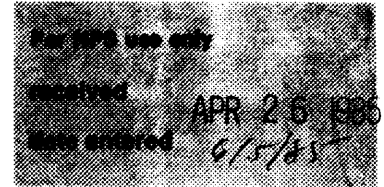


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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



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Downtown South Bend

Central High School & Boys Vocational School OWNER: Central Associates Limited
115 North St. James Court P.O. Box 8580
141-55313-598 Canton, Ohio 44718
d. 1911-1913 (#35) and c. 1918 & 1928 (#35a) ATTENTION: Mr. Gerald P. Gulling
General Partner

Description:

Photo #65-68; Building #35, 35a

Central High School occupies approximately half a block between Washington and Colfax Streets, facing St. James Court to the east with William Street to the rear.

The two and three story building above a raised foundation is an eclectic style typical of schools after the turn of the century. The foundation is faced with rusticated limestone and the upper floors are red brick with limestone trim.

The main entrance, located on St. James Court, is located in a center projecting pavilion and is three stories tall. The raised doorway is surrounded by limestone trim that extends to include the large, stained glass stairwell window located over the door. Limestone panels over the doorway include a center panel inscribed with "South Bend High School," flanked by panels containing a scroll. Secondary entrances located in the northeast and southeast quadrant are also raised and have limestone surrounds with the entablatures containing panels illustrating the sciences. The multi-panel windows of the school building are clustered together in groups of threes and fours, and divided by pilasters with limestone capitals. Limestone spandrels separate the first and second floor windows.

Ornamentation on the building is minimal and consists mainly of the limestone capitals and connecting string course, door surrounds and crenelated roofline. Located on the western end of the north and south walls and the main entrance are mosaic panels.

Located behind the main building on the north end is the two-story, irregular plan Boys Vocational School (#35a). The Vocational Building is a utilitarian building of dark red brick with limestone capitals surmounting the pilasters between each window, a limestone string course between the first and second stories, and a limestone door surround on the main entrance located on the west side of the building. The windows are metal factory sash.

Just north of the Vocational Building and west of the school is the one-story, rectangular plan, red brick Boiler House. It is a simply detailed, flat-roofed structure with a tall, round, concrete chimney attached to it.

Significance:

The site of Central High School has been associated with education since 1845 with the completion of the County Seminary built on the land donated by Alexis Coquillard. The County Seminary was purchased by the city in 1851, and the school continued without

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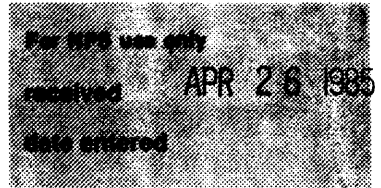
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interruption under city management. Central High School, the third high school in this location, was designed by architect William B. Ittner and built between 1911 and 1913. The school, which cost \$625,000, was to accommodate 1,500 students in 50 classrooms with 12 laboratories. Also included in the new school were a gymnasium, a large assembly hall, and a swimming pool.

The interior of Central High School remains intact with classrooms that still contain oak bookcases, laboratory tables, and storage shelves. In addition, the auditorium and inner light courts, along with "Our Little Theater," are still extant.

"Our Little Theater", which was completed in 1915 under the direction of drama teacher Gena Thompson, was reportedly a unique feature for a high school during the early 1900's. It seated 200, had a seven foot stage, and was used for smaller productions than those held in the auditorium.

Central High School, originally called South Bend High School, was the city's only high school until 1929. The school was closed as a high school in 1970, but the building has remained in partial use with special educational programs.

Behind the main high school building is a smaller vocational building which, in later years, served for part of Central's vocational educational program. The vocational building was originally built to comply with a 1913 state law requiring vocational education programs. In 1918, South Bend built a small one-story machine shop and foundry building of factory construction behind the high school as a beginning of South Bend's vocational education program for boys. In 1928, the small machine shop was incorporated into a much larger building that served as the Boys' Vocational School. The building consisted of machine shops, automobile repair shops, and printing shops on the first floor, and classrooms on the second floor.

In 1982, Central High School and its campus were designated as a local landmark.

UTM Reference: 16/562040/4613970

Acreage: 4.02 acres

Legal:

BOL 15
Parcel #18-1023-0977