Emerson School Floor Plan

Designed by the noted school architect, William B. Ittner, of St. Louis, with input from School Superintendent William A. Wirt, the construction of Emerson School commenced in 1908 and opened on September 13, 1909. The original floor plan was modified in 1920, extending the building to the north. The chief alterations included the addition of second floor gymnasia on both sides of the building, the redesign of the lower gymnasia to run north-south, instead of east-west, and the addition of the two-story instrumental music department over the boiler room area.

Up to this time, the original structure, with the exception of the center boiler house, extended no farther north than the classrooms in the northeast and northwest corners, with the original lower gymnasia falling within the basic rectangular design. The renovations extended the lower and, now, upper gymnasia roughly 40 feet north of the basic structure, with the band and orchestra rooms sandwiched between the two extensions. This created exterior courtyards on each side of the building which were employed as handball courts.

In late November 1924, the Emerson Shops were completed at the corner of 6th and Carolina Streets at a cost of $50,000. The Emerson Shops constituted the expansion of the barn originally built to house the horses used for making coal deliveries to the school. This resulted in the transfer to the new building of all industrial arts classes that had operated in the main building since 1909, including machine shop, auto mechanics, forge, and special trade academic classes. In 1926, the Primary Building was completed at 7th and Georgia at a cost of $170,000. Henceforth, kindergarten through lower primary grade students would be educated here, before moving over to the "Big Building."

This floor plan appeared in a 1910 issue of ***School Board Journal***, with the following article:

A Modern American School

The necessity for close co-operation between architects and school authorities in the planning of school buildings has been frequently emphasized. School board have to a certain extent sought to bring school master and builder together, and the results have in every case been gratifying from a pedagogic and economical standpoint.

A building which shows in every feature the possibilities of such co-operation is the new Emerson school completed last winter in Gary, Indiana. Supt. William A. Wirt and Architect William B. Ittner have produced a school that may be termed in the best sense a model American schoolhouse.

The building, including the boiler house, measures 345 feet 9 inches by 141 feet 9 inches, and occupies a plot of ground 320 by 295 feet in size, with streets on all four sides.

The ground floor contains six classroom, two kindergarten rooms, two library rooms, four manual training rooms (each equivalent to two classrooms) with necessary store and work rooms, two gymnasiums (each the size of two classrooms), a swimming pool, toilets, janitors' rooms and heating space. It should be remarked here that all classrooms in the basement are entirely above ground.

The first floor has twelve classrooms, a principal's office and two teachers' rooms, sup-

ply rooms, two locker rooms and toilets. One the second floor there are twelve classrooms, two manual training rooms, two infirmaries, a conservatory, and toilet rooms. A drawing room, equal in size to two classrooms, is on the third floor.

The total number of classrooms or equivalents is fifty-two. In addition, there is an auditorium that will seat 824 adults, of which 546 may be placed on the main floor.

The main hallways are arranged for use as art galleries or school museums and the one in the basement may be turned into a playroom on wet days.

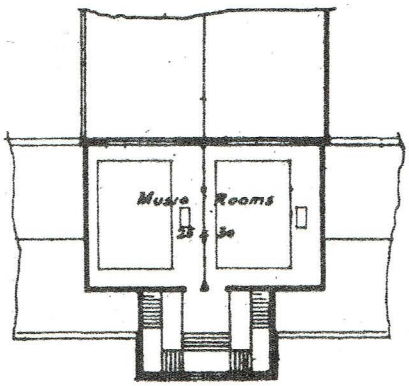
The construction is fireproof except the roof. All walls are built of vitrified brick laid in cement mortar. Ground floor halls, manual training, lock and toilet rooms, gymnasium and pool have a seven foot wainscoting of white enameled brick. Marble has been used for all hall baseboards, stairs and toilet room partitions. The interior finish is quarter sawed oak; the floors are granitoid, marble or clear maple. Blackboards are slate; and window stools are brick. A program master clock controls clocks, bells and gongs. A telephone system connects all the rooms. The heating system is a steam blower plant, fitted with a Zellinger air washer and Johnson automatic control.

The building cost, complete, $223,000, of which $28,000 was applied to the heating plant and $20,000 for equipment.

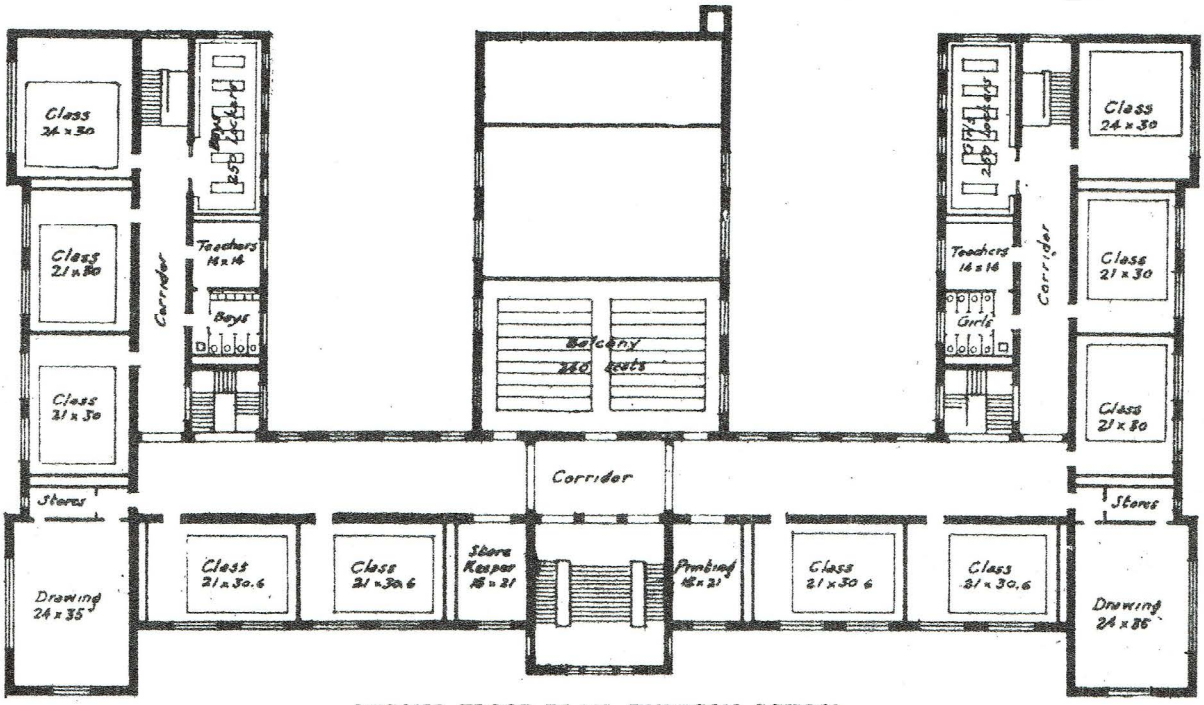
With the customary school organization there are in the building a total of thirty-five regular classrooms. With forty children per teacher this would accommodate 1,400 children, and the average architect would compute his per capita cost at about $140. However, two rooms are intended for a library substation, one for a special music room, one for a special drawing room, which leaves only thirty rooms for regular class work. Of these, four are required for natural science laboratories where only half schoolroom classes can be accommodated at one time. Thus there are twenty-six rooms for regular classes of forty students each and four classrooms for classes of twenty students, each making a total of 1,120 as the capacity of the building. The actual per capita cost with forth children per teacher would, therefore, be about $178. [To be continued]

1910 floor plans are on the next two pages.

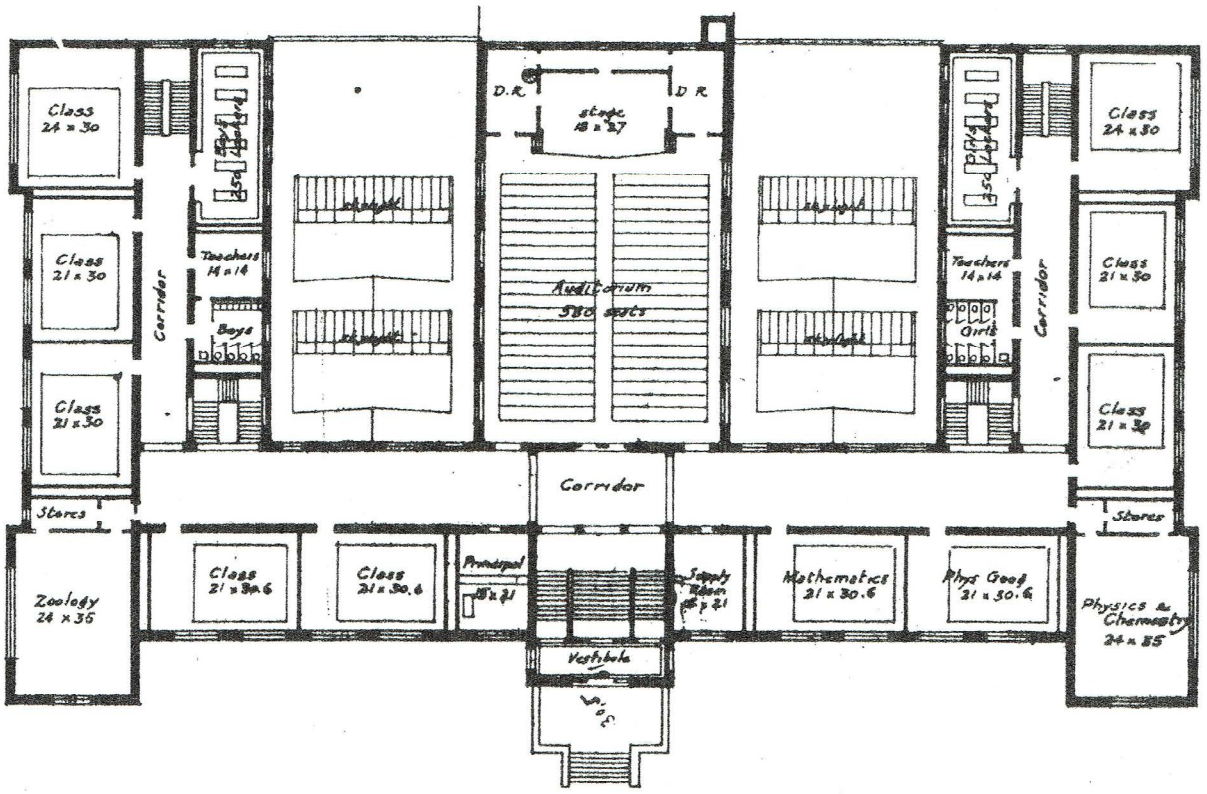
Emerson School Floor Plans—Top to Bottom



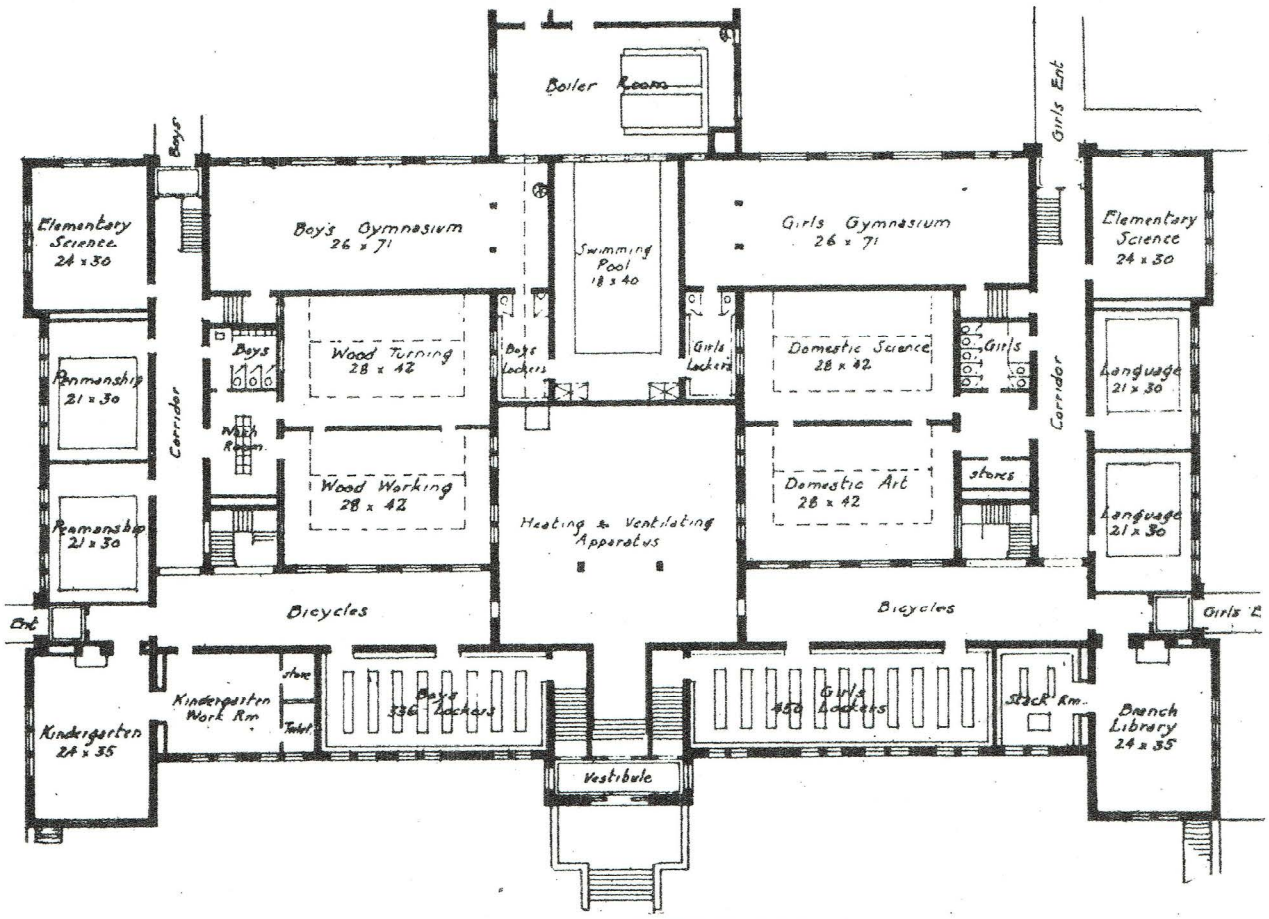
THIRD FLOOR PLAN.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN, EMERSON SCHOOL



FIRST FLOOR PLAN, EMERSON SCHOOL.



BASEMENT PLAN, EMERSON SCHOOL.