NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

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 Westport Junior High School

Other names/site number Westport Middle School

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Historic Resources of the Kansas City, Missouri School District Pre-1970

2. Location

Street & number 300 East 39th Street | N/A | not for publication

City or town Kansas City | N/A | vicinity

State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64111

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B X C ___ D

Mark A. Miles FEBRUARY 25, 2014

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
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

5. Classification

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

	private
X	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

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

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	1	sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	**Total**

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH/ EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL STYLES

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE/ limestone
walls: BRICK
roof: ASPHALT
other: TERRACOTTA

X **NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUTATION PAGES**

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.)

- [ ] 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.
- [x] 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

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1924

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Smith, Charles A.

[x] **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUTATION PAGES**

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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:

__X__State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other

Name of repository: **Missouri Valley Special Collections (KCMO Public Library**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.6

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: N/A
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
1	39.056793	-94.582314	3		
2			4		

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)
_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal; Lauren Rieke, Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Rosin Preservation date October 2013
street & number 215 W. 18th Street, #150 telephone 816-472-4950
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64105
e-mail lauren@rosinpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
  - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
  - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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.

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: **Westport Junior High School**

City or Vicinity: **Kansas City**

County: **Jackson County** State: **Missouri**

Photographer: **Brad Finch, F-Stop Photography**

Date Photographed: **Fall 2013**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 20: Primary (west) and south elevations. View northeast.
2 of 20: South elevation. View north.
3 of 20: East elevation. View west.
4 of 20: North elevation. View south.
5 of 20: Northwest corner showing elevated walkway. View southeast.
6 of 20: Northeast corner from Gillham Park. View south. Note Westport Senior High School in the background.
7 of 20: Athletic field at northwest corner of property. View southeast.
8 of 20: Southwest corner showing 1992 building. View northeast.
9 of 20: Main entrance on west elevation. View east.
10 of 20: Detail of windows on fifth floor, east elevation. View west.
11 of 20: First floor, main stairway. View west.
12 of 20: Third floor, typical staircase. View north.
13 of 20: First floor, main corridor. View south.
14 of 20: Third floor, typical corridor with integrated lockers. View east.
15 of 20: Fourth floor, typical classroom. View southwest.
16 of 20: Fourth floor, classroom with 1948 murals. View southwest.
17 of 20: Auditorium stage. View east.
18 of 20: Auditorium seating from stage. View west.
19 of 20: Basement, gymnasium. View northeast.
20 of 20: Sub-basement, natatorium. View northwest.

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1: Site Map. *ArcGIS 2013.*
Figure 2: Contextual Map. *ArcGIS 2013.*
Figure 3: Photo Map, exterior, first floor.
Figure 4: Photo Map, upper floors.
Figure 5: Photo Map, lower floors.
Figure 6: Subbasement, existing floor plan.
Figure 7: Basement, existing floor plan.
Figure 8: First floor, existing floor plan.
Figure 9: Second floor, existing floor plan.
Figure 10: Third floor, existing floor plan.
Figure 11: Fourth floor, existing floor plan.
Figure 12: Fifth floor, existing floor plan.
Figure 13: Existing site plan.
Figure 14: Westport Junior High School, n.d. *Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.*
Figure 15: Westport Junior High, 1931. *Source:* The Broadcaster, *Westport Junior High School newspaper, May 28, 1931.*
Figure 16: Postcard of Westport Junior High, n.d. *Source: The Postcard Emporium, http://thepostcardemporium.ecrater.co.uk/p/2144729/westport-junior-high-school-in-kansas, (accessed December 16, 2013).*
Figure 17: Sanborn Fire and Insurance Map, 1951. *Source: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd., 1951. Volume 4, Sheet 502.*

SUMMARY

Constructed in 1924, Westport Junior High School (Westport Junior High) at 300 East 39th Street in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri sits on a hill overlooking Gillham Park and the historic Hyde Park neighborhood. The building stands on the south side of the open 4.6 acre lot, three blocks east of the arterial intersection of 39th and Main Streets and about four miles south of the central business district. The massive building illustrates the Junior High School sub-type of Early Twentieth Century/Progressive Era Schools property type as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Resources of the Kansas City, Missouri School District Pre-1970" (MPDF). The five-story rectangular building with a rubble limestone foundation and a flat roof sits at the south end of the parcel. The remainder of the property is a large grassy athletic field. The terrain slopes to the northeast, exposing basement levels on the north and east elevations. Elaborate limestone and terra cotta ornament accents all four red brick walls. The ornament reflects a variety of architectural influences - Jacobethan strapwork; Italian Renaissance arcaded windows; and Beaux Arts sculptural elements such as festoons and shields. A double loaded U-shaped corridor organizes the interior. Specialized classrooms, offices and a natatorium line corridor. Two stacked gymnasiums and a three-story auditorium fill the center of the "U." The interior retains many original features, including plasterwork at the entrance and auditorium, marble floors on the first floor and integrated lockers lining the corridors. An elevated, glazed walkway on the west elevation connects to a secondary building erected 1992. The Modern Movement design of the 1992 building contrasts with the original school in form, massing and materials. It includes a two-story rectangular parking garage clad in red concrete panels and a three-story building with an irregular form clad in red and white concrete panels. Alterations to Westport Junior High have been limited. The most significant change, the connection to the 1992 building, is minimally attached to the west elevation through an existing window opening, leaving the façade of Westport Junior High School intact. Westport Junior High School meets the registration requirements outlined in the MPDF for its property type.

ELABORATION

SETTING

The property encompasses over half of a city block in Kansas City's Old Hyde Park neighborhood. The irregular 4.6 acre lot is bounded by 39th Street on the south, Warwick Boulevard on the east, 38th Street on the north and an open lawn fronting Gillham Road on the west. Sited at the top of a prominent rise overlooking Gillham Park, the terrain slopes gently to the southeast (Photo 6). The commercial area along Main, three blocks to the west, is listed on the National Register as the South Side Historic District.[1] Westport Junior High is also in close proximity to five historic residential districts: Hyde Park, Old Hyde Park East, South Hyde Park, Janssen Place, and Southmoreland.[2] These neighborhoods contain mostly single-family residences, some of substantial size. To the south across 39th Street is Westport High School (1908). Gillham Road and Gillham Park wind along the east edge of the block.

Westport Junior High anchors the southeast corner of the property. While the primary entrance faces west, the most prominent elevation faces south. A non-contributing resource, a building constructed in 1992, stands at the southwest corner of the property. It connects to Westport Junior High via a raised walkway on the second floor of the west elevation (Photos 5, 7, 8; Figure 9). An athletic field, a non-contributing site, fills the majority of the parcel north of the buildings (Photo 7). This is a large, open lawn

[1] The South Side Historic District was listed in the National Register in 1983.
[2] Hyde Park was listed in the National Register in 1980; Old Hyde Park West was listed in 2004; South Hyde Park was listed in 2007; Janssen Place was listed in 1976; and Southmoreland was listed in 1982.

is utilized as a recreation area. It A concrete sidewalk encircles the perimeter of the property. Smaller concrete sidewalks lead to the school. An area of red pavers and a concrete sidewalk, following the vacated alignment of McGee Street, runs between Westport Junior High and the 1992 building. A shallow amphitheater with curved concrete risers fills the space at the southeast corner of the 1992 building (Photo 1). North of the buildings, concrete steps descend into another small patio of red pavers. Two parallel sidewalks continue north to a circular sidewalk at the northeast corner of the lot. Concrete staircases with rubble limestone retaining walls rise along the east and north elevations. Mature trees line the west and north boundaries of the lot and surround the parking area.

EXTERIOR

Westport Junior High has a rectangular plan with bilateral symmetry on the primary (west) façade. The five story building has a two-story raised basement. One level of the basement is visible on the west and south elevations. The sloping terrain exposes a second basement level on the east and south elevations. The building stands on a rubble limestone foundation and is capped with a flat roof. Red brick is the primary cladding, with classically-influenced terra cotta and limestone ornament. A tripartitie water table caps the rubble stone foundation on each elevation. It has a thin carved limestone course in the center flanked on the top and bottom by a wide limestone block course. A large square chimney rises from center of the fifth floor. A band of terra cotta strapwork surrounds the top of the chimney on each side.

The primary (west) elevation is five stories tall with a single basement level (Photo 1, 5). Basement windows vary in height with the slope of the terrain. Five separate blocks organize the facade. The first, third and fifth blocks project slightly from the main elevation, creating a symmetrical, five-part façade. All first floor windows have storm windows.

From the north, the first block is four stories and projects slightly from the main façade. A single bay with a paired one-over-one double-hung aluminum window with a metal screen fills the basement level. Three bays rise from the first floor to the fourth floor. They have a central paired window flanked by single one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows on each side. Jacobethan style terra cotta strapwork, flush with the façade adorns the space between the limestone water table and the first floor windows. The first floor windows have a continuous limestone sill and terra cotta lintel. The second and third floor windows have individual terra cotta sills and lintels. A terra cotta stringcourse runs across the facade flush with the top of the third floor windows. The fourth floor windows have broken terra cotta block frames. Elaborate Beaux Arts style terra cotta elements adorn the fourth floor and continue into the parapet. A carved panel adorns the space beneath the paired window. A carved fan surmounts this window. Slender fluted pilasters on either side rise from beneath the opening and terminate in finials above the parapet. A festoon and medallion adorn the wall between the pilasters. On the outside edges is a medallion. A straight parapet forms an arch in the space between the pilasters. It has a simple terra cotta cap.

The second block has five bays of paired one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows that rise from the basement to the fifth floor. Windows at the basement level have storm windows. A louvered vent fills the basement window in bay 3. Brick pilasters rise between each bay from the first floor through the third floor. Windows on the first through the fourth floors are rectangular. Ornamentation on the first through the third floors is identical to the other blocks. Terra cotta strapwork, flush with the façade adorns the space between the limestone water table and the first floor windows. The first floor windows have a continuous limestone sill and terra cotta lintel. The second and third floor windows have individual terra cotta sills and

lintels. A terra cotta stringcourse, flush with the top of the third floor windows, continues across the facade. The fourth floor windows have terra cotta block frames. Carved terra cotta panels adorn the space beneath these windows. A wide terra cotta band with diamond medallions runs along the base of the fifth floor. Beneath each of the windows, metal railings cover this band. The Italian Renaissance style arcaded fifth floor windows have carved terra cotta frames with decorative keystones. A single fanlight surmounts each pair of windows. Another terra cotta stringcourse in the middle of the arch runs across the block. Square medallions adorn the wall between the windows. A highly ornate Jacobethan style terra cotta parapet caps the block. It has a carved terra cotta base, tracery and a finial at the outer corner. An enclosed, glazed walkway extends west from the first bay on the second floor of this block (Photo 5). It connects to the third floor of the 1992 building.

The third, center block rises from the ground level to the fifth floor. It contains the main entrance at the ground level and tripartite one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows with transoms between each of the upper floors. Windows between the second and fourth floors have terra cotta block frames. Strapwork ornament adorns the spandrel above the lower window. Argyle patterned beige brickwork rises on either side and above these windows. A wide terra cotta band with medallions, continuing from the second block runs along the base of the fifth floor. Above this line staggered terra cotta quoins define the edges of the bay. A large window pierces this band. It has a terra cotta frame with an elaborate Beaux Arts header comprised of a segmental arch pediment, cartouche, brackets and festoons. A terra cotta stringcourse, flush with the top of the window, continues from the second block. A slight shaped gable parapet caps this bay.

An elaborate two-story terra cotta and limestone frame defines the main entrance (Photo 9). Fluted pilasters with extended ionic capitals and carved bases rise on either side of the entrance. They terminate in a scrolled pediment with a recessed shield, acanthus leaves and a carved base. Recessed non-historic paired metal doors flanked on each side by a single metal dour access the building. A nine-light transom surmounts each door. Granite steps access the doors. Above the doors, “Westport Junior High School” is carved into the lintel. Paired one-over-one double hung windows pierce the terra cotta above this lintel. The windows have an intricately carved frame with strapwork, diamonds, and a sculpted header.

The fourth block is identical to the second block, without the connecting walkway. The fifth block is, likewise, identical to the first block, completing the symmetry of the elevation.

The south elevation, facing 39th Street, has four stories and a single basement level (Photo 2). Basement windows vary in height with the slope of the terrain. All basement windows have protective metal screens. All first floor windows have storm windows. The façade is divided into three blocks. From the west, the first block has two bays with paired one-over-one double-hung windows in each floor from the first through the fourth. First floor windows have a continuous limestone sill and terra cotta lintels. Second and third and fourth floor windows have individual terra cotta sills and lintels. A section of terra cotta blocks flanks either side of the fourth floor windows. The terra cotta stringcourse above the third floor windows continues across this block. A straight parapet with a single medallion in the center caps the block.

The second block projects very slightly from the main façade. Terra cotta quoins define the outer edges of the block. It has seven bays that rise from the basement to the fourth floor. Paired one-over-one double-hung windows fill the bays. The first floor windows have a continuous limestone sill and terra cotta

lintels. Windows on the remaining floors have terra cotta sills and lintels. Spandrels beneath the second and third floor windows are recessed. Carved terra cotta panels adorn the spandrel beneath the fourth floor windows and terra cotta blocks flank each side. A recessed entrance fills the ground level of the seventh bay. It has a terra cotta frame and a segmental arched hood. Paired metal doors with an arched transom access the building. A louvered vent, flanked by narrow one-over-one aluminum windows surmounts the entrance.

A complex shaped parapet caps the center block. In the second, fourth and sixth bays a recessed arched terra cotta niche fills the parapet. The parapet forms an arch above each of these niches. Terra cotta pilasters flank these bays, rising from beneath the roofline and terminating in a finial. A cut-out semi-circle pierces the parapet at the center of the first, third, fifth and seventh bays. Argyle patterned brickwork adorns the parapet in the center of these bays.

The third block of the south elevation is identical to the first on the first through the fourth floors. Two bays with paired windows pierce the basement level.

The east elevation is four stories, divided into five blocks (Photo 3). The terrain slopes down from south to north to expose two basement levels. Beneath the water table a band of brick spans the width of the façade above the rubble limestone foundation. Three dressed limestone stringcourses extend across the basement level. The terra cotta stringcourse at the third floor windows continues across the facade. A straight parapet with a simple terra cotta cap runs the length of elevation.

From the south, the first block has a single basement level and projects slightly from the facade. Beneath the water table paired one-over-one windows fill two bays. The sub-basement windows have storm windows. Above the water table, a single bay with paired one-over-one double-hung windows defines the second and third floors. They have terra cotta block frames. An “X” formed by beige bricks flanks each side of the third floor windows. Paired brick panels with terra cotta frames fill the bay at the fourth floor. The panels have the same ornament as the north and south blocks of the west elevation, with slender pilasters on each side, a carved fan above and a carved panel below. The same festoon and medallion adorn the arched parapet between the pilasters.

The second block has three bays of paired one-over-one double-hung windows rise from the basement to the fourth floor. Basement windows have storm windows. The windows have broken terra cotta block frames. A recessed entrance fills the first bay at the basement level. It has a dressed terra cotta frame with exaggerated keystones and an elaborate Jacobethan style strapwork header. Paired metal doors with a two-light transom fill the entrance.

The third, center, block has five bays and two basement levels. Rubble limestone pilasters on each end of the block terminate in a finial at the water table. Brick pilasters with terra cotta capitals rise from the sub-basement to the parapet between each bay. Beneath the water table these pilasters have limestone quoins and a decorative band at the center of the upper basement windows. Above the water table, narrow terra cotta blocks flank each side of the pilasters. Above the fourth floor line, the pilasters step back twice as they continue to the parapet. A finial caps each step

Large fixed nine-light metal windows fill each bay at the basement levels. Above the water table, the first and fifth bays are identical. They have two single one-over-one double-hung windows with terra cotta block frames on the first floor. On the second floor two single paired one-over-one double-hung windows have a continuous terra cotta sill. Very narrow terra cotta panels with terra cotta frames pierce the wall on the third and fourth floors. The three center bays have sparse fenestration. Argyle patterned beige brick adorns each bay at the third floor. An arched, paired four-light fixed window pierces each bay at the fourth floor (Photo 10). Beaux Arts style elements surround the windows. The tall, narrow windows have wide terra cotta frames. A fanlight with a scalloped terra cotta frame fills the space within the arch. An integrated balustrade runs between the capitals beneath the fourth floor windows. A cut-out semi-circle above each of the windows breaks the straight parapet. Beneath each is a sculpted festoon.

The fourth block is nearly identical to the second block, but has two basement levels. It has the same fenestration and ornamentation. A rubble limestone wing walls projects from the north side of the block at the sub-basement level. A recessed entrance identical to that of the second block fills the third bay at the sub-basement level. Sub-basement windows have storm windows. The fifth block is nearly identical to the first block, but has two basement levels. Single one-over-one double-hung windows fill two bays at each basement level. Sub-basement windows have storm windows.

The north elevation has four stories (Photo 4). Similar to the south elevation, three blocks organize the facade. The terrain slopes down from the west to expose two basement levels on the east side. Two bays with paired one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows pierce these levels. Storm windows cover the windows at the sub-basement level. Above the water table, the first and second blocks from the east are identical to the south elevation. The third block is void of fenestration. Terra cotta stringcourses at the first and third stories continue across the block. An argyle pattern of beige brick and a single medallion adorns the block at the center of the fourth floor.

Air conditioning units sit in some openings on each elevation.

The south, east and north elevations of the fifth floor are set back from the main façade and are not readily visible from the ground level. On the south and north elevations, truncated arched windows with terra cotta frames, a decorative terra cotta band and open fretwork parapet continue the ornament from the west elevation. On the east elevation, the arched windows have simple brick frames.

Three one-story penthouses rise above the fifth-floor roof. These brick structures have ceramic tile roofs and elaborate ornamentation similar to the main elevations. One narrow structure at the southwest corner of the fifth floor has ceramic tile cladding the gable roof (Photo 1, 2, 8). Louvered vents with terra cotta frames pierce the wall above a terra cotta stringcourse. Finials complete a terra cotta cornice on the east and west sides. Another, located at the center of the east edge of the fourth floor has a tile hip roof (Photos 3, 10). Louvered vents on the north and south elevation have terra cotta frames with carved headers. Three vents on each side have simple terra cotta sills and elaborately carved spandrels. A larger square penthouse at the center of the north elevation of the fifth floor has a severely truncated hip roof (Photos 6, 7). Terra cotta frames with elaborate headers surround the five windows on each elevation. A door on the south elevation accesses the roof. Scrolled pediments and finials adorn the parapet.

INTERIOR

A double loaded U-shaped corridor organizes the interior from the basement through the fourth floor (Figures 6-13). Integrated metal lockers line the walls in the corridor (Photos 13, 14). Classrooms, offices and restrooms line both sides of the corridor. A stacked mass formed by two gymnasiums and an auditorium fill the center of the "U". Lightcourts flank this central mass from the first floor to the fifth floor. The north lightcourt was roofed over in 1960.

Three W-shaped staircases and two elevators provide vertical circulation through the building. A staircase at the northeast corner of the building rises from the sub-basement to the fifth floor. Another in the southeast corner rises from the basement to the fifth floor. The concrete staircases have plaster knee walls with wood caps. A stair at the center of the west wall rises from the basement to the fifth floor. It has marble treads and risers at the first floor and concrete stairs in the basement and upper floors. Two elevators rise from the sub-basement to the fifth floor. They are located at the north and south ends of the main corridor. The shafts are original to the building. Modern elevator cabs fill each shaft.

The sub-basement occupies the north two-thirds of the building footprint. A double loaded corridor runs east-west through the space. A gymnasium lies south of the corridor. It has composite tile floors and an exposed steel beam ceiling. Glazed block wainscoting with wood chair rail and concrete masonry unit blocks cover the walls. The historic natatorium lies north of the corridor (Photo 20). It has concrete floors with ceramic tile at the edge of the pool. Ceramic tile covers the lower half of the natatorium walls, with plaster above. The ceiling has molded plaster beams with inset composite tile panels. Locker rooms and other rooms fill the remainder of this level.

Another gymnasium fills the center of the U-shaped corridor at the basement level (Photo 19). It has wood floors, an exposed steel beam ceiling, and glazed block wainscoting with wood chair rail and concrete masonry unit walls above. A music room spans the length of the north wall. Some of the classrooms on this level have original wood floors.

The first floor public spaces are more ornate than the rest of the building (Photos 11, 13). Corridors and staircases have marble floors with marble base molding. The staircase has marble newel posts and sculpted metal rails with wood handrails. Dark wood wainscoting and chair rail covers the walls. A dark wood trophy case with strapwork ornament projects from the wall facing the entrance. Arched openings access legs of the corridor. Molded plaster trim creates panels in the barrel vaulted ceiling at the main entrance. Molded plaster capitals support the arched ceiling at the entrance.

Paired wood doors near this main entrance access a three-story auditorium. A curved balcony with a metal rail rises from the second to the third floor (Photo 18). The raised stage has a carved proscenium with a decorative lintel of festoons and medallions (Photo 17). Paneled walls with wood trim extend from either side of the stage. Open fretwork defines the outer panels, and intricately molded plaster fills panels along the base. Plaster panels with curved ornamentation rise above entrances in the outer walls of the stage. Interior windows with multiple sashes and plaster ornament pierce the wall above and below the balcony. A row of plaster medallions runs across the second floor line and the face of the balcony. Original chandeliers are extant. The sloped concrete floor has carved wood base trim. Rows of original wood seating are intact. The original plaster ceiling is intact beneath acoustical panels. An original third/fourth floor balcony was enclosed as classroom space at an unknown date.

In one classroom on the fourth floor, student murals on the upper portion of the wall date to 1948 (Photo 16). The American Realism style paintings depict the development of Kansas City and are signed and dated by the student artists.

The cafeteria occupies the fifth floor. The kitchen space has been renovated to accommodate modern equipment. Historic terrazzo floors, base molding and chair rail are intact in the public space.

Some historic finishes are intact on the interior, most notably in the key public spaces. Much of the classroom trim appears to have been updated in the mid-twentieth century, although it generally complements the style and materials of the school's historic trim. Corridors and classrooms have plaster walls and wood chair rails and crown molding. Original plaster ceilings are intact beneath the dropped ceilings. Corridor floors are concrete with vinyl base molding. Classrooms have composite tile floors with vinyl base molding. Non-historic slab wood doors in wood frames access most rooms. Windows have wood frames and sills. Chalkboards with wood trim line most classroom walls (Photo 15). Office spaces on the first floor were reconfigured from the original plans and retain no historic finishes. They have drywall partitions and dropped ceilings. Carpet with vinyl base molding covers the floors. Non-historic wood doors in metal frames access the rooms.

1992 BUILDING

The 1992 building is a non-contributing resource to this nomination. It faces east and connects to Westport Junior High via an enclosed walkway at the second floor. The Modern Movement architecture contrasts in form, placement and massing with the original building, distinguishing it from the historic design. The structure consists of a three-story building with two-stories of conjoined parking structure on the west side. Both stand on a concrete foundation. The first floors of the building and parking garage share the same form, scored red concrete cladding, and regularly spaced fenestration, creating one visually cohesive level. The second and third stories of the building rise from the northeast corner of the parking structure and have contrasting form, materials and fenestration to the first floor. The irregular plan has a curved wall that spans the south and east sides. The shed roof rises to three stories on the east side and slopes to two stories on the west side. White concrete panels clad these walls. A four-story concrete circulation tower rises at the northeast corner of the building. A glazed elevated walkway leads from the tower to the second floor of Westport Junior High.

INTEGRITY

Westport Junior High is an excellent example of the junior high school property sub-type of Early 20th Century/Progressive Era Schools and retains integrity for this property sub-type required by the MPDF.[3] The nominated resource clearly communicates strong feelings about and its associations with the Progressive Era schools of Kansas City and with the district's inaugural implementation of the junior high school model.

Its original form, massing and materials, interior configuration, and pattern of windows and doors are intact. The design, materials and workmanship, emblematic of the schools designed by architect Charles Smith for the Kansas City district, are substantially unaltered. The highly elaborate façade reflects the

[3] Elizabeth Rosin and Rachel Nugent, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic Resources of the Kansas City Missouri School District Pre-1970," (Kansas City, 2012), F-51-52.

influence of multiple architectural genres that fall under the spectrum of the Period Revival styles, the most evident of which are the Jacobethan, the Beaux Arts, and the Italian Renaissance. Exterior changes are limited to the walkway from the 1992 building that attaches via a single enlarged window opening on the west elevation. Windows and doors have also been replaced within their original openings on all elevations. Alterations on the interior are limited to dropped ceilings throughout the building; reconfiguration of the first floor administrative office suite; and bathroom and kitchen renovations. The MPDF accepts changes of this nature, which do not compromise the overall integrity of the building.[4]

Construction of the 1992 building had an impact on the setting of the school. It historically faced a residential area, however, the setback of the building respects this historic space. As late as 1951, McGee Street ran immediately west of the school, with single family residences and an apartment building occupying the lots facing the school, where the 1992 building now sits (Figure 17).[5] The paved court that separates the 1992 building from the historic school references the former road alignment. This setback respects the historic patterns of developed and open space that historically surrounded Westport Junior High. The west elevation is clearly visible from the court and from 39th Street, while the other elevations can be viewed as they were historically. Additionally, the oblique view of the west elevation has not changed significantly from the historic view of the building (Photo 1, Figure 14). A newspaper article from the period of construction states that the structure will be "viewed from the south or west," emphasizing the equal significance given to both of these elevations.[6] Historic descriptions and images of Westport Junior High give equal attention to the west, south, and east elevations, and most historic photographs capture multiple elevations (Figures 14, 15, 16).

[4] Rosin and Nugent, F-44.
[5] Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Kansas City, Missouri, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1951) Volume 4, Sheet 502. Database online, available at http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/mo/4720/dateid-000005.htm?CCSI=45n, (accessed November 26, 2013).
[6] "Cutting into a hillside for the new Westport Junior High School," *Kansas City Star,* August 12, 1923. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Mounted Newspaper Clippings 1900-1949, "Schools, Public, Junior High Plan," Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

SUMMARY

Westport Junior High School (Westport Junior High) is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. It is locally significant in the area of ARCHITECTURE as an excellent example of the Junior High School sub-type of the Early 20th Century/Progressive Era School property type, as outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Historic Resources of the Kansas City, Missouri School District Pre-1970." Designed by District architect Charles Smith and constructed in 1924, the grand and imposing five-story structure embodies both the educational pride of the community and the educational pedagogy of the District during this period. Following the registration requirements of the Junior High School property sub-type, the building is smaller than a high school building but larger than its elementary feeder schools. It embodies the significant features of the Progressive Era property type, which was shaped by reform movements during this period. At Westport Junior High these include fireproof construction, wide corridors and ample stairs to accommodate egress; large windows to allow natural light and air into the building; double-loaded corridors to organize classrooms; and many rooms dedicated to specific functions as part of a comprehensive curriculum. Art, music, the sciences and manual training rooms supported cultural and vocational education, while two gymnasiums and a natatorium assured the physical well-being of the students. Westport Junior High served the students of Kansas City for over eighty-five years. The period of significance is 1924, the date of construction.

ELABORATION

As stated in the MPDF, Westport Junior High School is an "extraordinary example" of an Early Twentieth Century/Progressive Era Junior High School.[7] It retains its original form and massing, exterior and interior materials, fireproof construction, historic fenestration patterns, and interior configuration of corridors and stairwells. As a school serving a regional subset of District students, Westport Junior High is larger than the typical elementary schools and smaller than District high schools of the period. It was designed to architecturally complement the 1908 Westport High School building, which sits across the street. Facilities for specialized instruction include an auditorium, two gymnasiums, a pool, manual training rooms, and science laboratories.[8]

When it came to designing the more prominent secondary school buildings (junior high and high schools), Smith's architectural talents shone. As stated in the MPDF, each of these schools was significantly larger than the elementary schools, with a unique plan and more elaborate architectural ornamentation that reflected the importance of their role for secondary learning.[9]

In keeping with Progressive Era property type, buildings such as Westport Junior High utilized fireproof materials including concrete, steel and masonry in the structure and exterior cladding. On the interior, wide corridors and staircases provided easier evacuation, while flammable materials such as wood trim and wainscoting were employed in limited quantities.[10] Plans for Progressive Era schools also addressed health concerns regarding proper ventilation. To ensure an adequate amount of natural light and fresh air, fenestration focused on expanses of window openings that extended close to the ceiling.[11] Additionally, at

[7] Rosin and Nugent, E-18.
[8] Ibid, F-51.
[9] Rosin and Nugent, F-51.
[10] Ibid, E-29.
[11] Ibid, E-30.

Westport Junior High, light courts on either side of the central auditorium/ gymnasium space provided additional natural light and ventilation into the more interior portions of the building, although these were enclosed at an unknown date.

Many of the defined spaces intended to create a total learning environment in Progressive Era junior high schools are extant at Westport Junior High School, enhancing the significance of the building as a representative property type. The separate, stacked boys and girls gymnasiums and the natatorium supported the physical health of students (Figures 6, 7). The three-story auditorium, the library, and the music rooms helped to incorporate cultural education into the curriculum (Figures 7-10). In classrooms specifically designed as science laboratories, workshops, and manual training rooms students learned practical skills that would prepare them for future careers. Following the philosophies of the junior high school pedagogy, the breadth of the curriculum introduced students to a variety of subject that prepared them for more specific courses of study in high school.

Characteristic of the District schools that served students from a larger geographical area, Westport Junior High was larger and grander than its elementary feeder schools. Elaborate exterior ornament, unique façade organization and greater ornamentation of interior public spaces, such as the lobby, main hall and auditorium, attested to the importance of this building.[12] Because Westport Junior High was the first purpose-built junior high school in the District, it was important that its appearance, not only mimic that of Westport Senior High School, but also evoke the value of the educational advancements it offered. Understanding this, Smith used a variety of materials, including terra cotta, marble, and granite, to elaborately ornament all facades of the imposing five-story building.

Three other junior high schools, Central Junior High School (1924-1925), Northeast Junior High School (1925), and West Junior High School (1926), were constructed in Kansas City during this period. In keeping with the junior high school sub-type, these fireproof buildings were constructed with gymnasiums, auditoriums, and manual training rooms. They have similar brick construction with terra cotta embellishments on the exterior. However, the terra cotta ornament at Westport Junior High School is more abundant and it is overall more architecturally complex than these schools, enhancing its architectural significance.

PROPERTY HISTORY

The Kansas City School District annexed the Westport School District into its boundaries soon after the two cities merged in 1897. High School students at that time attended classes in a building at 39th Street and Warwick Boulevard, while younger students attended classes in multiple elementary schools. In 1907, while a new high school building was under construction, a fire destroyed the existing high school. In 1908 the new Westport High School opened for classes one block east of the old high school, on the south side of 39th and McGee Streets.[13]

The District experienced a considerable jump in enrollment over the next decade that rendered many of its existing facilities inadequate. To fund the construction of new buildings, voters approved $21,000,000 in

[12] Rosin and Nugent, F-50.
[13] (*Title unknown*), *Kansas City Star,* August 31, 1924. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Mounted Newspaper Clippings 1900-1949, "Schools, Public, Junior High, Westport," Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

bonds in the early 1920s.[14] Although it had been built to serve the District for fifty years, Westport High School had already become overcrowded. The District's introduction of a junior high school program at Westport High School in 1921 only added to the congestion. To relieve the crowding, the School Board allocated funds to erect a new building for the junior high school program (seventh, eighth, and ninth grades), while the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades remained in the existing high school.

Property already owned by the District across the street from Westport High School was an ideal location for the new building. In order to create space for the school, the school board demolished three large houses on the property.[15] A permit issued on October 28, 1923 authorized Fogel Construction Company to prepare a 130-foot by 200-foot reinforced concrete structure.[16] The enormous building would boast over 166,000 square feet of space. Although the original bid estimated construction costs of $674,800, the final price rose to $883,000.[17]

When it opened for classes in the fall of 1924 with an enrollment of 1,529 students, Westport Junior High was the first purpose-built Junior High School in Kansas City, Missouri (Figure 14).[18] Architect Charles A. Smith designed the building to complement Westport High School across the street, utilizing similar materials, massing and stylistic influences, such as shaped parapets and elaborate European-influenced ornamentation.[19] He incorporated the northeasterly slope of the terrain into his design. The building is seven stories on the east elevation and five stories on the west elevation. This outfitted two extra floors of instructional space with large, open windows for natural light and ventilation. Original plans called for a roof garden, although it is unknown if this was ever installed.[20] Smith furnished the immense building with elevators, making it the first school in the District to have this feature.[21] The cabs, outfitted with the most up-to-date safety features, could hold thirty persons each.[22]

Features throughout the building highlight the quality of the design. The auditorium was the most elegant space, with a seating capacity of 1,600 spread across the first floor and two upper balconies (Photos 17, 18). It boasted the only stage in a District school tall enough to handle full-height scenery. Smith also paid close attention to the acoustic qualities of the theater, as well as other music and recital rooms in the school. Elsewhere in the building, the fifth floor cafeteria held 600 people; separate gymnasiums provided physical exercise for both boys and girls. The boys' gymnasium had an amphitheater, as well. In order to streamline the school day, lockers integrated into the corridor walls took the place of the often crowded cloakrooms found in the District's older schools (Photos 13, 14). Built-in trophy cases near the main entrance anticipated the future success of students in extracurricular activities.[23]

By 1926, enrollment at Westport Junior High had reached 1,650. The progressive attitude of the era permeated every aspect of the school. Bessie Baker accepted the position of school principal that year,

[14] Rosin and Nugent, E-17.
[15] "The Westport Junior High School Building," *Kansas City Star,* October 13, 1923. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Mounted Newspaper Clippings 1900-1949, "Schools, Public, Junior High, Westport," Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.
[16] City of Kansas City, Historic Preservation Office, Building Permit #13828 (10/23/1923).
[17] "The Westport Junior High School Building, October 13, 1923." (*Title unknown*), August 31, 1924.
[18] "The Westport Junior High School Building."
[19] "The Westport Junior High School Building."
[20] "The Westport Junior High School Building."
[21] "The Westport Junior High School Building."
[22] (*Title unknown*), August 31, 1924.
[23] (*Title unknown*), August 31, 1924.

becoming the first woman principal in a Kansas City secondary school. Under her direction, Progressive Era philosophies inherent in the design of the building were manifest in the curriculum. A newspaper article from 1926 highlights the hands-on learning environment promoted by the Civics Department. It encouraged student to use resources outside the classroom to collect relevant information on current events and to draw conclusions from their own life experiences during class discussion. Baker even set aside a special room for a new Civics Library. Under Baker's leadership, this new approach to education enhanced the leadership skills and personal responsibility of Westport Junior High students.[24]

In 1927, developments in the foreign language department promoted specialized Latin courses specifically aimed at junior high school students. As part of an experiential learning program, assignments went beyond merely reading through textbooks. One assignment required students to review the newspaper each day to find words derived from Latin. Students also learned songs in Latin and studied the traditional lives of ancient Romans to better understand the historic context of the language.[25] In these ways, instruction in a foreign language, and the comprehensive education of the school, spread into all parts of a student's daily life. Latin teacher Mary Virginia Clarke helped to establish a Junior Classical League club at the school in 1937. The forty-one members studied Roman and Greek history as well as the Latin language.[26]

Enrollment at Westport Junior High grew to 1,688 in the 1930-1931 school year (Figure 15). The prestige of the building remained apparent as one student remarked, "[Westport Junior High School] is a living throbbing monument to a world of knowledge."[27]

In 1936, the physical education department adopted a "modified program" to aid those students with special needs related to physical activities. Students in the class had conditions, such as "rapid hearts" or asthma that made it difficult for them to complete the regular PE coursework. The alternative course responded to these special needs in fulfillment of the school's mission to provide a complete education for all students. Strengthening and corrective exercises were included, while other activities such as light sports or dancing were kept consistent from week to week and tumbling was mostly eliminated.[28]

Manual training courses also flourished with ample facilities and high-quality equipment and instruction. In 1938, 180 students were enrolled in six metal working classes that utilized soft metals, aluminum and even iron. The workshops, included in the original building plan, boasted all the necessary equipment for this work, including a small foundry.[29]

Although enrollment began to drop in the late-1930s, Westport Junior High served students as a public junior high school into the late twentieth century. During this period minor alterations were made to the building. A permit issued in 1960 authorized James Scearce, Inc. to enclose the light court north of the

[24] (*Title and newspaper unknown*), July 12, 1926. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Mounted Newspaper Clippings 1900-1949, "Schools, Public, Junior High, Westport," Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.
[25] Mary V. Clarke, "Latin in the Junior High School," *The Classical Journal* 23:3 (1927), 189.
[26] (*Title unknown*), *Kansas City Star,* December 5, 1937. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Mounted Newspaper Clippings 1900-1949, "Schools, Public, Junior High, Westport, Junior Classical League" Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.
[27] "For what are we thankful?" *The Broadcaster*, November 27, 1930, 2.
[28] Marian Marshall, "A Modified Program for Junior High School," *The Journal of Health and Physical Education* 7:8 (1936), 504.
[29] Carl Christensen, (*Title unknown*), *Kansas City Journal Post,* January 16, 1938. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Mounted Newspaper Clippings 1900-1949, "Schools, Public, Junior High, Westport, Metal Working Classes" Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

auditorium.[30] In 1963, Midwestern Construction Company completed $56,450 in unspecified alterations.[31] Hastings Construction Company replaced an elevator in 1966, updating this unique historic feature.[32]

Using funds from the desegregation program, the District erected the 1992 building to house multi-media rooms and a library. Located across the former McGee Street, this new structure sits on lots formerly occupied by two houses and an apartment building. It connects to the 1924 building via an elevated walkway that enters the historic school through a window bay at the second story.
In 1999 both Westport Junior High and Westport High School briefly converted to charter schools. The District closed Westport Junior High School in 2010, and the building remains vacant.

CONCLUSION

Westport Junior High School is locally significant under Criterion C for ARCHITECTURE. Constructed in 1924 and designed by District architect Charles Smith, it is an excellent example of the Junior High School sub-type of the Late 19th/Early 20th Century Progressive Era School property type, and it meets all of the registration requirements described in the MPDF. In accordance with the property type, the building retains its historic form and massing; exterior materials; interior recreation areas, including two gymnasiums, a natatorium and auditorium; historic fenestration patterns; and basic interior configuration. Specific to the Junior High School sub-type, it drew students from a larger area than an elementary school. Thus, the building was larger than an elementary school but still smaller than a high school. Westport Junior High School served the District for nearly eighty years, from 1924 until 2010. The building retains excellent integrity and stands much as it did when originally constructed as the first purpose-built junior high school building in Kansas City.

[30] City of Kansas City, Historic Preservation Office, Building Permit #64899A (12/13/1960).
[31] City of Kansas City, Historic Preservation Office, Building Permit #3201 (7/17/1963). This work may have included updating the classroom doors and woodwork, which while similar to the historic trim, appear to be of a more recent age.
[32] City of Kansas City, Historic Preservation Office, Building Permit #24149 (2/4/1966).

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

200 E 39th Street & 3845 McGee. Westport Plat, Lot 1 3801-39 Warwick Boulevard.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated boundary includes the parcel currently associated with the resource.

Figure 1: Site Map. *ArcGIS 2013.*

Figure 2: Contextual Map. *ArcGIS 2013.*

Figure 3: Photo Map, exterior, first floor.

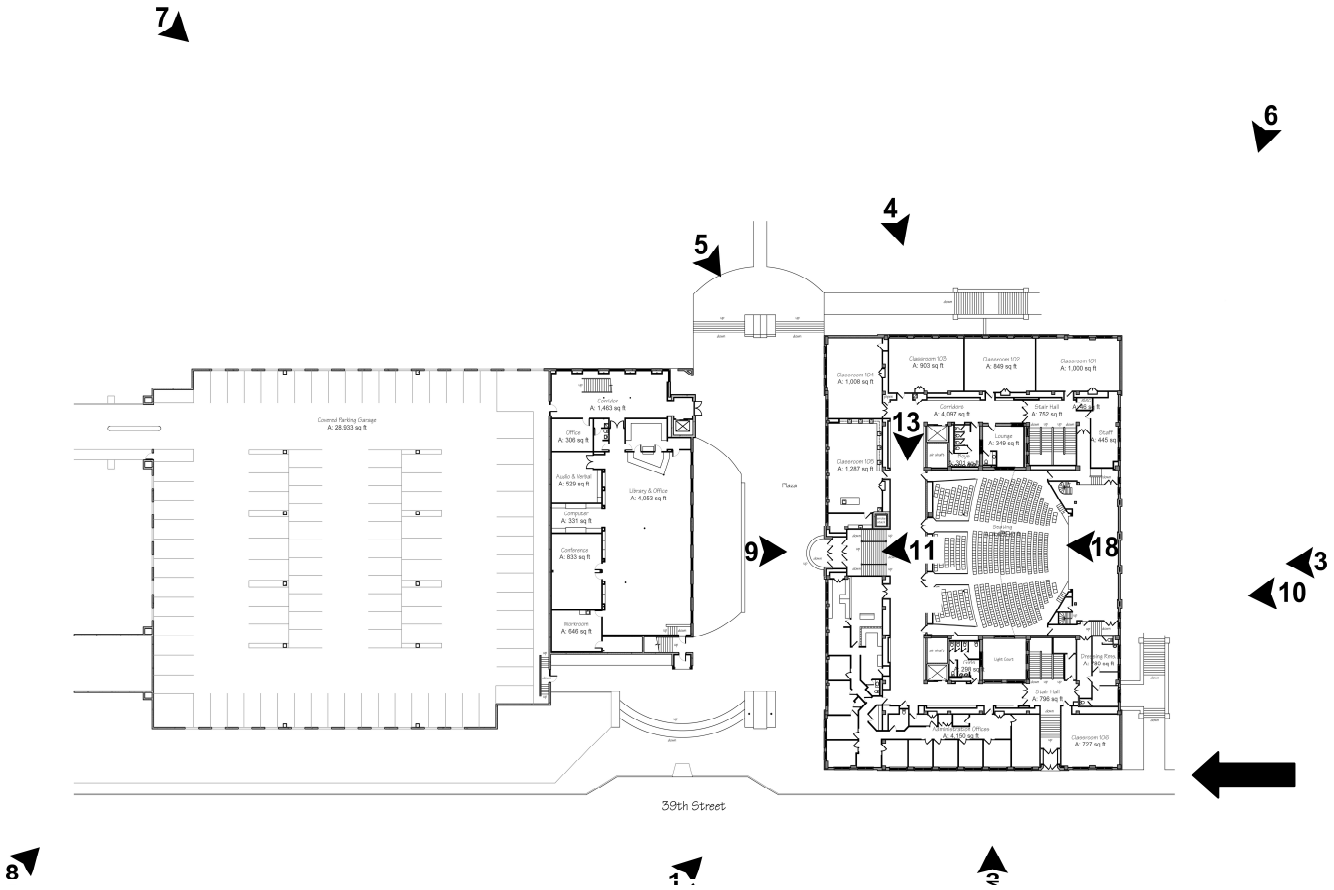

Figure 4: Photo Map, upper floors.

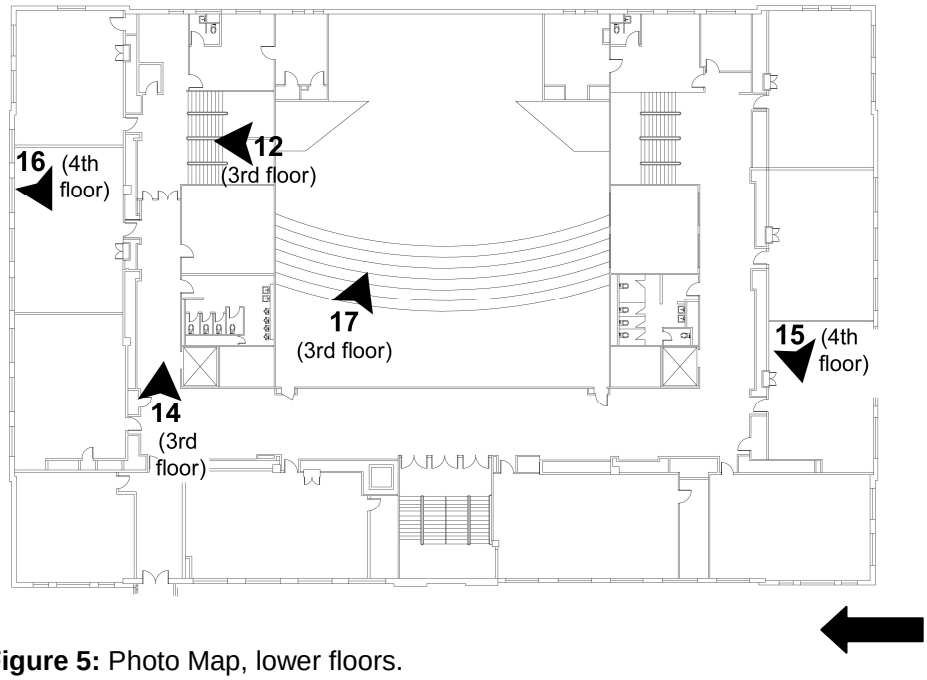

Figure 5: Photo Map, lower floors.

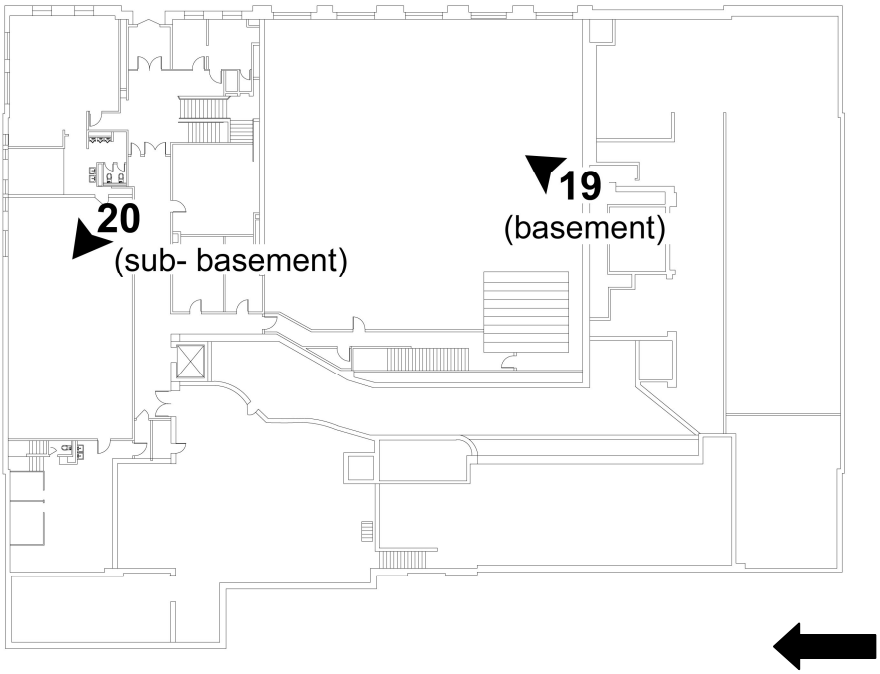

Figure 6: Subbasement, existing floor plan.

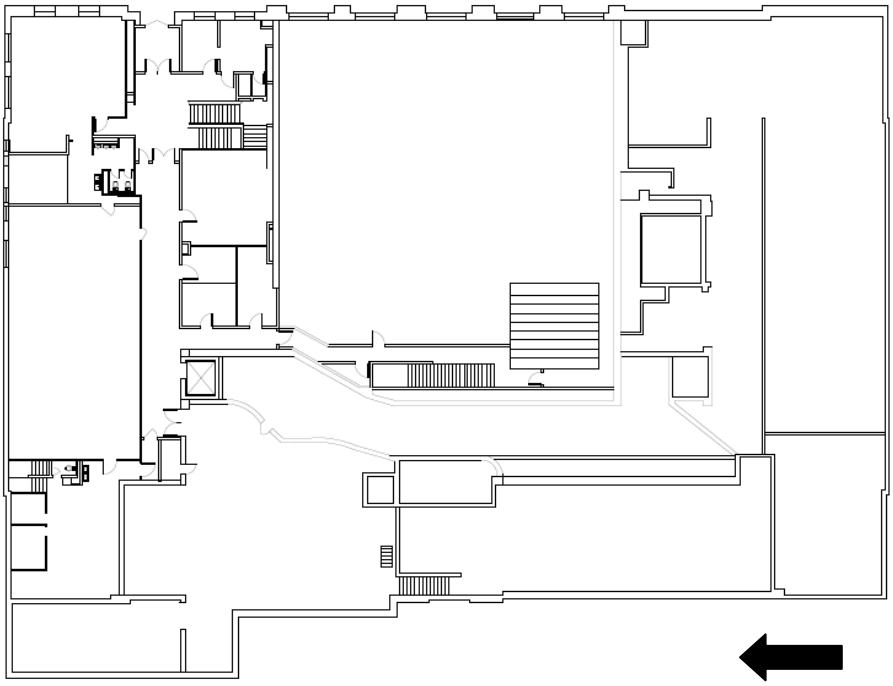

Figure 7: Basement, existing floor plan.

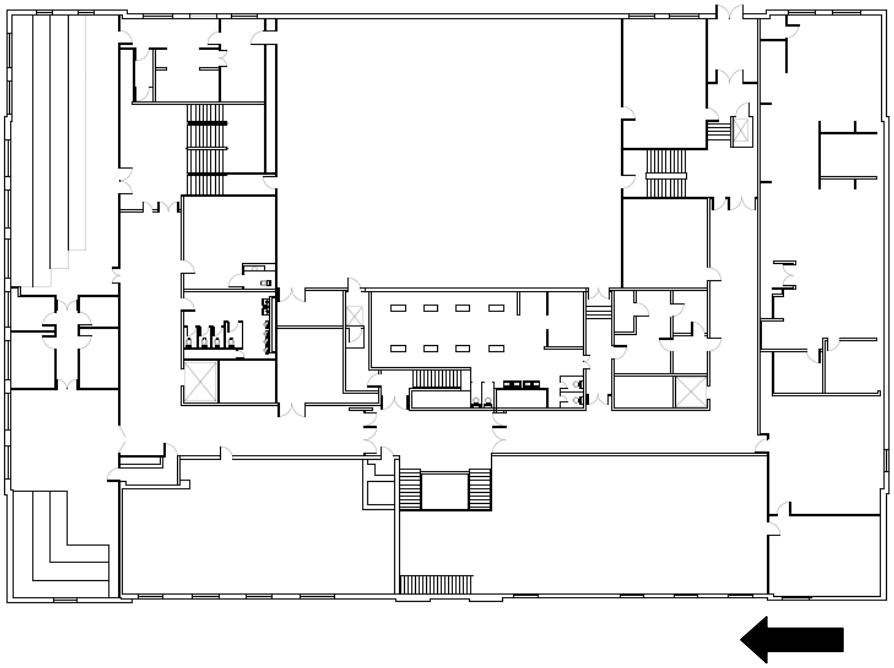

Figure 8: First floor, existing floor plan.

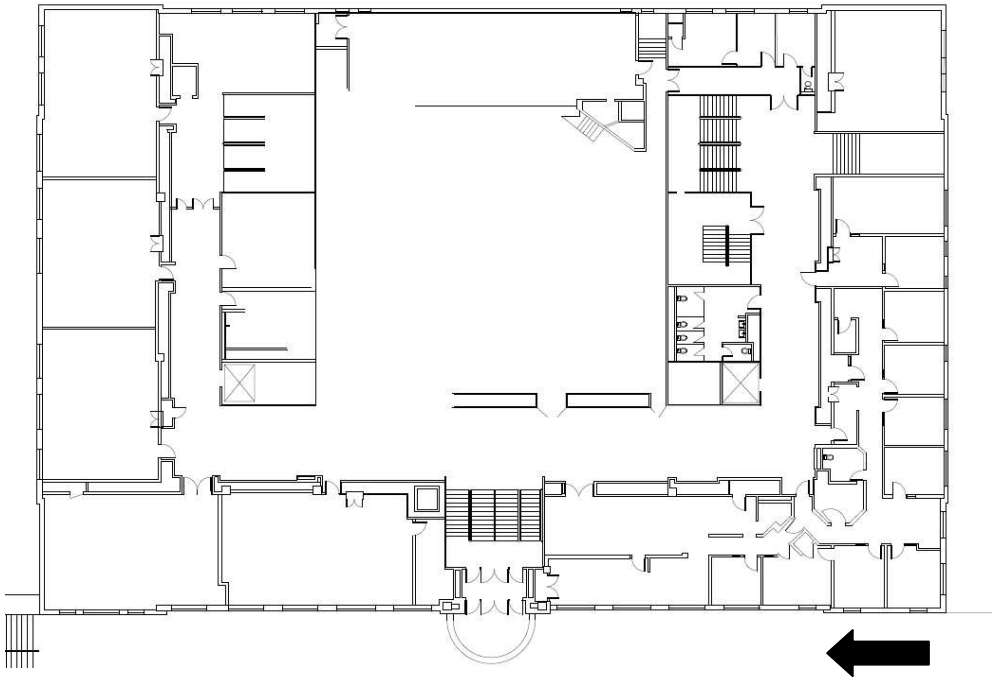

Figure 9: Second floor, existing floor plan.

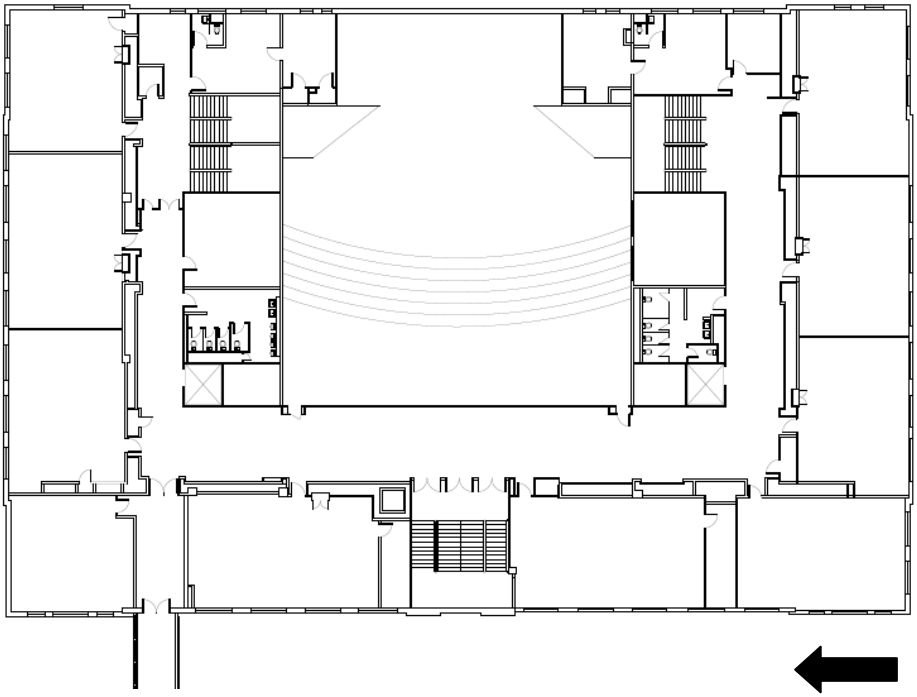

Figure 10: Third floor, existing floor plan.

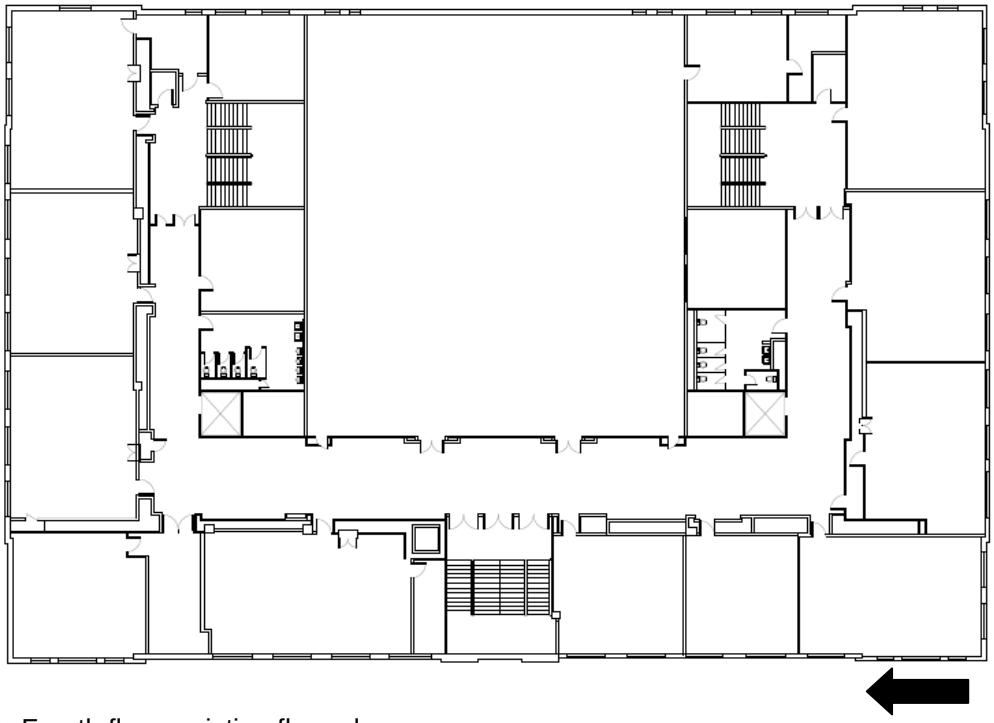

Figure 11: Fourth floor, existing floor plan.

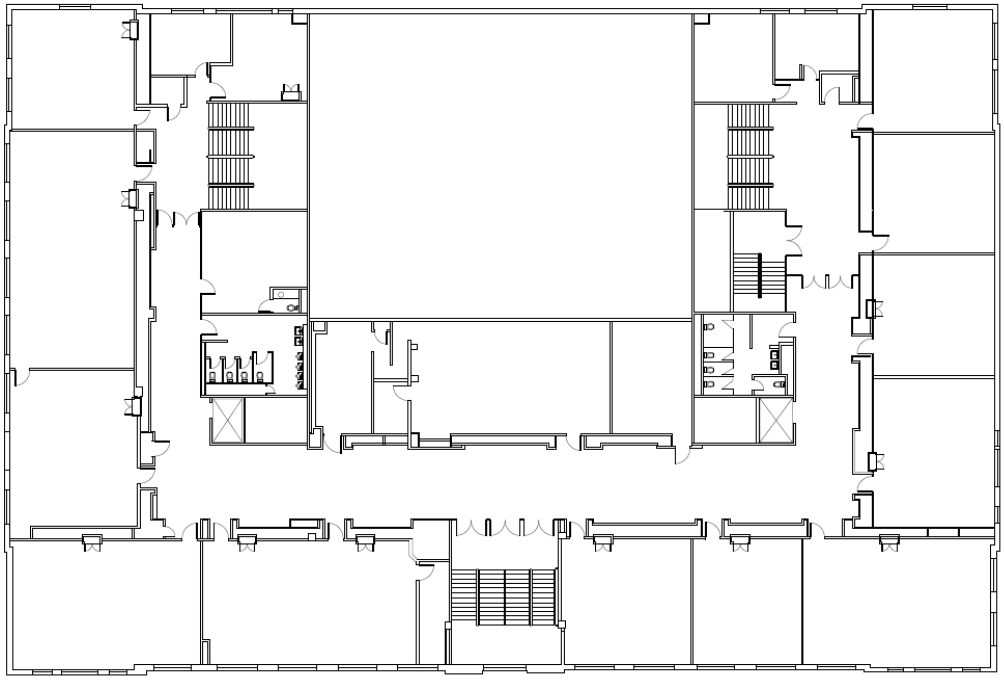

Figure 12: Fifth floor, existing floor plan.

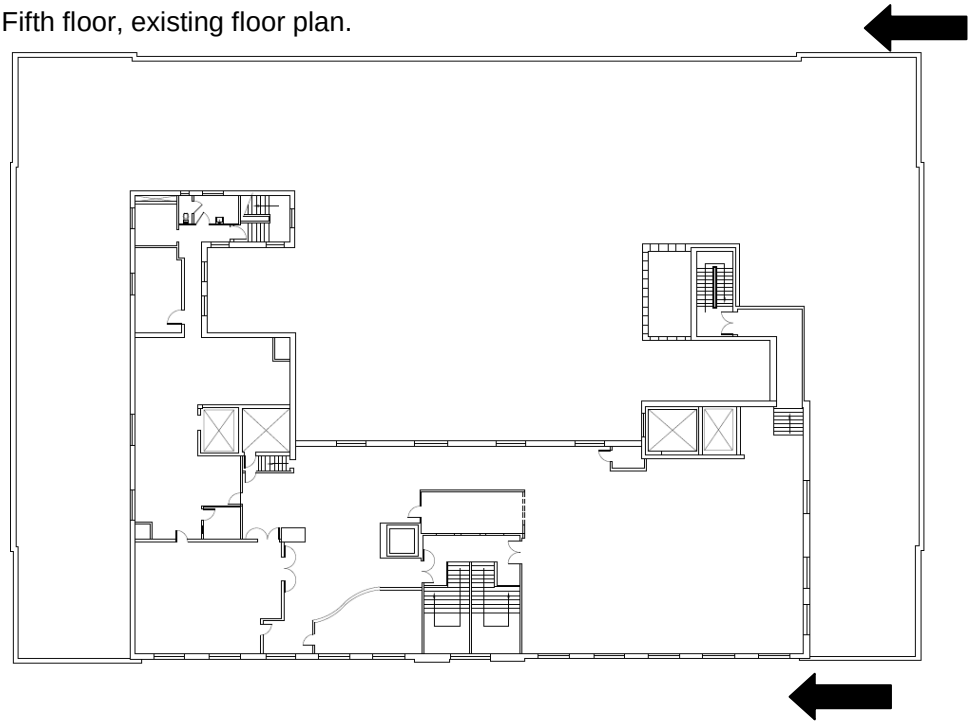

Figure 13: Existing site plan.

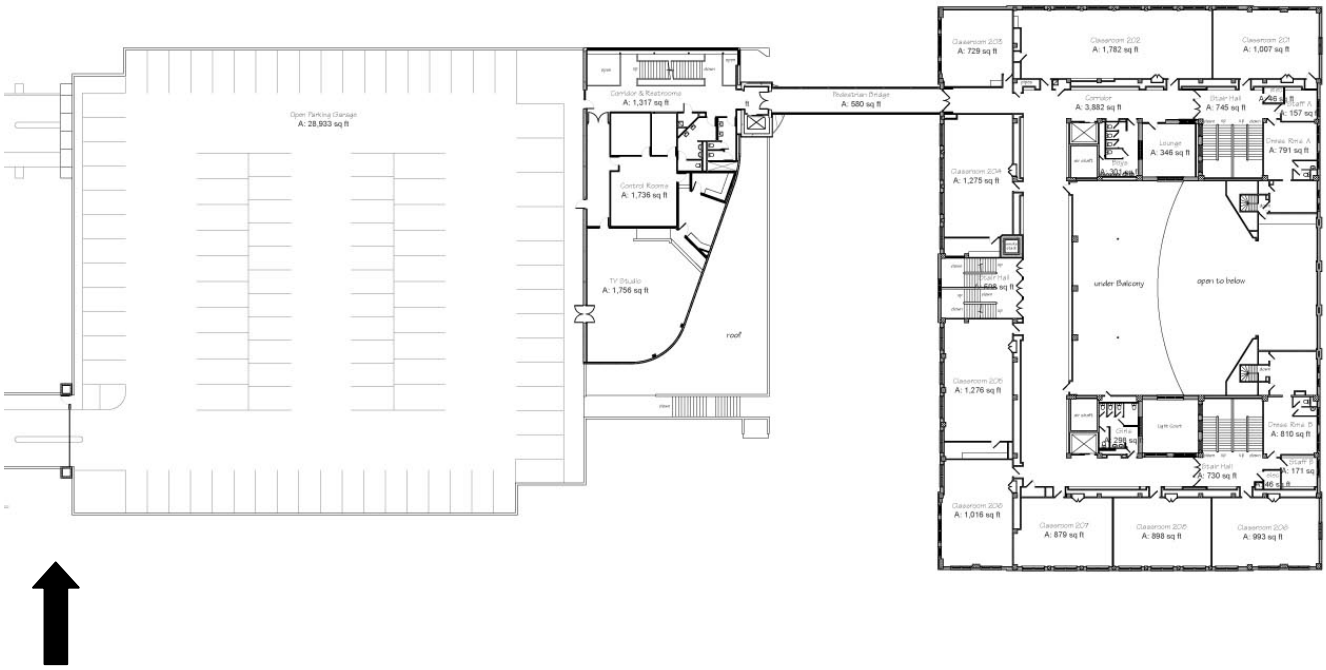

Figure 14: Westport Junior High School, south and west elevations, n.d. *Source: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.*

Figure 15: Westport Junior High, 1931, east and north elevations. *Source:* The Broadcaster, *Westport Junior High School newspaper, May 28, 1931.*

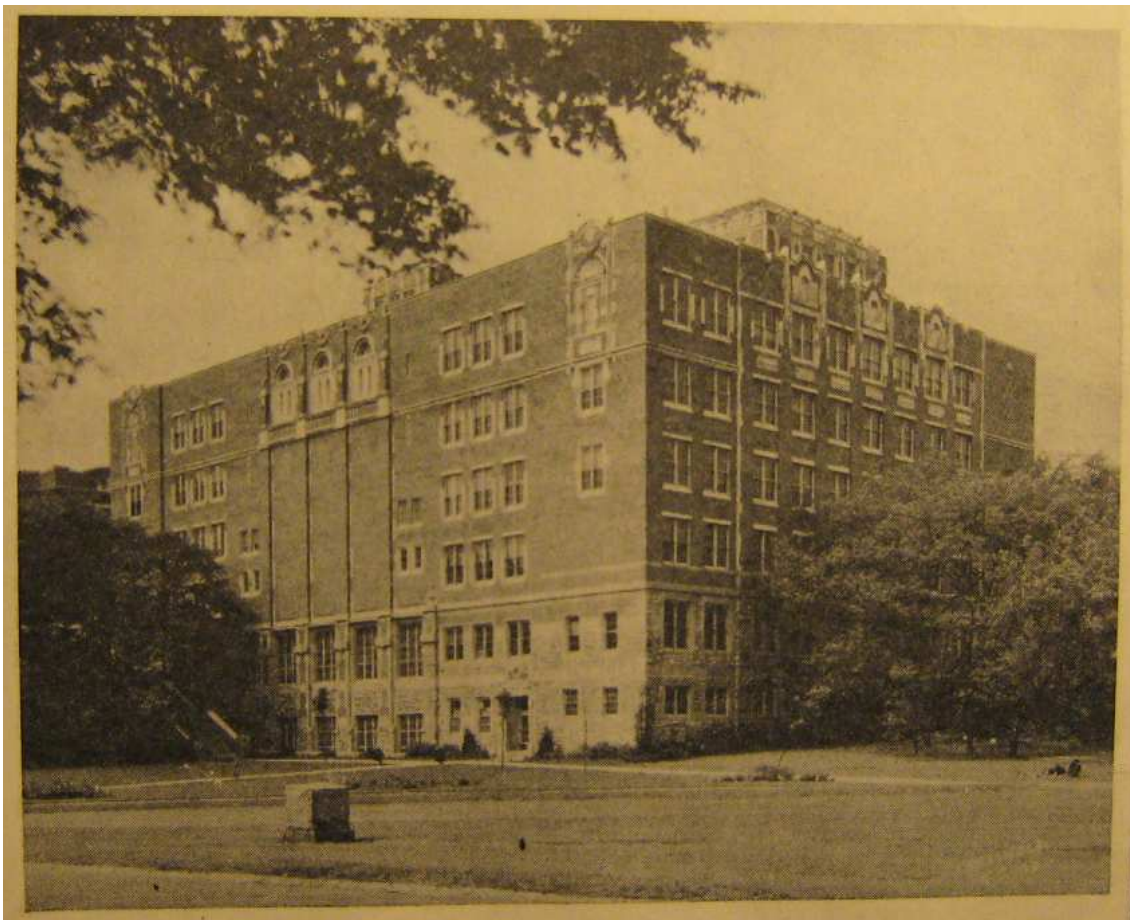

Figure 16: Postcard of Westport Junior High, n.d. *Source: The Postcard Emporium, http://thepostcardemporium.ecrater.co.uk/p/2144729/westport-junior-high-school-in-kansas (accessed December 16, 2013).*

Figure 17: Sanborn Fire and Insurance Map, 1951. Property Highlighted in red. Westport Junior High School building outlined in lower right corner. *Source: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd., 1951. Volume 4, Sheet 502.*

Warwick Blvd

WESTPORT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
NOTICE
THIS PROPERTY IS PROTECTED BY VIDEO SURVEILLANCE
300

Safe & Drug Free
SCHOOL

EXIT

3

4' 6"