

# 242 Kent Street West, Town of Lindsay (Central Senior School)

## Heritage Designation Evaluation

Lindsay

PT PARKLT 8 W/S ALBERT ST PL TOWN PLOT AS IN TL33337; KAWARTHA LAKES (PIN: 63224-0145 (LT)); PT PARKLT 8 W/S ALBERT ST, 9 W/S ALBERT ST PL TOWN PLOT AS IN TL21896, TL22440, TL32036, TL33338; KAWARTHA LAKES (PIN: 63224-0146 (LT)); and PT PARKLT 9 W/S ALBERT ST PL TOWN PLOT AS IN TL36221; KAWARTHA LAKES PIN: 63224-0151 (LT)

2023



## Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets any two of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. A heritage evaluation of the property has determined that 242 Kent Street West has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### 1. The property has design value or physical value because it:

i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method:

The property is a representative example of an early twentieth century Beaux-Arts school in Lindsay. The property, which was constructed between 1910 and 1911, displays characteristics typical of early twentieth century Beaux-Arts schools erected in urban areas such as large banks of windows with lintels and lugsills, a central entrance with Classical surrounds, coursing, pediments, and a belfry.

ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The property displays a typical degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit for a building of this type.

iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

There are no specific technical or scientific achievements associated with this property.

### 2. The property has historical or associative value because it:

i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to the community:

The property has direct historical associations with the history and development of education in Lindsay. The school was constructed between 1910 and 1911 to replace an older school as part of a wider upgrade of school facilities in Lindsay in response to a growth in primary education in the early decades of the twentieth century.

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

The property yields information regarding the development of education in Lindsay in the early twentieth century as a public school serving Lindsay from 1910 onward.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community:

The school reflects the institutional work of Toronto-area architect James Ellis who was well known throughout the province for his institutional commissions. He designed a wide array of schools throughout central and eastern Ontario in the early twentieth century in a consistent Beaux-Arts style which emphasized bold Classical features and symmetrical massing.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property defines and supports the character of this area of Lindsay which includes a wide array of historic building dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The school one of the area's primary institutional buildings and helps define the character of the area.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:

The property is historically linked to its surroundings as part of the early twentieth century development of this area of Lindsay which underwent substantial growth in the early decades of the century.

iii. is a landmark.

The property is a landmark as the longstanding middle school in this area of Lindsay and for its prominent position along Kent Street West.

## Design and Physical Value

242 Kent Street West, also known as Central Senior Public School or, prior to 1955, Central Public School, has cultural heritage value as a representative example of Beaux-Arts educational architecture in Lindsay. The building, which was constructed between 1910 and 1911 as a replacement for an older public school, demonstrates the key characteristics of Beaux-Arts educational design as executed in urban areas, including symmetrical massing with a central hall, large banks of windows on upper and lower storeys, heavy cornices and Classical design elements. The school is particularly notable for its Classical entrance surrounds, substantial pediments and highly formalized symmetry which are unique amongst early twentieth century schools in Lindsay. The school is also demonstrative of trends in educational architecture which developed and matured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century emphasizing new ideas regarding hygiene, ventilation, and safety incorporated into school design.

School architecture evolved substantially throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, as communities across Ontario grew and developed. This was the case in Lindsay as it was in other rapidly urbanizing areas throughout the province. Many early school buildings were not purpose-built structures and classes often took place in residential structures or churches; in Lindsay, for example, the earliest known common school was operated out of the Methodist meeting house on Wellington Street. However, as communities became more established, purpose-built structures were quickly erected, often in frame or log and highly utilitarian in design. They were built to serve a pressing need – provision of space for educating children – and lacked any sort of specialized facilities or decorative architectural elements. These early schools were usually constructed by community members without any external input from architects or provincial education officials. A frame schoolhouse of this type was built in Lindsay in 1852, located at the northwestern corner of Kent Street West and Albert Street North, where the current school is now located.

By the second half of the century, school architecture had evolved rapidly, particularly in urban communities where there were funds to invest in new school buildings where industrialization and increasing in population were bringing new prosperity to many communities across the province. Financial security and additional resources, as well as a desire to emanate prosperity and permanence through a rush of civic enthusiasm, led to the construction of a range of new schools in up-to-date architectural styles.

The shift from utilitarian to more architectural design was assisted by two factors: the increasing number of architects in nineteenth century Ontario and the proliferation of pattern books across the province. On one hand, the increasing number of architects in the province in the second half of the

nineteenth century, both those who immigrated to the province and those born there, meant that professional design expertise was increasingly available for school design and communities and local school boards hired architects to design their schools in the latest styles. This was particularly the case in urban areas where more architects were located and where the new schools being constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century were larger than their rural counterparts which were usually one room. Pattern books, on the other hand, provided both knowledge and information to communities where the services of architects were not available, a particular boon for rural and remote communities, but also helped disseminate wider ideas related to technical aspects of design. The importance of pattern books for the development of school architecture in Ontario was much the same as for domestic and institutional architecture, where booms in pattern book availability also assisted in the wide spread of popular nineteenth century architectural styles across the province.

Increasingly, the provincial government was also becoming involved in school construction and design. Ontario's Department of Education was formed in 1876 out of the earlier Department of Public Instruction and, as the government body in charge of education across the province, was active in providing and promoting school design. As the education system across the province became more regularized, so too did the variety of rules, regulations and guidance provided to schools and school boards across Ontario, including regarding architecture. While local schools were not obligated to use the designs provided by the government, they were increasingly required to conform to a variety of regulations regarding school construction and safety and the pattern provided in these texts adhered to the standards set by the Department. These texts generally included a range of guidelines on different aspects of school, as well as example school designs and architectural details that local schools could incorporate into new construction.

One of the major developments in school design in the late nineteenth century was with regard to ideas around the integration of provisions related to health safety into educational architecture. The late nineteenth century had seen the rise of the social reform movement which looked to the health of children as one of its primary challenges, particularly in urban areas where the proliferation of slums and poor quality housing meant that many children were living in abject poverty with little or no access to running water or sanitary systems. Although children in poverty were a primary point of interest for this movement, the importance of children's health was a universal concern. Increased understanding of communicable disease and the impact of the environment on health meant that a variety of strategies and initiatives were developed to address this concern. Reformers of this period saw physical infrastructure as an important indicator and promotor of health through the

provision of clean air and comfortable temperatures. Children who lived in warm homes with good air circulation had better health and would grow up into better and more productive members of society. So too it was with schools where comfortable temperatures in both winter and summer and fresh air circulating throughout the buildings was seen to translate into a better atmosphere for learning and increased educational attainment. The extension of this emphasis on health was on increased sanitation through the provision of clean, preferably indoor, bathrooms and running water. Light was also a factor to increase the ability of students to see and read well and to promote good ocular health; indoor electrical lighting was developing around the turn of the century, but was not widely used under the 1920s meaning that light needed to come from the outdoors through substantial windows in classrooms with high ceilings. This new emphasis on health-related matters translated directly into architectural design choices, such as large windows, bigger classrooms, and provisions for central heating and plumbing. As a result, schools of this period were complex architectural forms with significant mechanical systems and the design of buildings needed to evolve to reflect and support these physical, as opposed to aesthetic concerns. By the time Central School was designed in 1910, these ideas were well integrated into dialogue regarding school design and their use was nearly universal across new schools being designed and built both in Ontario and across North America.

While the health and well-being of children drove design choices around issues such as lighting and plumbing, safety was also a concern, particularly with regard to fire safety. Although concern around fire safety had been taken into account in school design since the late nineteenth century, one of the major drivers in developments in fire safety, in particular, was the 1908 fire at Lake View School in Collinwood, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, where 172 children were killed, in large part, due to the architectural design of the building where small exits and hallways and limited point of egress made escaping from the building extremely difficult and a flammable wooden structure made the fire move quickly through the multi-storey late nineteenth century building. This was not the only school fire in turn of the century North America, but certainly one of the most devastating and well-publicized and its tragic outcome put concerns around safety once again to the fore. As a result, an increased awareness of fire safety and the importance of architectural measures to prevent fires from spreading and allowing children to quickly exit school buildings was quickly integrated to educational architectural design, in part by choice but also by new fire safety regulations for public buildings implemented in jurisdictions across North America throughout the next several decades. This awareness translated into certain very specific design features such as the integration of large hallways and unobstructed exits, the increased use of concrete as a fire barrier, particularly between floors, and a move away from

wood stoves as heat methods and towards centralized heating using alternative fuel sources. For urban schools, where there was more than one classroom, multiple stories and a large number of students, the need for considering architectural and physical issues with regard to fire safety was an even greater consideration due to the increased complexity of disaster response in a large structure.

Despite a substantial emphasis on practical elements, school design also evolved aesthetically in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, generally reflecting the prevalent design trends and popular styles of the day. Although this was also the case in rural areas with one and two-roomed school houses, it was at its most dramatic in urban areas where larger buildings and bigger budgets gave substantial scope for architectural experimentation and the integration of a range of design features. The evolution of the aesthetic elements of architecture in nineteenth and early twentieth century Ontario can be documented through the evolution of the schools on this block, which as can be seen in the 1911 Fire Insurance Map of Lindsay, were all standing together at the time the school was constructed: the Union School which was the precursor to the subject property, Lindsay Collegiate Institute built as a secondary school and Central Public School.

The Union School, constructed in 1863, was a well-adapted version of the Gothic Revival style, complete with lancet windows, buttresses and steeply pitched roofs and was later described as looking like a medieval abbey. These details were highly consistent with the preferred architectural styles of the time, where the Gothic Revival dominated throughout the 1850s and 1860s and looked to the architecture of medieval Europe for its inspiration. By the time Lindsay Collegiate was constructed in 1888 as a new secondary school, architectural tastes had evolved with the new school designed in the Second Empire style, which rose to prominence throughout the 1870s and 1880s and was characterized, in particular, by its mansard roof and dormer windows. Although most commonly found in commercial and residential buildings, it was also used in public buildings including schools, as seen here. By the time Central School was constructed, however, the stylistic preference had evolved in favour of Beaux-Arts designs as demonstrated through the subject property.

The Beaux-Arts style dominated Canadian school architecture throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. This style, which originated in France in the early nineteenth century, used an eclectic mix of exaggerated Classical forms on generally symmetrically massed structures to create a dynamic, expressive architectural form. While European examples of this style tended to be highly decorative, the adaptation of the Beaux Arts in North America, where it enjoyed a period of popularity from about 1880 to 1920, was more subdued and focused instead on the use of a range of eclectically combined Classical

stylistic motifs, heavy masonry and subtle polychromy. This style was used almost exclusively on public buildings, including government buildings, certain types of commercial buildings such as banks, institutional structures like theatres, and schools. This coincided with a period preference for Classical forms in architecture across building types, such as the Edwardian Classical style which evolved from and often overlapped stylistically with Beaux-Arts architecture but was also used in residential structures.

In school architecture, specifically those erected in urban areas, a number of key features emerged within the Beaux-Arts type. These schools were usually multiple storeys and composed with symmetrical massing, but often on H- or U-shaped plans, with a central hall and entrance, although they often included entrances on both the front and side elevations. Almost exclusively constructed in brick, they integrated a range of decorative elements that included a number of eclectic and exaggerated Classical elements, such as cornices along the roofline, columns and pilasters, pediments and substantial entrance surrounds. Most noticeably, they were characterized by large banks of tall sash windows; this feature derived from ideas surrounding ventilation and lighting, not from the Beaux-Arts style more broadly, but quickly became associated with Beaux-Arts school design because of its prevalence across these types of structures.

When Central Public School was constructed beginning in 1910, these architectural ideas and priorities were well-established in school architecture and design. The school was architect-designed, by Toronto-area architect James Ellis who was known in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century for his school designs and whose practice specialized in these types of structures. It is highly representative of schools constructed in the Beaux-Arts style in urban areas where larger multi-storey schools using these stylistic motifs were constructed throughout the first several decades of the nineteenth century.

Central Public School is very much an urban school and its architecture is reflective of that. From its initial settlement in the 1820s, Lindsay had developed into a thriving regional centre throughout the nineteenth century. The designation of the community as the county seat alongside economic factors including the evolution into a key regional railway hub and the development of a substantial industrial base throughout the second half of the century meant that it rapid grew from an early mill site to an urban centre. by the turn of the century, around 7,000 people lived in the town, making it by far the largest settlement in then-Victoria County. In accordance with its growing urban station, the architectural fabric of the community developed throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century grew to reflect this, with a range of public buildings including schools, churches and commercial buildings

designed to contribute to the urban fabric that was perceptibly different from the surrounding rural landscape.

The subject property clearly fits within this pattern of development, particularly when compared with the one-room school houses erected in nearby hamlets in Ops, Emily and Mariposa Townships. Its size alone designates it as an urban school, as does its massing and layout. The two-storey design is rarely found in smaller communities and the H-shaped massing with a central hall arranged with two wings clearly suggests an urban location. Its location, set on landscaped grounds, at the northwest corner of Kent Street West and Albert Street North further emphasized its massing and urban focussed design where it could be seen from both streets and in the intersection.

The school itself displays a range of Beaux-Arts forms and is highly consistent with the trends in school architecture prevalent at the time of its construction. It contains entrances on both the side and front elevations with ornate Classical surrounds executed in cast concrete; the side entrances are contained in protruding bays surmounted with a pediment. Additional Classical features include the elaborate coursing above the second storey windows and the entablature and cornice along the roofline; the cornice was originally more elaborate than it currently appears but has been modified since construction. Similar concrete details appear as lintels and lug sills as well as the diamond shaped motifs between the window bays and radiating voussoirs above the rounded windows on both the front and side elevations. Its polychromatic appearance is highly typical of Beaux-Arts style schools which were usually executed in red brick, like the subject school, and embellished with cast concrete or buff brick decorative elements. Similarly, its large banks of windows are also highly typical of this architectural type and are demonstrative of the wider conversations around health and safety that informed school design. The wide hallways and large classrooms on the interior of the school are also consistent with the emphasis on health and safety to provide space, light, and ventilation to students and teachers.

The architecture of the school, and perceptions of it at its time of construction, were favourably reported on in the *Lindsay Watchman-Warder* in July 1911 when the school formally opened. Noting that the building was “one of the most modern and best equipped school buildings obtainable”<sup>1</sup> and that it was a “fine example of what a school should be,” the newspaper went on to describe the physical features of the school including its large corridors, substantial classrooms and high level of finish. In keeping with the contemporary preoccupations regarding safety and health, the newspaper was also quick to point out the excellent lighting and airflow provided through the

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<sup>1</sup> “New Central School was Opened To-Day,” *The Watchman-Warder* July 6, 1911: 1.

large windows in each classroom, its good design for sanitary facilities and the modern heating and ventilation system integrated into the school's design. There is no discussion regarding the school's architectural elements or style, besides a generally positive comment regarding its "splendid appearance" but this is highly typical of reporting on new school buildings at this time which consistently emphasized the practical design elements of the physical building and the health-promoting features with little to no analysis of its aesthetic components.

There were four Beaux Arts schools constructed in Lindsay around the turn of the century, and all four remain extant. The earliest of these, Queen Victoria Public School on John Street, was constructed between 1893 and 1894 while the others were constructed in the early 1910s: Alexandra Public School between 1910 and 1911, King Albert Public School in 1913 and the subject property between 1910 and 1911. Central Public School and Alexandra Public School were constructed at the same time and often discussed and reported on together. They all display similar features, although Queen Victoria is the least similar of the four, likely due to its much earlier date of construction at a time when Victorian styles were transitioning into Edwardian ones. Like Central Public School, the other three schools implemented various aspects of Classical design, including rustication, cornices, and columns, and are clear examples of this stylistic type. The subject property is the largest of these four examples and provides a highly representative example of how this building type was executed in Lindsay around the turn of the twentieth century.

### Historical and Associative Value

242 Kent Street West has historical and associative value in its role as a local public school. Opening in 1911, the school was constructed as part of a general upgrade of educational facilities in Lindsay in the early twentieth century as part of an expansion of the education system and growth in public school pupils. It yields information regarding the development of education in Lindsay throughout the late-nineteenth and twentieth century through its evolution as a public school in the early twentieth century to replace an older mid-nineteenth century school to a dedicated senior school from 1955 onward. The building also reflects the work of Toronto-area architect James Ellis who designed and executed a substantial number of educational facilities in the Beaux-Arts throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including in central and eastern Ontario.

Education evolved substantially through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries both in Lindsay and across Ontario. Formal education in Ontario, then Upper Canada, reached back to the late eighteenth century with the passage of the Schools Act in 1799 which established the ability to create schools and requirements for teacher certification. In this early period, most schools were fee-paying or associated with religious organizations, or both, meaning

that education was very much not universally accessible to children across the province. The first tuition free, non-denominational school, known as a common school, opened in Niagara in 1804, but the requirement to pay tuition for schooling remained for much of the first half of the nineteenth century, and participation in education remained low because of it. Most students in the early century were from upper and upper middle class background, located in urban areas and attending fee-paying schools.

Nevertheless, the provincial government increasingly took interest in ensuring that education was provided to communities across the province. The early eighteenth century saw a significant growth in population in the province, including more families, in part due to the influx of United Empire Loyalists in the late eighteenth century, in combination with migration from Britain and Ireland. By 1816, the Common Schools Act had been passed which created school boards and enabled local communities to build schools and hire teachers through local trustee, effectively enabling the development of local, municipally-led education efforts with rules and standards enforced by the province. 1841 saw the passage of the Education Act which created a provincial superintendent to oversee education across Ontario and to allow municipalities to collect taxes from the parents of school aged children to help support schools, in addition to both government grants and tuition. In 1846, a new version of the Common Schools Act was passed which allowed municipalities to tax their entire tax base to fund school and, crucially, to make schools free, although fees were still allowed to be charged. By 1871, the School Act was passed, mandating universal free education and, by extension, compulsory attendance now that fees were no longer an issue.

By the middle of the century, access to education was vastly improved across the province, including in rural areas and newer communities, such as Lindsay which were quickly developing during this period, as a result of these changes made at the provincial level and the growing recognition that the education of children across the province was an important area of concern for the provincial government. Communities such as Lindsay which were rapidly developing and growing as a result of increased settlement, urbanization and industrialization were in the middle between rural communities, where limited population growth and density made the provision of schooling challenging, and urban communities where many schools had already developed in this period and, for these mid-sized communities, schools needed to grow and develop very rapidly to serve a growing urban population.

The first known common school in Lindsay opened in about 1841 in the Methodist meeting house on Wellington Street. Provisions for education in the community since its informal establishment at the end of the 1820s are not fully known but it is likely that in Lindsay, as elsewhere, classes were held informally in private homes and in association with religious instruction

through Sunday schools. This first structure was acknowledged as a temporary location; while classes were taught there during the week, the Methodists continued to hold their meetings in the building on Sundays. By 1852, however, Lindsay had grown substantially and it was decided that a purpose built school was now required, particularly given the ability of local government to tax to fund education. This was a frame school and there is little known about what it looked like, but it was located at the corner of Kent Street West and Albert Street North, on the property where the subject property is currently located.

The 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s in Lindsay were a time of massive growth. The arrival of the railway in 1857, as well as the establishment of Victoria County with Lindsay as its administrative centre, attracted new businesses and residents to the community throughout these decades and the population boomed, making the need for new schools with space for more children imperative. Lindsay was quickly becoming a much more urban centre with a concentrated main street along Kent Street West, rebuilt in 1861 after a fire that destroyed much of the older building stock, and industrial establishment including lumber, shingle and grist mills as well as a tannery, foundry, carriage and wagon manufacturers and a brewery. By 1871, the population of the town had reached just over 4 000 residents, in just over forty years of settlement, and continued to grow into the early twentieth century.

In 1863, a new school was constructed at the site on Kent Street, known as the Lindsay Union School as it combined both common and grammar school streams into a single building; this included secondary instruction to reflect Lindsay's growing stature as the county seat and the demands of its citizens for good and comprehensive education for their children. This was a substantial structure and housed all of the grades in a range of classroom. A new multi-roomed school certainly marked Lindsay out as an urban centre compared to the communities in the surrounding rural areas where one-roomed school houses still predominated. At the same time, schooling provisions were being made for Lindsay's growing suburban areas with the erection of new ward schools, both due to population increases and new development as well as the introduction of compulsory school attendance across the province in 1871. In 1865, a new school was opened on John Street for the East Ward School, serving the area east of the Scugog River, with a school for the south ward following in 1871 and a third for the north ward in 1876. At the same time, the local school board were in the process of establishing a dedicated secondary school for older students and, in 1889, Lindsay Collegiate Institute opened at the corner of Kent Street West and Adelaide Street North, adjacent to the Union School. From 1889, although still called the Union School, the 1863 facility offered only elementary education with the secondary students attending the new high school next door.

By the turn of the century, Lindsay was well-served by four public elementary and one secondary school, in addition to facilities for Catholic students at St. Dominic's School and the convent school run by the Sister of St. Joseph on Russell Street East. The provision of good quality, free public education was an important concern at this time both in Lindsay and throughout Ontario for its role in shaping children into the morally-upstanding and hardworking citizens of tomorrow; not only was school seen as providing important technical skills, it was also viewed as a central social pillar within a community and having good schools for children to attend and learn was a substantial focus for leaders at the local and provincial level. However, the population of the community continued to increase as Lindsay had grown into both a regional railway hub and industrial centre. In particular, the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth saw the beginnings of a substantial rural exodus in many areas of the province, including much of Kawartha Lakes as the children of farmers decided to seek jobs in town and the lumber industry, which had driven the rural economy in many part of the region, collapsed, leading to more people seeking jobs in urban communities. At the same time, attendance at schools in urban centres was relatively high and continued to grow in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as more parents obeyed with the requirement to send their children to school full time. Once again, Lindsay and its school trustees needed to face the reality of needing to provide more space for its growing student population.

At the same time, changes were happening in Ontario across the province. In particular, while local school boards still retained substantial control over operations, the province continued to regularize and standardize educational provisions. Some of these changes were curricular. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw a broadening and diversification of the curriculum through the introduction of additional studies in areas such as art, science, and physical education and health, particularly for older students; some of these subjects required dedicated and specialized spaces, or at minimum, space of some variety to undertake these activities. Kindergarten was also introduced during this time; the first public kindergarten was opened in Toronto in 1883 and gradually spread throughout urban areas of the province by 1900, although it was by no means universal until the second half of the twentieth century. The education of teachers was also regularized to ensure that teachers had a basic level of professional qualification before entering into the classroom and to normalize standard pedagogical methods and subject matter. More specifically related to the physical plant of schooling, the turn-of-the-century saw also increased requirements at a provincial level for specific building standards, particularly with regard to health and safety issues such as ventilation, lighting, heating and exits and egress, to ensure that students were attending safe and healthy schools that were conducive to learning. More

mundane things were also required, such as storage space for the increasing number of textbooks and other learning resources required for schooling.

In Lindsay, several of the older schools, including the Union School, were falling into a state of poor repair and were in desperate need of upgrades or replacement; they were also not suitable for the needs of students, teachers and the local school board to delivery the evolving school program. Concerns about the safety of the central, north and south ward schools had been raised as early as 1902 and reconstruction was discussed as early as that date as the preferred option. This was not an uncommon problem across Ontario where many Victorian schools were not sufficient for the modernization of education occurring at this period and also had substantial physical issues, whether due to poor initial construction or the increasing cost of repairs.

As a result, the school board embarked on a period of widespread school reconstruction, replacing all of its elementary schools in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It first rebuilt the East Ward School in 1893, with the others reconstructed in the early 1910s and additions made to the Collegiate Institute in both 1909 and 1922. The Union School was replaced beginning in 1910 with the new school, known as Central Public School, constructed next door; the older school, however, was not demolished until 1921 and the Fire Insurance Map of Lindsay from this period shows the three schools, including Lindsay Collegiate Institute, standing together on the same block on Kent Street West between Adelaide and Albert Streets.

The new school was opened to much fanfare in July 1911 and reported on in the July 6 issue of the *Lindsay Watchman-Warder*. Comprised of ten classrooms with new and modern mechanical systems, large windows and Classical architectural features, the school was recognized at its opening by both the newspaper and the dignitaries who spoke at the opening as an integral public space within the community for its role in forwarding and advancing education in the community and for the improvements over the past half century in school accommodation in Lindsay. The speech of Dr. John White, a member of the school board, was reported on as follows:

Representing the school board, Dr. White said that he was very much pleased to be present at the opening of the new school. The opening of new schools in any town or city marked a step forward in the progress of education. The public schools were a stepping stone in the system of education and, as a medical man, he could vouch for the excellent equipment of the new schools as part as sanitation, lighting and heating. Canada was a great country and a great responsibility rested with the boys and girls to equip themselves for the big positions in life, the

education of the boys and girls would be laid broad and deep. The social conditions are bettered in new and up-to-date public schools, and they become a great centre of intellectual influence and a centre of great moral influence.<sup>2</sup>

White's comments, as reported on in the *Watchman-Warder*, were reflective of the pervasive views of schools and schooling in Edwardian Ontario where education had a central intellectual and moral function in community life. The construction of new schools, while serving a practical need to accommodate an increasing number of pupils and replace aging buildings, was also representative of this emphasis in Edwardian society and demonstrative of the importance placed on childhood education during this time.

Newly constructed and now opening, Central Public School served as the public elementary school for the central area of Lindsay beginning in 1911 and continuing through the interwar period. However, by the mid-twentieth century, more changes were afoot for education across Ontario. The population boom in the years following the Second World War led to increased demand for childhood education throughout the postwar period and the 1950s and 1960s saw new schools constructed in schools across the province to provide accommodation for students. At the same time, the Department of Education was increasingly focussed on the educational needs of adolescents, particularly with the raising of the compulsory age to which all students must attend school to 16 in 1954. By the late 1940s, the Department was examining the transition period from elementary to high school at the end of grade 8; by this time, still not every student across the province was finishing elementary education and, while public high schools existed and had since the nineteenth century, were not universally attended. One particular issue examined was with regard to the organization of the curriculum and the grade structure with concerned raised in the department and in local school boards regarding the abrupt transition between elementary and high school with regard to teaching focus and the subject-based curriculum in secondary education. A number of reports were issued around this time which attempted to address this concern, but the most influential was known as "the Porter Plan", authored by Dana Porter who was appointed minister of education in 1948. The primary outcome of this report was the creation of age divisions: primary from grades 1 to 3, junior, from 4 to 6, intermediate, from 7 to 10, and senior, from 11 to 13. These divisions were identified as having different curricular needs and methodologies appropriate to them; in particular, the intermediate division was conceived as a transitional period between elementary and secondary school.

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<sup>2</sup> "Opening of New Central School - Excellent Address - A New Piano," *The Watchman-Warder* July 6, 1911: 2.

When the report was issued, there was significant concern regarding who would be teaching this new intermediate division and where, as it spanned four grade where the lower two were traditionally taught in elementary schools while students moved on to high school in grade 9. The department was quick to clarify that it was not advocating for purpose-built schools or changes in teacher training, but rather creating a curriculum division specifically aimed at the needs of early adolescents and that the existing system of elementary and secondary schools could remain in place. Most schoolboards and areas retained this existing models but in some areas, dedicated schools were established for grade 7 and 8 as senior public schools. These schools were most opened in Toronto and its suburbs, as well as in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. However, in Lindsay, the Lindsay Public School Board also decided that Central Public School would become a dedicated school for grades 7 and 8 beginning in September 1955, with Lindsay's other schools, including the two new schools – Leslie Frost Public School, opened in 1955, and Park View Public School, opened in 1960 – built in the post-war boom offering exclusively grades 1 to 6, later including junior and senior kindergarten. This was an uncommon decision in Ontario school boards in the nineteenth century and was not repeated in other areas of Kawartha Lakes, which were primarily rural with one- or two-room school houses predominating. The school has continued to serve this function to the present day.

In addition to its historical value in the history of education in Lindsay, the school is also reflective of the educational architecture of Toronto-area architect James Ellis whose architectural practice specialized in school architecture. Ellis was born in Grey County in 1856 and began his architectural career in the Meaford area before moving to Toronto in the 1880s where he lived for the majority of his career. Throughout several partnerships between 1890 and 1927, he was a prolific designer and developed in an acknowledged and recognized expert in educational design. While Ellis was based in Toronto, and executed a large number of commissions in the City particularly in the Junction, his practice was not fully concentrated in one area because of his specialization in school design. Ellis was commissioned by school boards across the country to design both elementary and high schools and his designs can be found across southern and central Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. This included both the subject property and, it is believed, Alexandra Public School on Sussex Street North.

Between 1890 and 1927, Ellis designed approximately 40 schools, an astonishing number for a relatively small architectural practice, as well as numerous additions and auxiliary structures for other school buildings. Although his early schools show a variety of form, by about 1910 he had fully embraced the Beaux-Arts style and a consistent use of formal symmetry and Classical architectural elements can be seen across his school commissions.

The majority of these commissions were executed in urban areas and followed a similar design, usually with two storeys and multiple classrooms organized around a central hall. Particularly in the twentieth, Ellis' designs were generally very similar to each other with shared architectural elements and Central Senior School is typical of his designs.

To illustrate these similarities, it helps to compare the subject properties to other commissions executed by Ellis in his Beaux-Arts period. One of the best comparisons is to Queen Victoria Public School in Belleville, constructed around the same time as the Lindsay school in 1911 and which is still extant and in use as a public school. Although there are differences between the two schools, there are substantial architectural similarities that demonstrate the consistency across Ellis' work, and his preferred forms and design preferences; it was documented at the time that the Belleville school was, in fact, based on the design executed in Lindsay. The massing between these two schools is very similar with a recessed entrance placed between two flanking bays on the schools' primary elevations. Similarly, the entrance surround, for which Ellis was well-known to use in his educational commissions, is identical between the two structures, as is the coursing with embellishments above the second storey windows. Like most Beaux-Arts schools of this era, the fronts of both buildings are defined by their large banks of windows on both storeys. Another nearly identical design by Ellis was erected in Port Hope in 1911, also known as Central Public School, although now operating as a private high school. His other commission in Lindsay, Alexandra Public School, is less similar to the subject property, although the two structures were built concurrently. However, both schools share the same formal symmetry and bold Classical elements that are typical of Ellis' work.

### Contextual Value

242 Kent Street West has cultural heritage value as part of the historic landscape of central Lindsay which includes a substantial collection of architecture - residential, commercial and institutional - dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, it maintains and supports the historic urban character of the Kent Street West corridor which contains a substantial extant collection of historic properties between Lindsay and Adelaide Streets and forms the historic core of Lindsay. It has specific historic and functional links to the adjacent property at 260 Kent Street West which houses Lindsay Vocational and Collegiate Institute (LCVI), the local high school. The property is also a local landmark as a longstanding public school in Lindsay and its only current senior elementary school where it has served exclusively grade 7 and 8 students since 1955.

242 Kent Street West is located at the west end of the historic corridor of Kent Street West, Lindsay's key east-west thoroughfare and historic core. Kent Street West was surveyed in the 1840s and its eastern end, between Lindsay

Street and Cambridge Street, demarcated as the town's commercial core. This commercial area developed throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, with the bulk of its architectural evolution between approximately 1860 and 1880, and the area along Kent Street West to the west of Cambridge Street developed simultaneously, with industrial structures, now mostly demolished, a range of residential properties, and a large collection of key institutional structures. These institutional structures include Lindsay Town Hall (1863), the fire hall (1901), the public library (1901-1902), the Victoria Park Armoury (1913), Central Public School the subject property (1910-1911) and LCVI, then known as Lindsay Collegiate Institute (1889), as well as Victoria Park. Taken together, these institutional structures formed a substantial collection of public and civic spaces within the community, concentrated along Kent Street West and interspersed with other structures of similar vintages and architectural styles. The street itself developed into a major thoroughfare through the centre of the town.

Since this period of development, there have been a number of changes to the area, most notably the demolition of the industrial structures in this area and their replacement with more modern commercial buildings, as well as the reconstruction of LCVI in 1974. However, the majority of the historic built fabric along the Kent Street West corridor remains intact, including the majority of the downtown core, a substantial range of Victorian and Edwardian residential properties in different sizes and styles, and all of the institutional buildings with the exception of LCVI, although the newer building was reconstructed at the same location as the 1889 original. The street itself remains the central thoroughfare in Lindsay which leads to and from its historic centre. As a group, these structures form a historic core to the community due to their location along its primary thoroughfare and concentration of substantial structures in prominent historic architectural styles. The subject property forms a key part of this group as one of its institutional buildings and supports and maintains this historic character of Kent Street West.

The school is directly historically linked to its surroundings as part of this development of Lindsay in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, Lindsay experienced substantial growth in the early decades of the twentieth century and the school was constructed as a result of that growth, as were many of the surrounding residential structures; a substantial number of the homes on the south side of Kent Street West between Albert and Adelaide Streets across the road from the school were constructed in the period between 1890 and 1930.

More specifically, the subject property is directly linked, both historically and functionally to its neighbour LCVI, the local high school serving this area of Lindsay and Lindsay's original high school. The block on which both schools are constructed has been an educational hub since the middle of the

nineteenth century. The block originally contained Lindsay's Union School, constructed in 1863 in the middle of the block. In 1889, the first iteration of LCVI was constructed immediately to the west of the union school to provide secondary education in Lindsay. The subject property was constructed between 1910 and 1911 as a replacement for the union school and, in 1974 after years of modification and expansion, LCVI was reconstructed into its current modern form. Although differing architecturally, the two buildings are linked together in their role as education facilities, their shared history, and their wider integrated landscape on the block which includes the two buildings, a track and wider greenspace utilized by both schools and the community.

The school is also a local landmark and has been recognized as such since its construction because of its longstanding role as a local school, as well as its prominent location along Kent Street West. The building was recognized at the time of its construction as a key institutional structure in the community and is widely recognized as such to the present day, having served students in Lindsay since its opening in 1911. Its longstanding use as Lindsay's only dedicated grade 7 and 8 school, to which it was converted in 1955, gives it a unique role as the school that all public school students in the town must attend before proceeding on to high school. Its prominent location along Kent Street West at the corner of Albert Street North further emphasizes its role as a landmark, being visible from a number of angles, as well as Kent Street West, the town's main historic thoroughfare.

## Summary of Reasons for Designation

The short statement of reasons for designation and the description of the heritage attributes of the property, along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief, constitute the Reasons for Designation required under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

#### Design and Physical Value

242 Kent Street West has cultural heritage value as a representative example of Beaux-Arts educational architecture in Lindsay. The building, which was constructed in 1910 as a replacement for an older public school, demonstrates the key characteristics of Beaux-Arts educational design as executed in urban areas, including symmetrical massing with a central hall, large banks of windows on upper and lower storeys, heavy cornices and Classical design elements. The school is particularly notable for its Classical entrance surrounds, substantial pediments and highly formalized symmetry which are unique amongst early twentieth century schools in Lindsay. The school is also demonstrative of trends in educational architecture which developed and matured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century emphasizing new ideas regarding hygiene, ventilation, and safety incorporated into school design.

#### Historical and Associative Value

242 Kent Street West has historical and associative value in its role as a local public school. Opening in 1910, the school was constructed as part of a general upgrade of educational facilities in Lindsay in the early twentieth century as part of an expansion of the education system and growth in public school pupils. It yields information regarding the development of education in Lindsay throughout the twentieth century through its evolution as a public school in the early twentieth century to a dedicated senior school from 1955 onward. The building also reflects the work of Toronto-area architect James Ellis who designed and executed a substantial number of educational facilities in the Beaux-Arts throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including in central and eastern Ontario.

#### Contextual Value

242 Kent Street West has cultural heritage value as part of the historic landscape of central Lindsay which includes a substantial collection of architecture – residential, commercial and institutional – dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, it maintains and supports the historic urban character of the Kent Street West corridor which contains a substantial extant collection of historic properties between Lindsay and Adelaide Streets and forms the historic core of Lindsay. It has specific historic and functional links to the adjacent property at 260 Kent Street West which

houses Lindsay Vocational and Collegiate Institute. The property is also a local landmark as a longstanding public school in Lindsay and its only current senior elementary school where it has served exclusively grade 7 and 8 students since 1955.

### Summary of Heritage Attributes to be Designated

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations, unless otherwise specified, and the roof including: all façades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials of wood, brick, stone, stucco, concrete, plaster parging, metal, glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features.

### Design and Physical Attributes

The design and physical attributes support the value of the property as an representative example of an early twentieth century Beaux-Arts school in Lindsay.

- Two-storey red brick construction
- H-shaped plan
- Symmetrical massing
- Hipped roof
- Chimney
- Belfry
- Cornice and entablature
- Coursing
- Pediments
- Fenestration including:
  - Banks of classroom windows
  - Rounded windows
  - Basement windows
  - Radiating polychromatic voussoirs
  - Lintels
  - Lugsills
- Entrances including:
  - Classical entrance surrounds
  - Overhangs
  - Brackets
- Polychromatic decorative elements

### Historical and Associative Attributes

The historical and associative attributes support the historical value of the property as a local public school which has remained in operation since the early twentieth century.

- Association with the history of education in Lindsay

### **Contextual Attributes**

The contextual attributes of the property support the value of the property as a local landmark and as a contributing feature to the historic urban corridor of Kent Street West.

- Location at the intersection of Kent Street West and Albert Street North
- Orientation towards Kent Street West
- Historic and contemporary relationship with LCVI including grounds
- Views of the property from Kent Street West and Albert Street North
- Views of the surrounding historic properties from the school and grounds

Images



Historic Postcard









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