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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

JAN 18 1990

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name MAPLEWOOD SCHOOL
other names/site number Grammar School No. 5

2. Location

street & number 434 Maplewood Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Bridgeport N/A vicinity
state Connecticut code CT county Fairfield code 001 zip code 06605

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u> </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u> </u>
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

John W. Shannahan 1/12/90
Signature of certifying official John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Date
Officer: _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet. *Shelores Byer* 2/28/90

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Renaissance

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof Inaccessible

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Bridgeport's Maplewood School (Photograph 1) is a large 2-story, flat-roofed brick school built in 1893. It subsequently was twice enlarged: around 1904 short perpendicular wings were added to both ends, and in 1908 a separate annex building was built to the northeast. The original school building as it now stands is I-shaped in plan, 155 by 80 feet, with the narrower ends facing Linwood and Maplewood avenues. These elevations (Photograph 2) are identical and have a central entrance recessed deep within an arched opening. The brickwork surrounding the entry projects a short way beyond the plane of the facade, and it bears a brownstone cornice and tablet with the school's original formal name, "Grammar School No. 5." On either side of the entrance are four bays of windows, rectangular on the first story and round-arched on the second. Similar windows are grouped in twos, threes, and fours on the long side elevations (Photographs 3 and 4). Sills and straight lintels are of quarry-faced brownstone, as are stringcourses between stories on the end wings. The building's brownstone watertable has a chiseled top slope and edge tooling (Photograph 5). Brickwork is common bond with Flemish variation, laid with pink sandy mortar. Raised brick pilasters define groups of windows in the center part of the side elevations and the second story of the end wings. Four courses of corbelling separate the top-story windows from the plain frieze encircling the building, above which is a white-painted projecting wooden cornice. A large central brick stack and smaller stacks near the end emerge from the roof. Four fire escapes on the side elevations are relatively modern additions.

The flat-roofed annex (Photographs 6 and 7) has a seven-bay center pavilion with three-bay end portions recessed about two feet behind the plane of the center part's facade; it measures 140 by 50 feet in plan. The detailing is identical with the end wings of the main school building, including brick piers, round-arched and rectangular windows, corbelling, brownstone trim, and molded cornice. The only differences in detailing are the slight brick drip molds above the arched window heads and a brownstone keystone in the arched window openings on the sides of the flat-roofed entrance porches on the side facing the school. The annex also has added fire escapes on the street-facing elevations.

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Maplewood School
Bridgeport, CT

Description (continued):

The interior of each building features a central corridor with classrooms on either side. There are eight classrooms per floor in each building. Throughout are plaster walls, pressed metal ceilings, narrow-board wainscoting, paneled doors, molded window and door trim, and narrow-board floors. The stairwells for the school are in the end wings; these have brick walls and are devoid of wainscot or other architectural trim. The classrooms have extensive areas of blackboards, moldings for hanging pictures, built-in closets, gridded openings to the ventilator stacks, and large glazed transoms in the corridor walls. The 1893 and c.1904 classrooms in the school are similar, though the latter have access to a coatroom and storage area between the old and new part of the school.¹ One classroom (Photograph 10) is equipped with early 20th-century student and teacher desks.

The school has been out of use since 1980. The basement windows are bricked up and almost all window and door openings are boarded up with plywood. Those that remain unblocked show remnants of wooden two-over-two sash.

NOTE

1. The interior of the annex was not accessible; from the outside, the classrooms appeared identical to those in the school, except for a different pattern of pressed-metal ceilings.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1893-1908

Significant Dates

1893
1904, 1908

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Longstaff & Hurd, architect, school
Joseph Northrup, architect, annex

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

Maplewood School is locally significant for its association with the development of Bridgeport's school system in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Criterion A). At that time, the city was engaged in a massive building program aimed at replacing its antiquated one and two-room schoolhouses with modern schools. The new schools, such as Maplewood, were intended both to provide a better learning environment and also simply to make for more space. Bridgeport in the period 1880-1920 underwent tremendous industrial growth, with nationally ranked manufacturers in many industries, including sewing machines, rolled brass, typewriters, ammunition, rifles, and corsets. The population increased accordingly, from 29,148 in 1880 to 70,996 in 1900 to 143,555 in 1920. The city valiantly tried to keep up by building new schools, and enlarging old ones, but it was a hopeless task. Although at Maplewood School the number of classrooms doubled in 1904 and doubled again four years later, it was still insufficient. In 1908 the Superintendent of Schools observed in discouragement that the "Maplewood additions will about take care of the expected increase, this year, and will leave us just as much inconvenienced as before."¹ Maplewood School is not architecturally elaborate, but as the work of Longstaff and Hurd, a notable Bridgeport firm, it has local architectural significance as well (Criterion C).

Educational Significance

Maplewood School² was built to replace the one-room Old South School which stood nearby on Iranistan Avenue. Maplewood was a modern school in every respect, embodying many facets of turn-of-the-century educational theory and practice. With eight classrooms, Maplewood School allowed for graded education in place of the mixed-age teaching of the old district school. It also offered numerous physical amenities not commonly found in one-room schoolhouses: extensive blackboard space,

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bridgeport Board of Education. Annual Report, in City of Bridgeport, Municipal Register, 1893-1909.

Clipping file, "Architects," Bridgeport Public Library, History Collection.

Historical and Architectural Survey of Bridgeport. Phase II. Citywide. 1986. Bridgeport City Arhcives and Connecticut Historical Commission.

Waldo, George C., Jr. (ed.). History of Bridgeport and Vicinity. New York: S.J. Clarke, 1917.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford

CT 06106

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 1.2 acres

UTM References

A

1	8
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6	5	0	1	6	0
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4	5	5	9	9	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property includes the entire lot known as 434 Maplewood Avenue, shown in the Bridgeport Assessor records as Lot 7, Block 1112, Map 4.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire school parcel.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bruce Clouette, Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator
organization Historic Resource Consultants date June 30, 1989
street & number 55 Van Dyke Avenue telephone (203) 547-0268
city or town Hartford state CT zip code 06106

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Statement of Significance (continued):

indoor toilets in the basement, central heating, and closet space for storing school materials (until the 1890s Connecticut schools commonly did not provide books or other materials and therefore had no need for closets). The school also reflects the period's concern for fire safety in its masonry construction and exposed-brick stairwell walls. At the same time, some physical aspects of the school seem archaic by modern standards, such as the large classrooms, which typically accommodated 50 students in tightly packed rows (Photograph 10). In 1893, however, Bridgeport's school officials were well pleased with Maplewood School, noting "it is well adapted for its purposes, attractive in appearance, and will afford much needed relief."³

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, educationists promoted the value of a healthy learning environment. Maplewood School reflects this concern in its provisions for light and ventilation. In addition to supplying ample light, the many large windows gave access to outside air in the warm months, with circulation assured by the transoms in each classroom. In winter, each classroom could receive fresh air from a nearby ventilator stack, heated by steam pipes in the basement. Schools across the country were built with some variant of indirect heating in the period, but Bridgeport was especially conscious of the system's value: prominent manufacturer and school-board member Nathaniel Wheeler had developed and patented one method and was a vocal promoter of the idea.

The enlargements to Maplewood School typify the response to burgeoning child populations in industrial cities throughout Connecticut. When the school was built in 1893, there were few houses in the surrounding area, known as the West End. However, speculators had already divided up most of the vacant land, such as the estate of wealthy carriage manufacturer Frederick Wood, into house lots. Over the next two decades, the area was densely built up, mostly with two-family houses belonging to small proprietors and skilled industrial workers of European immigrant heritage. The row of two-family houses across from the school on Maplewood Avenue, for example, was owned and occupied in 1910 by several industrial workers, a city firefighter, a grocer, and two bakery workers, split almost evenly between Irish and Swedish names⁴. These were the people who rode the crest of Bridgeport's industrial prosperity, becoming homeowners in areas like the West End, and throwing the city's school system into a losing game of catch-up.

Architectural Significance

The schools which Bridgeport built in the 1890s were functional and attractive, and all had some architectural elaboration to give them an

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Statement of Significance (continued):

appearance of serious cultural purpose. In Maplewood School, as well as the Wheeler School on Highland Avenue, built at the same time from the same plans, this effect is achieved through the use of round-arched windows, brownstone trim, Classical cornices, and the prominent arched entries. These details, as well as the flat roof and overall symmetry of the building, appear to be derived from the Renaissance Revival architectural style which became popular for institutional buildings around the turn of the century.

The architect for the school was the firm of Longstaff and Hurd. George W. Longstaff was a builder with a talent for design, and his partner, Frank W. Hurd, was a lumber dealer. Hurd also brought social and political connections to the partnership, since he was the son of Frederick Hurd, treasurer and superintendent of the Wheeler & Wilson sewing machine company, at one time Bridgeport's largest manufacturer.⁵ Together Longstaff and Hurd offered a complete building service, from design to supplying lumber and architectural millwork (which they also manufactured) to actual construction. Longstaff would even design and construct appropriate furniture if requested. The firm had a brisk business building houses, commercial blocks, and institutional buildings. They also worked outside the city, building an addition to the Wadsworth Athnenum in Hartford.⁶ The pinnacle of their work, however, is the Barnum Museum in Bridgeport, an elaborate Romanesque-style building and a major landmark of downtown Bridgeport. Longstaff and Hurd went bankrupt in 1894.

NOTES

1. Bridgeport Board of Education, Report, 1908, p. 7.
2. The formal name, Grammar School No. 5, was rarely used, even for official reports of the school board.
3. Board of Education, Report, 1894, p. 395.
4. Bridgeport City Directory, 1910.
5. One of the most influential members of the School Board at the time Frank Hurd was chosen to build these schools was Nathaniel Wheeler, one of the founders of Wheeler & Wilson and a close associate of Hurd's father.
6. Their work appears to have been replaced in one of the later expansions of the museum.

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Photographs

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All photographs:

1. MAPLEWOOD SCHOOL
2. Bridgeport, CT
3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
4. Date of Photograph: June 1989
5. Negatives filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT

Maplewood Avenue elevation, Annex in background, view north
Photograph 1 of 10

Detail of entrance, Maplewood Avenue elevation, view northwest
Photograph 2 of 10

Playground (southwest) side of school, view north
Photograph 3 of 10

Rear of school, view northwest, part of Annex on right
Photograph 4 of 10

Detail of stone watertable, Maplewood Avenue entrance, view northeast
Photograph 5 of 10

Annex, view southeast
Photograph 6 of 10

Maplewood Avenue elevation of Annex, view northwest
Photograph 7 of 10

Interior corridor, first floor, view northwest
Photograph 8 of 10

Interior, first-floor classroom in center of school, view northwest
Photograph 9 of 10

Interior, second-floor east end classroom, view east
Photograph 10 of 10

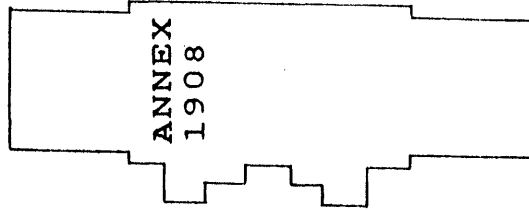
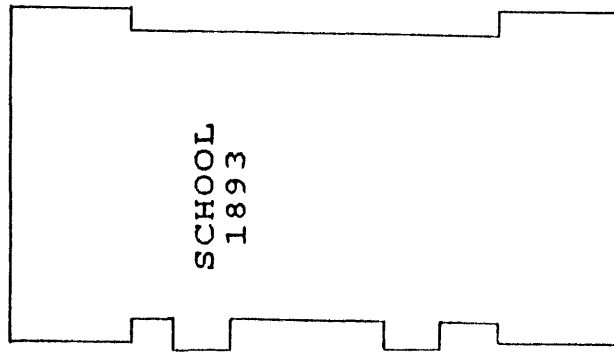
LINWOOD

AVENUE

MAPLEWOOD SCHOOL

Bridgeport, Connecticut

SKETCH PLAN



MAPLEWOOD

AVENUE

