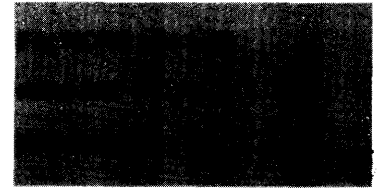


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Eastern High School; Gompers School (preferred)
and/or common Samuel Gompers General Vocational School #298

2. Location

street & number 1701 East North Avenue n/a not for publication
city, town Baltimore n/a vicinity of congressional district Seventh
state Maryland code 24 county independent city code 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name City of Baltimore
street & number 100 North Holliday Street
city, town Baltimore n/a vicinity of state Maryland 21202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Circuit Court
street & number 110 North Calvert Street
city, town Baltimore state Maryland 21202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust
Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1984 federal state county local
depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle
city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u> n/a </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resources		
Contributing	Noncontributing	Number of previously listed
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings	National Register properties
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites	included in this nomination: <u> 0 </u>
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures	
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects	Original and historic functions
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total	and uses: education

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The free-standing building occupies the entire 189' x 210' lot at the intersection formed by Broadway and East North Avenue. The building was designed and built during a period from 1904-1906 as a public high school and remained as an educational facility until its closing in 1981. The flat roofed building has four floor levels, and is roughly square in plan. Designed in the classical idiom, the building 'rests' on a granite base which extends up to the first floor line covering all sides with the exception of the rear. A medium-tone red brick laid in Flemish bond pattern makes up the body of the elevation, broken only by a continuous band of limestone at the third floor line, and a regular displaced fenestration pattern. There also exists a pronounced architrave-like limestone and stucco band at the roof line. The entablature is completed by a horizontal parapet cap of limestone. At the center of the principal elevation (North Avenue) protrudes the main entry; tri-partite in arrangement. Above, a flush, stuccoed pediment is supported by four 24' high columns of the Doric order. The floor plans are symmetrical in composition about the north-south axis. The assembly hall is located at the very center of the structure on the first and second floors. At the basement level the gymnasium occupied the center directly beneath the assembly hall. Its floor was excavated lower than the general basement floor level so as to permit more height for activity. About the perimeter of the building the classrooms are arranged, so located that each classroom enjoys an abundance of natural light. Most of these rooms still have the original wood floors and a stamped metal ceiling. The art room, located above the entry foyer on the third floor has north light provided by the windows and a skylight, with pitch to conform to the solstice of the sun. The interior wood trim used throughout the building is from quartered white oak and originally finished to resemble mahogany. Nearly all the original slate blackboards (also framed in oak) still remain.

See Continuation Sheet No. 1 for General Description.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Gompers School
Continuation sheet Baltimore City, Maryland Item number 7 Page 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

This free-standing building occupies the entire 189' x 210' lot on the southeast corner of the intersection formed by Broadway and East North Avenue and is located approximately five miles northeast of the downtown central business district, City of Baltimore, Maryland.

The building was designed and built during a period from 1904-1906 as a public high school and remained as an educational facility until its closing in 1981. The building has four floor levels, is roughly square in plan, and because the site slopes away from front to back, it is 3½ stories at the north (front) elevation and a full 4 stories above grade at the south (rear) elevation. The roof is primarily flat.

Designed in the classical idiom, the building rests on a granite base which extends up to the first floor line covering all sides with the exception of the rear. A medium-tone red brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern makes up the body of the elevation, broken only by a continuous band of limestone at the third floor line, and a regular displaced fenestration pattern. There also exists a pronounced architrave-like limestone and stucco band at the roof line. The entablature is completed by a horizontal parapet cap of limestone. The banding below the parapet replaces an original modillioned cornice.

The overall effect of the elevations are classically dignified; both proportionate and symmetrically balanced. At the center of the principle elevation (North Avenue) protrudes the main entry; tri-partite in arrangement.

Above, a flush, stuccoed pediment which originally was sculptured and dentilled, is supported by four 24' high columns of the Doric order. Granite steps lead from the sidewalk to the three main entry doors above which are arched fixed glass transoms spilling light into the interior lobby. Two exit doors located on each side elevation are also symmetrically placed and correspond to the four exit stairway locations. These doors are articulated with a limestone surround. Windows are painted wood sash, 2 over 2 double-hung with a small rectangular fixed glass transom. Above each window is a masonry flat 'jack' arch. The window sills are of limestone.

The floor plans are symmetrical in composition about the north-south axis. The assembly hall is located at the very center of the structure on the first and second floors. It is lighted through windows leading to two central open-air courts (east and west sides). The assembly hall is directly entered from the main entrance, through the lobby. A gallery is provided with entrances from the second floor corridor. Seating for 1200 people is oriented to the south end of the assembly hall where the stage is located. At the basement level the gymnasium occupied the center directly beneath the assembly hall. Its floor was excavated lower than the general basement floor level so as to permit more height for activity.

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

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National Park Service**

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Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet Gompers School Item number 7 Page 2
Baltimore City, Maryland

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

About the perimeter of the building the classrooms are arranged, so located that each classroom enjoys an abundance of natural light. Most of these rooms still have the original wood floors and a stamped metal ceiling. The art room, located above the entry foyer on the third floor has north light provided by the windows and a skylight, with pitch to conform to the solstice of the sun.

A ten feet wide corridor separates the perimeter classrooms from the central assembly hall and light courts, thereby inscribing a basically square circulation pattern. Terrazo flooring exists and the walls of the corridor are finished with a marble wainscote. Spaces that were originally used as coat rooms were arranged at the four inside corners of the corridors and interior stairways are located at the outer corners. The stairways also have a marble wainscote; the railings are made of ornamental iron and capped with a wood handrail.

The interior wood trim used throughout the building is from quartered white oak and originally finished to resemble mahogany. However, it has since been painted many times. Nearly all the original slate blackboards (also framed in oak) still remain.

Other alterations made over time include elimination of a running track, kitchen expansion, and installation of toilets for Blacks in the early 1930s. Some classrooms were enlarged in the 1930s and 1970s by demolition of some interior walls. Following a fire in 1974, the proscenium arch was removed from the stage of the assembly hall.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1905–1906 **Builder/Architect** Simonson & Pietsch, Architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A, C
 Applicable Exceptions: none
 Significance Evaluated: local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Gompers School, originally called Eastern High School, is important for association with the progressive movement that dominated public education in Baltimore in the early years of the twentieth century. William Fox notes in Maryland: A History 1632-1974 that the period from 1866 to 1900 was a time of "arrested development" for the city's public education program. The reform of Baltimore's City Charter in 1899 resulted in the appointment of its first Board of Education separate from the pressures of local ward politics. Under the new system, the professional standards of teachers and principals were raised, a progressive curriculum was introduced and the city began to move its schools from the crowded and poor environment of rented spaces in warehouse structures to new school buildings. Their interior arrangements were those of a far more complex program and being conceived as monuments to learning and respectability, the new schools had built into them the philosophy of health and productivity. Gompers School is the first major school building to be constructed under the new "progressive" spirit. Unlike such previous major school buildings as Baltimore City College, 1896, and Western High School, 1895, this building is characterized by a series of classrooms ringing an open court to allow maximum ventilation and light. In response to the recent Great Fire, the Gompers School like other public buildings of the period was built utilizing the latest in fire safety techniques.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets No. 6 and 7.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property .91 acres, 188.94' X 210'

Quadrangle name Baltimore East, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	8	3	6	2	5	0	0	4	3	5	2	4	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet No. 7.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
n/a			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Harry A. Prushansky, General Partner

organization Gompers Limited Partnership date December 7, 1984

street & number 330 North Charles Street #614 telephone (301) 837-8808

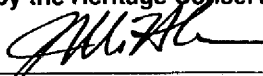
city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21201

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

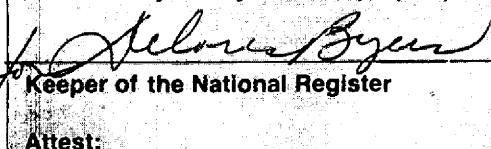
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature  date 5-17-85

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
 Keeper of the National Register	Entered in the National Register date <u>6-20-85</u>
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet Gompers School Item number 8 Page 3
Baltimore City, Maryland

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

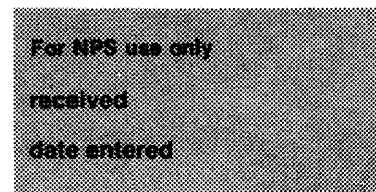
At the turn of the century, public education in Baltimore City began to reflect the goals and values of the nation-wide 'Progressive Movement.'¹ Educational progressivism in particular stood as an attempt to better the lives of the people by increasing the efficiency and expanding the roles of the schools. The reform of Baltimore's City Charter in 1899 resulted in the appointment of its first Board of Education separate from the pressures of local ward politics.² Under the new system headed by "forward-looking" James H. Van Sickle as school superintendent, the professional standards of teachers and principals were raised, a progressive curriculum was introduced and the city began to move its schools from the crowded and poor environment of rented spaces in warehouse structures to new school buildings.³ Their interior arrangements were those of a far more complex program and being conceived as monuments to learning and respectability, the new schools had built into them the philosophy of health and productivity. The ediface presented here, a new Eastern High School, was commissioned in 1904 to replace the smaller Eastern Female High School located at the corner of Aisquith and Orleans Streets. The new building stands today as an example of one of the first major school buildings to be constructed under the new 'progressive' educational system in the city of Baltimore.

On February 7, 1904, as the competition to select a building design for the new Eastern High School was being organized, the city was nearly destroyed by the Great Baltimore Fire. Inevitably the response to the fire was a great deal of concern over fire protection. The Board of Education "began bracing themselves for the idea that it would cost 25 to 30 percent more to build fireproof schools."⁴ On September 2, 1904 'expert' (sole judge) Edward Crane from Philadelphia selected the winning design entry, submitted by Baltimore architects, Simonson & Pietsch. The architects in the opening three paragraphs of the descriptive statement submitted with the building design acknowledged the City's new concern for fire safety by their emphasis on how the stairs and corridors were arranged for efficient egress "insuring absolute safety for the occupants in case of panic or fire."⁴ The building was almost entirely constructed with fireproof materials. In his Annual Report for 1906, the Supervisor of School Buildings noted in reference to the completed school "that fireproofed school buildings are of value to a community, possibly in the relief afforded to the mind of the anxious parent."⁶

Mr. Crane stated in his recommendation to the School Commissioners that the proposed building design by Simonson & Pietsch was the "best of 19 submitted designs; most reasonable as to the cost of construction and utilizing the space in the building to better advantage than any other."⁷ The estimated cost of the new building was \$250,000 - \$275,000. A classical design; emphasizing balance, symmetry and restraint was employed as the method of giving the new elements of a 'progressive' program a clear sense of spatial order and unity. Around the vast assembly hall, all the rooms are arranged with a clarity that made the plan seem inevitable.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Gompers School
Continuation sheet Baltimore City, Maryland Item number 8 Page 4

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Symbolically, the strength and position of the new school program was expressed by the massive exterior appearance as well as its location, occupying one entire corner block at the intersection of two major streets. The desire on the part of the architects to reinforce the uniqueness of public places was one of the important positive aspects of the resurgent neoclassicism at the turn of the century in the United States as well as in the city of Baltimore.

The new Eastern High School building, built by D. W. & G. H. Thomas, Contractors and supervised by Edward D. Preston, began construction in early 1905 and was completed in November of 1906. It continued to house the Eastern High School until it was moved to a new and larger structure. In 1950 the building was reopened and dedicated as Sammuel Gompers Vocational High School on October 13, 1950. It was named to mark the 100 year centennial of Gomper's birth. As founder and first President of the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.), Gompers fought to end child labor and advanced the theory that a student's education should be supplemented with technical training as a way to improve America's future industrial skills and intelligence.⁸ In 1981 the school building was again abandoned and has remained vacant to the present day. The building is to be rehabilitated for apartments.

Gompers School was designed by Otto C. Simonson (1862-1922) and Theodore Wells Pietsch (1868-1930). For twenty-five years, Simonson was Superintendent of Public Works in Baltimore. Pietsch, a native of Chicago, studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Simonson is known for his design of the Maryland Casualty Company building (also known as Hearst Tower) which was built in 1912 and is now known as the Tower Building, located at 222 East Baltimore Street. Pietsch's known works are the Zion Church, built in 1912, U.S. Fidelity and Guaranty building (1907) and the Jackson Place School, completed in 1923. Together, in addition to Gompers School, they designed what is now the Rotunda Shopping Center at 711 West 40th Street; the American Building across East Baltimore Street from the Tower Building; the United Way Building at 20-24 Light Street; the Southern Hotel at Light and Redwood Streets, now the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School; and the Sonneborn Building at Paca and Pratt Streets. In addition, Pietsch designed the Broadway Recreation Pier in 1914, the old Maryland Institute and surrounding market place buildings, including the Fish Market in 1907, the Industrial Building at 501 East Preston Street in 1912; and Saints Phillip and James Church at Charles and 29th Streets in 1928.

For Footnotes, see Continuation Sheet No. 5

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Gompers School
Continuation sheet Baltimore City, Maryland

Item number

8

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Footnotes

1. Raymond S. Sweeny, "Public Education in Maryland in the Progressive Era" in Maryland Historical Magazine, 1967, p. 28.
2. Andrea R. Andrews, "The Baltimore School Building Program 1870-1900, Study of Urban Reform" in Maryland Historical Magazine, Vol. 70, 1975, p. 270-274.
3. Sweeny, p. 28.
4. S. Olson, Baltimore, Baltimore, Md., 1980, p. 248.
5. For a detail discussion of the competition see: "The New Eastern Female High School Building" in The Baltimore American, Sept. 4, 1904., p. 10.
6. Baltimore Board of School Commissioners Annual Report, 1906, p. 147-148.
7. The Baltimore American, op. cit., p. 10.
8. Matthew Woll, "Why Name a School for Gompers" (a copy of the address delivered at the school's dedication on October 13, 1950) in Baltimore Bulletin of Education, Vol. XXVIII, 1950, p. 2-6.

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet Gompers School
Baltimore City, Maryland Item number 9 Page 6

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Andrews, Andrea R., "The Baltimore School Building Program 1870-1900, Study of Urban Reform", Maryland Historical Magazine, Vol. 70, No. 3, Fall 1975.

Baltimore Board of School Commissioners, "Report of the Supervisor of School Buildings", Baltimore Board of School Commissioners Annual Report, Vol. 77, December 31, 1905.

Baltimore Board of School Commissioners, "Report of the Supervisor of School Buildings", Baltimore Board of School Commissioners Annual Report, Vol 78, December 31, 1906.

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O'Reilly, Harry E., "Samuel Gompers: Founder of A.F.L.", Baltimore Bulletin of Education, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, Nov.-Dec., 1950.

Simonson, Otto G. & Pietsch, Theodore Wells, Recent Works of Simonson & Pietsch, Architects, January, 1906, (Peale Museum, Baltimore).

Sweeny, Raymond S., "Public Education in Maryland in the Progressive Era", Maryland Historical Magazine, Vol. 62, March 1967.

"The New Eastern Female High School Building", Baltimore American Newspaper, September 4, 1904.

Woll, Matthew, "Why Name a School For Gompers", Baltimore Bulletin of Education, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, Nov.-Dec., 1950.

See Continuation Sheet No. 7

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet Gompers School
Baltimore City, Maryland Item number 9 and 10 Page 7

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Dorsey, John and James Dilts, A guide to Baltimore Architecture: Centreville Maryland.: Tidewater Publishers, 1981, p. 285.

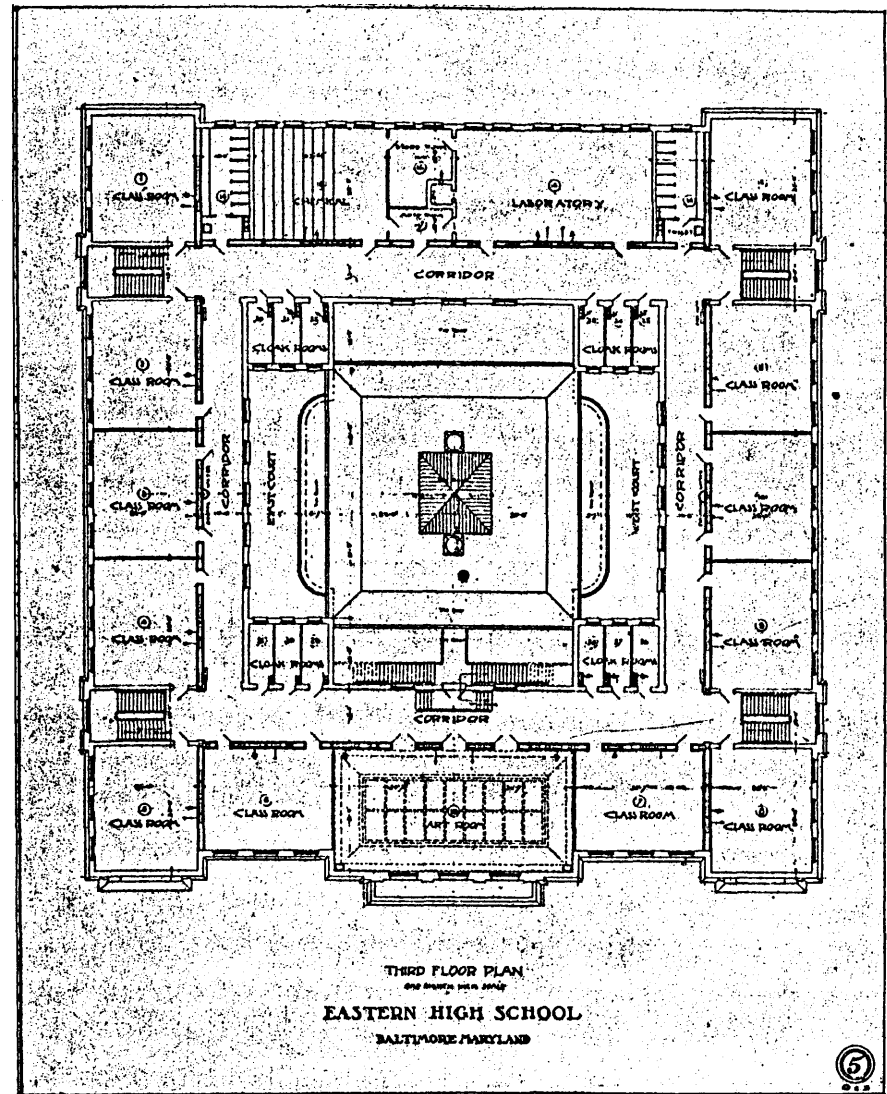
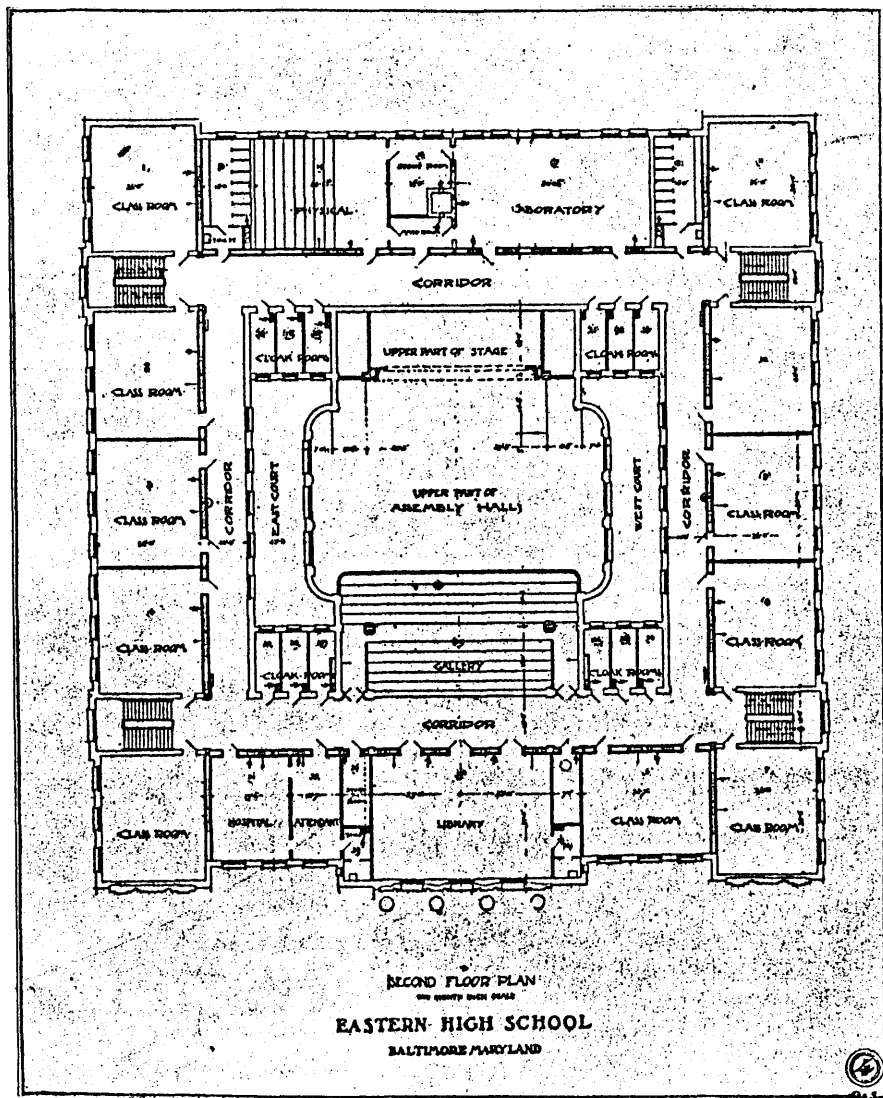
Whitney, Henry F. and Elsie R. Whitney. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc. 1956, pp. 472-473 and 555-556.

Walsh, Richard and William Lloyd Fox, ed. Maryland: A History 1632-1974. Baltimore, Maryland Historical Society, 1974, pp. 509-519.

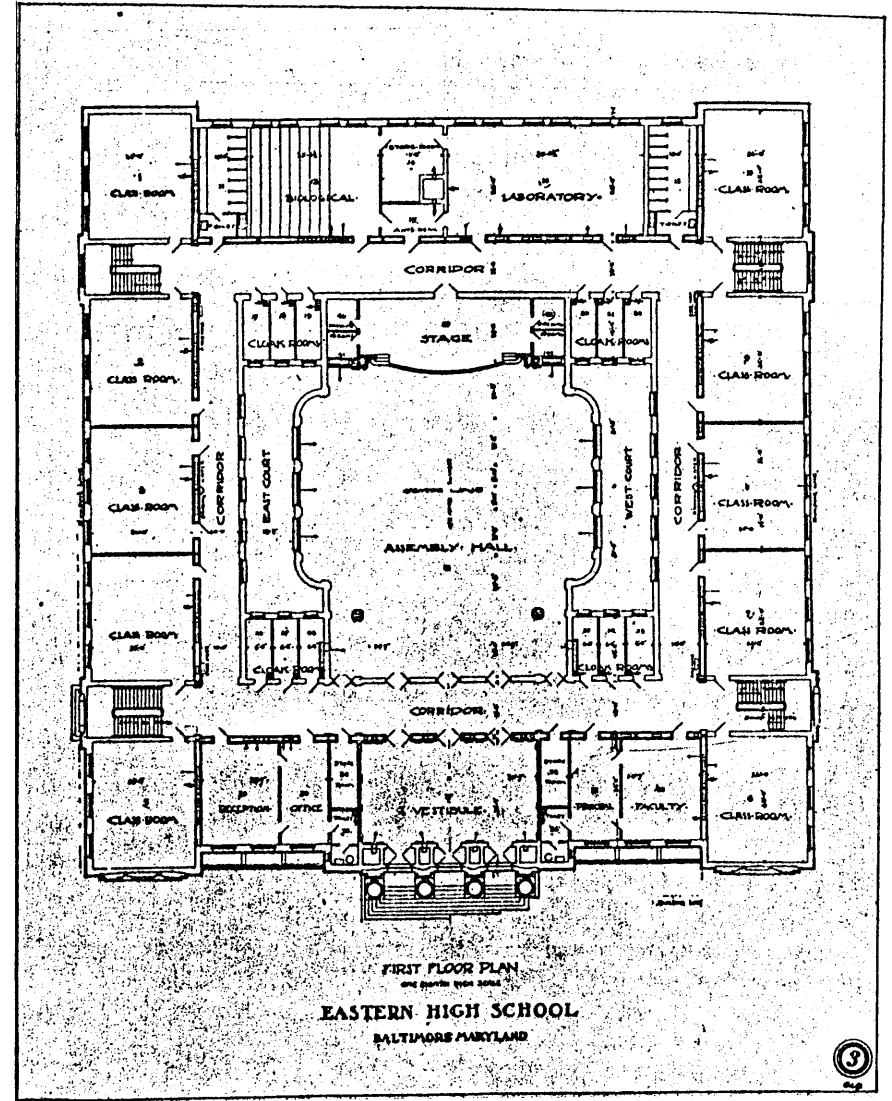
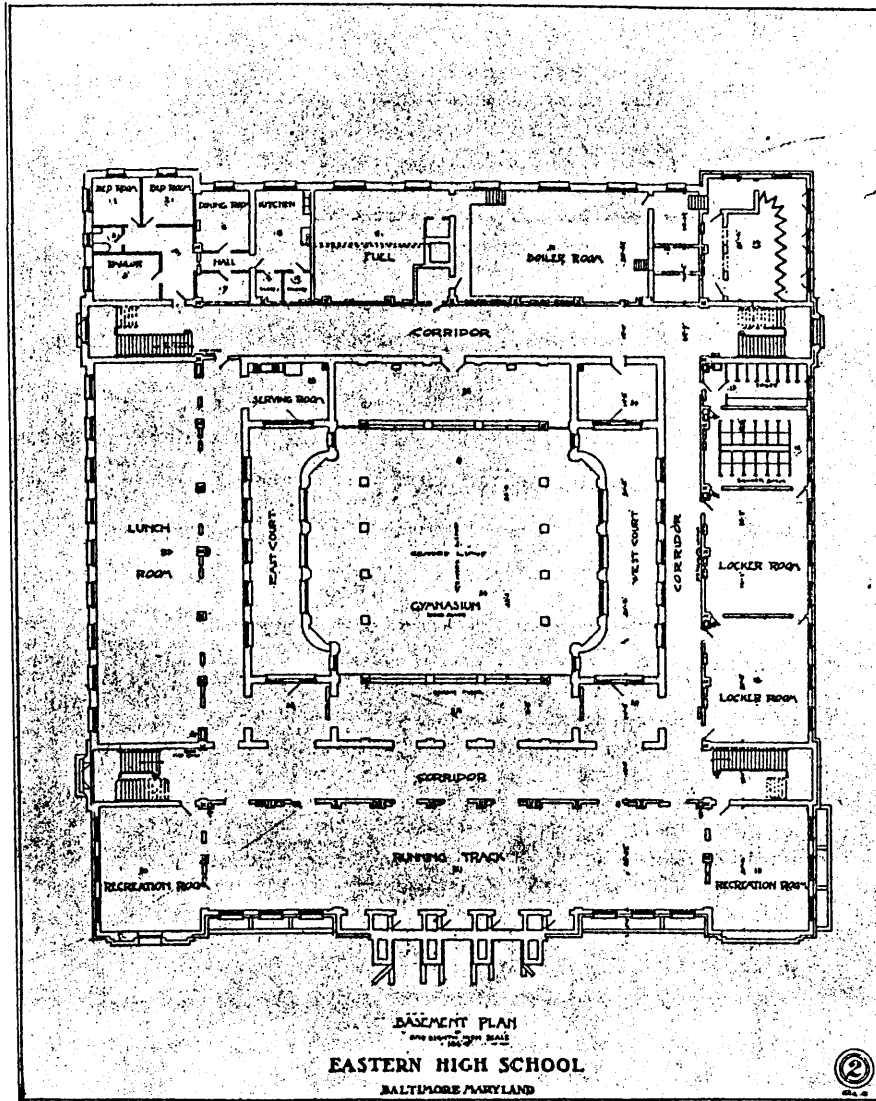
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

The property is a rectangular shaped plot measuring 188.94' along East North Avenue and 210' along Broadway. It is bounded by East North Avenue on the North, North Register Street on the east, an alley on the south, and Broadway on the west. The property consists only of the city lot upon which the building stands.

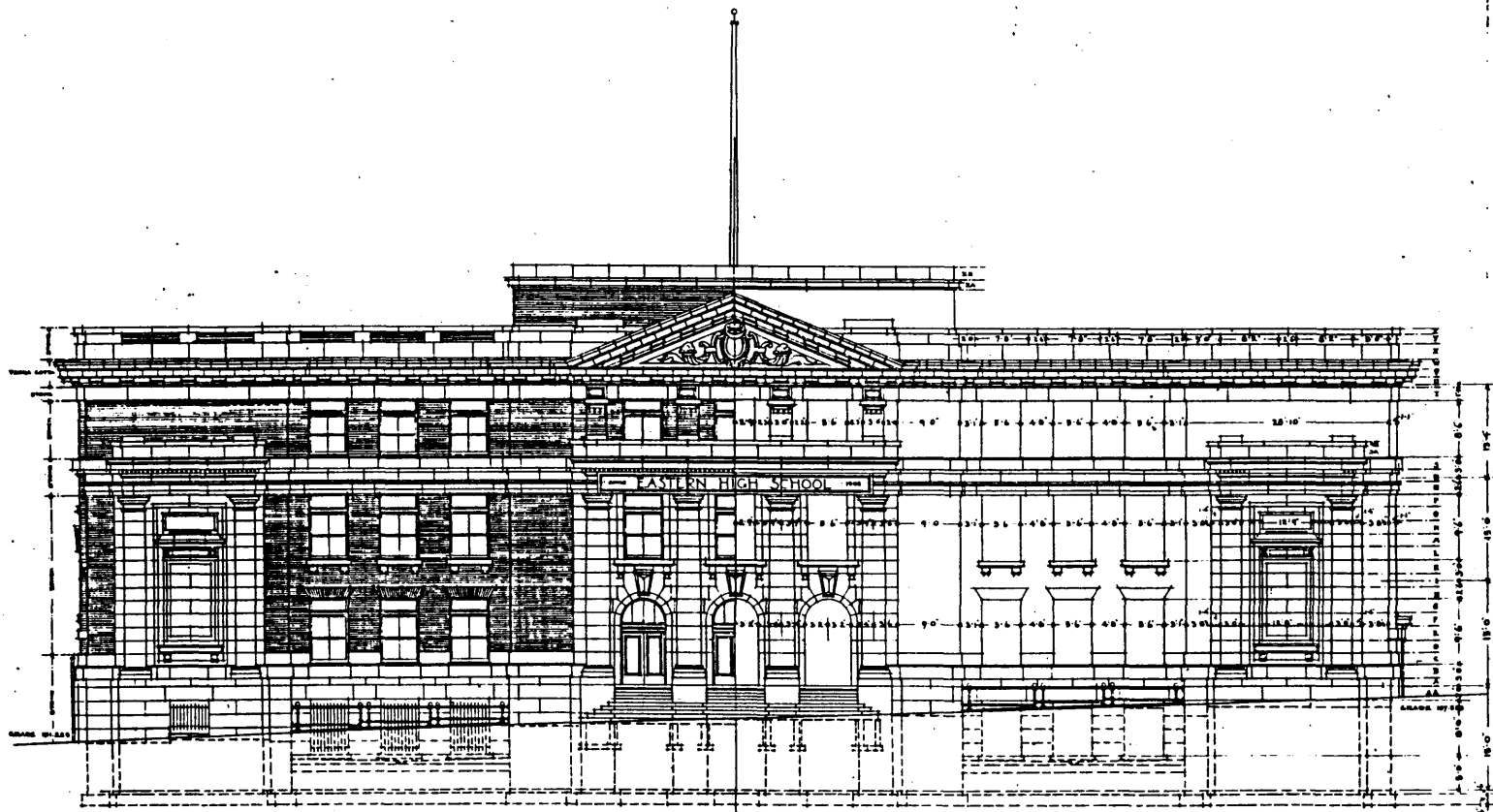


GOMPERS SCHOOL
Baltimore, Maryland



GOMPERS SCHOOL

Baltimore, Maryland



ELEVATION ON NORTH AVENUE
ONE EIGHTH INCH SCALE

EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL
BALTIMORE MARYLAND

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Edward Weston
ARCHITECT

Shaw-Walker & Co.
ARCHITECTS



GOMPERS SCHOOL

Baltimore, Maryland