

✓ Earthquake
Watsonville 5-16-90
SSMN

Hope held out for historic quake-hit building

By Bob Johnson
Special to the Mercury News

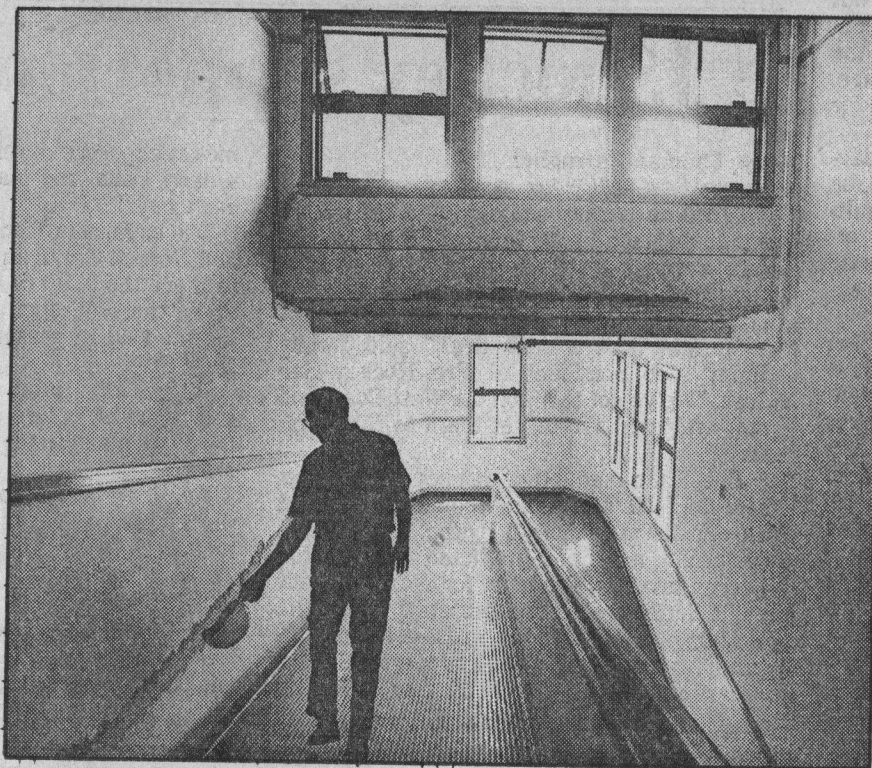
Officials of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District are holding out hope that the earthquake-damaged main building of Watsonville High School can be saved despite an engineer's report that it would cost \$6 million to rehabilitate the historic building.

The report from San Francisco engineer Arthur Weatherbee says rehabilitation would cost \$1 million more than replacing the building, according to Bob Peterson, district finance director. A major part of the cost of rehabilitating the building, named 1917 after its date of completion, would go toward bringing the structure up to current building codes and requirements for access by handicapped people.

The district's board of trustees will begin discussion of that engineer's report next week. But it probably will take months for them to decide the fate of the two-story building that has served Watsonville High School students for 73 years.

"As an alumnus and native of Watsonville, I personally would like to see that building saved," board Chairman Manuel Osorio said.

The problems with 1917 were uncovered early this spring when engineers doing a preliminary analysis of how to repair minor earthquake damage discovered that the



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Quake-caused cracks in interior walls of historic Watsonville High School, left, are among the problems that have caused classes to be moved into temporary quarters, below. The cost of rehabilitating the historic structure, which was built in 1917, is estimated at \$6 million.



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