

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)  
West side, Hammond Street, south of Division Street  
Westernport  
Allegany County  
Maryland

HABS. NO. MD-1049

HABS  
MD  
1-WESPO,  
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
Northeast Region  
National Park Service  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)

HABS No. MD-1049

HABS  
MD  
1-WESPO,  
2-

Location:

West side, Hammond Street, south of Division Street, Westernport, Allegany County, Maryland.

USGS Westernport, Maryland-West Virginia  
Quadrangle  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
17.667980.4372460

Significance:

The Westernport School later known as the Hammond Street School is significant for its role in the education of generations of children from southwestern Allegany County and southeastern Garrett County during the period from 1891 to 1958. Early references to the school refer to it as the Westernport Public School, showing it to be distinctive as the principal public educational facility for Westernport and the surrounding area.

Description:

The Westernport Public School, also known as the Hammond Street School is located on the west side of Hammond Street, just south of Division Street in Hammond's Addition to Westernport. The present structure dates from ca. 1923, a rebuilding of an 1891 building with 1911 and 1916 additions which were substantially destroyed by a fire which occurred on April 30, 1922. During the post-fire reconstruction, several changes were made to the structure.

The school is situated on steeply sloping ground in Hammond's Addition, a residential area carved out of a mountainside in the western section of Westernport. The school faces east, overlooking Georges Creek and the main part of town.

As it now appears, the school is a two and a half story brick structure resting on rock-faced stone foundations. Built into sloping ground, the building's foundations are exposed almost a full story at the front (east) elevation. The building has a telescoping shape beginning with the 1891 front block which is nearly square (73 feet x 72 feet). Each elevation of this front section has a central projecting pavilion. Attached at the rear (west) side of the earlier structure is an addition dating from 1911-12. It extends wider than the main block by 7 feet, 7

inches on each side.

Attached at the rear of this addition are two more classroom wings, jutting outward from the previous addition by 7 feet, 7 inches on each side. A date tablet above the entrance to the last addition, on the south side is inscribed 1916.

All windows and doors in the building have been walled shut with brick or concrete block. Metal lift-type garage doors have been installed in three of the openings. Despite the removal of doors and windows, some trim details are still visible. At the front (Hammond Street) elevation, the central projecting bay is flanked on each side by three windows at each of the two main stories. Each window opening is trimmed on all four sides by a brick corbel. These windows, unlike the other openings are infilled with brick and appear to be an old change dating from the 1920s renovation.

The central projecting pavilion on the Hammond Street elevation is embellished with an arched window at the upper story level. It is flanked by a pair of small vertical windows. Beneath this set, at the main story level is a large square window opening, flanked by a pair of narrow vertical windows.

At the side elevations of the front section poured concrete sills appear beneath the blocked-in windows. Entrances in the north and south side elevations are sheltered by narrow shed roofed projections supported by simple chamfered bracing. Bricks are laid in common bond with a ratio of five courses of stretcher bricks to each header course.

The first addition is also built of red brick but is embellished with a yellow brick belt course, three bricks wide at second story window sill level. A one-brick-wide belt course also of yellow brick is present at the second story window lintel level. The window lintels are steel beams with the manufacturer's name, Jones and Laughlin, cast into their sides. Decorative

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)  
HABS No. MD-1049 (Page 3)

rosettes embellish the bolts holding the beams in place.

Entrances to the first addition are located in the 7 foot, 7 inch extensions beyond the main block on each side. The south side doors remain in place. Reached by a flight of stone steps with poured concrete tops, the doors consist of two leaves, each with panels and an open area for glass. Above the door is a large rectangular multi-pane transom. The entrance area is sheltered by a shed roof supported by simple chamfered bracing. The entrance on the north side retains only the outline of its opening, but the shed-roofed hood above the former opening remains.

The second addition, dated 1916, is quite similar to the 1911 addition with yellow brick belt courses and steel beams above the openings. This section also has a pair of entrances in the portion of the wings extending outward from the adjoining section at the north and south sides. These entrances have similar shed-roofed hoods to those already described.

The entire structure is covered with a complex hipped roof of standing seam sheet metal. Additional hips and valleys occur at every point where the walls project. Three metal ventilators extend from the roof near the front, rear and central areas of the building. There are also three brick chimneys, one at the rear of the original section of the building and a pair at the back wall of the first addition.

The "original" appearance of the building might be interpreted to be the reconstruction that occurred after the fire of 1922, or its appearance in 1891 when built prior to the 1911 and 1916 additions. Except for the removal of windows and doors, the building now retains most features of the post-fire era.

In the rebuilding after the fire several notable changes were made to the initial 1891 structure. Although little physical evidence remains of these changes, they are shown in a series of

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)  
HABS No. MD-1049 (Page 4)

dated postcard views of the school from 1907 to 1915. In the 1891 section, each of the projecting pavilions was topped with a triangular pediment. Windows along the Hammond Street facade were grouped into sets of three double hung sash, instead of three separated smaller windows as seen on the present building. The postcard views indicate that the upper sash had nine lights while the lower sash had four. The old photos also suggest that steel beams made up the lintels of the large classroom windows in the 1891 section as well as the additions. A belt course extended around the entire structure at the second story sill level, except at the projecting bays of the north and south facades where stair landings altered the window level height.

In the projecting bay of the Hammond Street elevation, a broad half-round arch spanned a pair of double-hung sash windows at the second story level. The corresponding projecting bays at the north and south elevations had an arcade of three small arch-topped windows. These bays also contained the principal entrances into the building.

#### Interior

The interior of the school building appears to date entirely from the 1920s post-fire reconstruction. Apparently, at that time, the school was converted from a high school to an elementary school. Informants who attended the school in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s remember it as only an elementary school, and the present height of blackboards and coat hooks is appropriate for smaller children. The early 20th century views, however, refer to it as the "Westernport High School."

Current interior finishes and features are consistent in all rooms of the school regardless of whether they are in the 1891 section or the two 20th century additions. All have wainscotted walls, blackboard space on two walls, and cloak rooms with two arched entrances. The 1891 section has four classrooms and a restroom on

each of the two main floors. The first (1911) addition contains an auditorium at the first story and three classrooms at the second story. The 1916 addition provided four more classrooms, two at each level and four more restrooms. The basement of the 1891 section contains two classrooms and a kitchen at the Hammond Street side of the building, several smaller storage rooms, a small restroom and a boiler room. The boiler room contains two large asbestos-wrapped coal-fired boiler units and an incinerator.

Rooms at the main stories are reached by a T-shaped corridor with slightly off-set arms. The corridor extends from the rear (west) of the 1891 section forward toward Hammond Street where it intersects with a stairwell on each side (north and south) forming the top of the T. From the main classroom level, the staircases lead down to landings into which opened doors from the outside. At the second story level, the stairs lead upward to a landing area and an enclosed office. The Principal's office was at the top of the south stairwell and the assistant principal's office in the north stairwell.

The placement of the corridor and stairwells creates classroom space in each of the four corners of the building. The area at the head or top of the T at the central sections of the front (south) of the building became a restroom at each of the two main levels. The girls' restroom was at the first story, the boys at the second.

Since the two stairwells are not exactly opposite one another, two diagonally opposed classrooms are smaller than the other diagonal pair, one pair being 30' by 25' and the other 24' by 25'.

The west end of the corridor opens into the 1911 addition. At the first story level this area is one large room, an auditorium with an elevated stage across its north side. The second story level of this addition contains three classrooms, two arranged along the north and south walls of the addition and the third between them with its long side being the west exterior wall of the addition. A seven foot wide corridor running

perpendicular to the corridor from the 1891 section provides access to all three of these rooms.

The north and south classrooms in the 1911 addition each have a small flight of stairs which lead up into the 1916 addition. That addition consists of two wing-like extensions from the northwest and southwest corners of the 1911 building respectively. Each wing of the 1916 addition contains a main story door to the exterior, a flight of steps, and a restroom and a classroom at each level.

Since nearly all openings in the building have been sealed with concrete block infill, and electrical power has been cut off, details of finishes and trim were difficult to observe because of darkness. However, major elements have been recorded. All woodwork is of varnished pine. Flooring is narrow width (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " ) tongue and groove material typical of the 1920s. All classrooms, corridors and the auditorium have wainscoting extending 37-41 inches above the floor. The wainscoting is of pine in approximately three-inch widths with beveled edges. It is finished at the top with a molded rail featuring a bolection and cavetto profiles. The walls are also trimmed with a molded picture rail. Architraves are plain and flat. Interior doors, where they remain, have three horizontal panels in their lower half and a single large pane of pebbled glass in the upper portion. A notable feature of the interior is the use of high multi-pane windows to allow borrowed light into the corridor from the large classroom windows. These interior windows each have a nine light sash. Larger windows, one at the first story in the form of a transom, are located at the west end of the corridor.

All slate blackboards have been removed, but their outlines remain and chalk trays beneath their former locations are still present. Several original (1920s) light fixtures remain, consisting of translucent white glass bowl-like covers suspended by three short brass chains from the ceiling. Most classrooms also have more

recent fluorescent tube lighting.

The main story classroom in the southeast corner of the building retains painted decorations on the walls above the blackboard area. The paintings are of nursery rhyme and story book characters including Mary and her lamb, Mickey Mouse and the Gingerbread Man. These decorations appear to date from the 1940s, certainly after the date that Mickey Mouse was created.

The staircases are wide with an inner curve at the landings. The broad molded hand rail is supported by a wainscotted balustrade. Additional round wooden hand rails are attached to the wainscotting. A corresponding expanse of wainscotting topped with a rail covers the walled side of the stairs.

The bathrooms have wainscotted walls similar to those elsewhere in the building. Each bathroom has wooden stall partitions. The flooring consists of small hexagonal tiles.

Although the school has been vacant for over 30 years, it appears to be in generally sound structural condition.

History:

Westernport is located at the terminus of the Georges Creek coal basin in western Allegany County, an area that was developed for its coal deposits in the middle third of the 19th century. The town of Westernport, however, actually was established much earlier, in the late 18th century. Located where Georges Creek enters the North Branch of the Potomac River, the site is the westernmost point to which the Potomac River was navigable by freight boats. The town was laid out in 1800 and was officially named Westernport in 1802.

The coal industry and railroad transport contributed to Westernport's growth and development in the 19th century. In 1888 a pulp and paper plant was established in nearby Luke, Maryland, just upstream from Westernport. The paper mill contributed to Westernport's continued growth as an industrial town. This growth led

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)  
HABS No. MD-1049 (Page 8)

Thomas Hammond, a land speculator from Frederick County, Maryland, to purchase and then lay out lots on the mountainside just west of Georges Creek. Hammond's Addition to the town was officially recorded in July of 1888.

Three years later in 1891, the public school, a square brick building was constructed on the hillside, on the west side of Hammond Street in the addition. The cost of construction was \$12,997.00 according to a school plant inventory for Allegany County Schools made in January, 1950. The corner stone, set in the northeast corner of the building is inscribed with the following information: Westernport Public School, 1891; Frank E. and Henry R. Davis, Architects; E.J. Fredlook, Builder; Oliver H. Bruce, Principal; Carrie Hepburn, Ida K. Kalbaugh, B. Edna Duckworth, Annie Bissett and Anna Grimm, teachers.

Sources vary slightly as to the date and cost of the first addition to the Westernport School. The Annual Report of the State Board of Education for 1911 states that the Westernport School was enlarged with brick construction at a cost of \$14,550.86. The school plant inventory made in January 1950 for Allegany County Schools records the date of the first addition as 1913 and the cost as \$12,148.00. It lists the second addition as 1916, which concurs with the date tablet on the westernmost addition to the building.

According to local informants, a fire on April 30, 1922 gutted the building, although there is no reference to the fire in the 1950 school plant inventory. The fact that all interior finishes in the building date from the 1920s or later and that the interior treatment is consistent throughout the building, in the original section as well as the additions, indicates that the interior was rebuilt after the fire. In 1923 a new high school opened on Church Street and the Hammond Street facility became an elementary school. The school was last used in 1958. Since then it has stood vacant except for use as a storage building.

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)  
HABS No. MD-1049 (Page 9)

In 1990, the school was purchased by the Westernport Housing Board, Inc. The owner and the developer, Westernport Apartments, L.P., will have the former Westernport Public School demolished and construct an elderly housing complex on the site.

Sources:

Dorsey, David, "Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Survey Form, For Hammond's Addition to Westernport," May, 1982.

Feldstein, Albert L. ed., Feldstein's All New Postcard Album of Allegany County. Cumberland, Maryland: Commercial Printing Press, 1985.

Page 71 and 73 show two postcard views, dated 1907.

Feldstein, Albert L. ed., Feldstein's Historic Postcard Album of Allegany County, Maryland. Cumberland, Maryland: Commercial Printing Press, 1983.

Page 78 of this book includes a postcard view dated 1917. It, however, does not include the 1916 addition, suggesting that the postcard was mislabeled.

Maintenance Department, Allegany County Board of Education, "School Plant Inventory, Allegany Schools," January, 1950.

Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps of Westernport, MD, 1930.

State Board of Education, Annual Report, 1911. Baltimore: The Sun Job Printing Office, 1911.

State Board of Education, Annual Report, 1912. Baltimore: The Sun Job Printing Office, 1912.

State Board of Education, Annual Report, 1913. Baltimore: The Sun Job Printing Office, 1913.

WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(Hammond Street School)  
HABS No. MD-1049 (Page 10)

This publication, on page 227, has a photograph of a "commercial class, Westernport High School," and of the "Graduating Class, Westernport High School." The commercial class scene shows an interior view of a classroom, although few details of the room are visible.

Interviews with local informants.

Biggs, Dorothy, local historian and former student in 1958, November 18, 1991.

Rinard, Joseph, former student, Westernport, Maryland, November 1, 1991.

Historian:

Paula S. Reed, PhD  
Douglass C. Reed  
Preservation Associates, Inc.  
November, 1991

Site Plan

Source: Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps of Westernport,  
MD, 1930.

**ITEM NOT AVAILABLE**

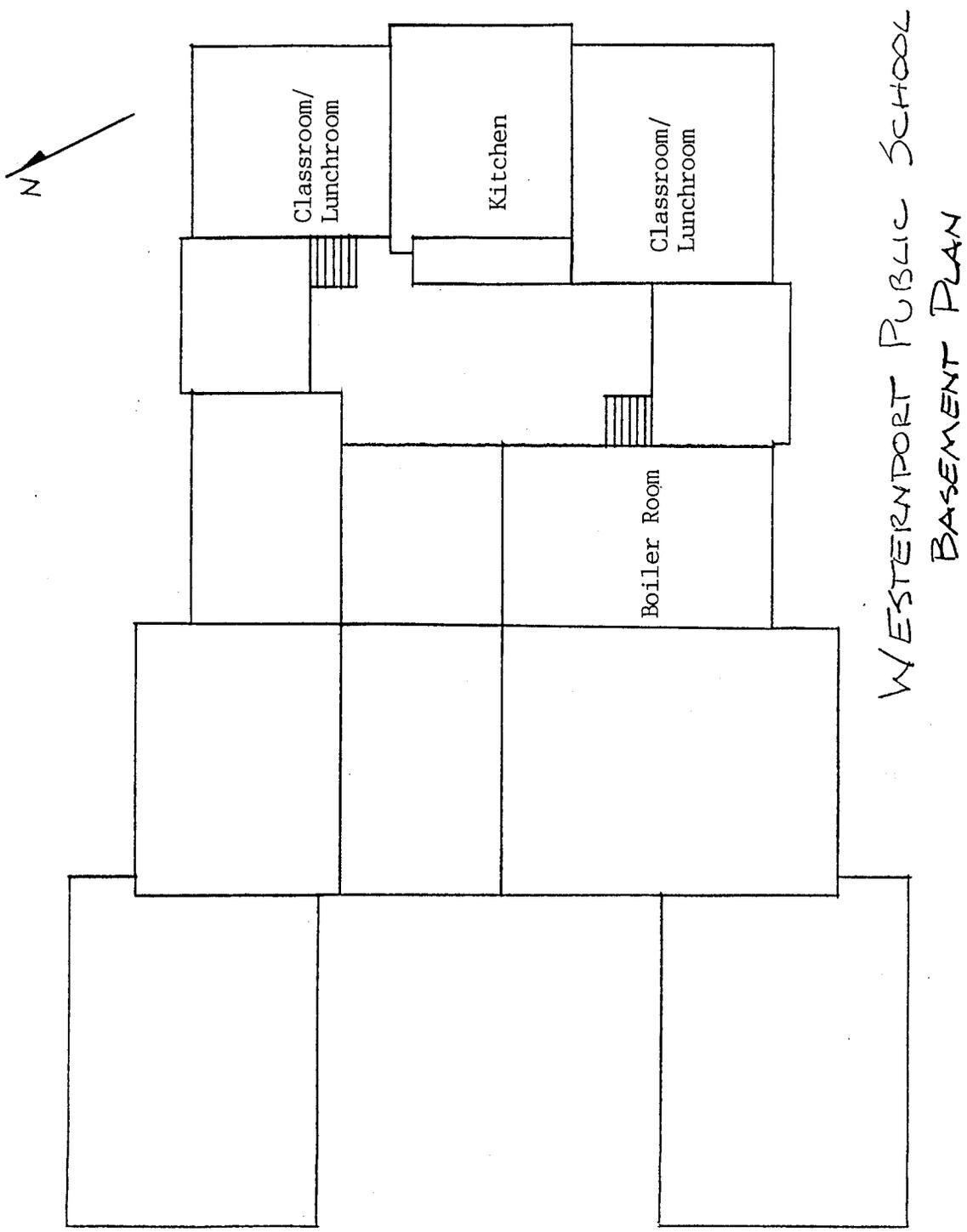
This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

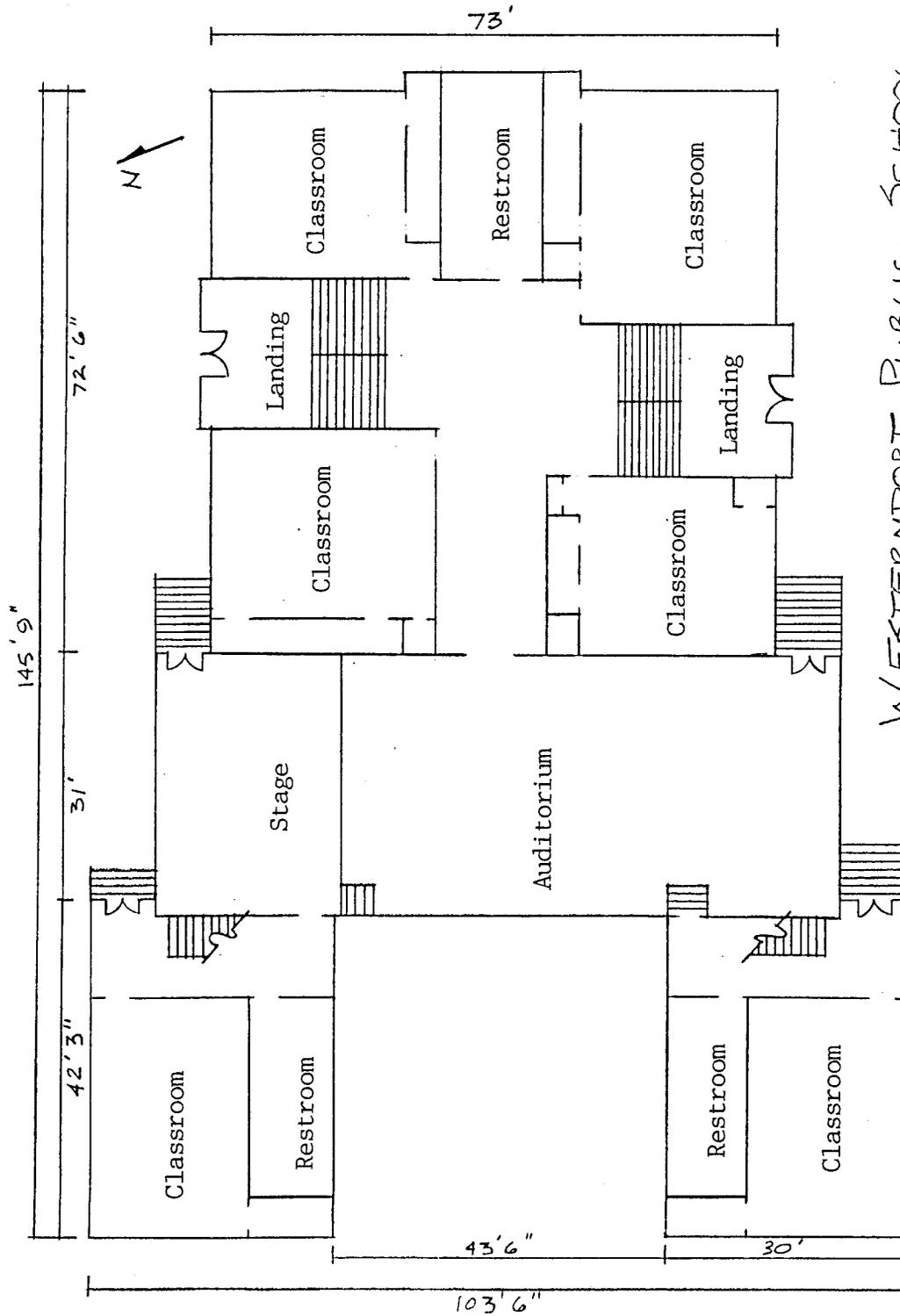
Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9.20.99

Basement Level Plan

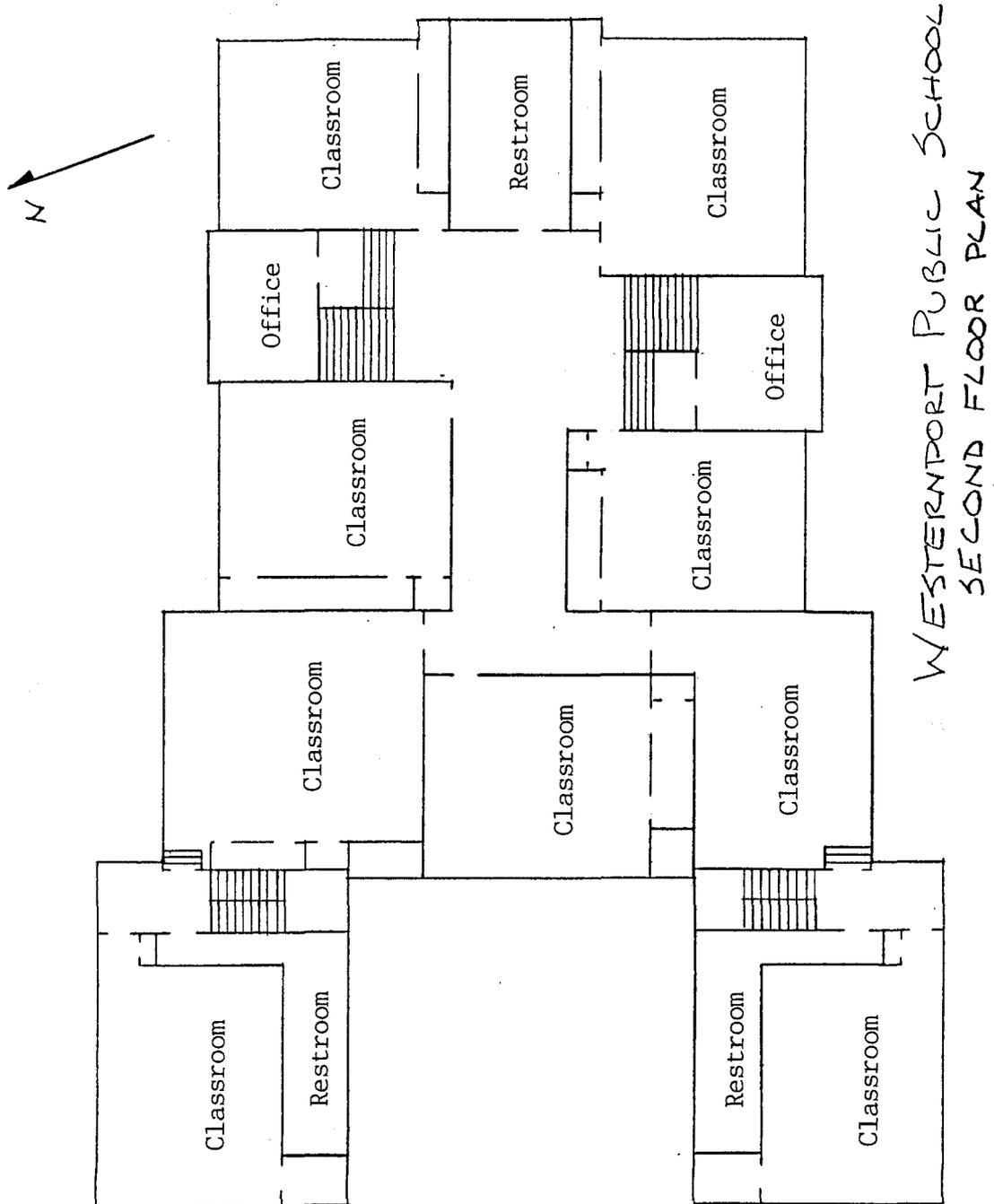


First Floor Plan



WESTERNPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Second Floor Plan



Source: Maintenance Department, Allegany County Board of  
Education, "School Plant Inventory,  
Allegany Schools," January, 1950.

### ITEM NOT AVAILABLE

This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9-20-99



Source: Maintenance Department, Allegany County Board of  
Education, "School Plant Inventory,  
Allegany Schools," January, 1950.

### ITEM NOT AVAILABLE

This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9-20-99

Source: Maintenance Department, Allegany County Board of  
Education, "School Plant Inventory,  
Allegany Schools," January, 1950.

### ITEM NOT AVAILABLE

This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9.20.99

Source: Feldstein, Albert L. ed., Feldstein's All New Postcard Album of Allegany County.  
Cumberland, Maryland: Commercial Printing Press, 1985.

### ITEM NOT AVAILABLE

This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9.20.99

Source: Feldstein, Albert L. ed., Feldstein's All New Postcard Album of Allegany County.  
Cumberland, Maryland: Commercial Printing Press, 1985.

### ITEM NOT AVAILABLE

This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9.20.99

Source: Feldstein, Albert L. ed., Feldstein's Historic Postcard Album of Allegany County, Maryland. Cumberland, Maryland: Commercial Printing Press, 1983.

### ITEM NOT AVAILABLE

This item has been removed from the formal documentation for this structure because:

- the item is registered or otherwise protected under the 1976 Copyright Act as amended and thereby ineligible to enter the public domain as formal HABS/HAER documentation
- the copyright status of the item is not possible to establish due to a lack of sufficient bibliographical information in the formal documentation

Items protected under current copyright law may include--but are not limited to--photographs, prints, drawings, letters, maps, unpublished manuscripts, photo albums, theses, dissertations, books, and periodicals.

9.20.99