

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 5 1985  
date entered JAN 9 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Bellevue High School

and/or common Center Street School

2. Location

street & number Washington and Center Streets n/a not for publication

city, town Bellevue n/a vicinity of

state Kentucky code county Campbell code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>NA</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>NA</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Bellevue

street & number 616 Poplar Street

city, town Bellevue n/a vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Campbell County Courthouse

street & number Fourth and York Streets

city, town Newport state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1978-1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

### 7. Description

The old Bellevue High School, located at the southwest corner of Washington and Center Streets in Bellevue, is a stylistic and unusually well-preserved public school building dating from 1905. (Photos 1, 2.) The building is rectangular and symmetrical in form, and consists of three stories above a raised basement. It is sited in the center of a small, level lot, bounded on the south by Smith Alley, and on the west by a block of residential buildings. (Map 1.) A narrow playground wraps around all four elevations. The main entrance of the school building faces Center St., with secondary entrances on the east and west elevations. (Photos 1, 6, 7.) The school's property line is delineated by a low concrete retaining wall.

The city of Bellevue, Kentucky (1980 population: 7000) is located opposite Cincinnati on the south bank of the Ohio River. Like its neighbor cities- Dayton, Newport, Covington and Ludlow- Bellevue possesses a rich inventory of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture. A representative survey of Bellevue's historic resources, conducted during 1978-1979, uncovered numerous structures of architectural significance. The Sacred Heart Catholic Church, located at Taylor and Divison Streets, is listed on the National Register.

The old Bellevue High School is located in the southern portion of the city's core area, which was developed in stages from approximately 1870 to 1910. Since the blocks surrounding the school are modest in character, with most buildings no higher than two or two and a half stories, the school building dominates the streetscape. (Map 2; Photo 3.) Furthermore, its height and monumentality make it one of the landmarks of the central portion of Bellevue. Due to the gradual rise in elevation in the southern portion of the neighborhood, the school building is visible for several blocks to the east; a particularly good view is available from the C & O railroad bridge to the south. (Photo 3.)

The massing of the old Bellevue High School building consists of a central block, nine bays wide, flanked by wider, slightly projecting twin wings four bays in width. The rear of the building, facing the alley, is a flat plane with no projections. (Photos 1 and 4.)

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1905-07; 1937      **Builder/Architect** W. P. Bausmith; E. C. & G. T. Landberg

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

8. Significance

The old Bellevue High School is the oldest unaltered public building in the city of Bellevue, and is one of several important and stylistic early-twentieth century school buildings in the Northern Kentucky area. The old High School remains in remarkably original condition, with nearly all of its architectural features intact, including exterior stonework and fenestration, and interior woodwork and gymnasium. The school building is associated with the prominent Northern Kentucky architecture firms of Bausmith and Weber and E. C. and G. T. Landberg. In addition, the School is a landmark in the truest sense of the word, since its size and monumentality, as well as its location on a slight rise of ground make it one of the most visually prominent buildings in the city.

The old High School was built to accommodate Bellevue's burgeoning school enrollment at the turn of the century, which resulted from the city's remarkable growth following its designation as a fourth-class city in 1884. In 1904 the decision was made by the Bellevue Board of Education to construct a new secondary school. In March of 1905, a site at the southwest corner of Wadshington and Center Sts. was chosen. The lot was subsequently purchased from local building materials magnate and real estate developer Harry Spinks for \$5400. Plans were soon drawn up for a new schoolhouse, projected to cost \$30,000. The building would be modern in every respect, since it would contain the conveniences of central heat, electric light and indoor plumbing that, according to old news accounts, were still missing from the city's older facilities. A noteworthy feature of the new school would be its third-floor auditorium, which would be available for public and private entertainments as well as school functions. The Superintendent of Schools expressed the hope that the new building would thus become the social center of the community, and a source of pride for city residents. The new school would also represent educational progress. It would have a new, expanded four-year curriculum, supplanting the three-year program currently in use. According to the Kentucky Post of January 11, 1905, this new course of study "was designed to bring the Bellevue schools to a high standard so as to enable graduates to enter universities and

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 1 acre

Quadrangle name Newport

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	7	1	7	8	4	0	4	3	3	0	9	5	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county n/a code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Warminski, Historic Surveyor

organization City of Bellevue

date August 1985

street & number 616 Poplar Street

telephone (606) 431-8869

city or town Bellevue

state Kentucky

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*David L. Morgan*

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date November 26, 1985

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*J. Thomas Byers*  
National Register

date 1-9-86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Bellevue High School

Continuation sheet Campbell Co., KY

Item number 7

Page 2

The building is eclectic in design, basically Renaissance Revival but also displaying elements common to other turn-of-the-century styles. It has a distinct horizontal emphasis, which is further enhanced by a projecting belt course (three bricks wide) dividing the first and second stories, as well as broad overhanging eaves borrowed from the Craftsman vocabulary. Although the body of the building exhibits a restrained classicism, its complex, steeply pitched gray slate roof recalls the Romanesque Revival. (Photo 5.) The main section of the roof follows the truncated hip form, with a multiplicity of dormers; subordinate hipped sections are to be found over the wings. Wall dormers, with stone copings and modified Palladian windows, rise from the central pavilion as well as the east and west entrances. (Photos 1 and 6.) These are flanked by smaller roof dormers on either side. The roof's height and complexity are not fully revealed from the street below, and are best appreciated from a vantage point a block or two away.

The north, east and west elevations of the old Bellevue High School are faced with a smooth-surface, unpainted hard red brick, laid in common bond. On the rear, southern elevation, a cheaper soft brick is used, and the fired brick "wraps" around the edges of this wall in a "Quoin"-like fashion. (Photo 10.) In like fashion, the foundation walls of the north, east and west elevations are built of smooth sandstone blocks, with a beveled water table above. Common fieldstone, however, is utilized on the rear foundation wall. (Photo 11.) This combination of materials is highly unusual, and may be unique in the area.

The windows of the school building have retained their original two-over-two light sash. Round-headed windows, with segmental brick arches, are utilized for decorative effect on the second and third stories of the facade, as well as in the dormers. (Photos 1 and 6.) Large round-topped windows are also centered above the east and west entrances. (Photo 6.) Since the windows are slightly recessed, there are no lintels; sills are simple sandstone blocks that appear continuous but are actually divided.

The most prominent decorative feature of the exterior is its main entry, which is contained in the main pavilion facing Center St. (Photos 1, 8.) It is distinguished by a monumental arch of large sandstone blocks. A large scrolled keystone is centered over the doorway; engaged, chamfered colonnettes flank the outer edges. The date "1905" is incised in a pair of cartouches ("19" and "05")

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Bellevue High School

Continuation sheet Campbell County, KY

Item number 7

Page 3

to the left and right of the doorway. A projecting entablature supports a recessed stone panel inscribed with the legend "Bellevue School". Although this originally read "Bellevue High School", the word "High" has been obliterated. (Photo 15.)

The main doorway is recessed in a vestibule and approached by a short flight of stone steps. The doorway is surmounted by a huge, semicircular fanlight with simple tracery, and flanked by sidelights. The original double wooden doors, with raised panels and rectangular glass panes, are still in use. (Photo 9.) The east and west entrances feature door surrounds of radiating stone voussoirs. (Photos 6, 7.)

Alterations to the school's exterior have been minimal. In fact, a 1923 photo of the school published in the Pictorial and Industrial Review of Northern Kentucky looks remarkably like a contemporary view. (See photo.) A fire escape has been added to the rear elevation, and a window converted to a door for access. In the Northwest corner of the building, a basement window was converted into an entrance, and an enclosed flight of steps added. (Photo 12). The doorway on the east elevation has been replaced by an incompatible metal door, and the sidelights filled in with concrete blocks. (Photo 6.) The old photo shows a crenellated stone wall surrounding the schoolyard, but that has since been replaced by the existing concrete wall.

The interior plan of the school's first and second floors features a broad central hallway that runs the length of the building, lined with classrooms on both sides. (Photo 13.) Stairwells, providing access to the upper floors, are located at opposite ends of this hall. These staircases date from a 1937 remodeling and are minimal. (Photo 14.) An original tin ceiling, with rectangular pattern, can be found in the second-floor hallway.

Classrooms are rectangular in shape and functional in design. Nonetheless, they are distinguished by their high ceilings and tall windows, which provide an abundance of natural light. Nearly all classrooms retain their original pine millwork, doors, cupboards, and operable transoms. Many also feature original ceiling-mounted electric "school" light fixtures, with milk-glass globes.

The most unusual interior feature of the old Bellevue High School is its third-floor auditorium/gymnasium, which utilizes a

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Bellevue High School

Continuation sheet Campbell Co., KY

Item number 7

Page 4

unique design all the more remarkable for its relatively small size. It is distinguished by a dramatic vaulted ceiling of smooth plaster, supported by a pair of massive pine arches featuring a "cutwork" pattern. (Photo 15.) The walls of the gymnasium are clad in tongue and groove pine siding which retains its original finish; the floor is hardwood. The room is illuminated by dormer windows set deeply into the north wall; a small projecting stage is located opposite. Classrooms located on either side have passageways leading into the backstage area of the auditorium/gymnasium.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
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date entered

Bellevue High School

Continuation sheet Campbell County, Kentucky Item number 8

Page 2

colleges without examination."

The old Bellevue High School is one of the few extant Cincinnati-area buildings designed by architect W. P. Bausmith, a Covington resident who maintained his office in Cincinnati. So far, only the Gerke Building at 123 E. Sixth St. in Cincinnati, and Covington's Colonial Apartments (built as the Greek Revival Wesley Hamilton Mansion; remodeled 1903 by Bausmith) are known to be his work. During the early 1900's Bausmith worked in conjunction with C. C. Weber, who later went into partnership with his brother Edward. Since newspaper accounts credit Bausmith with the design of the Bellevue High School, it is not known what part, if any, was played by Weber. However, the Weber Brothers firm would gain considerable notoriety later in the century as the designers of a number of significant buildings.

As mentioned previously, the School has been spared the excesses of modernization suffered by many other vintage school buildings. The most substantial renovation of the structure occurred in 1937, when the east and west stairwells were rebuilt using metal construction to conform with fire codes. The Landberg Brothers firm, architects of the remodeling, were responsible for a number of significant public and semi-public buildings of the 1920's and 1930's. Other extant works of the Newport-based firm include the Dayton High School (1924-25), which was nominated to the Register in the spring of 1985. The Landbergs were also responsible for the Lincoln-Grant School on Greenup St. in Covington, as well as the superb Egyptian-Moderne Scottish Rite Temple on Madison Ave. in the same city. Dayton's Masonic Temple, located on Sixth Ave., is also attributed to the firm.

Although built as a high school, the School has served the needs of a wide spectrum of students during its eighty-year history. It continued to be used as a high school until the present facility was completed in 1933. At this time, it was converted to a grade school and its official name changed to the "Center Street School". It served this function until a new elementary school was built in the 1960's, and then used briefly as a junior high. In 1970, the Board closed the school as a cost-cutting measure, and sold the building to the city of Bellevue. The old High School was then



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Bellevue High School

Continuation sheet Campbell Co., Ky.

Item number 8

Page 3

converted into a recreation/community center, housing a wide range of activities for city residents. It will continue to serve in this capacity until October of 1985. At that time, the building will be sold to a developer and converted to housing for the elderly, utilizing the preservation tax incentives. This adaptive re-use project will preserve a landmark structure while providing needed housing for Bellevue's sizeable elderly population. The new use of the building will also maintain its tradition of service to the community.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Bellevue High School  
Continuation sheet Campbell Co., KY

Item number 9

Page 2

9. Bibliography

Dayton High School National Register nomination form. Prepared by Walter E. Langsam, Historic Surveyor, City of Covington, Kentucky.

The following editions of the Kentucky Post  
April 18, 1903; July 16, 1904; January 11, 1905; March 11 and 17, 1905; November 11, 1905.

Pictorial and Industrial Review of Northern Kentucky. Published by the Fennell Company, Newport. 1923.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Bellevue, Kentucky, 1886, 1894, 1910. Sanborn Map Company, New York.

Views in Cincinnati and the Ohio Valley. Cincinnati: 1910.

Williams' Bellevue Directories and Cincinnati Business Directories, 1904-1905 and 1910.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered

Bellevue High School

Continuation sheet Campbell Co., KY

Item number 10

Page 2

10. Legal Description

This property comprises all of Lots 161, 162 and 163, Williamson's Addition.

Beginning at a point in the west right-of-way line of Washington Ave., this point being the southwest intersection of said avenue and Center St., and also the northeast corner of Lot 161; then proceeding south along the west right-of-way line of Washington Ave. 120 feet to the intersection of said street and Smith Alley, this point being the southeast corner of Lot 161; then west along the north right-of-way line of Smith Alley 169.14 feet (along the south boundary lines of Lots 161, 162, and 163) to the southwest corner of Lot 163; then proceeding north along the west boundary of Lot 163 to the northwest corner of said lot, this point being the intersection of Lot 163 with the south right-of-way line of Center St.; then east 169.14 feet along the south right-of-way line of Center St. (this being the north boundary line of Lots 161, 162, and 163) to the place of beginning.



POPLAR

R-1JU

CHURCH

ALLEY

DIVISION

STREET

SCHOOL

ALLEY

CENTER

SMITH

AVENUE

ALLEY

AVENUE

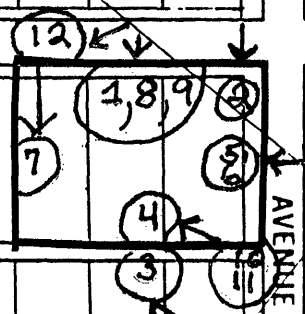
WALNUT

STREET

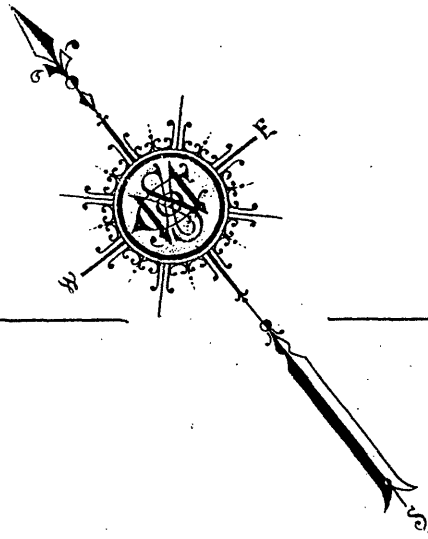
R-1JU

AND

ALLEY



Source:  
 City of Bellevue  
 Zoning Map  
 Map #1: PhotoKey



WASHINGTON

WAGON BRIDGE

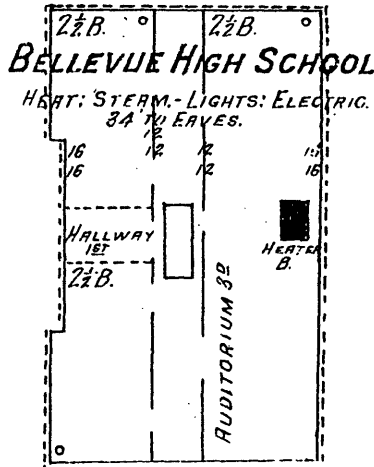
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4" W PIPE

D.H. 400

6" W PIPE

342



15'

D.H. 343

4" W PIPE

337 10

335 12

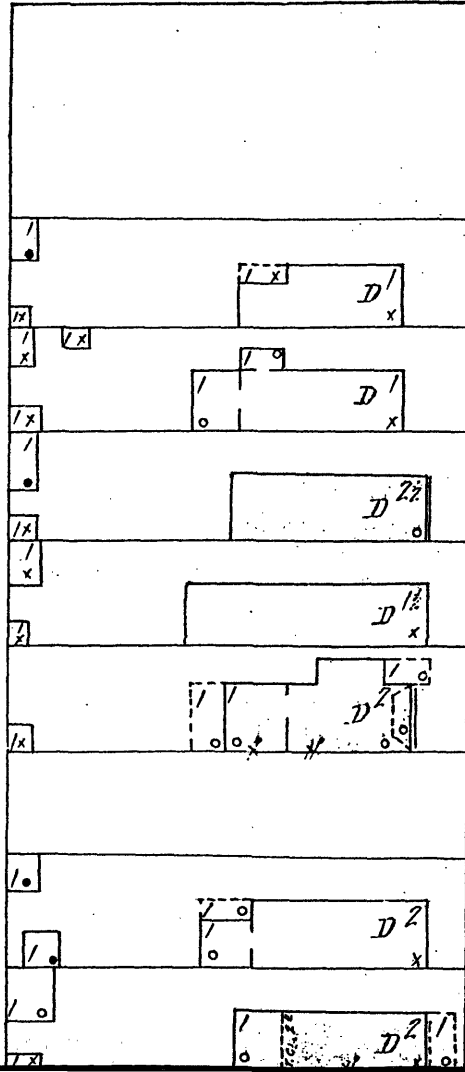
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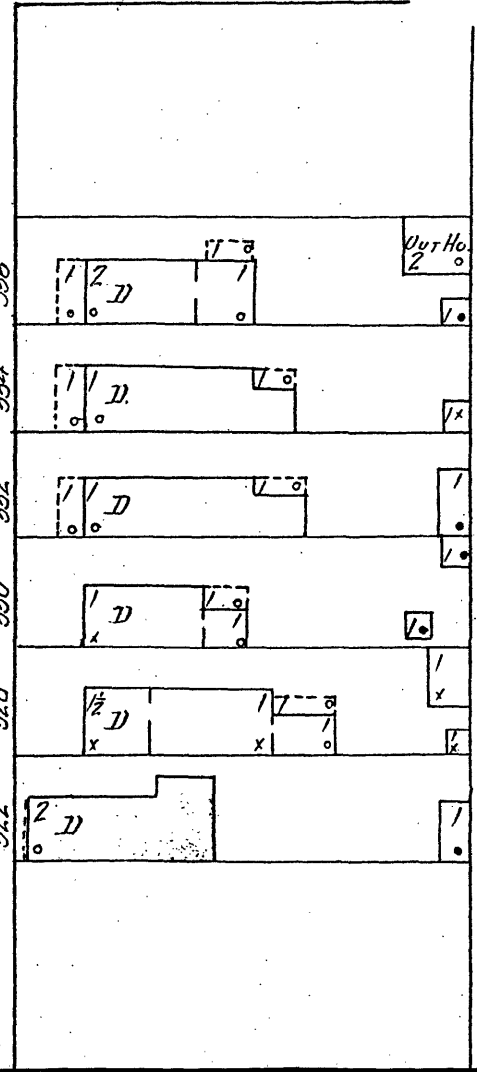
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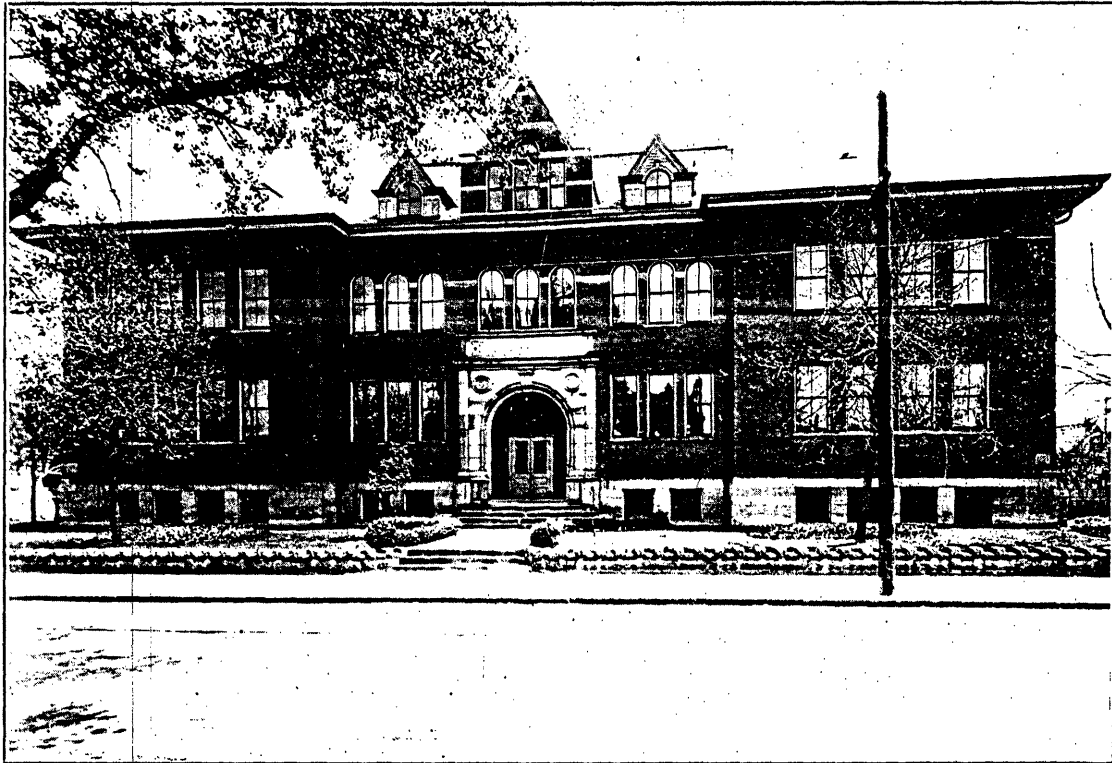
328

322



Map #2  
 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Bellevue  
 (1910)

BELLEVUE, KENTUCKY



**BELLEVUE HIGH SCHOOL**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

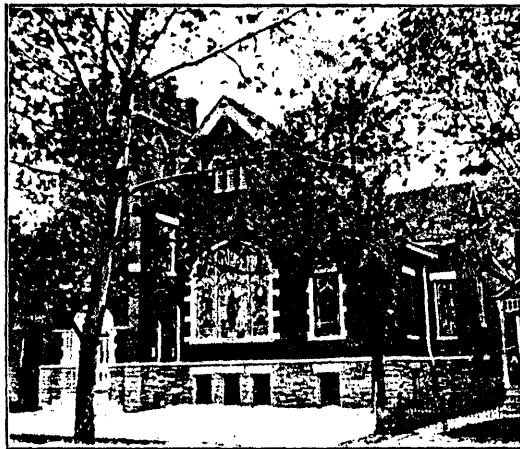
VAUGH MILLS, Superintendent  
GEO. GILLIGAN, Principal

CHAS. A. PATZOLD  
W. A. MANSER

JOHN R. GRAHAM  
C. M. STILL

STANLEY GORANFLO, Secretary  
HARRY F. SHAEFER, Treasurer

M. K. WILLIAMS  
R. J. MILES



**CALVARY M. E. CHURCH**

REV. JNO. L. TILTON, Pastor

Source:  
Pictorial and Industrial Review of Northern Kentucky

(1923)