

Oregon Historic Site Form

Bridlemile School
4300 47th Dr
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 4300 SW 47th Dr apprx. addr

historic name: Bridlemile School

Portland vcnty Multnomah County

current/
other names: Bridlemile Elementary School

Optional Information

assoc addresses:
(former addresses, intersections, etc.)

location descr:
(remote sites)

block nbr: _____ lot nbr: _____ tax lot nbr: _____
township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____
zip: _____

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 1

total # eligible resources: 1 total # ineligible resources: 2

elig. evaluation: eligible/contributing

NR status: _____

primary constr date: 1958 (c.) secondary date: _____ (c.)
(optional--use for major addns)

NR date listed: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)

primary orig use: School

orig use comments: _____

secondary orig use: _____

primary style: International

prim style comments: _____

secondary style: _____

sec style comments: _____

primary siding: Standard Brick

siding comments: _____

secondary siding: _____

plan type: School (General)

architect: Hollis Johnston & Koch

builder: _____

comments/notes:

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name: PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009 Survey & Inventory Project

farmstead/cluster name:

external site #: 142
(ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____

ILS survey date: 6/23/2009

RLS survey date: 6/23/2009

Gen File date: _____

106 Project(s)



North elevation

ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

(Include expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings, and alterations)

Summary Description

Bridlemile School is located at 4300 SW 47th Ave in Southwest Portland. The campus consists of the primary school building (142A), a detached portable classroom (142P1), and a covered playshed (142B). The finger plan type school incorporates an interior garden to provide maximum light and ventilation to the classrooms. The wood frame building is clad in variegated brick. A moderately pitched gable roof covers the single story building. Fenestration consists of grouped metal frame windows.

Architectural Description

Bridlemile School is located at 4300 SW 47th Ave in Southwest Portland. The school's 7.27-acre campus is located at the northwest corner of Hamilton Park. Development in the neighborhood consists primarily of single family residences on large parcels of land built between 1950 and 2000. The campus consists of the primary school building (142A), a detached portable classroom (142P1), and a covered playshed (142B). Three playfields are located at the south end of the parcel.

The h-shaped primary school building rests on a poured concrete foundation. The finger plan type school incorporates an interior garden to provide maximum light and ventilation to the classrooms. The wood frame building is clad in variegated brick. A moderately pitched gable roof covers the single story building. Fenestration consists of grouped metal frame windows.

The primary entry to the building is at the northwest corner. A system of double loaded corridors provides access to the classrooms, cafeteria, library, and gymnasium. The gymnasium is located at the northeast corner of the school. The gymnasium features exposed brick and a ceiling supported by a prominent glulam arch. The library and cafeteria are located immediately adjacent to the entry lobby. The walls of the corridors are also covered in exposed brick with tubular fluorescent lighting fixtures suspended from the ceilings.

The classrooms are primarily square or rectangular with built-in cabinetry on the walls opposite and adjacent to the windows. The classroom windows feature an operable awning window beneath a group of three fixed-frame windows. The kindergarten rooms flank a shared interior restroom.

Alterations/Integrity

Since the construction of Bridlemile School in 1956, there have been only minimal alterations to the building or campus. The south wing of the primary building was extended in 1965 to provide space for four additional classrooms. In 1969 the portable classroom building was added at the northwest corner of the campus. The covered playshed was built in 1979. Alterations to the interior include replacing the floor tiles in 1983, remodeling the library in 1989, changes to accommodate offices in 1990, and an upgrade to the boiler in 2006 (Portland Facility Profile). Despite the modest alterations, Bridlemile Elementary School retains its historical integrity. Its plan, major community spaces, interior finishes, roof forms, brick cladding, and fenestration are intact.

HISTORY

(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period [preferably to the present])

Statement of Significance

Built in 1956, Bridlemile School was constructed during a period of modernization and new construction initiated by Portland Public Schools (PPS) after World War II. In 1945, the citizens of Portland approved a ballot measure that provided \$5,000,000 over five years to construct, improve, and rehabilitate its public school buildings (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2). The ballot measure enabled the PPS to respond to the explosive growth in school-age children that had occurred in the city as a result of the arrival of defense plant workers and their families, as well as the deferred maintenance arising from the lack of funds during the depression (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2-3). Beginning with this initial bond measure, the PPS embarked on an effort to improve its school facilities through renovations, additions, and new construction of over fifty schools between 1945 and 1970.

For the new building program, PPS schools adopted the call of architects and school planners across the country for new types of schools. Nationally known architects including Richard Neutra, the Walter Gropius led Architects Collective, and the Perkins Will architectural firm promoted new school types that reflected both evolving educational practices and design philosophies (Ogata 2008: 567-568; Perkins and Cocking 1949: 238-246). Emphasizing the need for economy and rapid construction, the designers adopted new materials that were standardized and mass produced including steel, plywood, glass block, and aluminum. In many buildings, architects achieved flexibility through the building's structure by employing non-load-bearing partitions walls and zoned ventilation and heating systems. Folding walls and moveable cabinets provided additional flexibility intended to enable teachers to rearrange rooms based on lesson plan and activities (Ogata 2008: 568).

Although many of the architects for schools in Portland continued to design their schools to be extensible, designers turned away from the two-story schools with centralized massing popularized by Naramore and Jones. Instead many architects adopted the principles of the Modern movement and its regional variant, the Northwest Regional style, choosing to express functional areas through massing and materials to create innovative forms (McMath 1974: 628). Classrooms featured extensive built-ins that included sinks, slots for bulky rolls of paper, and coat storage. Many buildings incorporated interior courtyards which facilitated access to the outdoors and expanded the opportunities for passive ventilation and daylighting, a hallmark of the Northwest style.

In response to the significant growth experienced in southwest Portland after World War II, the district acquired land from the Walther Tract for

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\$49,500. The district subsequently sold a portion of the land to the city for \$19,455. Named for the surrounding subdivision, the Bridlemile school was constructed for \$809,575.00 (Snyder 1979: 236, Portland Chronology Binder).

The architects of Bridlemile School, Johnston & Koch, were experienced in the design of public facilities in Oregon. Johnston graduated from Jefferson High School in Portland and the University of Oregon Architecture School. Johnston later worked with several prominent architects including Lawrence & Holford and Sutton & Whitney before establishing a solo practice in 1930. During the depression Johnston served as chief consulting architect for the U.S. Corps of Engineers on the Bonneville Dam Project. He subsequently worked with Herman Brookman before founding the firm of Stanton & Johnston with A. Glenn Stanton. Work during this period included the design of military projects, structures for the new Lewis & Clark College Campus, and the Stadium Branch of the U.S. Nation Bank. After the War, Johnston reestablished his own practice. In 1957 he invited Robert J. Koch, an employee since 1946, to become his partner. Johnston is known for his work on the Portland Town Club (1931- NRHP) by Johnson, Wallwork & Johnston, the Watson/Eastman house (1928-NRHP), the Joseph Gerber House, and the new Lincoln High School (Ritz 2003: 214-215). Bridlemile Elementary School is the only PPS building that Johnston designed during his partnership with Koch.

A good example of the finger plan type school that retains its integrity with its floor plan, interior finishes, fenestration, and cladding, Bridlemile School is recommended as eligible for the NRHP. The school was built in response to the residential development in southwest Portland during the PPS program of post-war construction and is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A. Although designed by a successful architecture firm in Portland, archival research does not indicate that the school was a major commission. However, the building is a good example of the use of the finger plan and the use of materials to facilitate rapid construction of new buildings after World War II. It is, therefore, eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C.

RESEARCH INFORMATION

(Check all of the basic sources consulted and cite specific important sources)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Census Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Property Tax Records | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Histories |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical Sources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHPO Files | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obituaries | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Permits | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library | |

Local Library: Multnomah County Library University Library: Portland State University Library
Historical Society: Oregon Historical Society Other Repository: Portland Public Schools Archives

Bibliography: Bibliography

McMath, George. "A Regional Style Comes to the City." In *Space, Style and Structure: Buildings in Northwest America*. Ed. Thomas Vaughan, 467-499. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974.

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Ogata, Amy F. "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 67, no. 4, December 2008: 562-591.

Perkins, Lawrence B and Walter D. Cocking. *Schools*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1949.

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Portland Public Schools. *Repairing, Rehabilitating and Modernizing the School Plant*. Portland: Portland Public Schools. Office of the Superintendent, 1945.

_____. *Bridlemile Elementary School. Facility Profile*.

Ritz, Richard. E. *Architects of Oregon. A Biographical Dictionary of Architects Deceased – 19th and 20th Centuries*. Portland: Lair Hill Publishing, 2003.

Sanborn Map Company

1924-1928, 1908-Dec. 1950 Sanborn Maps, Multnomah County Public Library, Portland, Oregon. Available at: <https://catalog.multcolib.org/validate?url=http%3A%2F%2F0-sanborn.umi.com.catalog.multcolib.org%3A80%2F>. Accessed June 16, 2009.

Snyder, Eugene E. *Portland Names and Neighborhoods. Their Historic Origins*. Portland: Binford & Mort Publishing; 1st edition 1979.



West elevation facing southeast



North Elevation



South elevation



Portable facing northwest



East elevation

**Bridlemile School
Exterior Photos
ENTRIX, 2009**



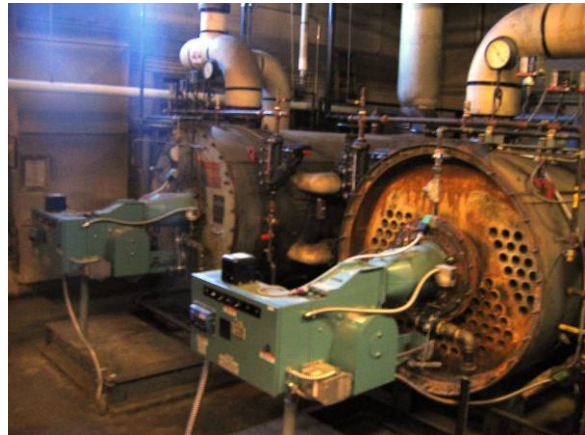
Corridor facing south



Cafetorium facing east



Classroom facing north



Boiler

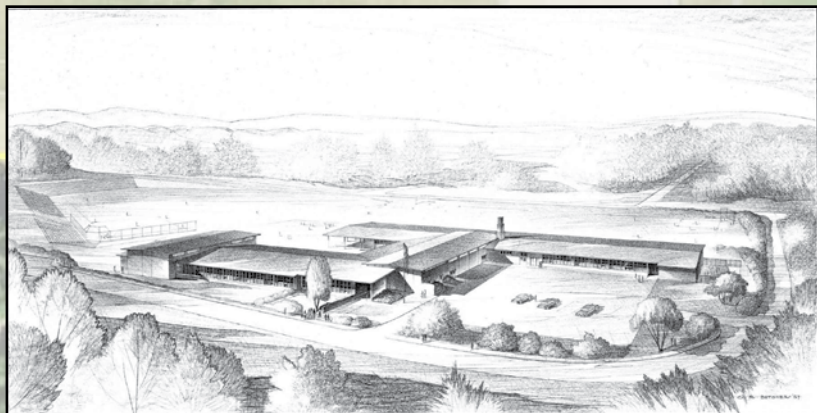
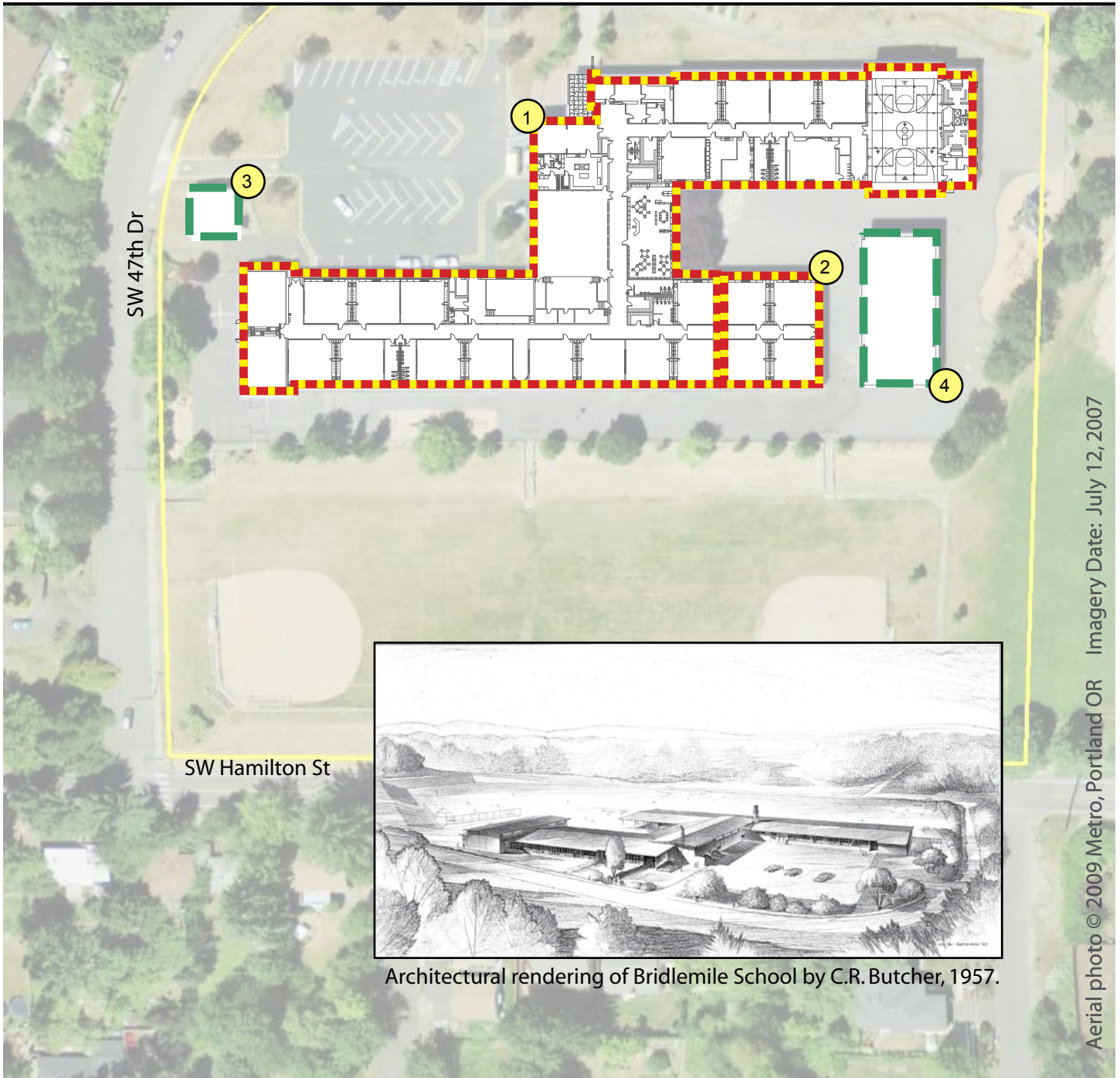


Classroom built-in

Bridlemile School

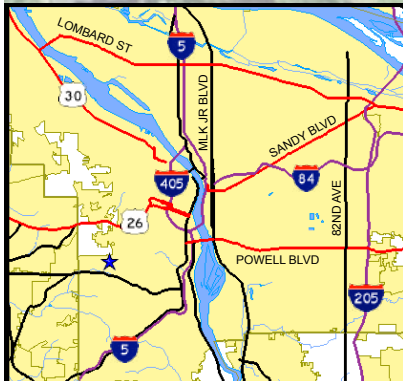
4300 SW 47th Ave, Portland OR, 97221

[View Site in Google Maps](#)






Architectural rendering of Bridlemile School by C.R. Butcher, 1957.

Aerial photo © 2009 Metro, Portland OR Imagery Date: July 12, 2007



Historical Significance and Building Integrity

-  Contrib: High Significance
-  Contrib: Moderate Signif.
-  Non-Contributing



Building Periods

1. Main Building (142A), 1956
2. Main Bldg Add (142A), 1965
3. Classroom Add (142P), 1969
4. Play Shed (142B), 1977



BRIDLEMILE ELEMENTARY – 142

4300 SW 47TH DR 97221

PPS HISTORIC ASSESSMENT



DRAWING: ANNOTATED PLAN

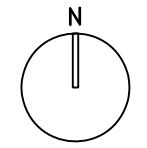
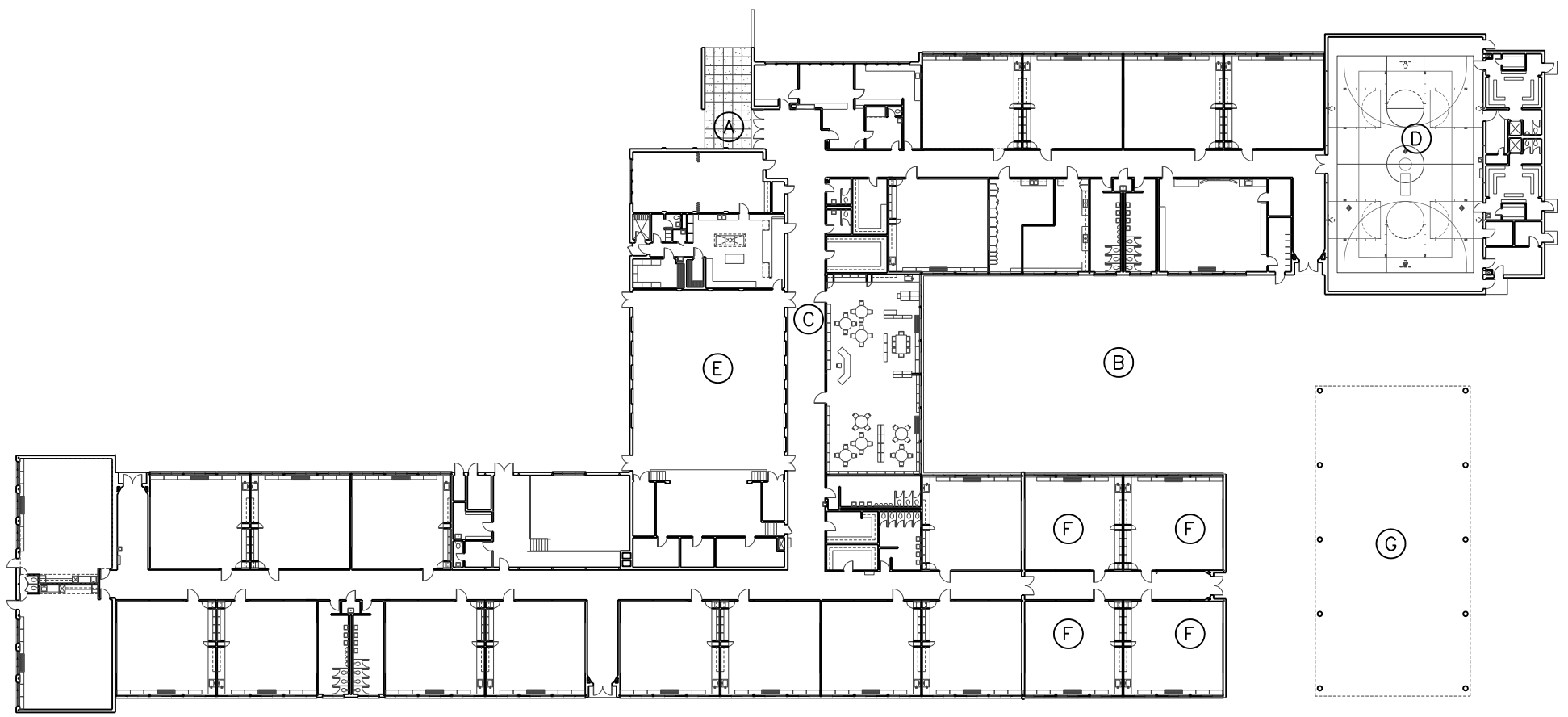
DATE: Sept. 4, 2009

KEYNOTES:

- (A) THE ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL IS BENEATH A COVERED OPENING CREATED BY THE OVERHANG OF THE SHED ROOF OF THE NORTH WING.
- (B) THE TWO PARALLEL FINGERS THAT HOUSE THE CLASSROOMS ALSO CREATE AN INTERIOR PLAY AREA THAT PROVIDES ADDITIONAL LIGHT FOR THE CLASSROOMS.
- (C) AN H-SHAPED DOUBLE LOADED CORRIDOR SERVES AS A CIRCULATION SPINE. THE WALLS OF THE CORRIDOR ARE LINED WITH EXPOSED BRICK.
- (D) A GLULAMINATED ARCH SUPPORTS THE ROOF OF THE GYMNASIUM. EXPOSED BRICK PROVIDES A DURABLE PLAY SURFACE.
- (E) THE DOUBLE HEIGHT SPACE OF THE CAFETERIA IS SUPPORTED BY A GLULAMINATED ARCH. THE TABLES AND BENCHES RECESS INTO SPACES IN THE BRICK LINED WALL.
- (F) 4 CLASS ROOMS WERE ADDED TO THIS WING IN 1965.
- (G) PLAY SHED

GENERAL NOTES:

- (1) THE CLASSROOMS ARE RECTANGULAR WITH GROUPED METAL FRAME WINDOWS ON THE EXTERNAL WALL. THE INTERIOR WALLS ARE LINED WITH BLONDE WOOD BUILT-INS. A SLIGHT RECESS BEHIND THE CLOAK CLOSET CREATES A SMALL ALCOVE FOR THE COUNTER CONTAINING THE SINK.
- (2) FENESTRATION CONSISTS OF GROUPED METAL FRAME WINDOWS.
- (3) CHARACTERISTIC ELEMENTS OF THE NORTHWEST REGIONAL STYLE INCLUDE THE GABLE ROOF FORMS, PROJECTING EAVES, VARIETY OF CLADDING MATERIALS, AND USE OF A COURTYARD TO ENHANCE PASSIVE VENTILATION AND DAYLIGHTING.



1 BRIDLEMILE ELEMENTARY – 1ST FLOOR
SCALE: 1" = 50'-0"