United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Dunbar School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 103 High Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Fairmont ☐ vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Marion code 049 zip code 26554

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

___ national ___ statewide _X_ local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

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

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Dunbar School
Name of Property

Marion County, WV
County and State

5. Classification

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

- [X] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

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

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
1	1	structures
		objects
2	1	**Total**

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th century revivals: Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brick
walls: Brick
roof: Asphalt
other: Sandstone, wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

See continuation sheets

Narrative Description

See continuation sheets

Dunbar School
Name of Property

Marion County, WV
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Education

Period of Significance

1928-1956

Significant Dates

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

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ittner, William Butts (architect)

D.J. Phipps Company (builder)

Period of Significance (justification)

See continuation sheets

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

See continuation sheets

Dunbar School | Marion County, WV
Name of Property | County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

See continuation sheets

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

See continuation sheets

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

See continuation sheets

Dunbar School
Name of Property

Marion County, WV
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

See continuation sheets

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.52
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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

17	573382	4371147
Zone	**Easting**	**Northing**

39.486794	-80.146682
Lat.	**Long**

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

See continuation sheets

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheets

Dunbar School | Marion County, WV
Name of Property | County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Erin Riebe, National Register Coordinator

Organization WV State Historic Preservation Office date November 2014

street & number 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East telephone 304.558.0240

city or town Charleston state WV zip code 25305

e-mail Erin.m.riebe@wv.gov

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Location and Setting

Dunbar School is situated on a slight hill near the corner of Weatherwax and High Streets and overlooks the Fairmont Downtown Historic District to its south. The narrow schoolyard in the front of the building includes a wide sidewalk which leads directly from the street to the building's main entrance. A modern signboard, bearing the words "Dunbar High School," sits low to the ground in the lawn to the east (right) of the sidewalk. It is surrounded by modest landscaping. A flagpole and large tree are west of the sidewalk. (Photo 1)

The front lawn slopes slightly downward from east to west creating a fully exposed basement level on the west elevation of the building (Photo 2). The property on this side of the building slopes steeply downward toward Cleveland Avenue (U.S. 250). A gravel parking lot along this road is reached by steep set of concrete steps with metal hand railing on either side (Photo 2). A paved and gravel parking lot to the rear (north) of the building is reached by a paved drive extending from High Street along the east side elevation of the building (Photo 3). A stone wall lines the drive and continues to the rear lot (Photo 15). The rear of the building includes a small lawn edged with metal hand rail and a concrete sidewalk with steps leading to the rear door and side elevation.

Description

The Dunbar School was constructed in 1929 and features modest elements of the Colonial Revival style of architecture. The buff colored brick building is rectangular in form and has a flat roof with rolled asphalt and three circular vents. The brick bond throughout the building is Flemish Garden Wall. A stone water table continues from the main elevation around the building between the basement and first story levels where this area is exposed.

The primary facade faces south-southeast and is asymmetrical (Photo 1). The main entrance, situated off-center, is a rectangular vestibule projecting from the façade halfway between the basement and first story at ground level. The double doors have two lower panels and two upper lights. The set is topped with a Colonial Revival style fanlight with stone surround. A cornerstone to the left of the entry reads "ERECTED; A.D. 1928; A.F & A. M [sic]; A.L. 5928" (the stone was laid by members of the grand lodge of the Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of West Virginia). A modern light fixture is situated to both sides of the doorway and the vestibule is topped with a low, decorative stone balustrade.

A large window opening with stone lintel is situated above the entrance and gives light to the interior stairwell. It is a unique eight-over-twelve, double-hung sash wood window with an eight light transom. A single one-over-one, double-hung sash window is situated to the left of the entrance on the second story. A six-over-six, double-hung sash window is located to the right (east) of the entrance. Beyond that, a set of five larger windows are arranged. Each window is nine-over-nine, double-hung sash with stone sill and decorative brickwork lintels. This fenestration pattern repeats directly above on the second story.

The east elevation has five large window openings which provide an abundance of light to the interior gymnasium (Photo 4). Each opening has six square wood windows, each with nine lights, and a stone sill. Decorative brickwork above each opening includes basket weave bonding and arched pattern. Paneled double-doors are situated directly below the center of the five openings at the ground level. A second entrance on this elevation is situated just beyond (to the north) of these five openings. It is above ground-level and reached by a set of five concrete steps and platform with metal rail. A small, one-over-one window is adjacent to its right and a large window opening above has been enclosed with T-111 siding. To the right (north) of this entrance are two coal chutes at ground level, two six-over-six, double-hung sash windows on the first story, and four nine-over-nine, double-hung sash windows on the second story. The opposite elevation, facing west, is symmetrical. Its five distinct sections each include four nine-over-nine, double-hung sash windows on each the basement level, first, and second stories.

The asymmetrical rear elevation includes a large square smoke stack which rises above the roof line (Photo 3). The rear entrance includes a set of double doors with lower rectangular panels and upper lights with a multi-light, rectangular transom and modest stone surround. A window situated in the stairwell above is similar to that on the main elevation; it is an eight-over-twelve, double-hung sash wood window with an eight light transom with stone lintel and sill. This façade also includes eight-over-eight and six-over-six, double-hung sash windows on the first and second stories. The basement level includes one window that has been enclosed with plywood and a large bay opening covered with wooden clapboard siding.

The interior of the building includes wide central halls with terrazzo floors (Photos 5, 9, and 10). Stacked lockers line one side of the hall on the basement and second floor (they have been removed from the first floor hall). Stairwells have wide terrazzo rails and curvilinear lines (Photo 3) similar to those the architect designed in the nearby Thomas C. Miller School annex (NR listed 2013). Classrooms have wood floors and some feature original built-in closets, cupboards, and chalkboards (Photos 6, 7, and 8). While many have traditional radiators, others have radiators hanging from the ceiling as is found in the basement hallway (Photos 6 and 10).

A large gymnasium doubles as an auditorium and is reached through two sets of double-doors from the first floor hall (Photos 12, 13, and 14). It has maple wood floors painted for use in games such as basketball and shuffleboard. Basketball hoops hang from either end of the room. Large light fixtures hang from the exposed roof truss system. An elevated stage is situated at the north end of the room. Multiple rows of radiators hang from the wall on the south side of the room as well as between the large window openings on the east wall. The west wall of the gym lines the hall on the first and second floors. Six openings to the second floor have been enclosed, but the metal railings remain. The openings once featured double sets of multi-light French doors with multi-light transoms.

Stone walls

A stone wall lines the driveway to the east of the property (Photo 15). The original wall, approximately 5’ to 8’ in height is constructed of large rock-faced stones with grapevine joints and stone coping. This wall is

considered contributing. A modern wall, constructed c.1965 continues from the end of the historic wall and continues around the rear of the lot. It is constructed of smooth-faced concrete. It is considered noncontributing since it was constructed outside of the period of significance.

Statement of Significance

Dunbar School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage (Black)* and *Education* for its significant contribution to Fairmont's African American history. From the time it was constructed in 1928, until 1956 when the school closed following desegregation, the Dunbar School served an essential role in educating the community's black youth. It is especially significant as the county's only high school available to black students during this time period.

History

In the 1920s, the Fairmont Independent School District (FISD) determined there was a great need for new school buildings in the city. A newly expanded curriculum required gymnasiums and other specialty rooms that basements, attics, and portables – where one-third of the city's students attended class – could not provide. Further, since construction of the last new school (1912), enrollment increased fifty percent.[1]

Dunbar School was constructed in 1928 as part of this school building initiative. The history of the institution, however, dates to the era of emancipation following the Civil War when a number of Fairmont's African American residents decided to "build [a school] for future posterity."[2] Donations of manpower, materials, and funding were combined with loans to pay for the school's construction in 1869. New buildings were constructed over the years, replacing the earlier one (all non-extant), and the school was eventually named "Dunbar" in honor of Paul Laurence Dunbar, a successful black writer whose works on education symbolized opportunity to the African American community.[3]

While the two Dunbar school buildings constructed in the early 1920s were better than the previous, they too were soon outdated and overcrowded. Plans for a new school for black children were thus included in the FISD's 1920's school building program. While William B. Ittner (known at the time as the Father of Modern School Architecture) designed each new building and addition, there were obvious differences. Fairmont Senior High School, for example, features high-style Colonial Revival architecture with a gabled roofline, tall chimneys, and rows of multi-light windows. The additions at Barnes and Miller Schools are also of a more high style than the stand-alone Dunbar School, which is a more vernacular interpretation of Colonial Revival architecture with a flat roof and minimal detailing.

The site location also differentiated between the high school and Dunbar. The FISD acquired "a beautiful park site of eleven and a half acres" for construction of Fairmont Senior High School, and two acres along a steep hillside for construction of the new Dunbar School.[4] Such site selection was considered a problem just

[1] Otis G. Wilson and William B. Ittner, "Building Program of Fairmont, West Virginia," *School Executives Magazine*, vol. 49, 1940, pg. 268.
[2] "History of Local Colored School Given," *The Fairmont Times*, 18 September 1917.
[3] "Dunbar Schools," Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park (U.S. National Park Service), http://www.nps.gov/daav/historyculture/dunbarschools.htm, accessed on 7 November 2014.
[4] Otis G. Wilson and William B. Ittner, "Building Program of Fairmont, West Virginia," *School Executives Magazine*, vol. 49, 1940, pg. 269.

a few years earlier when William W. Sanders, State Supervisor of Negro Schools, wrote the following in his 1922 biennial report to the State Superintendent of Free Schools:

> There seems to be an "unwritten rule" that whenever a building is to be erected for a Negro school, a hillside site must be selected. Usually these sites are almost inaccessible on account of the steep hill upon which they are located. But a building located along a hillside is better than no building at all.[5]

While the main entrance to Dunbar School was more accessible than Sanders described, the steep hillside on which it was constructed provided little room for outdoor school activities. The plans of the new buildings also differed. Fairmont Senior High School includes an open courtyard and a gymnasium separate from the auditorium. Dunbar, rectangular in plan without a courtyard, includes the auditorium and gymnasium in one space. In an article titled "Building Program of Fairmont, West Virginia" for *School Executives Magazine*, Superintendent Otis E. Wilson and Architect William B. Ittner described the Dunbar School as follows:

> The Dunbar school for colored pupils was planned for 540 pupils and for all grades. It is of brick construction, and the abrupt slope of the lot gives a three-story building in front and a two-story building at the rear. The school has fourteen classrooms, and the special rooms are about the same as for the white schools, viz., a library, a domestic economy room for both cooking and sewing, an auditorium, a gymnasium 48x62 feet with locker room and showers for both boys and girls, and a general science room.[6]

With such work space and laboratories, vocational guidance was available in the new school. The new building was planned to allow for training students in trades such as wood work, printing, sheet metal, and plumbing.[7] The auditorium and gymnasium did provide useful too, not only for the students' advanced curriculum, but to the community as well since it was provided free of charge for any events "advancing community interests, civic objections, and ideas."[8]

The FISD school building initiative was ambitious. The people of Fairmont voted for the bond issue on April 19, 1927 and bonds were sold on the first day of July. For the Dunbar School, plans and specifications were approved by November 1, 1927 and bids were advertised a little more than two weeks later. Contracts were awarded on January 9, 1928 with general construction work awarded to the D.J. Phipps Company of Roanoke and electrical work awarded to the McGraw Electric Company of Charleston. Excavation began by the end of the month.[9]

The cornerstone of the new building was laid on April 15, 1928 by the Grand Lodge of of the Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of West Virginia. The Masons met with school-aged children at the "Negro Masonic

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[5] West Virginia State Department of Education, "Biennial Report of the State Supervisor of Negro Schools of West Virginia for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1922."
[6] Otis G. Wilson and William B. Ittner, "Building Program of Fairmont, West Virginia," *School Executives Magazine*, vol. 49, 1940, pg. 288.
[7] "Dunbar School to Receive Gifts," *The West Virginian*, 11 December 1928.
[8] "Board Limits School Uses: Passes Resolutions Regarding Auditorium at Dunbar," *Fairmont Times*, 13 January 1929.
[9] "New Dunbar for Colored Pupils Ready," *The Fairmont Times*, 9 December 1928; and, "Charleston Firms Win Fairmont Jobs," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 12 January 1928.

Hall" and marched to the school together.[10] After a brief ceremony with singing and an address from Principal J. Rupert Jefferson of Summer High School in Parkersburg, several items were placed in a copper box in the cornerstone including school reports, newspapers, maps, and directories.[11]

The building was originally scheduled to be open the week of December 10, 1928, but it was postponed to January 7, 1929, likely due to an influenza epidemic in the city.[12] Opening events, however, went on as scheduled in December. Four dedication events took place the week of December 10th. Two of the events were advertised as "community nights" when Fairmont residents were welcomed to inspect the building. Superintendent Wilson issued the following invitation to Fairmont's citizenry:

> The new school building for the colored pupils at High and Weatherwax streets will open for informal public inspection on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, December 12 and 13. It is the first of the four buildings to be finished which the citizens of Fairmont authorized to be built in the bond issue for schools.
>
> All citizens are cordially and urgently invited to visit the building on either or both of these dates. For years, the colored pupils have had very poor school facilities; their rooms have been over-crowded and their equipment inadequate. They are entitled to better conditions which they are now to enjoy.[13]

The week ended with a program held by the Dunbar Parent-Teacher Association. The feature of the program was the presentation of several gifts to the school including a silk flag from the PTA and a Victrola from the teachers. Principal Jefferson returned from Parkersburg to make the primary address.[14]

When the school opened following the new year, 379 students were enrolled.[15] Students through sixth grade attended class in the basement or first floor while older students' classes were on the second floor. Students were taught general subjects – such as reading, writing, and math – as well as chemistry, physics, biology, visual education, and sociology in the higher grades. High school students also learned trades such as wood work, printing, sheet metal work, upholstering, carving, and elementary plumbing/electricity.[16] While boys attended shop in a two-room building (nonextant) located at the rear of the lot, girls attended home economics, where they learned to cook and sew, in a room located in the front of the school building.[17]

The school offered a number of extra circular activities including football, basketball, marching band, and cheerleading, as well as many different clubs, including Hi-Y, Projector, French, Athletics, and Dramatics Clubs. Members of the Press Club prepared the monthly newsletter, *Dunbar Live Wire* (later *The Tiger's*

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[10] "Corner Stone Laid for New Dunbar School," *The Fairmont Times*, 16 April 1928; and, "Negro Masons to Officiate," *Fairmont Times*, 14 April 1928.
[11] "Corner Stone Laid for New Dunbar School," *Fairmont Times*, 16 April 1928.
[12] "City Schools Reopen Today," *The Fairmont Times*, 7 January 1929.
[13] "New Dunbar for Colored Pupils Ready," *The Fairmont Times*, 9 December 1928.
[14] "Dunbar PTA has Program," *The Fairmont Times*, 15 December 1928.
[15] "Dunbar School Remains a Beloved Landmark," *Times West Virginian*, 10 February 2014.
[16] "Dunbar School to Receive Gifts," *The West Virginian*, 11 December 1928; and, "New Dunbar for Colored Pupils Ready," *The Fairmont Times*, 9 December 1928;
[17] See historic images on file with Dunbar School Foundation, Fairmont, W.Va.

Eye) and the Yearbook staff printed their first yearbook, *The Tiger's Lair*, in 1940. Dunbar School sponsored and supported a number of school programs and events such as recitals and musicals, declamatory and literary contests, physical education exhibition night, industrial arts exhibition, homecoming, and prom.[18] These were not the only activities at the school, however. While reminiscing about his career, former Dunbar Tiger football and basketball coach, Horace Belmear, recalled moments and activities he fondly remembered about the school, including:

> Prom night, graduation exercises, senior athlete campfire night at the "Old Fairgrounds," the class play, intramural tournaments, holiday class-room decoration contests, the train trip to the national basketball tournament in Nashville, TN, the public speaking contests, 9th grade civics classes, 12th grade "Problems of Democracy," the athletic dress codes, class day exercises, the "college going" athletes record, and Dunbar patrons providing their cars for our teams' travel.[19]

The school's PTA would have followed the statewide organization's goals to make teaching more effective by helping to provide library books and other needed equipment. They also helped maintain free hot lunches to those in need as well as organized reading circles, home-room mothers, and other welfare activities.[20] The school had other helpful programs as well. For example, the National Youth Administration allocated funding to Dunbar School to provide paid work experience to participating students.[21] In addition, many Dunbar teachers also took the time to teach life skills such as character, presentation, and physical hygiene.[22] The school's high standard for their students was evidenced by their Model School rating with the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.[23]

Dunbar School was the only black school in Marion County serving students from primary through the twelfth grade. Thus, it served many students from the outlying coal camps which only provided for the education of students through eighth grade. The county provided school busses to transport black high school students to Dunbar School from coal communities such as Idamay, Carolina, and Monongah. However, students who lived in company-owned houses were picked up at a central location, rather than their house, often requiring students to walk long distances to catch the bus. Due to this, many county students were unable to attend school beyond the eighth grade.[24]

In his Book, *Black Days, Black Diamonds*, former student Robert Armstead wrote about attending Dunbar School and living in Fairmont during segregation:

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[18] Information from various items in the collection of the Dunbar Foundation, including news articles, photographs, and unpublished manuscripts. Fairmont, W.Va.
[19] "Coach Horace Belmear: Dunbar High School – Love and Support," unpublished manuscript on file at the Dunbar Foundation, Fairmont, W.Va.
[20] West Virginia State Department of Education, "Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Free Schools of West Virginia," June 1932, p. 108.
[21] Isaac M. Carper, "Biennial Report of the Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics," State of West Virginia, 1937-38, p. 45.
[22] Chelsi Baker, "First year at Miller had 'Cold Divide,'" *Times West Virginian*, 11 June 2014.
[23] "Dunbar Middle School: Fairmont, WV," http://rlbelmear.tripod.com/page_1.html, accessed 14 November 2014; and, "Dunbar School Remains a Beloved Landmark," *Times West Virginian*, 10 February 2014.
[24] Robert Armstead, *Black Days, Black Dust: The Memories of an African American Coal Miner* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2002), p. 31.

> Going to Dunbar had one big drawback. Six of us had to walk almost a mile into town past the all-white Miller School, located just a few blocks from our house. Blacks and whites lived separate lives in Fairmont. Segregation affected where I could go and where I could eat. Most Dunbar students who had extra lunch money walked to Frank's Hot Dog Stand at the corner of Jefferson and Jackson Streets. They could buy a hot dog for ten cents or a hamburger for fifteen cents. Frank's Hot Dog Stand was the only place in Fairmont that a black person, young or old, had the privilege of sitting down to eat.[25]

Like many places and businesses, schools continued to be segregated in Fairmont until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional in *Brown vs. Board of Education* in the spring of 1954. The process of integration began with the new school year that fall. At the time, it was reported that in many areas throughout West Virginia, school integration was mostly uncontentious. However, communities such as White Sulphur Springs in Greenbrier County and Madison in Boone County saw protests from white parents. There were protests in Marion County as well. The Board of Education's "option" policy, which gave parents the choice of enrolling their children in previously all-white schools or remaining in a segregated building, permitted the enrollment of 13 black children at Annabelle School in nearby Four States. Thus, as many as 80 students attending this school were kept home by their parents as the mothers picketed at the school for several days. They demanded the Board provide busses to transport the students to the black school in Monongah as well as the dismissal of Annabelle's principal.[26]

By the second week of missed school, the Marion County Board of Education sent notifications to such parents reminding them of the penalties for truancy.[27] Governor William Marland, at the time known for his no-nonsense implementation of racial integration, issued a statement the following week in which he stated that the strikes and protests were "particularly disturbing" and called for "cooperatively planned action, carefully carried out, with restrain [sic] on both sides."[28] With the possibility of facing fines of $3 to $20 per day of absence, the strike in Marion County slowly ended.[29]

The "option" policy, however, meant decreased enrollment at Dunbar School when it reopened in the fall of 1954. Further, with other African American schools fully integrated by this time, Dunbar's sports teams found it difficult to fill their schedule. The football coach at Fairmont West, a white school, agreed to an historic match against Dunbar, calling it "entirely proper" in light of the move towards full integration.[30] Later that season, the Dunbar Tigers went on to play a second white school, Morgantown's St. Francis.[31]

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[25] *Ibid*., p. 69.
[26] "Schooling Required: Parents Notified of Attendance Law at Annabelle," *The West Virginian*, 16 September 1954; and, "Rough Going: Integration Moves Ahead in State in Spite of Foes," *Times -West Virginian*, 19 September 1954; and "State Round-Up Shows 12 Counties Fully Integrated," *Charleston Gazette*, 19 September 1954.
[27] "Schooling Required: Parents Notified of Attendance Law at Annabelle," *The West Virginian*, 16 September 1954; and, "Rough Going: Integration Moves Ahead in State in Spite of Foes," *Times -West Virginian*, 19 September 1954.
[28] "Marland Says State To Obey School Ruling," *Fairmont Times*, 23 September 1954.
[29] "Rough Going: Integration Moves Ahead in State in Spite of Foes," *Times -West Virginian*, 19 September 1954.
[30] "Selkirk to Use Billy Queen Behind Plate," *Charleston Gazette*, 21 September 1954.
[31] "Morgantown SF, Is Victor Over Fairmont Dunbar," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 29 October 1954.

Though they narrowly lost both games, the matches were a prelude of what was to come. The 1954-55 school year would be the last for high school students at Dunbar.

The next school year, the remaining 225 high school students integrated into the county's eight other high schools. Though Dunbar remained open for elementary students, enrollment was so low (95) that the school was closed after the 1955-56 school year. The four remaining teachers and principal were transferred to Miller School.[32] However, some students attending Dunbar at the time were apprehensive about the changes. They were used to their school building, peers, and teachers. As one former student commented, they were "unceremoniously transferred…there was no counseling…[they] were thrust together."[33]

Dunbar remained vacant until 1963 when it reopened as an annex to the Fairmont Junior High School, serving seventh and eighth grades, and was renamed. By 1970, however, Fairmont residents – with support from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – expressed a list of concerns to the Board of Education. Among those concerns was the name of the school. The name Dunbar was restored to the building and their requests also prompted redistricting in the county. Dunbar School became an elementary school.[34] It remained so until 2007 when it closed permanently.

Summary

Dunbar School is reflective of the segregated society that developed after the Civil War and persisted in American society through the 1950s. Serving as the only public elementary school for black students in Fairmont and the only high school black students in Marion County, it served a significant role in the community's history. It is eligible under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage* and *Education* with a period of significance dating from 1928, when it was constructed, to 1956, the last year it operated as a black school.

[32] "Counties Quiet as Schools Integrate," *Charleston Gazette*, 8 September 1955.
[33] "Dunbar School Remains a Beloved Landmark," *Times West Virginian*, 10 February 2014.
[34] "Dunbar Middle School: Fairmont, WV," http://rlbelmear.tripod.com/page_1.html, accessed 14 November 2014;

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register boundary of the Dunbar School includes the property within the following Marion County, West Virginia Parcel: District 03, Map 28, Parcel 0001.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes all property historically associated with the Dunbar School during the period of significance.

PHOTOS

Photos 1, 5, 6, 7, and 14 were taken by Erin Riebe (WV SHPO) on July 23, 2014. Remaining photographs were taken by Sandra Scaffidi (Fairmont Historic Landmarks Commission) on December 13, 2014.

Photo 1 of 15: Photo 1 of 15: Main elevation, facing NW

Photo 2 of 15: West-southwest side elevation, facing W

Photo 3 of 15: Rear elevation, facing SE

Photo 4 of 15: East-northeast side elevation, facing S

Photo 5 of 15: Detail, interior stairwell showing terrazzo tile

Photo 6 of 15: Typical classroom showing hardwood floors, built-in cupboard, chalkboard, interior brick sills, and radiator on ceiling

Photo 7 of 15: Classroom built-in cupboard

Photo 8 of 15: Science lab

Photo 9 of 15: First floor central hall, showing terrazzo floors and wall openings to classrooms (now enclosed, likely once used for hall lighting and ventilation

Photo 10 of 15: Basement level central hall, showing lockers, radiators on ceiling, and openings to classrooms (now enclosed, likely once used for hall lighting and ventilation)

Photo 11 of 15: Basement level bathroom showing original stalls and fixtures

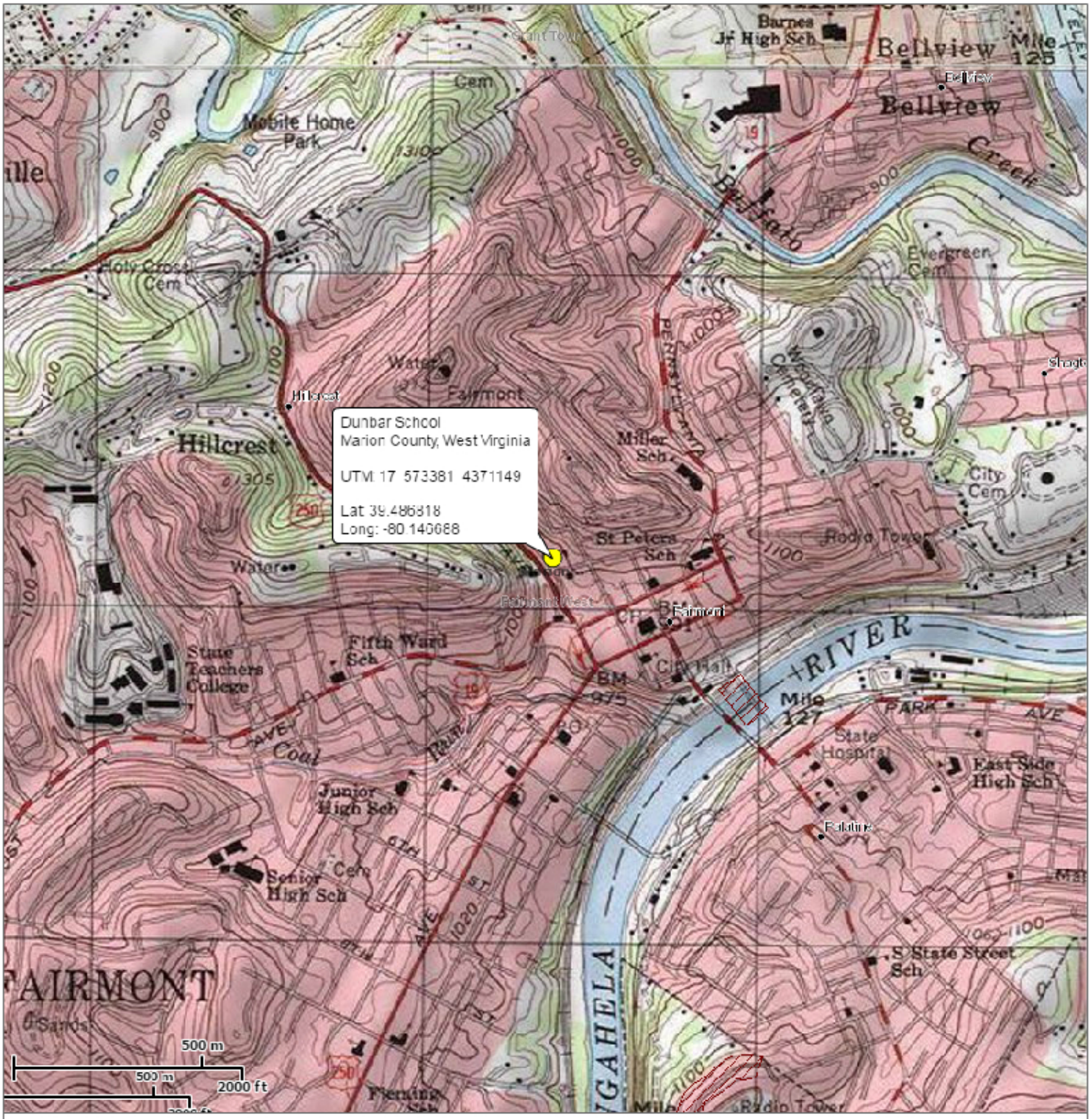
Photo 12 of 15: Gymnasium, showing radiators on walls, truss ceiling, and enclosed openings to second floor hall.

Photo 13 of 15: Gymnasium showing radiators on wall, truss ceiling, and large window openings.

Photo 14 of 15: Gymnasium showing stage, basketball hoop, and hardwood floors.

Photo 15 of 15: East-northeast side elevation and drive, showing stone wall (contributing structure)

Dunbar School, Marion County, WV



This map is created by West Virginia GIS Technical Center for West Virginia SHPO GIS Map Viewer.

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator (Auxiliary Sphere)

Map Created on 1/5/2015

Architectural
- Point
- Area

National Register
- Point
- Area

User Notes:

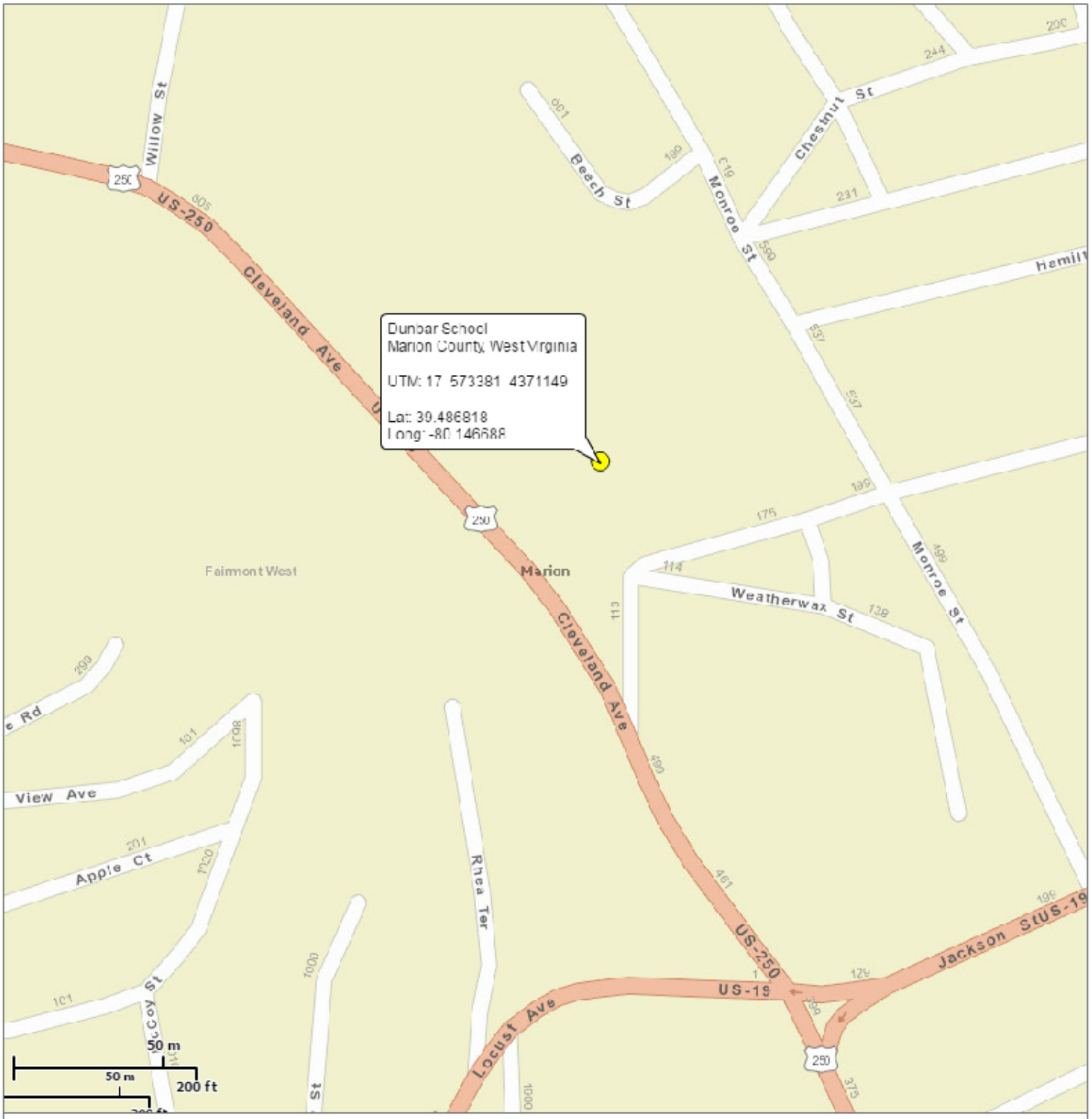
USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangles: Fairmont West; Grant Town

Disclaimer:

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office Interactive Map is designed to provide professional consultants, state/federal agency employees and the public with a means to make informed decisions with regards to the cultural resource location.

N

Dunbar School, Marion County, WV



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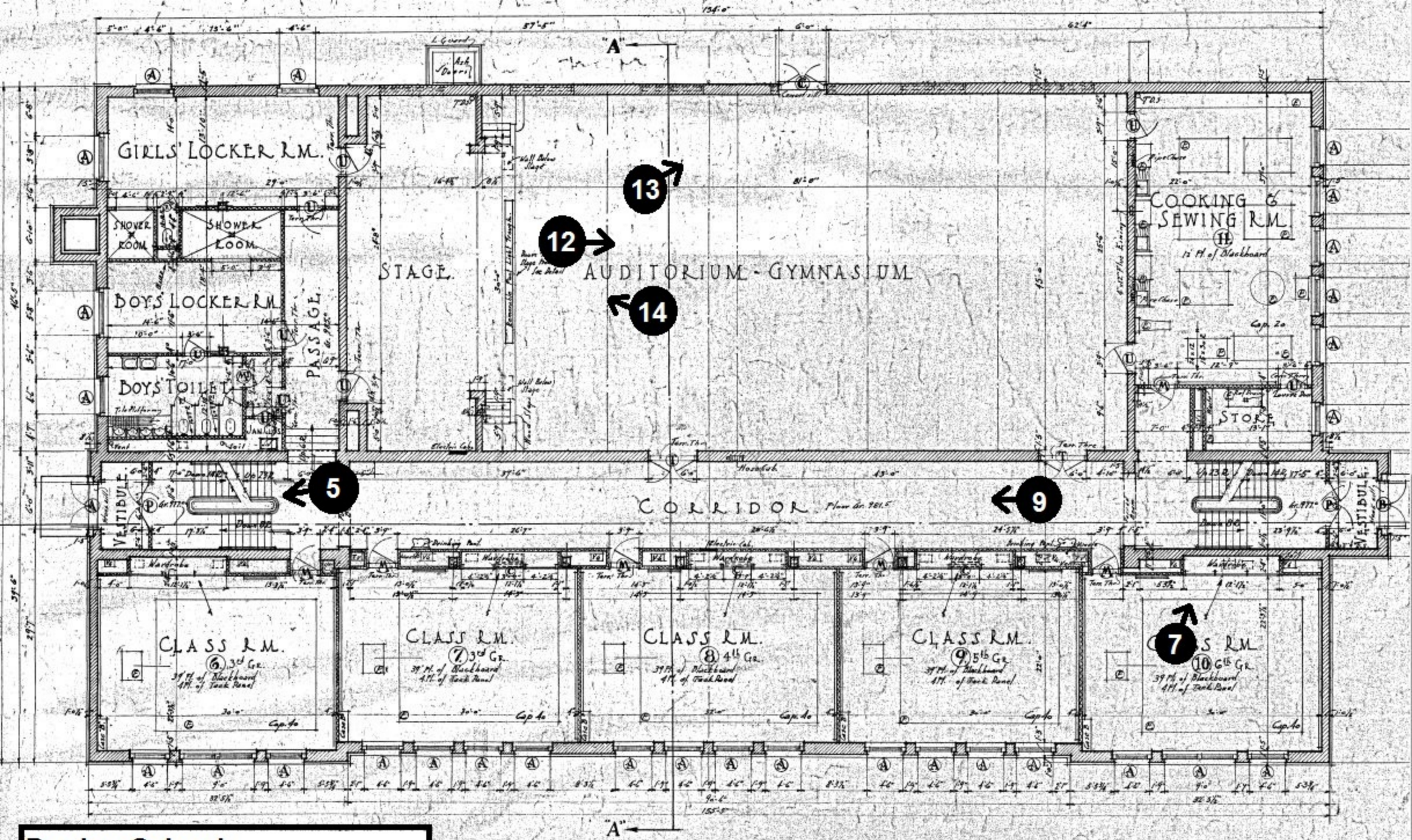
N

Dunbar School
Marion County, West Virginia

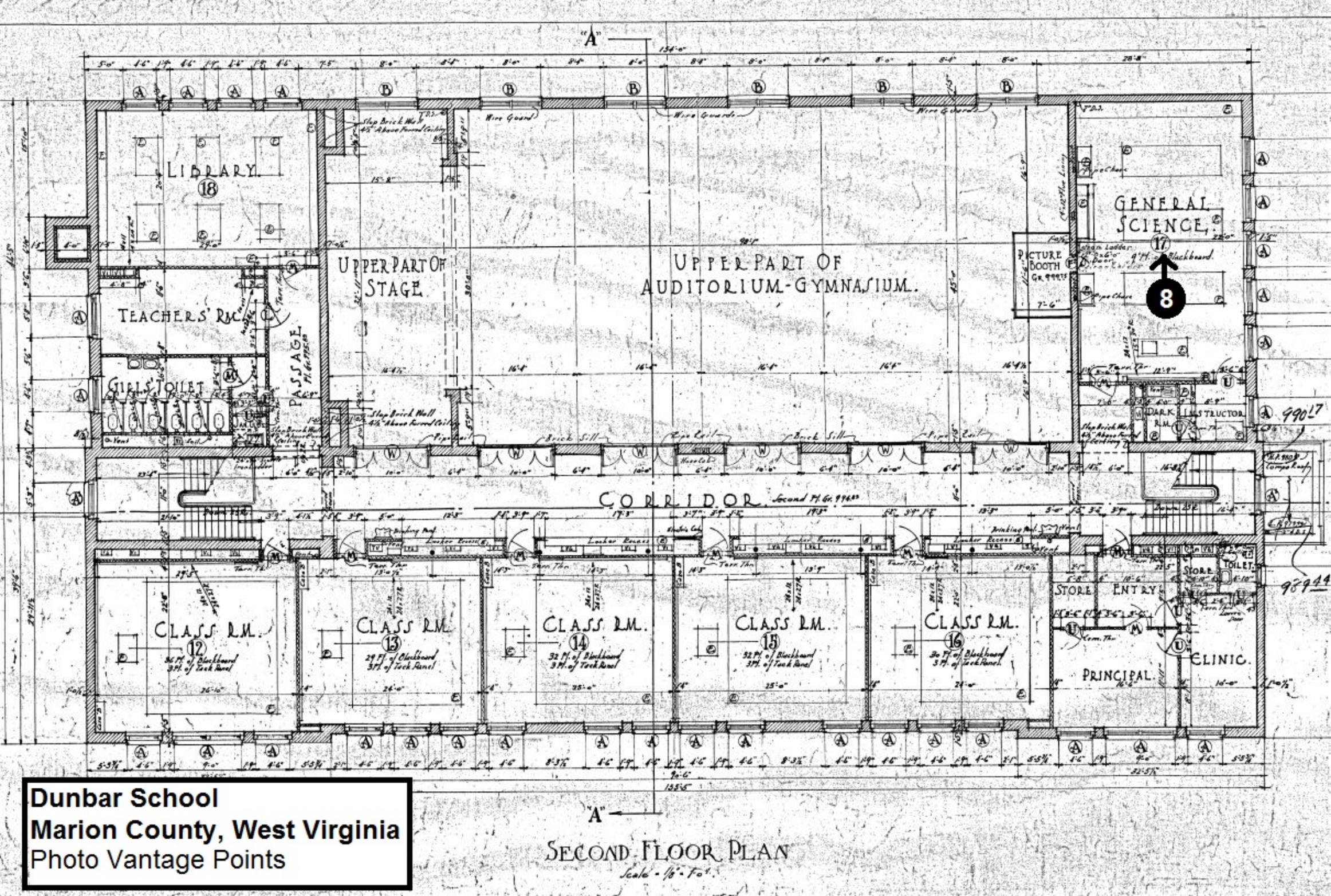
National Register boundary
Photograph vantage points

N



Dunbar School
Marion County, West Virginia
Photo Vantage Points

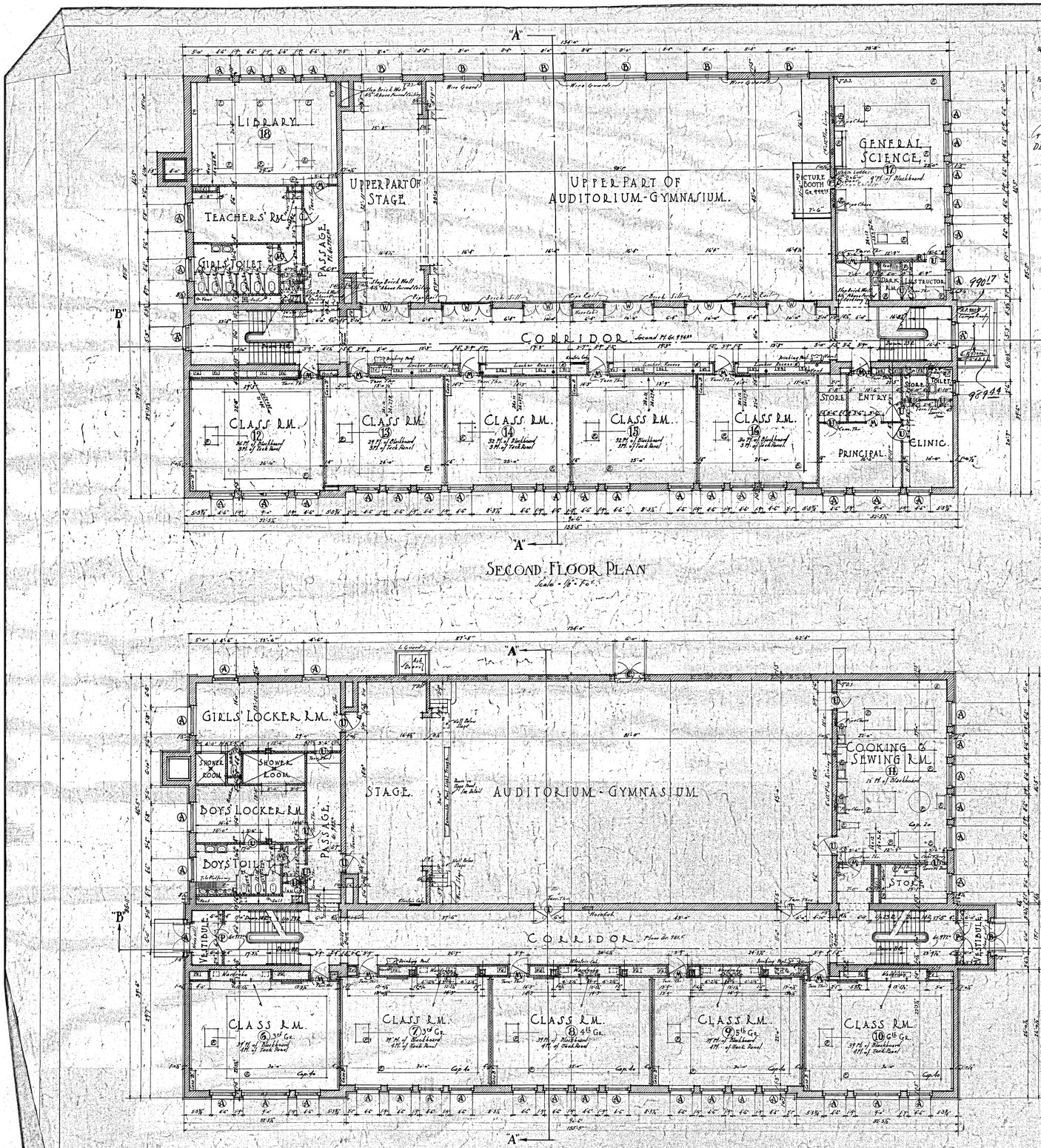
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

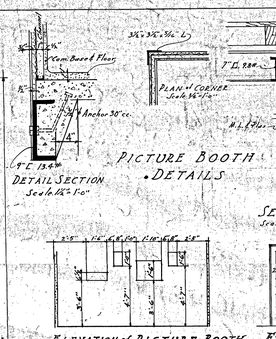
Scale - 1/8" = Foot

Dunbar School
Marion County, West Virginia
Photo Vantage Points



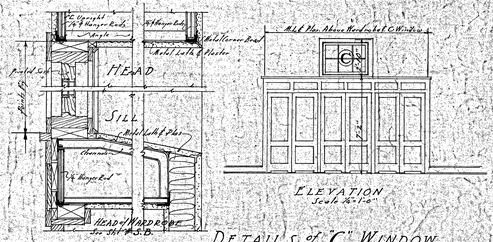
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
Scale - 1/8" = 1'-0"

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
Scale. 1/8" - 1'-0"



SCHEDULE OF FINISH — SECOND FLOOR PLAN

ROOM Nº	TITLE of ROOM	FLOOR	WALL	CEILING	REMARK
12 to 16 Inc.	CLASS RM.	Wood	Plaster	Plaster	Wood Base & Picture Mould
	CORRIDOR	Terrazzo	do.	do.	Terrazzo Base & Wood A.M.
	PRINCIPAL	Wood	do.	do.	Wood Base & Picture Mould
	CLINIC	do.	do.	do.	do.
	ENTRY	do.	do.	do.	do.
	STORE ROOM	Cement	do.	do.	Cement Base
	CLINIC TOILET	Terrazzo	do.	do.	Terrazzo Base
17	GENERAL SCIENCE	Wood	do.	do.	Wood Base & Picture Mould
	INSTRUCTOR RM.	do.	do.	do.	do.
	DARK RM.	Cement	do.	do.	Cement Base
18	LIBRARY	Wood	do.	do.	Wood Base & Picture Mould
	TEACHER'S RM.	do.	do.	do.	do.
	GIRLS' TOILET	Terrazzo	do.	do.	Terrazzo Base and Toilet Part.
	JANITOR'S CLO.	Cement	Brick Tile	do.	
	UPPER PART STAGE	Brick	Wood		
	UPPER PART AUD & GYM.	do.	do.		
	PICTURE BOOTH	Cement	Plaster	Plaster	Cement Base
	PASSAGE	Terrazzo	do.	do.	Terrazzo Base



SCHEDULE OF FINISH — FIRST FLOOR PLAN

ROOM Nº	TITLE of ROOM	FLOOR	WALL	CEILING	REMARK
6 to 10 Inc.	CLASS RM.	Wood	Plaster	Plaster	Wood Base & Picture Mould
	CORRIDOR	Terrazzo	do.	do.	Terrazzo Base & Wood A.M.
	PASSAGE	do.	do.	do.	do.
	TAIL	do.	do.	do.	Terrazzo To Floor Level Under Entry Hot Cast Steel Tread Cast
	VESTIBULE	do.	do.	do.	Terrazzo Base & Wood A.M.
11	COOKING & SEWING RM.	Wood	do.	do.	Wood Base & Picture Mould
	STORE	Cement	do.	do.	Cement Base
	AUD. & GYM.	Wood	Brick	Wood	Wood Base & Picture Mould Terrazzo Base Expansion Area Wood Gutter Base
	STAGE	do.	do.	do.	Plaster Above Fireproof Area Wood Cove Base Screed
	GIRLS' LOCKER RM.	Cement	Plaster	Concrete	Cement Base
	SHOWER RM.	do.	do.	do.	Cem. Base Portland Cem. Fine Wall
	SHOWER RM.	do.	do.	do.	Cem. Base Portland Cem. Fine Wall
	BOYS' LOCKER RM.	do.	do.	do.	Cement Base
	BOYS' TOILET	Terrazzo	do.	Plaster	Cem. Base Portland Cem. Fine Wall Terrazzo Base Wood Picture Mould Fine Top of Brickwork Across Corridor
	JANITOR'S CLO.	Cement	Brick Tile	Concrete	

Note
For Blackboard Heights See Typical Detail Sht. Nº 3B

MATERIAL CODE
BRICK
STONE
CONC.
TILE
WOOD
PLAN

NEW DUNBAR SCHOOL BUILDING
FOR THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
CLEVELAND AVE. & HIGH STREET
FAIRMONT, WEST VA.

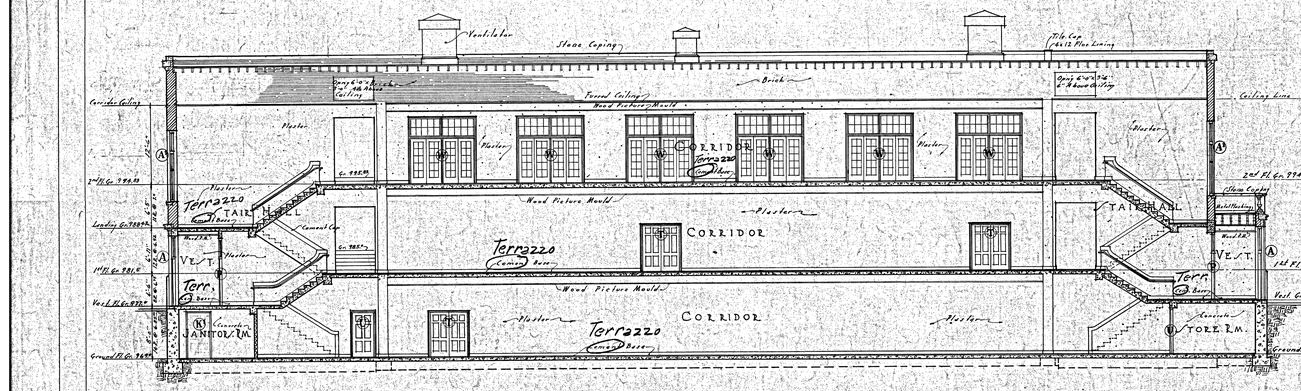
WM. B. ITTNER, INC. ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS
ST. LOUIS, MO. NOVEMBER 1927

2713

2

Contract V-A 28

FIRST & SECOND FLOOR PLANS



SECTION B-B

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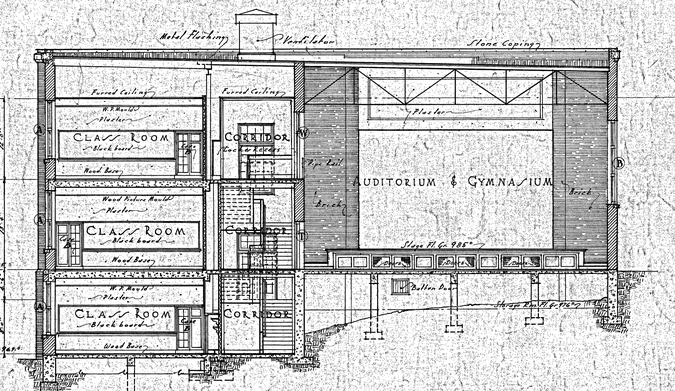

SECTION A-A

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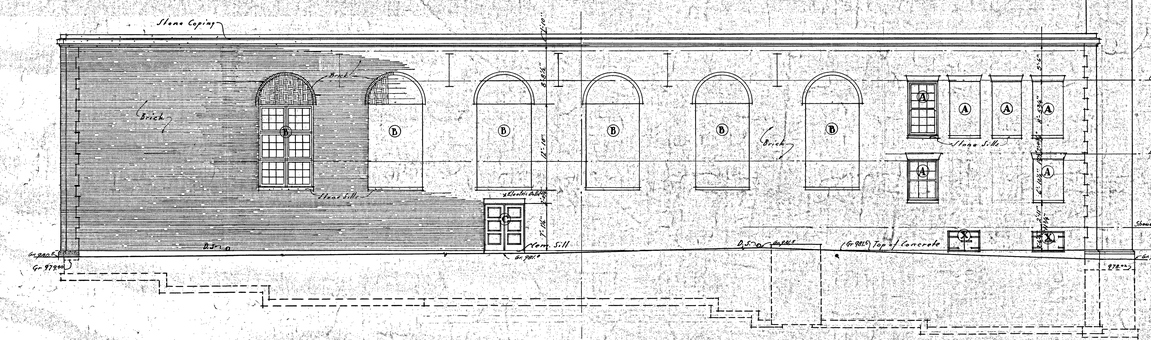
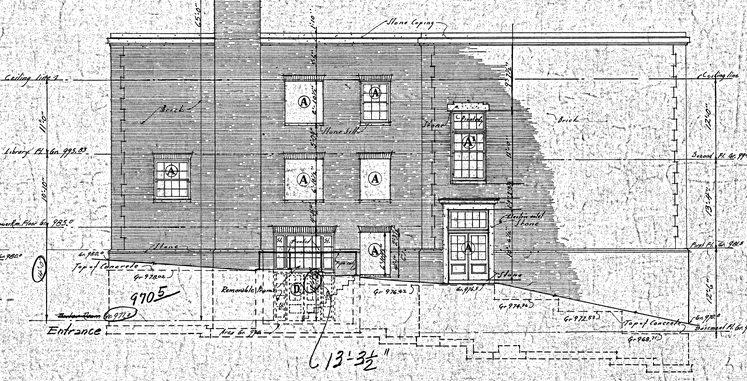


EAST ELEVATION

Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION

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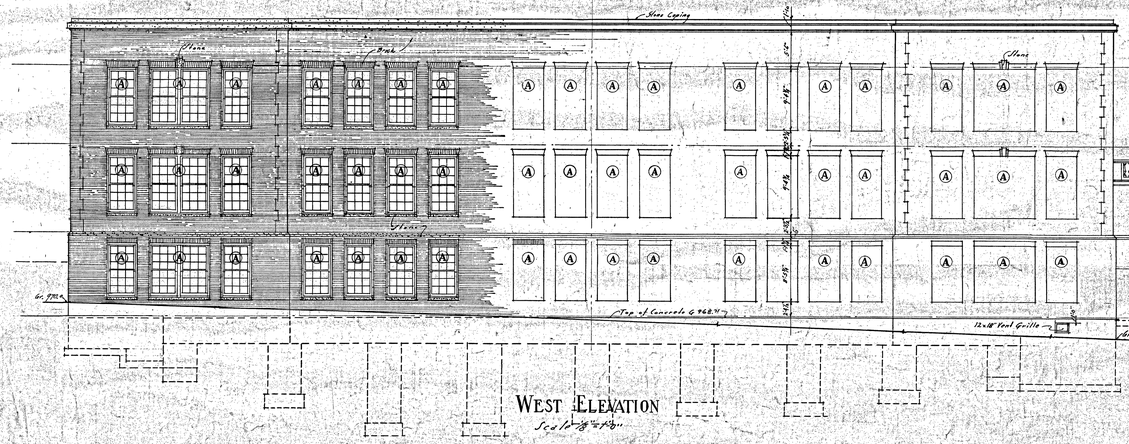

WEST ELEVATION

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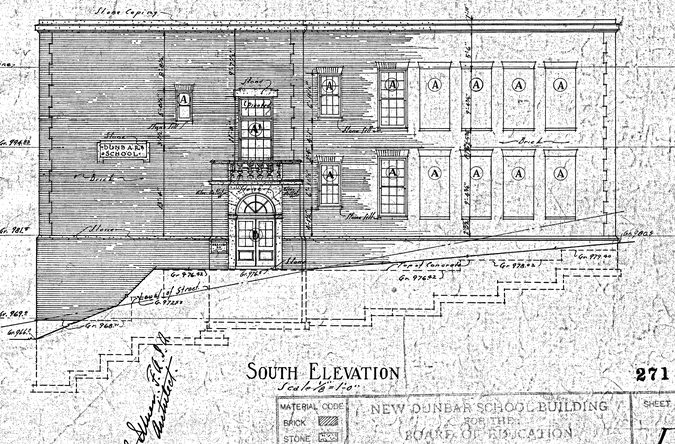


SOUTH ELEVATION

Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"

2713

MATERIAL	CODE
BRICK	
STONE	
CONC.	
TILE	
WOOD	
M. & P.	

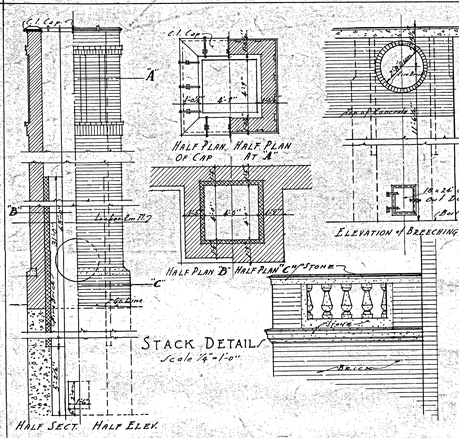
NEW DUNBAR SCHOOL BUILDING
FOR THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
CLEVELAND AVE. & HIGH STREET
FAIRMONT, WEST VA.

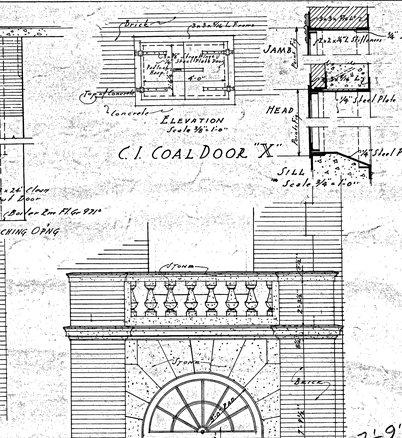
WM. B. ITTNER, INC. ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS
ST. LOUIS, MO.
NOVEMBER 1907

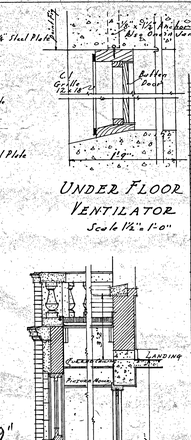
SHEET NO. 5

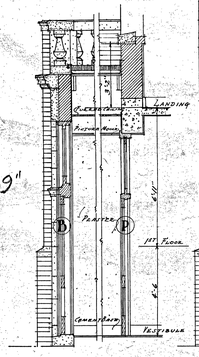
REVISED 1-4-08

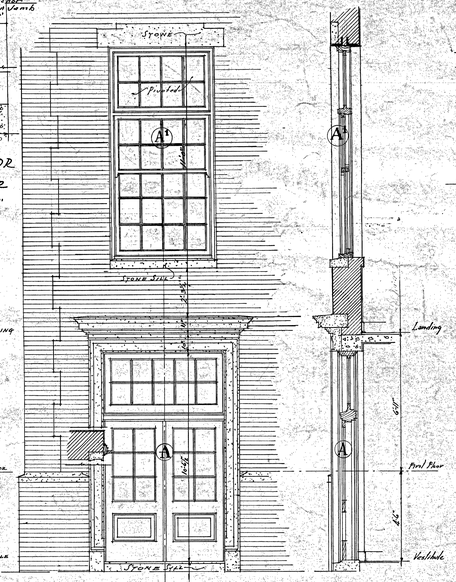
ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS

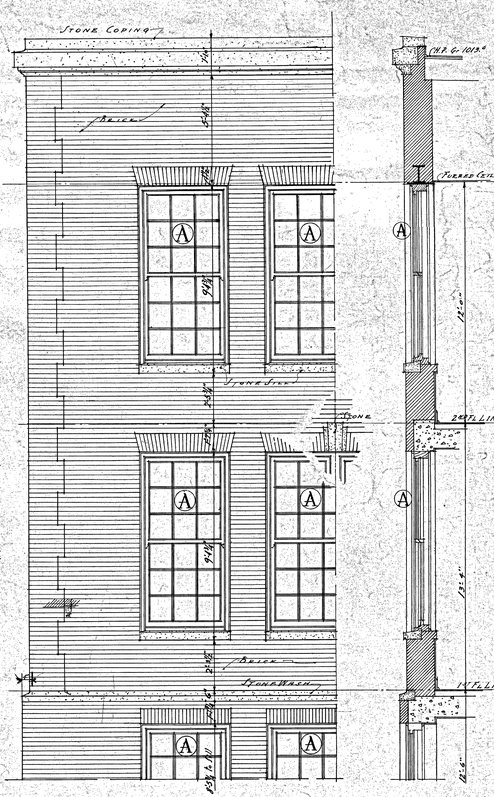


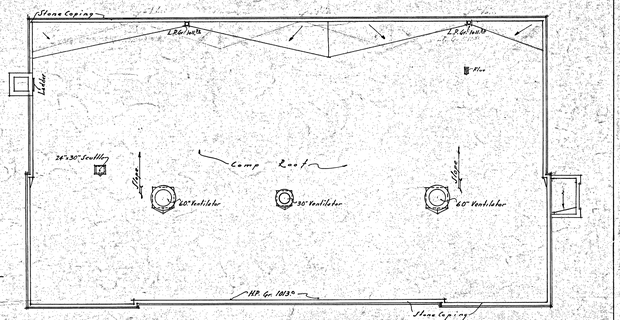












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BRICK	
STONE	
CONC.	
TILE	
WOOD	
M. L. & P.	
WM. B. ITTNER, INC. ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS	ST. LOUIS, MO. NOVEMBER 1927

SHEET NO. 6

2713

Revised 1-4-28

BLOCK + ROOF PLAN & DETAIL SHEET

Photo 1: Main elevation, facing NW

Photo 2: West-southwest side elevation, facing W

Photo 3: Rear elevation, facing SE

Photo 4: East-northeast side elevation, facing S

Photo 5: Detail, interior stairwell showing terrazzo tile

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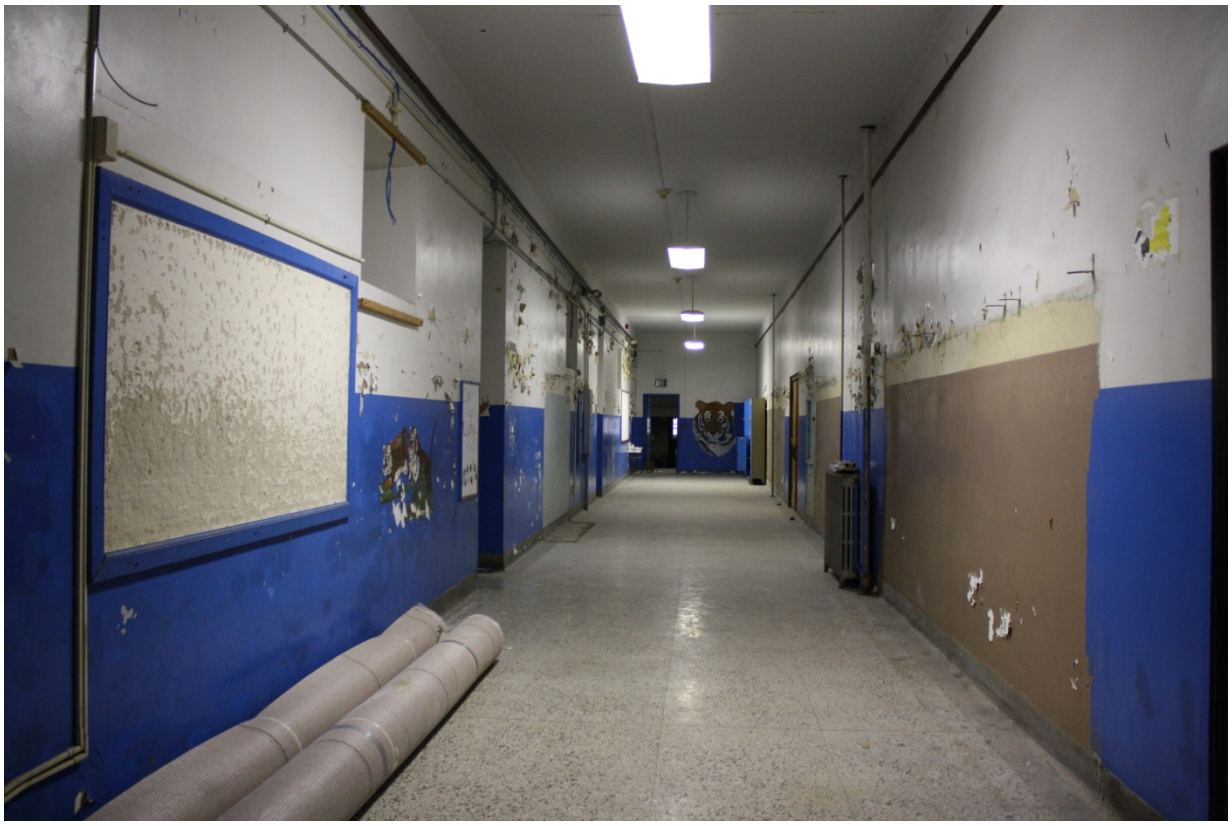
Photo 8: Science lab



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