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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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Lexington School

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 45 Lexington, N.W.

NA	not for publication
	vicinity

city or town Grand Rapids

state Michigan code MI county Kent County code O81 zip code 49504-6348

### 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

Kevin D. Murray 6/17/13  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
MI SHPO  
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

### 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:)

Lee Edward H. Beall 9.4.13  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**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

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

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

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

**Current Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

WORK IN PROGRESS

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Neoclassical (with elements of Arts & Crafts)

**Materials**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: SANDSTONE/concrete

walls: BRICK

TERRA COTTA

roof: SYNTHETIC/vinyl

other: GLASS/wood

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**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

See Continuation Sheet

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**Narrative Description**

See Continuation Sheet

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1915

**Significant Dates**

1915

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**Architect/Builder**

Henry H. Turner, Architect

Horner and Kelly, Contractors

**Period of Significance (justification)**

1915 represents the date of construction.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

See Continuation Sheet

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

See Continuation Sheet

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

See Continuation Sheet

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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
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.55  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	607290	4757530	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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

Part of Gold Street Block and Jefferson Street Block, Scribner's Addition as recorded in Liber 24 of Plats, Page 2 described as: Beginning at the Northeast corner of Lot 16, Jefferson Street Block; thence S01°14'17"E 265.68 feet along the East line of Lexington Avenue to the North line of Veto Street; thence N88°50'00"W 263.70 feet along said North line to the East line of Gold Avenue; thence N01°17'37"W 265.60 feet along said East line to the South line of California Street; thence S88°51'11"E 263.95 feet along said South line to the place of beginning. Being Lots 9, 11, 13, and 15 Gold Street Scribner's Addition and Lots 10, 12, 14, and 16 Jefferson Avenue Scriber's Addition.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Entire site associated with the building, playground, and park.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Grace A.M. Smith, RA, LEED AP  
organization Designsmiths date 2/15/2013  
street & number 200 E. Division Street telephone 616-866-4089  
city or town Rockford state Michigan zip code 49341  
e-mail designsmiths@hotmail.com

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO 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 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See attached Photograph Log

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**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Jeff Chamberlain, Charter Development Co., LLC  
street & number 3850 Broadmoor, SE, Suite 201 telephone 616-222-1700  
city or town Grand Rapids state Michigan zip code 49512

**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 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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**Narrative Description:**

**Summary Paragraph**

Lexington School is one of a series of schools designed by Board of Education Staff Architect Henry H. Turner and built for Grand Rapids Public Schools in Grand Rapids, Michigan between 1915 and 1929, a period of accelerated expansion and improvement district-wide. The school was built to replace the old Jefferson School, built in 1868. Unlike Jefferson School (Lexington Street was originally named Jefferson), Lexington School was an educational, recreational and social focal point of its residential neighborhood. This concept was reinforced in the 1960s when the school became a park-school. Architecturally, the school building is an 'I' plan structure built in 1915 in a simplified Arts-and-Crafts-influenced Neoclassicism. Two and a half stories in height, the building is positioned on a high basement story; thus entrances are slightly above grade and one enters the building between ground- and first-floor levels. Although not a large school, Lexington commands immediate notice in its neighborhood of small, densely sited two-story homes -- including the open area and playground where Jefferson School once stood, the building is the only structure on a full city block. The effect is one of a public "green." It was designed with a combination auditorium-gymnasium with stage and projection booth, fifteen classrooms, a kindergarten room, domestic science and manual training rooms, and a branch public library.

**Description**

Jefferson School was located one block north of the current Lexington School. This urban, residential neighborhood is located on the near west side of Grand Rapids. On January 18, 1915, it was recommended that the Board of Education put \$13,500 in the budget for the purchase of the properties on the block adjacent to Jefferson School for the new Lexington School. The purchase of property was approved on February 1, 1915. Houses were removed, the street bisecting the sites vacated and the new school built. The old school was demolished and in its place a playground was built. The cost of the new building was \$73,524.50, exclusive of furnishings.

This neighborhood is still intact, with old homes surrounding Lexington's wide-open site. Two small-scaled public buildings also face the school -- a church to the west on Gold Avenue and a former fire station to the east on Lexington. The property, as it still exists today, includes the school building and playground; the remainder of the property is preserved as open city parkland which, like the playground, remains open to the public.

Lexington became a park-school during the 1960s as part of a program jointly developed by the Department of Parks and the School Board in the 1950s, given direction by Frederick C. See, Grand Rapids' Superintendent of Parks from 1948 to 1971. The program grew out of a need for a large number of parks and schools as the population of the city grew rapidly following World War II. With the development of properties combining educational and recreational facilities, the cost could be shared by two agencies. Grand Rapids was not the first city to have park-schools -- the property type had been seen earlier in Illinois and Wisconsin -- but the Grand Rapids program became a model for other cities. In the early part of the program, land for park development was often acquired adjacent to existing schools. As



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the program progressed, entirely new properties were developed with parks integrated with school buildings and the park space designed to accommodate school uses. One of the effects of the program was to create strong neighborhood focal points utilized by residents year-round.

Lexington School is a stately red brick building, two and a half stories in height on a raised ground floor, with large window openings. Sandstone-colored terra cotta is used for trim and decorative details at the main entries; the combination of simple brick structure and restrained terra cotta ornament was one that Turner would use throughout his twenty-year association with Grand Rapids Public Schools. Ohio sandstone was used for the water table and for most window sills. The building's terra cotta elements were tinted to match the stone.

Lexington is a building of artfully simple architectural character, though less simple the closer you look. The school's 'I' plan has an entry on each of its short end facades instead of the typical central entry on one of the wide facades. The main entries are in identical, two-story ground level extensions on the building's east and west elevations. The entries themselves are recessed, and originally had paired paneled wood and glass doors with segmental arched transoms; these have been replaced with an aluminum storefront system, although the original arched transoms are still in place. The body of the school is based on Neoclassical design. However, the deliberately simplified terra cotta cornices and other details reflect an Arts and Crafts approach. The entry projections feature surrounds extending to the second level where there is a group of three windows (also replacements). Above the windows is a terra cotta cornice with heavy very stylized modillion forms beneath – all reminiscent of but modified from standard Neoclassical forms. The entry extensions have stepped parapets with terra cotta coping.

The body of the building has terra cotta banding above the windows and a terra cotta cornice, an abstract version of a standard Neoclassical cornice, just below the roof line. A parapet wall, topped with terra cotta coping, rises above the building's flat roof. The overall style of Lexington School is reminiscent of the district's Oakdale School, designed by Osgood and Osgood and completed in 1910, the year after Turner was hired by the Board of Education as its staff architect.

Most of the exterior original building materials are still in place and are in very good condition. Maintenance and repairs to the building's masonry and terra cotta have been sensitively undertaken. The original chimney on the north side of the building has been removed. No additions have been made to the building. The only major change is the removal and replacement of the original windows and exterior doors.

Turner's school design improvements included large windows, for better lighting and ventilation, and wide corridors. Although the ground floor is partially below grade, its original windows were also large; this was a particularly important consideration for a location often subject to minimal fenestration, one that Turner addressed in designing an improved learning environment. All but two of the original wood windows were removed and replaced with smaller metal windows, each with a metal upper panel to make the original openings smaller, during the 1980s. The original windows were very large double-hung 3-over-1 wood windows with stone sills, aligned one above the other in the three stories, with

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three-story brick piers forming vertical separations between window groups.

Two multi-paned divided-light windows, original to the building, remain in the boiler room and are in good condition. Throughout the remainder of the building, the wood frames were left in place and metal sashes set within on the interior. It appears that metal trim wraps over the exterior wood frame. The original wood exterior doors have been replaced with metal doors.

Turner's floor plan for Lexington was the physical embodiment of progressive reform in educational philosophy that evolved in the early 1900s. A new focus was placed on the importance of the school as a social center for its neighborhood. For the Lexington building, Turner skillfully devised such spaces – a branch library, offices and a social center area, which made use of the width of the corridor to create a wider room, a space that doubled as a gymnasium during school hours. The branch library and the “social center room” were down a flight of stairs from the west entrance, identifying this as the public entrance. The remainder of the lower level was given over to a domestic science room, manual arts room, boiler room, janitor's room, and girls and boys toilets. A motion picture booth was situated next to the social center, which also included a stage.

Interior renovations took place in the summer of 1997. The Academia de Espanol (the district's Spanish immersion program) moved into the building in the fall of 1997, converting the building's use from neighborhood school to specialty elementary school.

Lexington School's interior retains some of its historic features. The vestibules' interior wood doors have been removed, but the wood framing and arched glass transoms are still intact. Entry stairwells retain much of their original historic material. Plaster walls, ceilings, and half-walls at stairs, wood trim and caps, and metal and wood handrails all remain in their original location and are in good condition. Wood throughout the building is white oak.

Corridor and classroom dividing walls are typically original plaster with some gypsum board replacement walls put in place during the 1997 renovations. The original plaster ceilings remain above a lay-in ceiling system, also installed in 1997, in both the corridor and classrooms. The original design featured neither transoms above the doors nor clerestory windows at the corridor. A simple wood picture rail is located above the lay-in ceiling in both corridors and classrooms.

An article in the April 4, 1915 *Grand Rapids Press* announcing the dedication of Lexington School mentions an interesting and innovative feature in the new school – a painted frieze above the windows of the kindergarten classroom consisting of motifs appropriate for the young children who would learn in the space. Unfortunately, the frieze has been painted over. The concept was used again in 1916 when Turner and school superintendent William Greeson devised a competition, open to sixth-grade students, to compose designs for friezes to be used in the kindergarten room and along upper and lower corridors at the new Sheldon School.

Many of the corridor doors were replaced with contemporary doors in 1997; however, some five-

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paneled oak corridor doors still exist, as do many more between classrooms. Most of the classrooms are intact per Turner's original floor plans. Original wood window frames, baseboards, window and door surrounds, and other trim elements are in very good condition. Many of the original black slate window stools remain; replacement stools fabricated of oak match the building's other wood trims and are also in very good condition. Most of the original cabinetry built by the school's carpentry shop was removed from the building in 1997. No original slate blackboards exist, although some later blackboards are still in place.

Classroom floors are typically carpet or vinyl tile installed over original wood flooring. Where uncovered, the original floors are in good condition. The corridor is carpeted and appears to be over an original composition material, possibly linoleum. Most marble thresholds between corridors and classrooms are intact.

The lower level's original glazed brick walls remain in place, although gypsum board walls have been added to subdivide the large social center room and the stage has been removed. Fire walls and doors have been added at stairwells to meet current code requirements. Original skylights still exist above the second-floor ceiling and are covered over at the roof level.

The general contractors were Horner & Kelly; structural steel, ornamental iron and composition flooring was furnished by Frank L. Dykema; terra cotta, fire proofing tile and cement was furnished by S.A. Morman & Company; brick by Frederick H. McDonald; building hardware by Gleye Hardware Company; electrical wiring and fixtures by Roseberry-Henry Electrical Company; plastering by Theo. J. Beyne; plumbing by C. Bauman; heating by Adolph Leestilt Iron Works; boilers by Central Boiler Works, Henry Brobst, proprietor; interior trim by Stiles Brothers; interior decorating by F. L. Blvmier. Wernette-Bradfield-Mead were the consulting engineers, designing the heating and ventilating systems and electrical equipment.

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

Opened in 1915, Lexington Elementary School was built on the west side of Grand Rapids, Michigan. In a well-established neighborhood of small frame homes, the school was built to the south of an earlier Lexington [alternately Jefferson] school dating from the 1860s, which was later torn down and the street between vacated, leaving an open expanse adjacent to the new school. Architect Henry H. Turner designed the building as a school for students in kindergarten and grades one through six. As one of the first Grand Rapids schools designed to house a variety of new programs – kindergarten, gymnasium/social center and branch library among them – and the sole building among them retaining its original footprint, Lexington is significant under Criterion A [Education]. The Lexington School is notable as one of the first two school buildings of many Turner designed for the Grand Rapids school system over the next two decades. The school's interior layout was one of Grand Rapids' first designed to ensure a safer environment in view of increased contemporary concern on fire safety. For these reasons, as well as for incorporating features in the service of new school functions, Lexington is significant under Criterion C (Architecture).

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

The first third of the twentieth century was a time of widespread educational reform in Grand Rapids, as it was across the United States. Reconsidering the narrow curricula of the late 1800s, educators introduced a wealth of new programs in the early years of this century. Change included providing a more well-rounded education and placing new emphasis on physical health and well-being. Rooms dedicated to manual arts and domestic science instruction appeared, as did gymnasiums. Students learned useful life skills during the day and, to promote schools as social and educational centers for the surrounding community, evening classes were offered as well. Similarly, the new curriculum introduced physical activity into the school day, and the school gymnasium was available for community athletic and social activities in the evening or on weekends. Public school educators also widely adopted the concept of kindergarten as an important step in acclimating the youngest students to a learning environment. (Scattered examples existed in this country in the latter third of the nineteenth century, most often as private programs.) Older school plans had not included gymnasiums and, when practical skills classes and kindergartens were introduced, existing classrooms were usually pressed into service.

Additions that included new functions were made to older schools (and to some built since 1900, already crowded and without facilities for the newest school activities). The next priority, as funding became available, was building schools in neighborhoods where rapidly increasing student populations were pushing the limits of existing buildings or replacing schools built in the previous century, now antiquated and inadequate. Turner's design for Lexington – and a similar design for Franklin, which opened a few days earlier – was one of the first to incorporate new school functions into spaces specifically designed for them. In addition to the sweeping changes seen in education across the country, the Board of Education introduced public library branches into schools in 1906, an arrangement particular to Grand Rapids. Although not part of the national school reform movement, this joint project of the Board of Education and the Grand Rapids Public Library Commission was certainly allied to it in spirit – another connection forged between schoolhouse and surrounding community and a means of expanding educational resources, exposing students and citizens to a cultural institution in their own

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neighborhood. Between December, 1906, and April, 1915, when Lexington opened, the in-school library branches had grown to eleven in number; six of them, including Lexington, were in new schools the plans for which had included libraries in the original designs. During the intervening years, eight of eleven schools in existence in 1915 have been eliminated or razed in favor of replacements; one was sold and put to another use; and one was overhauled and expanded. Lexington is now the last of the early library-branch schools still standing as it did almost one hundred years ago.

Making space for gymnasiums, outfitting manual arts and domestic science rooms, providing cheerful areas for kindergarten play, planning spaces for libraries: these required looking at school design in a different light. It often made sense to group rooms by related function. It was widely believed that kindergarten rooms should be at or near ground level and that they should be larger than standard classrooms and provided with as much light as possible. With the opening of more programs to the community at large, consideration had to be given to providing convenient public access to certain parts of the building. All of these aspects required planning by the designer of any new school, as Turner did for Lexington, and these requirements all influenced the final plan. Working within a relatively modest footprint, he needed to fit the required new amenities into the plan, which he did with economy and careful thought as to how students and community members would most efficiently and comfortably work or play within the spaces he would supply.

In addition, disastrous school fires were fresh in national and local memory, and increasing importance was placed on the use of fire-resistant materials and streamlined floor plans that ensured quick, efficient emergency egress. Turner's design utilized the best fireproofing methods of the day and allowed efficient passage in and out of the school, avoiding somewhat haphazard traffic patterns typical in schools only a few years before. Straight corridors led directly to exits; entrances sited halfway between ground and first floor at Lexington, although not a new arrangement, meant that students on either floor need only negotiate a short flight of steps before reaching an exterior door.

The exterior appearance of the school was a letter "I," a common configuration at the time. In fact, this design for one of the first two full school plans Turner designed for Grand Rapids Public Schools looks, at first glance, like many others. It bears a notable resemblance to Grand Rapids' Coldbrook School, opened six years before Lexington, and Collinwood Memorial School in Cleveland, Ohio, which was widely admired and emulated as a forward-thinking example of a new standard in schoolhouse safety. (Collinwood was designed in 1911 by Turner's Cleveland Board of Education mentor, Frank Barnum, to replace a school demolished by a disastrous 1908 fire.)

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**Historical Significance Criteria A – Education Reform in Grand Rapids, Michigan**

The twentieth century brought with it many educational theories that led to changes in the way public education was administered and how schools interacted with their surrounding communities. All over the United States, educators looked beyond the typical nineteenth-century curriculum of rote learning and recitation, and school boards added programs meant to produce more well-rounded students who would become responsible citizens. Manual arts and domestic science were added to Grand Rapids Public Schools' curricula and, as evening classes, were offered to the community at large. Health was a nationwide concern among educators and administrators, and physical activity was planned into the school day. In Grand Rapids, gymnasiums were added to older schools and designed as an integral part of new schools, providing exercise opportunities for students during the day and community members in the evening. Thought was given to acclimating young children to the academic sphere; kindergartens were often part of additions constructed to existing Grand Rapids schools, adapted from existing rooms or included in designs for new buildings.

The Grand Rapids Board of Education oversaw a building boom in the first two decades of the twentieth century; between 1906 and 1915, the district built a new high school, rebuilt a ten-year-old school that had burned to the ground, constructed five elementary schools and added new construction to four existing elementary buildings and a high school. One of the reforms instituted under Board of Education Superintendent W. H. Elson [1904-1906] was establishing kindergartens in all elementary schools. In most cases at that time, this meant placing kindergarten classes in existing classrooms. It was under the watch of Elson's successor William A. Greeson that the pace of new construction gained momentum. Sigsbee and Coldbrook elementary schools, opened in late 1906 and 1909, respectively, were designed with kindergarten rooms; 1908 additions to Buchanan and Palmer schools, as well as 1914 additions to Alexander and East Leonard buildings included kindergarten rooms. In the 1911 Board of Education annual report, Miss Annie J. Blandford, appointed Supervisor of Kindergartens and First Grade two years earlier, noted that "... in plans for new buildings to be erected in the future a great deal of thought has been given to the planning of the kindergarten rooms and that they are to be larger and better suited in every way to the carrying out of the kindergarten program."

Following Miss Blandford's 1911 report, additions were made to the older Alexander and East Leonard buildings in 1914; both additions included a kindergarten room on the first floor and a space designated "playroom" immediately below in the basement; the rooms were undistinguishable from other classrooms in size or features. As the first elementary schools built after the statement of intent to design kindergarten spaces to better suit their inhabitants, Franklin and Lexington showed evidence of this mission. Architect Turner's plans for both accommodated kindergarten students in rooms much larger than standard classrooms, an appropriate arrangement, as games and physical movement were integral components of the kindergarten curriculum. Turner's Lexington design included window seats, a pleasant seating arrangement that incorporated cupboard and drawer storage below, and a toilet room within the kindergarten area, a convenience that saved trips to the larger boys' or girls' toilets, to the east and west, respectively, at the mezzanine between first and second floors. A *Grand Rapids Press* article from April 13, 1915, described that week's upcoming dedication of the new Lexington building and enthused over another special feature in the kindergarten room it thought sure to "...delight the small

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children. A wide border near the ceiling is composed of juvenile designs.” This feature was apparently considered a success. A September 29, 1916 *Press* article notes that Superintendent Greeson and Turner had conceived of a competition among high school art students to create designs to decorate corridor walls for the soon-to-open Sheldon elementary building. The art director suggested, instead, that sixth grade students from all Grand Rapids’ elementary schools submit designs; those chosen utilized a floral motif for general use and, for the kindergarten area, “...a clever arrangement of playful rabbits under prim little Noah’s ark trees.”

By including gymnasiums in his designs for both new elementary schools, a first for Grand Rapids, Turner accommodated the new emphasis on physical activity for all school children. Lexington’s basement gymnasium featured a raised stage at its north end, allowing the space to be used as an auditorium as well, and a “moving picture room” along the west wall included a projection booth. Equipped for many activities, the space is labeled “Social Center Room & Gymnasium” on the plan, a use that fit well with the new emphasis on schools as social centers and gathering places for their neighborhoods and the community at large. In an efficient use of space, corridors leading from the building entrances at the east and west – passing the janitor’s room and manual training room at the east end, domestic science room and branch library at the west – terminate at either side of the gymnasium, adding square footage to the room. A passage behind the stage gives access to the girls’ and boys’ toilet/shower areas and heating, ventilating and engine room facilities. Altogether, the basement efficiently groups the public functions of the school with spaces for athletic or forensic events, evening classes in “life skills” and a branch of the Grand Rapids Public Library. Not only were such functions seen as a means of reconnecting citizens in an era that was moving away from the earlier model of a close-knit agrarian society, but the Board of Education also realized that extended use of new buildings to *all* members of the community represented better and more efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Opening schools to the community, assigning specific rooms for manual and domestic arts, designing comfortable kindergarten spaces to encourage young learners, providing an arena for physical activity: these were all national trends with which Grand Rapids Public Schools were in accord. In addition, Grand Rapids pursued an arrangement much in the spirit of strengthening school-community relationships – Grand Rapids Public Library branches in select schools. The city’s library and schools shared a long relationship. Established in 1858, the Grand Rapids Library Association found itself deeply in debt in 1861 and donated its 855 volumes to the Board of Education of District No.1 – there not yet being one centralized district and board to oversee all city schools – which added them to the school library in its Central School. Subsequent Boards maintained control of the growing collection until funds donated by wealthy Chicago businessman (and descendant of Grand Rapids’ founder, Louis Campau) Martin A. Ryerson made possible the erection of a permanent home for the collection, and the Ryerson Public Library opened in 1904. The Grand Rapids Public Library Commission had been established the year before to assume control from the Board of Education, but the two entities maintained a cordial relationship. In fact, Superintendent Greeson was a member when the Commission proposed the creation of branches of the Grand Rapids Public Library in city schools and was a strong proponent of the arrangement.

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In December of 1906, the first public library branch in a school opened in a space that was little more than an anteroom at the end of a second-floor corridor in the new Sigsbee elementary building. Board and Commission would both contribute to the establishment and maintaining of the branches: schools would provide the rooms, equipment, heat, light and janitor service, the library the books and services of trained librarians. The ultimate goal of the program was to create school branches located so that residents of all parts of the city would have convenient access to the resources of the library. Branches were included in other new schools – Coldbrook, Franklin and Lexington elementary schools and South High School; in the rebuilt Turner elementary building; in additions to Buchanan, Palmer, Alexander and East Leonard; and in the existing Hall Elementary School, for a total of eleven branches in 1915. The newest branches in the district, those at Franklin and Lexington, were integral to the building's designs; unlike the first branch at Sigsbee these were the size of full classrooms and logically placed components of floors designed for convenient access by the public. Over the intervening years, most of the buildings that held the earliest branch libraries have been replaced by newer buildings. South High was purchased by the U. S. Department of Labor and put into use as a Job Corps center in 1982, and Franklin underwent extensive remodeling in 2002. Lexington alone remains of the schools that housed a program praised thus by Superintendent William Greeson: "an epoch-making event in the history of education in Grand Rapids. Everyone knows that children need the help of trained librarians to teach them how to use a library. What more sensible arrangement could be thought of than to have this important work provided for by the co-operation of the Board of Education and the Board of Library Commissioners?"

**Historical Significance Criteria C – Architectural Significance**

As the twentieth century began, wood-frame city schoolhouses were becoming a memory. Masonry structures were the norm, considered far superior in safety. And yet, in 1913, as the Grand Rapids Board of Education considered replacing old Lexington School, there was grave concern even about the safety of "modern" brick schools. On June 8, 1908, Turner Street School burned to the ground; per a *Grand Rapids Herald* article reporting the disaster, the school was built ten years prior, "one of the city's modern schools." No one was injured in the fire, but it further focused local concerns about fire safety raised by the horror of another school fire only a few months before – a March 4, 1908 fire at the modern (1901) Lake View Elementary School in Collinwood, Ohio, that left only the walls of the brick structure and resulted in the deaths of 172 children (almost half the building's 350 students), two teachers and a rescuer.

Typical of the era, Lake View's floors and stairways were of oiled wood, walls and ceilings of plaster over wood lath. Heat was supplied by a steam furnace; floor joists in the basement ceiling were of wood, fully exposed. The Fire Marshal's report did not state a cause, but it was speculated that an uninsulated steam pipe near a joist overheated the wood, turning it into kindling. Other factors contributed to the large number of children trapped in the burning building – three fire escapes in the architect's plan, but only one built; rooms arranged around a central hall, a "chimney" when air rushed in as exit doors were thrown open; stairwells that measured only slightly over 5 feet in width (Lakeview floor plans, Figures 3 and 4). Also in 1908, construction began on the Williamson & Crow design for Coldbrook Elementary in Grand Rapids. The floor plans (Figures 5 and 6) reveal a strong resemblance to those of Lake View.



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Classrooms are arranged around a central assembly hall on the first floor, around a central second-floor hallway with an open well to a skylight above, and there is no direct passage between stairways at either end of the building. (It is worth noting, however, that the older practice of placing public spaces such as assembly rooms on the upper floors of schoolhouses was avoided by placing Coldbrook's assembly hall on the first floor, a move toward increased safety for large assembled groups.)

The fire in Collinwood made papers all over the country, from the *New York Times* to small-town weeklies, and advocacy groups called for changes in school design – locating furnaces safely away from flammable surfaces, widening stairways and exit areas to allow easier emergency egress, more fire-resistant building materials; and building inspections and condemnation of unsafe buildings. Widely lauded as the exemplar of the new school, more carefully considered and constructed of the safest materials available, was the 1910 building that replaced Lake View. Built adjacent to the fire site, the new school, Collinwood Memorial, was designed by Cleveland Board of Education architect Frank Barnum. Many innovative features of this building, "...as fireproof and panic-proof as it is possible for a school building to be," were reported in the cover story from the October 1911 issue of *Popular Mechanics Magazine*. Every room was situated for easy access to the ground, without classes running into each other. Stairways were cement, floors were laid on concrete, and the doors were to be of steel. The building could be ventilated without opening windows, and the auditorium was located on the ground level.

In Grand Rapids, the schools that opened in 1909 (new Central High School and Coldbrook Elementary) would have already been under construction at the time of the Collinwood disaster, and plans for Oakdale Elementary (opened 1910) would have been complete before Barnum's Collinwood design was widely publicized. The district's next schools, Franklin and Lexington Elementaries (soon to be followed by the similar Sheldon), were the first to be built after Barnum had set the contemporary bar for fire safety. It is highly likely that, training under Barnum at the Cleveland Board of Education before coming to Grand Rapids, Turner was well acquainted with the Lake View School fire, and may have known of initial planning for Collinwood Memorial. Turner's floor plans for Lexington (Figures 7 and 8) certainly improved over the floor plans of the 1909 Coldbrook School plan. Corridors were wide (13'- 4") and took a straight route between the two entrances, providing a direct route to the exits. The prints for Lexington show the placement of the boiler in a separate room, engine room likewise segregated, and the plenum chamber and ventilating equipment in another area, all sitting on concrete floors. Stairways throughout are concrete, corridor floors throughout are of concrete composition, and detail sheets show placement of reinforcing rods for partitions on all stories. Most wall surfaces are shown as finished in Keene's cement, and the gymnasium walls are of salt-glazed brick, fire-resistant as well as durable through the challenge of athletic endeavor.

Contemporary newspaper accounts variously mention the red brick exterior over reinforced concrete, steel and brick used in construction, and that the building is "...as near fireproof as any structure could possibly be made." In the 1916 survey undertaken by the Board of Education, Grand Rapids' buildings and equipment were studied and analyzed by John F. Bobbitt, a professor at the University of Chicago's School of Education. Sometimes referred to as the "father of the modern school curriculum," and a

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respected authority on school administration and supervision, Bobbitt had high praise for “buildings like Franklin and Sheldon,” which description can be taken to include Lexington. He found them worthy of being “recommended in almost all their features.” He particularly commented upon the use of fireproof construction throughout and noted that the ground floor being minimally below grade allowed the use of large windows to adequately light the lowest floor. (It also made egress from this public section of the building very direct – up five steps and out a main door.) He also found exits “...sufficiently numerous, sufficiently wide, doors opening outward and provided with automatic panic bars. (Panic bars were decidedly up-to-date equipment; the VonDuprin panic bar was patented in 1908 and marketed by Vonnegut Hardware Company of Indianapolis.) He also noted that the boiler room was within the building, but separated from all surrounding areas by fire-proof construction.

In her book on educational architecture in the state of Ohio, author Virginia E. McCormick mentions Barnum’s design for Collinwood Memorial as a style trendsetter as well, citing the two-story Neoclassical brick building as the fashionable architectural standard of its time (Figure 9). Here, Turner took a different course than did his former mentor. Although his design for Lexington has a few subtle reminiscences of classical details, it is more notable for its very restrained and abstract use of ornament.

**Architect Henry H. Turner**

Henry H. Turner (born 1881, Auburn, New York; died 1974, Cleveland, Ohio) received his architectural education at Harvard, graduated in 1907, and trained with two influential, nationally known school architects of the early twentieth century before commencing his own career as a noted school architect, much of it in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

His first work experience was in the office of William B. Ittner of St. Louis. Ittner was the first Commissioner of that city’s public schools in 1897 and, later, Consulting Architect to the St. Louis Board of Education. His designs were widely acclaimed for functionality and artistic excellence; fifty schools of his design were built in St. Louis and twenty-five in other states. A recognized authority on school planning, he lectured on the topic at New York University, was appointed to the National Education Association’s Committee on Administration of Secondary Education and was invited by President Hoover to address a national education conference. Ittner also designed school fixtures, including a single-pedestal desk manufactured by American Seating Company of Grand Rapids, which the city’s 1910 Board of Education annual report recommended, “for reasons of hygiene and student comfort,” for use in three soon-to-be-completed schools.

Turner next trained with Frank Seymour Barnum, an architect well-versed in the design of school buildings and educational planning as the Superintendent of Buildings for the Cleveland Board of Education from 1895 to 1914. Like Ittner’s, Barnum’s work was well respected nationally. He was widely known for his early advocacy of school fire safety. A disastrous 1908 school fire in the Cleveland suburb of Collinwood resulted in the death of 172 students, two teachers, and a rescuer, and Barnum’s design for the replacement school focused attention on fireproof construction. His emphasis on fireproof materials and safer exit design were noted in national publications as well as small-town newspapers across the country. (Grand Rapids Historical Commission member and school historian Diana Barrett

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likens the Collinwood fire's impact upon subsequent school design to the impact of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist fire upon factory design.)

In 1909, the Grand Rapids Board of Education offered Turner employment as designer of high school equipment, an important position because a large new high school was then under construction. William Ittner, consulting architect on the high-profile Central High School project, may have recommended Turner. Grand Rapids' population was then rapidly increasing, new neighborhoods were being developed, and existing school buildings were viewed as woefully inadequate; the Board soon realized that retaining an architect in its business department would advantageously affect replacement and expansion of the district's building stock; plans could be designed in advance in accordance with areas of identified need, and finalized when resources became available. In 1911, the Board, familiar with Turner's work, offered him the position, and he served in that capacity through 1919. After leaving the employ of the Board of Education, Turner opened his own firm, taking as associates Victor Thebaud, a Cleveland architect, and William Bradfield, an engineer with whom he had worked on Board projects as early as 1915. Although Turner's school designs through the 1920s were with the firm of Turner and Thebaud, Turner is generally credited with the major design responsibility.

During ten years in the direct employ of the Grand Rapids Board of Education – and another ten years frequently under contract to the Board – Henry H. Turner oversaw the move to school construction with increased emphasis on safety. (In addition to the national focus on fireproof construction after the 1908 Collinwood fire, local concern had heightened after Turner Street School burned to the ground in June of the same year.) Also during that time, school design expanded to accommodate broadened curricula as the early twentieth century gave rise to many progressive educational reforms. Among them were early-childhood education, vocational and manual arts training, focus on physical activity and overall student health, and inclusion of handicapped students. Accordingly, Turner designed schools that were among the city's first to include child-friendly kindergarten rooms; modern facilities for sewing, cooking and construction activities; gymnasias, shower facilities and rooms for school nurses; and facilities for physically and mentally disabled students. His designs also accommodated new theory regarding schools as neighborhood focal points for social and learning opportunities, with provision for social centers (the school gymnasium in most cases), public library branches and separate entrances for non-school-hours building use by the public.

Over twenty years' time, Turner's Grand Rapids Public Schools designs display a progression from basic additions for two existing buildings in 1914, to Franklin and Lexington elementary schools in 1915 – the first new schools built from his designs, clean-lined structures with minimal ornament. Fourteen years later, Aberdeen and Eastern elementary schools displayed mastery of decorative use of the buildings' structural material complemented by distinctive applied terra cotta ornament to enhance each building's individual character.

These last two buildings were of brick and featured rounded blind arches – some infilled with a variety of masonry bond patterns and others forming a repeated relief on windowless expanses – and entrances delineated by series of recessed brick arches as major decorative elements. By 1929, these features were

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well-established Turner signatures. His use of them garnered wide recognition as early as his 1922 design for Lafayette Elementary School (now known as Vandenberg). The school was cited in an article in *The American Architect* for its sparing use of terra cotta in conjunction with brickwork of carefully selected colors in well placed patterns. The writer of the article concluded the design "...appeals to all lovers of fine brickwork" (as would many Turner designs to follow).

In an essay Turner wrote for a 1927 *Grand Rapids Teachers' Club Bulletin*, he espoused the ideal of beauty as the heritage of every child, that "...the American Public School should be good enough for the best child in the land..." Thus inspired, Turner made it his goal to provide artistically designed educational homes for children where they could experience freedom of expression, learn to appreciate beauty and search for truth, "the most lovely thing in the world." This was the legacy Henry H. Turner bequeathed to Grand Rapids Public Schools, a physical expression of the quest for truth and beauty.

Nor was his architectural legacy limited to Grand Rapids schools. As architectural consultant to the Board of Education in Muskegon, Michigan, in the 1920s, he designed several schools for that district as well. His designs also graced Western State Normal School (now Western Michigan University) in Kalamazoo: the Manual Arts Building, a state-of-the-art facility for teaching instructors of manual training, was completed in 1921, and a library completed in 1924 is a component of Old East Campus [National Register of Historic Places 1990 as Western State Normal School Historic District]. Turner also designed a school for the City of East Grand Rapids; built in 1933 in what was then East Paris Township, the school is now known as Breton Downs Elementary. Commercial buildings included the clean-lined, buff-brick Medical Arts Building, a 1925 office building in Grand Rapids. Also in Grand Rapids: the Deco 1933 American Laundry Building with a black marble base, expanses of glass, terra cotta piers, and aluminum spandrels; and the Tourist Building in Fulton Street Park (Veterans Memorial Park), of formal Georgian style in gray cut limestone, a WPA project built in 1935. In the early 1940s, Turner and his family returned to Cleveland, where he worked for the Austin Company, a pioneering design/build firm in systematized construction of industrial buildings, particularly those requiring large clear spans, such as modern aviation factories and sound stages.

Turner's Grand Rapids schools remain a fitting tribute and served the community well beyond his time there. After the 1929 openings of the Aberdeen and Eastern buildings, the Board of Education authorized no further construction until 1948, an addition to Alger School soon followed by a building boom of "ranch-style" schools. Extant Turner-designed schools embody the early twentieth century's growth and innovation through the architect's expression in terra cotta ornament upon brick. Some remain in use as schools. Others no longer in use deserve preservation as then-innovative structures designed by a craftsman who fulfilled the modern office of architect/planner, brought efficiency to the school building boom in the first third of that new century, and gave beautiful physical form to new educational philosophy.

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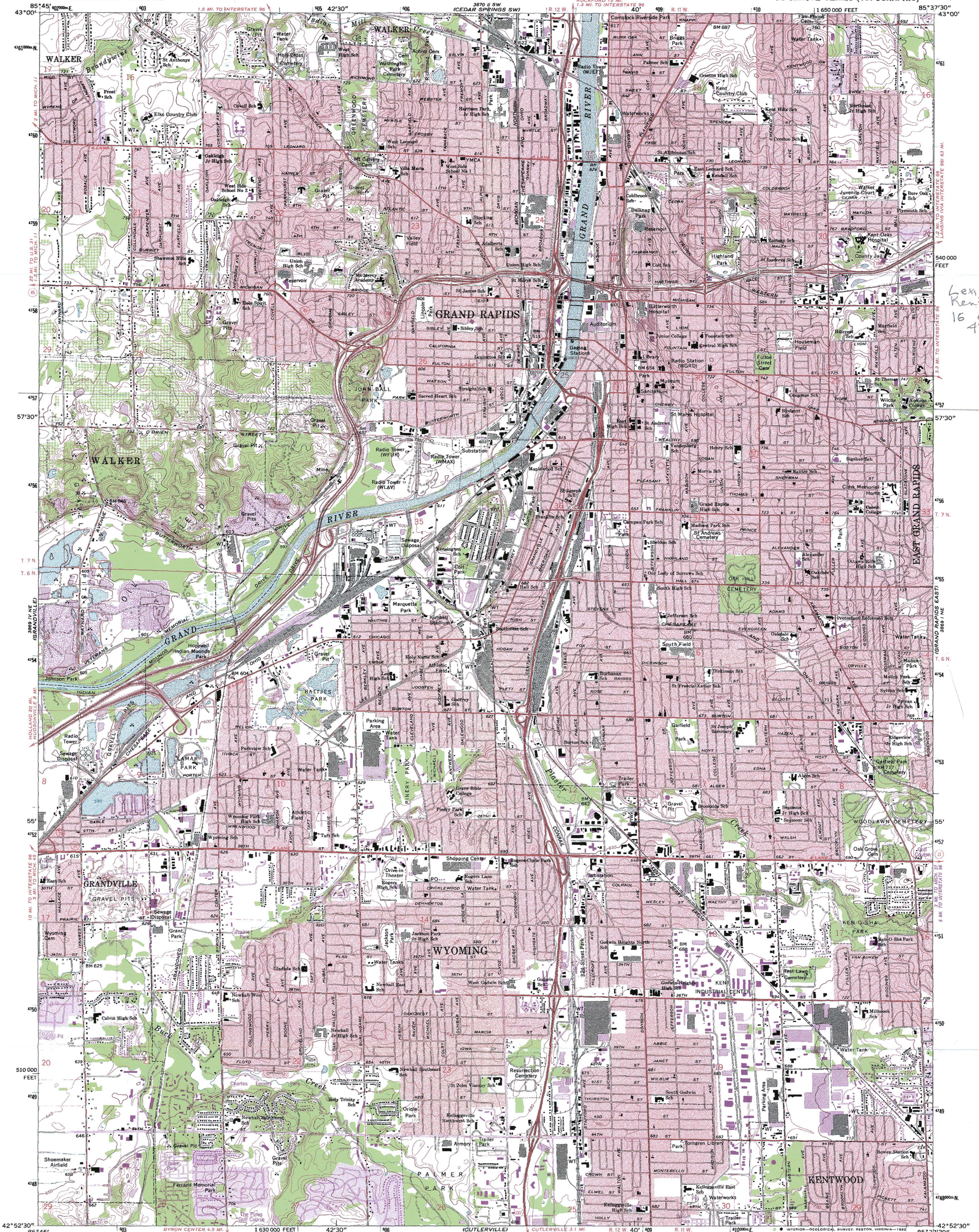
Section number      Figures      Page      1     

**Photographer:** Grace A.M. Smith

**Date Photographed:** November 29, 2011 (Photos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 18), September 5, 2012 (Photos 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17)

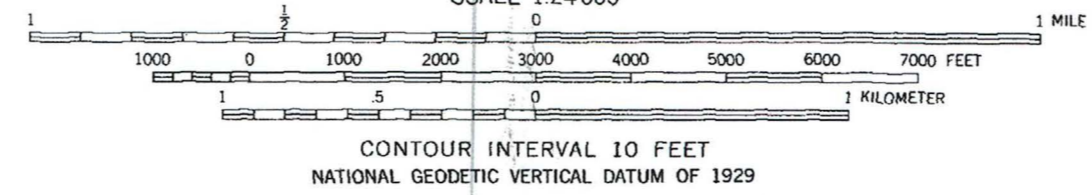
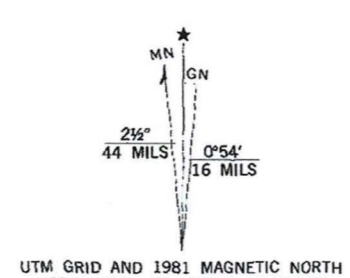
**Location of Original Digital Files:** 200 E. Division St., Rockford, MI 49341

- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0001 East elevation, camera facing west
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0002 View of southeast corner, camera facing northwest
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0003 View of southwest corner, camera facing northeast
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0004 West elevation, camera facing east
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0005 View of northwest corner, camera facing southeast
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0006 North elevation, camera facing south
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0007 East entry façade, camera facing west
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0008 First floor corridor, camera facing east
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0009 Second floor corridor, camera facing west
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0010 Entry stairwell at west entrance, view from the first floor to the landing between first and ground floors, camera facing west
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0011 Entry stairwell at east entrance, view from the first floor to the landing between first and ground floors, camera facing east
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0012 Stairwell between first and second floor
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0013 Windows in stairwell between ground and first floor
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0014 Typical classroom, first floor
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0015 Wood door between classroom and adjoining workroom
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0016 Ground floor gymnasium
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0017 Ground floor classroom, wood floor
- MI\_Kent County\_Lexington School\_0018 Typical classroom window stool



Lexington School  
Kent Co, MI  
16 607290  
4757530

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with State of Michigan agencies  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1967  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
move the projection lines 1 meter north and  
1 meter east as shown by dashed corner ticks



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ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty — Light-duty  
Medium-duty — Unimproved dirt  
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

GRAND RAPIDS WEST, MICH.  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Lexington School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Kent

DATE RECEIVED: 7/19/13      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/19/13  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/03/13      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/04/13  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000667

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT       RETURN       REJECT      9.4.13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

Certified Local Government  
National Register Nomination Review Report

Michigan State Housing Development Authority  
State Historic Preservation Office



Name of Property: Lexington School  
Address: 45 Lexington, NW, Grand Rapids  
Owner: Bruce Michael, G. R. School Lofts, LLC, 3270 Coolidge Highway, Berkley, MI 48072  
Date completed nomination approved by the SHPO: March 13, 2013

\*\*\*\*\*  
The CLG agrees with the SHPO to expedite the review period for this nomination.

YES \_\_\_\_\_ (date of agreement) \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Emily C. [Signature] 4/3/13  
Signature of CLG Commission Chairperson Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Elected Chief Official Date

\*\*\*\*\*

Date(s) of commission meeting(s) when nomination was reviewed: April 3, 2013

Date of written notice to property owner of commission meeting: March 26, 2013

The CLG provided the following opportunities for public participation in the review of this nomination: Written comment Accepted at any time Before April 3, 2013 meeting.  
Public comment accepted at April 3, 2013 meeting was accepted.

Were any written comments received by the CLG? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X  
(Please submit copies with this report.)

Was the nomination form distributed to CLG Commission members? YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_

Was a site visit made to the property by CLG Commission members? YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, when? Week of March 25<sup>th</sup>

Did the CLG seek assistance of the Michigan Historical Center in evaluating the eligibility of this property for the National Register? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X

VERIFICATION of Professional Qualifications of Commission in accordance with 36 CFR 61, Appendix 1, of Michigan's Certified Local Government Program.

AFFIX  
Mayor's Signature  
[Signature]  
Dept. of Law

List those commission members who meet the 36 CFR 61 qualifications required to review this type of resource.

Commission Member

Professional Qualifications

1. Heather Edwards MS-HP Ball State
2. Emily Uibbing BFA H.P. & Arch. History
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. <sup>staff</sup> Rhonda Baker Public History and 15+ years experience

Was an outside consultant used? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X

If yes, provide the name and list the 36 CFR 61 qualifications the person meets:

The CLG Commission finds that the property meets the following national register criteria of significance: Criteria A and C - Architecture and Education

The CLG Commission finds that the property meets the national register standards of integrity.  
YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation of CLG Commission:

APPROVAL X

DENIAL \_\_\_\_\_ (specify reasons on a separate sheet of paper)

Signature of Chief Elected Official

Date

Date of transmittal of this report to MHC/SHPO \_\_\_\_\_

Date of receipt of this report by MHC/SHPO \_\_\_\_\_

AFFIX  
Mayor's Signature

[Signature]  
Dept. of Law

## Michigan's Certified Local Government Program

### Basic Requirement 4-B

A CLG has the responsibility to participate directly in the national Historic Preservation program by reviewing and making recommendations on nominations to the National Register of Historic Places of non-federal properties. A CLG may also comment on the nomination of federal properties, but this is not required. Responsibility for nominating properties remains with the SHPO, but participation at the local level shall include the following steps:

1. Before a property within the jurisdiction of the CLG may be considered by the SHPO for nomination to the National Register, the SHPO shall conduct its official notification process 60-120 days before the State Historic Preservation Review Board meeting at which the property will be reviewed. Among others, the commission, the chief elected official of the local government, and the property owner shall be notified by the SHPO.
2. The commission, after reasonable opportunity for public comment, shall prepare a report as to whether or not the property, in its opinion, meets the selection criteria for the National Register. "Opportunity for public comment" shall include a review of the nomination at a regularly scheduled or special commission meeting and mailing of a written notice to the property owner providing the date, time, and location of the commission meeting. The commission's report need not be elaborate but must define which of the four National Register selection criteria are met by the property and whether or not the property meets the Register's standards of integrity. It is necessary to have qualified reviewers according to the type of resource that is being nominated, as described under Basic Requirement #2B-4.
3. Within 60 days of receipt of the nomination, the chief elected official shall mail to both the SHPO and the property owner the report of the commission and his/her own recommendation.
4. If both the commission and the chief elected official recommend that a property not be nominated, the SHPO shall take no further action.
5. An appeal may be filed with the SHPO within 30 days. If an appeal is filed, the SHPO may proceed with the National Register process. The commission report and the appeal shall be sent to the National Register with the nomination.
6. All official owner notification responsibilities will remain with the SHPO.
7. The state may expedite the CLG's participation in the nomination process, including shortening the 60-day commenting period, with the concurrence of the CLG as long as the owner notification and National Register procedures have been met. The SHPO and the CLG may agree to expedite CLG participation with respect to a particular nomination or may agree to expedite concurrence on all nominations. This process may be initiated by the SHPO or the CLG and will be described in an amendment to the Certification Agreement.



STATE OF MICHIGAN

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

SCOTT WOOSLEY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



June 17, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull, Interim Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is a national register nomination form for the Lexington School in Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan. This property is being submitted for listing in the national register. Grand Rapids is a Certified Local Government. We enclose the National Register Nomination Review Report form showing the city's review of this nomination. No other written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to the submission of the nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, national register coordinator, by phone at 517/335-2719 or email at [christensenr@michigan.gov](mailto:christensenr@michigan.gov).

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway  
State Historic Preservation Officer