

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Memorial Elementary School

Other names/site number: HT 498

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Public Schools of Kentucky

## 2. Location

Street & number: 1400 N. Jackson Hwy.

City or town: Hardyville State: Kentucky County: Hart

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

## 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 Xlocal  
Applicable National Register Criteria: XA \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D

<hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;">Signature of certifying official/Title: <b>Craig Potts/SHPO</b> <span style="float: right;">Date</span></p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; text-align: center;"><b>Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office</b></p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Date</b></span></p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>
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**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

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	_____	Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

EDUCATION/School

**Current Functions**

EDUCATION/School

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

MODERN MOVEMENT:Art Deco

**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE

Exterior Walls: BRICK, CONCRETE, METAL/Steel

Fenestration: METAL/Aluminum, METAL/Steel

Roof: SYNTHETICS

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## Narrative Description

### Summary Paragraph

Memorial Elementary School (HT 498) is a two-story early consolidated school constructed in 1943 and located at 1400 N. Jackson Hwy. (US 31 East), in Hardyville, Kentucky (Figure 1). The school is located just north of Hardyville, which is a small town and collection of residential, commercial, and municipal buildings at the intersection of US 31 E. and KY-88 (Hardyville Rd). The school is situated on the east side of US 31 E. and sits on approximately 8 acres, consisting of the entire parcel that has historically and presently been associated with the school and related activities. There is a second Contributing resource located just south of the school, an outbuilding that was at one point the detached garage associated with a residence that, itself, was associated with the school, with various employees living there over the years. The Period of Significance stretches from 1943, the year the building was constructed, through 1975, the last year included in the Multiple Property Listing *Historic Public Schools in Kentucky*. The building is in good condition and retains sufficient integrity for listing.

### Character of Site

Memorial Elementary School is surrounded on all sides by undeveloped agricultural land, with single-family residential buildings sporadically located along US 31 E, a couple of which border the Memorial Elementary parcel. The parcel on which Memorial is situated is surrounded by lines of dense vegetation. There is a thruway on the west end of the property with paved roads branching off and leading to other parking lots and delivery access points to the north and south of the school.

Surrounding the school, which is centrally located in the parcel, there is a paved area used for parking and recreational activities, along with playground equipment and the detached garage/storage building, to the south, a covered picnic area to the east, and a parking lot and open grassland to the north. To the northeast, there is the remnants of a former baseball field, however, it appears to be underutilized and not maintained. The presence of such recreational and educational spaces on the grounds are important aspects to these school buildings, as the modern school ideologies associated with the consolidation movement emphasized the importance of recreational activities to the students' physical health. Moreover, the ability for the school grounds to facilitate the construction of these spaces and the installation of this equipment was paramount, thus large lots were chosen not only for the ability for the schools themselves to expand overtime, but also for the grounds to be extensively utilized for extracurricular activities.

Memorial Elementary School has had several additions since its construction, expanding its footprint and ability to effectively provide the necessary education and space for the schoolchildren. The original portion of the building included a central gymnasium with a two-story "C" shaped surround of classroom and administrative space, something that was common to school plans of the early consolidation movement (See *Historic Public Schools in Kentucky* pages 22-29).<sup>1</sup> It is There is a one-story extension on the north end of the building, just east of the "C" shaped two-story portion that is believed to have been constructed in 1948. Shortly after that,

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<sup>1</sup> Chapman, James Virgil and V.O. Gilbert. *School Architecture of Kentucky*. Volume 10, Number 2. Frankfort, Kentucky: Kentucky Department of Education, 1917.

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*Figure 1. Boundaries of Memorial Elementary School, as shown on an aerial map (Google Earth). Location relative to the surrounding area in the insert corner callout*

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in 1956, there was a similar, but deeper one-story addition off the south end of the school that extended further to the east than the rest of the building and mirrored the one-story portion on the north end. In 1962, there was an annex constructed off the end of the 1956 portion that added four classrooms, an office, and two bathrooms. With these constructions, the school was brought to a size that was able to accommodate the growing number of students at the time.

Around ca. 1975, there was another noteworthy and essential addition made to Memorial Elementary School that allowed it to serve the growing student population and aligned it with the expectations and requirements of modern educational facilities. This was the construction of a cafeteria and kitchen off the northeast end of the school. The next couple decades saw little exterior alterations, but around ca. 2000, there was another addition off the 1962 extension and the addition of a media center, being created by expanding a portion of the 1956 southern addition. Lastly, in 2015, there was an addition off the north end of the kitchen for food storage that included a walk-in refrigerator, freezer, and food storage room.

## **Description of Resource**

### *Exterior*

Memorial Elementary School is a two-story, Modern school building with Art Deco detailing with a concrete foundation, exterior walls clad in brick, and a flat roof (Photo 1). The west (main) façade has a central entryway with a newer covered walkway leading to the building's arched opening and recessed door (Photo 2). The walkway's covering is decorative metal with three V-shaped roof portions supported by decorative V-shaped supports set in concrete footers. There is an Art Deco geometric motif around the arched entryway with "Memorial" etched in the frieze above the door with more Art Deco ornamentation above. Above the second story windows, there is a full-width soldier course band and a stone band above, separating the main portion of the building from the brick cornice. The cornice has modern lettering spelling "Memorial" and "Elementary" on either side of center, with a centered decorative stone Art Deco design inlaid in the brick. There is a small Art Deco parapet centered in the façade that steps down as it expands to the north and south end. There are 44 one-over-one windows with covered transoms; 20 on the first floor separated into two sets of five on each side of center, and 24 on the second floor, mirroring those on the first level with an additional four above the arched entryway. Each window has a concrete sill and soldier course brick lintel.

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**Photo 1. West Façade**



**Photo 2. Main entryway**

The south façade is separated into five sections, denoting five distinct periods of the building's evolution (Photo 3). The westernmost is the two-story original portion of the building. The west end of this portion is unadorned and lacks fenestration while the eastern portion has 14 windows that match those on the west façade, seven on each level. Just east of that is the 1956 addition that protrudes slightly from the rest of the building. This one-story addition has a recessed entryway at its west end where it meets the original building and six bands of three windows that match the configuration of those on the main building (Photo 4). Just above this section, the second level of the central gymnasium is visible with bands of windows located in the clerestory. On the east end of the 1956 addition, and encompassing a portion of it, is the ca. 2000 addition of the media center. Just east of the media center addition is the 1962 southeast addition and off the east end of that is the ca. 2000 Kindergarten addition, with each newer addition extending further south than the previous part of the building. Fenestration on these later additions all match the original in style, adopting the simplistic one-over-one look, commonly without the transom above.

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**Photo 3. West and South facades**



**Photo 4. South façade and Contributing Resource**

The north façade is separated into three portions (Photo 5). The westernmost is the two-story, original part of the school and it mirrors its counterpart on the south. Just east of that is the 1948 one-story extension that makes up the upper part of the “C” in the building’s original design. Due to the grade of the site, this portion of the building has an exposed foundation, with some fixed windows and louvered vents along its length. Where the two and one-story portions meet, there is a secondary entryway on the ground level that leads to stairs to access the building’s first floor. On the one-story portion, there are six pairs of windows that match the original building and above the door and its transom is a smaller pair of one-over-one fixed windows (Photo 6). The easternmost portion extends significantly from the rest of the building and has a raised loading dock and wide entryway in its western wall. The exterior walls are completely unadorned otherwise as this is the 2015 freezer/walk-in refrigerator addition. The stylistic features and fenestration on the rear façade match those throughout the rest of the building.

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**Photo 5. West and north facades**



**Photo 6. North facade**

There is one Contributing resource associated with Memorial Elementary School. This is a front-gabled detached garage that has been converted to the school's outbuilding, likely used for storage or educational activities (Photo 4). It is of concrete block construction and its exterior has been painted completely with murals, likely by the students or the community. The gable wall has wood clapboard and the roof is clad in metal. This was once used as a detached garage for an on-site residential building that was demolished in ca. 2006, and in later years, for educational programming. It once housed school employees, such as the custodian.

### *Interior*

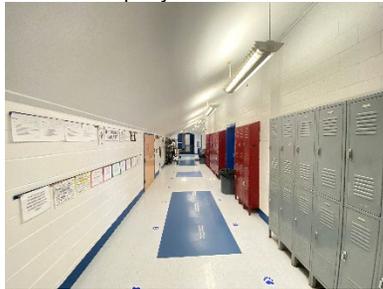
The interior of the Memorial Elementary School is two story building with a basement and is made up of a variety of different rooms including a main entryway with associated office and reception spaces, classrooms that cover a range of grades, a gym in the center of the building, resource rooms, a cafeteria, storage rooms, restrooms, and rooms dedicated to mechanical systems in the basement. The general makeup of the school is of vinyl tile flooring, concrete block walls, and drop tile ceiling throughout the hallways and corridors throughout the school (Photo 7). The main entryway is a small hallway with vinyl plank flooring, concrete block walls, and a drywall ceiling. The small hallway has a set of stairs and a ramp going from the door to the outside up to the door into the school proper. On one side of the hallway is a secondary door into the reception area and has a metal door surrounded by windows (Photo 8). The reception area has vinyl plank flooring, drywall, and a dropped tile ceiling. This area contains office spaces and administrative spaces for the school (Photo 9).

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**Photo 7. Corridor**

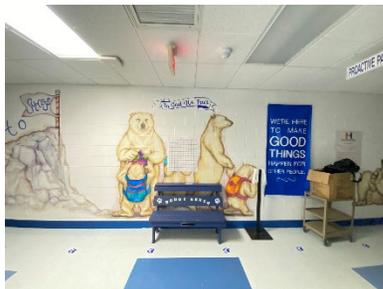


**Photo 8. Vestibule**



**Photo 9. Reception**

The main block of the building where the gym is located has the gym in the center of the block and is lined with hallways around the gym. These hallways are between the gym and various classrooms and other room types used by students and teachers (Photo 10). Classrooms are constructed with vinyl floor tiles, either exposed concrete block walls or drywall, and a drop tile ceiling (Photo 11). The gym is a large open portion of the building with polished wood floors styled after a basketball court, a combination of concrete block walls and windows along the sides of the gym, and an exposed metal ceiling with exposed arched rafters (Photos 12 and 13). Restrooms on the first floor include ceramic tile flooring, a combination of ceramic glazed tile and painted concrete block walls, and a drop tile ceiling (Photo 14). The ceramic glazed tile on the wall goes over the concrete block and covers the bottom two thirds of the wall.



**Photo 10. Corridor**



**Photo 11. Classroom**



**Photo 12. Gym Floor**

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Photo 13. Gym Bleachers



Photo 14. Boys' Restroom

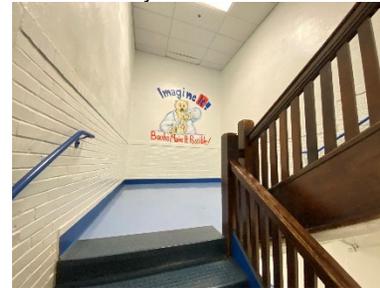


Photo 15. Stairway

At the ends of the front block are a set of staircases that lead up to the second floor of the building to additional classrooms. The staircases have rubber treads and a wood styled handrail with a thick square post and wide rails (Photo 15). The second story has a single hallway lined with classrooms. The hallway is constructed with vinyl tile flooring, concrete block walls, and a drop tile ceiling (Photo 16). Classrooms on the second floor are constructed with vinyl tile flooring, drywall, and a drop tile ceiling (Photos 17 and 18).



Photo 8. 2nd fl. corridor



Photo 9. 2nd fl. Classroom



Photo 10. 2<sup>nd</sup> fl. Classroom

### Changes to the Property Since the Period of Significance

Memorial Elementary School was originally constructed in 1943 and has undergone some additions and minor changes to the interior, consistent with a school that has been in continuous use for sixty-five years. Some of the interior changes, which are necessary to the ongoing use as a functional and safe school, include replacing flooring, classroom realignment, interior HVAC renovations, lighting renovations, the installation and consistent upgrades of a phone system, and other minor alterations.<sup>2</sup> There are some modern stylistic

<sup>2</sup> Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Finance and Operations, Division of District Support, District Facilities Branch, *Pulaski County School District Facility Plan*. June 2020.

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instances incorporated into the building's interior, namely in the administrative and welcome areas, that have been altered and no longer match the institutional feel of the rest of the school, however, these are to be expected as they serve a different purpose entirely, acting as the welcome area and space for office staff. These changes include newer vinyl flooring, carpeting, and painted drywall.

The original corridors, classrooms, restrooms, and larger assembly spaces all remain intact. The manner in which students, faculty, and staff move through the school remains unchanged from how it was in 1975. The materials of the additions and renovation also match the original construction materials. The painted concrete block walls, synthetic square floor tiles, and acoustic ceiling tiles all reinforce the building's intactness of materials and craftsmanship.

#### *Additions completed during the Period of Significance*

Many of the largest additions to Memorial Elementary School were completed during the Period of Significance, such as the northern and southern classroom extensions, the 1962 extension, and the cafeteria and kitchen. Each of these alterations provided necessary additions to the school to help it meet its changing and growing needs and the requirements for modern education facilities. In order to facilitate some of these additions, the central hallway was slightly altered. This was necessary to keep the interior flow and strengthen the ease of movement throughout the building, something that was made easier by the existing design of the building with a central gymnasium and a second level that required interior staircases. The northern, 1948 addition, was just an extension from the existing hallway, but for the southern, 1956 addition, the hallway winds slightly south, breaking from the otherwise straight corridor, to enter the new space, however, this occurs at the stairwell, making the change trivial. This was necessary on the south due to the presence of the locker rooms inside the gymnasium, which makes the width larger on the south end, causing the break in symmetry. A similar feature was utilized when entering the 1962 addition, where a small interior stairway and ramp is placed to accommodate the change in grade as one moves further east throughout the building. Lastly, the corridor leading to the cafeteria and kitchen was an obvious choice, being placed on the east side of the gym, creating a hallway circles the entire first floor, connecting the corridors of both the northern and southern additions. In addition to the commonsense way that the additions were fit onto the school, both interior and exterior, were aligned with the original school, in material, design, and style.

#### *Ca. 2000 Addition*

In ca. 2000, there were two additions/alterations. The first was the expansion of the media center. This alteration did not drastically change the footprint of the building and it did not change the interior layout or flow at all, but instead, just enlarged a room, seemingly to accommodate growing technological requirements and expanding curriculums. This increase in size and educational offerings was something that was encouraged in modern educational facilities, especially as technology evolves. Similar to many public schools, the library, which is often a public-facing room, has different flooring, a more decorative vinyl, but otherwise, the room matches the rest of the building. The second alteration was the addition of two more pre-K and Kindergarten rooms off the end of the 1962 wing. This is

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seen as a typical extension for a modern elementary school where the central hallway was simply extended and two new classrooms were constructed, one on either side. Moreover, this is in the rear of the building, which is standard placement for new construction.

### *2015 Addition*

The final major addition to Memorial Elementary School was on the northeast of the building. This was done in 2015, a year when the kitchen of the school was getting a full renovation. The addition created bigger and better space for food storage, complete with the inclusion of new walk-in freezer, refrigerator, and dry food storage space. This addition also included an exterior loading dock, ideal for receiving food deliveries straight to the kitchen. This addition greatly increased the building's functionality and does little to deter from the overall exterior integrity. While the exterior lacks any ornamentation or windows, for obvious reasons, it is in the rear of the building and largely hidden from sight. Moreover, the brick veneer ties into the style of the rest of the building nicely.

The impact of the additions and renovations on the pre-1975 building have been considered within the context of public education in Kentucky. The classrooms were still individualized by grade, teacher, and purpose. The materials, both the original and the newer replacement materials, retained the same utilitarian nature of the original 1943 building, even matching the type, style, and size of the windows with those on the pre-1975 building. By keeping additions primarily to the sides and rear of the building, the school is able to retain the overall general layout of the school interior, with a corridor encircling the central gymnasium flanked by classrooms, one-room deep. Moreover, by keeping the additions all to one story, the emphasis remains on the two-story, Art Deco style of the main façade. These additions allow for the cohesive feel of the interior. Visually, there is a flow within the building which shows an awareness of the original design.

The school retains integrity as a functioning school building that has been used as a school over the course of its history. The various additions and renovations done to the school ensure that its history and function as such can continue. The original portion of the building's exterior, and that of the pre-1975 additions, is still visible throughout, with very little covered or lost by later additions. The additions off the north, south, and east (rear) match the original construction in material, style, and design. Those additions are in the Modern style and the Art Deco style is only visible on the main façade. The newer windows differ slightly from historic windows.

Memorial Elementary School displays the design that resulted from Hart County's early consolidation movement. It was constructed in a high style, being more than one-story tall, yet still built with wings that allowed for growth and a variety of programming. Schools of this type were placed on large lots and designed to grow organically. Many of the most notable and large-scale additions were completed during the Period of Significance. The building meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the Historic Public Schools of Kentucky MPS.



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- 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

#### Significant Person

NA

#### Period of Significance

1943-1975

#### Cultural Affiliation

NA

#### Significant Dates

1943

#### Architect/Builder

Unknown

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## Statement of Significance

### Summary Paragraph

Memorial Elementary School (HT 498) is locally significant within the historic context, Public Schools in Kentucky 1800-1975, as outlined in the Historic Public Schools of Kentucky MPD, and is a significant example of the property type Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century School Buildings. The school's significance is rooted in the early consolidation movement, something that aligned ideologically with the later consolidation movement, but often differed in style and design. This combination can be seen exceptionally well in the design, location, and setting of Memorial Elementary School. The early consolidation movement emphasized the construction of larger schools in rural areas, often of multiple stories and in high styles, that still underscored the need for modern educational facilities and their ability to expand to meet growing needs. This focus allowed the school to cater to a wider geographic region and provide better educational accommodations for the schoolchildren, which all positively impacted Kentucky's rural communities. Schools, such as Memorial Elementary School, were essential for Kentucky's rural areas, as they provided adequate educational facilities, established with progressive ideologies best suited for learning, that could grow and evolve as needs arose. Moreover, this particular era still highlighted the grandeur of earlier educational periods, bringing a beauty and splendor to Kentucky's rural landscape. Memorial Elementary School was likely one of the last schools constructed in the Commonwealth that would fall into this Property Type, as following WWII, new school designs changed drastically, not in ideology, but in style. However, this does not diminish the importance of this school and its ability to remain representative of the entire early consolidation movement.

Memorial Elementary School meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the Multiple Property Listing. The Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century School Buildings Property Type includes examples from the early consolidation movement. These buildings are characterized by their size, often being multi-level buildings, and their use of high-style ornamentation on their primary facades. Moreover, this era of school construction featured characteristics that separate it from those of its predecessor and those that follow. Earlier schools lacked certain amenities, such as a gymnasium, and lacked the ability to easily expand its footprint to accommodate future needs and requirements. Similarly, unlike those schools that followed in the Post-War years, these of the early consolidation movement still embraced the impressiveness of high style architecture and multi-story buildings. As such, buildings that fall into this Property Type will be eligible as long as they have not lost sufficient integrity and no longer possess the characteristics of this type. For Memorial Elementary, it still possesses a high level of integrity, still retaining the character-defining features of the Art Deco style on the main façade, and the later additions, many of which occurred during the Period of Significance, were all done off the rear of the building, something that was figured on as part of the overall school's design, something that is considered a character-defining feature. The additions and alterations that occur after 1975 are weighed against the significance of the building, to determine whether the building's significant identity survives in material form. The important question an eligible property must answer in the affirmative is whether the building's physical status today continues to reinforce the significance of local historical educational efforts.

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Similar to other rural counties in Kentucky, the educational landscape following World War II drastically changed. This was in large part due to the changing demographics of the area with the return of veterans and the subsequent baby boomer population, as well as the constant improvement of the Commonwealth's infrastructure, coupled with the increasing availability of automobiles for Americans. Of the five elementary schools currently serving Hart County, which in this case refers to public schools offering preschool through eighth grade classes, four were constructed within the Period of Significance of the Multiple Property Listing Historic Public Schools of Kentucky. These elementary schools were built between 1943-1960, with the earliest of these schools, Memorial Elementary School, being one of the rare examples of a public school being constructed during the war. The fifth active public elementary school in Hart County was constructed in 2007.

In Hart County, the post-war years brought about a new era in public education. In 1945, there were 67 one-room schools within the county, but in less than a decade, all of them had been closed.<sup>3</sup> Over the next couple of decades, most schools in Hart County remained segregated, despite the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954. By 1965, however, all segregated schools in Hart County were demolished. By 1970, there were four consolidated elementary schools in Hart County, geographically placed to accommodate all school-aged students in the county, thus fully realizing the consolidation school model and eliminating the necessity of local rural schools in the area. It is an interesting point that all "elementary" schools in Hart County offer preschool through eighth grade courses, essentially eliminating the need for separate middle schools in the county. While this is not unheard of, it is somewhat unique for an entire county to adopt this approach.

### **History of Nominated Property**

Memorial Elementary School is a bit of an oddity in public education in Hart County, as the building that now serves as Memorial Elementary School was originally the Memorial Consolidated High School, also called the Hart Memorial School or Hart Memorial High School. Despite the change in use over time, the building will still be referred to as the Memorial Elementary School throughout this nomination.

Memorial Elementary School was constructed in 1943 and was built as a replacement for the original Memorial School that was constructed in 1919 and destroyed by fire in May 1942.<sup>4</sup> This unfortunate occurrence explains the timing of Memorial Elementary School's construction, as throughout Kentucky, and most of America, large-scale construction projects of this type were paused during WWII. In the years following WWII, Kentucky was rectifying the vast disparities between its city schools and the county schools in the more rural regions. The school consolidation movement began around the turn of the century, but in many of Kentucky's counties, it was not until after WWII that diligent efforts were made to implement the changes both in physical school construction and ideological evolution of the curriculums and the importance placed on new offerings. Despite the passing of the 1934 School Code, it was not until 1943, which only occurred

<sup>3</sup> The Historic Marker Database, "Hart County One-Room Schools 1945-1946," Electronic Document, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=174340>, accessed October 2024.

<sup>4</sup> "Memorial School is Destroyed by Fire Early Friday Morn." In *Hart County News*, May 7, 1942.

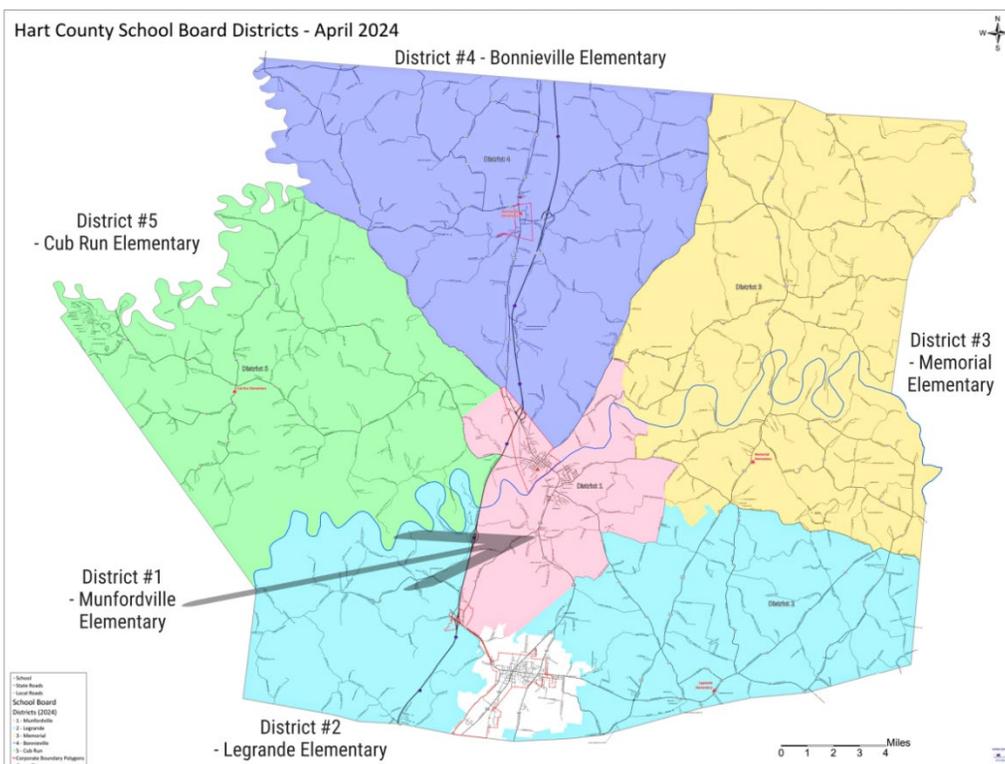
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because of the 1942 fire, that Hart County made moves to consolidate its school buildings. Of the five schools that still serve Hart County, Memorial Elementary School, built in 1943, was the first in the region and likely served elementary and high school, but it was closely followed by Bonnieville and Cub Run in 1948, and LeGrande, in 1960. Originally, the four schools served the County in each of the four cardinal directions; east, north, west, and south, respectively, with Munfordville having its own elementary school. Following the construction and consolidation efforts that resulted in the aforementioned four schools, other schools that had been serving Hart County residents were closed, including Northtown, an elementary school that closed in 1970-1971, and Carter-Dowling, which was a consolidated elementary school for African American students that lost most of its student population after the Hart County School District desegregated their schools in 1965, closed in 1968-1969.<sup>5</sup> In 2007, the new Munfordville was constructed, replacing the one there before, being the last of the five that currently serve the Hart County School District. Horse Cave, the largest city in the County, is served by the Caverna Independent School District instead of Hart County.



At the time of its construction, the school was built to serve as the high school and likely had elementary offerings as well, although this is unclear since they were mentioned as separate facilities sometimes and combined in other instances. According to early topographic maps and historic aerial photographs, there was another one-story building on the site as well, just north of the school building. It is not clear if this was a separate facility for different grades, for different

<sup>5</sup> “Board changes district boundaries; Northtown students to attend LeGrande.” In *Hart County News*, July 18, 1985; “1951-1969 Carter-Dowling School.” Electronic document, <https://www.hartcountymuseum.org/historical-highlights.html>, accessed April 2025.

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programming, or if this was a remnant of the earlier building, but it remained until ca. 1970 and by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the current facility served as both the Memorial Elementary and High School. By 1963, the other building on site contained classrooms for the agricultural offerings at the school.<sup>6</sup>

When Memorial Elementary School was built, it was a fraction of its current size, consisting of only the two-story portion of the building and the gymnasium, situated in the building's "C." The original school was somewhat simplistic in style, with a symmetrical main façade and single window openings throughout, as opposed to the bands of windows preferred by later school buildings. However, the school did contain some high style features, typical of the era. The building was constructed in the Art Deco style, with ornamentations along the parapet, cornice, and around the central entryway. Just five years after it was constructed, the building received its first addition off the north side, and in the next fifteen years, two more large-scale additions were constructed, all to facilitate the growing number of students and educational programming, consistent with a school that served first through twelfth grade. All of these additions occurred on the wings of the two-story "C" and were one-story in height. Outdoor educational and recreational space was an integral part of the facility by the early 1960s, with a baseball field, playground equipment, and an agricultural shop all existing outside the main school's footprint. Over the years, the agricultural shop has been lost, a former garage was converted into a music room and then into storage, and the recreational spaces and equipment have all been replaced, upgraded, or added to out of necessity to modernize outdoor play and make things safer for the children.

The 1963 Hart County Facilities Survey noted several failings and inadequacies in the Hart County Public Schools, including Memorial, which was still serving both elementary and high school students at the time. The survey resulted in the District recommending the construction of a county-wide consolidated high school. Thus, four years later, in 1967, Hart County High School was constructed and intended to serve all high school students in the county. The final high school class at the Memorial Elementary School (Hart Memorial School) graduated in 1969, leaving the Memorial Elementary School to only cater to elementary education thenceforth. The same survey recommended that when/if high school students moved to another school, then the existing Memorial Elementary School should be renovated to include a cafeteria and kitchen on the first floor and be remodeled to repurpose other spaces for special purpose rooms such as art, music etc. Shortly after, in ca. 1975, a cafeteria and kitchen addition off the rear of the building provided an adequate space for children to eat, replacing the basement lunchroom previously employed by the school. The following year, some of the interior spaces were reallocated to allow for Kindergarten, which began being offered at Memorial in the 1976-1977 school year.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> "State Department of Education Recommends a Central High School for Hart County," In *Hart County News*, July 18, 1963.

<sup>7</sup> "Two Kindergarten units for Hart," In *Hart County News*, April 15, 1976.

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Figure 2. Photo of Memorial Elementary School from 1978.<sup>8</sup> Note the presence of both the north and south additions, the kindergarten addition, the cafeteria, the custodian's house that has since been demolished, and the detached garage that is a Contributing resource.

The series of additions to the school in its first two decades is emblematic of the significance of the early consolidation movement and the schools constructed during this period. These schools were designed with the intentional purpose of easily allowing additions of outer wings and annexes off the sides and rear of the buildings. Memorial Elementary School, with its “C” shaped design left possibilities for additions off the rear wings open and this was extremely fortuitous considering the constant expansion that occurred in the first several years. Moreover, the design of the early consolidation school allowed for these expansions to occur without detracting from the stylistic importance and character-defining features of the Art Deco main façade. These aspects allowed Memorial Elementary School to both convey a sense of splendor while allowing for ease of growth, something that was complimented by the large size of the parcel.

In 1981, a Hart County Department of Education's Facilities Survey once again highlighted noteworthy shortcomings with the Memorial Elementary School, this time due to routine deterioration and to improve the school's energy efficiency.<sup>9</sup> While no mention of when these changes took place, as the Facilities Survey Report only noted that this should be one of the District's top priorities, it is believed that in the years immediately following this report is when

<sup>8</sup> *Vintageaerial.com*. “50-MHAT-28 from 1978” <https://vintageaerial.com/photos/kentucky/hart/1978/MHAT/50/28>, accessed April 2025.

<sup>9</sup> “Memorial School renovation at top of priority list.” In *Hart County News*. April 16, 1981.

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the replacement of windows took place. Other than these procedural updates and upgrades, Memorial Elementary School remained largely the same until around the turn of the 20th century. The ca. 2000 addition and alterations, which included the expansion of the media center and the construction of two new kindergarten/preschool classrooms were a direct result of growing needs, both technological and in educational offerings.

Memorial Elementary School's ability to expand, per the modern educational ideologies, is embodied in both the physical expansion of the building's footprint, but also in the educational and recreational offerings. As Memorial entered into the twenty-first century, the expansion of the media center was of the utmost importance. This alteration included the addition of audio/visual space and inclusion of newer technologies and computer labs in the school. Similarly, by the early years of the twenty-first century, outdoor recreation was emphasized, resulting in strengthening its offerings through a reworked baseball field and the installation of new playground equipment.

There had previously been an on-site residence located just south of the school, utilized as housing for certain school employees, such as custodians. This residence was demolished in the early twenty-first century, but the detached garage was preserved. While an earlier Kentucky Heritage Council survey form denoted this building as a music room, it is believed that now it is utilized purely as storage.

The final notable addition occurred in 2015 when a modern extension of the kitchen space was constructed. This allowed for streamlined deliveries to occur straight to the kitchen and it added modern walk-in food storage rooms. Other site additions in the twenty-first century include the paving of driving, parking, and recreational space and the construction of a covered picnic area off the rear of the ca. 2000 addition.

Throughout its existence, Memorial Elementary School has been designed and constructed architecturally to meet the contemporary requirements of public education and has grown to accommodate growing populations and increased needs. It has remained a valuable resource in Kentucky public school education and a testament to the early consolidation movement and the ongoing educational ideologies of the mid-to-late twentieth century, ensuring that the design of schools could adapt with growing needs, provide an ideal learning environment for students, and be easily accessible by all students in the surrounding district.

Over the years since the building was constructed, Memorial Elementary School has hosted events for the local community in addition to its service as an elementary and high school for a large region in northeast Hart County. While some of the events held on site benefit the school and its educational and extracurricular activities, there were countless others that utilized the space. Despite the purpose of the events, they all served as important channels for community cohesion and involvement in the local school. Examples of the kinds of events held at Memorial include several events in its early years that went to support the War effort like the State Wool Pool and its use as a location to attain War Ration Books, and in later years, it was the location for horse shows, local celebrations, cancer drives, and gubernatorial candidate addresses, to name a few.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> "State Wool Pool Will Receive at Memorial School." In *Hart County News*, May 21, 1942; "War Ration Book No. 2, Available to All Who Hold No. 1." In *Hart County News*, Feb 18, 1943; "What? When? Where? Memorial

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Such activities were intentional, as these schools were intended to serve the local community both as a place for education and as a community center, especially in rural areas.

Enrollment at Memorial Elementary School has been inconsistent over the years, owing in large part to the fact that it once housed both elementary and high school students. In 1960, the combined school had 753 students, with 375 in grades 1 through 6 and 378 in grades 7 through 12.<sup>11</sup> From 1977 to 1978, enrollment at Memorial Elementary School changed from 448 to 421, respectively, consisting only of elementary students K-8.<sup>12</sup> By 1989, the number of students enrolled at Memorial was 338, and that number has remained somewhat stagnant, as today, the enrollment sits around 320.<sup>13</sup> Today, Memorial Elementary School is at its capacity, meaning that all of the additions and alterations over the years have only served to keep the school aligned with its current needs and expectations.

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Horse Show Sat. Night.” In *Hart County News*, July 11, 1963; “Terry Compton Day Scheduled for May 11.” In *Hart County News*, May 9, 1974; “Gospel Notes by Donna Stanton.” In *Hart County News*, May 1, 1975; “Democratic gubernatorial candidate Wilkinson visits Hart County.” In *Hart County News*, October 15, 1987.

<sup>11</sup> “Memorial School News.” In *Hart County News*. September 22, 1960.

<sup>12</sup> “Enrollment declines in Hart schools.” In *Hart County News*. September 14, 1978; “Hart Schools enrollment down slightly.” In *Hart County News*, August 28, 1980.

<sup>13</sup> “Hart enrollment figures down from last year.” In *Hart County News*, August 24, 1989; Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Finance and Operations, Division of District Support, District Facilities Branch, Hart County School District Facility Plan. February 2020.

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1976, April 15. “Two Kindergarten units for Hart.”

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*Vintageaerial.com*. "50-MHAT-28 from 1978"

<https://vintageaerial.com/photos/kentucky/hart/1978/MHAT/50/28>, accessed April 2025.

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**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):** HT 498

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 8 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

1. Latitude: 37.271938

Longitude: -85.773854

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of Memorial Elementary School includes the entire legal parcel on which the school is located. The property is roughly bounded by N. Jackson Highway to the west, neighboring residences to the north and south, and undeveloped land to the east.

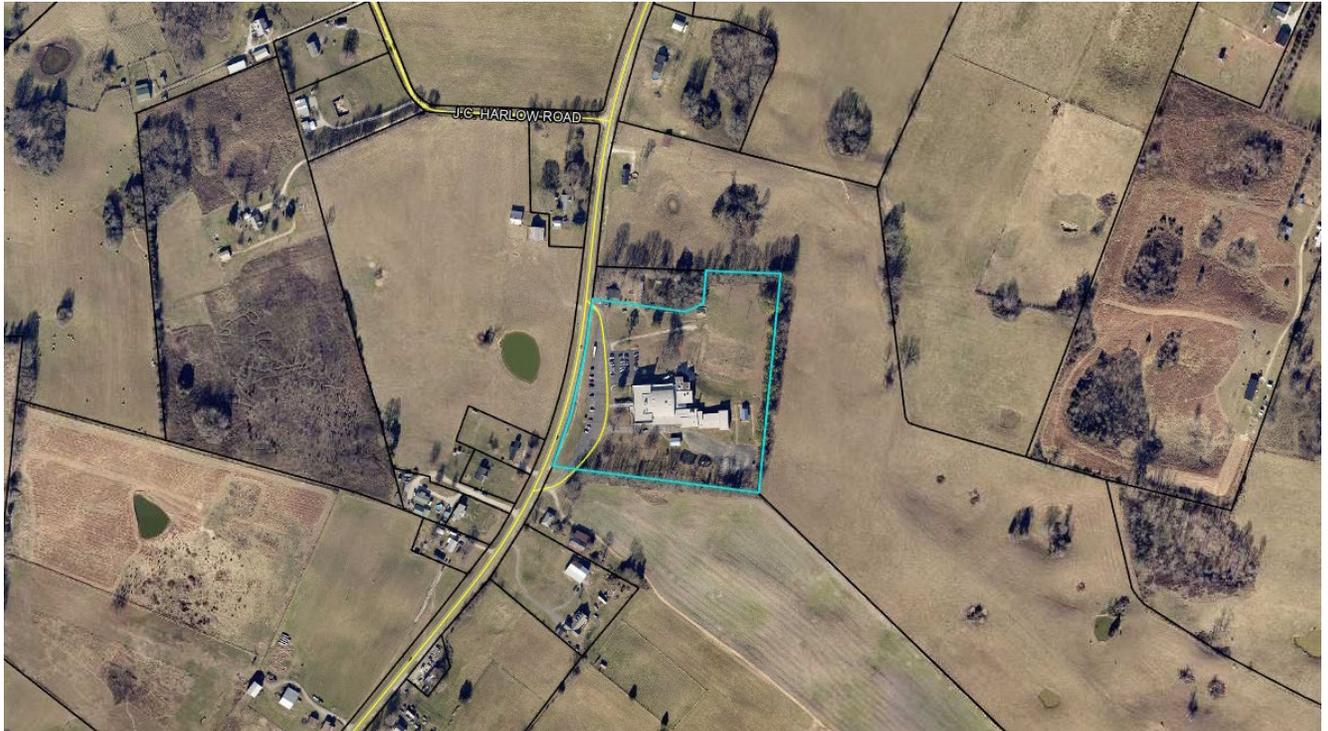


Figure 3. Parcel map courtesy Hart County Property Valuation Administrator

### Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the entirety of the property historically and currently associated with Memorial Elementary School.

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#### Property Owner:

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

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name Memorial School  
street & number 1400 N. Jackson Hwy. telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Hardyville state KY zip code 42746

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Wes Cunningham, MA, Sr. Principal Investigator History/Architecture, Director of National Register Nominations & Research

organization: Pinion Advisors

street & number: 1131 Logan Street

city or town: Louisville state: Kentucky zip code: 40204

e-mail: wcunningham@pinionadvisors.com

telephone: 502-807-0575

date: April 2025

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## Photographs

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Memorial Elementary School

City or Vicinity: Hardyville

County: Hart County

State: Kentucky

Photographer: Jonna Mebelitini

Date Photographed: December 2024

- 1 of 18: View of Memorial Elementary School, camera facing east.
- 2 of 18: Detail of the Memorial Elementary School entryway, camera facing east
- 3 of 18: View of Memorial Elementary School, camera facing northeast.
- 4 of 18: View of Memorial Elementary School and Contributing Resource, camera facing north.
- 5 of 18: View of Memorial Elementary School, camera facing southeast.
- 6 of 18: View of Memorial Elementary School, camera facing south.
- 7 of 18: View of interior corridor, camera facing east.
- 8 of 18: View of vestibule, camera facing east.
- 9 of 18: View of reception area, camera facing east.
- 10 of 18: View of interior corridor wall, camera facing east.
- 11 of 18: View of first floor classroom, camera facing north.
- 12 of 18: View of gymnasium, camera facing east.
- 13 of 18: View of gymnasium, camera facing north.
- 14 of 18: View of bathroom, camera facing south.
- 15 of 18: View of stairway, camera facing north.
- 16 of 18: View of second floor corridor, camera facing north.
- 17 of 18: View of second floor classroom, camera facing north.
- 18 of 18: View of second floor classroom, camera facing east.

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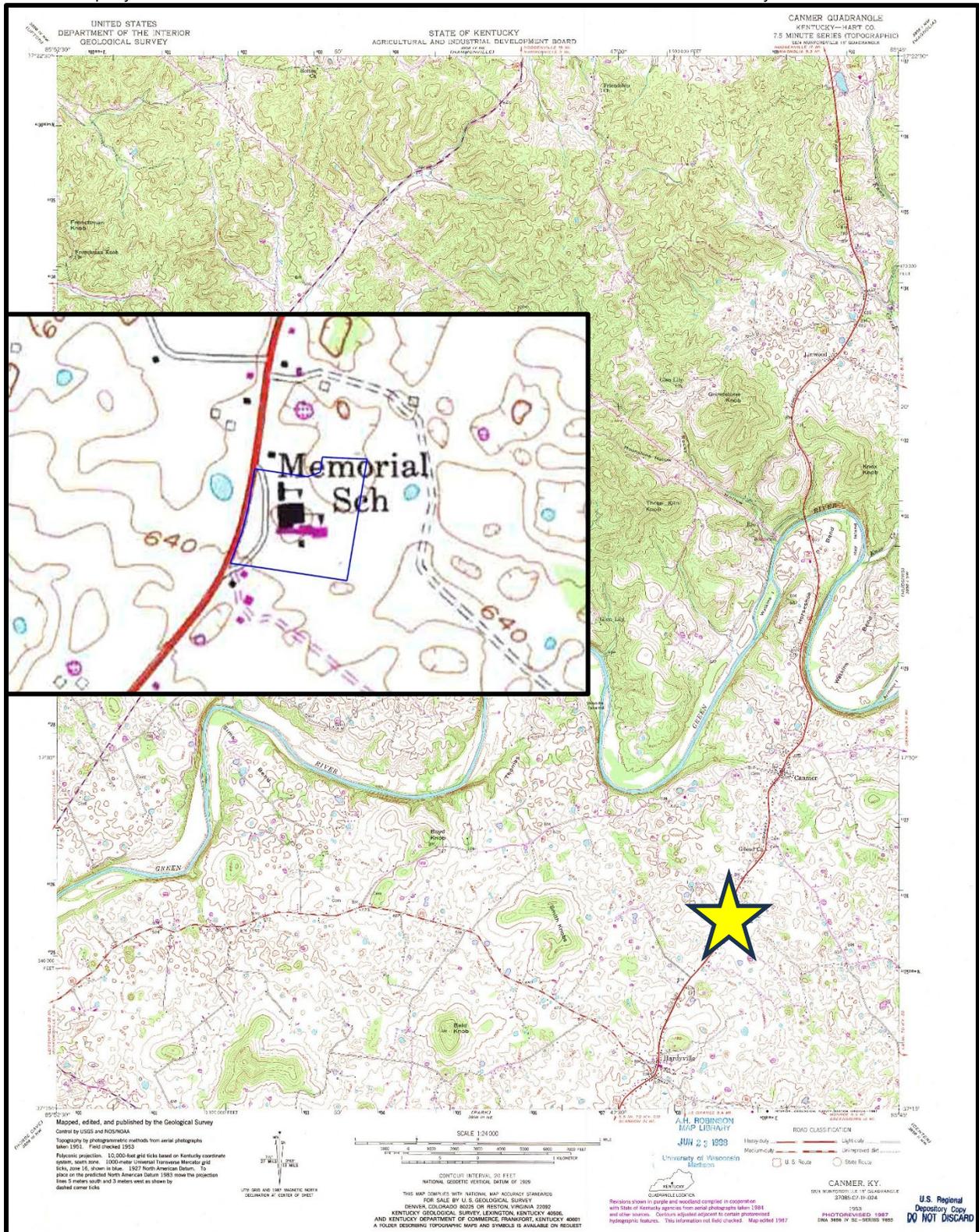
Hart County, Kentucky  
County and State



Photo Key

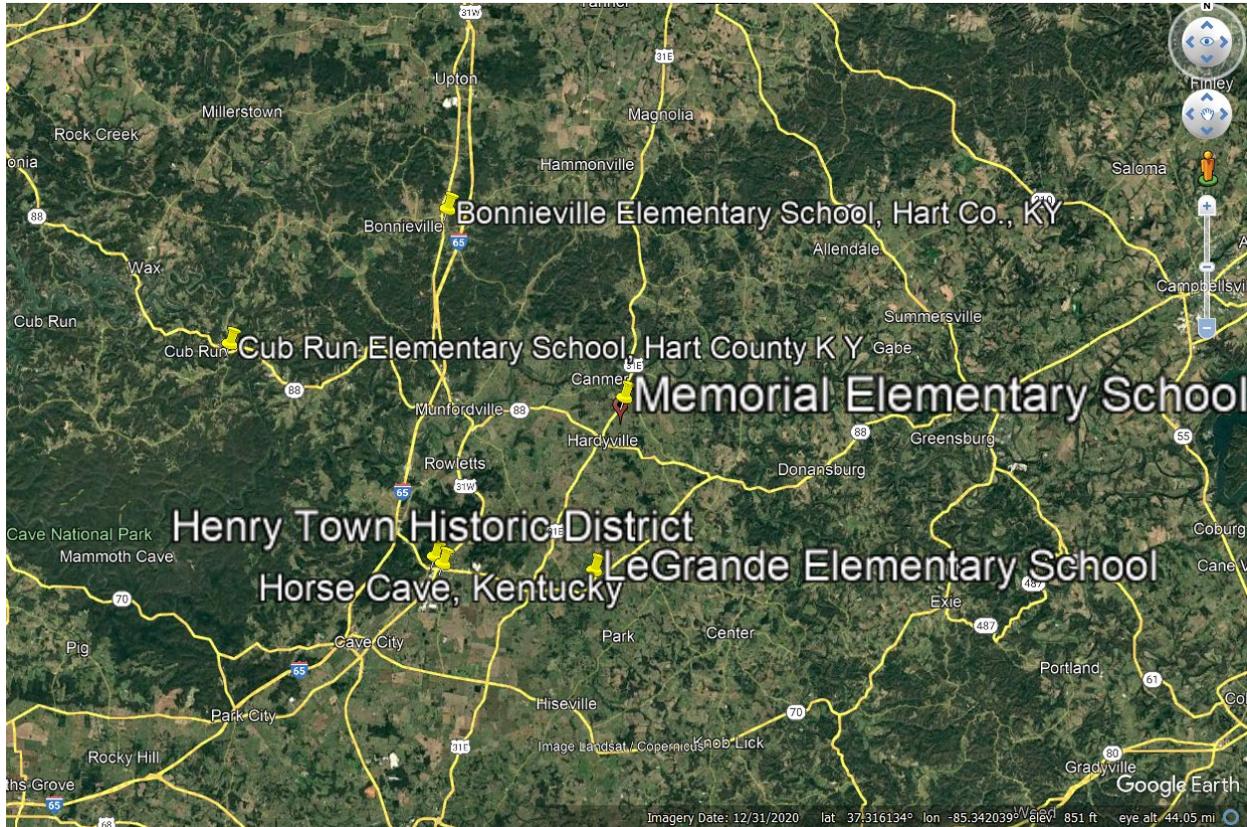
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**Memorial Elementary School, Hart County, KY, area map showing recent listings**