

Oregon Historic Site Form

Jackson School
10625 35th Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: <u>10625 SW 35th Ave</u> <input type="checkbox"/> apprx. addr	historic name: <u>Jackson School</u>
<u>Portland</u> <input type="checkbox"/> vcnty <u>Multnomah County</u>	current/ other names: <u>Andrew Jackson Middle School; Andrew Jackson High School; Southwest High School</u>
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: <u>Building</u> height (# stories): <u>1</u>	total # eligible resources: <u>2</u> total # ineligible resources: <u>0</u>
elig. evaluation: <u>eligible/significant</u>	NR status: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)
primary constr date: <u>1966</u> (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> secondary date: _____ (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> (optional--use for major addns)	NR date listed: _____
primary orig use: <u>School</u>	orig use comments: _____
secondary orig use: _____	prim style comments: _____
primary style: <u>Contemporary</u>	sec style comments: _____
secondary style: _____	siding comments: _____
primary siding: <u>Concrete: Other/Undefined</u>	architect: <u>Bear/Mcneil/Schneider/ Et Al</u>
secondary siding: _____	builder: _____
plan type: <u>School (General)</u>	
comments/notes: <u>No HRI Ranking.</u>	

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name	<u>PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009</u>	<u>Survey & Inventory Project</u>
farmstead/cluster name:		external site #: <u>174</u> (ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed:	_____
ILS survey date:	<u>6/3/2009</u>
RLS survey date:	<u>6/3/2009</u>
Gen File date:	_____

106 Project(s)



ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

Summary Description

Jackson Middle School is located at 10625 SW 35th Avenue in the West Portland Park neighborhood of southwest Portland. The sprawling, interconnected 32 acre campus encompasses the main school building (1966, 174), which consists of an office, auditorium wing, cafeteria, gymnasium, library, two two-story "resource centers" (classrooms that encircle an open middle space), and a detached 1970 autoshop. Originally constructed as a high school, this "unit" plan school is indicative of trends in modernist architectural movements of the mid-1960s. Constructed of precast concrete slabs with polished gravel exterior surfaces, the building's various functions are communicated by the different heights, massing, and fenestration patterns for each section of the building. The building also reflects the influences of the more suburban context as it is situated off the main road, approached via a U-shaped drive, and set within an expansive 32 acre property.

Architectural Description

Jackson Middle School is situated in the southwest neighborhood of West Portland Park. The campus occupies a 32 acre roughly square shaped parcel that is bounded to the north by SW Alfred St., to the east by SW 35th Ave., to the west by SW 40th Ave. and to the south by residential development. The school building is approached via a U-shaped driveway that extends west of 35th Ave. to allow for easy drop off to a concrete column lined shelter on the front (east) side of the school. Development in the surrounding area consists primarily of single family residences built between 1930 and 2000 (www.portlandmaps.com).

The school is an expansive, precast concrete slab building that varies in height from one to two stories. It features a flat roof over all of the building's various components and large brick slab chimney rises from near the center of the building. Most windows consist of vertical oriented glass windows with a hopper window and insulated panel below. Unlike many of the earlier International style buildings constructed by PPS in the late 1940s and 1950s, however, the windows do not run continuously along exterior walls but usually appear in groups of two to six separated by precast concrete slabs and/or large concrete columns.

The entry drive to the Jackson school building is lined by a shelter supported by a series of concrete columns. Entry into the school is through two different sets of four glass and metal doors. While the north set of doors leads to the auditorium, cafeteria, gymnasium, and other common spaces, the south door leads to the main office and the two "units".

The overall organization of the building's plan is conveyed by the structure's varying heights, overall massing, and fenestration. Designed to be an extensible school, the Jackson School was originally to have a square-shaped corridor plan, but due to unexpected shifts in demographics two additional units were never constructed and hence only a rough L-shaped corridor plan was realized. Most of the school's most significant spaces are accessed via the corridors. The two existing units, located on the south end of the building, are nearly identical in terms of exterior appearance and interior plan. The exterior of each unit features a box-like massing with the building's concrete columns left exposed and the precast concrete slabs recessed into the building. The auditorium is communicated by its double height, windowless, and asymmetrical form that mirrors the space inside. The three court-long gymnasium is also unfenestrated and accessed via courtyard located on the north side of the building through four sets of double doors.

A majority of the classrooms are located in the two units. On each floor an outer ring of classrooms surround a central "resource room" or open space. Both floors, approached via sets of stairs, feature similar arrangements. The classrooms themselves are rectangular in shape and largely lack cabinets with the exception of science rooms that are outfitted with laboratory counters and wood cabinets. Only about four classrooms within the two units contain doors that lead directly into an adjoining courtyard. Tubular fluorescent light are housed in boxed lighting fixtures attached to the classroom ceilings.

The double height auditorium, located on the north side of the building and away from most classrooms, features a main seating area, but lacks a balcony. An interesting design feature found on the stage is a set of folding doors that allows the stage to be closed off from a rehearsal and dressing area. The one story cafeteria, situated just west of the auditorium, can also be subdivided into three different spaces. On the west part of the building, the gymnasium, the largest interior space in the entire PPS system, accommodates three full size basketball courts as well as bleacher seating. The roof is supported by large transverse I-beams that extend across the building. The floor below the gymnasium features weight rooms, locker rooms, a wrestling room, and other storage spaces.

Alterations/Integrity

There have been minimal alterations to the school building and grounds since its construction in 1966. In 1970, a detached, one story autoshop was constructed near the west side of the campus, but no major additions or other work beyond maintenance projects have been performed at the school. The Jackson School retains its historical integrity through the preservation of its overall plan, precast concrete construction, and interior finishes.

HISTORY

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

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Significance Summary

Constructed in 1966 and originally called the Andrew Jackson High School, the Jackson Middle 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 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, PPS embarked on an effort to improve its school facilities through renovations, additions, and the 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 partition 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).

In response to growing numbers of high school students in southwest Portland and overcrowding at Wilson High School, PPS retained the architectural firm of Bear McNeil Bloodworth & Hawes to design a new extensible high school on the suburban outskirts of the city in the West Portland Park neighborhood. The firm of Burns, Bear, McNeil & Schneider was founded by Thomas Burns, a prominent architect and contractor in Portland from 1933 to 1961. Burns attended Oregon State College and the University of Oregon Extension. In 1920 Burns began to work for architect Charles W. Ertz, eventually becoming a licensed architect and partner in the firm of Ertz-Burns. Noted project by the firm include McMinnville High School, Lloyd Golf Course Clubhouse, Bonnaville Administration Building and several residences. In 1946 Burns established a new partnership – Burns, Bear, McNeil & Schneider which operated until his death in 1961. The firm designed the Portland International Airport Terminal, Northwest Natural Gas building, the Medical Research Laboratories Building at University of Oregon Medical School and the Physics-Chemistry building and dormitories at Oregon State University (Ritz 2003: 59).

The new building, which cost \$4.2 million to build, was reflective of the newest advances in educational instruction and was declared a "palace of learning" by the Oregon Journal (Oregon Journal 8-18-1966). Consisting of two "units" or independent sets of classrooms (and also known as the "school-within-a-school"), the Jackson School featured two sets of staff for each unit that included groups of teachers as well as independent principals (PPS Dedication Booklet 1966: np). Students from each of the units would then share the other parts of the school that included the auditorium, music rooms, cafeteria, and gymnasium (Michigan SHPO 2003: 24; PPS Dedication Booklet 1966: np). According to then school superintendent Melvin W. Barnes, one of the intended consequences of the design was to combine the "best of small school environment with large school opportunities" (Oregon Journal 10-18-1966). In order to create a schedule for the incoming students, PPS hired Stanford University which used the IBM 7090 computer to produce a so-called "variable" schedule (PPS Dedication Booklet 1966: np). Despite initial intentions to expand the school with an additional two units, by 1981 declining enrollment precipitated the closure of the school (Oregonian 12-13-1981). The school was subsequently reopened as a middle school.

The Jackson School retains its integrity with its floor plan, and many of the exterior and interior finishes remain intact. Therefore it is recommended as eligible for the NRHP. The school was built during the PPS program of post-war construction and was designed to be reflective of the evolution of educational instructional concepts that developed in the mid-1960s. The school is indicative of the "unit" or "school-within-a-school" design that decentralized instruction and separated students into two groups who could then share the building's common spaces that consisted of the gymnasium, cafeteria, and auditorium. The school, designed by Burns, Bear, McNeil & Schneider, was reflective of the firm's capacity and expertise in designing large public facilities. The school, as PPS's only example of a unit plan design, is further 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 checked="" 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 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: PPS 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.

Michigan State Historic Preservation Office. *An Honor and An Ornament: Public School Buildings in Michigan*. 2003.

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.

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Oregon Journal. "Andrew Jackson 'Palace of Learning' Most Modern School." 8-18-1966.

Oregon Journal. "Dedication." 10-18-1966.

Oregonian. "Portland Schools saving 599,190 with 4 closures." 12-13-1981.

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

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

_____. Dedication Booklet for Andrew Jackson High School, 1966.

_____. Portland Public Schools Chronology Binder.

_____. Jackson School. Facility Plan.

_____. Jackson School. Facility Profile.

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



Main building, south elevation, showing blank walls to receive two addition building units (never built) (174A).



Main drive leading to Jackson School (174A).



Auto shop, looking northwest (174B).



Typical ancillary entrance (174A).



One of the two “units”, looking northeast (174A).

**Jackson School
Exterior Photos
ENTRIX, 2009**



Typical commons area in unit (174A).



Side corridor near auditorium (174A).



Auditorium (174A).



Typical corridor (174A).

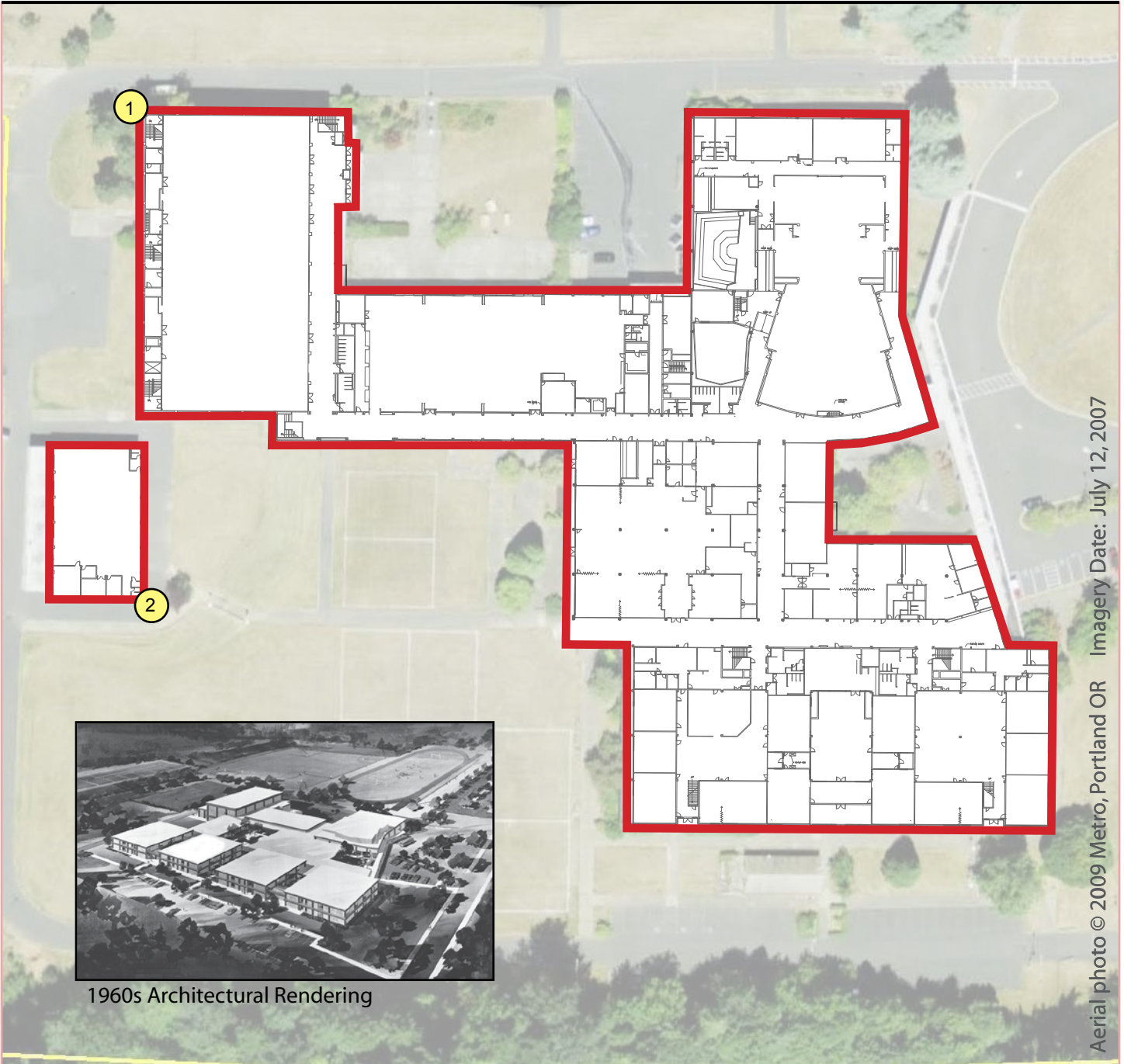


Gymnasium (174A).

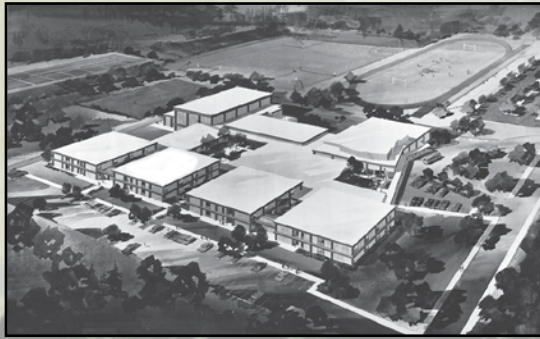
Jackson School

10625 SW 35th Ave, Portland OR, 97219

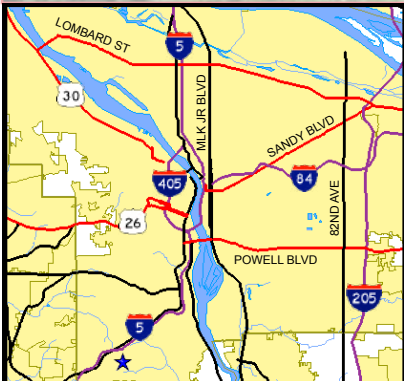
[View Site in Google Maps](#)






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



1960s Architectural Rendering



Historical Significance and Building Integrity

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

Building Periods

- 1. Main Bldg (174), 1966
- 2. Auto Shop (174), 1966

