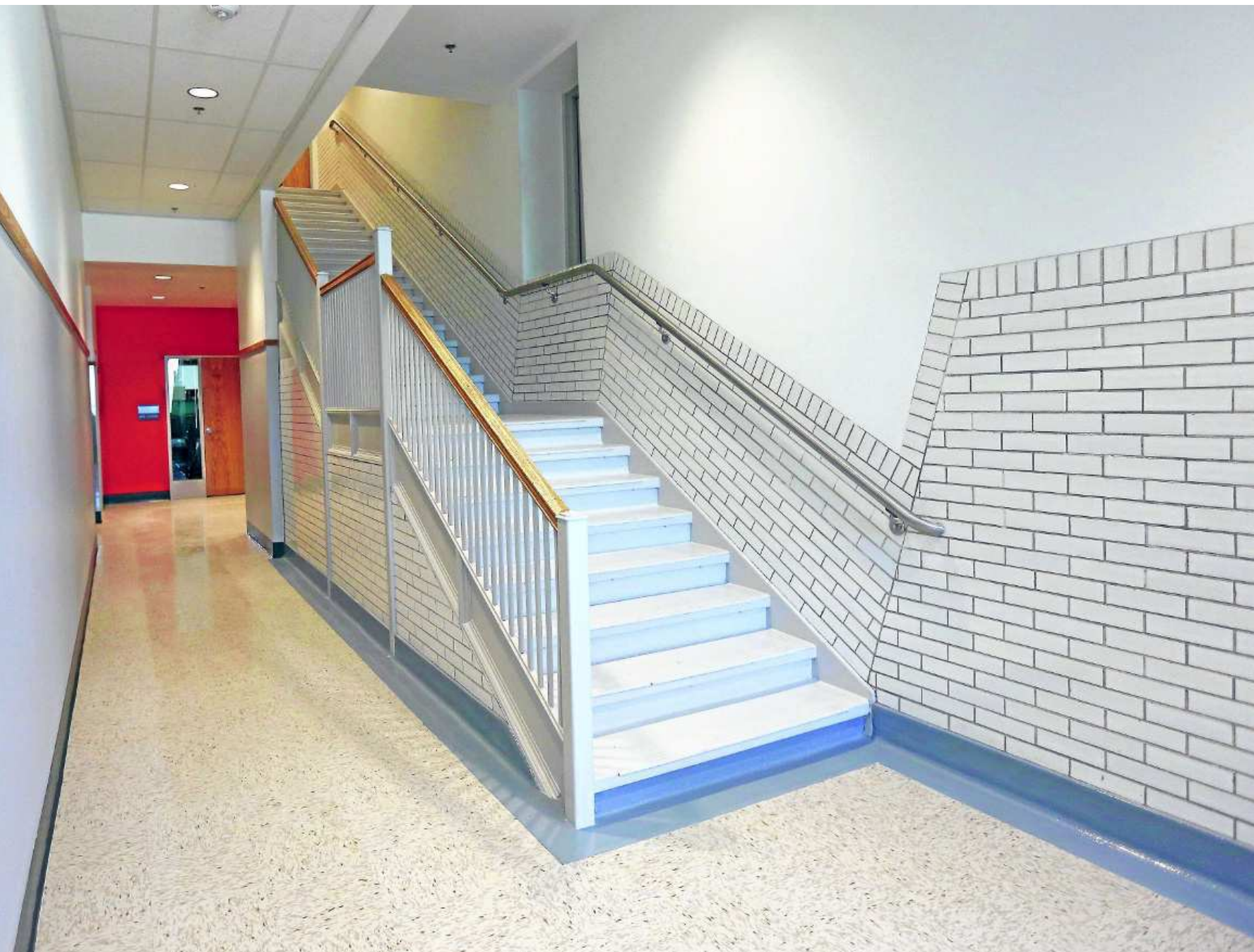
**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

Modular chemical-resistant workstations fill one of several science labs specifically constructed for research and design, utilizing up-to-date technology to streamline education.



**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

“We have an idea today how students want to learn and are trying to accommodate their desire for 21st century learning at NCHS. Due to the evolving needs in education, the space was designed with a tremendous amount of flexibility to accommodate those future changes and also accommodate short cycle changes,” said Superintendent Hopkins. The modern classroom above, filled with contemporary track lighting and twenty-first century student workstations, occupies the former principal’s office on the front southeast corner of the NCHS building.



**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

An original stairway leads to the NCHS tower, lined with vintage ceramic tiles and surrounded by new construction on the third floor.



**DALE BOHREN, STAR-TRIBUNE**

The state of the art cafeteria at NCHS provides national and international cuisine, accommodating 450 students at any one time. A 21st century fingerprinting system allows students quick access to their meals, which they can then eat in the newly constructed Commons Area that overlooks the new athletic facility.



**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

Advanced kiosks adorn each major entrance to Natrona County, providing students and community members access to important dates, live feeds from NCTV and up-to-date information about campus activities.

# Congratulations

\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_



Paving

Utility

Excavation

Contractors

**Construction**



**Casper - 235-2922**

**Riverton - 856-7171**

**Rawlins - 328-7171**

**Soil and Stone - 473-7100**



DALE BOHREN PHOTOS, STAR-TRIBUNE

**Top:** One of the school's east entrances is flanked by terra cotta embellishments that highlight its collegiate Gothic architectural style.

**Below:** The faces of a boy and girl are sculpted in architectural terra cotta next to an exterior entrance to NCHS. The sculpted faces were extensively renovated to repair and clean features like broken noses and other chips.



**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

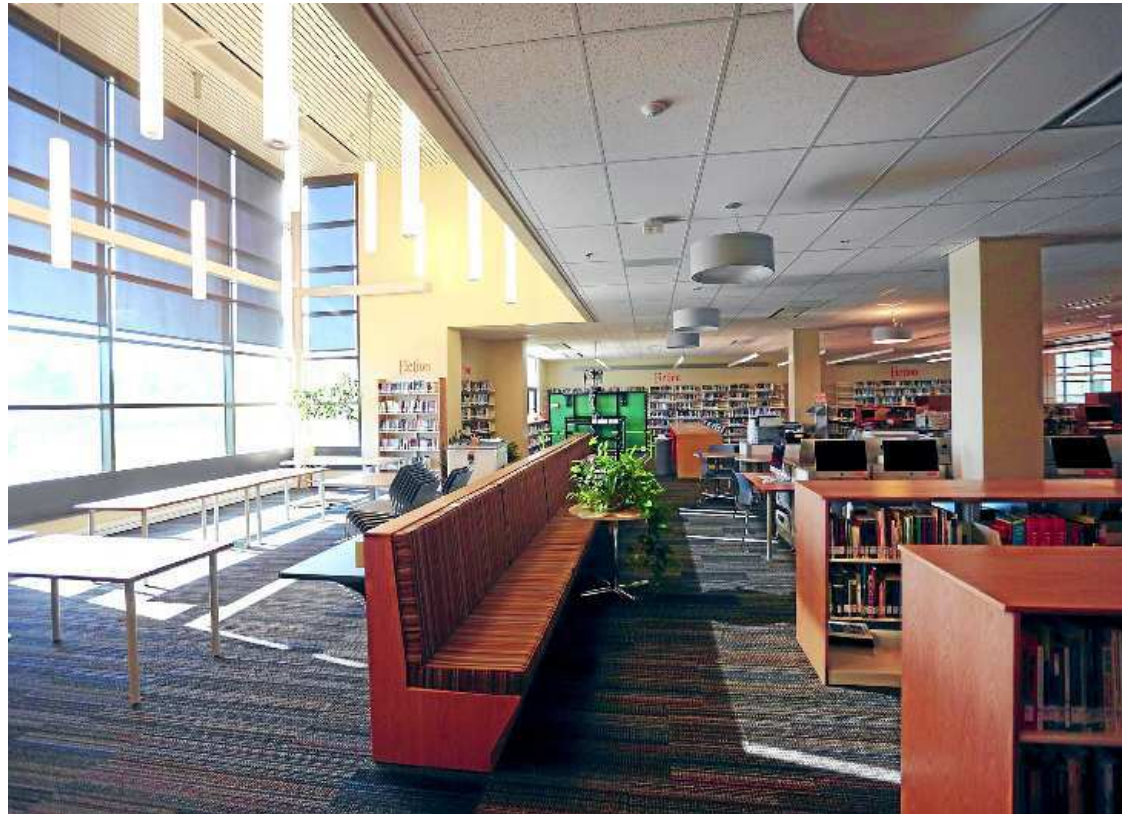
All classrooms at NCHS utilize 21st century technology such as motion sensor lighting, computers, document cameras, projectors and wireless connectivity, all to promote student learning. Pictured here is one such classroom, designated as a technology lab.

NCHS teachers will have personal work-space separate from the classroom, allowing the classroom to be used more frequently throughout the day. This is a significant change from the traditional model of school design where classrooms belong to a single teacher whose office is embedded inside the classroom. The teacher's private office space will generally be included with other teachers, creating an environment where it's easier for multiple teachers to collaborate. Much of the space was designed to create collaboration and cooperative learning with an eye towards flexibility.

Where the NCHS pool once stood, a newly constructed library media center gives students access to multitudes of learning materials, including space to simply sit down and read.

Architects designed spaces in such a way that the space can be reconfigured. Teachers, with a quick reconfiguration, can go from several small rooms to one large space that accommodates a variety of group learning situations. There's more modern lab space for the sciences and career and technical education. Students are also learning with state-of-the-art equipment in a modern environment that replicates the real-world experience in which they will soon find themselves. These opportunities dovetail into those at the new Pathways Innovation Center that opened Aug. 18 in west Casper.

**DAN CEPEDA**, STAR-TRIBUNE



## High school students:

Earn college credit at Casper College through ACE (Accelerated College Education). Get a jump start on your college degree and even earn credits towards graduation with ACE, powered by BOCES.

.....  
For more information about ACE, powered by BOCES, see your high school guidance counselor or call BOCES Program Manager Jeana Lam-Pickett at 307-268-3309 or visit [caspercollege.edu/BOCES](http://caspercollege.edu/BOCES)

**Earn**  
college credits.  
BOCES  
**pays**  
for your tuition  
and books!



**BOCES ACE**

**DUAL AND CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROGRAM**



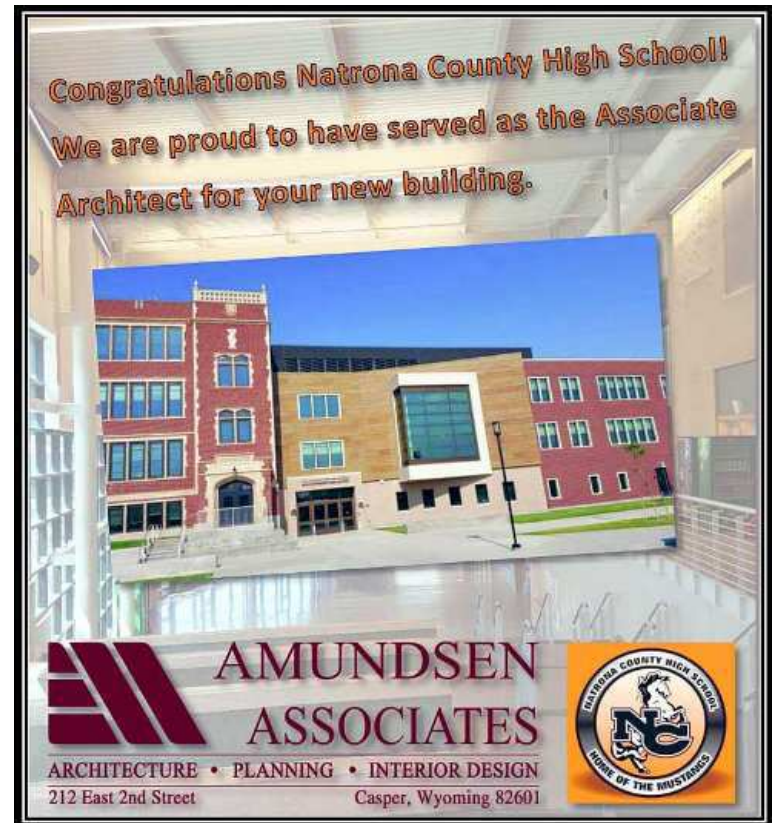
The new classrooms at NCHS have been outfitted with the most recent technology, but with an eye towards the needs of the next generations coming into the classrooms. "There's a balance to holding on to the historical element of the institution that is NCHS, and providing up-to-date learning and teaching environment to the students and staff," said Steve Hopkins, Superintendent of Natrona County's schools.

A business classroom at NCHS is pictured here with state of the art student seating, which accommodates pop-up computer workstations. The front of the room efficiently combines storage space and 21st century technology, projecting onto white boards and allowing wireless connectivity.

**DAN CEPEDA**, STAR-TRIBUNE



4154 Talon Drive • Casper, WY 82604  
307.232.0100  
[www.mountainplazaassistedliving.com](http://www.mountainplazaassistedliving.com)






DALE BOHREN, STAR-TRIBUNE


Numbered wooden benches from the old gymnasium were recycled into the new commons area near an entrance to the new gym.


### Thank you to the following contractors that have worked on the renovation and construction of NCHS to date:

71 Construction	Interkal, LLC	Recycled Materials LLC
American Seating	ITC Electrical Technologies	Restoration Specialists, Inc.
AP Wyoming, LLC	Knife River Corporation	S2M Construction Co., Inc.
Avalis Wayfinding	Kone Inc.	SECOA, INC
Barnum Construction Services, LLC	Mid Mountain Concrete Pumping	Sheet Metal Specialties, INC.
Big Horn Roofing Inc.	Mobile Concrete, Inc.	Shotcrete Montana
Black Roofing—Sheet Metal	National Coatings, Inc.	Specialties Contracting, Inc.
Brisco, LLC	Norcon of New Mexico	Spectra Contract Flooring
Budget Blinds of Casper	OmniTech Industries, Inc.	Standard Drywall Inc.
Casper Electric	Overhead Door Company of Casper, Inc.	Stoner Lawn and Landscape
Commercial Kitchen Supply	Pepper Tank and Contracting Co.	SWI, LLC
Division Seven Services	Peterson Contractors Inc.	Teton Steel Company
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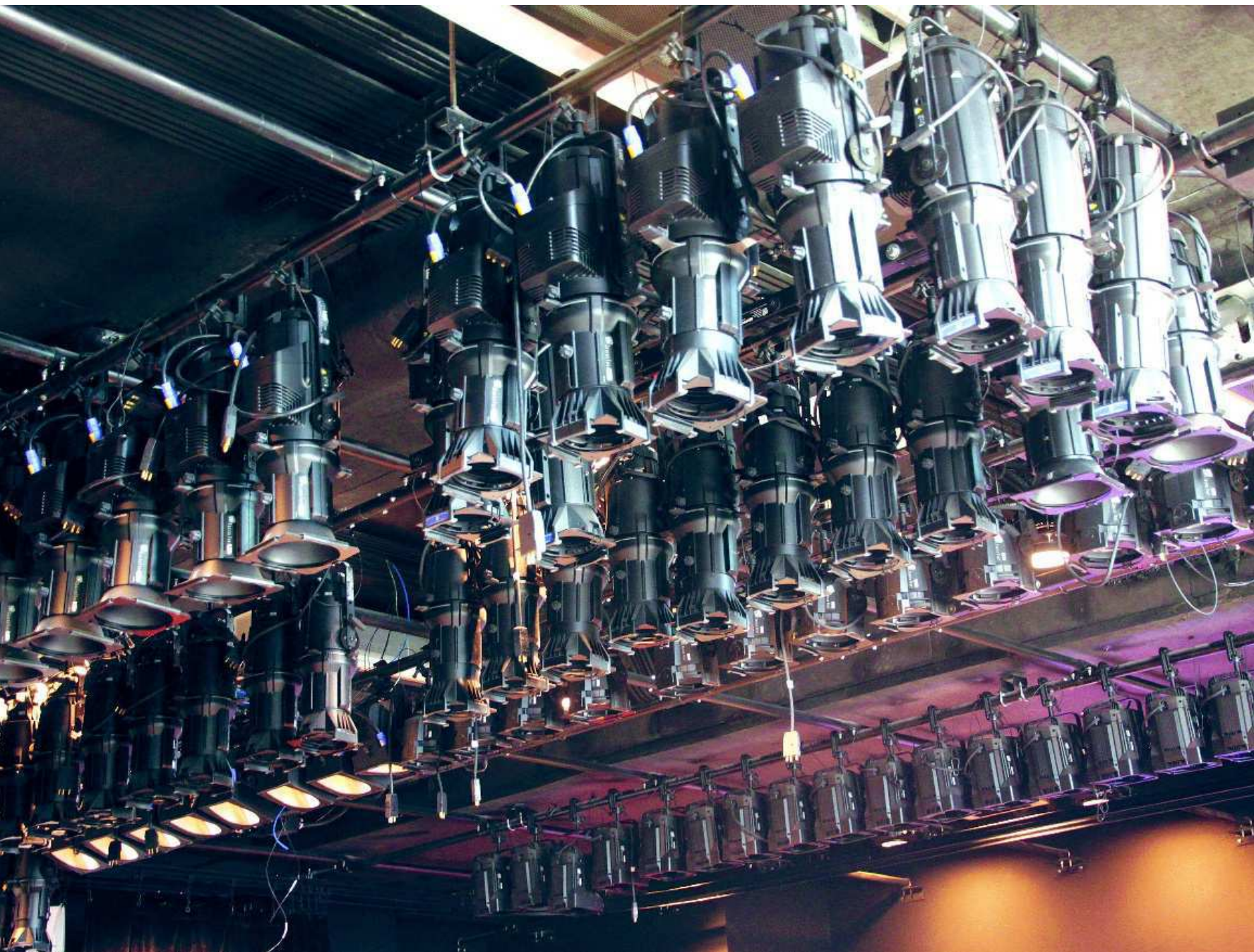
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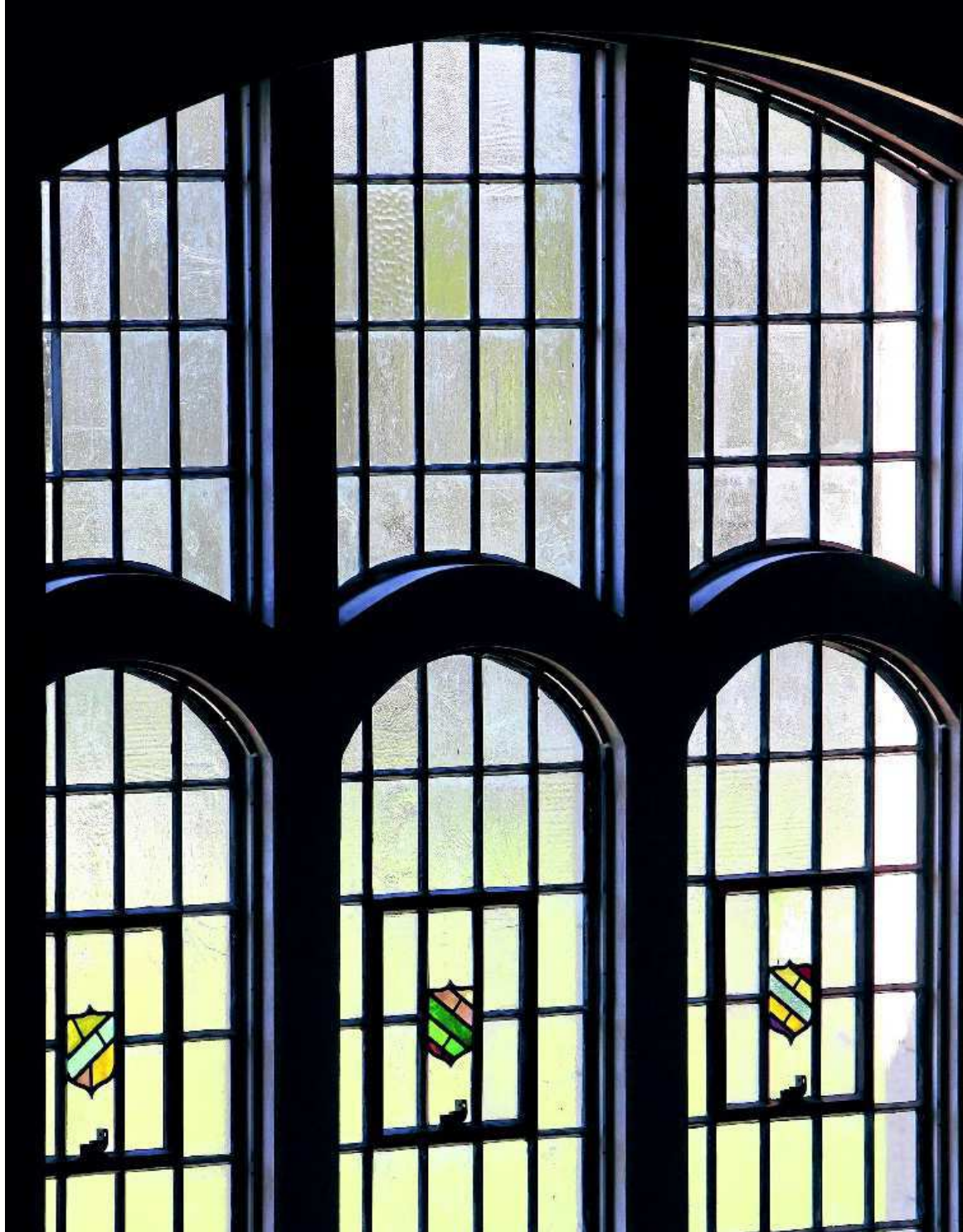
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**DALE BOHREN**, STAR-TRIBUNE

A generous grant from the Goodstein Family Foundation allowed for the purchase of advanced lighting and sound equipment for the drama classroom.



**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

Much of the original glass from the large windows was saved during the renovation of the John F. Welsh auditorium, including stained glass accents. Panels that were broken during a previous renovation have been reproduced and replaced. Electronic blinds hidden above each window can be lowered to adjust lighting.

The lighting fixtures in the auditorium have been masterfully restored to reflect the original design. Each globe has been hand-crafted and updated with efficient LED bulbs, bringing together old and new.

DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE



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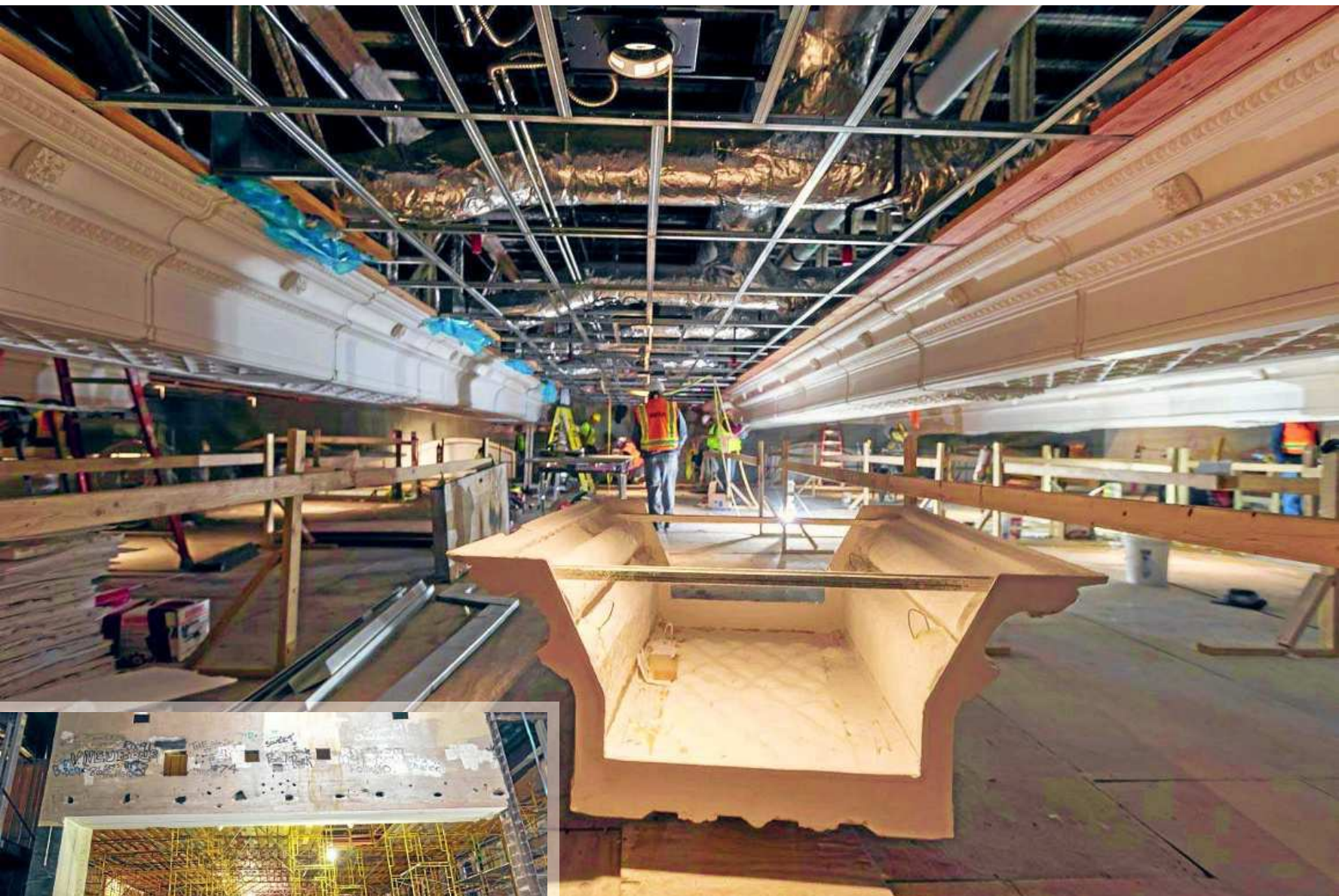
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COURTESY PHOTOS

**Above:** Craftsmen, working atop scaffolding, recreated the plaster moulding on the ceiling of the John F. Welsh Auditorium, approximately five feet at a time.

**Left:** Scaffolding supports a work surface at the top of the auditorium so craftsmen could safely work on the the cast-plaster ceiling above while other work was completed below.

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**DAN CEPEDA, STAR-TRIBUNE**

The John F. Welsh Auditorium shines after a complete renovation at NCHS. The space was stripped down to the brick after original ornamentation and fixtures were salvaged and repaired before being rebuilt to appear as original. The windows that had been covered in a previous renovation are again repaired and exposed. Hidden blinds can be lowered electronically to darken the auditorium for daytime performances. A massive state-of-the-art lighting grid is hidden in the ceiling, and new acoustical materials will help create an outstanding performance environment.

# Honoring the past, looking to the future...

**P**ublic education found its origins in the industrial age, and education was patterned after a factory model. Much of what students experienced was by lining up. Everyone did the same thing, and they took the same path. From a learning perspective, students that come to school today are different than students who came 20 years ago. It's our obligation and responsibility to meet their expectations and help a student learn. So we have to adapt. We have to evolve and change. We have to continue to make their education relevant and engaging. The environment at NCHS has been redesigned to make it easier for teachers to remove barriers: building barriers, classroom barriers and structural barriers.

"NCHS is a grand institution in our community. With the renovation and construction that is continuing to move forward, we honor and respect that institution, while serving the next several generations of students as education evolves in Natrona County," said Steve Hopkins, superintendent of Natrona County Schools.

## **Last, but not least...**

Thank you to the Natrona County School Board, school administrators, teachers, parents, community members and hundreds of construction workers and businesses who continue to put in the hard work of maintaining quality education in Natrona County. It's work that matters on a place that matters. Completion of all phases of the NCHS project will be in 2018. The Wyoming Legislature and both the School Facilities commission and department deserve credit for their willingness to honor the institution that is NCHS by funding this project. Thank you also to the coal industry, for paying coal lease bonuses for many years so the state of Wyoming had the money to fund school construction in the first place.

Thank you to the staff at NCHS who participated in this telling of the school's past, present and future, and also Vince Crolla at the Western History Center at Casper College for his many contributions to the NCHS timeline. This celebration of NCHS was collected and edited by Dale Bohren and Collin Rudkin and published by the Casper Star-Tribune in collaboration with the Natrona County School District.



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