

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

**OHSPAB VERSION**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instruction in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (formerly 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Fairview Public School and Annex

other names/site number Twelfth Ward School, Twelfth District School, Fairview German Bilingual School

**2. Location**

street & number 255 Warner Street/2232 Stratford Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Cincinnati N/A vicinity

state: Ohio code: OH county: Hamilton code: 061 zip code: 45219

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency or Tribal government \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau or Tribal government \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that the 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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Fairview Public School and Annex  
Name of Property

Hamilton, Ohio  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

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

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

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque  
MODERN MOVEMENT

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone: granite  
walls brick  
roof asphalt shingle  
other stone: sandstone, limestone

**Narrative Description**

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

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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 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

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1888-1958

### Significant Dates

1888-1890

1957-58

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Siter, H. E.

Schulte, Edward J.

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.63

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	<u>16</u> Zone	<u>714141.28</u> Easting	<u>4333274.91</u> Northing
2.	<u>/ /</u> Zone	<u>/ / / / / / / /</u> Easting	<u>/ / / / / / / /</u> Northing
3.	<u>/ /</u> Zone	<u>/ / / / / / / /</u> Easting	<u>/ / / / / / / /</u> Northing
4.	<u>/ /</u> Zone	<u>/ / / / / / / /</u> Easting	<u>/ / / / / / / /</u> Northing

[ ] 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 Beth Sullebarger  
organization Sullebarger Associates date May 18, 2010  
street & number 1080 Morse Avenue telephone 513 772-1088  
city or town Glendale state OH zip code 45246-3830

### 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 images 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 Mohammed Shamma, Ph.D., Five Korner LLC  
street & number 2232 Stratford Avenue telephone (513) 793-3076  
city or town Cincinnati state OH zip code 45219

**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 range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**DESCRIPTION**

Setting

The former Fairview Public School and Annex, most recently known as Fairview German Bilingual School, comprise two separate but related buildings located in a residential area of the Clifton Heights neighborhood of Cincinnati. The original Romanesque Revival school building, built in 1888-1890, fronts on Warner Street and is bounded on the west by Stratford Avenue, on the east by Chickasaw Street and on the south by the annex. The modern flat-roofed annex, at 2232 Stratford Avenue, was built in 1957-58. South of the annex is a green space created in 1990 and partly occupied by a playground. (While previously part of the school property, the green space does not contribute to the significance of the property and is not part of this nomination.) The school site is located on a hillside, which slopes down toward the south and west. A massive limestone retaining wall topped by a sandstone coping and iron fence encloses the original building along the three public streets. On the east side, the original building site is a few feet below the grade of Chickasaw Street. The south end of the old schoolyard is enclosed with a chain link fence, which is interrupted by a passage to the annex. There are two openings in the fence on Warner Street, a pedestrian gate at the front entrance and a vehicular gateway near the northeast corner. The areas around both buildings are paved with asphalt. The surrounding streets are lined mostly with small late-nineteenth century houses. The property east of Chickasaw Street is wooded and occupied by a tall TV broadcasting tower and related utilitarian buildings built circa 1948. (See sketch map, p. 15.)

Exterior

The original Fairview Public School is a massive rectangular three-story building with a large turret at each corner and a very steep, hipped roof. The exterior is red brick punctuated by a series of rough-cut stone stringcourses, and the foundation is rough stone that continues up to the sills of the first story windows, approximately nine feet above the ground. Each of the massive corner turrets contains five windows in angled bays defined by rough stone quoins. The third floor is offset by corbels. The main entry on the north facade, approached by stone steps from Warner Street, is framed by a corbelled arch. The double eight-paneled wood doors are probably not original but they match the original drawings. A large, arched infill above the doors is painted, probably fairly recently, with "Willkommen," the German word for "Welcome." The front facade is symmetrical with three bays between the turrets. The longer side elevations each contain a slight projection in the center extending for nine bays. The south façade has a similar arched window at the first floor above the basement, echoing the main entrance.

The windows have double-hung six-over-six wood sashes and a three-paned transom which probably does not open. The windows at the third story in the nine-bay projections on the side facades are arched, emphasized by brick and stone surrounds and semicircular transoms. On the front at the third story, two quarter-circle windows together form an arch matching the door's arch at ground level. The four corbelled interior chimneys can be seen for some distance towering over the surrounding lower neighborhood. The chimneys help to give the building its solid appearance. The steeply pitched roof contains a wide hipped-roof dormer on each facade. The windows in the dormers have twelve-over-twelve double-hung wood sashes. The basement is punctuated by single-sash windows with 6 panes; their sills are at grade. Some of the windows are covered by metal mesh screens.

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The stone stringcourses continue the horizontal lines of the sills and lintels, contrasting to the vertical accents of the narrow alternating stone quoins that outline the edges of the many-sided polygonal corner turrets. The ridgelines of these turrets project diagonally and dramatically from the main roof. The roof, which was originally covered with slate, was reclad with asphalt shingles in 1992. The main entrance on Warner Street is emphasized by a stone plaque above displaying the name of the school; stone roundels with inscriptions of the superintendent and building committee in its upper corners; and the grouping of stone-framed windows above. The secondary entrances are also highlighted by round arches. The wide hipped-roof dormers retain the original small 12-over-12 window sashes and reinforce the centers of the sides of the building. The "battered" or sloping rough stone foundation walls help anchor the building to the ground.

#### Interior

The interior plan is organized around a wide hallway running longitudinally through the center of each floor. There are six primary rooms on each floor, three on each side of the central corridor. In addition, ends of the hallways have been set off by wood and glass demising walls creating small rooms; one at the south end of the first floor, two at the north and south ends of the second floor, and one at the south end of the third floor. Between classrooms there are narrow cloak rooms, each with a separate door to the hallway.

The three entrances are all several steps below the elevation of the first floor. The front entrance leads to the central corridor. The floors in the corridors are stained concrete, scored to look like stone. The two side entrances connect with full-height stairwells, which have been enclosed with drywall there they enter the hallways on each floor. The stairs have pierced iron risers, concrete treads, and simple wood handrails. In the northeast stair, toilet rooms are located at the landings. Each toilet rooms have two stalls and a small sink, all old fixtures. The interior doors are mostly solid wood doors with seven horizontal panels and straight-headed transoms above. The classrooms have narrow board oak floors, beaded board wainscoting, black chalk boards, and suspended acoustic tile ceilings. The partition wall between two classrooms at the north end of the third floor was designed so that it could be raised into the attic to create an auditorium; a low platform in the east classroom acted as a stage. At an unknown date this rather thin partition was covered with corkboard, presumably for acoustic purposes.

The attic floor features dramatic heavy timber trusses supporting the roof. The north and south ends of the attic are set off by partitions of horizontal wood boards. In the center of the attic wood stairs rise to a landing about five feet higher. This landing leads to two small rooms on each side. These simple rooms, with transomed doorways and small closets with paneled wood doors, were once occupied by custodians until it was realized that this was a fire hazard.

The basement floor is similar to the floors above. There are classrooms in the northwest and southeast turrets; a toilet room in the northeast turret, storage on the east center, boiler room on the west center, and additional mechanical equipment in the southwest corner. The heating and ventilating system was originally a coal-fired system in which hot air was driven by a fan in the basement and moved through vertical masonry shafts. The volume of air was controlled by dampers operated by cast iron dials located in the inner walls of the classrooms installed in the blackboards. This system was replaced at an unknown date by steam radiators. On the west side of the building, there is a passage under the schoolyard connecting the boiler room with Stratford Avenue for the delivery of heating fuel and other materials. There are two openings in the retaining wall on Stratford Avenue; a narrow one filled with

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red brick and another wider opening filled with brick and a flush metal door.

Alterations

Fairview School and Annex have changed little over the years. Alterations to the original school building have been limited to heating and ventilating systems, stair enclosures, toilet rooms, lighting and the site. Based on photographs in 1894 and 1895 brochures promoting development in Fairview Heights, the stone retaining walls were added to the site in 1895, and high brick walls extended along the east and west sides of the lot. A history published by Cincinnati Public Schools states that the school yard was originally paved with brick, which was later replaced with concrete. An undated site plan from ca. 1920 calls for concrete paving and shows a small temporary "colony building" at the northeast corner of the lot.<sup>1</sup> The current asphalt paving was added at an unknown later date.

By 1938 the first colony building was gone, replaced by two additional one-story colony buildings at the south end of the lot, which housed the Gymnasium and Industrial Arts Room. Their construction was wood-frame with paper composition roofs and wood steps.<sup>2</sup> A 1945 Survey of the School-Building Needs of Cincinnati, Ohio, recommended that Fairview be replaced with a new building, however, it was rated as a lower priority than other school projects and did not happen.<sup>3</sup>

When completed in 1890, the original building had a coal-forced air system that employed vertical stacks in the walls. The flow of air was regulated by dampers controlled by cast iron dials in the classroom walls, typically within a blackboard (see Photo 12). In 1908 this system was replaced with a hot-water system with an oil-burning boiler and radiators. Drawings by E. N. Hannaford, Engineer, dated April 4, 1908, show the locations of radiators under windows on the perimeter walls. Ventilating ductwork was installed in the attic to provide cooling in hot weather. In the basement, a new boiler and fans were installed in the center rooms on the west and east sides, while the toilet rooms that originally occupied those spaces were relocated to the tower rooms—the girls' room at the northeast corner and boys' room at the southwest. New stone steps in areaways were then also added to provide egress from the new toilet rooms to the outside.

In 1959, there was another upgrade to the heating & ventilating system designed by Frankenberger Junker & Lensky, whose drawings dated April 1, 1959, show a new hot-air system with a new oil-burning boiler. At this time, the stairways were enclosed and the lighting was replaced. In 1974, the lighting was upgraded again, per drawings by KZF dated March 27, 1974 with new wiring and light fixtures. In 1983, per drawings by architect George Allen Paul, the toilet rooms were renovated, cork was installed on both sides of the wall between classrooms 301 and 302 to enhance sound-proofing, and a new library was created on the first floor in the southwest corner. A new door opening was created between the former classroom and the former lounge at the south end of the hall. The stone

<sup>1</sup> The term "colony building," which appears on a 1956 site plan by Schulte and an earlier undated site plan, apparently refers to a satellite or supplementary facility to a school that could be on-site or at another location. Early on, in order to accommodate changing demographics, some classes were held in neighborhood churches, and more recently, in trailers.

<sup>2</sup> Cincinnati Public Schools. *Survey of Sites, Buildings, and Equipment, Being a Two-year Study of the Physical Plant of the Cincinnati Public Schools, Made Possible by Grants from the United States Works Progress Administration*, 1938.

<sup>3</sup> T. C. Holy, *A Survey of the School-building Needs of Cincinnati, Ohio*, 1945, p. 75.

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retaining walls were repaired in 1967 and 1994. Other alterations to the school include the enclosure of the stairways and insertion of metal screens in the centers of the stairways to prevent objects from being dropped through the stairwells, and replacement of the slate roof with asphalt shingles in 1992.

The biggest change to the site was the construction of the Fairview School Annex on the south side of the original school. Approximately 13 narrow houses on Stratford and Chickasaw were demolished to make room for it. When built, the Annex provided a gymnasium and library previously missing from the old building. In 1967, the heating system was provided with a gas conversion burner. In 1983, when the library was moved from the Annex to the old building, the former library at the northwest corner of the Annex was restored to a classroom; the library storage room was converted into teachers lounge, and a stage was added at north end of gymnasium, in accordance with drawings by George Allen Paul.

#### Annex

The annex, which fronts on Stratford Avenue, is a three-story, flat-roofed red brick building with smooth sandstone trim. The south end of the west façade is dramatized by a projecting limestone pavilion divided into six narrow bays by full-height pilasters. The main entrance is protected by a flat-roofed projecting porch, two-bays wide, with the name of the school in large metal-colored aluminum capital block letters across the front. The doorway is equipped with two sets of double metal replacement doors with transoms above. The date "A.D. 1957" is carved in stone on the inside of the north wall of the porch and randomly colored tile decorates the soffit. The rest of the building has a horizontal emphasis with long window bands punctuated by smooth limestone pilasters. The triple windows, which are divided by recessed limestone mullions, have aluminum double-hung sashes each with three horizontal panes.

In plan, the building has a double-loaded longitudinal corridor with stair towers at both ends. The main entrance leads through a vestibule with metal and glass doors to a two-story stairwell with terrazzo stringer and steps and streamlined aluminum railings. The first floor contains classrooms, a teachers' lounge and toilet rooms on the west side; and boys' and girls' locker rooms, classrooms and the boiler rooms on the east side. The second floor contains offices, a teachers' lounge, first-aid room, and former "resource center" on the west side, and a double-height gymnasium on the east side. The Third floor has classrooms on the west side, and a teacher's lounge and toilet rooms on the east side in addition to the upper portion of the gym.

The interior finishes consist of vinyl tile floors, painted concrete-block walls lined with glazed ceramic tile, and acoustic tile ceilings with recessed fluorescent lights. The classroom doors are typically solid wood with single lights at the top. The most distinctive features of the interior are the built-in maple cabinets, which typically line two interior walls in each classroom. The built-ins include coat closets with pivoting doors, cabinets, and in some rooms a sink. The cabinets are distinguished by brass recessed ring pulls. Another interesting feature is wood folding partitions, which exist in the gymnasium and the former "resource center" on the second floor. These partitions enable these spaces to be subdivided for maximum use of the space.

The annex is mostly in original condition with only a few alterations. Several utilitarian additions were made on the east side. The largest of these is a second furnace room with three large furnaces which were installed to serve both the original school building and the annex.



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**SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Fairview Public School and Annex are eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C for their representation of the development of Cincinnati Public Schools and for their architectural significance. Built in 1888-1890 and designed by H. E. Siter, who served as the official architect for Cincinnati Public Schools from 1890 to 1899, the original school is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style. It is one of the oldest public school buildings still extant in Cincinnati and retains a high degree of integrity in design and materials. The modern-style annex by Edward J. Schulte built in 1957-58, reflects the late work of an important local architect and the expansion of the school facilities after World War II.

History of Cincinnati Public Schools

According to a 1902 history, "Schools of Cincinnati," by John B. Shotwell, the City of Cincinnati had the first public school system in the Northwest Territory. In 1825 the state of Ohio passed a law instituting a tax for the erection of public school buildings. In 1829, Cincinnati established a board with one member elected from each political ward to oversee its school district. In the early schools, students of all ages and abilities sat in the same room. For the first two decades of public education in Cincinnati, there was no superintendent. This changed in 1850 with a new state law requiring the election of a superintendent for each school district in Ohio. Nathan Guilford, a lawyer and state senator who had helped create the 1825 school-funding law, was elected the district's first superintendent. He served just two years and was followed in 1853 by Joseph Merrill. After 1853, the superintendent was appointed by the board rather than elected.

The district began to build new model schools throughout the city in the 1830s. Woodward High School, which opened in 1831 on Sycamore Street in the neighborhood of Over-the-Rhine, was considered by Shotwell to be the first successful school in the city. William McGuffey, author of the famous readers, taught there in the 1840s, and President William Howard Taft was among its graduates. Sometime between 1836 and 1840, Cincinnati became the first city in Ohio to institute separate grades. Local law provided for the construction of a building in each district, and each building was divided into two grades.<sup>4</sup> A German Department was added in 1840 to help educate the city's growing German-immigrant population. A second Woodward High School building was built in 1845. By 1846, enrollment had grown to 7,000 students, and the district employed 76 teachers and was overseen by a 20-member Board of Education. Enrollment grew by 1850 to 11,000 students taught by 124 teachers.

During the 1830s and 1840s, Cincinnati's school buildings were vernacular examples of the Greek Revival style. Typically they were three-story masonry buildings with massive proportions and minimal detail evoking the classical ideals of the early republic. In the 1850s two new high schools were built; the original Hughes High School, designed by John B. Earnshaw, was completed in 1853 at Fifth and Mound Streets in the West End. A third building was built for Woodward High School at Sycamore and Thirteenth Street in 1854. Both [no longer extant] were in the Tudor Gothic Revival style, emulating the medieval colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. Hughes displayed the solid symmetry of a castle punctuated by a gabled projecting entry and slender octagonal towers on each corner. The interior provided practical amenities such as washrooms in the basement, cloakrooms for the lower-floor

<sup>4</sup> Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio*. (State of Ohio, 1888; rpt. Cincinnati, 1907), p. 142.

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classrooms and a lecture hall occupying the entire third floor, open for community as well as school programs. Hughes was held up as a model by the national education advocate Henry Barnard, who selected it for the frontispiece of the sixth edition of his authoritative treatise on school architecture published in 1855.

By 1869, Cincinnati had 18 district schools, two intermediate schools and two high schools.<sup>5</sup> During the 1860s and 1870s the Italianate style was favored. Extant examples include the first district school (1866-68) at the foot of Liberty Hill, designed by Walter & Stewart [and converted to condominiums]; the former Cummins School (1871-72) on William Howard Taft Road in Walnut Hills attributed to Samuel Hannaford [converted to office use]; and McKinley (1876) on Eastern Avenue in the East End [vacant]. Cummins School is a three-story building with tall windows and projecting bays. Its innovative double-E shaped plan—organized around a longitudinal corridor with six classrooms per floor—provided maximum light, ventilation, and wardrobes for each classroom. The building was also equipped with a principal's office, library, and science laboratory. It was heated by stoves but was designed so it could be converted to steam heat. Other technological innovations were the use of interior pivot blinds to control light.<sup>6</sup>

In 1852, the state had granted African-American activists the right to create and operate the Independent Colored School System. Financed by taxes on property owned by blacks and operated by a board elected by African-Americans, this school system provided a base for an emerging black middle class in Cincinnati, according to historian Daniel Hurley. After black males were enfranchised by the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the independent black school board was abolished in 1874 and the system was gradually dismantled. In 1887 the law was changed to allow black children to enter public schools. Ten years later, the only black school that remained was the Elm Street School, which became Douglass School in 1910. In 1914, an African-American teacher in Cincinnati Public Schools, Jennie D. Porter, persuaded the Cincinnati Board of Education to allow her to organize a segregated school with black teachers and a black student body in the West End. Although Porter's Harriet Beecher Stowe School was successful, it was also controversial among some black leaders in the community. One of the most prominent, newspaper publishers, Wendell Phillips Dabney, was outspoken in his criticism of Porter, arguing for true integration. Stowe remained an all-black school until it closed in 1962.

State legislation in 1877 made twelve weeks of school attendance mandatory for all children eight to fourteen years old, with exceptions for those who were mentally deficient, needed in the labor force, or lived more than two miles from a public school. In 1889, required attendance was increased to twenty weeks per year. These mandates led to increased enrollment and the need for new school buildings. In his 1885 and 1886 annual reports, state commissioner LeRoy Brown expounded on the proper design of schools, now typically "three-story brick buildings with a raised stone foundation providing a lighted basement and classrooms on the upper floors..."<sup>7</sup> Richardsonian Romanesque became the dominant architectural style.

<sup>5</sup> *Outline Map of Cincinnati, Accompanying Atlas of Cincinnati & Hamilton County* (Philadelphia: C. O. Titus, 1869), pl. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Virginia E. McCormick, *Educational Architecture in Ohio*. (Kent, Ohio & London: The Kent State University Press, 2001), p. 56-58.

<sup>7</sup> McCormick, p. 88-90.

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Dr. Emerson E. White, who served as Cincinnati's school superintendent from 1887 to 1889, brought a national reputation to the office, having experience as teacher and superintendent, text-book writer, editor of the *Ohio Educational Monthly*, State Commissioner of Education for Ohio, president of Purdue University, and in high positions in the National Educational Association. Though his administration lasted only three years, it was momentous in terms of improvements to the curriculum, testing, teacher qualifications, and facilities.

Under White, Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) launched a substantial building program, which was continued by his successor William. H. Morgan in the 1890s. Mr. Morgan came to Cincinnati with his parents in 1838, was educated in Cincinnati public schools, and graduated from Woodward High School in 1856. The 1890s were a period of "Educational Revival," in part reflecting Progressive Era initiatives and reforms in education at the state and national levels. This period saw a growing professionalism in education, increasing standardization in curriculum and testing, changes in courses taught, and new school designs. Physical fitness was introduced, and gymnasium buildings were added at Woodward and Hughes high schools.

During this period, H. E. Siter served as the official architect to CPS and designed at least ten schools. In accordance with LeRoy Brown's recommendations, Siter's school buildings were typically three-story brick masonry buildings with raised basements of rock-faced stone. Most were examples of the Richardsonian Romanesque style popularized in the 1880s by the prominent Boston architect H. H. Richardson. Siter's designs reflected the characteristic elements of that style, including bold massing and variety of surface textures and colors, massive round arches, and steep rooflines dramatized with towers, dormers and tall chimneys.

Siter's elementary schools were all very similar—three-story buildings with six classrooms per floor arranged around a longitudinal corridor with two stairways, one on each side. They had coal-fired furnaces and forced-air heat. They also incorporated a movable partition between two top-floor classrooms that could be raised into the attic to provide a large auditorium. A similar method of creating a large assembly area via a folding partition had been used in two schools designed by Elah Terrell and Company of Columbus—one built in Johnstown in 1882 and an identical building at Groveport built the following year. In Fairview School, one can also see the high-quality components that became standard for decades later, such as oak floors and wainscoting, brass hardware, and slate blackboards.<sup>8</sup>

Siter's largest school commission was the Walnut Hills High School, which opened in September 1895. Located at the corner of Burdett and Ashland Avenues, the school was proclaimed as "one of the finest public buildings in the city...It contained 16 light, airy recitation rooms, a spacious assembly hall, a fine gymnasium, and a good chemical and physical laboratory besides a general office, a small library and various laboratories."<sup>9</sup> Like his other buildings, it was a three-story, fortress-like red brick building in the Romanesque Revival style with a steeply pitched high roof and numerous conical-roofed turrets.

After 1900 the one-man design policy ended and commissions were divided among several architects hired to design schools. Edward H. Dornette and Gordon Sheppard designed the Hyde Park School (1901-1902) in the Richardsonian mode. Soon after, however, there was a reaction against these

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 60, 65, 66.

<sup>9</sup> John B. Shotwell, *A History of the Schools of Cincinnati*. (Cincinnati: The School Life Company, 1902), p. 108.

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massive Victorian-era structures, which were considered expensive and inefficient, in favor of the more regular Neo-Classicism and its French variation—the Beaux Arts classical style. In addition to ornament based in ancient Greece and Rome, the main characteristics were efficient plans, formal symmetry, and hierarchy of spaces. Examples of this period include the Clifton Elementary School (1908-1910) by Dornette and the former Woodward High School (1909) on Sycamore Street in Over-the-Rhine, recently occupied by the School for Creative and Performing Arts, by Gustave Drach. The latter is a monumental, flat-roofed five-story building with a rusticated base, a mid-section with three-story arched bays accented by quoins, and a heavily bracketed cornice. The former Guilford School completed in 1914 and designed by Elzner & Anderson, is another example.

The early twentieth century was a time of innovation. In 1905, Cincinnati became the first Ohio city to institute kindergarten, which was accommodated within the elementary schools. Cincinnati also pioneered in the beautification of schools through art. In 1903 an art teacher at old Hughes High School formed the Art League to “develop a love for the beautiful in environment.” With private donations from alumni, parents and students, who made contributions as small as five cents a month, the Art League began to procure an extensive collection of paintings, sculptures, murals, and colorful Rookwood Pottery-tiled drinking fountains, most from local artists.<sup>10</sup>

Educators also came to recognize that the traditional organization of eight-year elementary schools and four-year high schools was not well suited to the needs of young teenagers. A new system was developed known as “6-3-3 plan,” consisting of a six-year elementary school followed by junior and senior high schools of three years each. In 1915, Cincinnati created its first junior high school—Bloom Junior High School in the West End. Rothenberg in Over-the-Rhine became the second school of this type a decade later. By 1935, there were 76 school buildings total, including 6 junior high schools and 6 high schools. Cincinnati was also early to develop vocational education, anticipating the passage of the National Vocational Education Act in 1917. By 1935, Cincinnati was operating nine vocational high schools, seven of which were housed in separate buildings.

Over the years, there were repeated studies assessing the facilities needs of the school system. Cincinnati’s population growth was steady and slower than other Ohio cities, without the great boom periods. Nevertheless, the 1920s and 1930s were fairly busy periods of school construction, possibly affected by a 1921 state law making attendance in school mandatory for all children between six and eighteen years of age.<sup>11</sup> Between 1920 and 1935, at least 28 building projects were designed by twelve different architecture firms.<sup>12</sup> During this era, Colonial or Georgian Revival and variants of Collegiate Gothic styles were favored along with more exotic revival styles. American Colonial Revival architecture had been introduced to Cincinnati by Elzner & Anderson in the mid-1890s. Their design for College Hill Elementary School (1902) with a 1925 addition, is a refined Adamesque composition with a symmetrical façade, impressive portico, pilasters, both round-arched and rectangular windows openings, and other Neo-Classical details. The one-story Kilgour School (1922) by Tietig & Lee in Mount Lookout is an attractive Colonial building of residential scale, with a balustraded portico, cupolas and quoins.

<sup>10</sup> McCormick, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> “Public Schools,” [www.ohiohistorycentral.org](http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org)

<sup>12</sup> *Report of Comments and Observations on the U.S. Office of Education "Survey Report of the Cincinnati Public Schools."* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Bureau of Governmental Research, 1936), p. 371.

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Cincinnati's most significant public school buildings of the twentieth century were produced by the distinguished firm of Garber & Woodward. Both were educated at MIT, worked for Elzner & Anderson, and practiced in Cincinnati from 1904 until 1933. They were responsible for the magnificent Withrow High School complex (1915-19), a formal neo-classical design. The school was housed in five distinct but connected buildings unified by a central portico and arranged around a roughly semicircular courtyard. The plaza is dramatized by a tall bell tower inspired by the *campanile* in St. Mark's square in Venice and approached by a Georgian-style footbridge that spans a swale. The growing attention to physical education and competitive sports is reflected by a stadium and gymnasiums to the rear. Walnut Hills High School (1931), by the same firm, includes a low-domed library, which was modeled after Thomas Jefferson's library at the University of Virginia. Their Hartwell School (1925) is an elegant smaller example of the Georgian Revival.

The most impressive example of a Collegiate Gothic school is the impressive Hughes High School built in 1906-08. It was designed by Minnesota architect J. Walter Stevens, who won the commission in a competition. Located on Clifton Avenue across from the University of Cincinnati, the building has a massive seven-story tower, set off by wide horizontal wings. Octagonal corner turrets, buttresses topped with gargoyles and tile accents enrich the façade. Typical characteristics of this style were the large rectangular block, flat roofs, low arches, large areas of continuous windows and stone or cast terra cotta trim which contrasts with the typical brick walls. High-quality artistic details such as stained glass windows and Rookwood tile fountains were often incorporated. Other examples of this style include Central Fairmount (1906) by Dornette, and two designs by Hannaford & Sons—Carson (1916) in Price Hill and Hoffman Elementary (1919-1925) in Walnut Hills.

Other variations on eclectic revival styles include the former Guilford Elementary (1914) on Fourth Street downtown with Italian Romanesque Revival flourishes by Garber & Woodward. The design features a taller central block with a strong arcade at the top accented by polychrome voussoirs, and generous loggias (originally open) enclosing roof gardens on the lower wings. Condon Elementary (1922) (demolished) in Avondale and Oyler Elementary (1931) in Lower Price Hill, both designed by Hannaford & Sons, exemplify the Spanish Romanesque. Mount Washington Elementary School (1933) by Kruckmeyer & Strong, with its angled wings, steep slate roofs, textured brickwork and a low cylindrical tower with a conical roof, reflects the Normandy Manor style popular during the previous decade.

Construction slowed somewhat during the Great Depression and World War II. Then in 1945, there was a new assessment of building needs. In 1942-43, the Cincinnati school system was housed in 81 school buildings, ranging in age from 11 years for Mount Washington to 86 years for the Twelfth District. The 1945 survey noted a "typical pattern of urban growth, which is characterized by deterioration at the center and rapid growth on the edge."<sup>13</sup> Improved transportation and decentralization of industries, such as the new Wright Aeronautical plant built in the northern suburb of Evendale in 1941, promoted the dispersal of the population and growth at the city limits.

During the 1950s, the city's population remained stable, actually declining slightly from 503,998 in 1950 to 502,550 in 1960. But as the general population declined, the school-age population increased by 16,500 or 34 percent during the same period. This resulted in part from the baby boom but also from

<sup>13</sup> Holy, pp. 25, 9.

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enlargement of the school district beyond city limits. By 1962, the Cincinnati school district included the city of Cheviot, most of the city of Silverton, Amberley Village, Golf Manor, part of Fairfax, and parts of Anderson, Columbia, Delhi, Green, and Springfield townships. While the area of the city as of January 1960 was 77.3 square miles, the school district covered about 90 square miles.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the Board of Education had stated its intention in 1944 of providing specialized schools and classes including a college preparatory high school, vocational high schools, a special remedial school for under-achieving students over 12 years old, a special school for crippled children and home instruction for children confined to their homes or in hospitals; as well as special classes for pupils with visual or auditory deficiencies and the mentally retarded.

The expansion of the school district to include the new suburbs, growth of specialized schools, the post-war baby boom, and the desire to replace aging school buildings led to a burst of school construction. In the 15 years between 1944 and 1959, 44 new schools or major additions were built at a cost of \$69.5 million.<sup>15</sup> Numerous new schools were provided at the periphery of the school system, including a large Modern-style Woodward High School in the new northern suburb of Roselawn, completed in 1953 and designed by Charles Cellarius. The many buildings built in the post-World War II era attest to the ascendance of Modernism, which swept away historical references and applied ornament in favor of a stark stripped-down appearance and modern materials.

“A Manual for Architects” published by the Board of Education in 1946 recommended maximum flexibility as to interior arrangement—with as few weight-bearing partitions as possible, arranging classrooms in unbroken rows of three or more, designing buildings in a way that later additions could easily be made without cutting off natural light and ventilation to existing rooms, limiting building height to two stories, using brick rather than wood, terra cotta or stucco for the exterior walls, designing windows for maximum light penetration, and minimizing decorative masonry features. In light of uncertainty about the future school population, the board resolved to provide the greatest flexibility in the size of any new buildings, which could be readily expanded.<sup>16</sup>

The 1945 survey had recommended replacement of Fairview and several other elementary schools. By 1962 Fairview and four other schools had received annexes which were designed for future enlargement to permit the abandonment of the old buildings. However none of these schools was torn down or abandoned until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As a result of the latest facilities master plan completed in 2002, most of these 1950s-vintage and later school buildings have been or will be demolished, making the Fairview Annex a rare survivor.

Fairview Public School

The original Fairview Public School was built as an amenity to entice people to move to the surrounding area. Situated on the southwestern slope of the hills north of Over-the-Rhine, the neighborhood of Fairview was an unincorporated area of Millcreek Township in the first half of the nineteenth century. Because the steep hillsides made the area difficult to reach, Fairview was very thinly populated until

<sup>14</sup> *Survey of School Plant Needs; Cincinnati Public Schools.* (Cincinnati: Board of Education, 1962), 1, 75.

<sup>15</sup> Curry, Robt. *Fifty Years in the Cincinnati Public Schools, 1925-1975.*

<sup>16</sup> Holy, p 21.

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inclines and streetcars made it accessible. Around 1856, Fairview Avenue was built on the western edge of the hill and named for the fine vista it offered of the basin and lower Mill Creek Valley. In the late 1860s residents began using the name of the street to refer to the entire neighborhood. The eastern part of Fairview began to develop in response to the Bellevue Incline, which climbed the hillside from Clifton Avenue to Ohio Avenue, and opened in 1876. Dwellings were built along the streets near the incline and the street car line that ran from the upper terminus.

Because Fairview offered excellent views and the cheapest undeveloped land close to the Cincinnati basin, a group of speculators, related by marriage, business, and political ties, began purchasing large tracts here in the 1870s and 1880s. Lawyer and politician Isaac J. Miller (1833-1910), who had moved to Fairview around 1866, acquired large amounts of land, and other prominent citizens—Christian Moerlein and his son-in-law John Goetz, Jr., law partners Gustav Tafel and Francis Lampe, Dr. Massilon Cassat, and hat manufacturer Phillip Volkert—built large homes in western Fairview.

These major landowners began using their positions in city government and their family and political connections to bring public services to the area. From the late 1880s to the mid-1890s, the Moerlein family was very influential in Cincinnati politics. Tafel was a member of the City Board of Administration; Goetz was president of the Board of Fire Commissioners; and Miller was president of the Board of Police Commissioners. During this time, in addition to Fairview Public School, a firehouse, police station, water and gas lines, sewers and street improvements were all put in place in the still sparsely populated Fairview and adjoining Clifton Heights. Unlike most neighborhoods, where development and population growth were well underway before such improvements were made, here public services were used by the landowners to spur the sale of their properties. Their land became even more desirable after 1894 when the Cincinnati Street Railway Company completed the Fairview Incline, which ran from McMicken Avenue to Fairview Avenue.<sup>17</sup>

Construction of Fairview School began in 1888 and was completed in 1890. The Annual Report of the Public Schools of Cincinnati for the year ending August 31, 1888 states that, "During the past year, the board has contracted for the erection of an eighteen (18) room house on the Haas lot, on Warner Street, which is also to be equipped by a modern system of heating and ventilation, and when completed will supply a much needed want in a part of the city which is rapidly improving as well as being a credit to the Board and an ornament to its surroundings." Formally opened on September 12, 1890, the building was praised in the Sixty-First Annual Report: "This building is one of the finest, best equipped and appointed school buildings in the State of Ohio, and is truly a credit to the schools of Cincinnati. It is supplied with all the modern appliances in the matter of light, ventilation and every thing to make the school room and surroundings cheerful, inviting and pleasant to its pupils and its teachers. The cost of the building complete is \$72,288, the lot \$15,500, a total of \$87,788."

Fairview originally housed students from grades 1 through 8, and the student body was predominantly of German descent. In 1918, under the influence of World War I anti-German sentiment, the Cincinnati Board of Education voted a ban on teaching German in Cincinnati's elementary public schools. However, German language instruction was offered in Cincinnati schools as early as 1835. In 1976, in

<sup>17</sup> Geoffrey J. Giglierano and Deborah A. Overmyer, *The Bicentennial Guide to Greater Cincinnati*. (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Historical Society, 1988), 230-231.

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response to suit filed by the NAACP, the board established a German-English bilingual program for grades 1-2 at Fairview and at Schiel School in Corryville. These alternative or "magnet" programs were designed to improve racial balance. The board located some of the more popular programs in what were regarded as less desirable neighborhoods, hoping to draw children from a wide variety of backgrounds from throughout the system. By 1980 Fairview students were racially balanced and consistently scoring at the top of Cincinnati's elementary public schools on achievement tests.

The school became crowded as early as 1900, so a temporary wood-frame "colony" structure was constructed at the northeast corner of the lot. Less than 20 years after the first temporary structure, two more colony buildings were built south of the lot to provide a gymnasium and Industrial Arts Room. Their construction was wood-frame with paper composition roofs and wood steps.<sup>18</sup> A 1945 *Survey of the School-Building Needs of Cincinnati, Ohio*, recommended that Fairview be replaced with a new building; however, it was rated as a lower priority than other school projects and did not happen.<sup>19</sup> Still, by the 1950s the building was so crowded that the lower grades were being taught in local churches. Crowding was finally relieved in 1958 with the dedication of the Fairview School Annex. This building was designed for future enlargement, which was intended to allow the replacement of the old building. However, this plan was never implemented, probably because the subsequent movement of young families to the suburbs caused a decline in the number of children in the neighborhood.

In 2002 Cincinnati Public Schools completed a Facilities Master Plan to deal with aging buildings and shifting demographics. As a result, the German-English bilingual program moved to a new building in Clifton while the old Fairview school buildings were closed in 2008 and sold for redevelopment in 2009.

H. E. Siter

According to architectural historian Walter E. Langsam, H. (Henry) E. Siter (1851-1913) was one of the most interesting of late-19th-century architects who practiced in Cincinnati. Siter came to Cincinnati in September 1884, and opened his own office in the Lincoln's Inn Court Building in November 1885, after a year in the office of Edwin Anderson (the former partner of Samuel Hannaford). He is listed as practicing here 1885-1912 (although apparently in Boston in 1899), was a regular member of the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and attempted to open an office in Lexington, Kentucky, with the English-born and trained Cincinnati architect W. W. Franklin in 1886. He was listed as a partner of Lucien F. Plympton in 1897.

Siter's earliest Cincinnati work is said to have been the United [States] Bank Building (completed May 1886), at Third and Walnut streets, where he had his office during the 1890s. From the beginning he seems to have had distinguished clients, especially for residences, such as Eugene Zimmerman (whose daughter Helena married the Duke of Manchester), Charles Fleischmann, General Michael Ryan, and members of the Groesbeck, Heekin, Hanna, Longworth, and possibly Seasongood families (or their estates). His designs for the A. H. Hinkle and C. H. Duhme residences were published in *American Architect and Building News* in 1889 and 1892, respectively.

<sup>18</sup> Cincinnati Public Schools. *Survey of Sites, Buildings, and Equipment, Being a Two-year Study of the Physical Plant of the Cincinnati Public Schools, Made Possible by Grants from the United States Works Progress Administration*, 1938, Section I: Elementary Schools, Fairview, p. 1-2.

<sup>19</sup> Holy, p. 75.



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Siter designed some of the most poetically textured and detailed local variants of the Richardsonian Romanesque, such as the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church on Taft Road near Auburn Avenue, a virtually intact (both outside and inside) Richardsonian design with a Gothic flavor. The Richardsonian Romanesque style was very popular in Cincinnati, exemplified by the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Building by H. H. Richardson himself, built at Fourth and Vine streets and completed in 1888, as well as Cincinnati City Hall by Samuel Hannaford, built in 1888-93, and numerous private residences and churches.

Although most of his work was Richardsonian in flavor, Siter also designed one of the earliest and finest American Colonial Revival buildings in the area, the jeweler Charles H. Duhme's buff brick house (1892) on Clifton Avenue at Lafayette Circle, with its delicate Adamesque detail on a basically cubic block. Perhaps this interpretation of the Colonial Revival also reflects his New England background. Although born in Philadelphia, Siter was educated in Newport, R.I., among many sterling examples of 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century, vernacular and high-style Colonial architecture. He spent a year in the Boston office of Clarence S. Luce; two years with Gridley J.F. Bryant, a prominent Boston, Mass., architect; and seven with Samuel J.F. Thayer, architect of the Second Empire Providence, R.I., City Hall, for whom Siter was head draughtsman for the last five years (ca. 1879-84); all were prominent architects of their period and place. Siter was therefore exposed, not only to the actual New England Colonial (and Federal) architecture that was beginning to be recognized during his years with Thayer after the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, but also to the development of H. H. Richardson's personal version of the Romanesque (combined with Byzantine and even Syrian Early Christian elements) but based on the Beaux-Arts planning and conceptualizing that Richardson had gained in Paris during the Civil War years.

Siter & [Edwin] Anderson competed in the nationally important competition for the design of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Building at Fourth and Vine Streets (1885; won by H. H. Richardson, with entries from Bruce Price of New York, Burnham & Root of Chicago, and Wheelwright & Everett of Boston). Siter won an informal competition to design the Pike Street townhouse of architecture patron A. Howard Hinkle in 1887 (who endowed a scholarship for the A.I.A.), against New York architect Bruce Price, W. M. Aiken, and A. O. Elzner, but contributed unsuccessfully to the circa-1888 competition for the First (Linton) Unitarian Universalist Church on Reading Road in Avondale won by James W. McLaughlin, and the 1895 University of Cincinnati Competition (won, as so many Cincinnati competitions were at the turn of the last century, by S. Hannaford & Sons).

Siter designed the cruciform main building (Horticultural Hall, also used as the Art Gallery) of the Cincinnati Centennial Exposition of 1888 in Washington Park, linked to Music Hall by a "Bridge of Sighs," as well as a "Log Cabin" for the Exposition. The diminutive Gothic-style stone St. Stephen Episcopal Chapel (1886) in Winton Place (now known as Spring Grove Village), Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church (1889-1890) and related Clifford Memorial Chapel (completed in 1889-1890, demolished by the University of Cincinnati in 2004), and the Church of the Nativity, Price Hill, demonstrate further his interest in picturesque massing.

The Third National Bank Building of Cincinnati, with its high gable, was a superb adaptation of Richardsonian conceptions to a narrow urban site (like the Hinkle house, formerly located on Ninth Street opposite the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and torn down in the 1980s for

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parking.) The design for the Third National Bank appeared in the *American Architect and Building News* in July 1889. Siter also designed a pre-1891 Second National Bank Building and the Commercial Bank Building; the Farmers' National Bank in Mansfield, Ohio; the former Citizens' National Bank in Sidney, Ohio; and the German National Bank on Madison Avenue at Pike Street, Covington, Kentucky, mentioned above. He designed a Richardsonian addition to the St. Nicholas Hotel, formerly at the southeast corner of Fourth and Race streets. Siter also designed many large-scale commercial and industrial structures, such as the former Sachs Shoe Mfg Co., 800 Sycamore St. (ca. 1890); other shoe factories on the southeast and northeast corners of Ninth and Sycamore; and the Enterprise Carriage Co. plant in Miamisburg, Ohio. For the City of Cincinnati, Siter designed at least two police stations and one fire engine house.

However, H.E. Siter is best known for his great Richardsonian Romanesque Revival public-school buildings built in the older suburbs of the city beginning in the 1880s, and served as the official architect for the Board of Education from 1890 to 1899. Siter's schools typically have symmetrical massing, giant pyramidal or hipped roofs, dramatic chimneys, and rich detail, which make them landmarks in their neighborhoods. He designed at least ten. These included the Carl School (1891-2) on Baltimore Pike in North Fairmount, demolished in 1990; the 12<sup>th</sup> district School (1892) on Southern Avenue in Mt. Auburn; Columbian School (1892-3) in Avondale, demolished in 1993; Mount Adams School (1894) on St Gregory Street in Mount Adams, recently converted to condominiums; and Harrison School (29<sup>th</sup> District) (1894) in Sedamsville.

Later Siter-designed schools include the former Walnut Hills High School, aka Burdette School (1895), at Ashland and Burdette avenues in Walnut Hills; Garfield (1897) at Elmore and Edgewood streets in South Cumminsville; Salmon B. Chase School (1897) on Chase Street in Northside; and Lincoln School (1898) on Delta Avenue in Mount Lookout; all converted to apartments. Other schools by Siter no longer extant include Webster High School (8<sup>th</sup> district) (1898) at Findlay and Bremen streets in the West End and a possible addition to Hoffman (19<sup>th</sup> district) School in East Walnut Hills (entirely replaced by the present Hannaford & Sons Tudor Revival structure in the early 1900s). If Siter did indeed design all schools during the period of 1890-1899, then he was also responsible for the Elm Street (6<sup>th</sup> District) school (1896-97) at Elm and Odeon in OTR (converted to a city health center), and the 21<sup>st</sup> District School on Price Hill (1892-93).

Fairview is one of Siter's earliest and best school designs. Its high walls, enormous hipped roof punctuated by rugged chimneys, corner towers and generous overall proportions give it monumentality. The slightly overhanging corbelled top story, particularly on the corner towers, the wide hipped dormers, and the relatively delicate treatment of the wall-surfaces suggest H. H. Richardson's Sever Hall (1878-1880) at Harvard University. As a New Englander Siter had firsthand experience during his early career in Boston with the contemporary works of Richardson, for whom this distinctively American late 19<sup>th</sup>-century version of the Romanesque Revival is named. Fairview School's layout of a rectangle with corner towers has even more ancient antecedents in the mediaeval chateaux and fortresses of Northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands in the 10<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In 1899 Siter "relocated in Boston, where he built up a large clientele; he is listed with William F.

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Goodwin as Goodwin & Siter in Boston 1900-1904.”<sup>20</sup> His move coincides with a new school superintendent, W. H. Morgan, taking charge, and the appointment of Dornette & Sheppard as official architects to Cincinnati Public Schools. However, Siter returned to Cincinnati shortly before his death in 1913. By 1902, Siter’s work was characterized as a bit behind the times by rival architect Samuel Hannaford, who authored a chapter on school architecture in John B. Shotwell’s *A History of the Schools of Cincinnati* published in 1902.

For the last few years, the public school buildings have been creditable specimens of architectural effort. Perhaps it may be complained of as being rather monotonous, but this is the almost inevitable result of one-man effort. Critically considered, they are in the main designed in that phase of “Romanesque” rendered so popular throughout the country by the work of H. H. Richardson, of Boston, of which the building of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce is a fine exponent.

In the school buildings referred to this feeling is plainly discernible in the high, steep-pitch roof; the constant repetition of circular towers, in place and out of place; the almost constant use of circular head windows; and the heavy, deeply recessed, arched doorways, as well as in the use of the peculiar carvings introduced, wherein the surface is crowded to the utmost with heavy interlacing foliage; nearly always lacking in refinement and often semi-barbarous [sic]. Of all well-defined styles of architecture, or their variants, there is not one so ill-adapted to the demands of school architecture as the one under consideration, and it is only by doing violence to the very instincts of the style that it can in any way be reconciled or adapted to school-house purposes.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, Siter’s school commissions represent a significant and lasting body of work. Most of his school buildings are still standing and have been successfully converted to new uses. Two of Siter’s schools are individually listed in the National Register— Lincoln School listed in 1979, and Mount Adams listed in 1980—and one, Chase School, is a contributing building in a certified local district—the Northside Neighborhood Business District Historic District. Two Cincinnati public school buildings by other architects are individually listed--Withrow High School (1919) by Garber & Woodward and Cummins School, which is listed under the *Samuel Hannaford and Sons Thematic Resource in Hamilton County*. Five schools—Bloom, Clifton, Heberle, McKinley, and Rothenberg—are listed by virtue of their location in National register-listed historic districts and are all contributing. A 1998 inventory of school buildings then owned by Cincinnati Public Schools by the Cincinnati Preservation Association identified 28 more school buildings considered to be eligible, including Fairview Public School.

Edward J. Schulte

<sup>20</sup> Langsam, “Biographical Dictionary of Architects Who Worked in the Greater Cincinnati Area before World War II,” 1996, pp. 149-150.

<sup>21</sup> Samuel Hannaford, “School Architecture,” in *A History of the Schools of Cincinnati*, ed. John B. Shotwell (Cincinnati: The School Life Company, 1902), 317-329.

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Edward J. Schulte (1890-1975) was a nationally famous architect based in Cincinnati who was known for his church designs. He retired in 1967 after almost 50 years in practice. On two occasions, he received the Cincinnati Fine Arts Institute's Sachs Prize for outstanding achievement; in 1930 for the design of St. Cecilia Church in Oakley and in 1958 for the restoration of St. Peter-in-Chains Cathedral. Other Cincinnati churches designed by Mr. Schulte include St. Monica's (1928), Our Lord Christ the King (1957), Guardian Angels (1963), and Nativity of Our Lord, (1967-69). Schulte was described as "the most prolific architect of churches in the history of Cincinnati," by Donald A. Tenoever in his master's thesis, "Edward J. Schulte and American Church Architecture of the Twentieth Century."

A recipient of an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Xavier University, Mr. Schulte served two terms as president of the Cincinnati chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Educated at the Cincinnati Art Academy, he began his career in Pittsburgh and returned to Cincinnati in 1921. Schulte served as a draftsman with several leading Cincinnati firms: Werner & Adkins, H. E. Hannaford, Charles F. Cellarius and H. Garriott, on his own after 1912 and with Robert E. Crowe (1881-1944) from 1921 to 1933; then again on his own to 1967. Together Schulte and Crowe designed numerous ecclesiastical works throughout the Cincinnati area; including The Loretto, Dayton, Ohio and St. Peter, Lexington, KY. The role of Crowe in the firm's accomplishments has not yet been ascertained, but many of the best works attributed to Schulte were designed during their partnership.

According to architectural historian Walter E. Langsam, Schulte was a prolific and skilled architect who avoided the usual Protestant Gothic or Colonial Revival modes and devised a streamlined version of earlier medieval and even slightly exotic styles and models, but often simultaneously suggesting an Art Deco or Modern influence. In the 1950s Schulte began to move toward Modernism, as seen in his 1955 renovation and expansion of the 1835 Greek Revival St. Peter-in-Chains Cathedral. Here he incorporated historic motifs in a stripped down rectilinear way, but he was still straddling traditional and modernistic forms. In the 1960s, he explored alternative church plans and relied more heavily on aluminum walls, as seen in the Church of the Nativity (1967). However, for more utilitarian designs such as schools, he used an undiluted Modern approach beginning in the 1940s.

Among his works were 45 school commissions, all but four were for Catholic organizations. His first school commissions—Regina High School and Purcell High School—both dating from 1927 and reflecting traditional or revivalist styles. In addition to the Fairview School Annex, his other public schools were the Lawrenceburg (IN) High School (1935-36); the Physics Building at the University of Cincinnati (1936-37); and Quebec Heights Elementary School (1965-67). By the 1940s his school designs were typically flat-roofed two-story buildings with banded or grouped aluminum windows, often with horizontal muntins and limestone mullions and spandrels between floors. The entrances were sometimes emphasized by slightly projecting bays with limestone facing, as seen in the Fairview Annex. This Modernist approach was directly in compliance with the 1946 CPS Manual for Architects. The Fairview Annex had a flexible interior plan, with folding partitions in the gym and a second-floor classroom, classrooms in unbroken rows of three, and large banded windows. In massing and exterior materials it was limited to two-stories and brick, with minimal decorative features. Quebec Heights, his only other school for CPS, is a sprawling one-story flat-roofed building of aluminum and glass, and not of the same quality as the Fairview annex in materials or stature.

Conclusion

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The former Fairview Public School and Annex are eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C for their representation of the development of Cincinnati Public Schools and for their architectural significance. Built in 1888-1890 and designed by H. E. Siter, who served as the official architect for Cincinnati Public Schools from 1890 to 1899, the original school is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style and reflects the architectural taste, the building program of Cincinnati public schools, and the development of the Fairview neighborhood near the end of the nineteenth century. Fairview School is also one of the oldest public school buildings still extant in Cincinnati and its integrity, despite its age of 120 years, is very high. The Modern-style Annex by Edward J. Schulte built in 1957-58, reflects the late work of an important local architect and the expansion of the school facilities after World War II. In addition, Fairview Annex is a rare surviving example of a 1950s-era school, as most school buildings of this era have been or will be demolished as a result of Cincinnati Public Schools' 2002 facilities master plan.

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary of the property coincides with Parcel Number 096-0002-0152, remaining parcel A and new parcel B, created in a lot split drawn on September 3, 2009.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary consists of all property historically associated with Fairview Public School and Annex.



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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information pertains to all photograph numbers except as noted:

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Date of Photographs: September 2009  
Negatives: NA

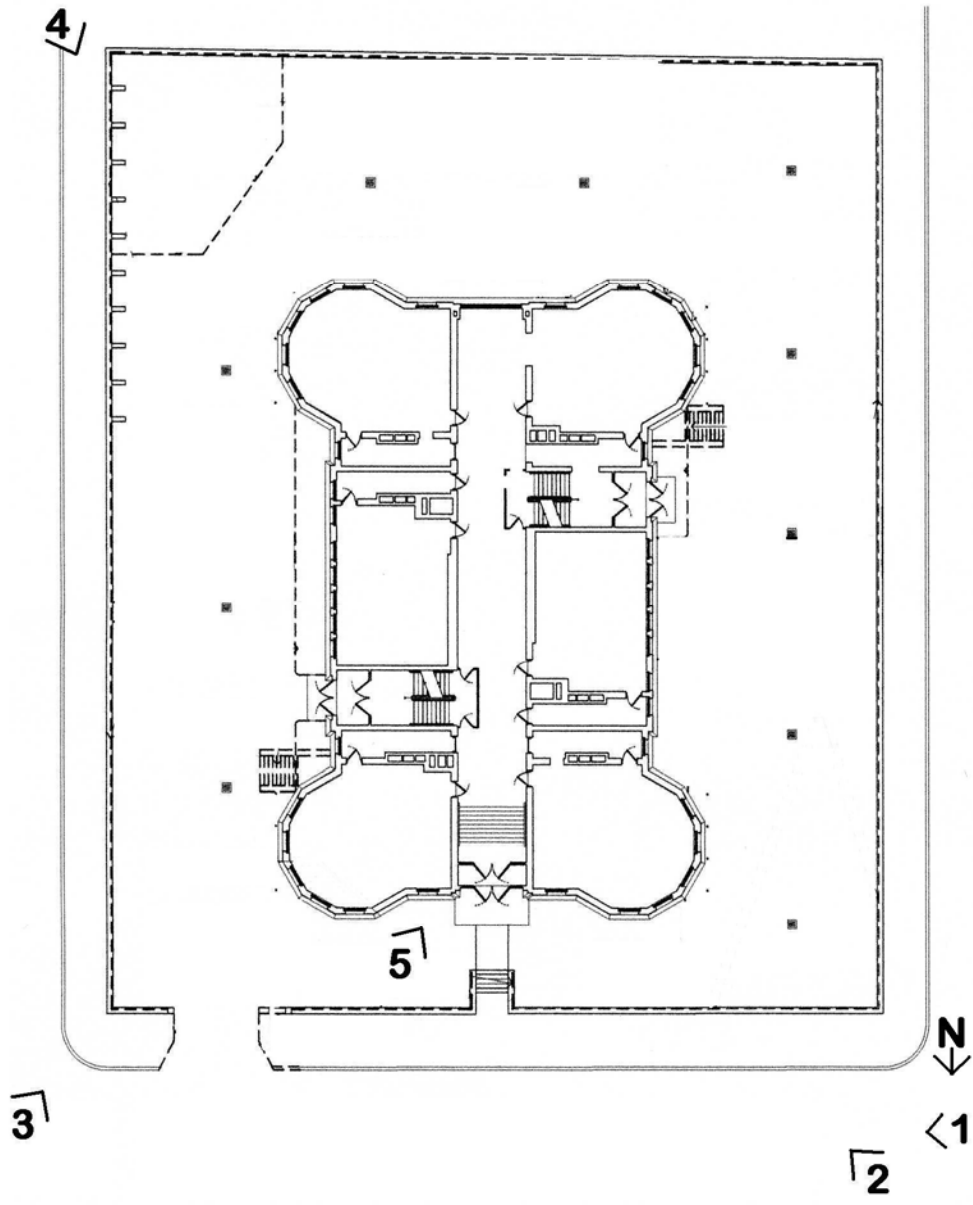
Photo No.	Photographic Information
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2	North and west elevations, looking southeast
3	East and north elevations, looking southwest
4	South and west elevations, looking northwest
5	Main entrance, north elevation, looking southwest
6	First floor corridor, looking north
7	Main entrance detail, looking north
8	First floor, classroom, looking west
9	First floor, classroom, looking northeast
10	Second floor, classroom, looking northwest
11	Demising wall, first floor, looking south
12	East stairway, first floor, looking east
13	Ventilation dial, third floor, looking south
14	Attic corridor, looking north
15	Annex, north and west elevations, looking southeast
16	Annex, west elevation, looking northeast
17	Annex, south and east elevations, looking northwest
18.	Annex, east and north elevations, looking southwest
19	Annex, entrance foyer, looking west
20.	Annex, ground floor corridor, looking north
21.	Annex, typical classroom, looking northeast
22.	Annex, typical classroom, looking southeast
23.	Annex, typical classroom, closet detail, looking south
24.	Annex, gymnasium, looking north

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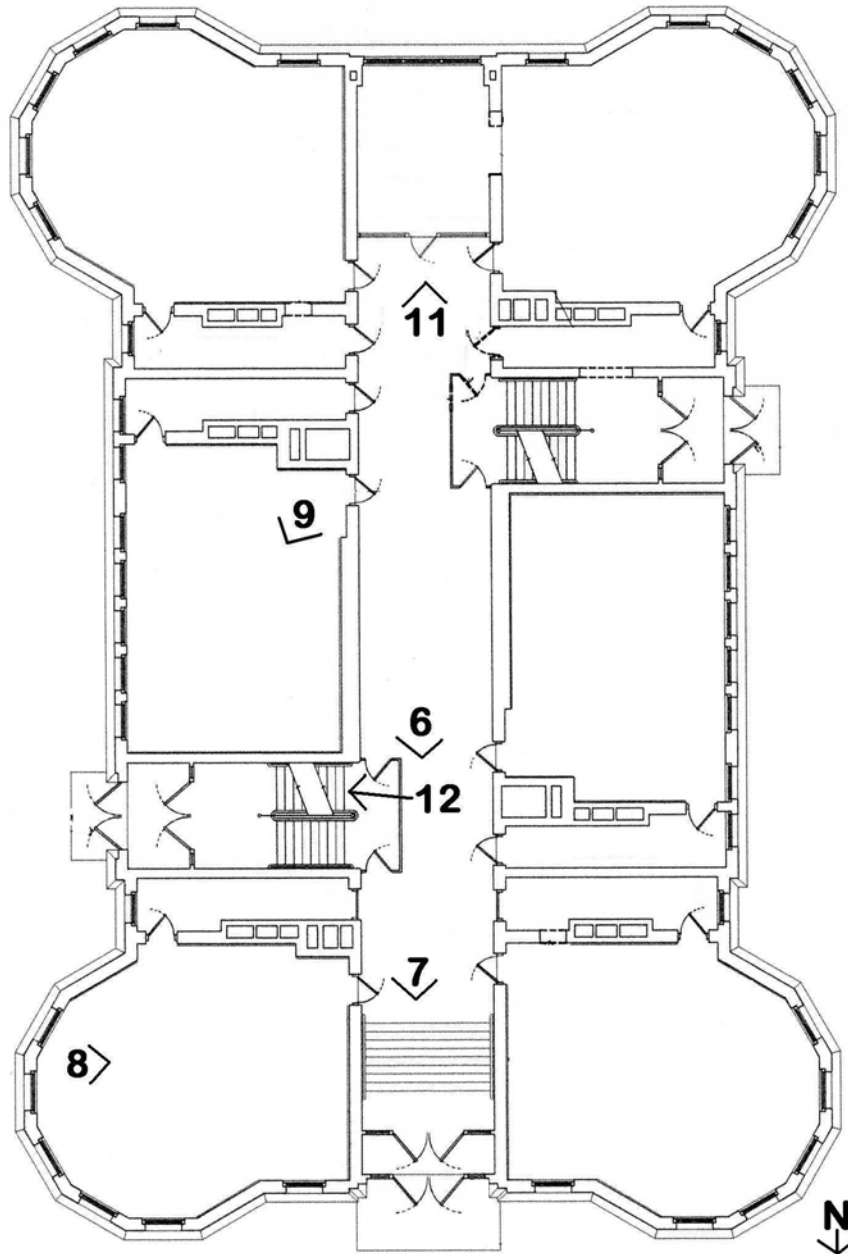
Fairview School: exterior photo key

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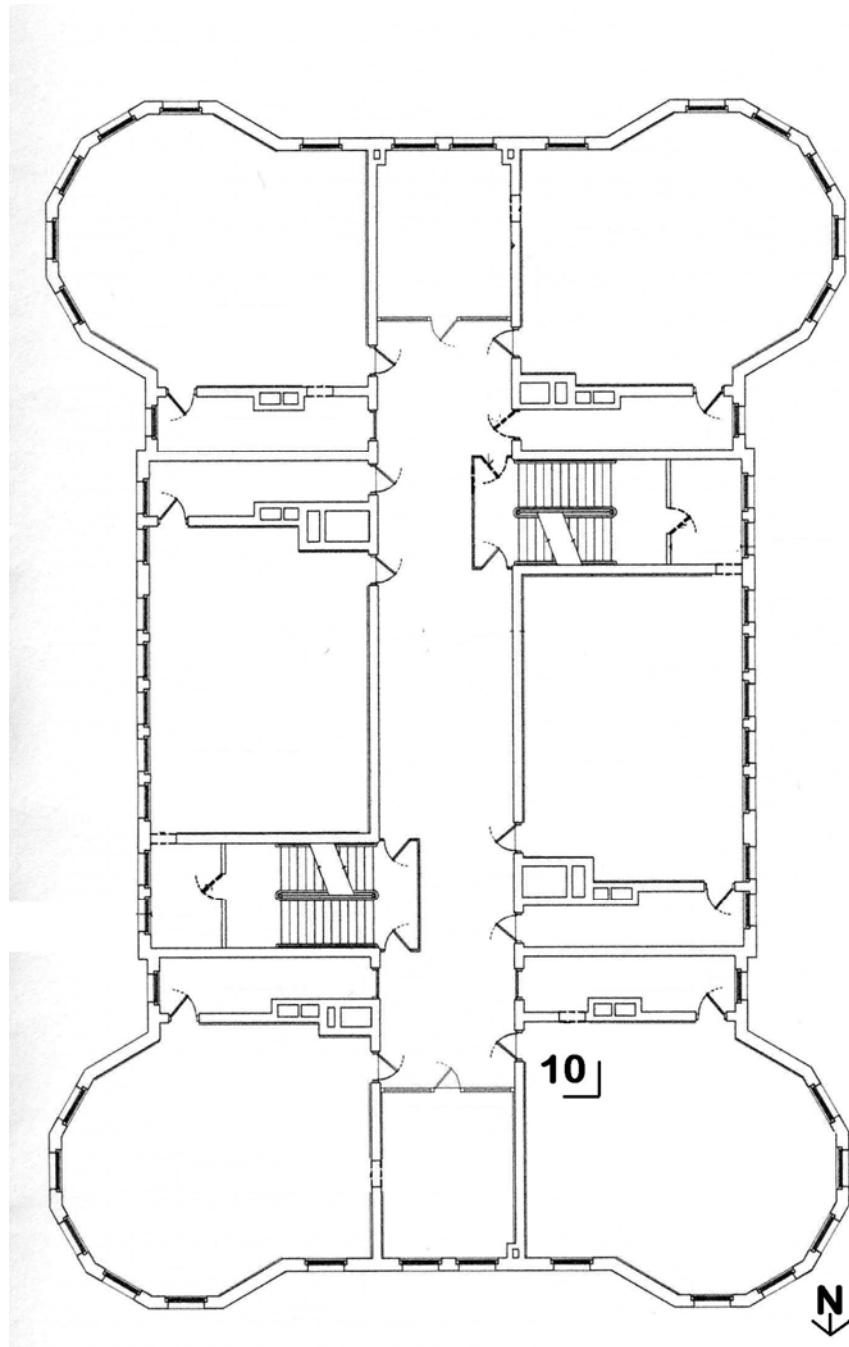
Fairview School: first floor photo key

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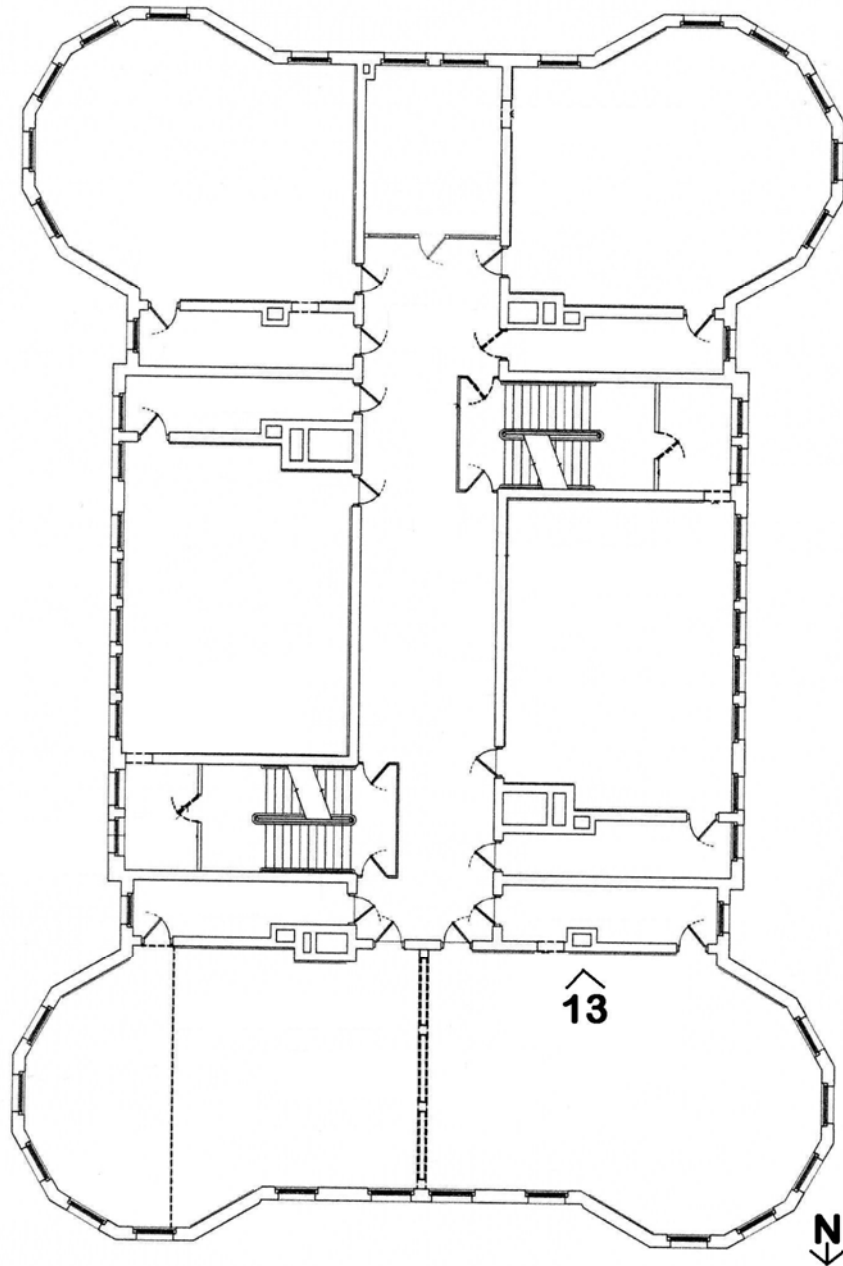
Fairview School: second floor photo key

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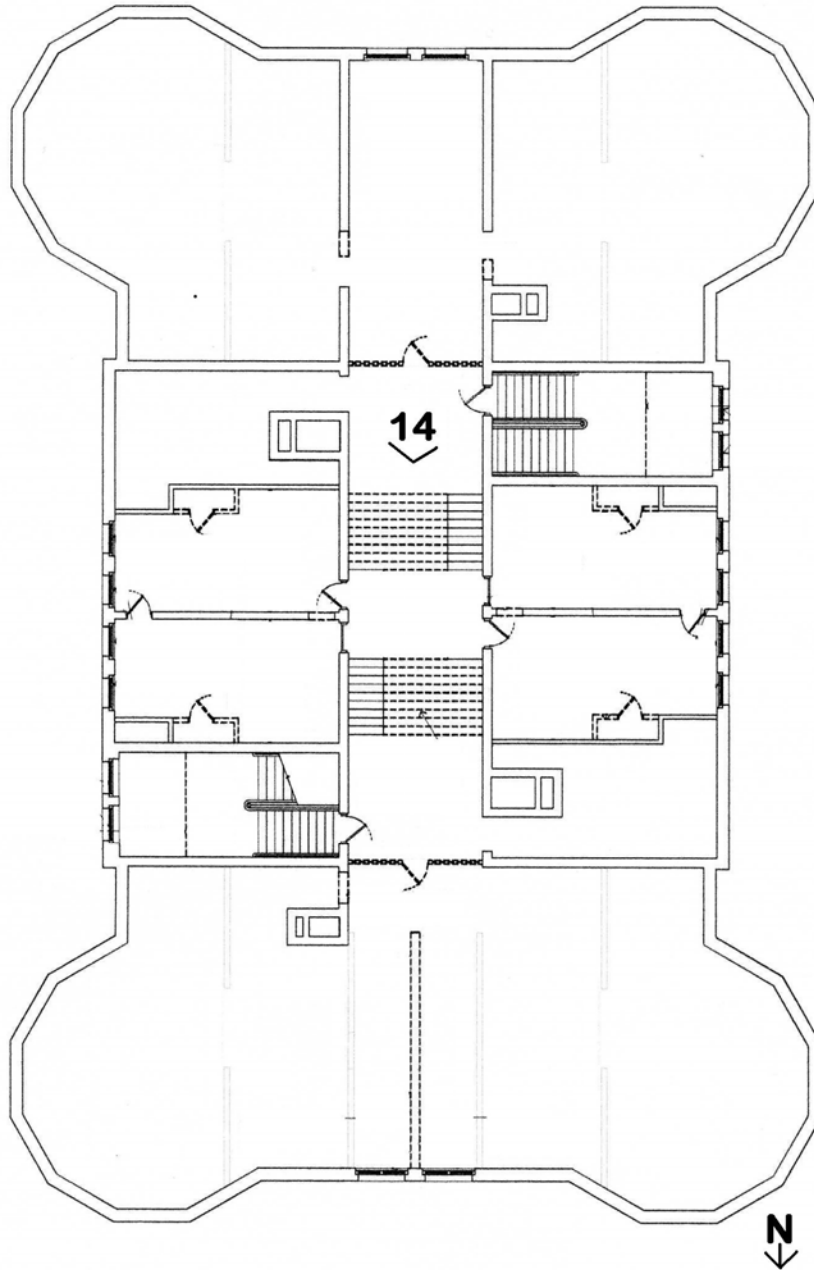
Fairview School: third floor photo key

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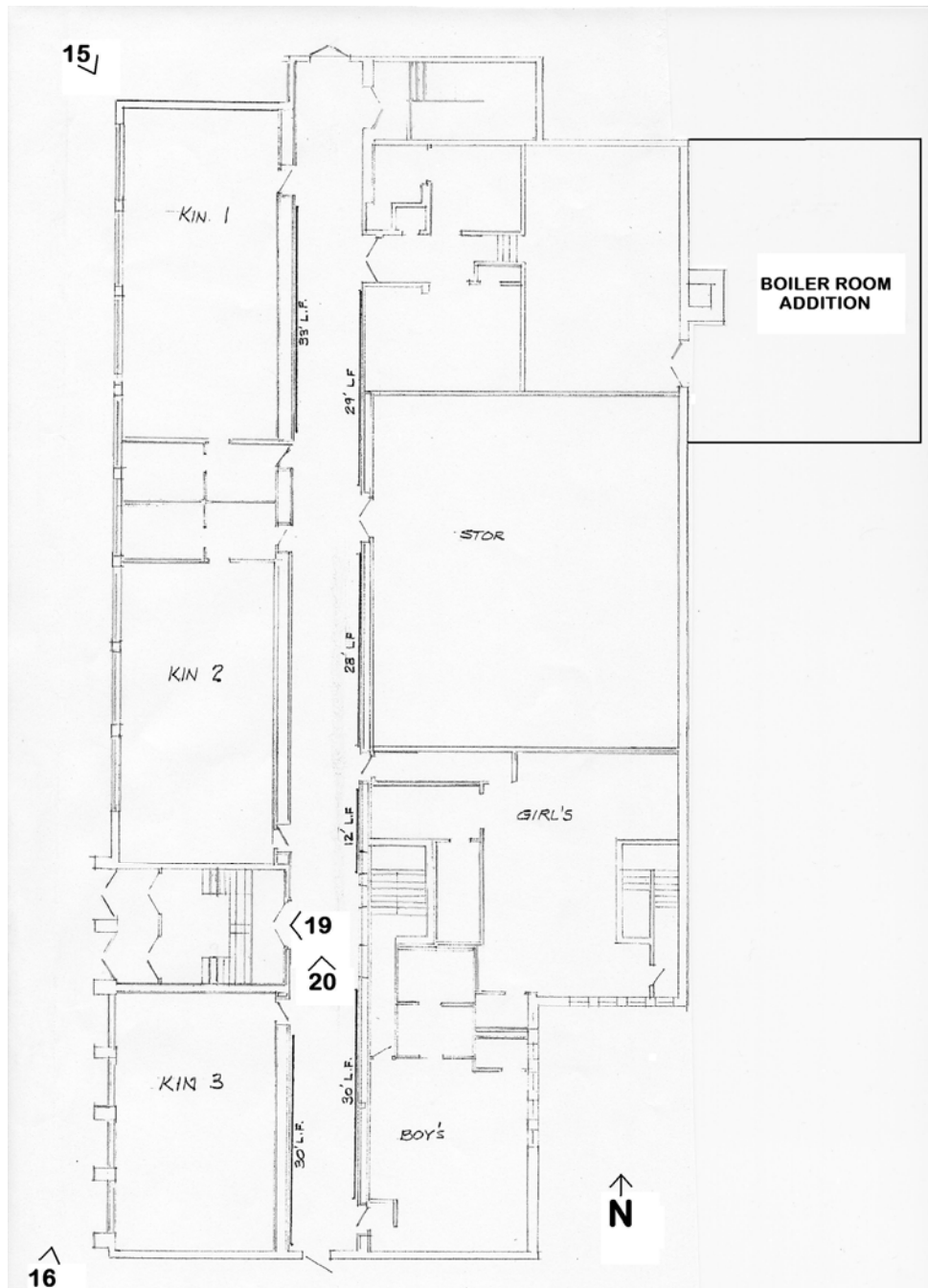
Fairview School: Attic photo key

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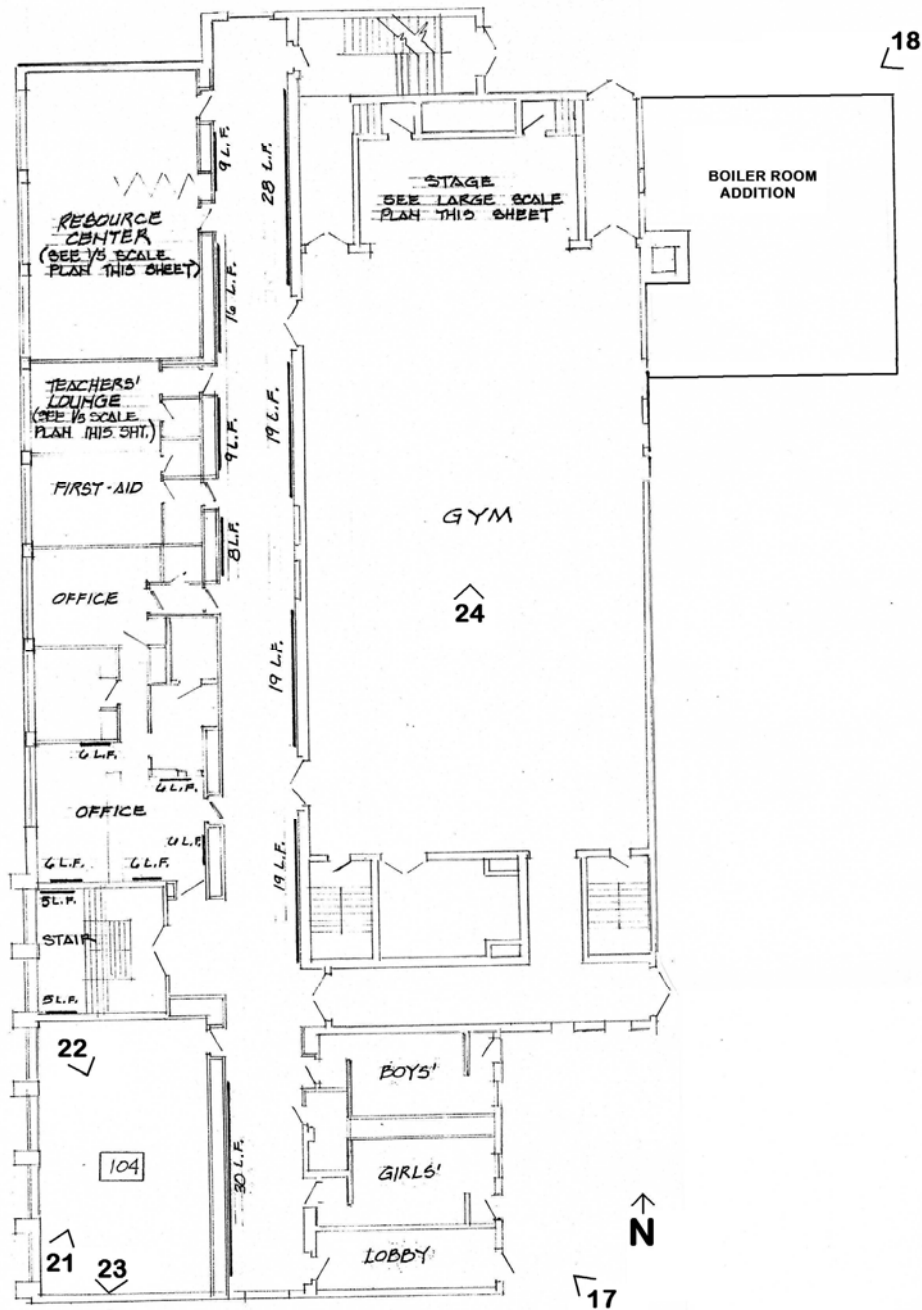
Fairview Annex: ground floor photo key

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Fairview Annex: first floor photo key



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List of Figures

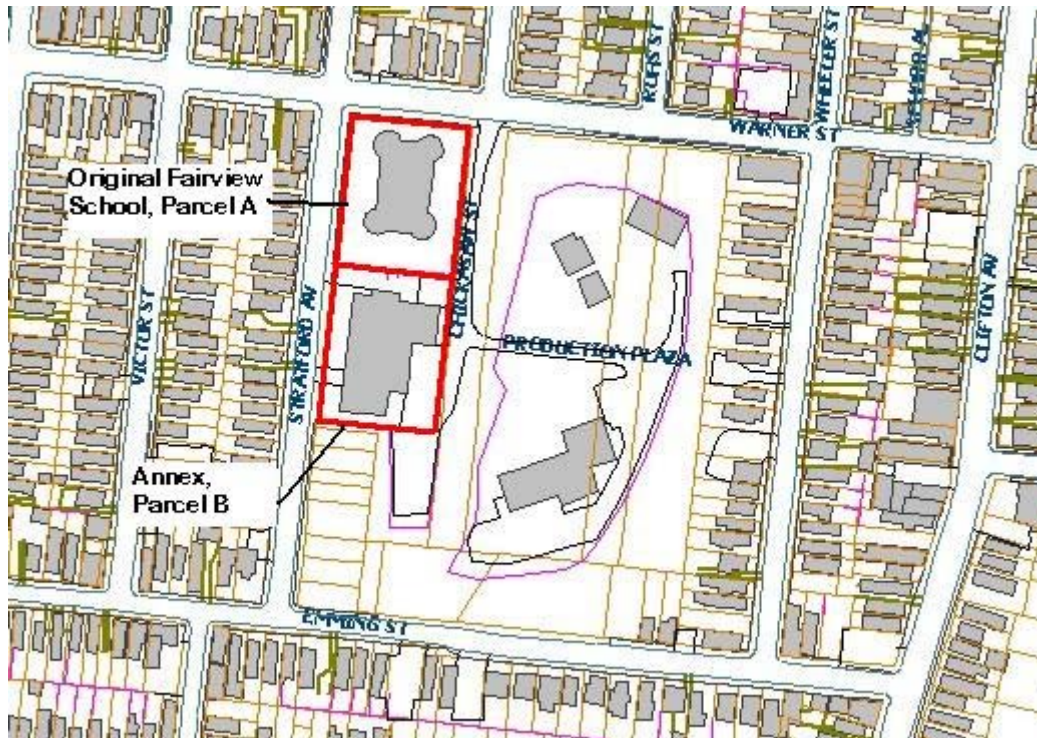
1. First floor plan
2. Second floor plan
3. Third floor plan
4. Attic plan
5. Basement plan
6. Front elevation
7. Side elevations
8. Transverse Section
9. Longitudinal Section
10. Fairview School, looking southeast, *Fairview Heights Souvenir*, 1894
11. Fairview School, looking southeast, *Fairview Heights Souvenir*, 1895
12. Post Card view, circa 1914
13. Annex, ground floor plan
14. Annex, first floor plan
15. Annex, second floor plan

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Sketch Map

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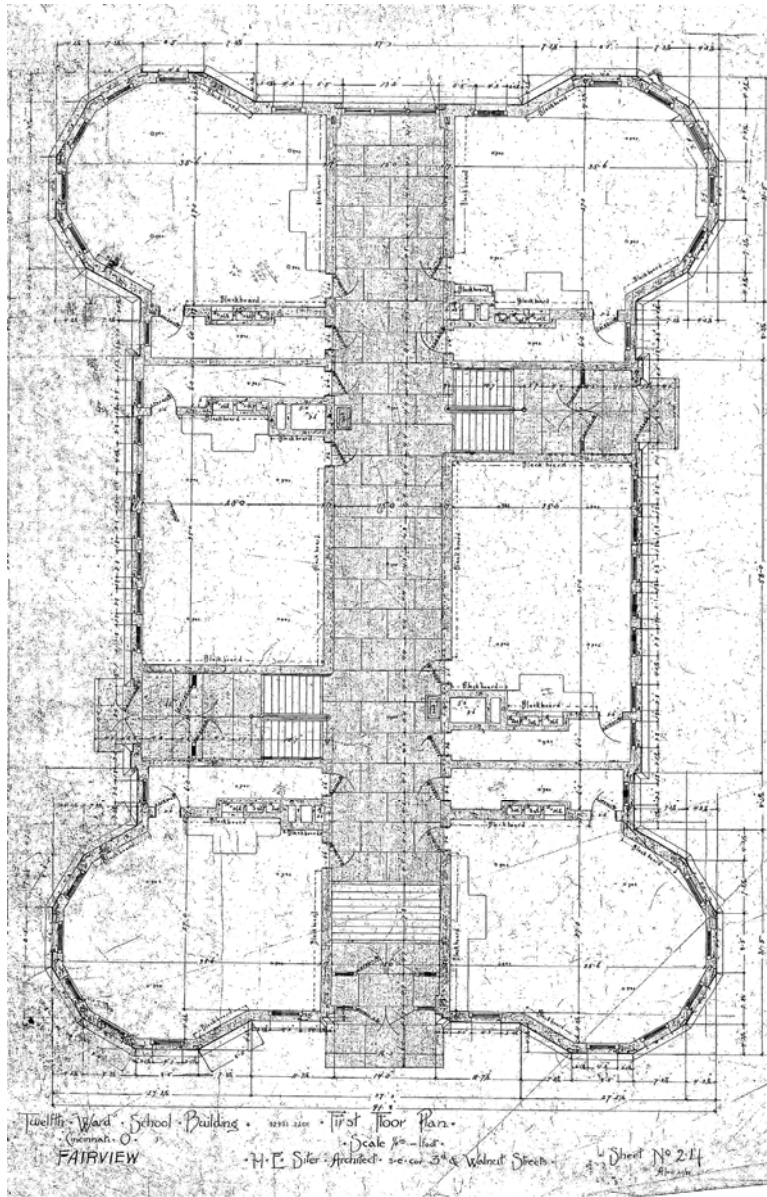


Figure 1: First floor plan

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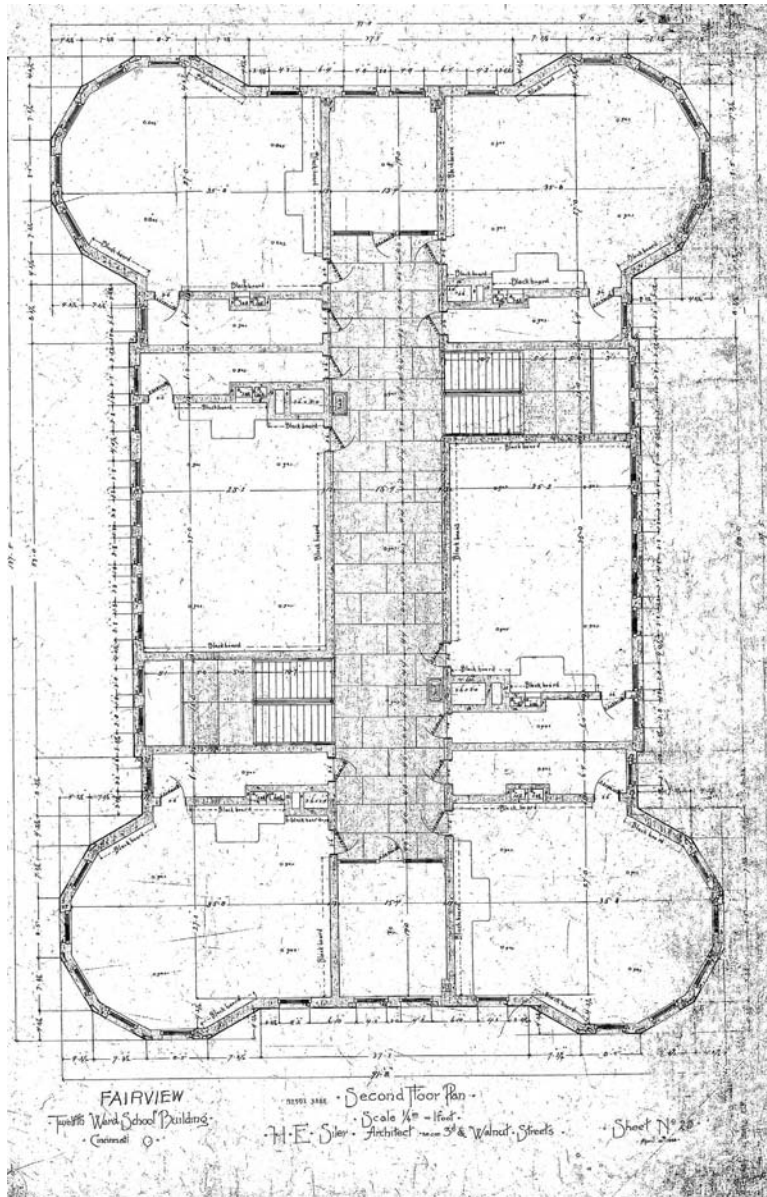


Figure 2: Second floor plan

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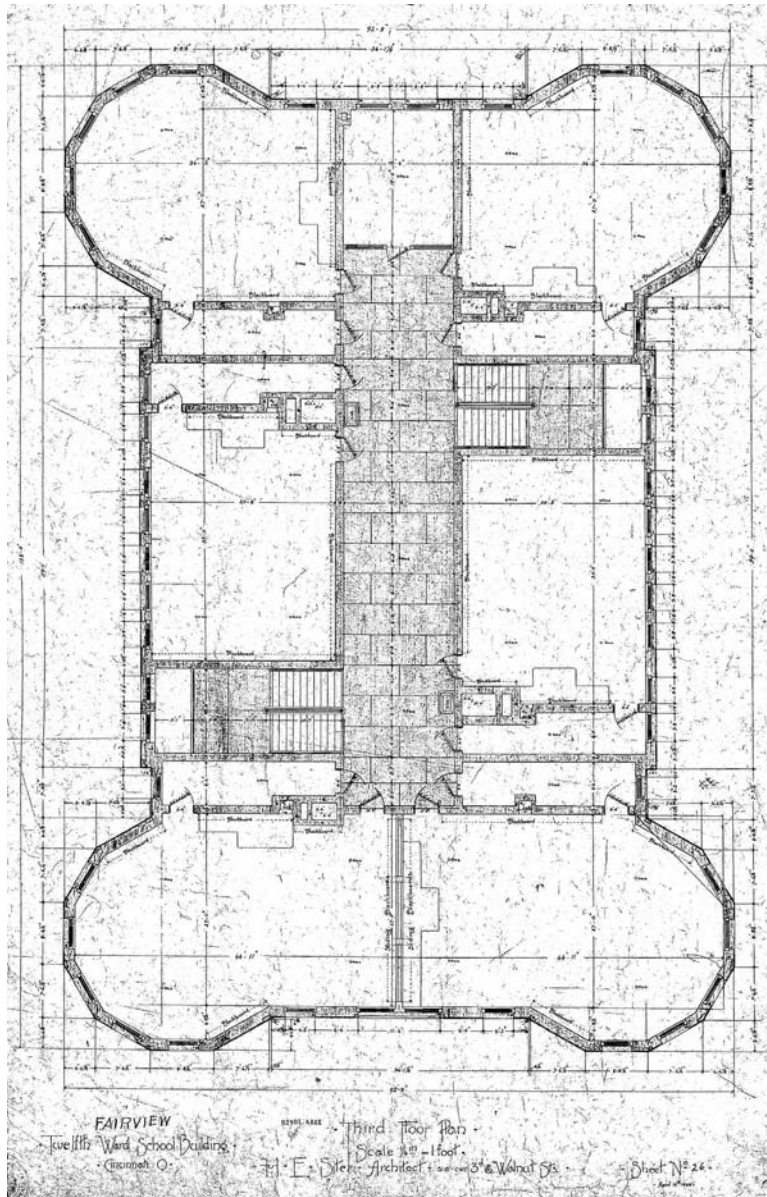


Figure 3: Third floor plan

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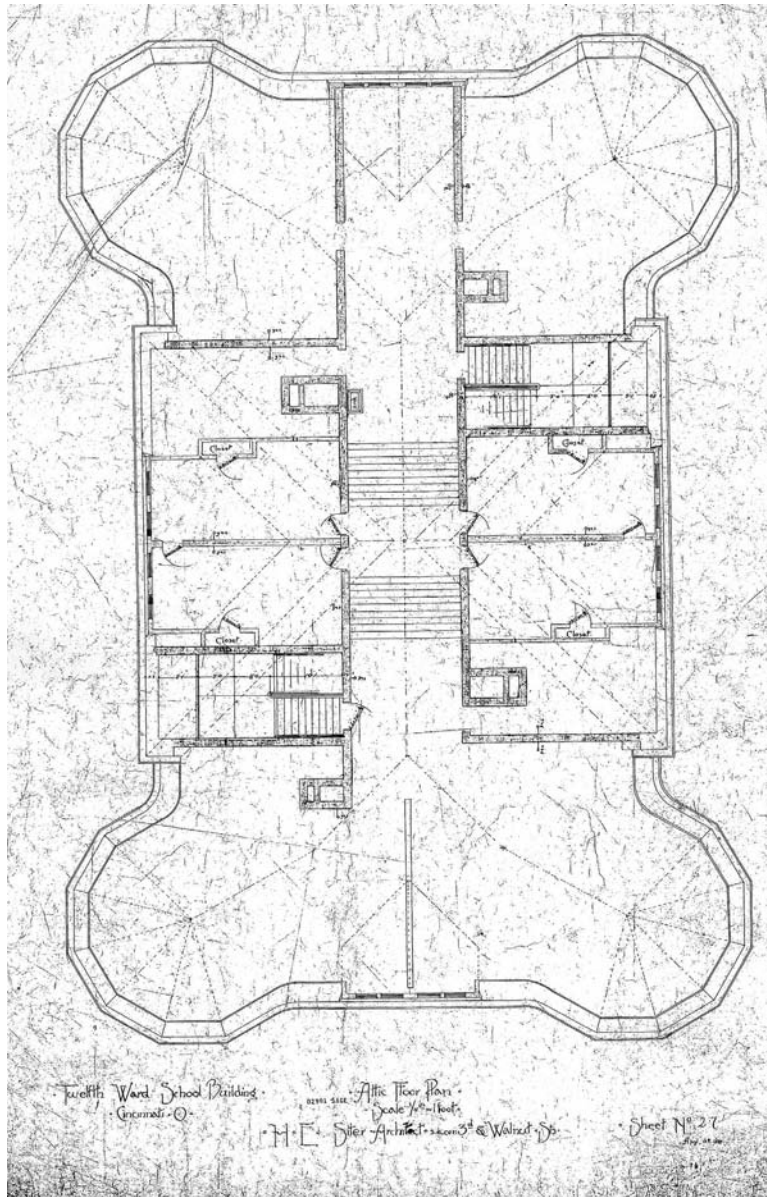


Figure 4: Attic floor plan

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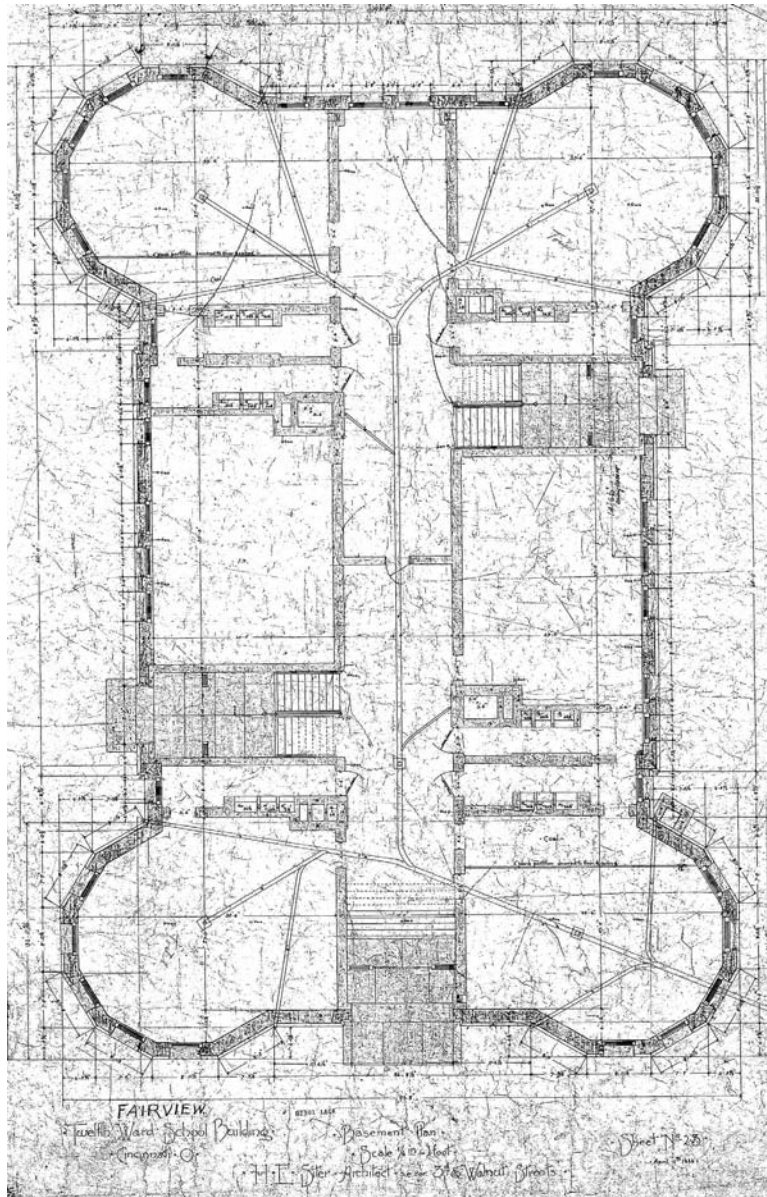


Figure 5: Basement plan

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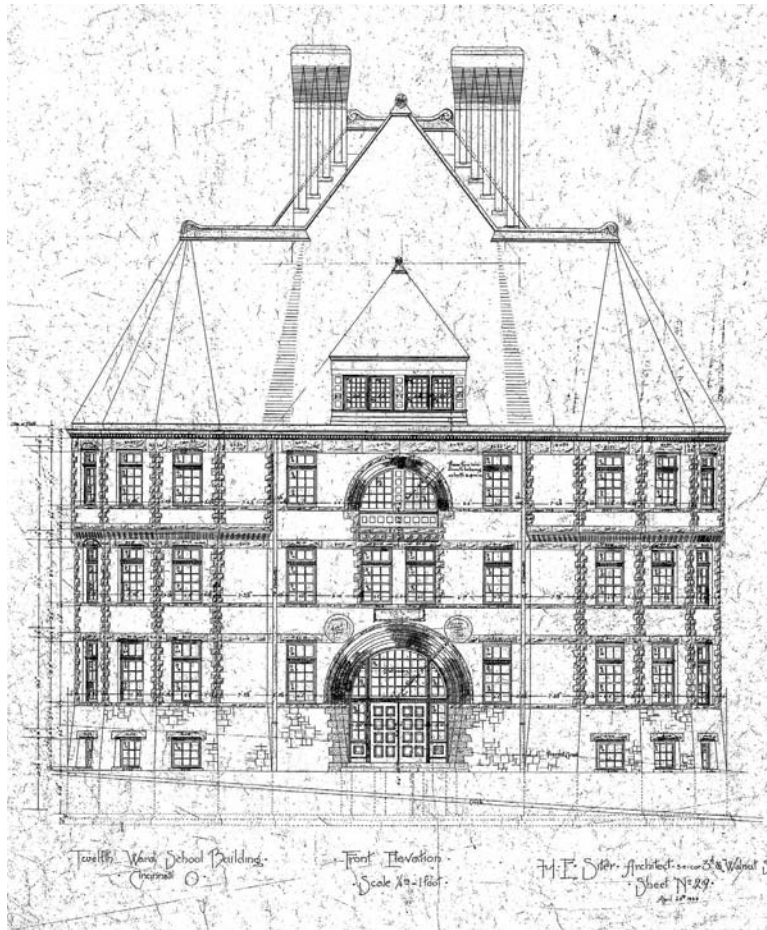


Figure 6: Front elevation



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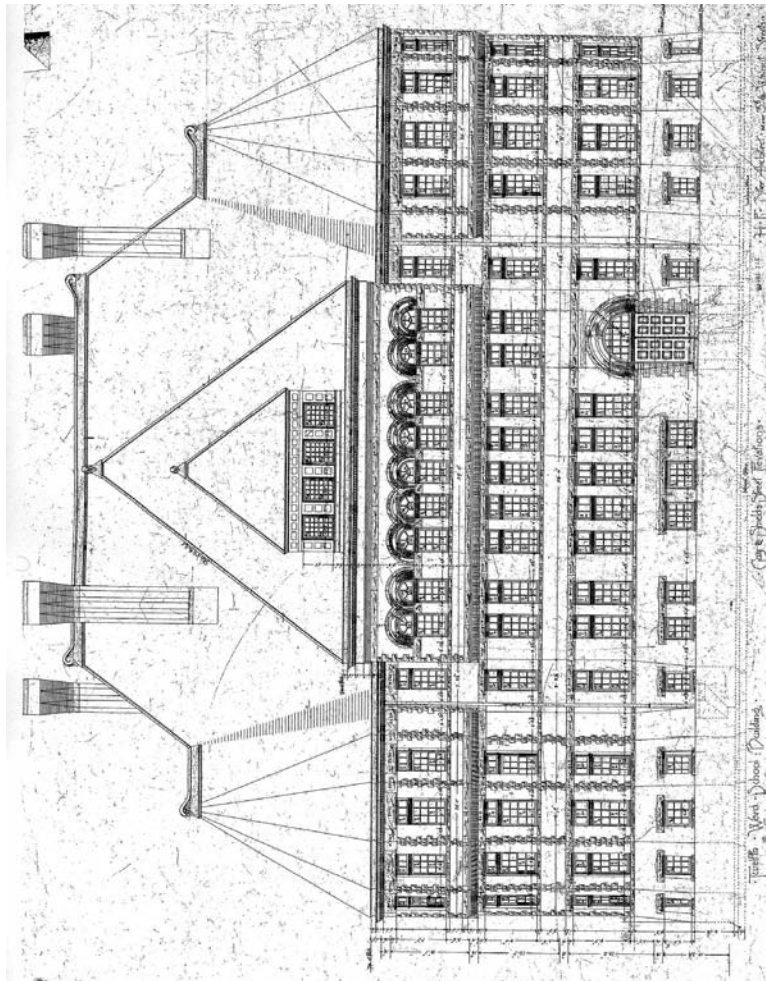


Figure 7: Side elevations

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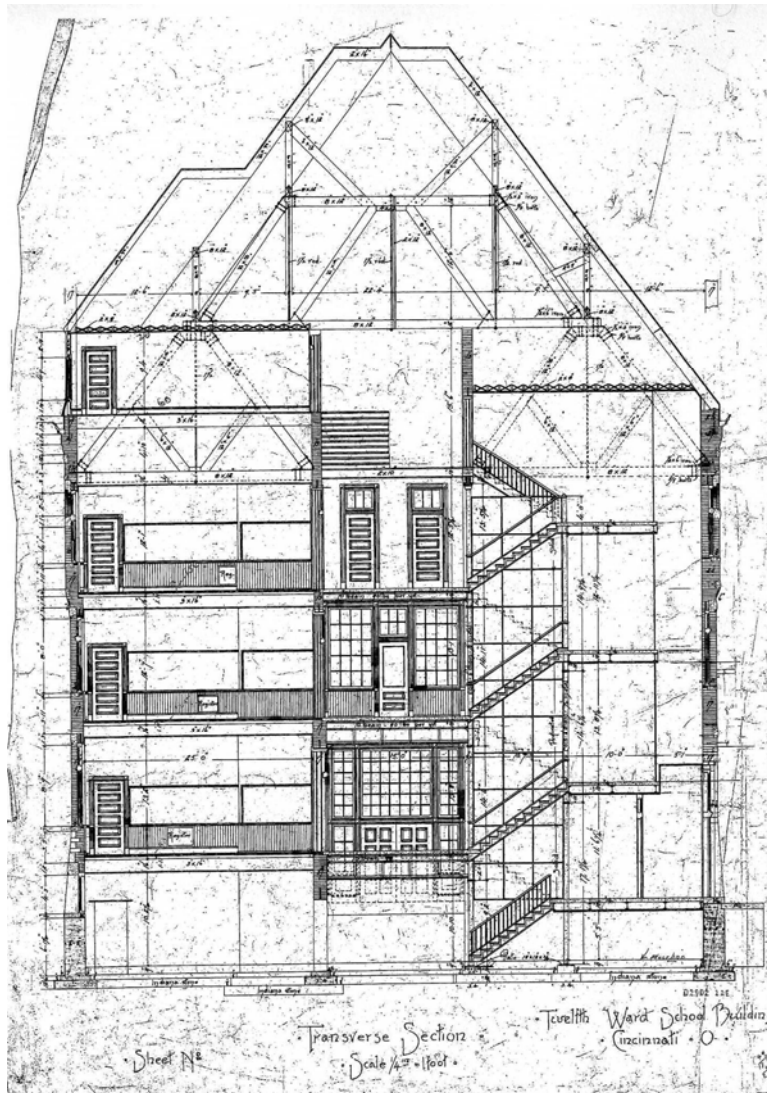


Figure 8: Transverse section

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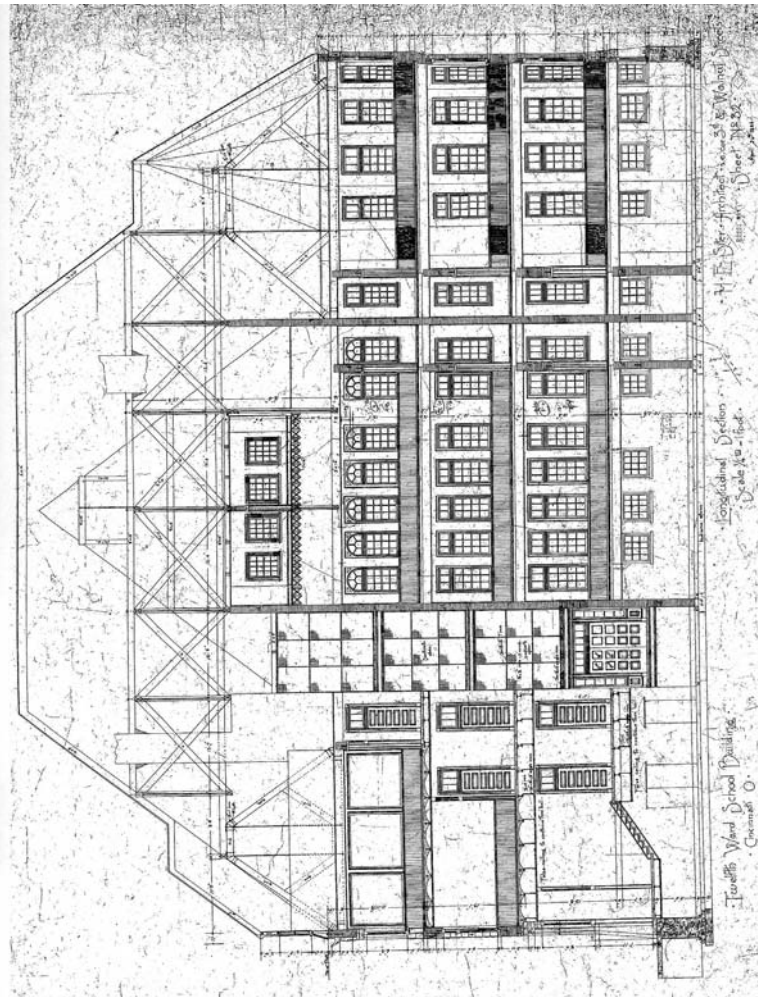


Figure 9: Longitudinal section

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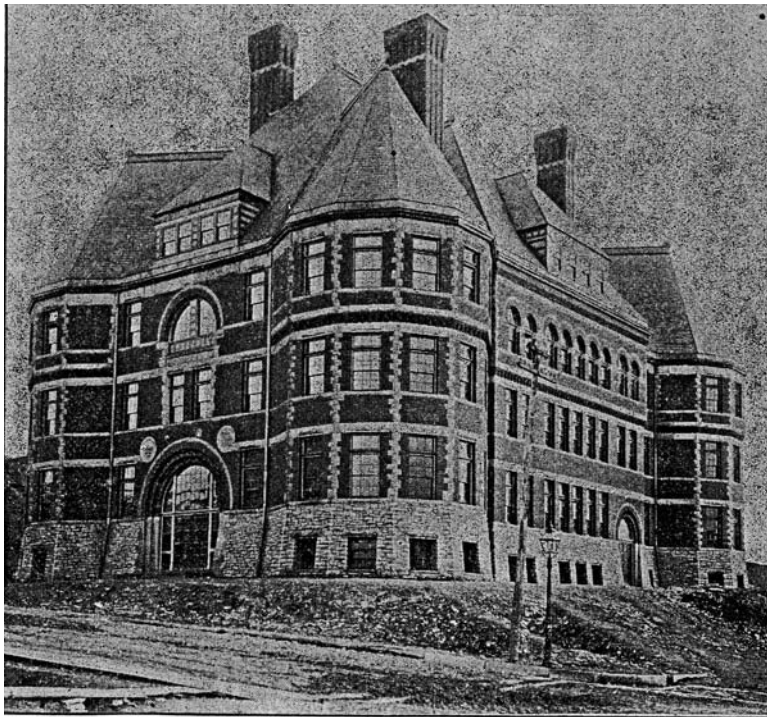


Figure 10: Fairview School, looking southeast, *Fairview Heights Souvenir*, 1894

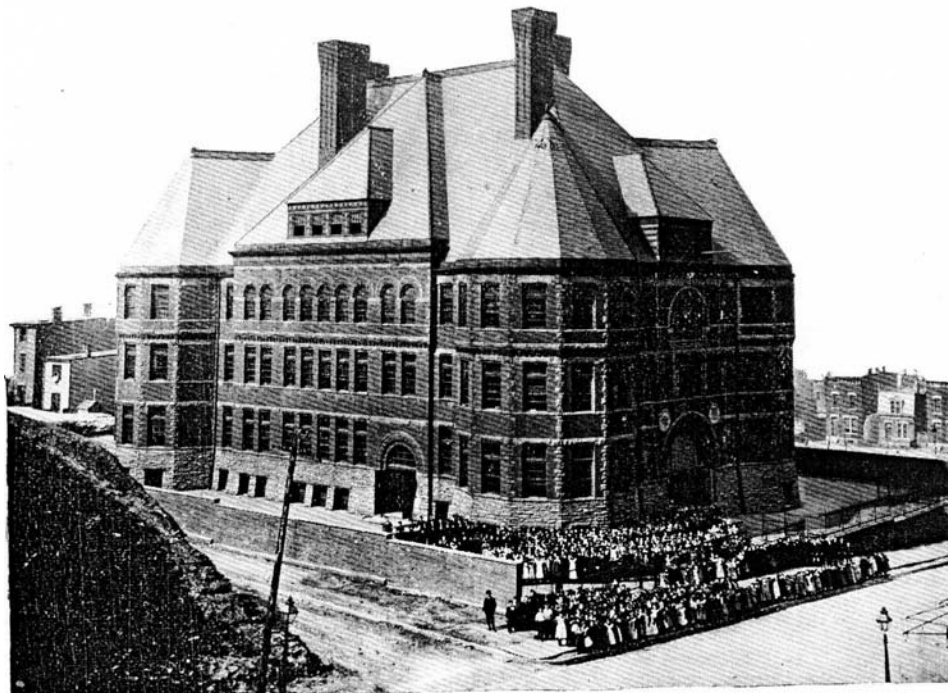


Figure 11: Fairview School, looking southwest, *Fairview Heights Souvenir*, 1895

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Figure 12: Post Card view, circa 1914,  
Clyde N. Bowden Collection of Post Cards,  
The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

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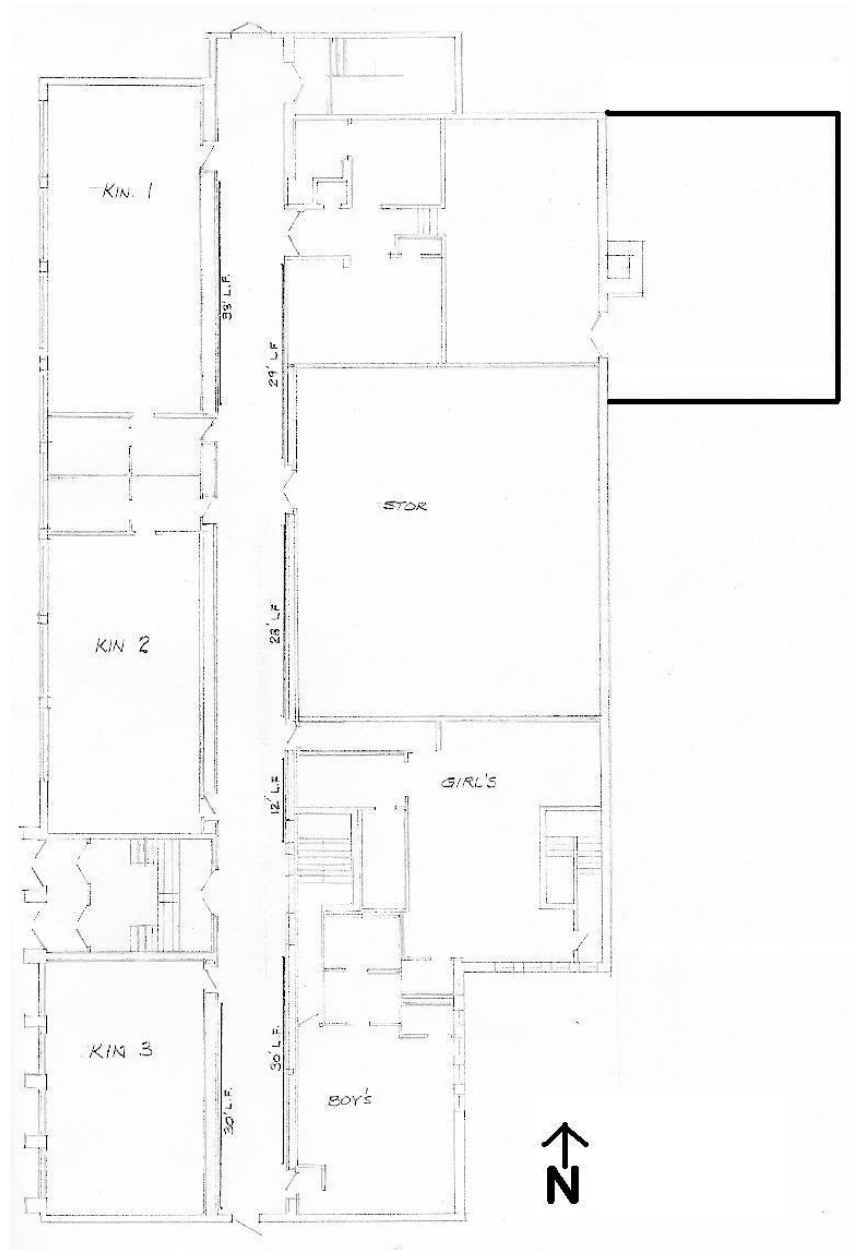


Figure 13: Annex ground floor plan

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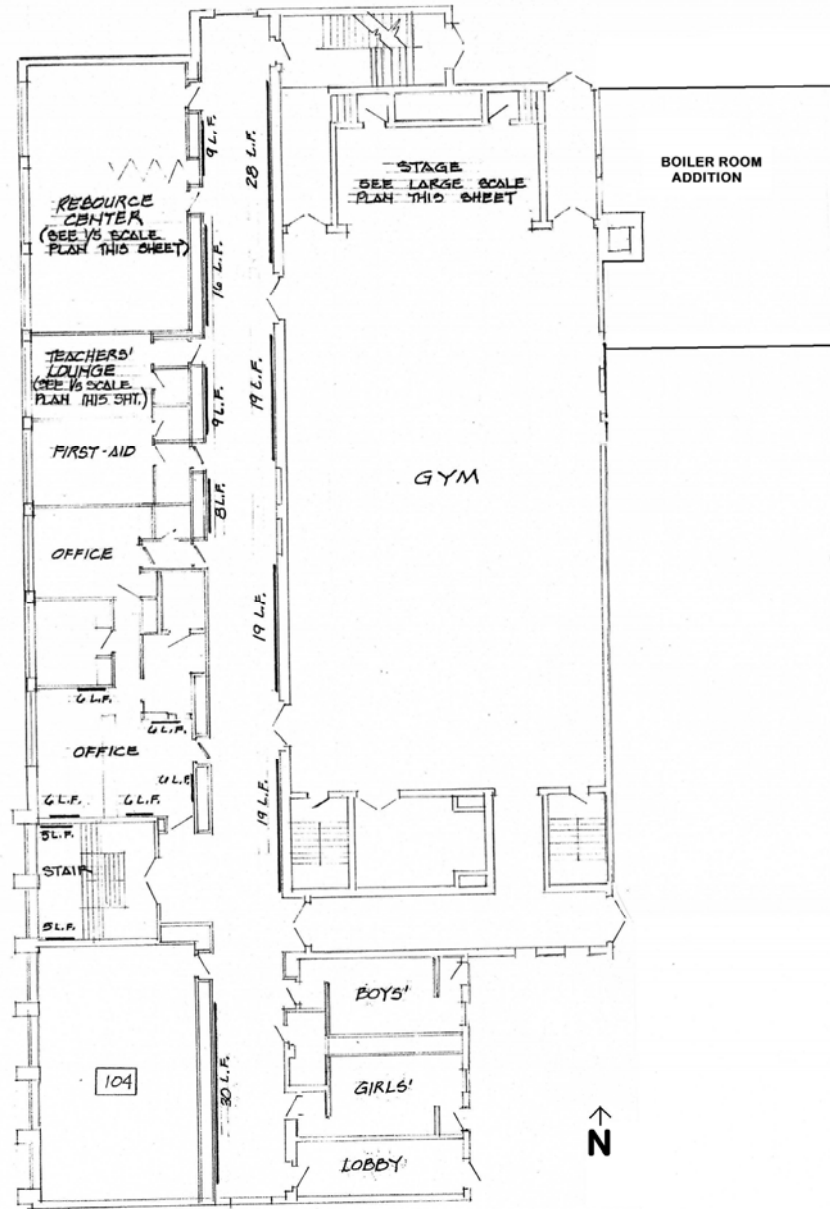


Figure 14: Annex first floor plan

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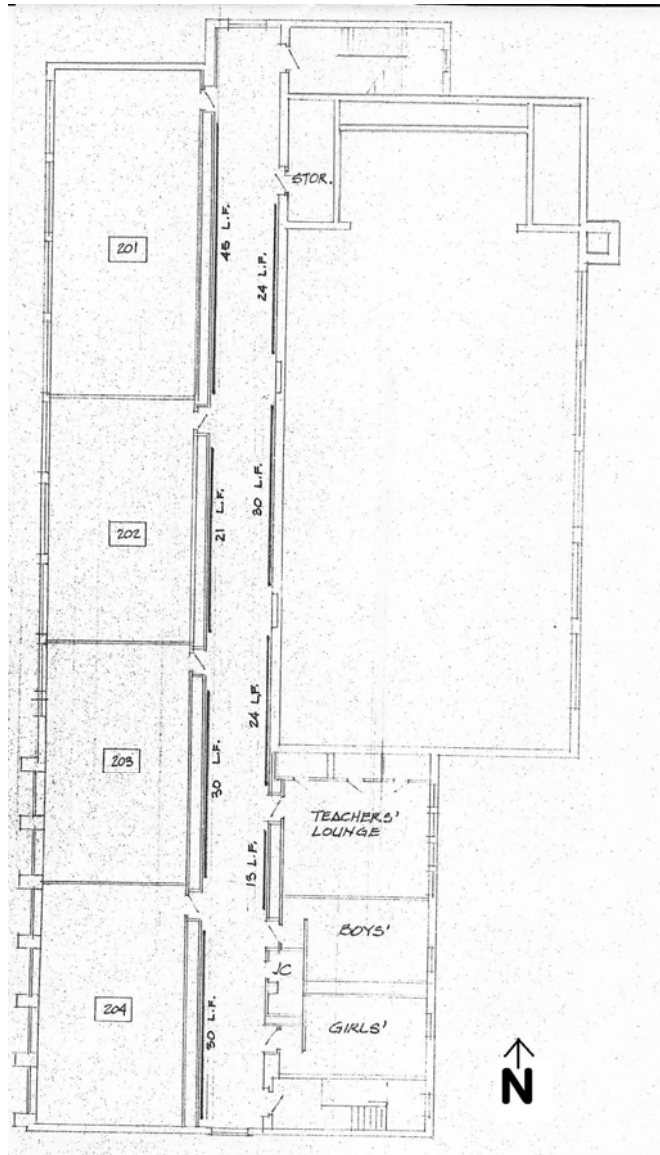


Figure 15: Annex second floor plan





November 24, 2009

Beth Sullebarger  
Sullebarger Associates  
1080 Morse Avenue  
Glendale, OH 45246-3830

RE: Fairview Public School, Cincinnati, Hamilton County

Dear Beth:

Thank you for submitting a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the above-referenced property. We appreciate your interest in the National Register program, as well as the time and effort given in preparing the nomination. Our office looks forward to working with you on the nomination in the months ahead.

The nomination has been reviewed for completeness and conformance with the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register guidelines. This letter outlines any technical and substantive issues that will need to be addressed before the nomination can be considered for presentation to the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board (OHSPAB). The advisory board is a 17-member panel appointed by the Governor to advise the State Historic Preservation Officer regarding the eligibility of nominations for the National Register. The board meets three times a year. All meetings are open to the public.

The Ohio Historic Preservation Office serves to facilitate the nominating of Ohio properties to the National Register. In reviewing draft nominations we try to help form-preparers present complete nominations for review by the advisory board and ultimately the National Park Service.

Specific review comments for this nomination are outlined below. Please see the enclosed copy of the nomination form for edits and other changes. Please make any necessary changes and resubmit on a National Register of Historic Places nomination form.

#### TECHNICAL ITEMS

- Please provide two sets of black and white images and a CD with tiffs meeting NPS labeling and photo image specifications. NPS guidance can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/photopolicy/index.htm>.
- Please provide floor plans and interior photograph views for the 1958 building.
- Please provide an original USGS map with the nominated property circled in pencil.
- The attached Owner Notification Form must be completed.
- Architectural Classification – add MODERN MOVEMENT

OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Ohio Historic Preservation Office*

1982 Velma Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43211-2497 ph: 614.298.2000 fx: 614.298.2037  
[www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org)

SECTION 7. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

- Provide further description of the 1958 building including interior spaces and architectural features and any alterations to the building.

SECTION 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- Your information about the career and other architectural work of H.E. Siter and Edward J. Schulte is very thorough. Additional information to place the buildings within an architectural context for the Cincinnati Public Schools will be helpful. How do these buildings compare with other examples from their same time periods? Does the 1958 building represent a standardized design approach for post WWII school designs or does it reflect distinctive aspects of Schulte's work?
- Additional information is needed to support Criterion A. How do these buildings reflect the educational history and development of the Cincinnati Public Schools? Please expand the information provided about the 1890 building to compare it to other similar examples. Does it reflect a period of growth within the school district? Is it a part of a specific period of building activity for the district? Place the 1958 school within the post WWII Baby Boom growth of the Cincinnati Public Schools. Along with local sources a helpful reference for educational history is *Educational Architecture in Ohio, From One-Room Schools and Carnegie Libraries to Community Education Villages* by Virginia E. McCormick.
- Section 8, page 9 – please clarify sentence about Withrow High School as only one other CPS school building individually listed in National Register. Is this in addition to Lincoln and Mount Adams school buildings mentioned on page 8? Or is it making the distinction between schools no longer used as schools and buildings still operating as schools?

I hope you are able to address these review comments for the nomination of this property. Without such information the nomination will likely encounter some difficulties when the OHSPAB and the National Park Service review it. Please return the revised nomination to me by January 4, 2010. If the nomination is complete, it will likely be presented at the OHSPAB meeting on April 9, 2010. Please submit the revised nomination as a Word document on a CD or as a Word email attachment.

This nomination was received by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office on September 30, 2009 meeting the recommended first draft deadline of October 1 for nominations likely to be considered for the April 2010 state review board meeting. The recommended first draft deadline for the December 2009 meeting was June 1, 2009 with revised nominations due by the end of August.

Beth Sullebarger  
November 24, 2009  
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Should you have any questions about the comments outlined here, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614/298-2000 or at [bpowers@ohiohistory.org](mailto:bpowers@ohiohistory.org). I am also available to meet with you if you would like to further discuss preparing the nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Powers". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Barbara Powers, Department Head  
Inventory and Registration

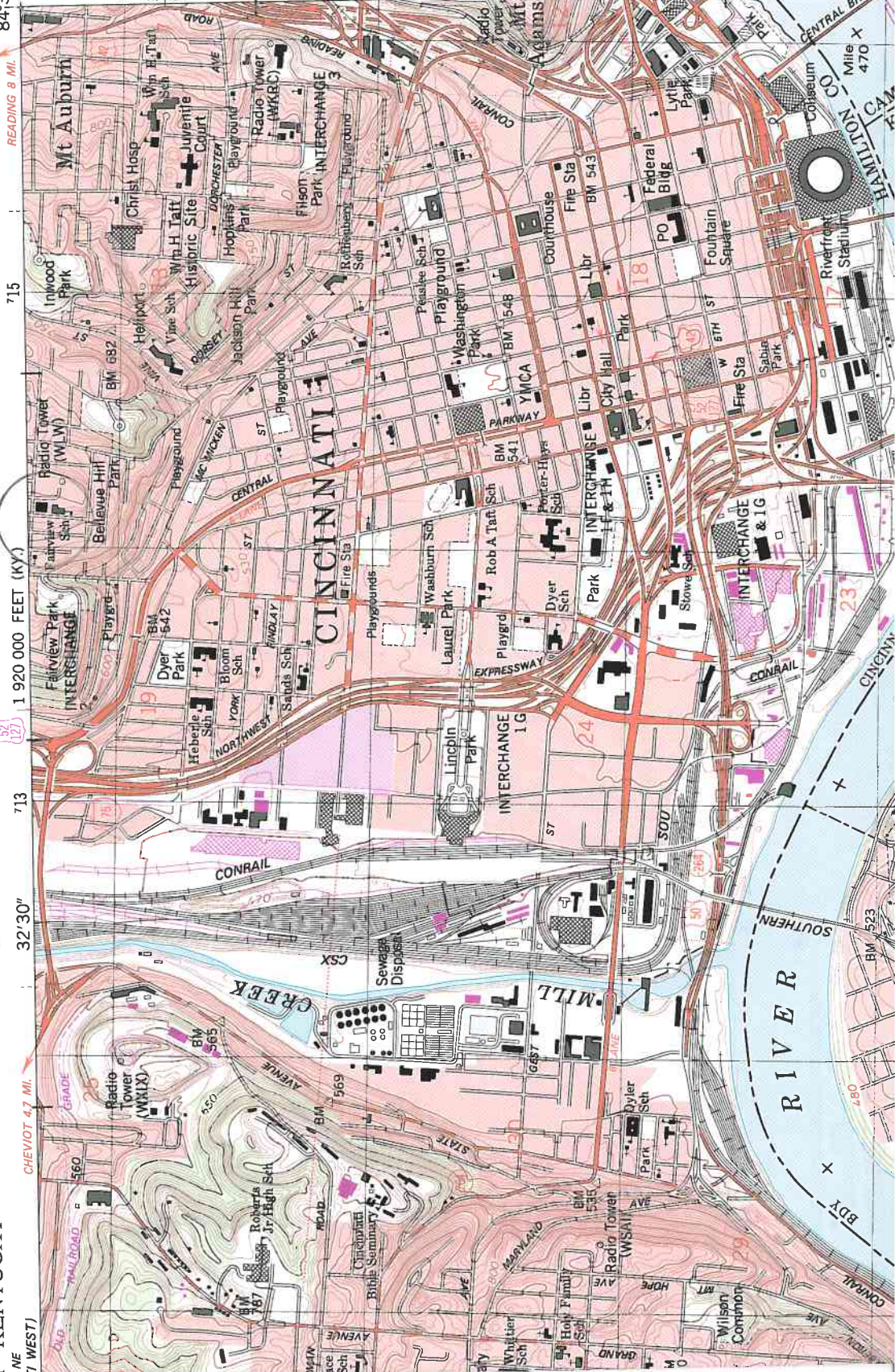
x.c.: Mohammed Shamma, Five Korner LLC (7781 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45242

**COVINGTON QUADRANGLE  
KENTUCKY—OHIO**

**7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
SE 1/4 WEST CINCINNATI 15' QUADRANGLE**

84°30' 39"07'30"  
READING 8 MI.

433  
590 000 FEET  
(KY.)



1 920 000 FEET (KY.)  
READING 8 MI.

CHEVIOT 4.7 MI.  
32°30' 713

71 WEST)

**KENTUCKY  
OLOGICAL SURVEY  
F KENTUCKY**

*Fairview public school Annex  
255 Warner St / 2222 Stratford Ave  
Cincinnati, OH 45219  
16 714141.28 E*

433 (KY.)  
READING 8 MI.