A look back at Westwood history

Westwood Elementary became part of Dayton Public Schools in 1920, when it was annexed from Harrison Township Schools; it was the largest elementary school in that annexation. Due to a burgeoning population (some 1,000 to 1,200 students) in the 1950s, the school underwent a number of additions and expansions. In 1957, a new auditorium-gymnasium was constructed as part of the third addition to the school in a decade. The old gym was converted into eight classrooms, bringing the total number to 44 classrooms.

The school also saw many educational changes over the years. In 1968, Westwood was split into two sections, with kindergarten through third grades in one area and fourth through seventh grades in another. The goal, according to then-principal Bill Harrison, was to “give the students closer supervision by specialists.” At that point, Westwood had more than 1,600 students.

The school was closed in 1982. When the original school was razed, the gymnasium was left standing and serves today as the Westwood Community Center, a City of Dayton Recreation and Youth Services facility.

Ground was broken in November 2006 for the new school, which is built on the original site of Westwood Park. The site was acquired through collaboration with the City of Dayton.

Like the other new preK-8 buildings, the new Westwood PK-8 School will serve 473 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade and will provide more than 72,000 square feet of space for educational programs. The school facilities will be available after school hours for neighborhood activities.