



THE WESTMOUNT GAZETTE

Summer Edition

June 2025

Westmount Tangos with the Arts— A Show- stopping Performance of Chicago

By Lilyanna Colling-Cen

Let me transport you to the Roaring Twenties in Chicago, with fringy flapper dresses, elaborate dances, and all that jazz. This year, Westmount brought Chicago the musical to life in the Cynthia Rees Auditorium starting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14th and wrapping up on Saturday, May 17th. There were 65 people in the cast and crew, with a variety of talents that consolidated their efforts to create an amazing show. Mrs. Charters and Mrs. Grant were the directors, and other notable contributing members are the caretaking staff, administrative staff, volunteers, as well as the parents and Westmount community that supported the whole process.

As the Artistic Director, ...

Mrs. Charters says that the show and the themes she chose to explore were very deliberate and thoroughly considered. Due to the talent and capabilities in this cohort, Chicago was an excellent choice, focusing on the ideas of fame and notoriety. Considering the relevance of fleeting celebrity status in 2025 despite the show being written in the 70s, Mrs. Charters says that Chicago reaffirms the importance of authenticity and recognition for positive contributions to society.



The auditions took place last May, and the students part of the varying Musical Theatre courses worked tirelessly for months on a myriad of aspects that brought the show together, such as the lighting, the musical numbers, the choreography, and the set. All of it created an amazing show that highlighted the vocal and dancing capabilities of cast members such as Regan Saker as Velma Kelly and Meg Budan as Roxie Hart. Many people in the Westmount community thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to appreciate the boundless talents of everyone in the process, and the shows were near sold out every night. The next musical is two years from now, and though it will be vastly different, Westmount is excited to see what is in store.

Prom

By Hunter Ost

On May twenty-first, Wildcats were dressed in their best attire as they attended ...



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prom. It was a particularly cold and wet night as it rained throughout the event. The 2025 Prom theme was Meet Me At Midnight and was held at Carmen's event centre from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm, where students were served dinner and later danced. Along with dinner and a dance there was a photo booth where seniors got to capture the memories of the night. The word Prom is defined as a formal dance hosted by a high school at the end of the grade twelve year, but for most Wildcats, Prom was a night that they have been waiting for, dreaming about, and even fantasizing over ever since their freshmen year. Four long years were culminated in a final dance representing an end of an era. For many, Prom was filled with electric vibes mixed with the bittersweet feeling of leaving high school behind as they experienced their last formal event, last dinner with their peers, and last time dancing like the night would never end. As the night went on, nobody was thinking about school the next day or the days after that, no one was stressing about exams or their upcoming first semester in college and university. Prom was the night that Wildcats could dance the night away and look back on all the memories they made with their friends ...



and peers over the last four years. As Westmount says goodbye to the grade 12's of 2025, we want to wish you all the very best in your upcoming new adventures, whatever and wherever they may be. Even though you are graduating and moving forward in life, you will always be a Wildcat in spirit. May you enjoy the adventure that life has to offer you. GO WILDCATS GO.

Vaccines: Why are They Mandated in Schools?

By Aaron Zhou

One of the more controversial topics across the world is the idea of vaccines. There was once a time where healthy people would be knocking on Death's door with the slightest exposure to disease, as healthcare was essentially non-existent.

What has plagued not only humans, but nearly all living beings on the Earth, is disease. From the 1800s, all the way to the present day, vaccines have developed and evolved, but so have the many viruses that roam and live within nearly every human being. Yet these days, there are those who argue that vaccines are a money grab, a fraud, and a government lie that has people even sicker than before. Now, what happens if you have a considerable amount of people within a public area, say school for example, that refuse to protect themselves and ensure the safety of others through these vaccines? You get health crises like what we're all well aware of: Covid-19.

Because of this, in Ontario and the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, vaccines are enforced and mandated for enrollment in school in order to protect the students and staff that occupy the space. If not for this, then contagious diseases would wreak havoc. This, in turn, prevents further incidents with later stages of such diseases that would cost far more time and money to treat. Staying up to date with immunizations is essential in keeping this layer of protection against disease for not only the students of the school, but for ...



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those at home with both younger and elderly family.

This innovation in technology and science has resulted in many benefits towards Canada's healthcare. No person, no system, and no worlds are perfect, but doing the best thing possible for taking care of the people is what really matters. Without the efforts of many people and the nearly collective agreement on not only vaccines, but all other medical achievements, the human species would truly suffer.

In the end, however, everyone has the right to their own views and opinions, and this shouldn't spark violent conflict between anyone. Protests have occurred, opposition and tensions have always existed between believers and non-believers, but we all are still here on this world together, so the next best thing is to try to cooperate and collaborate where we can. Rules will always exist for a reason, and some are more reasonable than others. There will always be support for every human being out there, so be safe and be responsible, especially with



your children and yourself.

The Digital Sign in Front of The Main Office

By Ben Ireland



This is a picture of the sign outside the main office. You probably know of it, but have you ever given any thought to why it exists, how it works, or who controls it? I have, because of my weirdness, discovered the answers to these questions.

Before the current sign, there used to be a different electronic sign in front of the school. The



old sign was replaced sometime around July 2015. And before that one, there was a non-electric sign until the Westmount Recreation Center was constructed. According to Ms. Cardwell, the current sign is part of an attempt by the board to standardize the HWDSB's branding in front of every school.

The sign works via internet access. It is powered via an underground power line, and it uses its antenna to connect to the internet via the school's internet connection. It has an RGB screen with a diffusing plate in front to help blend colour with the large pixel size. The large pixel size allows bright LEDs that are legible even in direct sunlight. This resolution is probably 128 x 48 pixels, which is enough for 4 lines of text to be easily read along with some spacing.

As for who controls the sign, that would be our lovely OCTU Sec Office Assistant Ms. Cardwell. She is responsible for generating the information for the sign to display, as well as sending it to the sign. She puts school events and holidays on the sign and controls how it is formatted. For example, the "clock page" now displays the time accurate to a second instead of only a minute.

Hopefully this has satisfied your probably non-existent curiosity about the sign in front of the school.

NBE3U Course: The Replacement for ENG3U

By Aaron Zhou



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One of two official languages within Canada is English. We all know it, to different extents or levels of proficiency. The Ontario high school curriculum requires that students take ENG courses from grades nine to twelve. Throughout the courses, one idea that many students become familiar with is the works of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's writing is a significant building block to the foundation of the language, showing its history as well as striking the core themes of language or what others might consider humanity.

How though, did English come to be an official language in Canada? The colonization of North America by Great Britain resulted in English being the dominant language. This had its toll on those who had already found a home in the land. It's something everyone in school is aware of, as Canada has committed several atrocities towards Indigenous people over the time span of its development. The efforts of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) are important and necessary for the decades of harm done to the Indigenous peoples of Canada, though what is also key in healing with those who have suffered is by celebrating the good.

One way this idea is being brought to the students of HWDSB is through the NBE3U course, first introduced to Ontario in 2019. NBE3U is a grade 11 English course with nearly all the same units and skills necessary for grade 12 English. However, it does not include Shakespeare and instead focuses on other pieces of media emerging from First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures in Canada.

A large part of students' learning concerning Indigenous peoples focuses on the trauma caused by the Canadian government, so a change towards a lighter side with celebration of culture helps with balancing the learning. Here at Westmount, the NBE3U course has been offered since 2021. Paige Henderson is an English teacher in Westmount who has been teaching this course since its arrival in the board. Ms. Henderson spoke on the overarching themes of the course residing within identity. Many students have varying cultural backgrounds, though their differences actually result in the realization of more similarities. This ties into the idea of the course, helping all people feel represented in some way. This isn't about just the individual impact or the bigger picture, it's both. The ...

collaboration within classes over these topics not only helps reflect on what needs to change, but helps students be a part of the necessary change.

There is a ways to go in changing the system from its colonial roots, which ties into the young students that are to change Canada within the future. For now, the course only runs once a semester due to the amount of interest from students. Hopes are that this will change not only for a check mark to assure that Canada is the good guy, but in exposing these cultures and ideas to students today, representing those who had to suffer.

Westmount History: Interior Changes

By Keegan Massie and Ben Ireland

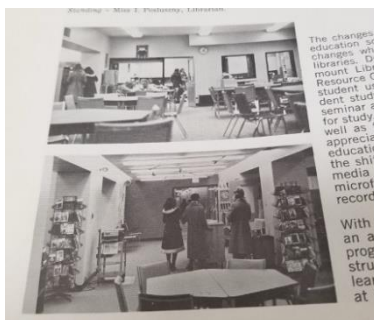
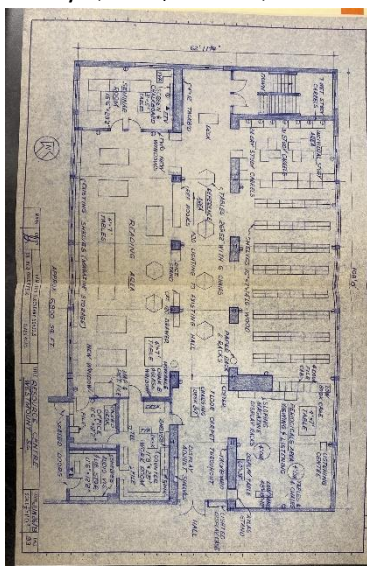
Westmount Secondary is very different today compared to when it was first envisioned. There have been lots of changes, from the big opening of the LC to the small lighting changes in the hallways. At the same time, there have been a lot of parts of the school that have stayed the same, artifacts of a different time. In this article, the second edition of Westmount History, we will delve into these topics ...



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and hopefully gain a greater appreciation for our school's journey.

First of all, have you ever wondered about the origin of the LC? Well, back in 1973, the blueprint to construct the LC was approved, and soon went forward. Originally, the space that the LC inhabits was a hallway with more classes, and these classes extended to those big posts that run down the middle of the LC. When the Commons first opened, it looked very different, with a long room to the left of the front doors and a large room at the back rather than two. There were many more bookshelves, with cassettes and microfilm near the front. There was even a student library club that helped maintain and run the library! (LC blueprint below)



(Photo of the library club above)

Another big change that a lot of people don't know about is the movement of the tech classes to the tech wing. When the school had its first students in 1960, the tech wing had not been constructed yet, and only when construction was completed in 1961 was the school officially open. However, at the time, woodshop was held where the music room is now, and other tech and science classes were held down in what is now the art and English hall. Eventually the tech classes were moved to the new wing, and science classes moved upstairs later.

Finally, let's briefly talk about some general interior changes. Have you ever noticed that most classes at Westmount have the windows to the left of the chalkboard? This is because originally, natural light was relied on a lot, and since most people are right-handed, having the light coming from the left would mean that their hand wouldn't block the light from ...

page. Nowadays, classes are not all laid out in this way, as we have lights in all classes. Next, in the hallways at Westmount, the current lights are fluorescent strip tubes that run down the center of the ceiling. Many decades ago, the lights instead were set around a foot into the ceiling on either side of the hallway. This change is visible in the photos below.



That concludes this edition of Westmount History. We got to dive into some of the origins of big components of the school and find out some fun facts along the way. Look out for more Westmount History in the next Newspaper Article, where we might discuss some of the old sports teams and clubs of Westmount, the addition of the OAC hall, and some other historic spots around the school (such as the basements)!

Behind the Scenes of Student Council

By Jack Croft

This year, Wildcats have ...



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enjoyed many events, such as the Brawl Stars tournament, easter egg hunt, winter market, and semiformal, all of which were organized by Westmount's student council. I've seen a lot of students wonder about what happens behind these events and since I was one of the student council's treasurers this year, I am here to explain what goes on behind the scenes in the student council and explain an exciting new evolution which we will see next year.

The student council has weekly meetings every Monday. Discussions within the council are either open ended or ordered, where members take turns providing their opinions. Our presidents George Zheng and Maple-Gin Benson moderate things to make sure that the dialogues are productive. Discussions usually include sharing ideas on ways to make life at Westmount better and improve school spirit, agreeing on logistics, or assigning jobs to different members. Sometimes, the student council will collaborate with a club when organizing events. Lastly, at the end of each meeting, the council votes on "blue sheets," which are forms that must be approved for every new club or event.

While all student council ...

members participate in the discussions, each member also has a specialized role. Some examples include grade representatives who act as a voice for the students of their respective grades (9, 10, 11, or 12); the treasurers who manage money and make sure that the council's spending remains in budget; and the secretary who takes notes during the meeting.

This year, an exciting new topic has been on the forefront of the student council's agenda which will mean big changes to Westmount next year. I am referring to Westmount's new constitution – a new framework for the council that is both bigger and more streamlined. The constitution is essentially a document that lays out how student council operates. The most notable change will be the addition of specialized committees. The student council's current structure will remain as the "main body." The specialized committees will have more specific focuses, allowing for greater productivity within the council. Additionally, these specialized committees will be highly accessible to students. No speeches are necessary, and students can join at any point during the school year. This will offer Wildcats a greater understanding of the ins and outs of the student council.

In my opinion, this new design for the student council is an exciting evolution, one that will surely provide a great experience for Westmount students in the coming year.

Westmount's student council has been hard at work this year. I hope that this article has provided a greater understanding of how this team has provided so many fun and memorable events. In addition, I believe everyone should look forward to the council's updated constitution, which will create a more productive and accessible council next year.

A Look at Westmount's Model United Nations

By Jack Croft

Over 400 000 students participate annually in Model United Nations (MUN) conferences worldwide. With so many people simulating United Nations procedure, many of you may be wondering: what's the big deal? For me, Model UN was an experience that gave me life-long memories and skills. In this article, I hope to explain how.

First off, what is Model UN and how does it work? Model UN is a simulation of the debates that you would see ...



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in the real United Nations. Typically, in a Model UN committee, participants act as the delegate of a particular country. Together with other delegates, they try to solve the issues that they are presented with. Delegates must cooperate with each other while also pursuing the goals of their own country. In my experience, the most successful delegates have been those with good ideas, a prominent voice, and strong leadership. Model UN conferences are events where multiple committees are held, and typically hundreds of high school students participate.

One of the conferences I have attended is SOMA (the Southern Ontario Model United Nations Assembly). This year, SOMA had 17 committees and more than 600 delegates. The conference was held at the UofT campus in Toronto and lasted 3 whole days. This meant I got to spend two nights in Toronto. It was a fantastic opportunity to get out there and spend time with



friends. When we weren't debating, we were mostly exploring the city, and we got to go out to restaurants.

This aspect of the trip was a lot of fun, but I don't want to take the spotlight away from the conference itself, because the time I spent during the committees was fantastic. There were some of the most skilled and smart leaders I have ever met at those committees – people I know someday will do amazing things in the world of business, politics, or the real United Nations. It was a great experience talking and working together with these people.

Not to mention, there was a lot that I could learn from them. Model UN was a great place for me to see firsthand what it means to be a good public speaker, take initiative, and be a leader. By observing and exercising these essential skills, I greatly improved my capabilities as a leader. This is something that I am certain will help in my future, no matter the career path I go down. It's no wonder why both Universities and employers see Model UN experience as a good sign. I'm very glad I could put my experience at SOMA on my resume because as a highschooler who has no work experience, it was a great way to show off my skills.

There are so many reasons I am grateful for my time during Model UN, especially at SOMA.

This event provided a memorable experience with friends, the chance to meet amazing people, and the opportunity to gain lifelong and universal skills. Because of this, I have to thank Mr. Thomas and Ms. Wilde for putting in all the effort to organize this the club's time there and chaperoning for it.



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Life at Westmount





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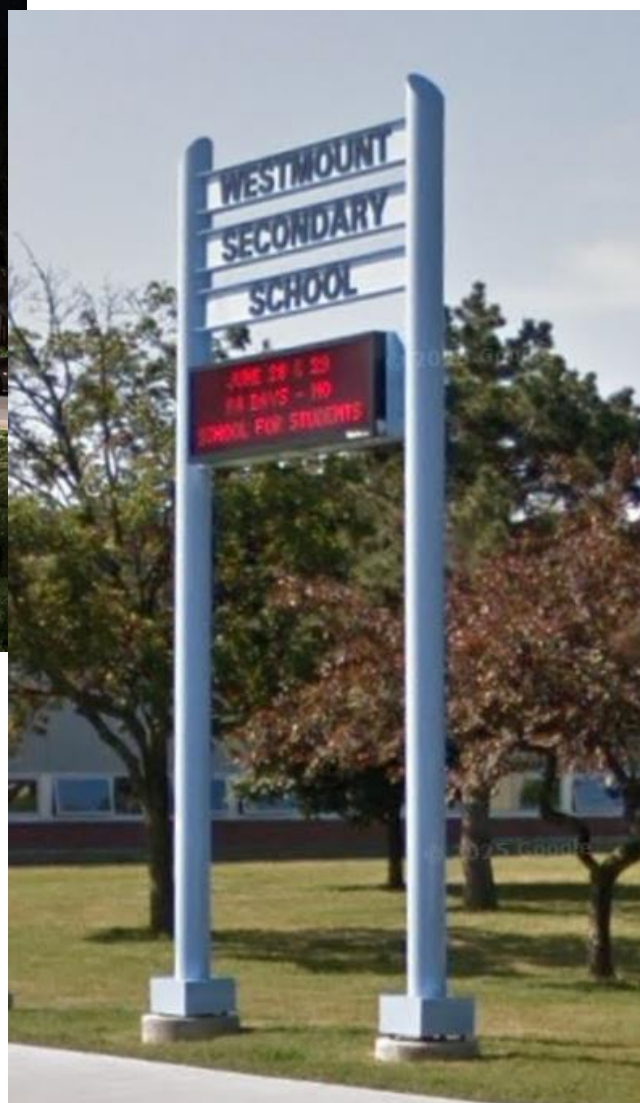
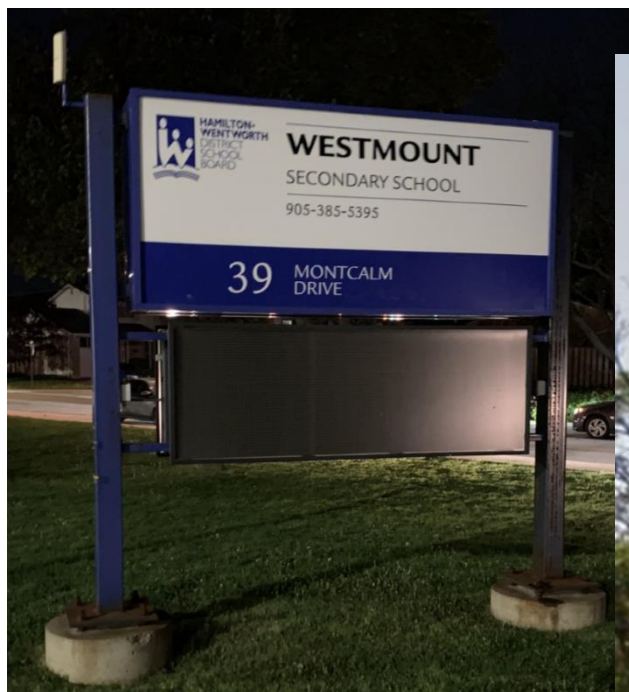


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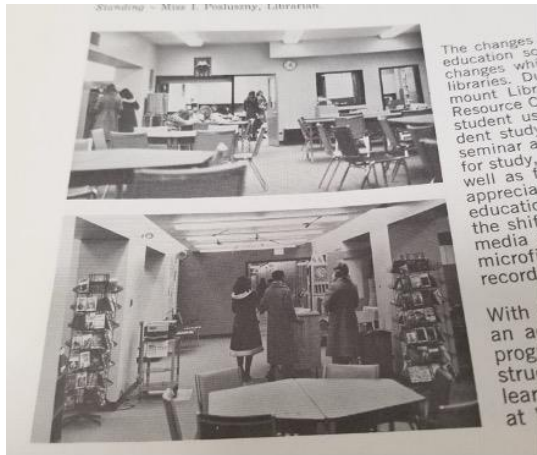


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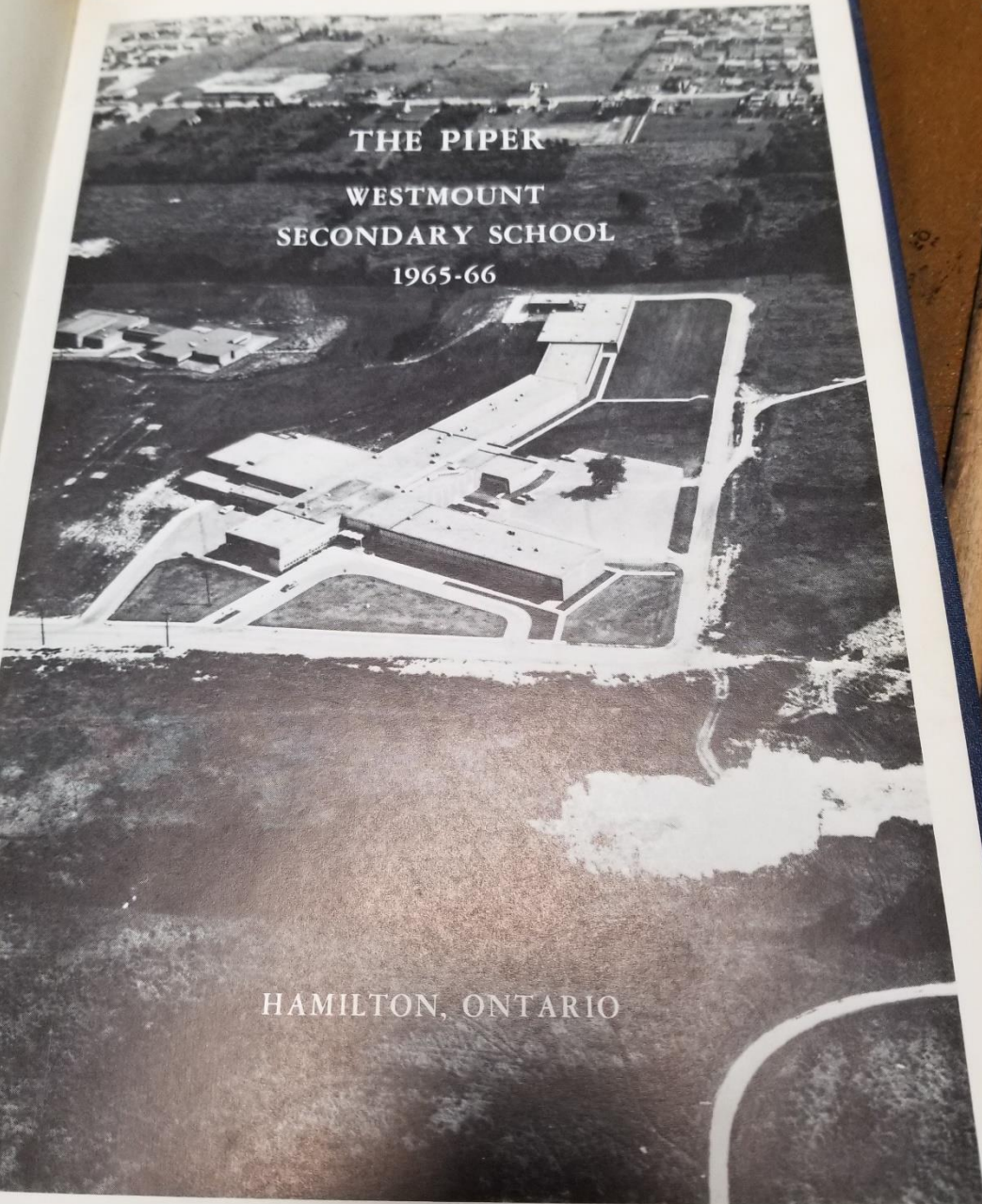


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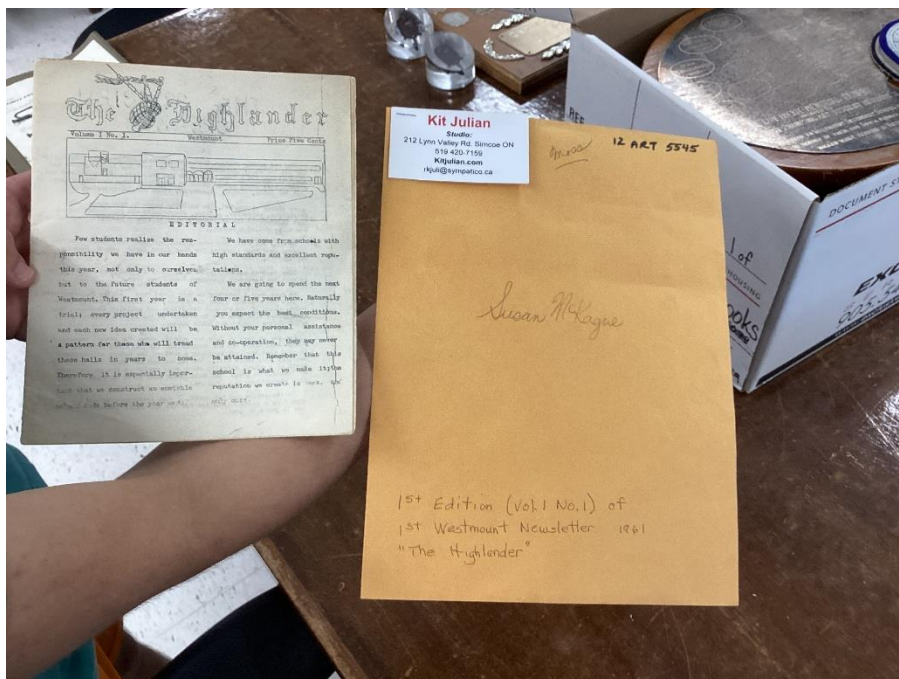
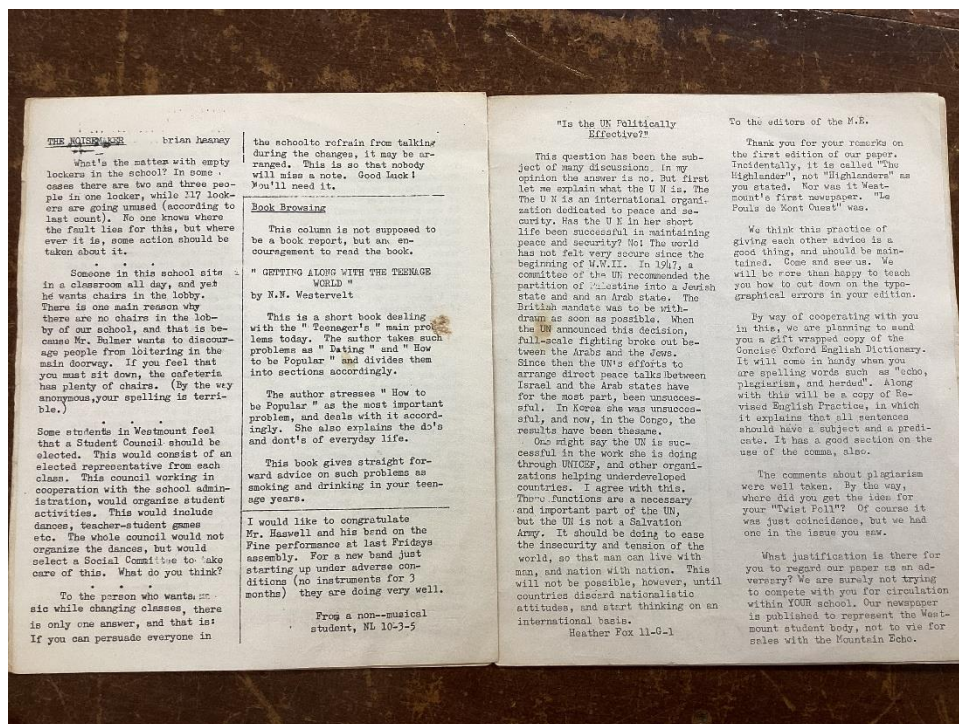


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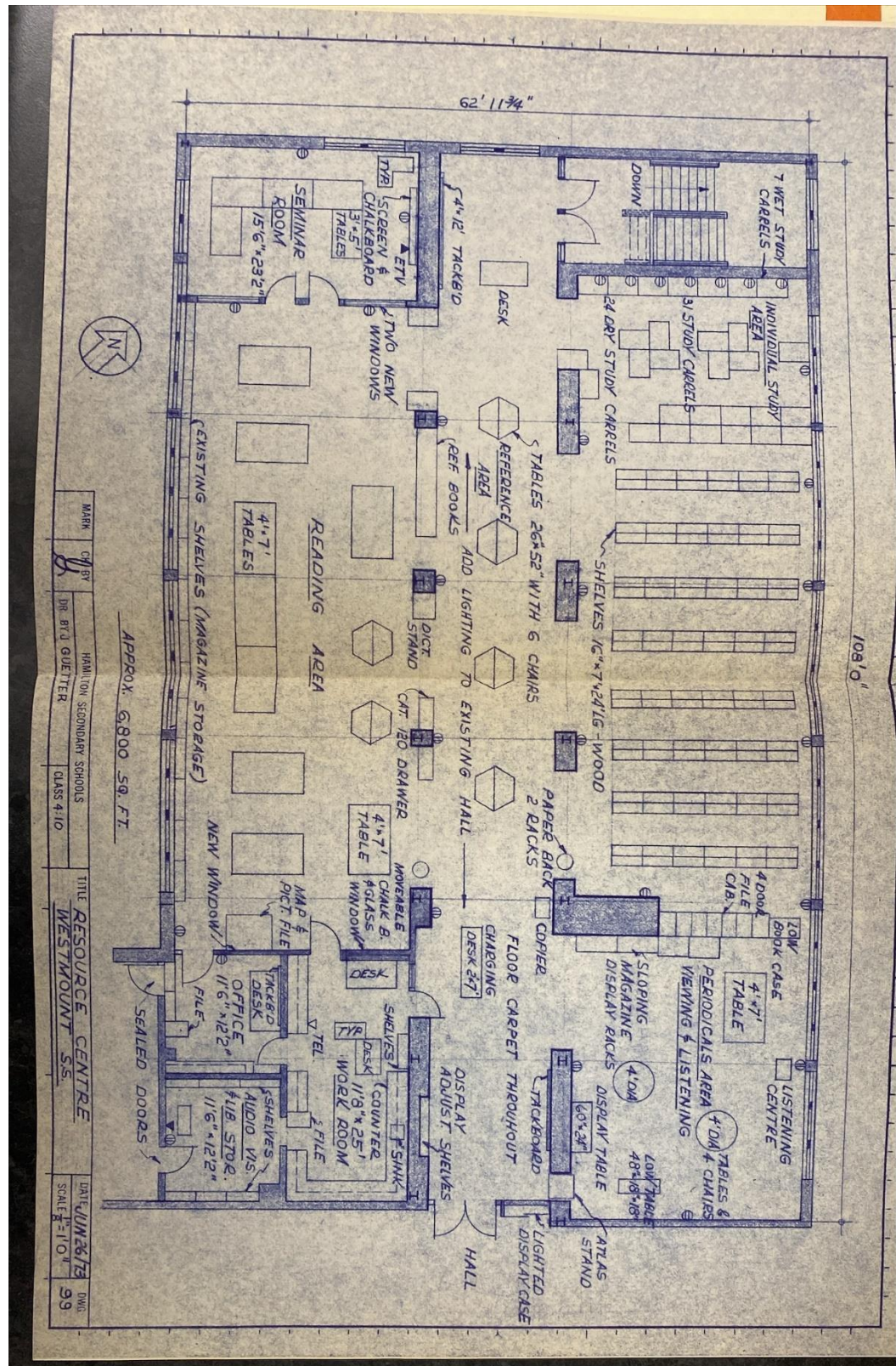
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