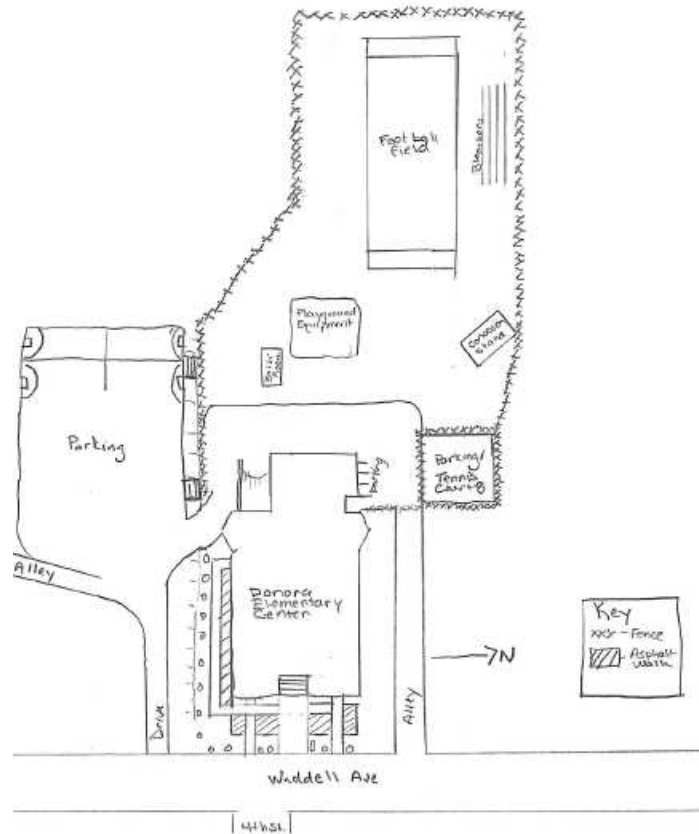
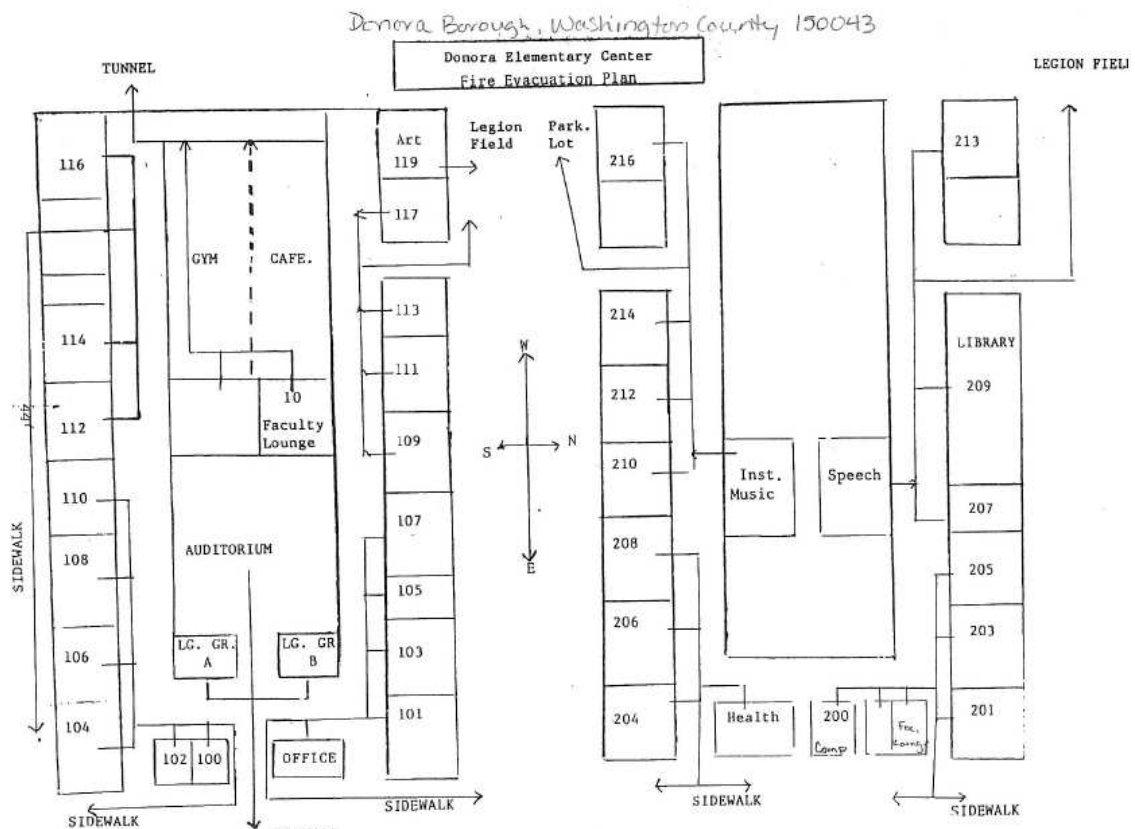


150043 – Donora Elementary Center





Site Plan of Donora Elementary



Floor Plan of Donora Elementary

150043; Donora Elementary Center. This school is located at 401 Waddell Avenue, Donora, Pennsylvania in Donora Borough, Washington County. It is part of the Ringgold School District. The 1930 school building is separated from Waddell Avenue by a courtyard with cement and asphalt sidewalks, narrow strips of grass with mature trees, benches, and a flagpole. Bushes are planted along the façade of the building. A paved driveway circles the school, connecting a large paved parking lot located south of the school building to a small parking area in a former tennis court at the northwest corner of the building and an alley north of the school. A basketball court is located at the western end of the southern parking lot. West of the school building are a playground with modern equipment, a pavilion, and a modern concrete-block restroom building. A football field is located northwest of the school. Bleachers are built into a berm on the northeast side of the field. A concession stand is located near the field. The school is built at the edge of concentrated residential development within the Borough of Donora.

The 1930 school is a two-story rectangular building with a U-shaped hallway surrounding an auditorium and a combination gymnasium/cafeteria. Classrooms line the outer edge of the hallway corridors. Originally intended as a junior and senior high school, two additional wings attached to the rear of the brick building were planned. However these wings weren't built due to the economic constraints of the Great Depression. A mid-1970s one-story addition is located at the northwest corner of the school. The addition was built as an industrial arts room. It has since been converted to an art room. The brick school sits on a cast stone foundation. The flat roof features decorative parapets. No chimneys are visible. The roof covering is unknown. The building features a variety of brick and cast stone decorative details including arches over each of the central main entrances, and cast stone pediments over currently secondary front entrances. The current main entrance is the middle of three separate sets of double doors of modern metal-frame glass doors with transoms. The secondary entrances on the front, east, façade feature the words, "Junior High School" and "Senior High School," representing the original intent of the school to function as both. The transoms over the secondary entrances are closed. The building is lit by modern metal picture and hopper windows. The upper portion of each window bay is closed.

The main entrance accesses a lobby directly in front of the auditorium. The lobby features hexagon floor tiles, brick and plaster walls, an inset wood display case, a plaster ceiling with archways, and fluorescent lights. Hallways feature similar floor tiles, walls, archways, and light fixtures. Original classroom entrances are inset wood doors with a single pane and decorative brass hardware. The auditorium features carpeted wood floors, plaster walls with two arched entrance hallways, and a proscenium stage. The room was intended to have a balcony; however, economic constraints prevented its construction. Modern alterations to the auditorium include the construction of two classrooms at the rear of the room, and the installation of a dropped ceiling with acoustic ceiling tiles and fluorescent lights. The gymnasium features wood floors, brick walls with padding, fluorescent lights, and permanent wood bleachers. A cafeteria is incorporated into the gymnasium space. It features wood floors, brick walls, unused basketball hoops, rollaway metal bleachers, and hanging safety nets. A library is located in a former lab. It features a carpeted floor, plaster walls and ceiling, and fluorescent lights. A computer room has been created from an enclosed section of hallway. It still

features the original tile floor, brick and plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with archways.

Originally intended as a junior and senior high school by the Donora School Board, the building was planned as a T-shaped structure. The two wings that were to house the junior high students were never constructed due to the onset of the Great Depression, and the building opened solely as a high school in 1930. Elements that reflect the District's original intent include inscriptions over the secondary front entrances and different colored brick on the rear of the school where the wings were to be appended. An air pollution incident in Donora in 1948 spurred the installation of air quality monitoring equipment in the second floor of the school. The Donora School District was incorporated into the newly formed Ringgold School District in the mid 1960s. The 1960s brought a decline in Donora's population due to the closure of major industries in the borough. That and the declining condition of the district's early school buildings led to multiple school closures. For a portion of the 1972-73 school year, students from the junior high school attended classes in the high school building. It was the only time the building was used for both educational levels. In the mid-1970s, an industrial arts addition (later an art room) was added to the building. During this time the Ringgold School District reorganized its facilities, which included major construction and renovation plans. A new Ringgold High School was constructed and Donora High School (as well as the district's Monongahela High School) was converted into one of three elementary centers. Donora Elementary Center was established between 1977 and 1979.

Historical information provided by Donora Elementary Center.

United States Department of Agriculture

- 1938 Aerial Photograph APT-12-49. Created on September 25, 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

- 1993 *Donora SW, PA Aerial Photograph*. USGS Reference Number 40079-B7-04-PHT. Created on April 23, 1993.
- 1998 *Donora, PA Quadrangle*. 7.5 minute series. Derived from imagery taken 1952 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery taken 1993. Survey control current as of 1954. Boundaries, other than corporate, verified 1998. Denver, CO.



Aerial View of Donora Elementary

More Photos of Donora Elementary Center

