

ELA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL
(Ela-Vernon High School, May Whitney Elementary School)
100 Church Street
Lake Zurich
Lake County
Illinois

HABS No. IL – 1281

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

ELA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL ELA-VERNON HIGH SCHOOL, MAY WHITNEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HABS No. IL – 1281

<u>Location:</u>	Ela Township High School (Ela-Vernon High School, May Whitney Elementary School) is located at 100 Church Street, Lake Zurich, Illinois, Lake County, Illinois, 60047. The school is located at 42°12'02" N and 88°05'17" W. This point represents the eastern-most point on the building, and was obtained from Google Earth on July 27, 2021.
<u>Present Owner:</u>	The building is owned by the Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95.
<u>Present Use:</u>	The school building is presently unoccupied.
<u>Significance:</u>	The original Ela Township High School building, later named May Whitney Elementary School, was designed to educate the high school age children of Ela and Vernon Townships. Over the years, as the population in the area increased, the school expanded with multiple additions. The construction and multiple additions to the original Ela Township High School are reflective of the area's growth and development; from its agricultural beginning to its development as a seasonal resort area, and finally, into a thriving suburban bedroom community.
<u>Historians:</u>	Sylvester Historic Consultants, LLC Jeanne Sylvester, Historian
<u>Project Information:</u>	This HABS documentation was commissioned by Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95. The documentation was carried out in fulfillment of a Memorandum of Agreement executed among the Board of Education of the Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 and the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a division of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, regarding the demolition of the May Whitney Elementary School (SHPO Log #015022119) which the SHPO determined to have an adverse effect on the historic property. Those involved in preparing the documentation for this report include Kathleen McNamee, Harshitha Beere, Kelsey Kuehn, and Aubrey

Prestwich of JLK Architects; Leslie Schwartz of Leslie Schwartz Photography; and Jeanne Sylvester of Sylvester Historic Consultants, LLC.

This report was prepared by JLK Architects. Historical research was performed, and historical information narrative was prepared by Sylvester Historical Consultants, LLC, Jeanne Sylvester, Architectural Historian. Research was conducted from June 1, 2021 to November 24, 2021. Existing conditions were verified via field survey and architectural CAD sketches were prepared by Kathleen McNamee and Harshitha Beere from JLK Architects. Architectural photography was prepared by Leslie Schwartz of Leslie Schwartz Photography. On-site photography was completed on November 15, 2021.

Part I. Historical Information

A. Physical History

1. **Date(s) of construction:** The building was constructed between 1928 – 1929.
2. **Architect/Engineer:** John A. Scribbins designed the 1929 building. Burnham and Hammond, Inc. were the architects for the 1952 addition. Dennis Blair was the architect for the 1958 Addition. Kingscott/Kosel Associates, Architects & Engineers were the architects for the 1978 Junior High School Renovation. Legat Architects, Inc., were the architects for the 1990 and 1993 additions.

John A. Scribbins

John Adin Scribbins was born on July 15, 1880 in Falls City, Nebraska. Graduating from the Armour Institute in Chicago (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) in 1906, Scribbins was an architect and a structural engineer. He began work with the firm of Jenney, Mundy & Jensen, working as an overseer in construction of the Chicago Trust & Savings bank building, and worked on a number of other large buildings in Chicago, including remodeling the Carson, Pirie Scott & Co., the Hillman, and the Boston stores in Chicago.¹

In 1911, Scribbins opened an office with Charles Harris, with the firm name of Harris & Scribbins, in Decatur, Illinois. While he was with Harris & Scribbins, Scribbins's work primarily consisted of designing the James Millikin University Conservatory of Music and Gymnasium buildings.² In 1912, Harris & Scribbins joined with architect

¹ "Patton Company Represented Here," *Herald and Review* (Decatur, Illinois), July 18, 1912.

² "Finishing Work on New Building," *The Daily Review* (Decatur, Illinois), June 15, 1912.

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Norman S. Patton, one of the “leading educational and bank building architect companies of the country ... [with] a national reputation.”³ Patton had previously worked as an architect for the Chicago Board of Education.

In 1921, Scribbins appears to have been working or consulting on his own, and was engaged as a consulting architect and engineer by the city of Decatur. In that capacity, he oversaw construction of a three-story factory building for Hahn Concrete Lumber, and two residences, using a newly developed form of concrete construction.⁴

A few years later, around the same time Scribbins was designing the Ela Township High School building, he also designed the 1929 Jackson Gym addition to the Libertyville Township High School District in Libertyville, Illinois. In the 1930 United States federal census, he identified himself as an architect for “educational buildings.”⁵ In 1938 he designed an annex to the Annawan-Alba Township high school in Annawan, Illinois.⁶

Scribbins was a member of the American Institute of Architects from 1942 – 1958.⁷ In the late 1930s he formed the firm of Scribbins Feldmann Klusmeyer, Inc., Architects & Engineer, designing or remodeling residences, schools, and churches. In 1959, he designed the John Mosser Public Library additions in Abingdon, Illinois.⁸

John Scribbins married Lula I. Nelson on January 10, 1911 in Chicago.⁹ They had two daughters, Ruth and Jean, and a son named John R., who was studying to be an architect, but who was lost at sea during World War II.¹⁰ Lula died in 1956, and on

³ “Patton Company Represented Here.”

⁴ “Decatur Man Proves that Concrete Lumber is Practical,” *Decatur Review*, December 11, 1921.

⁵ “John A. Scribbins,” 1930 U.S. Federal Census, Ancestry.com., https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6224/images/4584584_00138?usePUB=true&_phsrc=zpp2767&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&pId=25309838, accessed September 9, 2021.

⁶ “Eight Hundred at Annawan School’s Annex Dedication,” *The Daily Times* (Davenport, Iowa), April 23, 1938.

⁷ “Scribbins, John A,” AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, <https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/pages/20742394/Browse+Sc>, accessed July 27, 2021.

⁸ “Abingdon Couple Donates \$28,000 for Library Wing,” *Galesburg Register Mail*, May 28, 1959.

⁹ “John A. Scribbins,” Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Marriages Index, 1871 – 1920, Ancestry.com., https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/844724:2556?tid=&pid=&queryId=e56448b6106ae988814c3bd0f364bf75&_phsrc=zpp2815&_phstart=successSource, accessed September 9, 2021.

¹⁰ “John A. Scribbins,” 1930 U.S. Federal Census; 1940 U.S. Federal Census, Ancestry.com., https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/144714478:2442?tid=&pid=&queryId=778f5c93b98c22370a91d7c08d2c0c00&_phsrc=zpp2829&_phstart=successSource, accessed October 1, 2021; “John Robert Scribbins,” U.S. Find a Grave Index, 1600s – Current, Ancestry.com., <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui->

April 15, 1957 John married Ethelmae Farrington.¹¹ John Scribbins died in 1974 and is buried in Galesburg, Illinois.¹²

Burnham and Hammond, Inc., 1952 Addition

The firm of Burnham and Hammond, Inc. was a successor architectural firm of Burnham Bros., Inc. Hubert Burnham and Daniel Burnham, Jr. were the sons of Daniel H. Burnham. Hubert and Daniel Jr. worked for their father's firm, D.H. Burnham & Company. After Daniel H. Burnham died, the firm was reorganized into Graham, Burnham & Company. Five years later that firm was reorganized into Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, and Hubert and Daniel Jr. began their own practice as Burnham Bros. Hubert Burnham was president of Burnham and Hammond, Inc., and D.H. Burnham, Jr. was vice president. C. Herrick Hammond was the other named partner in the firm.

Hubert Burnham was born in Chicago on September 7, 1882. He graduated from the Chicago Manual Training School, the U.S. Naval Academy in 1905, and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1912. From 1910 – 1912 he was a member of the D. H. Burnham & Company firm, and from 1912 – 1917 he was a partner in the firm of Graham, Burnham & Company. Hubert Burnham was licensed to practice as an architect in Illinois, Ohio, Iowa and California and was also licensed as an engineer in Illinois. In 1953, he was a member of the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Illinois Society of Architects, and an Associates Member of the American Hospital Association.

Hubert's service in World War I included overseeing construction of a Naval air base in France as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. He was a member of the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations, the Chicago Building Congress, the Arts Club of Chicago, the Architects Club of Chicago, and a Member of the Board of Architects, Century of Progress Exposition, Chicago, 1929 – 1934.¹³

Daniel H. Burnham, Jr. was born in Chicago on February 22, 1886. He attended Middlesex School in Concord Massachusetts and Harvard University for two years.

content/view/25363250:60525?tid=&pid=&queryId=fb3e52b29450f1aae635a722ca5f50bb&_phsrc=zpp2825&_phstart=successSource, accessed September 30, 2021.

¹¹ "John A. Scribbins," Cook County, Illinois Marriage Index.

¹² "John Adin Scribbins," U.S., Find a Grave Index, 1600s – Current, Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/187985733:60525?tid=&pid=&queryId=c5d0760a9253ebbd5750f131c43bf8ed&_phsrc=zpp2766&_phstart=successSource, accessed September 14, 2021.

¹³ "Burnham & Hammond, Inc." AIA Architects' Roster Questionnaire Burnham & Hammond, Inc., February 25, 1953, https://content.aia.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/BurnhamHammond_roster.pdf, accessed August 15, 2021.

From 1907 – 1912 he was assistant general superintendent in charge of construction for the D.H. Burnham & Company, and from 1910 – 1912 he was a member of the firm. Like his brother Hubert, from 1912 – 1917, he was a partner with the firm of Graham Burnham & Company before forming Burnham Bros. D.H. Burnham Jr. was licensed to practice architecture in Illinois, Florida, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin, and was also licensed as an engineer in Illinois.

Daniel Jr. was president of the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1917, president of the Chicago Regional Planning Association, and American Civic & Planning Association. In World War I he was a Captain in the Army, in charge of numerous Army field construction projects. D.H. Burnham Jr. was Director of Works, for the Century of Progress Exposition, from 1929 – 1934, as well as vice-president of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, member of the Illinois Post-War Planning Association, and a member of the Commercial Club of Chicago.¹⁴

C. Herrick Hammond was born in 1882. In 1904, he graduated from the Armour Institute of Technology, and not long after that he formed the firm of Chatten & Hammond, where he worked from 1907 – 1927. In 1927, Dwight H. Perkins joined the firm, forming Perkins, Chatten & Hammond, which lasted until 1933, when Perkins left the firm. Hammond then joined the Burnham brothers, and formed Burnham and Hammond, Inc. At the same time, Hammond was Supervising Architect for the State of Illinois from 1929 – 1952. In 1952, Hammond moved to Florida where he practiced with the firm of Gamble, Pownall and Gilray until 1959. Hammond died in January of 1969 in Del Ray, Florida.¹⁵

Prior to World War II, Burnham and Hammond primarily built office buildings, hotels and schools. After the war, the firm designed multiple hospitals. In 1953, the firm listed the Ela Vernon Township High School building on a list of its representative projects.¹⁶

Dennis Blair, 1958 Addition

Dennis Edward Blair was born on July 3, 1921 in Detroit, Michigan. He received a degree in architecture from Lawrence Institute of Technology in Detroit in 1942, and studied later at the University of Chicago. Blair was an apprentice for Frank Lloyd

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Charles Herrick Hammond (1882 – 1969) Papers, 1894 – 1963 Finding Aid, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archive, The Art Institute of Chicago, <https://artic.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/findingaids/id/26883/rec/3>, accessed October 1, 2021; “C. Herrick Hammond,” *Chicago Tribune*, January 11, 1969.

¹⁶ Burnham & Hammond, AIA Architects’ Roster Questionnaire.

Wright at Taliesen West in 1944 and part of 1945.¹⁷ While with Wright, Blair worked on preliminary drawings and models of the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Johnson Wax Co. Research Tower in Racine, Wisconsin.¹⁸ Blair worked for Howard T. Fisher & Associates from 1945 – 1947, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill from 1947 – 1949, and Garfield, Harris, Robinson & Schafer, where he designed the Cleveland College in 1949.¹⁹

In 1951 Blair was chosen by the editors of *Architectural Forum* as one of the ten “architects of a new generation” along with, among others, Vincent J. Scully, Jr. Blair’s design for the Cleveland College was featured in the article.²⁰

Blair is best known locally for his design for the Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois, which won an award in 1963 from the American Association of School Administrators.²¹ He also designed numerous modern homes along the North Shore area of Chicago and in Barrington and Long Grove, Illinois.

In the 1950s Blair lived in Long Grove. In 1957, when the Village of Long Grove voted to incorporate, he ran for village trustee. At the time, he was a registered architect in Michigan, Ohio and Illinois, as well as a consulting architect on the Rehabilitation and Planning Commission for Cleveland. His practice consisted of residential and commercial work, including consulting services relating to educational facilities.²²

Blair later moved to Barrington, Illinois where he continued his practice. He married twice and had four sons: Lee, Allen, Curtis and Jay.²³

The addition to the May Whitney Elementary School that Blair oversaw from 1958 – 1959 added three floors of space, including classroom space on a walk-out story on the lower level and first floor, and a library on the second floor.

¹⁷ Email from Indira Berndtson, Administrator of Historic Studies, Collections and Exhibitions, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Taliesen West, October 6, 2021.

¹⁸ Rebecca Holland, “A Home by a Frank Lloyd Wright Prodigé Hits the Market,” *Architectural Digest*, August 27, 2019; Emma Keiler, “Kildeer Will Elect Village Officials Saturday, Feb. 2,” *The Daily Herald* (Chicago, Illinois), January 31, 1957.

¹⁹ “The Young Man in Architecture,” *Architectural Forum* (June, 1951): 137.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “Stevenson School to Open,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 5, 1965; “Proposed Ela-Vernon East High School,” *The Daily Herald* (Chicago, Illinois), October 4, 1962; Ronnie Wachter, “Stevenson High School Celebrates 50 Years,” *Lincolnshire Review* (Lincolnshire, Illinois) *Pioneer Press*, May 30, 2015, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/lincolnshire/ct-lsr-shs-50-tl-0604-20150530-story.html>, accessed September 30, 2021.

²² “Kildeer Will Elect Village Officials Saturday, Feb. 2.”

²³ Email from Indira Berndtson.

Kosel Associates, Architects & Engineers, 1978 Jr. High Renovation

In 1929, engineers Louis C. Kingscott and Donald A. Stewart founded Stewart-Kingscott Company, Architects & Engineers. Stewart died in 1939 and Stewart-Kingscott Company changed to Kingscott Associates and Louis C. Kingscott became president. In 1962, Louis C. Kingscott died, and Louis Jr. became president of the firm. Currently, the company is based in Michigan. The renovation to the Junior High School was a joint venture with Hans Kosel in Lake Zurich.²⁴ No information was found on Hans Kosel. The 1978 renovation updated mechanical systems.

Legat Architects, Inc., 1990, 1993 Additions

Legat Architects, Inc. designed the 1990 and 1993 additions. Legat Architects is a Chicago-based architectural firm. Founded in 1964 in Joseph Legat's Waukegan, Illinois home, the firm has been in business for over 50 years, and has expanded to a multi-studio practice in Chicago, Gurnee, Moline and Oak Brook, Illinois, as well as Columbus, Ohio.²⁵ As of 2014, the firm had designed over 500 schools in 88 school districts in Illinois, train stations and civic buildings in 50 communities, 500 healthcare projects, 100 corporate facilities and 20 mixed-use developments.²⁶ Legat designed the theater, second gymnasium and other facilities at the new Lake Zurich High School in 1991, as well as classrooms in 1993.²⁷

- 3. Original and Subsequent Owners, Occupants, Uses:** The original owner of the building was Ela Township School District 125. The building was purpose-built as an educational building. It continued to be used for that purpose, although for children of different ages, as a high school, junior high school, and finally elementary school, until the building was closed in 2021. In 2006, for approximately one year, the building was rented to Gavin School District for classroom use.

²⁴ Interview with Jan Kaminski, October 20, 2021.

²⁵ Legat Architects, AIA Chicago, <https://www.aiachicago.org/find-an-architect/legat-architects/>, accessed October 5, 2021.

²⁶ Legat Architects, <https://www.legat.com/>, accessed October 3, 2021; Legat Architects, Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200 Statement of Qualifications, November 28, 2010, <https://campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/prod/1558748/bd01c7ae-765f-11e9-9402-0a56f8be964e/1934146/efac670a-8135-11e9-b9d7-1248d3ffc982/file/FLLegat.pdf>, accessed October 3, 2021; "Legat Architects Celebrates Half Century of Quietly Transforming Chicago Region, Anticipates Next 50 Years," <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/legat-architects-celebrates-half-century-of-quietly-transforming-chicago-region-anticipates-next-50-years-269050881.html>, accessed October 5, 2021. In Lake Zurich, Legat Architects also designed the new Spencer Loomis Elementary School and the new Lake Zurich Middle School. "Architecture Week," http://www.architectureweek.com/2004/0526/environment_1-2.html, accessed October 3, 2021.

²⁷ Mark LeBien, "District 95 Begins Plans for Building New Schools," *Daily Herald*, November 13, 1991, Ela Area Public Library Local History Clippings File; Email from Victoria Cullinan, Assistant Superintendent Business/Operations, Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95, October 8, 2021.

4. Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:

1929 Building: Boher-Dunlevy Construction Company, General Contractors

1952 Addition: Ivar Fredricksen, Wonder Lake

1958 Addition: unknown

1978 Alterations: unknown

1990 Addition: Bollar Construction

1993 Addition: Bollar Construction

- 5. Original Plans and Construction:** The Ela Township High School was designed in the Collegiate Gothic Revival style. A two-story rectangular building with a low, one-story projection on the east side, the building's front (west) and side facades were decorated with brick and limestone ornamentation. A crenelated parapet emphasized the central main entry of the building, Gothic pointed arches with tracery and Tudor arches, buttresses, finials and brick and limestone ornamentation gave the building an important and scholarly air. The building was constructed above a stepped landscape, above street level, adding to the imposing effect when viewed from the street across a wide lawn and long, stepped sidewalk, especially in a farming community with few other examples of monumental architecture.

According to the *Libertyville Independent* newspaper, "It [would be] an honor to attend this modern school, which [was] built, equipped and administered in a modern scientific way. The standards of this school are the highest possible. State and University accreditation will be given for work done in this school. No boy or girl of high school age in this community, can afford to miss the opportunities offered through this school."²⁸

The building was designed to hold 100 students. In addition to regular academic courses, classes were offered in domestic arts, commercial and manual arts and agricultural arts.²⁹ The building classrooms, a gymnasium with a wood floor and concrete risers and it also had an auditorium.³⁰

6. Alterations and Additions:

²⁸ "Ela Township High School Notice," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), August 30, 1928.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Lake Zurich," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), May 30, 1929.

Alterations: ³¹

1978: Renovations consisted mainly of upgrades to mechanical systems.³²

1985: Single hung windows in 1952 and 1959 additions were replaced in 1985.³³

1992: The cafeteria floor, ceiling and lights were replaced; floor and backboards replaced in the gymnasium.

1993: Alterations in the girls' locker room, new flooring in stairways.

1994: Flooring replaced in hallways.

1996: Various classrooms renovated; casework replaced.

1997: Library and science rooms renovated

1998: Upper gymnasium closed.

1999: Casework changed in 1959 addition classrooms; concrete stairs on north side of 1929 building replaced.

2009: Large amount of roofing replaced; additional classrooms renovated.

2010: 1959 Addition boiler replaced.

2012: Early childhood play area added.

2014: Fire alarm system replaced.

2015: Kitchen and serving area renovated.

2017: Various interior doors and door hardware were replaced.

2019: Room 219 renovated after fire.

³¹ Email from Lyle Erstad, Director of Facilities and Grounds, Community Unit School District 95, October 7, 2021. Information provided was based upon Erstad's review of District 95 Facility Improvement Plans.

³² Email from Lyle Erstad, October 12, 2021; telephone interview with Jan Kaminski, October 19, 2021. Mr. Kaminski is a 1970 graduate of Lake Zurich High School and a retired architect who worked with Hans Kosel and Kingscott/Kosel on the renovations of the Junior High School in 1978.

³³ Email from Lyle Erstad, October 6, 2021.

Additions: 1952, 1958, 1990, 1993

1952 Addition: a one-story building with a basement and a three-story building with a gym were added to the original high school building. A new main entrance was added at the south façade.

1958 Addition: a three-story addition was built at the north side of the 1952 addition.

1990 Addition: six new classrooms were added to the southeast side of the 1952 addition.

1993 Addition: three new classrooms were added to the northeast side of the 1990 addition.

B. Historical Context:

Ela Township and the Village of Lake Zurich

Ela Township was organized in 1850, and named for George Ela, an early settler of the area. Ela was born in Lebanon, New Hampshire in 1805, where he operated a general store in Goffstown, New Hampshire until 1835 when joined his brother in Chicago. In the fall of 1835, Ela moved to Deer Grove, Illinois to stake a land claim. He built a cabin in early 1836. The area of his land claim straddled the border of what would become Lake and Cook counties; his cabin was built on the Cook County side in Palatine Township, just southwest of the intersection of Quentin and Lake Cook roads. After several years, Ela moved north and built a house and store along what would become Long Grove Road.

George Ela was a mortgage lender, the first postmaster in the area, a member of the Illinois House of Representatives in 1846, and Ela Township Supervisor from 1852 – 1856. In 1850, areas that were surveyed as townships in 1838 were re-organized and the Lake County Commissioners organized Ela Township and named it in his honor.³⁴ Ela died on February 5, 1898.³⁵

Seth Paine is credited with founding the village of Lake Zurich. Born in Vermont around 1816, Paine settled east of what is now Lake Zurich in 1836. He was a farmer, and United

³⁴ “George Ela,” Palatine Historical Society, <https://palatinehistoricalsociety.com/history/profiles/george-ela/>, accessed September 20, 2021; “George Ela,” Ela Township Historical Society Exhibits;

³⁵ “George Ela,” U.S., Find a Grave Index, Ancestry.com., https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/24507308:60525?tid=&pid=&queryId=6c26d841ef524672169ba099cd736fce&_phsrc=zpp2871&_phstart=successSource, accessed September 20, 2021.

States postmaster, first appointed in 1843 and re-appointed in 1860.³⁶ He was married twice, first to a woman named Frances, and later to a woman named Almira Winter.³⁷

Seth Paine was a believer in communal living, and named his settlement and the lake adjoining the settlement Lake Zurich after Swiss cantons that practiced the type of communal living Paine admired. Paine built a “Stable of Humanity” for homeless people from Chicago, and was active in the Underground Railroad movement.³⁸

In 1850, there were 100 residents of Lake Zurich, by 1900 there were 215 residents, and by 1930 there were 368. In 1960, there were 3,458 residents, and thirty years after that, in 1990, there were 14,947 residents.³⁹

As with many villages, railroads were key to the community development. In 1889, the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railroad was built, and the Lake Zurich Depot was built in 1895. Hoping that the railroad would attract development, local leaders William Buesching, William Eichmann, Joseph Whitney, Charles Kohl, Emil Ficke, and Herman L. Prehm incorporated the village on September 29, 1896.⁴⁰ Frank Clark was the first village president. In 1910, a new rail line that bridged the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railroad and linked Lake Zurich to the Chicago and North Western Railway in Palatine, Illinois opened, offering passenger service in 1912.⁴¹ Visitors began coming to the area, attracted to the bucolic lake and rural setting. As a result, many local residents opened their homes as rental cottages for visitors.

³⁶ “Seth Paine,” Appointments of U.S. Postmasters, 1832 – 1971, Ancestry.com., 1843; https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1932&h=55740&tid=&pid=&queryId=9bc52d99a9172ef88206c4766c50d80b&usePUB=true&_phsrc=zpp2841&_phstart=successSource, 1860; https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1932&h=55900&tid=&pid=&queryId=9bc52d99a9172ef88206c4766c50d80b&usePUB=true&_phsrc=zpp2844&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 30, 2021.

³⁷ “Seth Paine,” 1850 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com., https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/16365523:8054?tid=&pid=&queryId=43f1f282a460fcfd503b0d713e0c34f&_phsrc=zpp2839&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 30, 2021; 1860 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com., https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/37944142:7667?tid=&pid=&queryId=9bc52d99a9172ef88206c4766c50d80b&_phsrc=zpp2837&_phstart=successSource; “Seth Pane [sic.], Illinois, U.S. Marriage Index, 1860 – 1920, https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=60984&h=28671&tid=&pid=&queryId=9bc52d99a9172ef88206c4766c50d80b&usePUB=true&_phsrc=zpp2836&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 30, 2021.

³⁸ “Seth Paine: Radical Thinker in his Day,” The Frontier Enterprise,” Ela Public Library Local History File; “Lake Zurich, IL” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/717.html>, accessed October 1, 2021.

³⁹ Ibid; “Lake Zurich,” United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/lakezurichvillageillinois>, accessed October 6, 2021.

⁴⁰ Courtney Flynn, *Lake Zurich* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 23.

⁴¹ “Lake Zurich,” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

Rand Road (now U.S. Route 12) was paved in the 1920s, and more people visited, making the area a popular resort destination. Post-World War II development further expanded Lake Zurich, and the village grew into a suburban bedroom community. In 1960, there were 3,458 residents, almost ten times the number of residents in 1930. After 1960, most of the farms were sold and the original farmland in Lake Zurich was converted to residential and commercial use. As a result, retail and other commercial growth along U.S. Route 12 exploded. By 1990, the population was 14, 947. The growth trend continued and in 2000, the population was 18,104.⁴² However, that trend seems to be leveling off – the population in 2010 was 19,693 and in 2019 was 19,877.⁴³

Ela Township and Lake Zurich Schools

There were a number of early, one-room schools in Ela Township. At the time, there were approximately 65-67 children in the school district.⁴⁴ Not long after that, Seth Paine allowed a room in his Stable of Humanity to be used as a school. After that building burned, the school moved to the Ela Town Hall.⁴⁵ The first recorded school board members were Emil A. Ficke, A.J. Crawford, G.W. Gross, E.J. Umdenstock and E. J. Gossweiler.⁴⁶

Ela Township High School

In 1927 it was announced that Ela Township would build a high school. Prior to that time, Ela Township was a non-high school district, and students attended secondary school in nearby Barrington or Wauconda.⁴⁷ At the same time, Grant Township announced that it would build a high school, making eight high schools in 17 townships in Lake County, including Waukegan, Deerfield, Warren Township, Libertyville, Antioch and Wauconda.⁴⁸

Proponents of building the new high school argued that the costs of construction were counterbalanced by the advantages the new school would offer. They were encouraged by the commitment of the board of education to maintain high scholastic standards, as well as their recognition of the value of technical training under the supervision of highly trained instructors. Small class size would encourage close personal contact between instructors and students. Keeping students close to home during the impressionable and formative period of high school was prudent. The proposed site for the building provided abundant space for

⁴² “Lake Zurich,” Encyclopedia of Chicago; “Lake Zurich,” U.S. Census Bureau.

⁴³ Id.

⁴⁴ Courtney Flynn, *Lake Zurich*, 57; Spencer Loomis, *A Pictorial History*, 92.

⁴⁵ Spencer Loomis, *A Pictorial History of Ela Township*. Ela Historical Society/Walsworth Publishing Company, 1994, 92.

⁴⁶ Ibid. In 1926, Emil A. Ficke was Ela Township Supervisor. “Officers in Townships are Chosen,” *The Lake County Register* (Libertyville, Illinois), April 10, 1926.

⁴⁷ Spencer Loomis, *A Pictorial History of Ela Township*, 97.

⁴⁸ “High Schools in 2 Townships are to be Erected,” *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), April 2, 1927; “Palatine,” *The Daily Herald* (Chicago Illinois), December 16, 1927.

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outdoor athletics and natural materials for science classes, due to its proximity to lakes, woods and fields. Also, the community believed that a local high school would provide a community and civic center, in part because of the compactness of the township and central location of the proposed site of the school and the excellent roads in the township.⁴⁹

On December 10, 1927, it was reported that an election was held to decide a site for the Ela Township High School and to issue bonds. The site chosen was the "Steil site" across from the St. Paul's Evangelical Church in Lake Zurich."⁵⁰ At the time, Lake Zurich was the largest village in Ela Township.

On April 30, 1927, Ela Township held an election for school board, and Emil A. Ficke, Edward J. Umbdenstock, George W. Gross, A.J. Crawford and Elmer J. Gosswiller were elected supervisor and members, respectively.⁵¹ On January 23, 1928, several members of the school board visited and inspected several high schools for ideas, plans and suggestions for the new high school.⁵²

Some of the original planners of the school were Walter Prehm, Emil A. Ficke, August Froelich, and John Fink.⁵³ The new high school building opened on September 25, 1928, but classes and were held at a grammar school until the new building was completed. A total of 60 high school students from Ela and Vernon townships in Lake County were members of the first class.⁵⁴

In October of 1928, the Ela Township High School was admitted to the Northwest Suburban High School Athletic Conference, making the conference a ten-school athletic circuit.⁵⁵ The Northwest Suburban Conference had been formed in 1925; charter members were Arlington, Barrington, Libertyville, Palatine, Warren and Wauconda. In 1965 Ela-Vernon High School closed and Lake Zurich High School opened, and Lake Zurich left the Northwest Suburban Conference in 1992.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ "Lake Zurich to Vote on High School December 6," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), December 1, 1927.

⁵⁰ "Lake Zurich," *The Lake County Register* (Libertyville, Illinois), December 10, 1927; "Lake Zurich," *Franklin Park Beacon*, December 16, 1927.

⁵¹ "School Board for Ela Named in Quiet Vote," *Waukegan News-Sun* (Waukegan, Illinois), May 2, 1927.

⁵² "Lake Zurich," *The Lake County Register* (Libertyville, Illinois), January 2, 1928.

⁵³ *Lake Zurich*, 60. The school board's names are listed on a plaque on a wall in the historic main entrance to the 1929 Ela Township High School building.

⁵⁴ "Lake Zurich," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), September 20, 1928.

⁵⁵ "Lake Zurich Admitted to N.W. Conference," *The Daily Herald* (Arlington Heights, Illinois), October 9, 1928; "Sport Review of 1929," *The Daily Herald* (Chicago, Illinois), December 28, 1928.

⁵⁶ "The Great Conferences," *Illinois High School Glory Days*, <http://www.illinoishighglorydays.com/id349.html>, accessed August 9, 2021.

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The building was dedicated on November 3, 1928.⁵⁷ Charles A. Werner was the first principal and his staff comprised six teachers. James Watson was the first superintendent.⁵⁸ Students came from across Ela and Vernon Townships. A new bus owned and operated by Walter Gossweiler from Long Grove transported students from Long Grove and other areas in Vernon Township, east of Lake Zurich.⁵⁹

In November of 1928, soon after the building opened, the high school planned to offer evening classes in vocational agriculture for adult farmers. The development of evening schools in vocational agriculture was something new: prior to the 1920s they were essentially non-existent, but beginning around 1925, there were almost sixty schools in Illinois with more than 3,000 farmers attending agriculture-related classes once or twice a month.⁶⁰ In February of 1929, the Lake County Farmers' Institute held a three-day conference in Lake County, including at the Ela Township High School with discussions, speakers, meetings, demonstrations and social and cultural entertainment.⁶¹ Including other programs held at Antioch Township High School, and the Model Farm of the Public Service Company of Northern Illinois in Mundelein, over 2,000 people attended the Farmers Institute, the largest county attendance in a number of years.⁶²

The high school agricultural department hosted a series of meetings for farmers and anyone else who was interested to discuss agricultural issues. In February of 1929, the school hosted J.H. Brock of the Dairy Extension Department of the University of Illinois who gave a lecture entitled "Factors that Influence Dairy Profits in Lake County."⁶³

The commencement ceremony for the first graduating class in the new building was held on June 5, 1929 in the school auditorium. The speaker was W.C. Reavis, a professor of education at the University of Chicago, who had been interested in the school since the first plans for the building were being drafted.⁶⁴ Reavis was the author of numerous articles on education, including one entitled "The Determination of Professional Curriculums for the Training of Teaching for Secondary Schools."⁶⁵

⁵⁷ "New High School Building at Lake Zurich" dedication invitation, Ela Township Historical Society Archival File.

⁵⁸ Ibid; "Ela High School Notes," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), November 1, 1928; "Lake Zurich," *Waukegan News-Sun* (Waukegan, Illinois), November 1, 1928; New High School Building dedication invitation.

⁵⁹ "Lake Zurich," *Waukegan News-Sun*.

⁶⁰ "Lake Zurich, Ela Township High School Notes," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), November 15, 1928.

⁶¹ "Grayslake, Farm Bureau Meets," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), February 7, 1929.

⁶² "County Farmers Institute," *The Lake County Register* (Libertyville, Illinois), February 16, 1929.

⁶³ "Lake Zurich, Brock Leads Dairy Meeting," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), February 21, 1929.

⁶⁴ "Lake Zurich," *Libertyville Independent* (Libertyville, Illinois), May 30, 1929.

⁶⁵ W.C. Reavis, "The Determination of Professional Curriculums for the training of Teachers for Secondary Schools," *The University of Chicago Press* 32, no. 1 (1924): 27.

1952 Addition

In 1951 the residents of School District 125 in Ela and Vernon Townships voted to construct an \$861,000 addition and to remodel the original 1929 high school building for a cost of \$100,000. A proposed addition had been rejected the year before in 1950. The *Chicago Tribune* noted that the original high school building was “constructed in 1918 [sic.] for an enrollment of 96 pupils ... [but in 1951] now serves more than 300.” Moreover, enrollment by 1959 was projected to be at least 450 students.⁶⁶ The *Chicago Tribune* later reported that the proposed addition was estimated to cost \$854,000 and remodeling would cost \$107,000, and were approved because of overcrowding at the school.⁶⁷

The proposed addition, designed by Burnham and Hammond, Inc., would allow a capacity of 600 students. In terms of architectural style, the design would “harmonize in style with the present building” and would allow for future additions. The addition and remodeling would provide 13 classrooms, special or departmental rooms and laboratories, a cafeteria, a library, a bookstore, a gymnasium with shower and locker rooms and offices.⁶⁸ Burnham and Hammond estimated that construction of the addition would cost \$900,000.⁶⁹

In 1952 the elementary school district consolidated with the Vernon Area and the Ela Township High School was renamed the Ela-Vernon High School.

1958 Addition

Enrollment was 508 students in 1957 – 58, increasing to 631 for 1958-59 term. Expectations were 750 students for the 1959-60 school year, and that the upward trend would continue.⁷⁰ By 1958, enrollment had exceeded the school district’s projections.⁷¹ In October of 1958, the *Chicago Tribune* announced that construction was started on a three-story addition to the Ela-Vernon Consolidated High School. The addition would serve 900 students. At a cost of \$400,000, the addition would include 13 classrooms, a library, band room, chorus room, enlarged kitchen facilities and locker rooms. The architect was Dennis Blair of Long Grove, and the general contractor was Ivar Fredricksen of Wonder Lake. The addition was paid for from a \$450,000 bond issue approved in 1957, part of which was used to purchase a 34-acre

⁶⁶ “Vote Saturday on Lake County School Building,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 13, 1951.

⁶⁷ “2 Districts O.K. Bonds to Build School Units,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 20, 1951.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ “Burnham & Hammond,” AIA Roster Questionnaire, Burnham & Hammond, Inc., February 25, 1953, https://content.aia.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/BurnhamHammond_roster.pdf, accessed August 15, 2021.

⁷⁰ “Work Begins on Ela-Vernon High Addition,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 26, 1958.

⁷¹ “First Classes at Ela-Vernon H.S., Which Opened Doors in 1928,” *Frontier Enterprise*, November 26, 1958; “Work Begins on Ela-Vernon High Addition,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 26, 1958.

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site on the north side of Illinois Highway 22 between the villages of Half Day and Prairie View for a future high school.⁷² That school would become Adlai E. Stevenson High School.

The Ela -Vernon high school, including the 1958 addition, provided for 900 students. By 1962, enrollment had risen to 913 students, and enrollment was projected to increase to 1,200 by 1964.⁷³

In 1958 the area was still relatively rural. An informational meeting was held by the Ela Township Women's Civic association at the Ela Vernon High School to discuss the impact of a proposed large development in the township of 6,000 acres, which was met with widespread opposition.⁷⁴

In 1962, taxpayers in the Ela-Vernon Consolidated High School District 125 voted to build a new high school on Route 22 between Half Day and Prairie View (present day Lincolnshire). The new high school would serve students from Vernon Township, and the Ela-Vernon High School would serve students from Ela Township. The new school in Vernon Township, Prairie View, was known as "Ela-Vernon East" for a short time, but its name was officially changed to the Adlai E. Stevenson High School. Architect Dennis Blair, who designed the 1958 addition to the Ela-Vernon Consolidated High School, designed the new Adlai E. Stevenson High School, which opened in 1965.⁷⁵ In that same year, the Ela Vernon Township High School became known as the Lake Zurich High School.⁷⁶ At the same time, Lake Zurich created the Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95, joining elementary school District 95 and high school District 125.⁷⁷ The new Stevenson High School district became District 125.

Stevenson High School drew students from all of Vernon Township and about one-fourth of the east side of Ela Township. As a result, the Lake Zurich High School student population was cut almost in half.⁷⁸

The 1929 building served as a secondary school building until 1971, when a new Lake Zurich high school building was built just north of the building, and the 1929 building was

⁷² "Work Begins on Ela-Vernon High Addition."

⁷³ "Taxpayers O.K. 6 Million for Schools, Sites," *Chicago Tribune*, November 4, 1962.

⁷⁴ "Ela Women Slate Study Meeting," *Arlington Heights Herald* (Arlington Heights, Illinois), November 27, 1958.

⁷⁵ "Proposed Ela-Vernon East High School," *The Daily Herald* (Chicago, Illinois), October 4, 1962.

⁷⁶ Ralph Leo, "11 New High Schools Await Debuts in Football," *Chicago Tribune*, September 9, 1965.

⁷⁷ Howard Harmening, "Lake Zurich has High Hopes for Unit School District," *The Daily Herald* (Chicago, Illinois), July 29, 1965; "Jubilee," Village of Lake Zurich 75th Anniversary Celebration – 1971, Ela Area Public Library Local History File.

⁷⁸ "Unit District for Lake Zurich; Ela-Vernon High School Shrinks," *The Daily Herald* (Chicago Illinois), June 17, 1965.

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re-named the Lake Zurich Junior High School.⁷⁹ In 1985, about 650 seventh, eighth and ninth graders attended school in the building.⁸⁰

1990 Addition

In 1989, enrollment rose in the Lake Zurich Unit District 95 schools from 3,605 to 3,915 students, which may have been the second largest enrollment in the district history.⁸¹ Space in the junior high school was remodeled to add five classrooms, however, even with that additional space, District 95 continued to explore ways to add additional classroom space at the junior high school in light of enrollment projections that estimated that 1,300 new students were going to be entering the district in the next four years.⁸² Enrollment in 1989 once again exceeded those expectations.

1993 Addition

In 1993, the Lake Zurich Junior High School (formerly the 1929 building and its additions) was re-named the Middle School North Campus. The building served as a Middle School from 1993 to 2004, when a new Middle School building was constructed; in 2004 the original 1929 building (including additions) was re-named the May Whitney Elementary School and was used as an elementary school.⁸³

May Whitney Rockenbach

May Whitney Rockenbach was born in Lake Zurich in 1870. Her first day of school was in September of 1875 when she attended school in the Ela Township Hall. Rockenbach was a member of the first graduating class of Barrington High School in 1888, and began teaching school at Honey Lake School. She later taught in a one-room log schoolhouse at Rainbow Road and Route 22, as well as another one-room school house at Oak Drive in Lake Zurich.⁸⁴ Rockenbach also taught in Wilmot School in Deerfield.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ "The Lake Zurich Junior High School," *Daily Herald*, September 28, 1983.

⁸⁰ Craig Long, "Lake Zurich Principals Hope for January Move," *Countryside*, Ela Area Local History Clippings File; Lake Zurich Community School District 95, Annual Report 1985 – 86, Ela Area Public Library Local History Clippings File.

⁸¹ Beth Wilson, "Dist. 95 Enrollment Jumps by 300 Students," *Daily Herald*, September 11, 1989; Susan J. White, "School Enrollment Increases, Slightly Exceeds Projections," *Lake Zurich Courier*, September 28, 1989; Ela Area Public Library Local History Clippings File.

⁸² Susan J. White, "District 95 Searches for Ways to Expand," *Lake Zurich Courier*, December 8, 1989, Ela Area Public Library Local History Clippings File.

⁸³ Rita Heybeck proposed her great-grandmother's name as a choice to name the new school in a contest Ela Historical Society, "May Whitney," display photograph, courtesy of Rita Heybeck Winter. After this, the school board set a policy of naming school buildings after local settlers. *Jubilee*, Village of Lake Zurich 75th Anniversary Celebration, 1971, Ela Area Public Library Local History Clippings File.

⁸⁴ Joyce Stirniman, "School Name gets Traced at Assembly," *Daily Herald*, March 20, 1987, Ela Area Public Library Local History Clippings File.

⁸⁵ "Mrs. Orman Rockenbach," *Deerfield Review*, July 14, 1949.

She married Orman Rockenbach on June 15, 1897.⁸⁶ The couple lived in Deerfield until they moved to Lake Zurich in 1923. Orman was a farmer and operator of Reynolds Park in Lake Zurich. Orman died in May, 1941 and May died in 1949.⁸⁷ Her daughter, Almira Rockenbach Heyback, was a teacher and principal at the Lake Zurich Elementary School and May Whitney's grandson, Frank Heybeck, was principal and business manager of the May Whitney Elementary School.⁸⁸

In 2006, the Gavin Elementary School District 37 rented part of the building for 600 of its students who were displaced because of cracked wooden roof trusses in the Gavin Elementary School District building.⁸⁹

One year later, in 2007, May Whitney Elementary School closed in August, 2007 because of the presence of asbestos and mold.⁹⁰ Students attended classes at the former Middle School North building (the original 1929 building, which was vacant at the time).⁹¹ The northeast portion of May Whitney Elementary School was demolished in July of 2011.⁹²

In 2018, a referendum was passed by 67% of voters supporting District 95's issuance of \$77.6 million in bonds to fund facility improvements, including demolishing the 1929 building along with the 1952, 1959, 1990 and 1993 additions, and building a new May Whitney Elementary School.⁹³ Construction of the new May Whitney Elementary School began in 2019. The building opened and classes began in August, 2021.⁹⁴ Since that time, the previous May Whitney Elementary School, comprised of the original 1929 building and its four additions, has been vacant.

⁸⁶ "May Whitney," Illinois, U.S., Marriage Index, 1860 – 1920, Ancestry.com., https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=60984&h=2031679&tid=&pid=&queryId=361e06c4d8967c676faeda6be9529277&usePUB=true&_phsrc=zpp2872&_phstart=succesSource, accessed September 22, 2021.

⁸⁷ "Mr. Rockenbach Taken by Death," *Herald* (Arlington Heights, Illinois), May 30, 1941; "Mrs. Orman Rockenbach."

⁸⁸ Spencer Loomis, *A Pictorial History*, 94.

⁸⁹ Robert Channick, "Ingleside's Gavin School District Settle Suit," *Chicago Tribune*, June 30, 2005; "Lake Zurich District 95 Land Rental," *The Daily Herald* (Chicago, Illinois), November 2, 2006.

⁹⁰ Danielle Gensburg, "Demolition Begins at Former May Whitney School in Lake Zurich," *The Daily Herald*, July 20, 2011.

⁹¹ "Mold Drives Pupils out of May Whitney for Year," *Chicago Tribune*, August 21, 2007.

⁹² Stephanie Kohl, "Old Whitney Demolition set to Begin Wednesday," *Lake Zurich Courier*, July 14, 2011, Ela Area Public Library, Buildings, May Whitney School File; Danielle Gensburg, "May Whitney Demolition Set for July;" Victoria Remback, "Demolition to Start Soon on Part of May Whitney," Schools, Patch.com., <https://patch.com/illinois/lakezurich/demolition-to-start-soon-on-portion-of-may-whitney>, accessed September 20, 2021.

⁹³ May Whitney Elementary School – 100 Church Street, Village of Lake Zurich, <https://www.lakezurich.org/682/May-Whitney-Elementary-School>, accessed September 22, 2021.

⁹⁴ May Whitney Elementary School, [https://www.lakezurich.org/682/May-Whitney-Elementary-School#:~:text=Construction%20on%20the%20site%20is,for%20demolition%](https://www.lakezurich.org/682/May-Whitney-Elementary-School#:~:text=Construction%20on%20the%20site%20is,for%20demolition%20), accessed September 20, 2021.

Part II. Architectural Information

A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural character:** The original 1929 Ela Township High School Building design is an excellent example of Collegiate Gothic Revival style adapted for a secondary school. Its rectangular plan, flat roof, crenelated parapet, emphasized central entry, Gothic pointed arches with tracery and Tudor arches, buttresses, finials and brick and limestone ornamentation give the building a scholarly and imposing air, especially when it was originally viewed from a long sidewalk in a small farming community. While the community may have grown around the school, the building retains its distinguished character.

An addition in 1952 was sensitively placed at the side in the rear of the building. The 1952 entrance is equally distinctive; black granite panels carved with the name of the school and date frame a modern recessed entrance. The 1958, 1990 and 1993 additions are sympathetic, but have less architectural character than the 1929 building and 1952 addition.

- 2. Condition of fabric:** The building is in good condition. The exterior brick and limestone of the original 1929 building appears well-maintained, although some minor weathering is evident in areas. Some staining is present on the limestone. The exteriors of the 1952, 1959, 1990 and 1993 additions are in excellent condition.

The interior of the 1929 building retains original stairway stringers, wall stringers, balusters, handrails, newel posts and newel caps. The original 1929 gymnasium floor appears to be at least partly intact, and is in fair condition. In the 1952 addition, the entrance vestibule retains original black granite walls and wood-framed display cases, and the science lab retains historic glass front cabinetry. These features are in good condition. The condition of the remainder of the buildings is good.

B. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Overall dimensions:** The building, including all additions, extends approximately 320' to the northeast and 308' to the northwest.
- 2. Foundations:** The foundations are concrete.
- 3. Walls:** 1929 Building: The walls of the original building are red and grey wire cut brick in a running bond pattern, with decorative brickwork, limestone quoins, label

molding, belt courses, spandrels, crenellations and medallions. A thick limestone belt course runs under the first floor windows, above the second floor windows, and below the parapet. Sections of brick laid vertically are framed with limestone beneath the beltcourse under the parapet. Gothic Revival details include the building's rectangular plan, a prominent front entry with limestone details that projects above the roofline, pointed arches with tracery, a Tudor arched front entry, a crenellated parapet roofline, and buttresses and finials flanking the front door. Also flanking the front entry are symmetrical wings of brick walls with windows on the first and second floors, separated by soldier bricks laid in a quincunx pattern.

The north and south walls of the 1929 building both have crenellated parapet rooflines, that rise in the center, with circular inset limestone medallions beneath the apex of the central roof sections. Like the west façade, the north and south facades have limestone belt courses. Replacement metal framed glass doors are set within Tudor arches framed by three wythes of brick, outlined by limestone label molding. Above the doors are infilled windows, framed by limestone quoins and label molding. Flanking the central section are visually striking rectangular sections of decorative projecting footer bricks, framed by soldier and footer bricks. There is a historic one-story rectangular section at the east side of the building.

1952 Addition: The walls are red and grey wire cut brick in a common bond, with a header course inserted every sixth course. The south elevation at the main entry is scored concrete, with the entrance framed in black granite panels. Concrete panels are placed between rows of windows on the first and second floors.

1959 Addition: The walls are red and grey wire cut brick in a common bond pattern, with a header course inserted every sixth course.

1990, 1993 Additions: The walls are red and grey wire cut brick in a common bond pattern.

4. Structural system, framing: Brick and limestone masonry-clad steel framing.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: 1929 Building: Historic doorways are set within Tudor or flattened arches. The historic main entry is on the west side of the building through non-historic metal framed glass double doors, with non-historic glass side lights and divided glass above the doorway filling out the arch. The side doors on north and south elevations are non-historic metal framed glass doors with glass side lights, set within Tudor arches. A non-historic loading dock with a metal garage door and a pedestrian door is on the west side of the south elevation. The

historic door on the north side of the building is accessed by a concrete ramp and painted tube handrail. A metal door labelled “high voltage” is beneath stairs on the north side of the building next to a metal door leading in to the basement of the building.

1952 Addition: The recessed main doorway on the south elevation of the 1952 addition is framed in black granite. A black granite panel to the east of the door is etched with the words “ELA-VERNON HIGH SCHOOL” and the panel below is etched with “1952.” Three non-historic black metal framed doors with one over one window panels, sidelights and windows over the doors lead in to the building. Above the entry are the words “MAY WHITNEY ELEMENTARY” spelled out in large red letters. Just above that is a ghost sign that spells out “LAKE ZURICH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL.”

Metal double-doors on the north side of the 1952 addition are set between a concrete retaining wall and the west side of where the 1952 addition ends. There is a single metal door on the west side of where the 1952 addition ends and where the 1959 addition begins, leading to a stairway; brick infill suggests that another door may have been just south of that door. Other doors on the 1952 addition on the north façade are metal framed glass double or single doors, or metal with small windows.

1958 Addition: On the east façade, there is a metal door with a small window.

1990 Addition: There are metal framed glass double and single doors, all with fixed transoms. Exterior doors lead to a small vestibule with another set of metal framed glass double doors flanked by a single door and fixed windows, all with fixed transoms.

1993 Addition: The doors on the northwest side of the 1993 addition are framed glass double and single doors that match the doors on the 1990 addition.

- b. Windows:** The building has an assemblage of window types; all of them are replacement. On the 1929 building, windows in the basement are fixed single pane. On the west and east facades, pebble-faced insulated-panels cover the full length of several windows and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the glass on the other windows. The windows that aren't covered with insulated panels are single hung. On the north and south facades on the second floor, windows that look into the stairways are covered with the same pebble-faced insulated panels.

Classrooms in the 1952 addition have sliding windows. The gymnasium has drop down windows. Windows in the 1958 addition are sliding; several are operable

with screens in classrooms and the library. Classrooms in the 1990 and 1993 additions are sliding, casement, and fixed. The hallways of the 1990 and 1993 addition have single pane and hopper windows.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering:** The roof of the 1929 building is crenellated and has a parapet. The roof of the rest of the building, including the additions, is flat.
- b. Cornice, eaves:** There are no cornice or eaves on the building.
- c. Corner Turrets:** There are no corner turrets on the building.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans:** The original 1929 building faces west. The historic front entry on the west façade led to a hallway on the first floor with classrooms on the west and east sides. Staircases are on the north and south sides of the building. The 1952 addition punched a hole in the east side of the building and added a hallway that runs east – west, with classrooms on the north and south sides of the hall. Another hall turns north and there are classrooms on the west side of the hall. The gymnasium with stage is on the east side of the hall. A new main entrance to the 1952 addition is on the south side of the hall, along with the school office and additional classrooms. The 1959 addition punched a hole at the north end of the north hall of the 1952 addition, and added classrooms, later converted to a computer lab, a reading specialist room and a library at the north end of the building.

The 1990 addition is attached to the southeast corner of the 1952 addition. A hallway runs northeast, with classrooms on the southeast side of the hall. The 1993 addition punched a hole at the end of the hallway and added a hallway with more classrooms. The northwest side of the addition was connected to the former May Whitney Elementary School which was demolished in 2011.

The 1929 building, 1952, and 1959 additions have second floors. The gymnasium has a small upper gymnasium, band and orchestra room, and band office are on the second floor.

- 2. Stairways:** There are stairways in the 1929 building, the 1952 addition, the 1959 addition, the 1990 addition and the 1993 addition. The 1929 building has stairways on the north and south ends with historic wood handrails, and metal stringers, wall stringers, newel posts, newel caps, and balustrades. Each staircase has a metal rod that is attached from the stringer to the handrail. The stair treads have been covered with non-historic blue rubber tread covers and non-historic hand rails have been mounted to

the walls. A small set of stairs on the west side leads from the front entry vestibule to the classroom hall. The stairs are covered with non-slip composite. Tube handrails are mounted to the walls, and one is mounted to the risers in the middle of the stairway. All other staircases in the 1952 addition, 1958 addition, 1990 addition and 1993 addition have non-slip material and tube handrails. The stairway in the 1990 addition has clear plexi-glass or plastic panels covering the tube handrails.

2. **Flooring:** Flooring is linoleum tile in the halls, and linoleum tile or carpeting in the classrooms. Color tape dividing the halls, indicating which direction students should walk and social distancing restrictions due to Covid-19 precautions, is attached to all of the floors. Flooring in the gymnasium on the first floor and the balcony is wood, and flooring on the stage in the gymnasium is wood. Basement flooring is concrete, except on the north side of the 1952 addition, where there is a remnant of the 1929 wood gymnasium floor.
3. **Wall and ceiling finish:** The walls in the 1929 building are plaster. On the east side, where the wall was opened for the 1952 addition, the wall is glazed masonry units. Metal lockers line the walls.

1952 Addition: The walls in the entry vestibule are black granite panels that match the granite panels on the exterior of the entry. Wood framed glass display shelves line the interior of the vestibule.

The vestibule leads to a small stairway and a corridor that leads to north, east and west hallways. The corridor west and north walls are wire cut brick, painted white on the west wall, unpainted on the north wall. Open shelving is on the northeast side of the corridor. The walls in the hallway are glazed masonry units painted white; concrete masonry block; plaster, and one row of brick at the ceiling. Lockers, open cubbies and display cases line the walls.

There is graffiti on the columns in the basement of the gymnasium. The walls in the gymnasium are painted concrete masonry block. Wire cut brick is on the second floor east wall of the upper balcony of the gymnasium.

1959 Addition: The walls in the halls and classrooms are glazed masonry units. The walls in the library are glazed masonry units and drywall.

1990, 1993 Additions: The walls in the halls and classrooms are glazed masonry units.

The ceilings are mostly dropped ceiling tiles with fluorescent lighting.

4. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors:** 1929 Building: all the doors are replacement painted wood doors with glass inserts. In the 1952, 958, 1990 and 993 additions, the doors are metal in the hallway, and wood with small windows leading to the classrooms.
- b. Windows:** As noted above, the building has an assemblage of window types, and all of them are replacement. There are no unique interior features.

5. Hardware: All of the hardware in the building is modern levers, knobs, push bars and hinges.

6. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:** There are two boilers in the basement of the 1929 building and one boiler in the 1959 addition. There is no central air conditioning in the building. A few classrooms have air conditioning window units.
- b. Lighting:** All lighting is fluorescent in drop tile ceilings.
- c. Plumbing:** Bathrooms have replacement toilets and sinks; locker rooms have non-historic showers.

D. Site:

- 1. Historic landscape design:** No historic landscape plans were found for the site. Historic photographs show a stepped landscape; the site today has degraded and is sloped. Historic photographs show plantings of immature deciduous trees and a concrete walkway leading west to Church Street. The site today has mature deciduous and non-deciduous trees and a concrete walkway from the front of the historic building leading west, but it does not extend to Church Street.
- 2. Outbuildings:** There are no outbuildings associated with this site.

Part III. Sources of Information

A. Architectural Drawings: The original drawings for Ela Township High School are on file with the Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95.

B. Early Views: None

C. Interviews: Interviews with Jan Kaminski, October 19 and 20, 2021.

D. Selected Sources:

1. Unpublished Sources:

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F. Supplemental Material: Copies of digital color photographs captured by JLK Architects during a site visit on June 26, 2021 are included in Appendix I at the end of this report. Also, sketches of floor plans by JLK Architects which capture interior configurations of the building at the time of this report are included in Appendix II. As described, select historical photographs from various archives are included separately in field records.

Prepared by:	JLK Architects
	Meg Kindelin, President
	Katie McNamee, Project Architect
	Harshitha Beere, Project Architect

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Kelsey Kuehn, Architectural Historian
Aubrey Prestwich, Architectural Historian

Sylvester Historic Consultants, LLC
Jeanne Sylvester, Architectural Historian

Date: September 24, 2025

Appendix I. Color Photographs



Figure 1. North entrance at 1952 addition, view looking northwest. (JLK Architects, 2021)



Figure 2. North, main entrance. (JLK Architects, 2021)

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Figure 3. West façade of original 1929 building, view looking northeast. (JLK Architects, 2021)

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Figure 4. West facades of original 1929 building (at right), and 1952 and 1959 additions (at left), view looking east. (JLK Architects, 2021)

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Figure 5. East façade of 1952 addition, view looking southwest. (JLK Architects, 2021)



Figure 6. Interior view of west entrance to original 1929 building, view looking southwest. (JLK Architects, 2021)



Figure 7. Interior view of hallway and student lockers within 1952 addition, view looking southeast toward south entrance. (JLK Architects, 2021)



Figure 8. Interior view of second floor gymnasium, view looking southwest. (JLK Architects, 2021)



Figure 9. Interior view of cafeteria, view looking northwest. (JLK Architects, 2021)

Appendix II. Sketch Plans

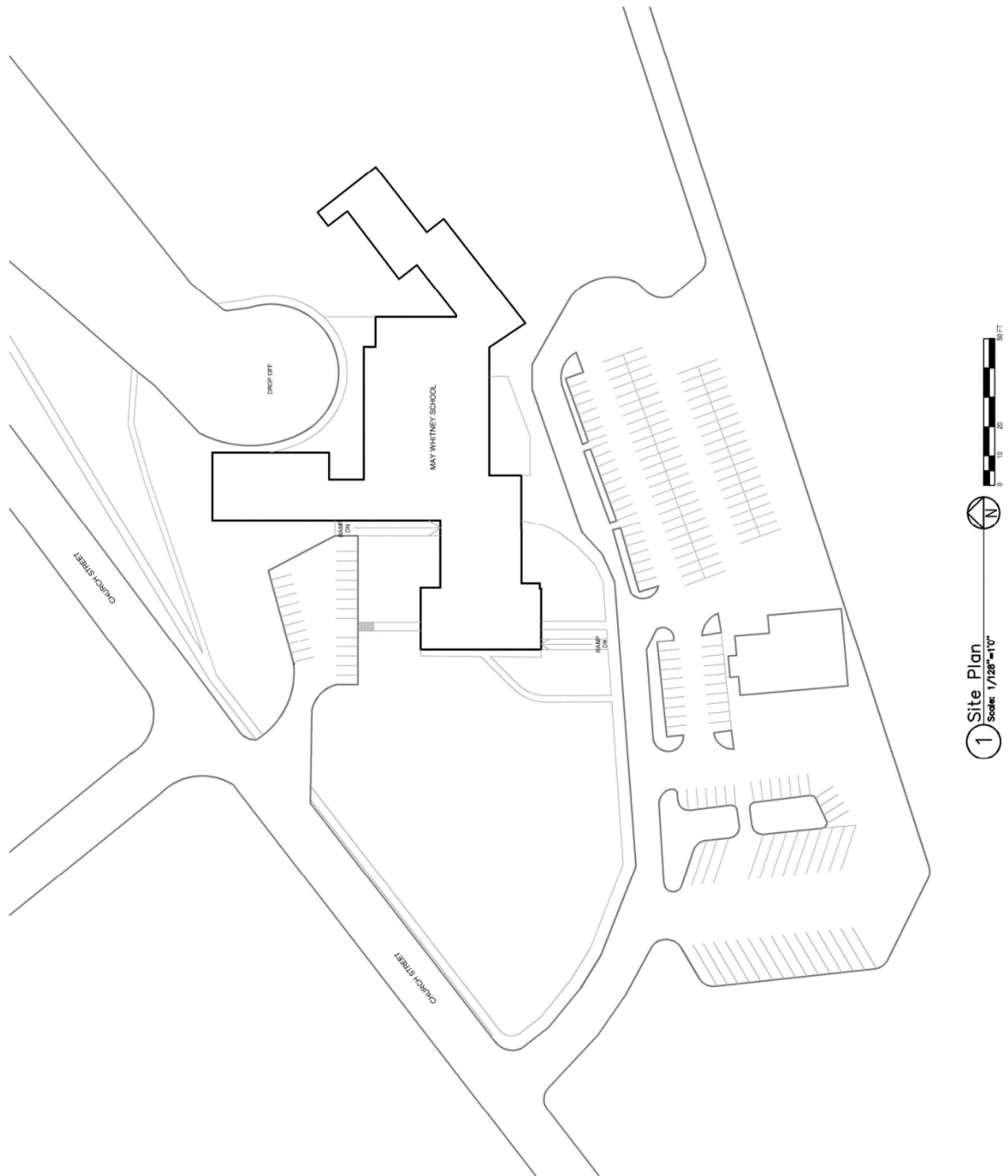


Figure 11. Sketch site plan, not to scale. (JLK Architects, 2021)

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Figure 12. Basement sketch floor plan, not to scale. (JLK Architects 2021)

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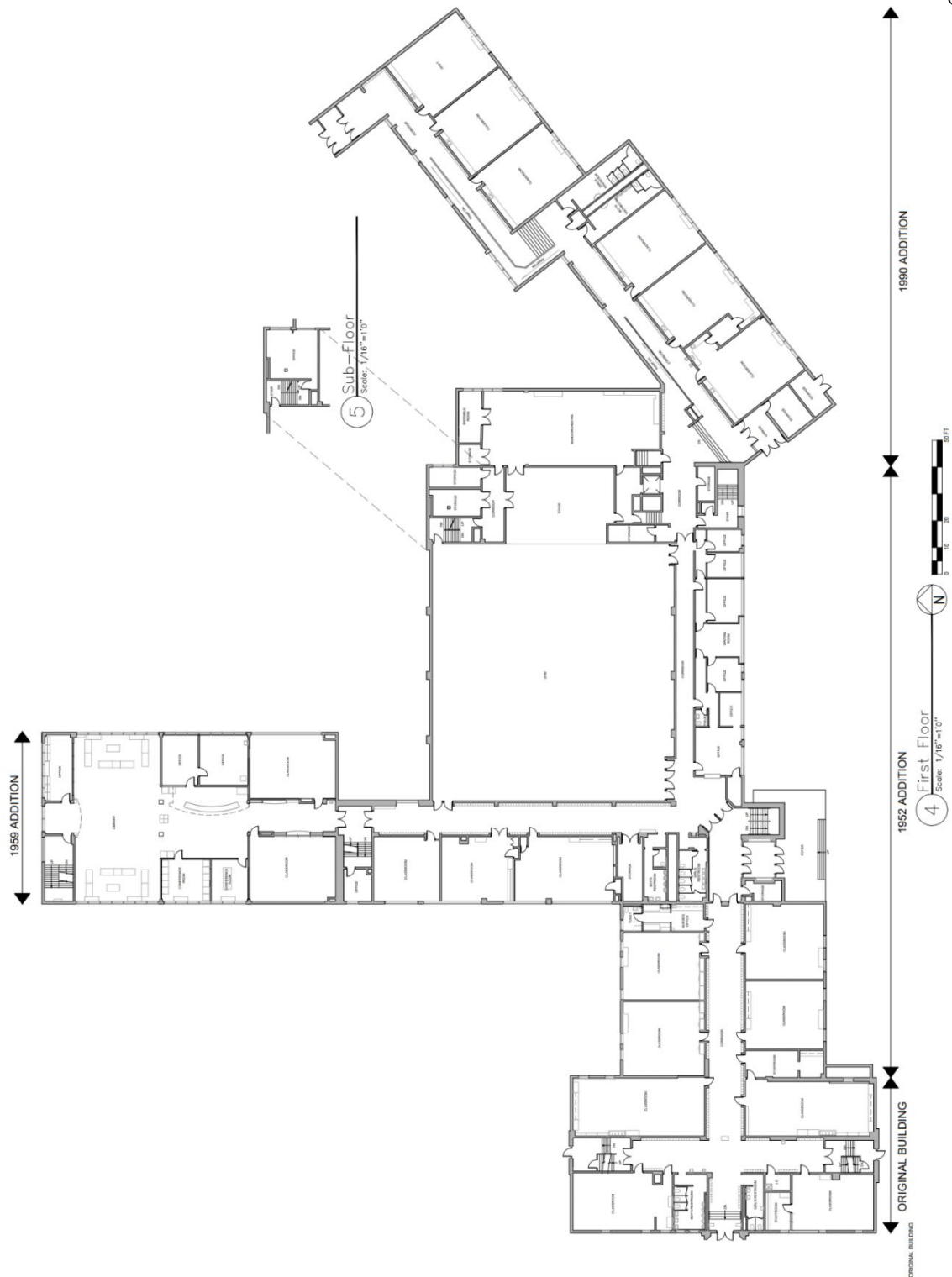


Figure 13. First floor sketch floor plan, not to scale. (JLK Architects 2021)

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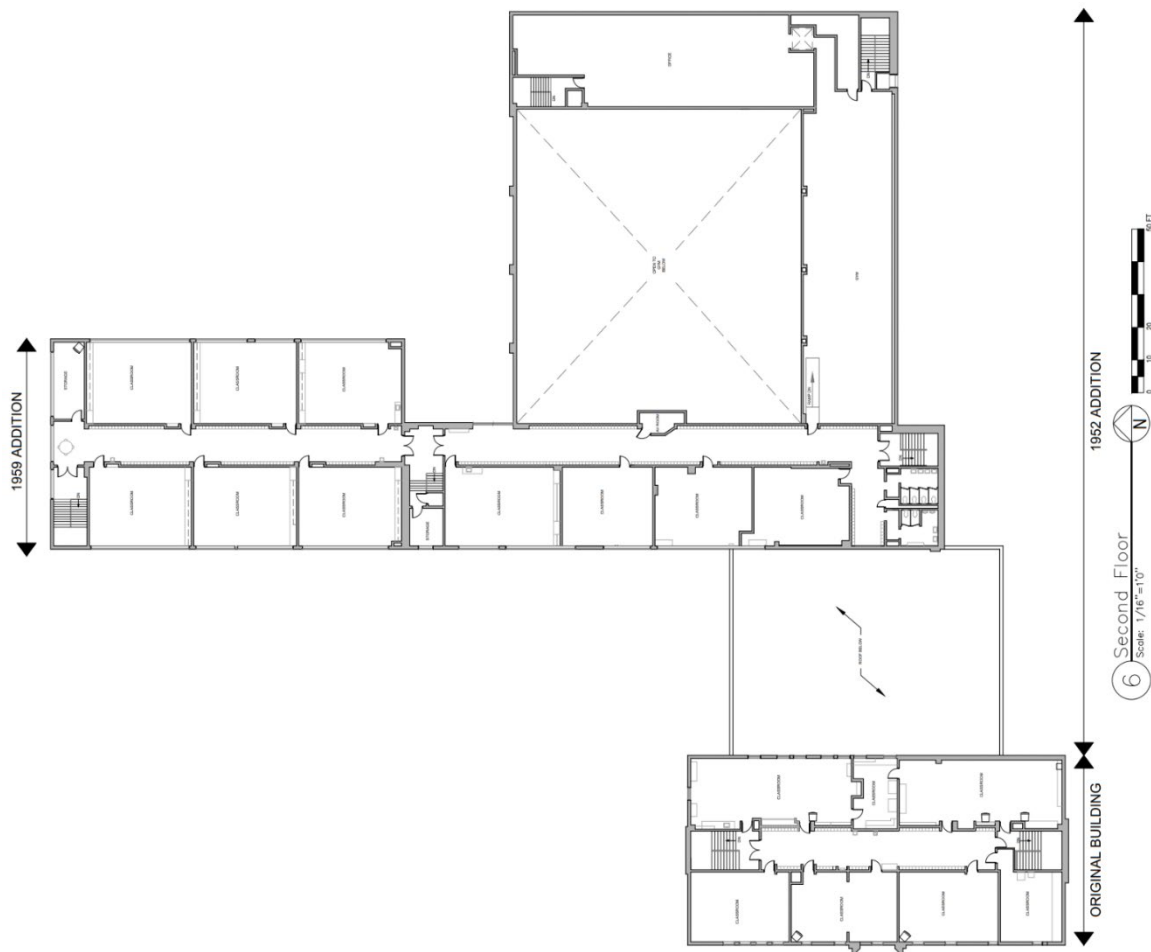


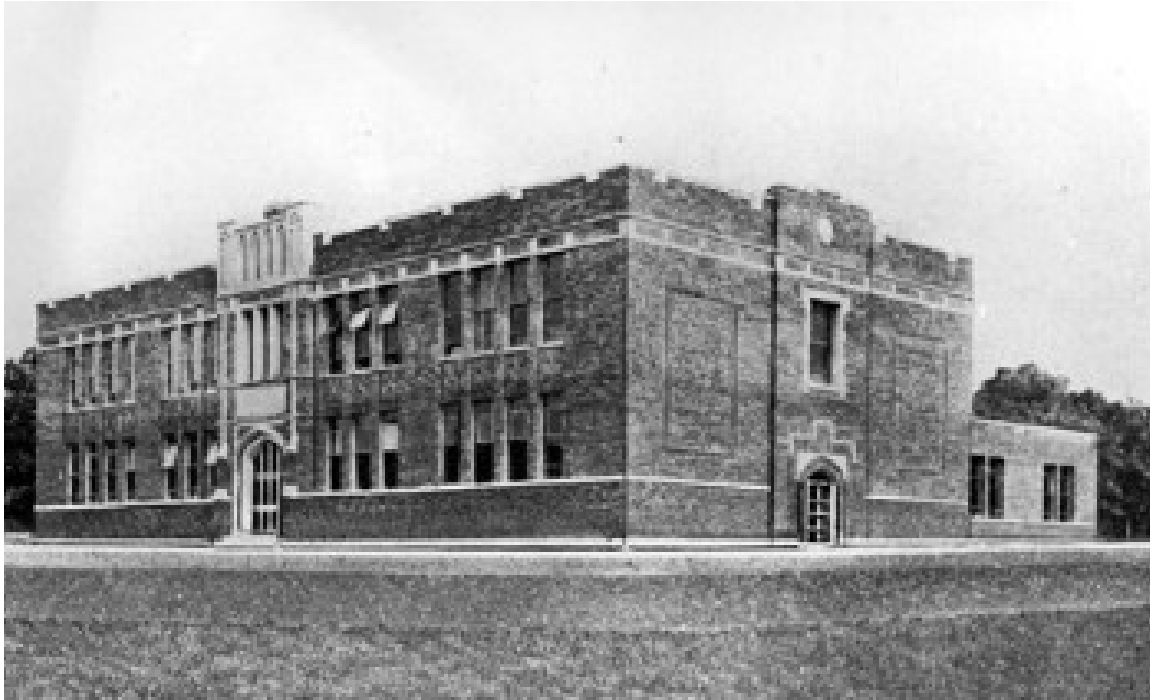
Figure 14. Second floor sketch floor plan, not to scale. (JLK Architects 2021)

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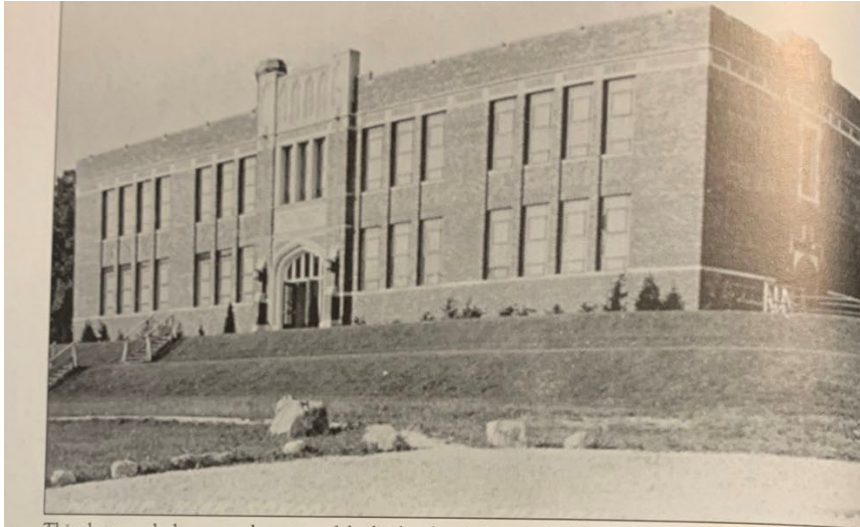
Historic photograph of 1929 building from the collections at the Ela Historical Society, in Ela Township, IL.

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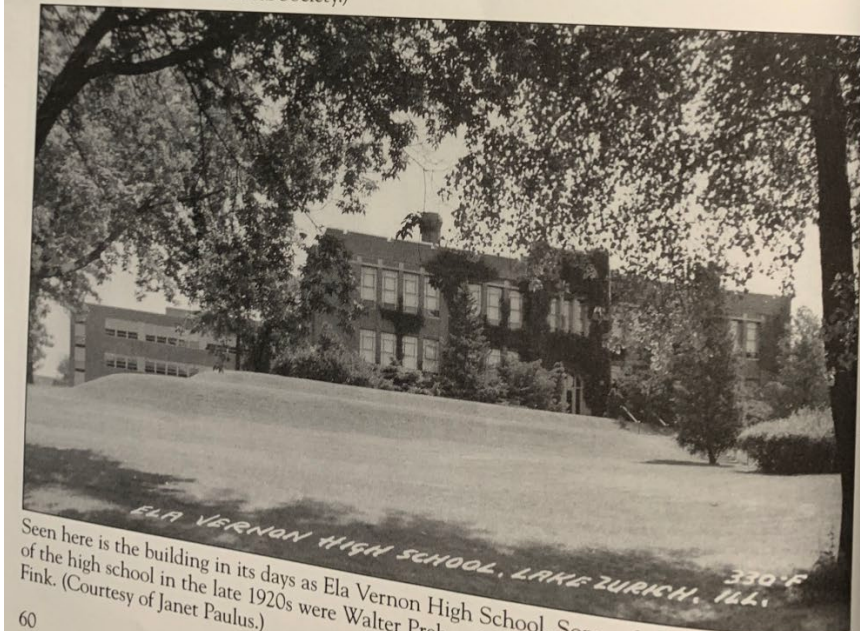


Historic photograph of 1929 building from the collections at the Ela Historical Society, in Ela Township, IL.

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This photograph shows another view of the high school. Several additions to the building occurred over the years, including those in 1952, 1958, and 1961. In 1965, the elementary school district and the high school combined to create District 95. James Watson served as its first superintendent. (Courtesy of the Ela Historical Society.)



Seen here is the building in its days as Ela Vernon High School. Some of the original planners of the high school in the late 1920s were Walter Prehm, Emil Ficke, August Froelich, and John Fink. (Courtesy of Janet Paulus.)

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Historic photographs of 1929 building from page 60 of *Images of America: Lake Zurich* by Courtney Flynn, published 2011. Retrieved from the collections at the Ela Historical Society, in Ela Township, IL.

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Historic photograph of 1952 addition under construction from the collections at the Ela Historical Society, in Ela Township, IL.

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Historic photograph of the building on December 16, 1977, from the Lake Zurich School District 95. Photograph taken by Dick Stouffer, Stouffer's Photo Service at 65 Miller Road Lake Zurich, Illinois 60047.

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Jubilee, Village of Lake Zurich 75th Anniversary Celebration, from the collections at
Ela Area Public Library Local Clippings File.

First Classes at Ela-Vernon H.S., Which Opened Doors In 1928



First enrollment in Ela-Vernon high school. School was opened in 1928, the following year graduated a class of seven. Charles Werner was the schools' first principal, and his staff was comprised of six teachers. School now has some 600 pupils and a staff of 32.

Frontier Enterprise, 11/26/58

Historic photograph of students in front of the building on November 26, 1958, from the collections at the Ela Area Public Library Local Clippings File.

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Lake Zurich

Lake County

Illinois

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- IL-1281-4 West façades, original building to the right, looking east from building grounds.
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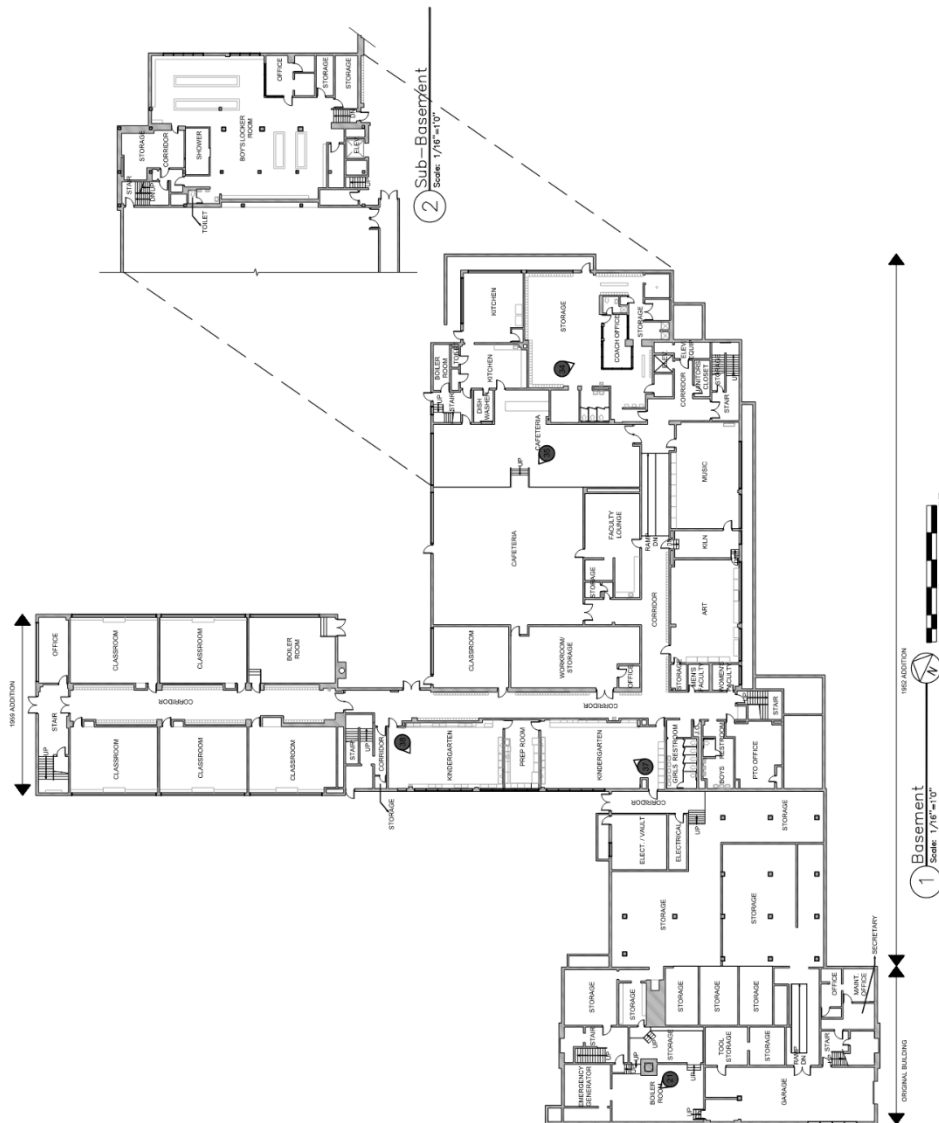
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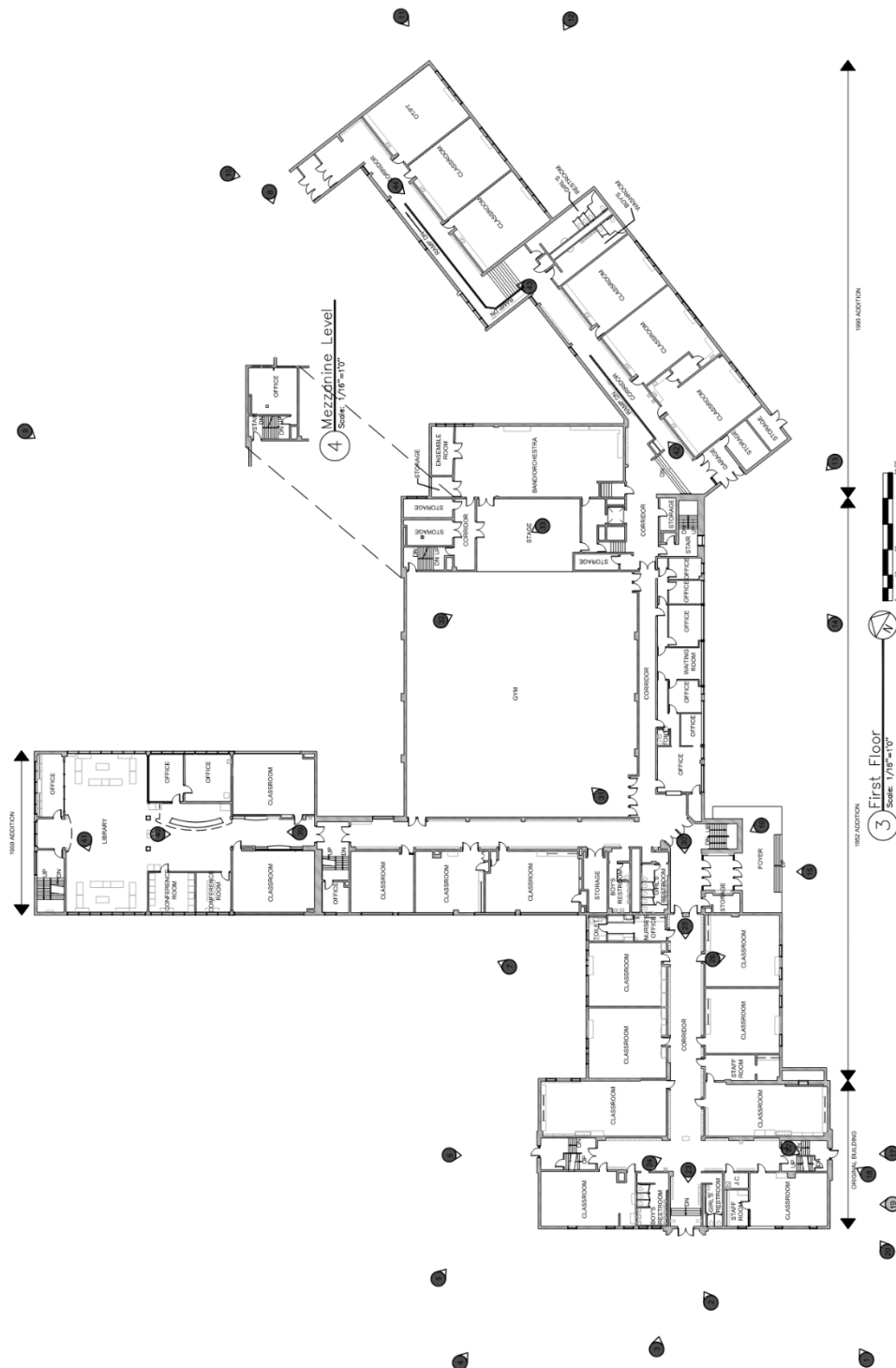
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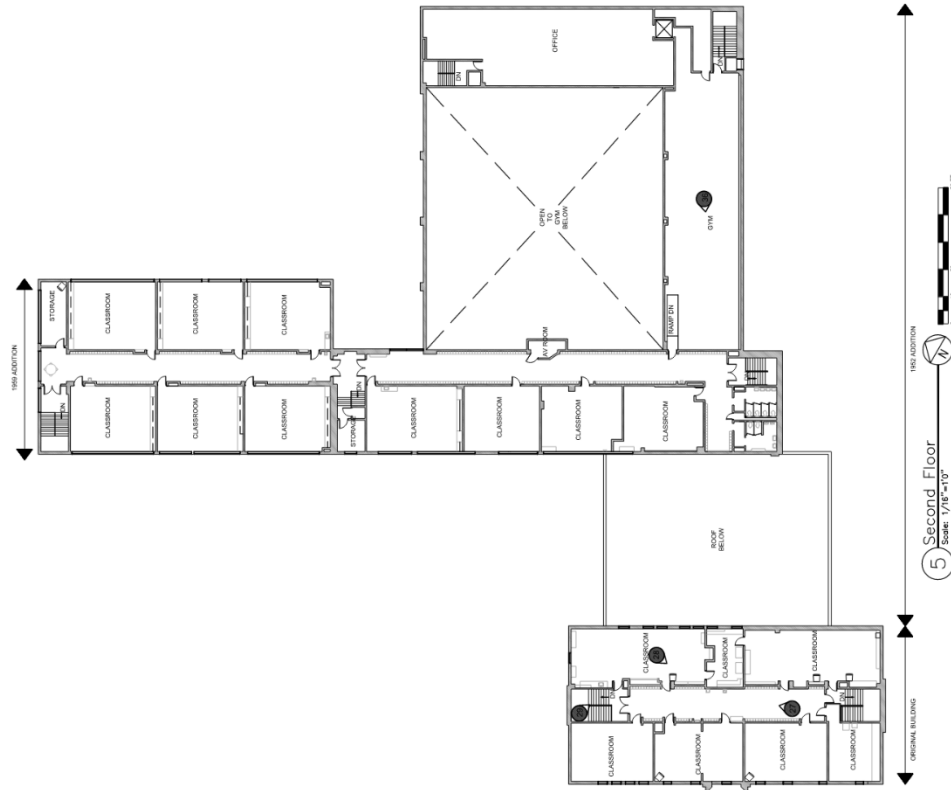
BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO KEY – BASEMENT
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BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO KEY – FIRST FLOOR
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