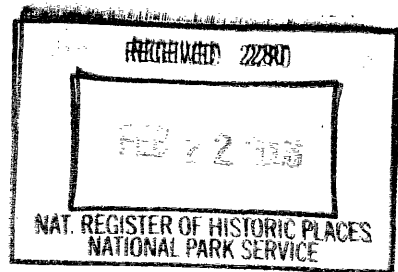


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Russell School

other names/site number FA-NS--746

2. Location

street & number 201 West Fifth Street not for publication N/A

city or town Lexington vicinity N/A

state Kentucky code KY county Fayette code 067 zip code 40507

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David L. Morgan

Signature of certifying official
David L. Morgan, SHPO and Executive Director, KHC

2-20-06

Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of certifying official / Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

4-5-06

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

Category of Property

Number of Resources within Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

(Do not count the number of previously listed resources above.)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Add more category and subcategory lines if needed)

Cat: EDUCATION/school

Sub: school

Current Functions (Add more category and subcategory lines if needed)

Cat: VACANT, NOT IN USE

Sub: NA

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Cat: MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

Sub:

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

roof OTHER/built-up asphalt, composite

walls Brick

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes)

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Areas of Significance

EDUCATION,
ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black

Period of Significance

1953-1956

Significant Dates

1954

Significant Person

NA
(enter only if Criterion B selected)

Cultural Affiliation

N / A
(enter only if Criterion D selected)

Architect/Builder

Wilson, John F. (Architect)
Forbes and Taylor (Contractors)

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository:

N / A

Russell School
Name of Property

Fayette County, Kentucky
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.4

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	720271	4214	575
Zone	Easting	Northing		
2				

3				
Zone	Easting	Northing		
4				

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Glen Payne / Asst. Director for Education and Communication

organization Center for Historic Architecture and Preservation date 2-10-2006

street & number 117 Pence Hall / Univ. of Kentucky telephone (859) 257-4629

city or town Lexington, KY state KY zip code 40506-0004

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Russell School Community Service Center, Inc. c/o Ty Sturdivant

street & number P.O. Box 11610 telephone (859) 233-4600 x 1270

city or town Lexington state KY zip code 40576

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. 470 *et seq.*). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

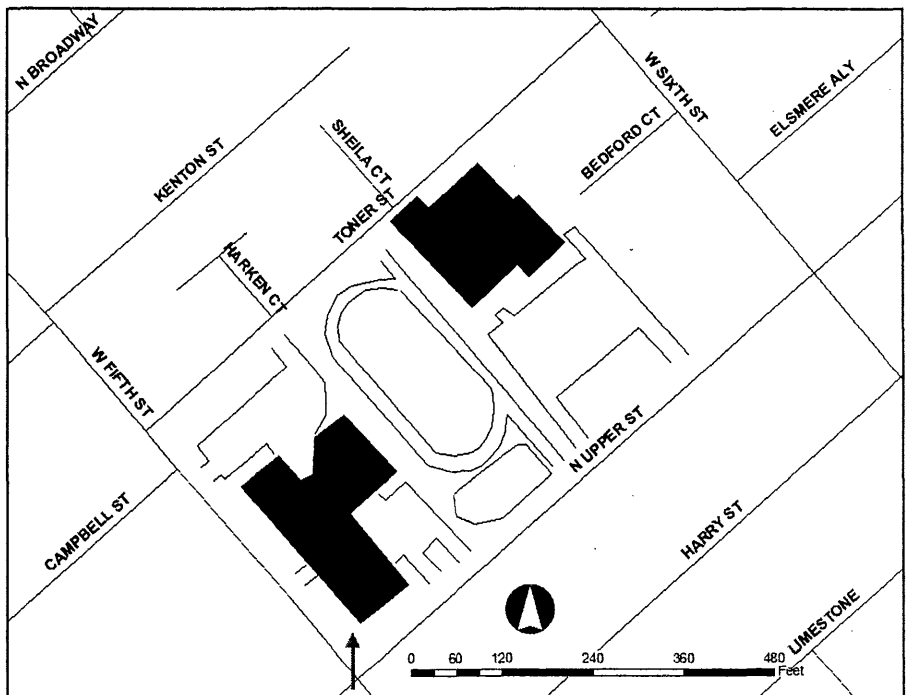
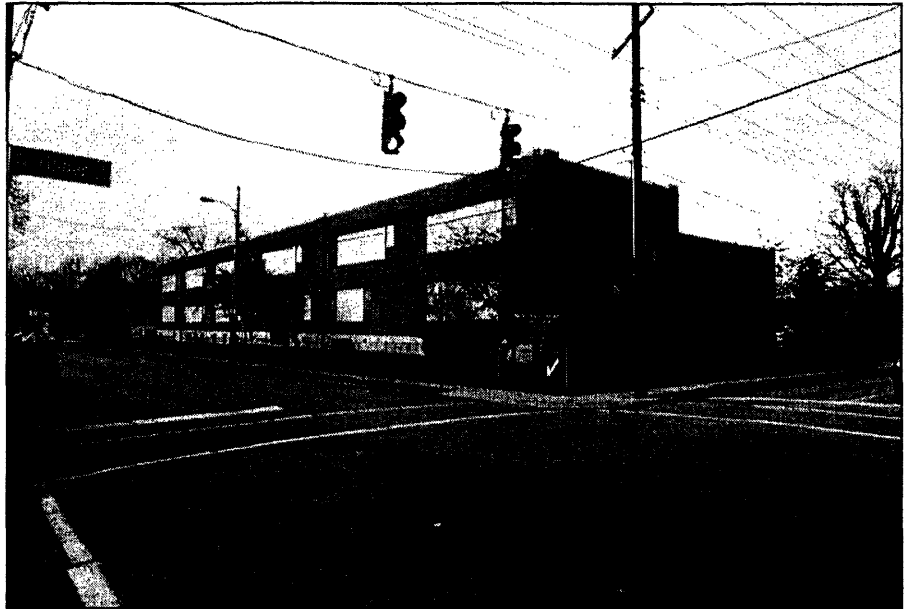
Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 1

Name: Russell School
Built: 1953
Architect: John F. Wilson
Builder: Forbes and Taylor Contractors

The Russell School (FA-NS-746) as seen from the intersection of Fifth and Upper Streets is a two story, six-bay brick structure on a poured concrete foundation. Integrated brick pilasters separate the bays. The Fifth Street entry bay is flanked by two bays to the south and three bays to the north. As constructed in 1953, the original façade was symmetrical. The northernmost bay was added after the original 1953 construction ca. 1960, as evidenced by comparing photographs of the building's 1954 opening day with subsequent photographs that pre-date the 1976 renovations. This addition was a response to changing community needs; in design, scale, and workmanship it simply copied the original.



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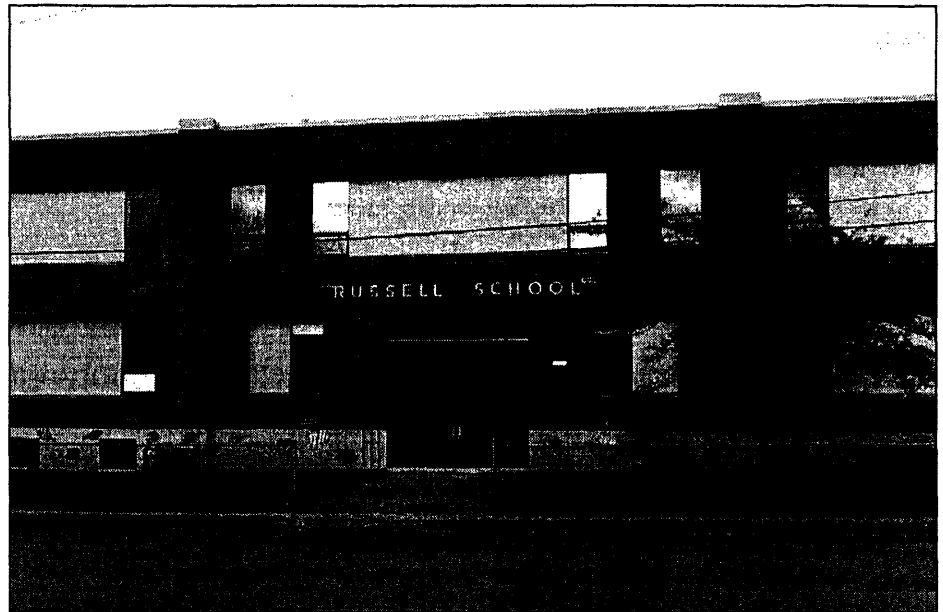
National Register of Historic Places

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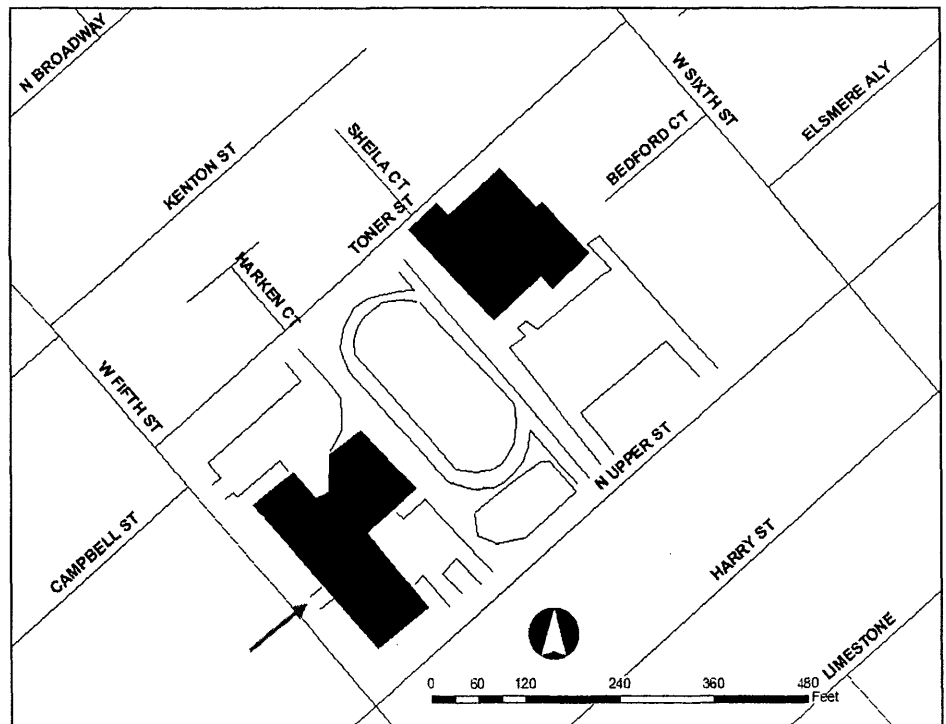
Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 2

The Fifth Street entrance bay has a doorway set in a brick opening with three setbacks stepping into the opening for the main doorway. The existing double doors are flush with the innermost brick setback and feature windowed areas on each side spanning the height of the door and a windowed area across the top. While the dimensions are unchanged from the original, this door configuration represents a modification as the original door was more deeply recessed in a bricked well (see Figure 2).



The windows have been modified from their original form. Originally they comprised eight metal-frame jalousie-type windows aligned horizontally across the lower portion of each opening with glass block completing the upper 2/3rds. A soldier course spans the top of each window piercing. The building has a flat roof. Along the roofline, there is a continuous cement cap. The bays are separated by integrated brick pilasters of the same patterning as the rest of the façade. The capitals of each pilaster extend above the roofline.



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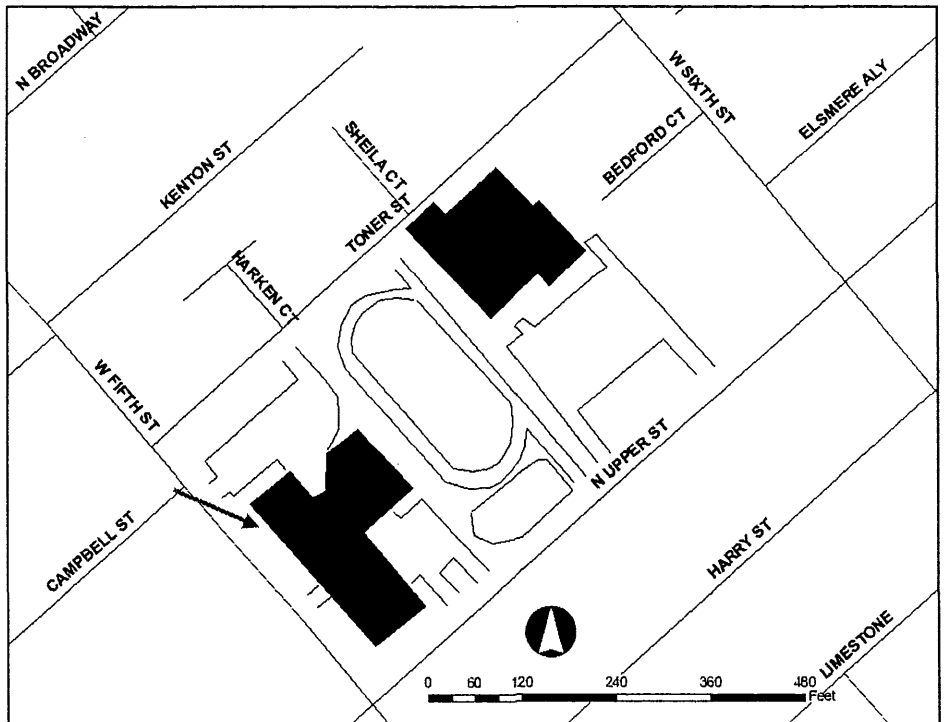
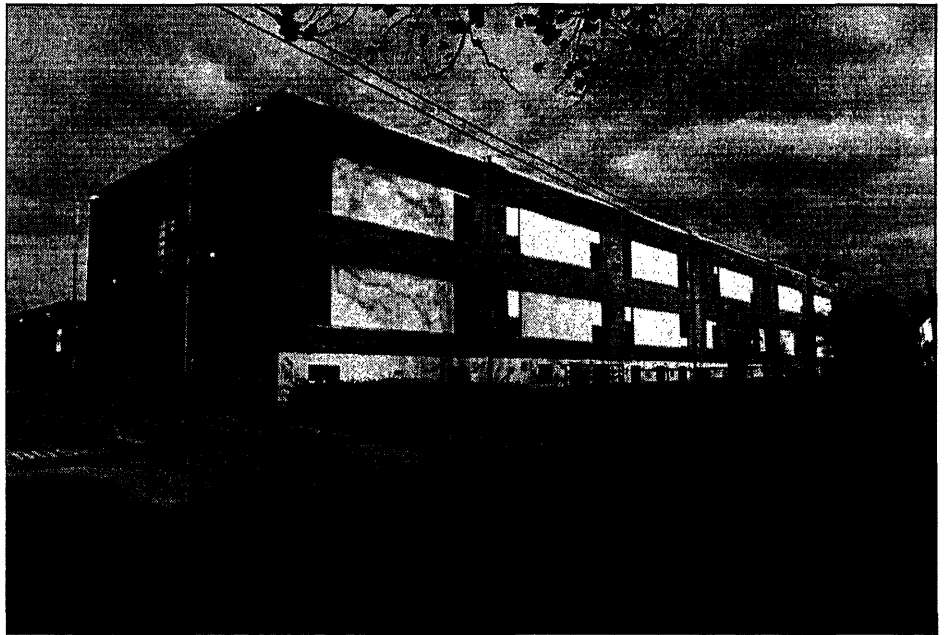
National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 3

As seen from the corner of Fifth and Campbell, the broad modern Fifth Street façade of the Russell School building reflects the role it played as an educational institution in this predominantly African-American portion of Lexington. The pattern and dimensions of its fenestration broadcast the size and location of classrooms within, calling attention to this building's educational function.



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Continuation Sheet:

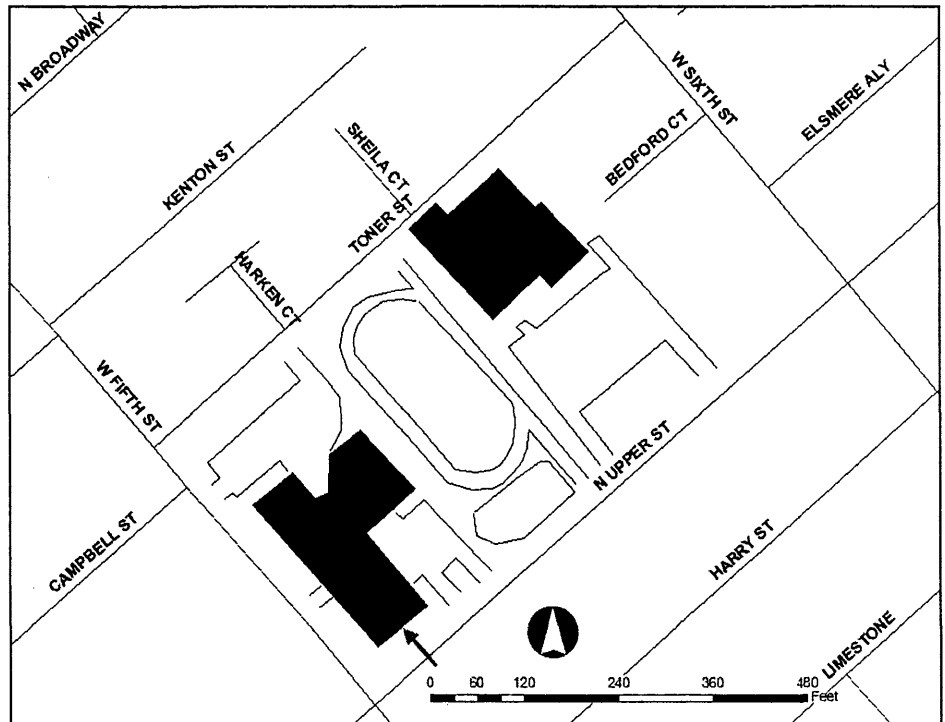
Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 4

The original portion of the 1953 building facing Upper Street is seen here from across Upper Street. It comprises two masses that have undergone only mild alteration. The mass to the south along Upper Street is higher in elevation; a single door serves as an entryway. Both windows on this mass are placed between the first and second floors in order to light interior stairwells. The lower of these windows has been enclosed by brick. The other is a metal framed jalousie-type window.



The lower mass of the 1953 building (i.e., to the north following Upper Street), enclosed an auditorium space. There is an entryway centered in this section with the same setback detail as on the Fifth Street entrance, but with two sets of double doors. These doors and windows are not flush with the brick, but rather are set back in a shallow well.



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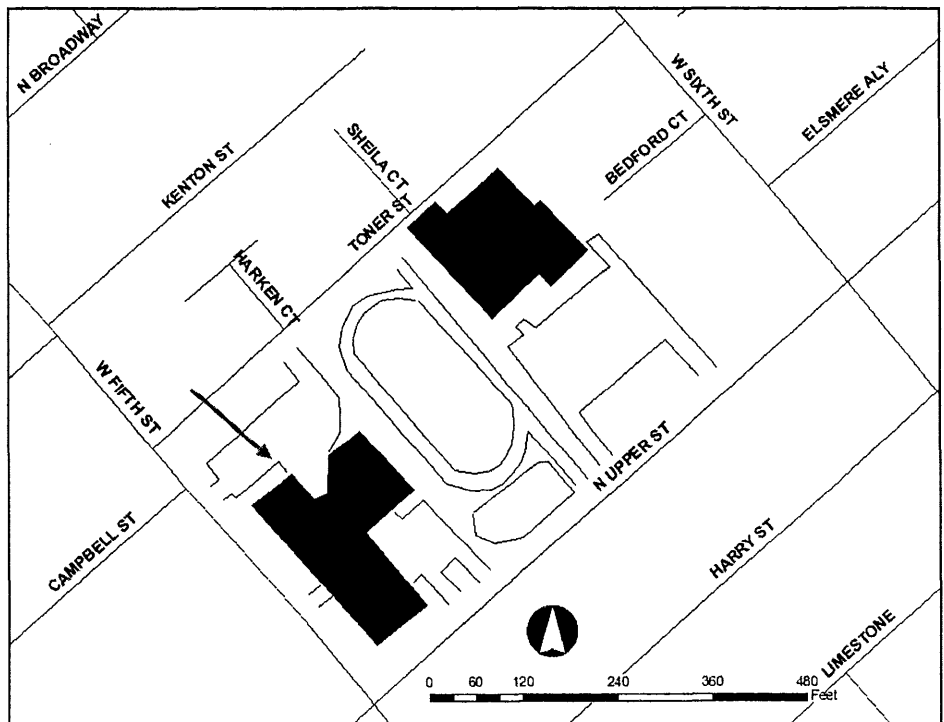
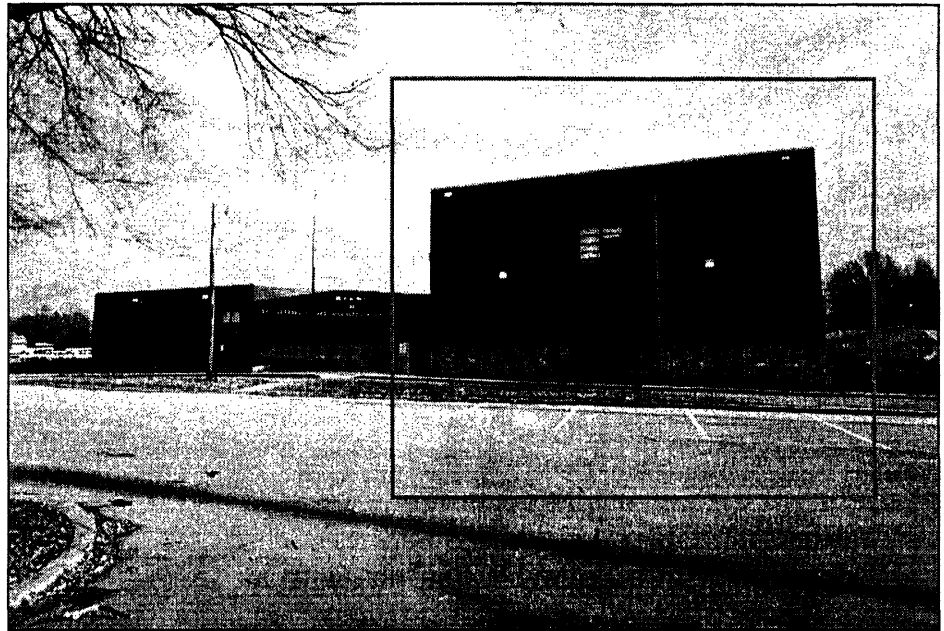
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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 5

This section of the building closest to Toner Street was added around 1960 to provide additional classroom space. There is a single window piercing and a secondary entry-way centered on this facade.



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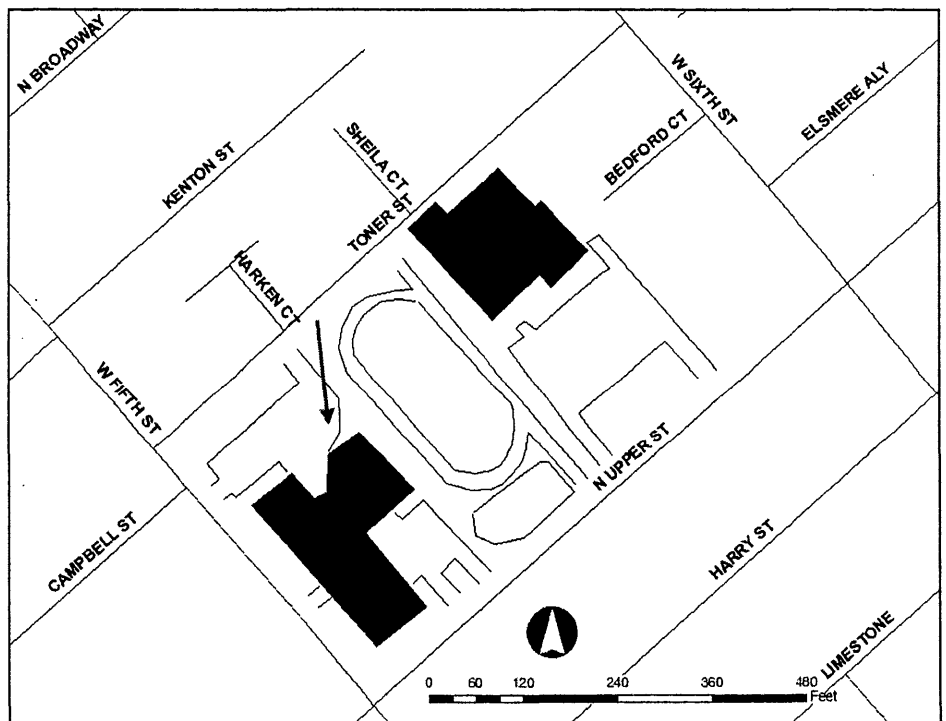
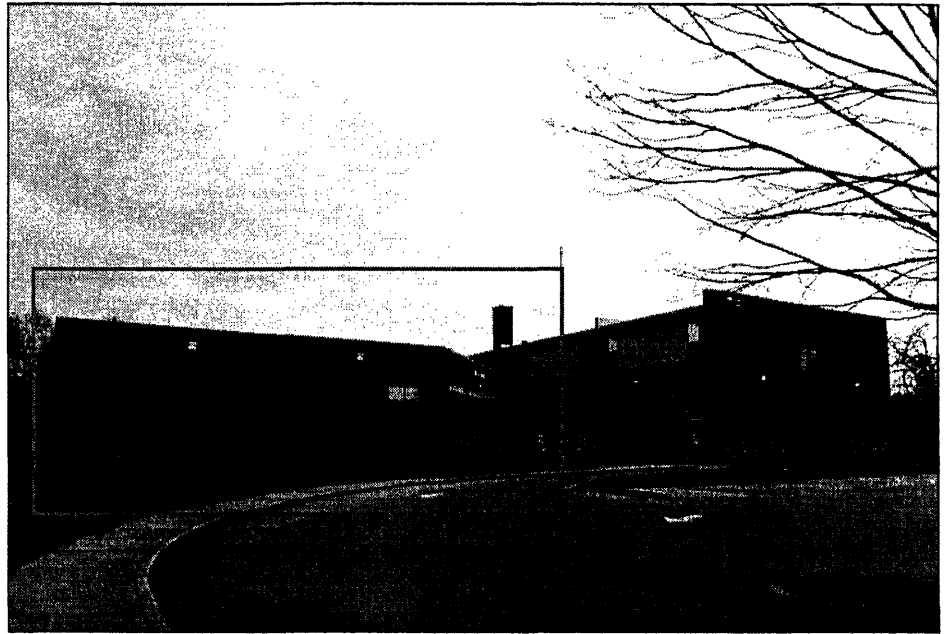
Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 6

In this view looking south, a chimney can be seen above the roofline on the rear of the 1953 building. Except where they have been covered by additions, the original window openings remain clearly visible on this part of the structure.

Behind the 1953 structure is a single-story brick addition that was built in 1976 to provide a library, cafeteria, and office space. An angled entryway is located at the point where the 1976 addition adjoins the original building mass. The 1976 addition left the distinct massing of the original building largely undisturbed by its careful placement entirely to the rear of the building, its unobtrusive design, and its substantially diminished elevation.



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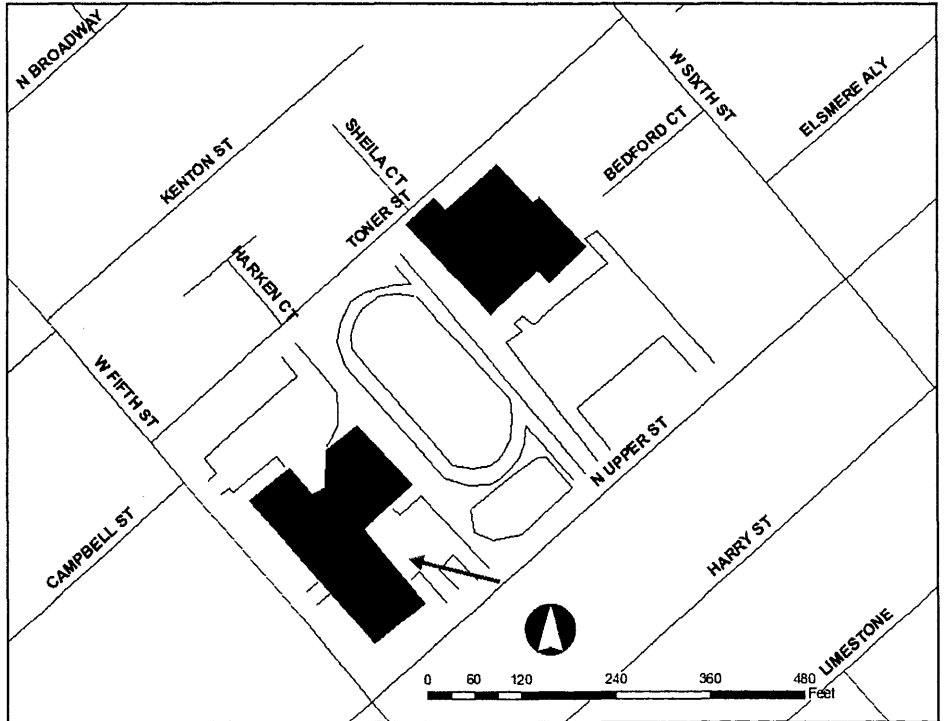
Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 7

1. The design, scale, and materials of the 'auditorium' section of the 1953 building remain intact, including original brick pilasters and roofline; windows on this rear portion have been enclosed although their placement and dimensions are still visible.

2. The 1976 rear addition is visible and has several window piercings and another secondary entry.



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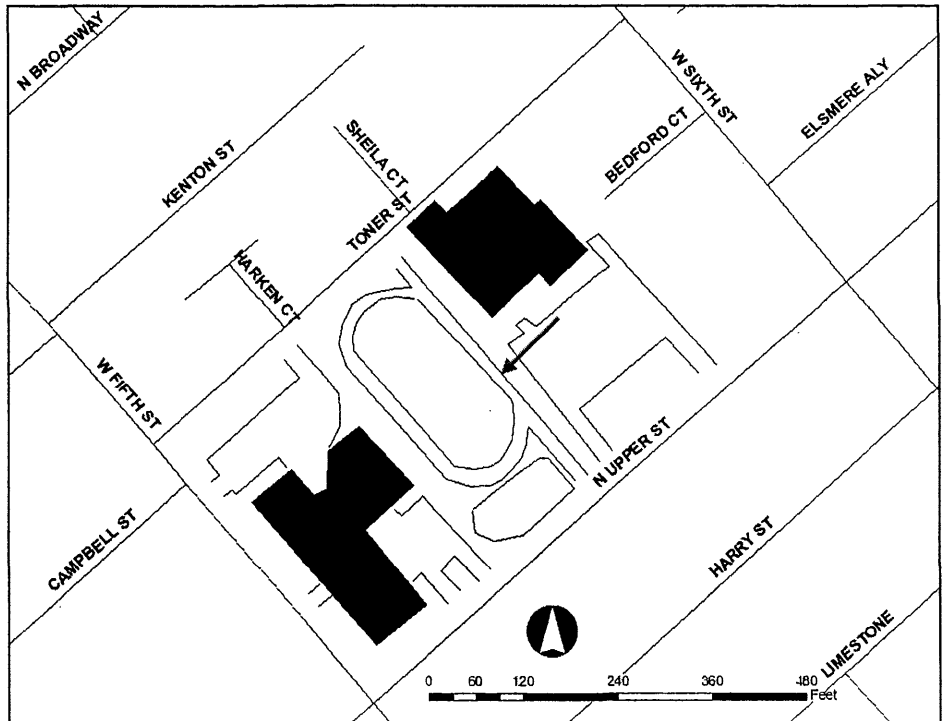
Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 8

The outdoor recreational facilities for the school provide a public green space and were historically integrated with the Dunbar High School (adjacent to the Russell School). The facilities include a running track and basketball court. There is a playground area that has a wooden 'jungle-gym' structure near the SE portion of the lot.

The Russell School anchors the southern portion of a central public block within the neighborhood. It remains part of a distinct recreational and community complex that offers play areas for community residents.



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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

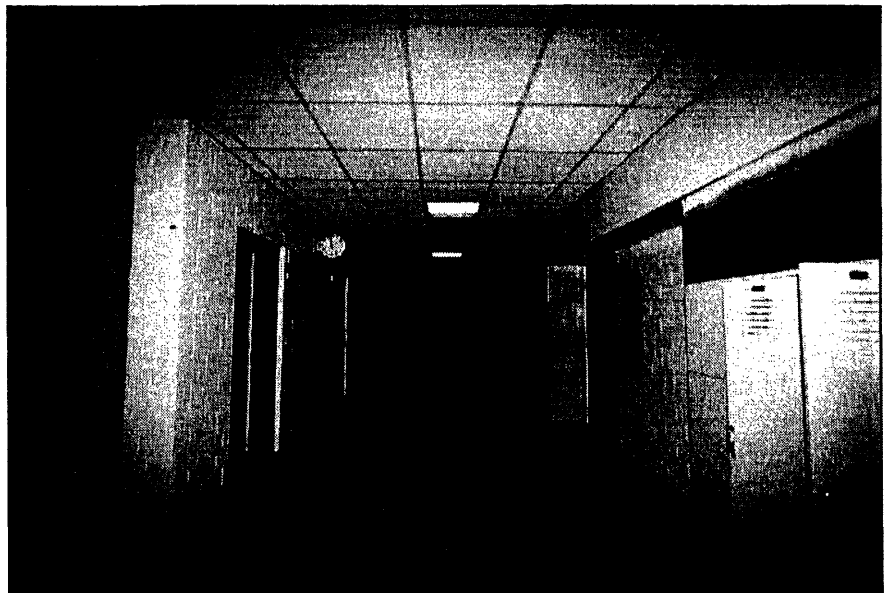
Section number 7 Page 9

The interior of the school is broken primarily into repetitive hallway spaces and classrooms. In plan the school is bisected lengthwise by a primary hallway or corridor on both the first and second floors; classroom spaces are located on either side of this corridor on the second floor. On the first floor, classrooms are located only along the Fifth Street side. On the first floor are also located a gymnasium, a cafeteria and kitchen, and small office areas. These occupy space within a secondary mass of the building, slightly lower in elevation and behind the main Fifth Street mass. There is very little in the way of distinguishing detail on the interior of the whole; ornamentation is absent from architectural features in the building in keeping with its functional intent. Walls are cinderblock throughout; floors are tile, linoleum, or carpet. Apart from lockers, drinking fountains, clocks, and other elements typical of school buildings, there are almost no interruptions to these primary spaces and no special installations.

Overall, the interior of the building, composed of broad corridors and classroom spaces in series, plus a gymnasium and cafeteria/kitchen, remains expressive of the building's purpose as an educational facility.



Fifth Street entryway. This space is approximately fifteen feet in width. A suspended ceiling is hung throughout the interior except for the gymnasium.



Main 1st floor hallway, looking northwest. The Fifth St. entryway is just to the left. Groups of steel lockers are installed at intervals along the walls but there are no other major interruptions.

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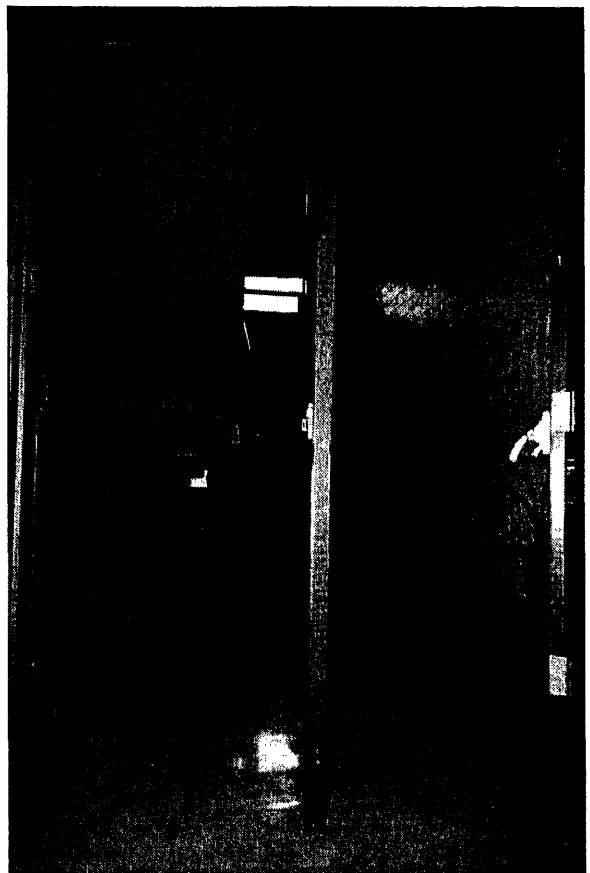
Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

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Typical classroom space, first floor. This classroom is located at the southern end of the building. Classrooms are approximately 24' x 28'. The windows in this view look onto Fifth St. The walls are plaster.

Stairwell, southeast corner of building. Walls are cinderblock as the rest of the building, the stair structure and railings are painted steel with little detail.



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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

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Gymnasium: view looking north from southeast corner. There is a raised wooden stage approx. 3 ft. in height at the opposite end of the space. The ceiling is approx 22 feet above the wooden floor.



Cafeteria: view looking north from southeast corner. Two cinder-block pillars interrupt the space. At the far end of the view is the entry to the kitchen.

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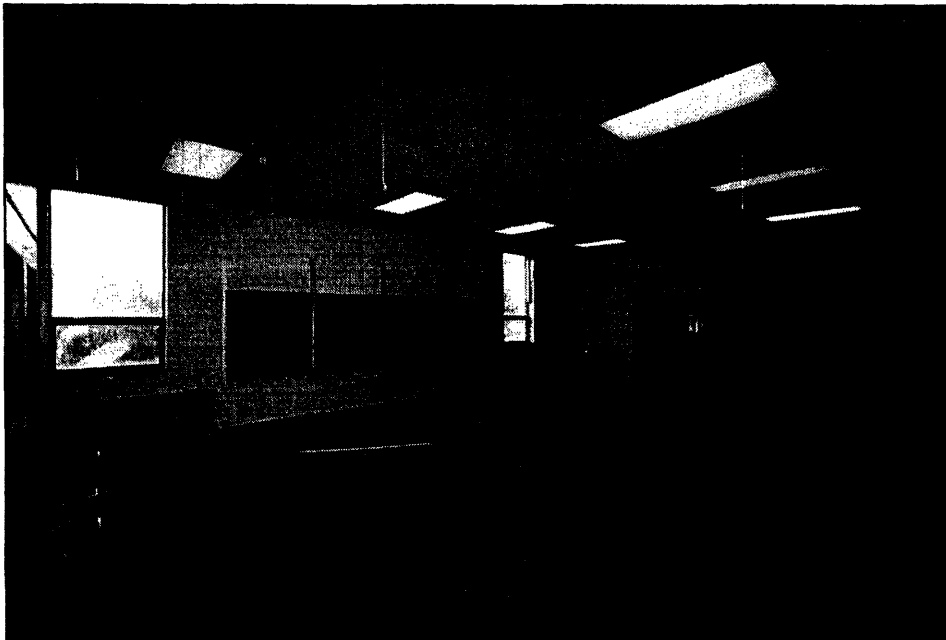
Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 12



Kitchen, view looking south from northwest corner. The floor is tile. Beyond the southwest wall (left of picture) are large walk-in cold storage lockers.



Classroom space, second floor. Second floor classrooms are like the ones on the first floor except for openings in the dividing wall that permit circulation between two classroom spaces.

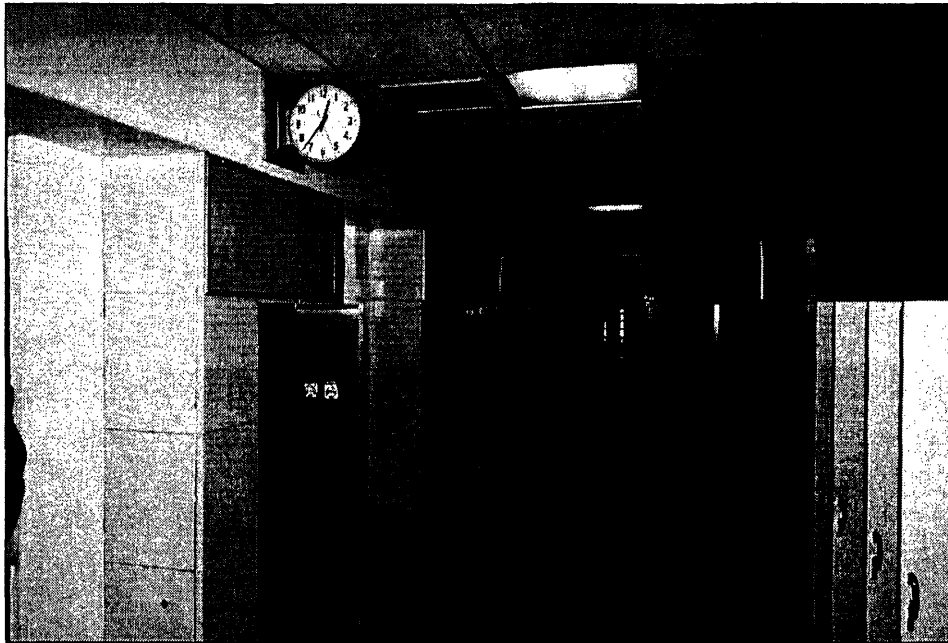
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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

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Second floor hallway; view looking southeast.



Stairwell, northeast end of the building. This stairwell is located in the ca. 1960 addition.

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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 1

SIGNIFICANCE

The historic Russell School meets Criterion A for its association with significant events in the context “African American education in Lexington, Kentucky from 1953 to 1956.” During that time the Russell School was an anchoring educational institution within the neighborhood, and it reflects important struggles that blacks faced and triumphs they enjoyed in the arena of public education.

PERIOD

The period *1953-1956* reflects the Russell School (FA-NS-746) as a significant structure associated with a continuum of events surrounding the education of African Americans in Lexington, Kentucky, and that are part of the overall development of Lexington’s Northside neighborhood. These events reach back to the late nineteenth century and, as the narrative will show, reached a culmination in the construction of the Russell School. The School demonstrates the important role of education in supporting Lexington’s African American community and stands as a material expression of those events.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following context narrative will explain that “African American education in Lexington, Kentucky from 1953 to 1956” is a useful framework to account for the development of the Northside neighborhood and particularly the Russell School’s importance to that context.

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Continuation Sheet:

Name: **Northside Historic Residential District**
Location: **Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky**

Section number 8 Page 2

Context: "African American education in Lexington, Kentucky from 1882 to 1973"

According to *Kentucky Historic Schools Survey: An Examination of the History and Condition of Kentucky's Older School Buildings*, a free system of public education in Kentucky is relatively recent in the state's history. Kentuckians did not make a substantial state level public investment in their schools until the twentieth century. Between the establishment of statehood in 1792 and 1900, educational efforts were largely a local effort supported by private academies and religious institutions (Kennedy and Johnson 2002: 15). During the antebellum period, religion took precedence over education for most blacks. Marion Lucas demonstrates that 'Kentucky did not prohibit by law the education of slaves, though scattered white opposition existed' (Lucas, 1993:140). Many blacks were able to learn reading and writing, especially bondsmen who were more likely to work outside of agriculture.

Kentucky's common school system developed in 1837 after the disbursal of the Federal Surplus, which were funds garnered from the sale of public lands. Kentucky's share of the funds was \$1,433,757 (Kennedy and Johnson 2002:15). The following year, state lawmakers moved to enact a law for the establishment of a system of common schools. One of the stipulations of this legislation was local taxation and control over each district school system. Unfortunately, by the time the statute became law, the funds had shrunk to \$850.00. A push for the education of blacks emerged during the early 1830s in some areas of Kentucky. In Trimble County, for example, a school was opened for blacks but it got shut down by local whites who opposed the education of blacks. In other parts of the state religious leaders of the Quaker faith who advocated the abolition slavery also attempted to create common schools for blacks. For the most part, however, black schools were forced to close after continued harassment from local whites (Lucas, 1993:142).

By mid-century, educational reforms for whites and blacks declined. John Brown's raid of Harper's Ferry increased racial and sectional tensions and generated widespread fear among whites who anticipated rebellious uprisings among slaves. The issue of slavery took center stage and fueled sectional hostilities between the North and South. Many blacks reverted to getting their education in the church, which focused on biblical teachings, scriptural readings, etc. According to Lucas, some whites sponsored black education through the churches with missionary zeal. White churches often donated 'hymnals, religious books, maps of the Holy Land and other teaching tools' to black churches, while some whites 'regularly engaged in instructing blacks' (Lucas, 1992:144). After the Civil War, the education of African Americans received assistance from the federal Freedmen's Bureau and various northern missionary societies.

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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 3

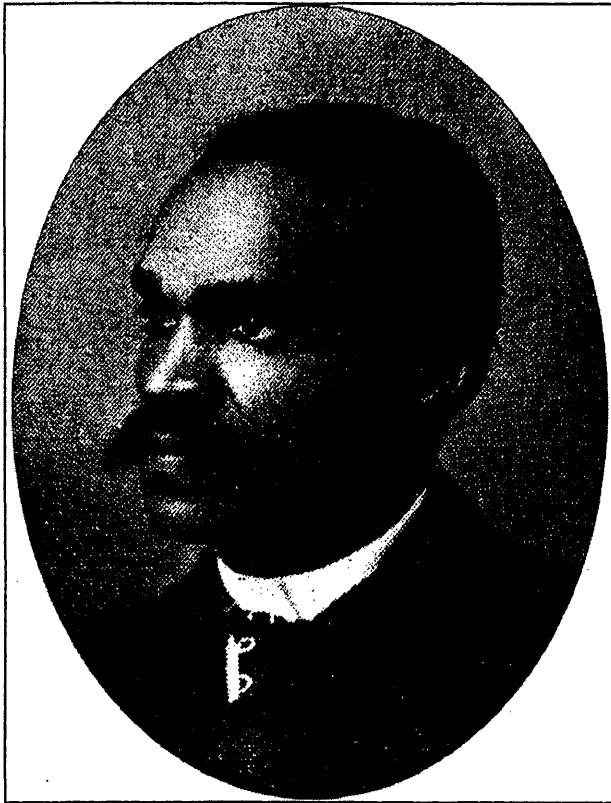


Figure 1,

G. P. Russell (1861-1936), was born in Logan County, Kentucky, and graduated from Berea College. Russell served as the principal of Lexington High School from 1890 to 1894. He was appointed supervisor of the Lexington's African-American schools and in 1895, the high school was named in his honor. Russell later served as president of the Kentucky Normal and Industrial Institute in Frankfort. He served the state's African American community as a leading educator for many years (Smith, 49).

The last third of the nineteenth century witnessed the opening of over 200 schools for Kentucky blacks, although the support ended in 1871. African-Americans struggled on until 1874, when the school law funding a segregated common school program passed (Kennedy and Johnson 2002:18, 19). By 1882, G. P. Russell was among several African Americans in Lexington to successfully mount a campaign for the public funding of black the city's schools, after which three public schools (Patterson, Constitution, and Russell) got approval to be built. Russell's role in public education was crucial in a time of extreme discrimination and codified segregation. His legacy as an educator and community leader is embedded in Fayette County's black history, while his contributions to those causes were celebrated by both whites and blacks during and after his life (Fouse, p. 56).

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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 4

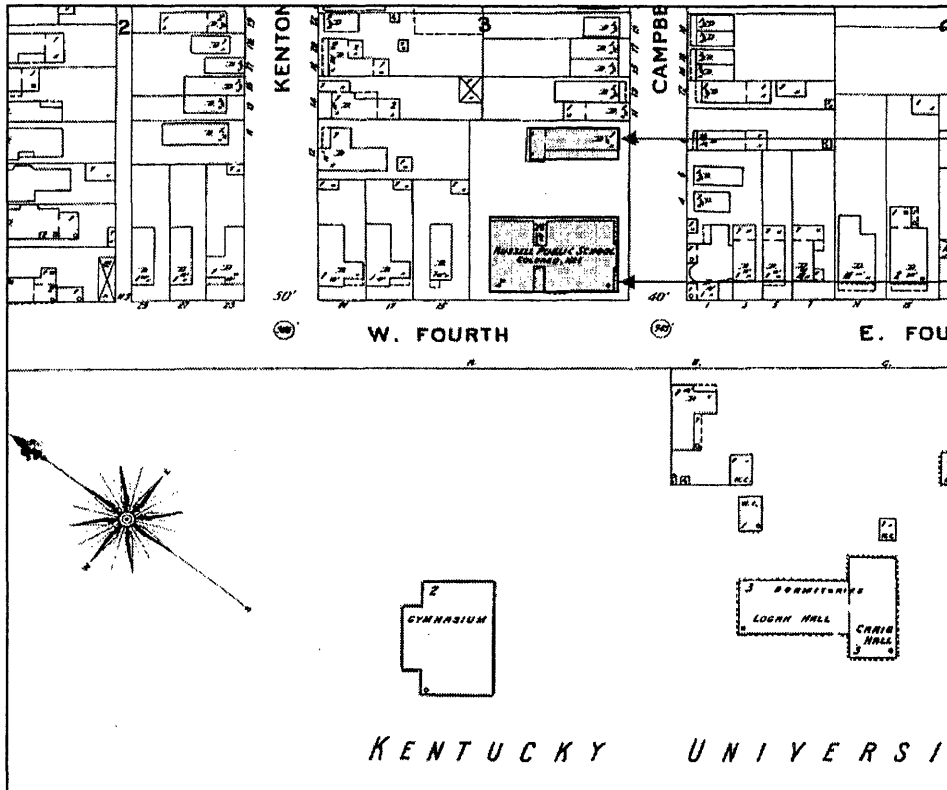


Figure 2,
Early frame school house
built in the neighborhood
between 1872-1882

Colored School No. 1, built
in 1888

In 1888, several years after the initial movement to acquire public funding and support, the first significant publicly funded school for blacks was built in the Northside Neighborhood. This was called the Colored School No. 1. It stood on Fourth Street, near the site of the present Russell School building. An 1888 newspaper article celebrated the erection of the 8-room brick building that replaced an earlier frame structure on the same lot. The school was the culmination of many efforts made by leaders in the black community to build a viable network of institutions that focused on education and racial advancement. In the years following the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the ratification of the 13th amendment, Lexington blacks built banks, residential enclaves, commercial businesses, funeral homes, cemeteries, and so on. Benevolent organizations flourished, as did other civic orders that fostered a sense of belonging. The Colored School No. 1 was a major accomplishment in the area of public education for blacks and enriched the lives of many citizens.

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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 5



Figure 3, Students and teachers standing in front of the Russell School in 1927 (Smith, 50).

The Colored School No. 1 was a defining characteristic of Lexington's Northside Neighborhood and an anchor to the community. Like the present Russell School, it was built in proximity to many residential structures and other neighborhood niches such as churches, parks, businesses, and so on. It provided a sense of social cohesion as a significant backdrop for how blacks constructed a meaningful society for themselves. Education was a building block and cornerstone for the community that reinforced social and moral codes of behavior (Wright, 59).

In 1895, H. C. Duncan, the Mayor of Lexington renamed the school in honor of G. P. Russell (*Lexington Leader*: 1895). Russell was the Superintendent of all the black schools in the city and a respected educator within the state. The Russell name signified racial triumph and achievements that focused on equitable policies and the fair treatment of blacks within the public education system. Russell was lauded as a steward over the education of blacks (Dunnigan, 179).

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Continuation Sheet:

Name: Northside Historic Residential District
Location: Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 6

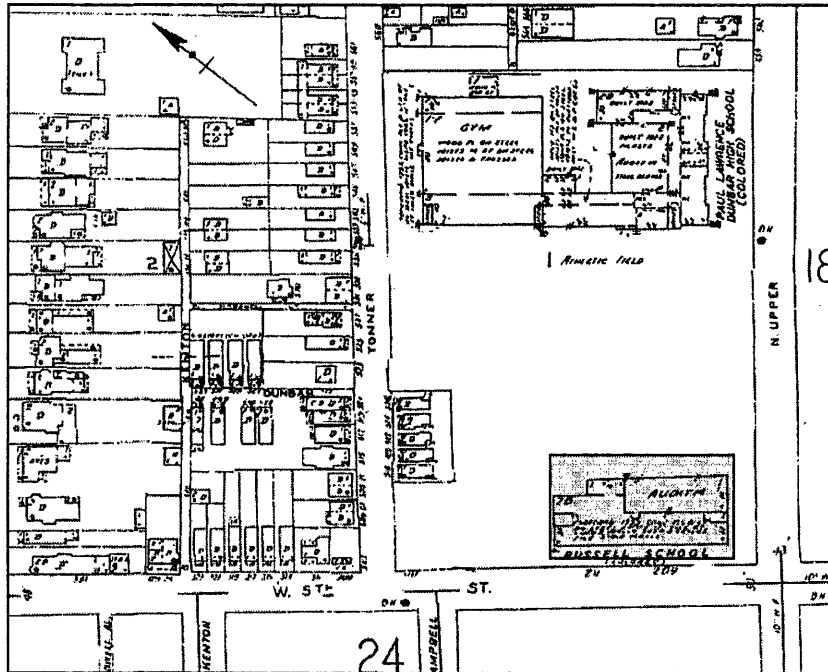


Figure 4, The New Russell school shared a lot with the Dunbar High School and was in proximity to many residential structures. The corner of Fifth and Upper Streets was a hub of activity within the Northside Neighborhood that centered on the public education for African Americans.

The school was widely used by the neighborhood residents until the middle of the twentieth century. The building eventually reached a state of decay, which became a major concern for residents. A newspaper article reported in 1950 that the school was sixty years old and had ‘outlived its usefulness’ (Herald Leader, March 10, 1950, p.1). As a result, a bond was issued in August of that same year to pay for the construction of a new building. Likewise, the bond would be sufficient to pay for additions and improvements to the Booker T. Washington and Dunbar High schools among others.

Construction took place in 1953. The new building, designed by architect John F. Wilson, was built in proximity to the existing Russell school. It retained the Russell name, thus strengthening the association with G. P. Russell and African American education in Lexington and Kentucky.

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Continuation Sheet:

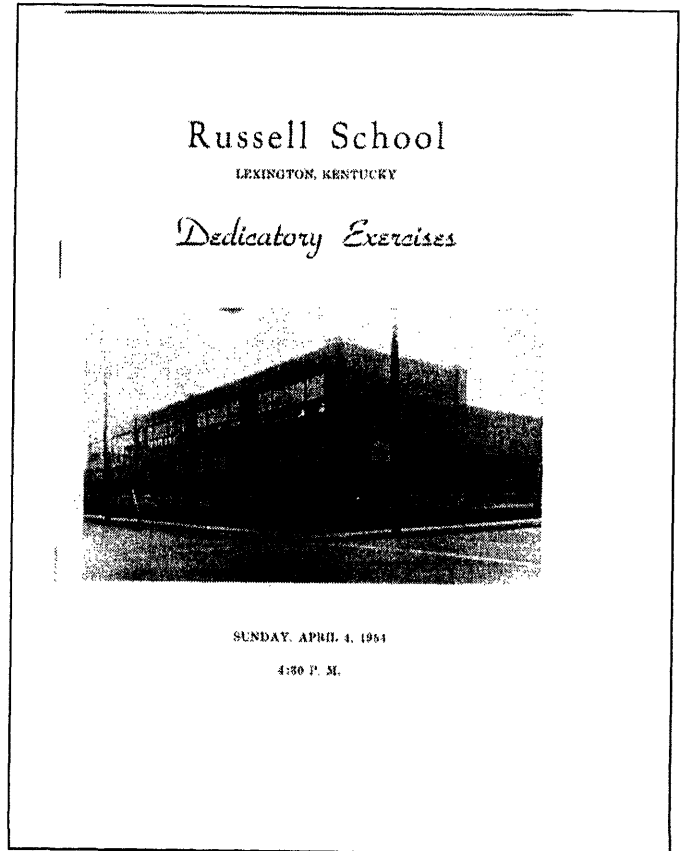
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Image above: 2004AV001, The John C. Wyatt Lexington Herald-Leader Photograph Collection, SCDP, University of Kentucky Libraries. J.39.tif.

Figure 5, Students lined up to enter the New Russell school, which featured modern kindergarten and elementary rooms and a state of the art cafeteria (above). The commencement ceremonies celebrated the accomplishments of many area blacks and featured performances by the students (right).



Program cover courtesy of Naomi Clewett, Lexington, Kentucky

The new school opened in January of 1954, the same year that the U. S. Supreme Court ruled in the case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. It was constructed of concrete and steel with modern amenities that included a 400-seat auditorium/gymnasium. The new structure ushered in changes in school building architecture, providing a good example of improved and more equitable facilities for the education of the African American children in Lexington's Northside neighborhood. A newspaper reported that the school was built by Forbes and Taylor Contractors at a cost of more than \$350,000 (*Leader*, January, 1954). A dedication ceremony was conducted towards the end of the school year. It featured many guest speakers from the community, including Allie Washington, one of the first students to attend the original Russell school (Colored School No. 1), built in 1888.

The federal mandate to desegregate schools was hard fought in Kentucky. The process of integration brought teachers together from all the schools in the city to form integration workshops, and school boards across the state moved to 'study ways to implement the court decision and work with community leaders' (Wright, 1992: 198).

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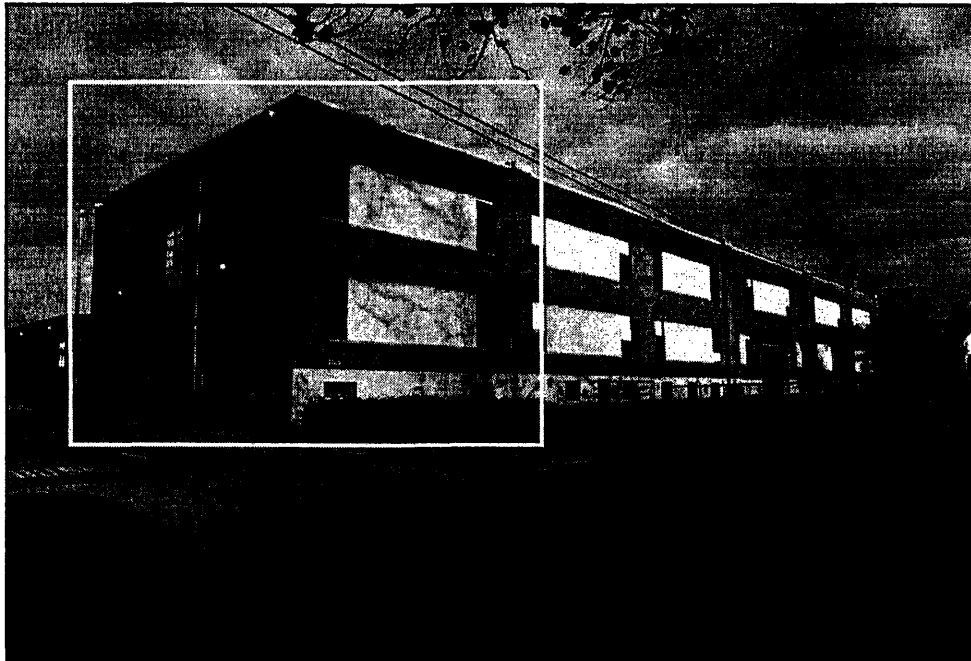


Figure 6, View of addition.

Warren T. Seals was appointed Principal of the Russell school in 1937, remaining in that position through the transition to the present Fifth Street school building, until his retirement in 1970. The school rapidly outgrew its capacity. In November of 1960, the school board approved bids for the addition of a new classroom wing onto the Russell school. The addition followed the same modular design as the 1953 construction and deployed the same materials and workmanship. The improvement cost nearly two hundred thousand dollars and ameliorated overcrowding of the school (Kennedy, Blue Grass Trust "Eleven Endangered List", 2004, p. 1).

As the Civil Rights era gained momentum, African American schools in the city continued to suffer from inequitable funding. It was not until the mid-1960s that Kentucky's dual school system came to an official end when the Kentucky Department of Education issued an order for all schools in the state to comply with the 1954 court order. Lexington, like other large cities in the state, opened up schools to both blacks and whites, but required students to attend the nearest school to their neighborhood. This meant that the schools remained mostly segregated. Likewise, protests against integration forced the closure of some schools and led to the busing of black students to schools outside of their neighborhoods (Kennedy, Blue Grass Trust "Eleven Endangered List", 2004, p. 2). As a result, many African American schools were neglected and began to fall into various states of disrepair.

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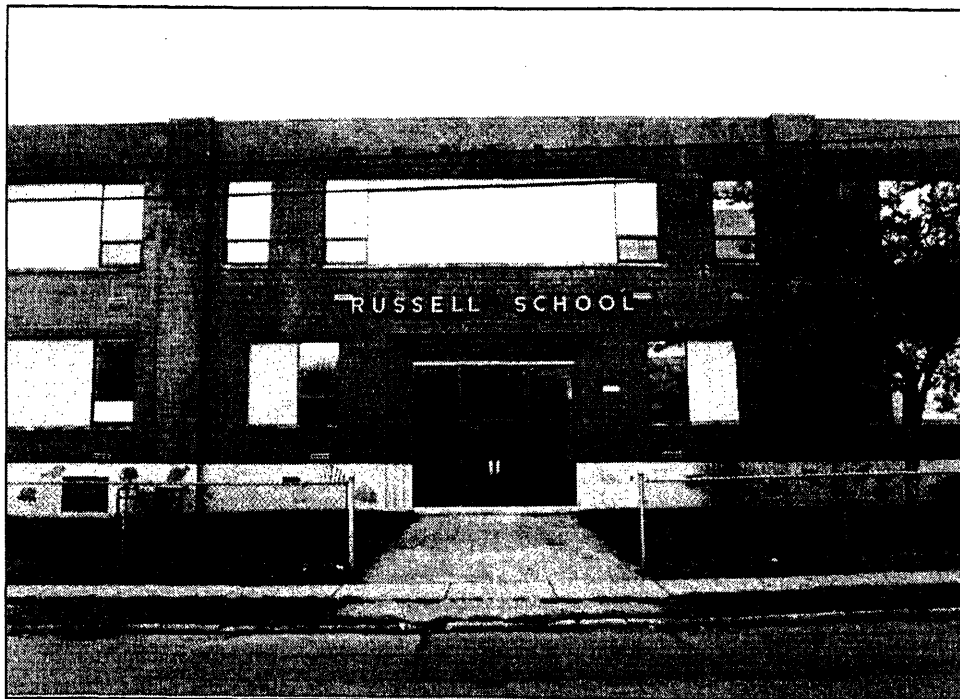


Figure 7, The Russell School, 5th Street entrance, 2005.

Despite earlier mandates for integration, the city's schools remained racially identifiable. For example, in 1971, Booker T. Washington, Constitution, and Douglas schools remained more than 96 % black, while Russell, Johnson, Dunbar, and Lexington Junior averaged about 80%. The failure of integration policies to provide fair treatment to African Americans sparked a legal campaign against the Fayette County School Board. In 1971, a law suit naming the Russell School was filed by Northside residents against the Fayette County Board of Education. The suit challenged the legality of racially segregated schools. Judge Mac Swinford ruled in 1972 that segregation of public schools was in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution. He ordered the school board to comply 'by eliminating all vestiges of segregation within elementary and junior high schools' (U. S. District Court Case #2309, 1971). This action determined that the Russell school would no longer be exclusively a 'neighborhood school'; rather it would be integrated into a consolidated effort to eliminate racially identifiable schools. Afterwards, the Russell school was no longer a 'neighborhood institution' and students were bussed out of their neighborhood to schools throughout the city/county.

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Integrity Considerations

Location

The Russell School occupies its original location at 201 W Fifth Street, Lexington, KY. The building has not been moved.

Setting

The building retains its integrity of setting as a prominent educational institution set in the midst of many residential, commercial, and religious structures that comprise the surrounding historic neighborhood and that were integral to the development and significance of that neighborhood. It occupies the southern part of a large lot which also includes the Dunbar High School, a running track, basketball court, and recreational playground. The building's original design intent, of serving the immediate neighborhood as a dedicated educational institution, is still made evident by its location and setting and by the forms of both its exterior and interior.

Design

The portions of the building constructed in 1953 remain distinctly recognizable and retain high degrees of design integrity. The Fifth and Upper Street facades, including the wide recessed entryways with brick ornamentation and door sidelights, the capped brick pilasters, and the broad horizontal window openings are still the dominant features of the school's exterior design and still broadcast its educational function. The bay that was added ca. 1960 simply copied the original in terms of design, materials, and workmanship. The addition constructed in 1975 is distinct by its location completely to the rear, its use of different materials, its unornamented, unobtrusive design, and its substantially diminished elevation. The original interior of the building, composed of broad corridors and classroom spaces in series, plus a gymnasium and cafeteria/kitchen, is expressive of the building's purpose as an educational facility.

Materials / Workmanship

Most of the original materials that made up the Russell School are still in place, including the exterior concrete and brick and block walls and steel stairs on the interior. The doorways along Fifth and Upper streets are modifications from the original, though these are steel with large glass transoms and sidelights intentionally designed to echo the originals. Where there are window modifications, these have left in place the original window dimensions and placement, and have only slightly altered the building's original pattern of fenestration. Apart from the introduction of suspended ceilings and some storage and office spaces, the interior of the building is unmodified in terms of materials or design. Throughout the building, workmanship is typical of a modern school built by a large contractor in the mid-1950s. The use and integration of modular and commercially-available materials is expressive of typical construction methods.

Association / Feeling

The Russell School retains its association with significant events in the history of African American education in Lexington, Kentucky from 1953 to 1956. During that time the Russell School was an anchoring educational institution within the district and the neighborhood, reflecting important events in both the struggles and triumphs that blacks faced in the arena of public education. In its present state, the building's setting, scale, massing, design, and materials represent material embodiments of its historic function and are still expressive of this association.

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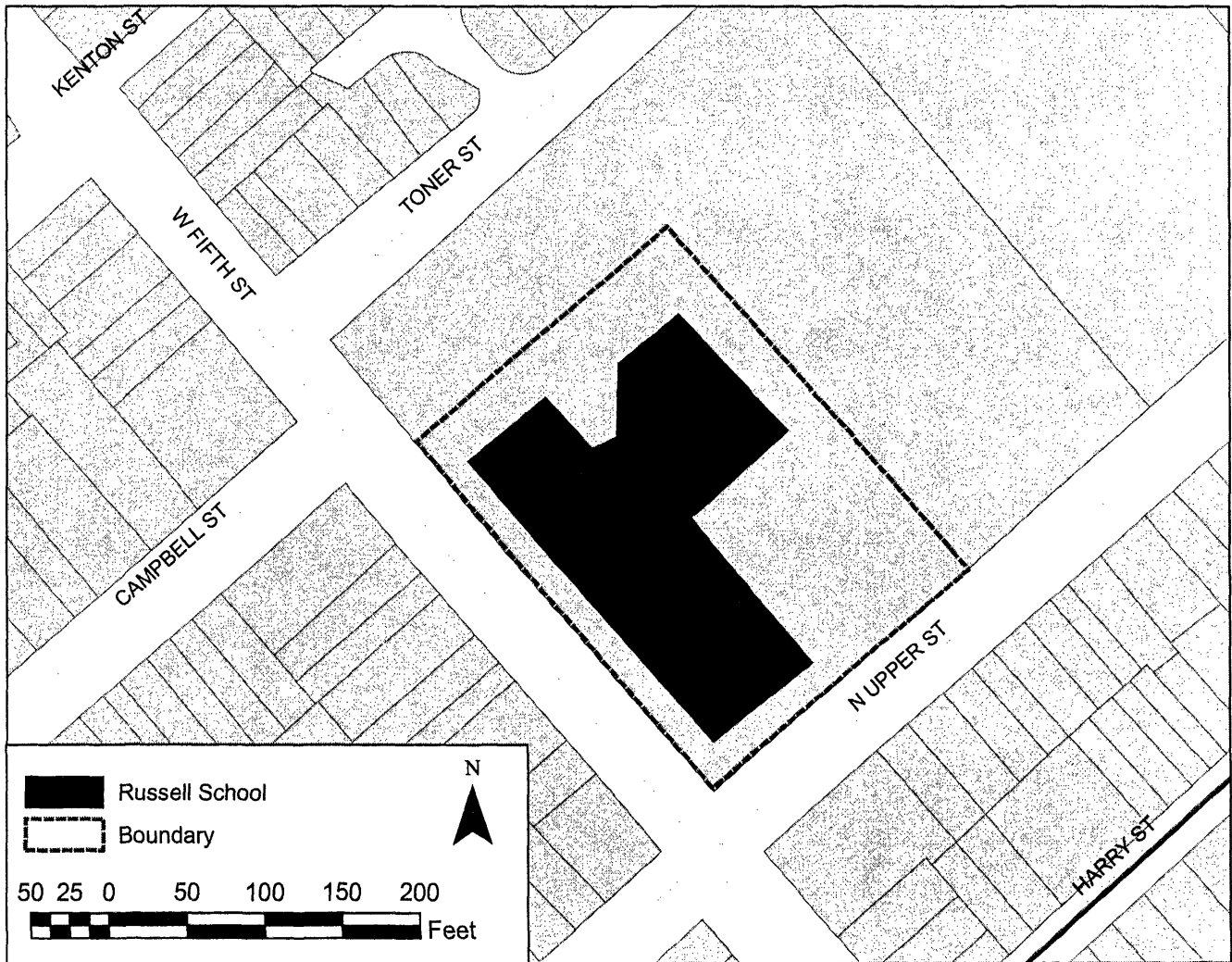
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Verbal Boundary Description

Begin at the northernmost point on the intersection of N. Upper and W. Fifth Streets. Proceed in a northwest direction for 300 feet; next, proceed in northeast for 215 feet; next, proceed southeast for 300 feet to the edge of N. Upper Street; finally, proceed southwest for 215 feet to return to the point of origin.



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Boundary Justification

A boundary was selected to encompass the entirety of the Russell School building to within 30 feet of the structure. This boundary contains the entire school building including the portions constructed in 1953, the 1960 addition, and the 1976 additions. The boundary follows the line of W. Fifth and N. Upper Streets; otherwise, it excludes those portions of the property which do not contribute directly to its significance.