

Dwight shows off addition

By Joseph Straw
Register Staff

NEW HAVEN – The sun shone bright Sunday on Timothy Dwight School, as the city dedicated a new \$2.7 million addition to the Edgewood Avenue elementary school.

More than 200 residents, state and local politicians and community leaders filled the school's glistening brand-new 5,400-square-foot all-purpose room for the ceremony.

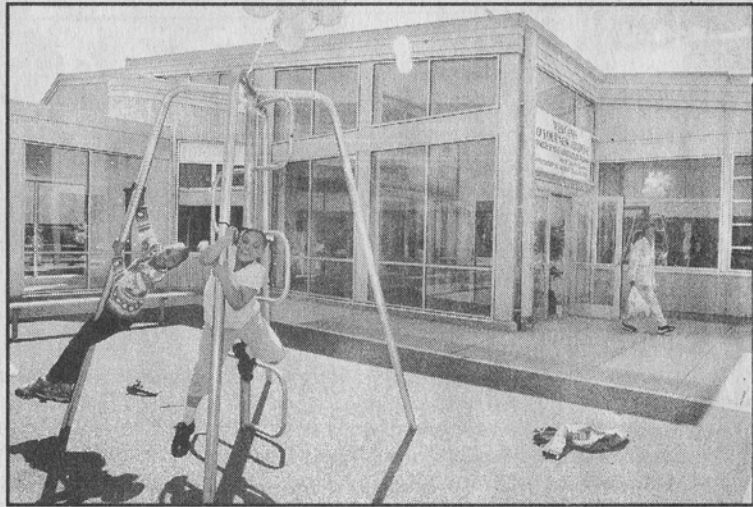
Each of the event's speakers, including Mayor John DeStefano Jr. and Superintendent of Schools Reginald Mayo, credited the neighborhood's residents with helping to make the project happen.

"This neighborhood shows what it means to share a vision. Look at Dwight and you'll see how to get things done," DeStefano told the crowd.

Others on hand included alderpersons Jelani Lawson, D-2, and Joyce Poole, D-23, state Sen. Toni Harp, D-10, state Rep. Patricia Dillon, D-92, and Yale University Associate Vice President Michael Morand, from the school's office of New Haven and state affairs.

The project, which also included the addition of two meeting rooms and a new atrium-style entranceway, is part of the city's 10-year, \$1 billion school construction program.

While the majority of the Dwight School project was paid for by the state, the city chipped in \$140,000, and the Greater Dwight



Melanie Stengel/Register

Damaris Duarte, left, 8, and Cierra Howard, 9, of New Haven climb in the new play area at Dwight Elementary School in New Haven.

Development Corporation \$400,000 from a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant secured in the late '90s along with Yale University.

Yale faculty and post-graduate students also provided architectural and legal consultation for the project free of charge.

Curlina McDonald, vice president of the Greater Dwight Community Development Corp., said that the group's early intent was to secure or construct a new community center for the neighborhood. But because Dwight school's older all-purpose room, used for athletics, assemblies, and as a cafeteria, is not large enough to hold all of the school's students, the CDC decid-

ed to direct the funds to the school.

The new facilities will be used for community activities and events when school is not in session.

Dwight School Principal Bernadette Strode thanked what she called her "little champions"—Dwight's students, for their patience during the year of construction.

Dwight School Parent/Teacher Association Vice President Bobby Durham, whose son Bobby Jr. and daughter Raychelle attend the school, said that he was "overwhelmed" by the new look.

"This is the most beautiful thing I've seen at Dwight. It's just a pleasure to be part of this school," Durham said.