

150022 – Baker Elementary School



150022; Baker Elementary School. This school is located at 108 West Ward Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania, in Altoona City, Blair County. It is part of the Altoona Area School District. The 1912 school is situated on a small urban lot. The building was originally oriented towards Ward Avenue, from which it is separated by a wide sidewalk and a narrow strip of landscaping. The main entrance to the school is now oriented towards paved parking lots located northeast and southeast of the building. The lots are separated by a fenced-in paved play area. At the western corner of the building is a grassy hillside and play area with modern playground equipment. A paved driveway from Ruskin Avenue accesses a maintenance area on the southwest side of the school. The driveway turns towards Ward Avenue and leaves the property through modern brick gates.

The 1912 core of the school is a two-story rectangular structure arranged around a center hall. The core includes classrooms and office space. A 1958 addition appended to the rear of the core includes additional classrooms and a library (built originally as a small multi-purpose room) arranged along a linear hallway. A 1989 addition appended to the 1958 section added a larger multi-purpose room to the building. The core is a brick structure set on a stone foundation. Decorative elements include a sandstone water table, lintels and sills, a carved name plaque, and a bell tower. The asphalt-covered roof of the core is divided into two hipped sections flanking the pyramidal bell tower. The bell tower features a tri-partite opening with an arched center with keystone. The core has two brick interior chimneys. Another brick chimney is located in the 1958 addition. The Colonial Revival original main entrance contains modern metal-frame glass double doors with a fanlight, set into an arched brick keystone lintel. It is accessed via a double set of brick stairs with iron railings. The core is lit by single or double-hung one-over-one windows. Some of the windows are topped with a single fixed light. The 1958 addition is a two-story structure with a flat roof. It is clad in brick and lit by picture and awning or hopper windows. The main entrance is now located on the northeast side of this addition. It contains metal-frame glass doors surrounded by fixed windows. The 1989 addition is a one-story brick-clad structure with simple concrete belt courses.

The original entryway of the school building has tile floors, plaster walls with wainscoting, and hanging fluorescent lights. The new entryway features terrazzo floor tiles, glazed concrete-block walls, acoustic ceiling tiles, and fluorescent lights. The library, formerly an all-purpose room built in 1958, is multi-leveled. One level was a former stage and one level was a former viewing balcony. The room features carpeting, a dropped ceiling with acoustic ceiling tiles, and fluorescent lights. The 1989 all-purpose room features concrete-block walls, tiled floor, acoustic ceiling tiles, fluorescent lights, suspended basketball hoops, and a proscenium stage. There is also a wood room divider. The school contains an art room and music practice room in the additions.

Baker Elementary School was constructed in 1912 by the Altoona School District. It was named for Elias Baker, a well-known nineteenth-century owner of the Allegheny Iron Furnace and local Altoona resident. The school was expanded in 1958. In 1989 it was expanded again, this time by the Altoona Area School District. When adding to the building, the local community chose not to make major alterations to the original building and add expansions to its rear side instead. At the dedication of the second

addition in 1989, then Superintendent of Schools Dennis Murray stated that "Baker Elementary School has always been a source of community pride and a focal point for many activities that have taken place in this neighborhood over the years" (Altoona Area School District 1989).

Altoona Area School District

- 1989 *Elias Baker Elementary School Dedication and Open House* brochure provided by the Altoona Area School District.

United States Department of Agriculture

- 1938 Aerial Photograph AQH-90-77. Created on December 16, 1938. On file at the Pennsylvania State Archives, Record Group 31, Records of the Department of Commerce, State Planning Board Collection.

United States Geological Survey

- 1981 *Hollidaysburg, PA Quadrangle*. 7.5 minute series. Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1962. Field checked 1963. Photorevised 1982. Photoinspected 1981.
- 1993 *Hollidaysburg NE, PA Aerial Photograph*. USGS Reference Number 40078-D4-02-PHT. Created on April 8, 1993.



Aerial View of Baker Elementary

More Photos of Baker Elementary School

