

Existing Conditions Assessment

Wirt County High School

ASSESSMENT: Visual existing conditions review and CEFPP baseline summary

FIELD OBSERVATION DATE: September 9, 2026

REPORT DRAFT DATE: September 20, 2026

CLIENT: Wirt County Board of Education

SITE ADDRESS: 431 Mulberry St, Elizabeth, WV 26143

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION: CEFPP facility data, historical facility narrative, and September 9, 2026 field observations

1. Executive Summary

Wirt County High School is an approximately 78,000-square-foot secondary school campus anchored by an original three-story building constructed in 1938 and expanded through nine additions. The original building is a masonry-bearing-wall and wood-framed structure with a partially below-grade lower level. Later additions are generally one-story masonry-bearing-wall and steel-framed structures. Historical CEFPP information describes the overall facility as average in condition and identifies the original 1938 building as needed improvements. The 2020 CEFPP did not adequately address all of the existing conditions.

Field observations completed on September 9, 2026 identified substantial deficiencies within the original building and building-system deficiencies affecting the 1977 classroom addition. These include persistent water penetration through solid brick walls; recurring leakage at junctions between additions; sagging wood floor and roof framing; prior deterioration and repair of wood floor components; continuing water intrusion into the basement electrical area; poor-condition windows; original doors and noncompliant hardware; unreliable HVAC systems that do not adequately condition the buildings, including insufficient fresh-air ventilation in the 1977 classroom wing; an electrical system subject to frequent outages and overloads; original switchgear for which replacement parts are unavailable; and a failed sanitary line that causes recurring sewer backups and has rendered the locker rooms unusable.

The site is constrained but remains generally adequate for continued school operation. An open field and parking area are located near the cafeteria building, and the football field occupies the opposite side of the campus. The football field is cramped and should be considered for enlargement or relocation. Historical CEFPP information also identifies limited acreage, scattered and generally unpaved parking, bus loading along Mulberry Street, inadequate separation of vehicle and student circulation, and limited capacity for future expansion without acquiring adjoining property.

Professional assessment: The observed conditions indicate that the proposed work should be organized as both a building-integrity program and a comprehensive modernization program. Structural, sanitary, water-intrusion, electrical, roofing, and building-envelope needs should receive first priority, followed by HVAC, accessibility, educational technology, interior, and site improvements.

Alternatively, consider replacing the educational spaces while keeping the newer additions: the gym, Auditorium, and cafeteria. Using a phased approach, a new academic wing can be added adjacent to the cafeteria building without disturbing the use of the existing building. Once the new building is built, the original building can be demolished, and areas of the existing school could be remodeled over the summer.

2. Purpose and Scope

This draft consolidates available historical CEFPP information, facility metrics, and field observations into an organized record of existing conditions at Wirt County High School. Its purposes are to document reported and observed

deficiencies, identify priorities for additional investigation, support capital and bond planning, and establish a framework for documentation and discipline-specific evaluations.

The September 9, 2026 review was visual and non-destructive. No structural calculations, destructive testing, material testing, subsurface exploration, pipe camera investigation, electrical load study, air-balance testing, code-compliance analysis, accessibility survey, hazardous-material assessment, or concealed-condition investigation is documented in the information provided to date.

3. Facility Profile and CEFP Baseline Data

Data	Wirt County High School
School Number	094501
Original Construction	1938
Number of Additions	9
Approximate Building Area	78,000 square feet
5th-Year Projected Enrollment	241 students
Cost to Bring Facility to Current Codes & Standards	\$15,434,457
Replacement Cost - SBA Formula	\$23,200,000
Building Program Capacity	715
Program Utilization (%)	39.3%

The reported capacity exceeds the fifth-year projected enrollment. Future planning should therefore consider the efficient use, consolidation, and modernization of existing space in addition to the physical repair needs.

4. Existing Conditions

4.1 Facility History and Construction

Wirt County High School was first constructed in 1938. Three additions and renovation projects were completed from 1948 through 1962. An approximately 20,000-square-foot addition was completed in 1977. Additional work between 1982 and 1997 added approximately 31,000 square feet, resulting in a reported total building area of approximately 78,000 square feet. The facility is reported to have nine additions overall.

The original 1938 building is a three-story masonry-bearing-wall and wood-framed structure with a lower level partially below grade. Later additions are generally one-story masonry-bearing-wall and steel-framed construction. The overall buildings have historically been described as well maintained and in average condition, except for the original building, which requires major improvements.

4.2 Educational and Support Spaces

- 13 general-purpose classrooms
- Two specialized instructional spaces
- Library and two computer laboratories
- Music/band, art, home economics, industrial arts, and vocational agriculture shop spaces
- Gymnasium and locker rooms
- Kitchen, separate dining area, and auditorium

- Administration, staff, and general storage areas

A classroom annex and library building are detached from the main building. This distributed organization should be evaluated for circulation, supervision, accessibility, security, weather-protected movement, and operational efficiency.

4.3 Site Context and Organization

The school occupies a reported 8.0-acre site, below the referenced 15.0-acre guideline. The site fronts Mulberry Street and is bounded by residential development to the west, the football stadium and county maintenance facility to the east, and the Little Kanawha River to the north. The site is generally level and is not in a FEMA 100-year flood zone according to the WV Flood tool.

The September 9, 2026 field observations characterize the site as tight but generally adequate for the existing school. An open field and parking lot are located near the cafeteria building on one side of the campus, with the football field on the other. The football field is cramped and should be considered for enlargement or relocation.

- Paved bus loading is accomplished using Mulberry Street rather than a dedicated on-site loading area.
- Staff, student, and visitor parking areas are scattered and generally unpaved.
- Physical-education play fields are not available on site except for the football stadium.
- Traffic patterns are not adequately zoned or separated from student circulation.
- The available property limits future building additions and support facilities without acquisition of adjoining property.

4.5 Roofing and Addition Interfaces

4.4 1977 Classroom Addition

The 1977 addition is a one-story classroom wing constructed with masonry walls and steel joists. Its roof, exterior walls, and structural framing appeared to be in relatively good condition during the visual review.

Although newer than the original 1938 building, the addition shares several building-system deficiencies. Its primary identified needs are associated with HVAC, electrical, and sanitary systems rather than roof, wall, or structural assemblies.

The roof over the original building is old but was not leaking at the time of the field assessment. Leaks have occurred in the recent past, particularly at junctions between additions. Roofing transitions, flashings, drainage, and interfaces between construction phases should be evaluated and repaired as required.

4.6 Exterior Masonry and Water Intrusion

The original building has solid brick exterior walls with plaster interior finishes. Water continually seeps through the masonry. Prior attempts to reduce the leakage included cleaning the brick and applying a sealer, but those measures have not stopped the water penetration. The wall assemblies, mortar joints, copings, flashings, transitions, site drainage, and below-grade conditions should be investigated before selecting a corrective treatment.

The basement area containing electrical equipment also experiences continuing water leakage through the walls. Water intrusion in an electrical-equipment area is a high-priority condition requiring coordinated building-envelope, drainage, and electrical evaluation.

4.7 Structural Conditions

The original wood floor and roof framing show signs of sagging. Portions of the floor structure have deteriorated due to rot and have previously required repair. A structural engineer should evaluate the framing, document prior to repairs, determine the extent and source of deterioration, and establish whether repair, reinforcement, temporary support, or replacement is required.

4.8 Windows, Doors, and Hardware

The windows in the original building are in poor condition and should be replaced. Replacement should be coordinated with the masonry and water-intrusion investigation so that perimeter flashings, sealants, and adjacent construction are corrected as part of a complete assembly.

The doors are reported to be original, and the hardware does not meet current standards. Interior and exterior openings should be evaluated and replaced as appropriate for accessibility, egress, fire and smoke protection, security, durability, and operation.

4.9 HVAC

The HVAC systems serving the original building and the 1977 addition incorporate equipment that has been upgraded incrementally over time. The systems break down regularly and do not adequately condition the occupied spaces. The system serving the 1977 classroom wing also does not provide the required fresh air for student health. Comprehensive HVAC replacement should be evaluated in lieu of continued incremental repairs, including outdoor-air ventilation, temperature control, equipment access, controls, electrical demand, and the requirements of STEM and other instructional spaces.

4.10 Electrical Systems

The electrical systems serving the original building and the 1977 addition are inadequate for a modern school. The 1977 classroom wing is tied to the original switchgear. Frequent power losses and circuit overloads reportedly occur daily. The switchgear is original to the building, and replacement parts are reported to be unavailable. The electrical service, switchgear, distribution equipment, panels, feeders, branch circuits, grounding, emergency systems, and capacity for proposed HVAC, technology, and instructional loads should be evaluated for comprehensive replacement.

4.11 Plumbing and Sanitary Systems

The building sanitary line is broken and passes beneath an adjacent portion of the building. This system serves the building areas associated with the original facility and later additions, including the 1977 classroom wing. The failure causes frequent sewer backups and has made the locker rooms unusable. The sanitary system should be investigated promptly to verify the failure location, pipe condition, routing, access constraints, and the most practical approach to repair or replacement.

4.12 Regulatory and Inspection Records

Applicable regulatory-agency inspection reports are reported to be maintained at the Wirt County Board of Education office. The historical CEFPP process considered those reports and addressed identified deficiencies and recommendations. Current planning should verify the available reports and determine which findings remain open, have been corrected, or require updated evaluation.

5. Condition Priorities

Priority	Condition	Required Response
Immediate / High Priority	Broken sanitary line, recurring sewer backups, and unusable locker rooms.	Investigate promptly and repair, replace, or reroute failed sanitary piping.
Immediate / High Priority	Continuing water intrusion into the basement electrical area.	Identify and correct sources of water entry; coordinate with electrical-system planning.
High Priority	Original switchgear, daily power losses and overloads, and unavailable replacement parts.	Complete electrical engineering assessment and plan comprehensive replacement.
High Priority	Sagging wood floor and roof framing and history of rot repairs.	Complete structural evaluation; establish repair, reinforcement, monitoring, or replacement requirements.
Urgent Investigation	Persistent masonry water penetration despite prior cleaning and sealing.	Investigate the complete wall and drainage assemblies before prescribing repairs.

Priority	Condition	Required Response
Major System Improvement	Regular HVAC breakdowns, inadequate space conditioning, lack of air conditioning, and insufficient fresh-air ventilation in the 1977 classroom wing.	Plan comprehensive HVAC replacement coordinated with ventilation, electrical, and educational requirements.
Building Envelope	Poor-condition windows, aging roof, and leakage at addition interfaces.	Replace windows and repair roof transitions, flashings, and related envelope components.
Life Safety / Accessibility / Security	Original doors and hardware that do not meet current standards.	Replace or upgrade openings based on each location and required rating or function.
Site / Long-Term Planning	Constrained circulation, limited acreage, scattered parking, and cramped football field.	Develop coordinated site, access, parking, pedestrian-safety, and athletic-facility options.

6. Recommendations for Future Use

6.1 Continued Use and Grade Configuration

The CEEP Steering Committee recommended that Wirt County High School remain open at its existing site as a grades 9-12 school. Renovations are to the extent that the SBA will not consider funding renovations of the original building; repairs are recommended to maintain the facility until potential replacement can be funded and completed.

6.2 Priority 1 - Building Integrity and Continued Operation

- Structural investigation and repair of the original wood floor and roof framing.
- Investigation and correction of the failed sanitary system and recurring sewer backups.
- Correction of basement and exterior-wall water intrusion.
- Electrical-system assessment and replacement, including original switchgear.
- Roof and flashing repairs at addition interfaces.
- Window replacement coordinated with masonry and wall repairs.

6.3 Priority 2 - Comprehensive Modernization

- Comprehensive HVAC replacement, air conditioning, and code-appropriate outdoor-air ventilation.
- Replacement of interior and exterior doors and hardware.
- Restroom and locker-room renovation after sanitary-system correction.
- Interior-finish improvements.
- Technology and communication upgrades for STEM classrooms.
- Accessible routes, walkways, parking, and bleacher access.
- Sprinkler-system upgrades.
- Site circulation, parking, pedestrian safety, and athletic-facility improvements.

6.4 Long-Term Replacement Option

The CEEP identifies a new Wirt County High School as a potential long-term option. Because the Board of Education owns limited property at the current campus, a replacement school would require acquisition of a suitable site. Students would remain in the existing school during construction. After completion of a replacement school, the current facility could be sold, repurposed for Board of Education offices or other operations, or demolished so the property could be used for athletic fields or other school-support functions.

Alternatively, consider replacing the educational spaces while keeping the newer additions: the gym, Auditorium, and cafeteria. Using a phased approach, the district can add a new academic wing adjacent to the cafeteria building without

disrupting use of the existing building. Once the new building is built, the original building can be demolished, and areas of the existing school could be remodeled over the summer.

7. Preliminary Planning-Level Costs

CEFP Planning Item	Reported Amount
Maintenance and upgrades to then-current standards	\$15,434,457
Potential new high school - SBA formula	\$23,200,000

These figures are planning values and should not be presented as current 2026 construction budgets. Current capital planning should update the costs to reflect verified scope, current construction pricing, escalation, design and engineering fees, surveys, testing, permitting, furnishings and equipment, technology, contingencies, temporary work, and any required property acquisition.

8. Recommended Additional Investigation

- Obtain and review original drawings, addition and renovation documents, prior structural repairs, roof records, maintenance logs, and regulatory inspection reports.
- Complete a structural evaluation of the 1938 wood floor and roof framing, including previously repaired areas.
- Perform a building-envelope and water-intrusion investigation of masonry walls, below-grade walls, windows, roof transitions, flashings, copings, and drainage.
- Complete an electrical engineering assessment, including service and distribution condition, available fault current, overloads, emergency systems, and anticipated renovation loads.
- Conduct a sanitary piping investigation, including utility locating and camera inspection where accessible.
- Evaluate the HVAC system and develop a replacement concept coordinated with electrical capacity and instructional requirements.
- Complete an accessibility and life-safety review of routes, entrances, doors, hardware, restrooms, locker rooms, bleachers, and changes in level.
- Prepare a site circulation and athletic-facility study addressing buses, passenger vehicles, service access, parking, pedestrian separation, and football-field options.
- Document each major deficiency with dated, location-keyed photographs and measured observations.

10. Limitations

This draft documents a visual, non-destructive review and information provided through historical CEFP materials and field observations. It is not a structural engineering analysis, code-compliance determination, accessibility certification, environmental assessment, hazardous-material survey, energy audit, or warranty of concealed conditions. Reported system failures, dimensions, dates, quantities, and costs should be verified against available records and discipline-specific investigations before final design or construction decisions are made.

11. Conclusion

Wirt County High School remains an established grades 9-12 facility with substantial existing program capacity and a broad range of academic, vocational, arts, athletic, assembly, food-service, and administrative spaces. The constrained site can continue to support the existing school, but circulation, parking, pedestrian separation, expansion capacity, and the cramped football field limit long-term flexibility.

The original 1938 building displays a concentration of deficiencies that extend beyond routine maintenance. Persistent water intrusion, sagging and previously deteriorated wood framing, unreliable HVAC, obsolete and overloaded electrical distribution, failed sanitary piping, poor-condition windows, aging roofing, and original doors and hardware collectively indicate the need for coordinated building-integrity and modernization work. Structural, sanitary, water-intrusion,

electrical, roofing, and envelope investigations should guide immediate priorities, while HVAC, accessibility, technology, interior, site, and athletic improvements should be developed as an integrated capital program.

The historical CEFPP recommendation to maintain the school at its existing site while preserving a long-term replacement option remains a useful planning framework.