United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Lincoln-Grant School

other names/site number KE-C-

2. Location

street & number 824 Greenup Street | na | not for publication

city or town Covington | na | vicinity

state Kentucky code KY County Kenton code 117 zip code

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _x_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _x_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___ **statewide** _x_ **local**

Signature of certifying official/Title **Lindy Casebier, Acting SHPO** Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Lincoln-Grant School
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky
County and State

5. Classification

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

	private
x	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

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

x	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		Total

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement: Art Deco

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Brick
roof: unknown
other:

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Lincoln Grant School (KE-C-)is situated within the historic working class East Side neighborhood of Covington, northern Kentucky's largest city, across the Ohio River from Cincinnati. The Lincoln-Grant School within the Emery-Price Historic District (NR ID 86008434), listed in the National Register in 1986. It is being interpreted for this nomination for its identity as a historic school for African-Americans during the era of racial segregation.

Character of the Site

The property is located at 824 Greenup Street. It is bordered by East Eighth Street to the north, and East Ninth Street to the south. The building faces west toward Greenup Street. The lot is approximately 2 city blocks in size, extending east to the Licking River. Separating the building from a small park is a roadway which lies on the north side of the property and is adjacent to the school's side façade. The school is set in a late-nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century neighborhood composed mostly of Italianate and Queen Anne architecture.

Neighboring the park and directly to its east is a public swimming pool, south of the pool and behind the school building is an outside basketball court. Separating these features on the east side of the property and behind the school building from the Licking River is a baseball field and levy. The topography is flat and adorned with small clumps of trees in the park and at the front of the building which were not originally there. Following the closing of the school in 1976 the building was used as a community action center. At this time the school in not being used and is suffering from severe deterioration, most notably water damage.

A long and wide sidewalk leads from Greenup Street and up four small steps to the main central entry bay.

Exterior Description

West Side: The building is 3 stories above a partially-raised basement level. The three above-ground stories are faced in buff-colored brick, the basement's exterior walls are poured concrete. The building has concrete detailing expressed in Art Deco architectural styling.

The structure has a complex form that is repeated from side to side, with each façade composed of 3 basic units, or bays. On any side, the central bay is recessed in relation to the outer bays. From overhead, the building looks something like a castle, with the outer bays reading as a castle's turrets (see plan).

The front (west) façade's central by contains the entry framed by multiple setbacks of pilasters and projections.

The entry is comprised of two pairs of modern metal doors, not original. Each door has a long rectangular window in it placed such so that when the doors are closed the two windows come together in the center. Above and spanning the four metal doors is a four light transom with metal sash bars.

Above the entry are three concrete spandrels, square in shape and containing a circular wreath-like feature. These spandrels occur only on the front side entry bay, between first, second, and third floors. The bulk of the windows on this side are non-historic wide-metal-sash replacement

windows in a six-light configuration, 3-beside-3. The historic windows that remain on the front, and elsewhere in the building, are metal sash casement windows, 3-beside-3, and are still operable. The school's name plate is set inside a large rectangular concrete tile, with the name "Lincoln-Grant" appearing in stylized letters on top of the text "School". The font is long and thin letters in all capitals, typical of an Art Deco.

Recessed from the center section on both sides are the broadest areas of the front façade. These are symmetrical set backs designed with four rows of four modern six-light window bays from the ground floor to the third floor encased with metal. At the bottoms of each window bay is a concrete window sill, with lintels placed at the tops of each window opening. This is consistent for all window openings on the front façade except for the tops of those on the third floor. Here the vertically-set brick runs in a continuous row from one end of the set back to the other. There is no ornamentation on these set back sections of the front façade.

The terminal wing corners project slightly from the set back features, aligning with the center section which contains the entry bay. The protruding corner sections of the front façade contain no windows and have little decoration except the date plate which reads "1931", located on the southern end of the front façade placed at eye-level. Within the rectangular wall treatment of the corner sections is a vertical rectangular frame set with alternating brick headers that are slightly protruding from the wall. At the top of this field is a rectangular concrete decorative frame. The building has a variety of concrete accent pieces, giving it the appearance of having carved stone decorative panels. Many of these are stylized forms alluding to classical sculpture, such as urns and wreaths. Most of these decorative pieces are on the west side.

South Side: The south side rises from a small parking area. As on the other sides, the gross composition is a projecting bay, receding bay, and projecting bay. The western projecting bay has banks of 4 windows, one per floor, with each bank indicating a classroom. These windows are metal-framed replacement windows. The central recessed bay has a similar set of 4 windows per classroom, but original metal-framed casement windows remain in this bay on all 3 above-ground floors. The projecting bay, to the east, has groupings of 3 blind (bricked-in) windows per floor. The partially-raised basement windows are original. Two entries, both made of paired metal doors, give access to the building. The tops of this side, the north side, and the east (back) side are articulated with a thin concrete cap.

North Side: This side is similar to the South side, only in reverse. That is, the most prominent projecting bay is on the west side, closer to the front of the building, and the projecting bay of the east side, near the rear, contains sets of 3 blind windows per floor. One element absent from the South side is a tall squarish chimney, which separates two classrooms per floor on the broad recessed bay in the middle. On this side, as on the the South, there are 2 entries, with paired metal doors. On this side, the windows of the partially-raised basement, as well as half of the first-floor windows, have been boarded up. This side also retains original windows in the stairways, which occur directly above the 2 entry doors.

East (rear) Side: The east side retains almost all of its original windows, providing the best view of how the school looked with its historic windows. The projecting bays on each corner each contain 4 windows per floor, indicating a class room with each bank of 4 windows. On this side of the building, filling in the central set-back bay, is the gymnasium. That gym extends from the center bay's setback, actually projecting farther forward than the plane of either of the flanking end bays. It rises only

about half the height of the rest of the school. The gym's façade consists of three sections divided by two engaged brick columns, with three six-light metal-frame sashes, similar in style as the other original windows; these are casement windows, i.e., they fold out from hinges. At ground level, on the center of the gym's façade, is an entry door. The original double doors are gone; the opening now contains one metal door and the rest of the opening boarded up. The gymnasium façade bays are set with concrete window sills on the bottom and vertically set bricks on the top.

Interior Description[i]

The interior of the building has had remarkably little change since its construction in 1931. The main change has been decay due to neglected maintenance. The original features remaining include hall way lockers, interior classroom doors, and operating apparatuses for the original windows. Modifications to the building were made when it became a community action center. Banners that once named all graduates of William Grant High School that had adorned the hallways have since been removed and destroyed as well as the original clock in the main lobby.[ii] The interior hallway floors are covered with decaying remnants of the ceiling as well as the stairs. Stairwells can be found in at the north and south ends of the corridor on the front west side of the building extending into the interior of the building's terminal wing corners. The other two stair wells are situated on the rear side of the building, nestled in the north and south ends of the corridor, which runs by the gymnasium. The stairs and handrails are intact, with moderate to severe water damage and deterioration. Water damage has had a resounding impact on the interior of the building, dropping plaster from the ceiling, damaging many walls inside the classrooms, and severely deteriorating the parquet flooring in some rooms.

The interior arrangement of rooms, the identities of those rooms as revealed on the building's architectural drawings, and the equipment that remains in some of the rooms, reveal an educational program for the students that was oriented toward service industry jobs. Large areas of the building were devoted to mechanical arts, automotive repair, domestic skills, and similar non-professional occupations. These spaces, then, become important in documenting what was considered quality education for African Americans from the 1930s-1960s, what would prepare them for their next step—entry into the world of manual labor.

Ground Floor: The main function of the ground floor was the kitchen, cafeteria, play rooms for kindergarteners, auto mechanics, boiler rooms, and manual arts. These rooms were arranged so as to give direct access to each other, allowing students to go room-to-room without having to step foot in the hallway. The ground floor gives access to the gymnasium, to locker rooms and showers.

First Floor: On the front section of the west side of the building facing Greenup Street and on the northern corner of the building is a classroom. Neighboring the classroom to its south is the school's library. Neighboring the library and south of it is a girls bathroom and boys bathroom. The vestibule of the main entry has a terrazzo floor and a few small steps that transition into the lobby which accesses the waiting room.

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[i] All information regarding physical description of interior taken from original floor plans housed at City of Covington's Economic and Planning Department: Courtesy of Ms. Beth Johnson, Planning & Preservation Specialist. Copies are also housed with this writer.

[ii] Personal conversation with Reverend Richard Fowler, 2/27/2012 at Lincoln Grant School, Greenup Street.

The central section of the first floor is composed of some classrooms and the auditorium. On the north side of the building across and east of the library is classroom number three, next to and east of is classroom number two. Across the hall and south of the two classrooms is the auditorium, which still retains its original seats, stage, Rondel lights, and balcony.

Second Floor: The second floor contains classrooms, teachers' break rooms, the music room, art room, and auditorium.

Third Floor: On the third floor is an apartment sandwiched between two restrooms. The "flat" as the apartment in the design plans has been referred to, was considered a state of the art addition to the new Lincoln-Grant School and contributes to its distinctiveness. The apartment was equipped with a living room, dining room, bedroom, and bathroom. Young ladies were given the opportunity to apply what domestic skills were learned at the school and apply them to a model real-life situation.

The central section of the third floor on the north side is composed of a cooking room which is east and across the hall from the sewing room. Bordering the cooking room to its east the laundry room. The laundry room is another contributing room to the building's historic integrity. It was equipped with and still has a tumbler, extractor, washing machine, two flip down ironing boards, laundry troughs, and one large industrial ironer. It was in this room where linens from the white Holmes High School were taken for cleaning. The laundry room stands as an extension of racist policy and tradition as the black students at Lincoln-Grant washed the laundry of white students. East of and across the hall from classroom nineteen is the Physics and Chemistry room. This is another room which contributes to the school's character as much of the original woodwork and the gas/chemical ventilation hood remains intact.

The rear section of the building on the east side is composed of the gymnasium and two classrooms on the outer corners. Classroom seventeen is situated on the north side of the building and the mechanical drawing room on the corner of the south side of the building. The gym is located between the two classrooms.

Layout

The layout of the school's rooms floor-to-floor differ in use but are laid out the same, the general design construction is in a "U" pattern. The classrooms that are similar in use are clustered together, such as on the ground floor the lockers/showers and gymnasiums are all linked together and separated from the rest of the floor from an unexcavated portion of the central section. The fuel, boiler, and auto mechanics rooms are clustered together. Opposite these rooms on the south side are the building are all of the "manual arts" rooms. The manual arts room, the lumber room and the finishing room are grouped together and allow access to each other without walking in the hall way. The kitchen and cafeteria are of course next to each other for efficiency and neighbor the girls' and boys' play rooms.

The auditorium is the center of the first and second floors, and is contained with class rooms on its north and south sides. Separating the rooms from the auditoriums on the first floor are two hallways. The front and west side of the building contains class rooms four and five on the north and south corners of the front of the building. The lobby and vestibule are at the center of the entrance, conveniently located next to the office and waiting room, making up the administrative space.

The second floor is designed as the ground and first floors with class rooms on both side of the balcony of the auditorium, the center of the building. Classrooms make up the perimeter of the building with a faculty room with boys and girls bathrooms being the center of the front/west side of the building.

The third floor, as with the previous floors, have the classrooms bunched together according to use. The unused space neighboring the study hall, to its west, makes up the portion where the auditorium is on the lower floors and is the center of the third floor. The “domestic arts” department takes up most of the space on the third floor. The laundry room and cooking lab neighbor each other on the north side with the sewing room and apartment on the west side of the third floor. Four miscellaneous classrooms are situated on the exterior corners of the floor with the exception of the south-east corner. The south-east corner room is the mechanical drawing room which is separated by a corridor and grouped with the physics and chemistry room to its west and is connected to the lecture room also to the west. All of these rooms lie on the south side of the building.

Lincoln-Grant School
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

Education

Period of Significance

1931-1966

Significant Dates

1931; 1966; 1976

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Landberg, E.C. (architect)

Period of Significance: The Lincoln-Grant School stands as an architectural (Art-Deco) and cultural artifact from the final thirty-five years of segregation in the Covington School District for the period of 1931-1966. The school is one of the many designs by respected local architect E.C. Landberg. Lincoln-Grant School expresses the historic feeling, association and integrity of 1930s architecture and black Kentucky heritage.

Criterion Considerations: NA

Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Lincoln Grant School is historically significant and meets National Register Criteria A for its association with African American education in Covington, Kenucky. The property's significance is evaluated within the historic context, "African American Education in Kenton County, Kentucky, 1918-1961." It may also be eligible for listing under Criteria C, for its Art Deco styling, a design by A.C. Landberg, but that second basis is not the subject of this nomination. The design of the building made it a state-of-the-art educational facility during the years of "separate but equal" education for blacks and whites. Lincoln-Grant was not representative of the normal quality seen in schools built for blacks during the years of segregated education, however. It is one of few facilities in all of Kentucky that attempted to match the quality found in contemporary urban school for whites. The Period of Significance runs from 1931, when the school was constructed, through 1966, when integrated schooling was implemented locally.

Historic Context: African American Education in Kenton County, Kentucky, 1918-1966

Background Research: An exploration of the holdings of the Kenton County Library's Local History Department, the Cincinnati History Library, and personal conversations with Reverend Richard Fowler was made in an attempt to find any historic framework within which the school building may have been identified or where it might have contributed. The author attempted to establish the historic context of the school in relation to its transition from segregation into an integrated school system and other miscellaneous elements that contributed to the school's distinctiveness. With the aid of written histories, floor-plans, personal conversations, and surveys of the built environment and of the school itself, a context was able to be constructed. Joseph M. Walton's *The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School, Covington, Kentucky 1866-1976,* was helpful.

African American Education in Kenton County

For the largest part, construction of schools used by African Americans during the era of segregated education came from black citizens' taxes directly. Alternative places for schooling were provided by local black churches. Construction for rural black schools came from the black communities themselves, and after 1917, could be supplemented by grants from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation in Chicago, Illinois.

The original City of Covington charter established the responsibility of student education in 1850, but for a segregated white-only school system. Over several years, it created a schools for whites in each of the three districts of the city, and the first public high school in 1853. During the mid-19th century, the state and local governments generally did not recognize the need to educate its African American children. The general education of African American children was not a high priority as long as Kentucky permitted the legal enslavement of people. Even after 1865, local school boards were not greatly concerned with the education of African American primary- and secondary-school-aged children.

Following the Civil War, African American students began to attend school with classes held in private homes and within African American churches. This was facilitated when the State of Kentucky in

1867 provided for the education of Negroes and mulattos within segregated local schools. By 1873, Covington established an African American school within one of the original white district schools. This school led to a decline in classes within private homes and churches.

In 1876, the City of Covington amended its charter to incorporate the education of African American students into a segregated public school system. The amendment in part read as follows

> "that the Board of School Trustees of the City of Covington, out of any funds in their hand derived by taxation under and by virtue of the City Ordinances of said city, be and are hereby authorized and empowered to establish and maintain schools for the colored children of the city in such numbers and localities as in their judgment will furnish sufficient educational facilities for the colored children of the city. Such schools shall be under the control, rules and regulations as govern other schools of the city."

Shortly thereafter in 1880, Col. William Grant donated land that was to be the location of a new school. In 1888, the Seventh Street Colored School was constructed. In 1886, the William Grant High School was established; its building was completed in 1888. Mr. Grant (1820-1882) was a prominent local lawyer, politician and real estate developer who was a strong supporter of the Covington African American community. In 1909, the Seventh Street Colored School was renamed for Abraham Lincoln. At the time, the William Grant High School was located at the second floor. Over the years, the combined name of Lincoln-Grant became associated with the school.

Lincoln-Grant School was part of an unofficial "three-county" school system.[iii] The regional education system in place for black children was designed in the way that all elementary school age children would attend the school geographically closest to them. Students who could not be enrolled in their local schools due to over-crowding, or schools that did not provide an appropriate grade level were sent to Lincoln-Grant School, as well as all high school students regardless of what city they lived in.[iv]

The following is a list of segregated black schools throughout the region that sent students to Lincoln-Grant: Latonia Public School of Latonia, Dunbar and Wilkens Schools of Erlanger and Elsmere, Southgate Street School in Newport, the Burlington Baptist Church, Beaverlick School in the Walton-Verona area, and Our Savior Catholic School in Covington just a block away from Lincoln-Grant.[v] The annexation of the city of Latonia by the City of Covington marks the beginning of Lincoln-Grant's overcrowding problem which led to the building of the new school in 1931. Following the annexation of Latonia in 1909 the Latonia school was closed and its pupils sent to Lincoln-Grant.[vi]

Students received transportation in a few different ways. A few were bused; others were driven by private automobiles whose owners received compensation from the Covington Board of Education. Some were lucky enough to be driven by their parents and some were given fare for the street-car disbursed by the Lincoln-Grant principal.[vii] Students from outside the district brought in revenues of fifty-five dollars annually per student to the Covington Board of Education.[viii] The most distant

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[iii] Joseph M. Walton, The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School, Covington, Kentucky, 1866-1976. Little Miami Publishing Company, Milford, Ohio, 2010. (113).
[iv] Ibid. (113).
[v] Ibid. (114).
[vi] Walton. (115).
[vii] Ibid. (120).
[viii] Ibid. (120).

students served by Lincoln-Grant came from the small towns of Walton and Morning View, both towns a ride of about twenty miles over country roads.[ix]

By the 1920s, Covington's school board recognized that a new African American school was needed. Plans were made for a school that incorporated all grades. In 1929 the site at Ninth and Greenup streets was selected as the site for the new school. In 1932 the modern Art Deco Lincoln-Grant School was opened to African American students.

From 1932 until the school closed in 1976, it was the focal point for high school education within Covington African American community. It was also the location of a vibrant sports program that Covington's African Americans considered to be a contribution to the overall school experience. Within a segregated school system, the school provided an affirmation of the need for a good education, despite the limited budget and lower levels of programs and educational standards than available in white schools.

Lincoln-Grant School's Architectural Design

The Lincoln-Grant School stands as one of many architectural works of local architect E. C. Landberg who designed and built numerous structures in the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Area. Among his works are the Silver Grove High School in Silver Grove, Kentucky; a junior high school in Hamilton County, Ohio; the A.J. Jolly Memorial School in California, Kentucky; the Erlanger Deposit Bank, Kentucky Loan and Building Association in Newport; Henry Barnes Loge-number 607 F & A.M. in Dayton, Kentucky; the Milford Masonic Temple in Milford, Ohio among other churches, court houses, residences and commercial buildings.[x]

Landberg opened his first business in 1923 in Newport, Kentucky and eventually moved his office to downtown Cincinnati, Ohio.[xi] Landberg was in the United States Army Corps of Engineers in 1928 and by World War Two he had achieved the rank of colonel. He contributed to the design and construction of the Alaska-Canada Highway during his time in military service.[xii]

An architectural survey of the Northern Kentucky/Greater Cincinnati region was undertaken to learn of other Art Deco properties in the area. Northern Kentucky is home to several Art-Deco buildings including some elaborate Art-Deco theaters. The Marianne Theater in Bellevue, the Madison Theater in Covington, and the Dayvue Theater in Dayton (all of these in Northern Kentucky). The Masonic Lodge in Covington, the AJ Jolly Memorial School in California (also one of Landberg's buildings), and a Junior High School built by Landberg in Hamilton County, Ohio have comparable plain Deco designs, as seen in Lincoln-Grant School. The most prominent Art-Deco building in the Greater Cincinnati area is generally seen as the Union Terminal. The theaters in Covington, Bellevue, and Dayton are the region's most prized possessions for their elaborate and beautifully decorative Art Deco designs.

[ix] Ibid. (114 & 120).

[x] Debra Kay Cyprych, A Cincinnati Story: Emil Steinmann, E. C. Landberg and Associated Families. Cincinnati, Ohio, Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, 2008.

[xi] Walton. (175).

[xii] Ibid. (184).

The school stands as typical example of Art-Deco architecture of the 1930s. It has a simple design and relatively plain exterior. The school board wanted a building with great functionality, yet wanted a building with contemporary styling.

The *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas* decision was handed down unanimously by Earl Warren's court in 1954. Segregation had been declared illegal but it would take the City of Covington twenty years to actually be in compliance with the new law. Almost immediately black students from outside of Covington were integrated into their local high schools.[xiii] The Board of Education for the Walton-Verona Independent School District implemented a desegregation plan for the school year 1955/1956. The high school students from nearby Newport started going to a desegregated school in 1955 (Kentucky Post: September 7, 1955). The Catholic school system in Covington also began to attract additional African American high school students as well.

William Grant High School, which was housed within the Lincoln-Grant school building, served as the high school for some African American students from Campbell and Boone counties. In I965, the William Grant High School closed as a high school with the remainder of its high school students transferred to the desegregated Holmes High School. This resulted from a desegregation plan for the Covington school system that started in 1955.

Jessie Moore, a female sophomore student from Lincoln-Grant School, attempted to enroll at the white Holmes High School in 1955, but was denied. The reason given was because her sudden enrollment did not fit the plans of gradual integration. However, the Board reversed their decision and permitted Moore to attend. As elsewhere, the first black student in an otherwise all-white Covington high school became the target of verbal assaults and racial harassment; Moore went back to Lincoln-Grant after a few weeks.[xiv] In 1956 the choir from Lincoln-Grant performed for the white students at an assembly at Holmes High School. That was cited as one of the first small steps toward integration for Covington's schools.[xv]

In 1957, Joseph Walton was asked to attend the first summer school session at Holmes High. In the second session, another black student from Lincoln-Grant went through.[xvi] The 1957-1958 school year saw more progression toward integration, as two Lincoln-Grant students enrolled at Holmes, only to transfer back after a few weeks of a verbal insults.[xvii] Despite the white students' resistance to integration, Holmes High saw its first black students cross the stage at graduation ceremonies at the end of the 1958-1959 school year.[xviii]

The plan to gradually integrate the entire school system was slow. Transfers from Lincoln-Grant High to Holmes High were voluntary.[xix] Black students were apprehensive to leave their safety zones. Although Holmes High School was very slowly being integrated, its staff and faculty were not for a full ten years following *Brown v. Board of Education*.[xx]

[xiii] Ibid. (281).
[xiv] Ibid. (281).
[xv] Walton. (282-284).
[xvi] Ibid. (284 & 285).
[xvii] Ibid. (287).
[xviii] Ibid. (287).
[xix] Ibid. (287 & 313).
[xx] Ibid. (313).

History of Lincoln-Grant School

The story of the Lincoln-Grant school begins with the 1875 state senate race when Covington City Clerk William Grant ran for the Kentucky State Senate.[xxi] Realizing the importance of black voters in achieving victory he aligned himself with black community leaders in Covington. Grant made the promise, "…that if Colored voters would support him as a candidate to the Legislature, and if he were elected, he would have the Charter of Covington amended so as to provide for a public school for Colored children."[xxii] True to his word Grant had the Covington city charter amended to include a public school for black children in 1876 following his election.[xxiii] He showed further support in 1880 by deeding his own property at 25 East Seventh Street to the Covington Board of Education for a new school building. That address was to house two schools, one for elementary age children and the other for high schoolers.[xxiv]

Grant died in 1882; the high school was named William Grant High School.[xxv] The building was finally completed in 1888, and the two-building complex was officially called the Seventh Street Colored School from 1888 through 1908.[xxvi]

The curriculum at the new school included four units of English, two units of Latin, two and a half units of Science, three and a half units of History and Civics, two units of Mathematics, two units of either Domestic Science (for the ladies) or Mechanical Drawing and Cabinet Work (for the young men).[xxvii] The elementary school was renamed in honor of President Abraham Lincoln.[xxviii] The occupation of the site by both schools eventually led to the hyphenated name for the property, Lincoln-Grant School, which was made its official name in 1912.[xxix]

Lincoln-Grant School began to serve as a magnet school for black children of Kenton County, as well as neighboring Boone and Kenton Counties, whose schools were often overcrowded and understaffed.[xxx] By the second decade of the 20th century, Lincoln-Grant itself began to feel overcrowded, too. The School Board annexed nearby store fronts on East Seventh Street to relieve the overcrowding, which thrust attention to the issue of the two races integrating in public spaces.[xxxi] A plan was needed to move the school children and teachers to another location to keep in line with the tradition of racial segregation.

A new colored school was proposed to the Covington Board of Education in June 1928.[xxxii] The cost of the site was estimated at roughly $75,000 and the building 273,000 dollars. The projected assets

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[xxi] Ibid. (50 &51).
[xxii] Ibid. (51).
[xxiii] Ibid. (51).
[xxiv] Walton. (54).
[xxv] Ibid. (57).
[xxvi] Ibid. (88).
[xxvii] Ibid. (198).
[xxviii] Ibid. (89).
[xxix] Ibid. (89).
[xxx] Ibid. (113).
[xxxi] Walton. (143).
[xxxii] Ibid, (144).

were: a bond issue of $250,000 , the value of the old school at almost $40,000 , and a projected $61,000 from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation. Including miscellaneous expenses and revenues, the project's total cost was estimated at $383,000 .[xxxiii]

Construction of the new Lincoln-Grant School started in controversy. The most pressing matter was the miscalculation of the new site's foundation. The ground proved to be too soft to support the weight of the building, which cost additional funds to excavate and stabilize.[xxxiv]

Walton reports that in a January 5, 1931 article in the *Kentucky Post*, a letter from the Rosenwald foundation notified the Covington Board of Education that the foundation was withdrawing its grant because the plan to build a combined elementary and high school violated their guidelines. By this time, the Foundation had restricted their funding to high schools only.[xxxv] The problems with the Rosenwald Foundation led to infighting that resulted in a Grand Jury investigation of the project. That episode culminated in the resignation of two Board members, and in a less-elaborate building than originally planned.[xxxvi]

In response to these frictions, the School Board decided to build the new Lincoln-Grant School at a new site, on Greenup Street, some blocks of the preferred site, and not very far from the old Lincoln-Grant School. Groundbreaking was in May 1931, and the school was opened in the spring of 1932.[xxxvii]

The old school had created a strong tradition of academic excellence, sending forty percent of its graduates on to higher learning.[xxxviii] The new school would retain the old curriculum while adding some electives. These are found among the 1957 course offerings: Metal and woodwork, cooking and sewing, vocal and instrumental music, typewriting I and II. Extra-curricular activities included basketball, cheerleading, dance club, jazz combo, drum majorettes, and drum major.[xxxix]

Construction of the new Lincoln-Grant School generated money for local businesses and contractors.[xl] Lincoln-Grant adapted to the post-war G.I.s who came home to pursue an education and reprogram back to civilian life. In 1947 several black veterans obtained their G.E.D.s under the "G.I. Bill" through evening classes at William Grant High School.[xli] The return of black veterans of military service in conjunction with President Harry Truman's order to integrate the Armed Forces were a precursor to what was about to happen in the 1950s.

Following complaints from local civil rights leaders and the federal government, William Grant High School was officially closed in 1965.[xlii] All students were transferred to Holmes High School and the

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[xxxiii] Ibid. (147).
[xxxiv] Personal conversation with Reverend Richard Fowler 2/27/2012 at Lincoln Grant School, Greenup St. Covington, KY.
[xxxv] Ibid. (147).
[xxxvi] Walton. (148, 151-152).
[xxxvii] Ibid. (161 &162).
[xxxviii] Ibid. (289).
[xxxix] Ibid. (198).
[xl] Walton. (150).
[xli] Ibid. (204),
[xlii] Ibid. (314).

faculty and staff were reassigned or let go. A year later the Covington Board of Education decided to rezone the first and fourth districts to include a zone for Lincoln-Grant. This led to an expansion in Lincoln-Grant's racial diversity and proved to be a very effective strategy. 1966 also saw the name of the school changed, to Twelfth District Elementary School.[xliii]

By 1975, Lincoln-Grant (or Twelfth District School) was only twenty-nine percent black compared to a year prior when the student population was fifty-seven percent black.[xliv] By 1976 the school, and several others, were closed. The reason given was low enrollment and the need for a financial overhaul of the entire school district. The African American community supported this plan. Students and staff were reassigned to other schools, the rezoning of the school district allowed for black students to attend the school closest to their home. Lincoln-Grant continued as a community action center until it closed around 2000.[xlv]

Evaluating the Significance of Lincoln-Grant School within the context African American Education in Kenton County, Kentucky, 1918-1966

The Lincoln-Grant School was an extremely important place of African American education for the entire region of Northern Kentucky, which included Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties. The current school building was the product of a school system entrenched in racial segregation. The original Lincoln-Grant school (called the "Seventh Street Colored School" before 1909) became the original segregated school within the City of Covington. Other African American schools funneled students into the first Lincoln-Grant school from nearby communities, to enable them to complete their high school education, as at the time, these communities did not provide that level of education to their students. The construction of the present Lincoln-Grant facility only increased this pattern, because the school was sufficiently large and well-staffed.

For the Covington educational system, the 1932 Lincoln-Grant school was the sole school to provide for the secondary educational needs of the segregated African American students. This practice continued until desegregation was implemented, and African American high school students transferred to the previously white-only Holmes High School in 1965. In contrast with other African American schools throughout Kentucky from 1930-1965, on the basis of its physical plant alone, Lincoln-Grant appears to have come close to achieving the goal of a "separate but equal" education.

Few black schools from the era of segregated education continued being used when local school systems integrated. Many of the schools were of extremely construction; others that might have been usable were undesirable to white children's parents, who still had strong feelings toward a space associated with African Americans. Despite that, from 1965-1976, Lincoln-Grant functioned as an integrated primary school. Following its closure as an educational facility, it served as a community center for its neighborhood until all activities ceased within the building. The building is extremely unusual for serving the black community during an era of a segregated society, and then contributing well to social programs during the era of greater Civil Rights attainment.

Evaluating the Integrity between the Significance of Lincoln-Grant School and its physical condition

[xliii] Walton. (319).
[xliv] Ibid. (322).
[xlv] Ibid. (324).

A historic African American school in Kenton County is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places if it retains an integrity between its historic significance and its physical plant, sufficient to support the integrity of **associations** needed for eligiblity. The integrity of associations becomes the primary factor that determines eligibility due to the wording of Criterion A: it is a property that "is *associated* with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." Lincoln-Grant High School maintains a high level its important associations due to its retention of these integrity factors: location, design, setting, and materials.

The building possesses integrity of **location,** in that it still occupies its original site. The site has not given the property a great deal of its significance. The spot is not in the center of an African American neighborhood, for instance. However, in standing in this place for so many years, and being such a prominent building, the tenure at this site has conferred significance or meaning to the location.

The building possesses integrity of **setting.** It still is situated within an urban area, as it was during its construction. It continues to visually dominate its setting, which is composed of mixed-use properties within a residential neighborhood. It continues to be a significant focal point for the identity and development of its neighborhood.

The building possesses integrity of **materials**. All of the original exterior walls of the building are still in place and exhibit only normal weathering. Some metal doors have been installed, some repointing and brick replacement has occurred, and some window sashes have been altered. The interior spaces are essentially in the same as originally constructed, though slight modifications were undertaken when the school became a community center. With neglect and lack of maintenance, the building roof is beginning to fail, leaving a growing amount of water damage to stairwells, halls, and some rooms.

The building maintains integrity of **design**, as its present-day appearance has changed almost none since its original construction. It still exhibits its Art Deco style, and is recognizable as a New Deal-era construction. The primary damage to the design occurs with its windows, by vandals in recent years.

Due to the retention of integrity factors location, setting, materials, and design, the building can be said to have integrity of **associations**, the primary factor leading to the eligibility conclusion. Anyone who toured the building upon its original opening in 1931, or views its appearance in the photographic record from that time, would recognize the building today. A student who attended the school in its earliest years would have the same visual images of the school as one who attended it as late as 1964. For this reason the Lincoln-Grant High School building meets all the criteria for integrity of association—location, design, setting and materials. It therefore should be considered for preservation as a major historical structure for the development of education in the county.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cyprych, Debra Kay. *A Cincinnati Story: Emil Steinmann, E.C. Landberg and Associated Families*. Cincinnati, Ohio, Cincinnati Museum center at Union Terminal, 2008.

Fowler, Reverend Richard. Lincoln-Grant graduate. Personal conversation at Lincoln Grant School, Greenup Street, Covington, Kentucky, 2/27/2012.

Landberg, E.C. Lincoln-Grant School Interior Floor Plans. Documents Housed at City of Covington Economic and Planning Department.

Walton, Joseph M. *The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School, Covington, Kentucky, 1866-1976*. Little Miami Publishing Company, Milford, Ohio, 2010.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.25
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

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

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Matthew Yagle

organization Northern Kentucky University date 5/7/2012

Lincoln-Grant School
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky
County and State

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town Highland Heights state KY zip code _____

e-mail yaglem@nku.edu

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Lincoln-Grant School

City or Vicinity: Covington

County Kenton State: Kentucky

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of ___.

Property Owner:

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

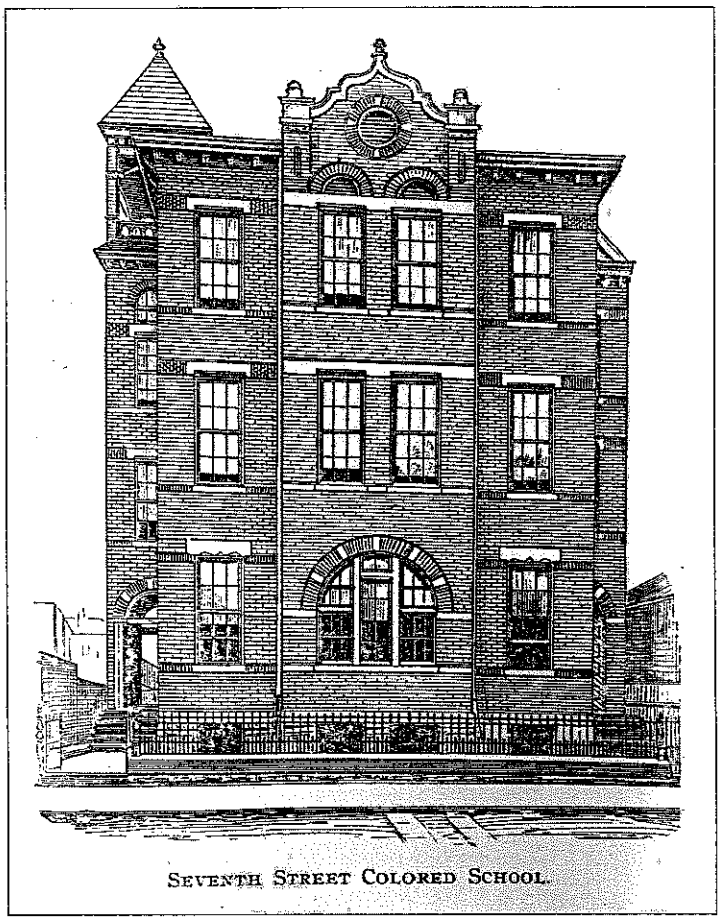
name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

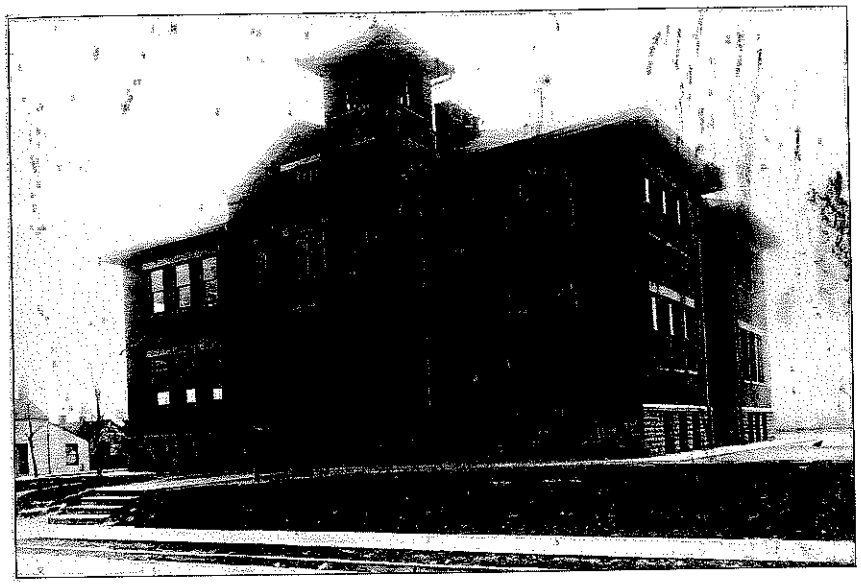
LINCOLN GRANT SCHOOL
LINCOLN AND GRANT SCHOOLS
ONE HOUR PARKING 9AM-4PM

The improvements to this site were financed in part by an Urban Park and Recreation Recovery program grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.
Randolph Park



Photograph 16: Seventh Street Colored School, 1890.
COURTESY OF THE KENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, COVINGTON, KENTUCKY.

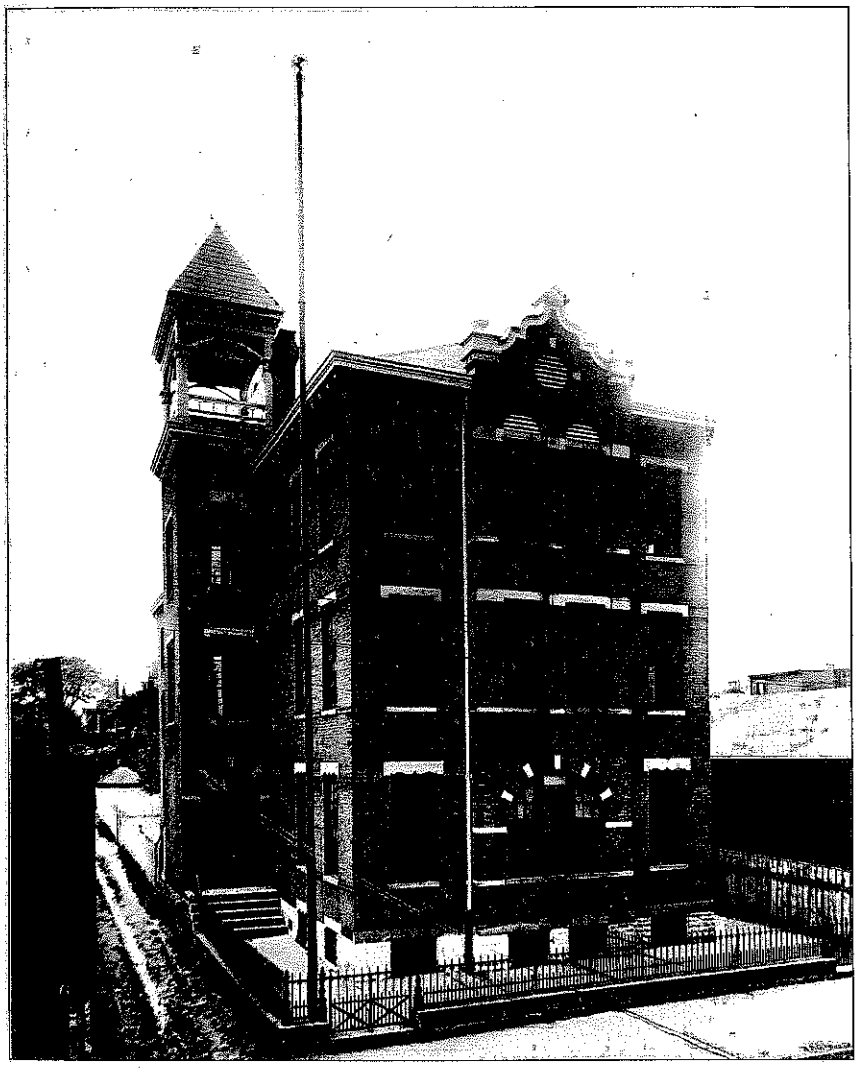
A drawing of the original Seventh Street Colored School building, Covington, Kentucky, 1890. The building was erected in 1888.



Photograph 38: Latonia Colored School.
COURTESY OF THE KENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY.

A school building originally constructed for white students in Latonia that was eventually vacated due to its age. The building is believed to have housed the Latonia Colored School students for two or three years during the early 1900s. The facility was only partially used, due to its size in relation to the number of black students that were served.

Source: Joseph M. Walton, *The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School*, Little Miami Publishing Co., 2010

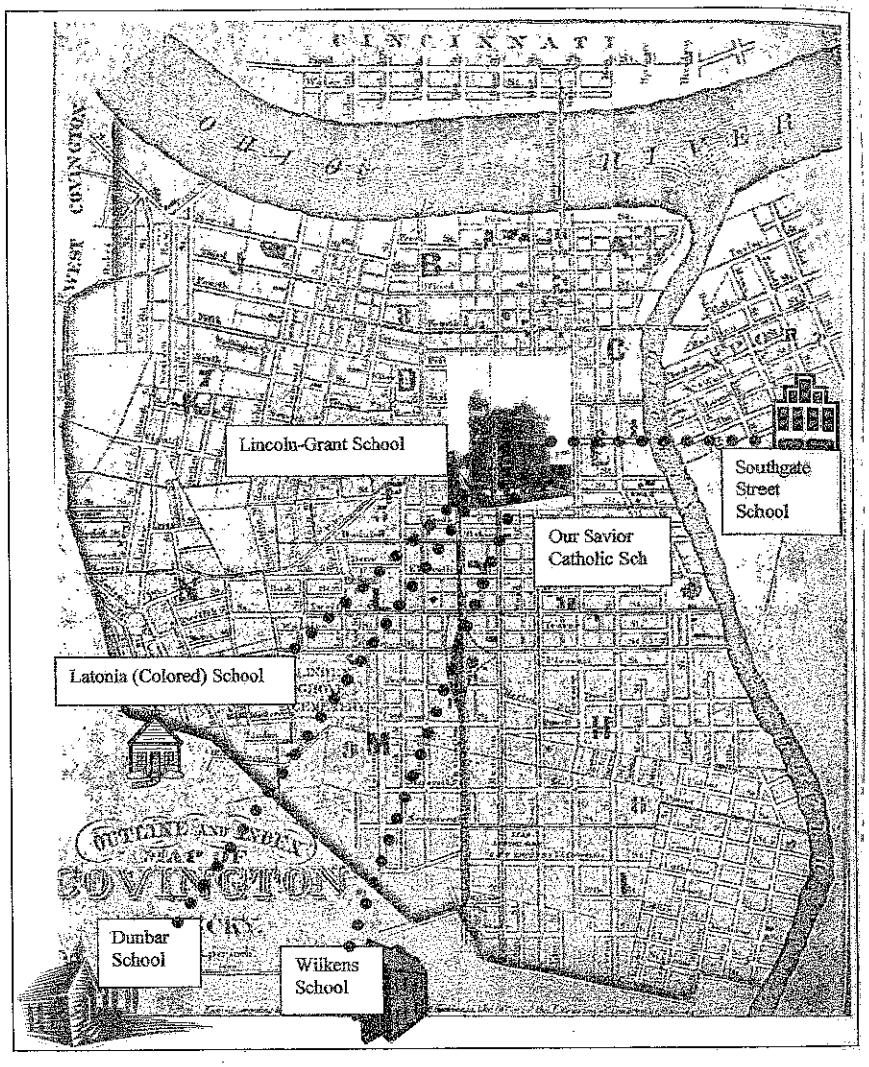


Photograph 17: Lincoln School, 1910.
CREATOR: ROMBACH AND GREEN
COURTESY OF THE KENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, COVINGTON, KENTUCKY

The Seventh Street Colored School was renamed Lincoln School in 1909 in honor of Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president of the United States of America. William Grant High School was also contained on the upper floors of the building.

Source: Joseph M. Walton, *The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School*, Little Miami Publishing Co., 2010

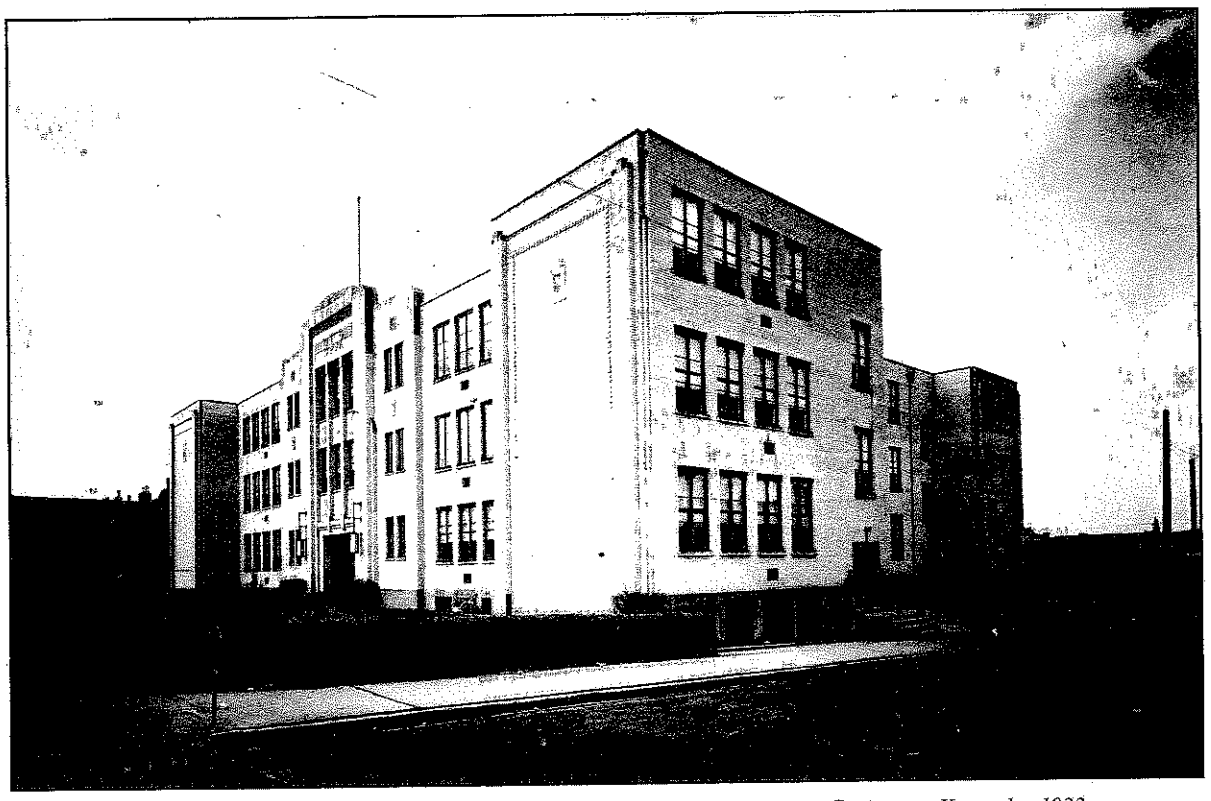
Black Schools in Northern Kentucky



Black school linkages in Northern Kentucky during the early 1900s. Photo of Lincoln-Grant School courtesy of the Kenton County Public Library, Covington, Kentucky. All other building representations above are facsimiles.

MAP SOURCE: ATLAS OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, COURTESY OF THE KENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY.

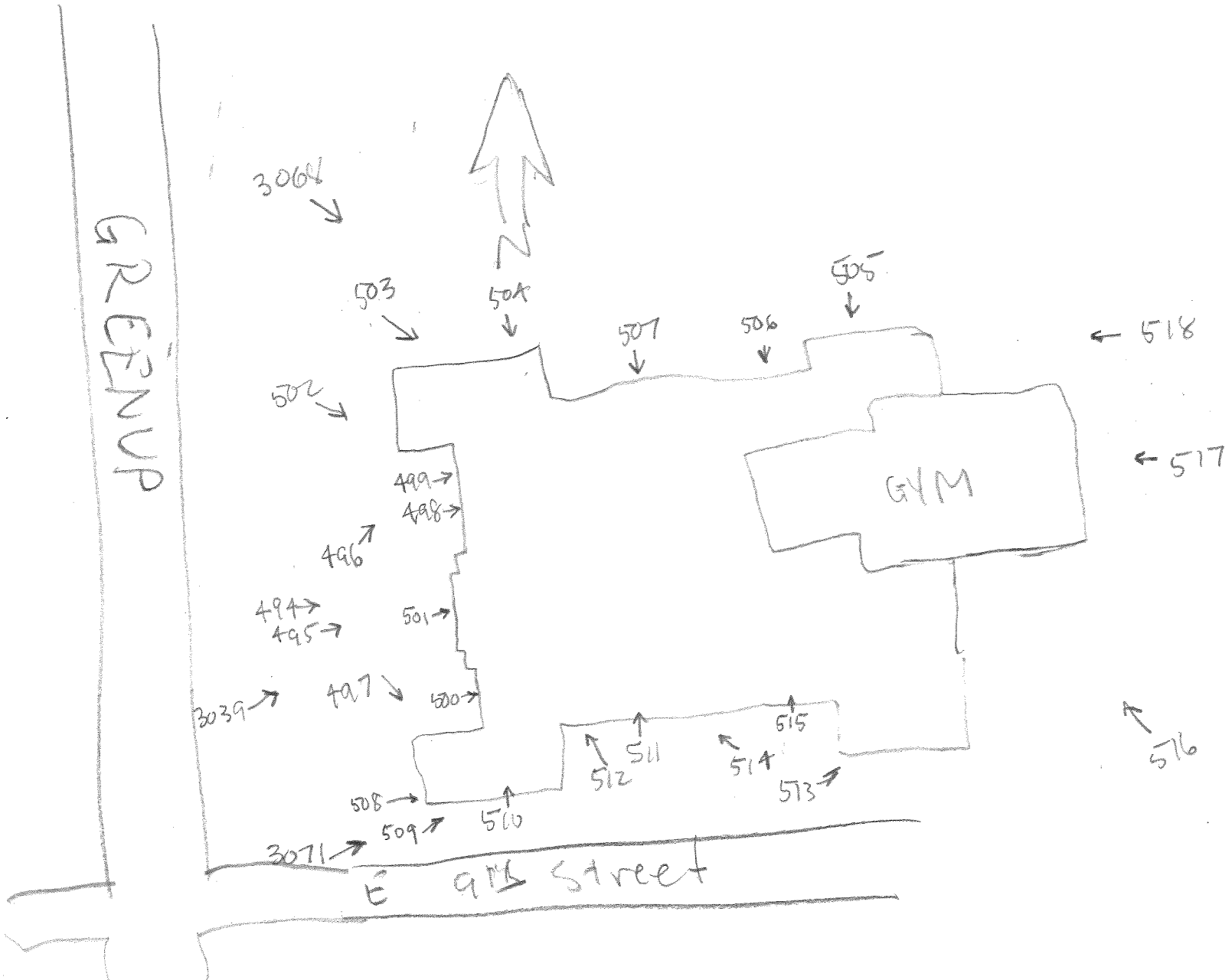
Source: Joseph M. Walton, *The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School*, Little Miami Publishing Co., 2010



Photograph 60: New Lincoln-Grant building, Ninth and Greenup streets, Covington, Kentucky, 1932.
COURTESY OF THE KENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, COVINGTON, KENTUCKY.

Source: Joseph M. Walton, *The Life and Legacy of Lincoln-Grant School*, Little Miami Publishing Co., 2010

Lincoln-Grant School
Kenton Co., KY
Photo locations



BONUS
PERIOD
HOME
VISITOR
EXIT

EXIT
EXIT

umoja