

# Oregon Historic Site Form

Sunnyside School  
3421 Salmon St  
Portland, Multnomah County

## LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 3421 SE Salmon St  apprx. addr

Portland  vcnty Multnomah County

Optional Information  
 assoc addresses:  
 (former addresses, intersections, etc.)  
 location descr:  
 (remote sites)

historic name: Sunnyside School

current/  
 other names: Sunnyside Environmental School

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

## PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 2

elig. evaluation: not eligible/non-contributing

primary constr date: 1925 (c.)  secondary date: 1952 (c.)   
 (optional--use for major addns)

primary orig use: School

secondary orig use: \_\_\_\_\_

primary style: Classical Revival: other

secondary style: \_\_\_\_\_

primary siding: Standard Brick

secondary siding: Cast Stone

plan type: School (General)

total # eligible resources: 0 total # ineligible resources: 1

NR status: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NR date listed: \_\_\_\_\_ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)

orig use comments: \_\_\_\_\_

prim style comments: \_\_\_\_\_

sec style comments: \_\_\_\_\_

siding comments: \_\_\_\_\_

architect: Jones, George H.

builder: \_\_\_\_\_

comments/notes: HRI Rank II.

## GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

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

farmstead/cluster name: \_\_\_\_\_ external site #: 191  
 (ID# used in city/agency database)

## SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: \_\_\_\_\_

ILS survey date: 6/24/2009

RLS survey date: 6/24/2009

Gen File date: \_\_\_\_\_

**106 Project(s)**



## ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

### Description Summary

Situated in the primarily single-family residential Sunnyside neighborhood of Southeast Portland, Sunnyside School sits on a 3.2-acre campus at 3421 SE Salmon Street. Built in 1925, the two-story school building (191A) with a ground floor basement has a reinforced concrete structure and is covered with brick veneer. The exterior is distinguished by its Classical Revival style cast stone and terra cotta ornamentation. The building's irregular shaped plan includes classrooms, an auditorium, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, a library, and an administrative office.

### Architectural Description

Situated in the primarily single family residential neighborhood of Southeast Portland, Sunnyside School sits on a 3.2-acre campus at 3421 SE Salmon Street. The two-story school building (191A) with a ground floor basement faces SE Salmon Street, and is situated on a campus covered with a mixture of grass and asphalt. East of the school parcel is Sunnyside School Park, a City/School Distinct joint-use property maintained by the City of Portland which contains playgrounds and play fields. An extensive garden is situated along the front elevation. The primary entrance to the building is on SE Salmon Street.

The two-story school building with a ground floor basement is oriented on a east-west axis. Clad in variegated brick, the reinforced concrete structure rests on a poured concrete foundation. A cast stone cornice highlights the parapet of the flat roof. Classical Revival style details include cast stone door surrounds with a pedimented head supported by brackets and decorative terra cotta/cast stone panels with ornamental garlands. The panels are located over the entries and above the cast stone cornice. The central pavilion windows are capped by ornamental voussoirs. The north elevation is highlighted by a brick-cladded ventilation stack that rises from the boiler room.

The fenestration consists primarily of symmetrically placed metal frame replacement windows with a horizontal sliding opening at the bottom of the window. Divided into three horizontal sections, the upper section of each window is blocked off with louver vents. Some of the lower sections have hinged windows. The stairwell windows over the doors on either side of central pavilion are round-arched but have been modified. The wood frame windows on the stairwell landings between the 1st and 2nd floors were replaced with metal frame windows. The cast stone surrounds have been retained over the doorways. Double leaf metal doors replace the original wooden outside doors.

The interior layout of the school consists of a modified U-shaped hallway plan on both floors with the main hallway running east-west. Sections of the double-loaded corridors, especially on the second floor, have not retained their original configuration, height, or built-in metal lockers. The second floor hallway configuration has been extensively modified to add classrooms. On both floors the wood molding and framing have been painted, and contemporary fluorescent light fixtures replace the original lights. Sections of the acoustic tile ceilings have been lowered. Flooring consists of linoleum and concrete. Single leaf metal doors replaced the original wooden doors that provide access to the classrooms from the hallways.

Most of the stairwells retain their original concrete steps and landings, veneer plaster walls, wooden railings and molding, and steam radiators. The north elevation stairwell between the ground floor entry and the 1st floor has been extensively modified to provide handicap access. The landing on the 2nd floor has also been modified to create additional storage space.

The majority of classrooms are rectangular with built-in cabinetry and closets for storing coats and supplies. However, the ceiling heights and furnishings in many classrooms on the second floor have been modified. Several classroom walls on the east side of the building were removed to create larger rooms. The molding and framing has been painted. All the rooms have veneer plaster walls, tiled flooring, and tubular fluorescent light fixtures suspended from the acoustic tile ceilings.

The auditorium has been extensively modified. The stage, ceiling, seating, and wall fixtures have been modified and/or removed. Metal frame windows replace the original wood frame, semi-circular/arched windows.

There are two gymnasiums located adjacent to one another. One still functions as a gymnasium, while the other has been converted into a lunch room. Both retain their original configuration with high bay ceilings, ceiling skylights, and steel trusses. A sliding wooden door connects the two rooms. In addition to its other features, the functioning gymnasium retains its original folding bleachers.

The building is heated by boilers located in the ground floor basement behind the gymnasium. Radiators with metal covers are found in the hallways, stairwells, and classrooms. Grilles are also set in the exterior walls.

### Alterations/Integrity

The first major addition/modification to the school building occurred with the classroom additions to the northwest elevation in 1952. During this same time the auditorium was significantly modified, and the second gymnasium was converted into a cafeteria/lunch room. In 1976 there were extensive alterations to the hallways and some of the classrooms, especially on the east side of the second floor. In 1989, metal frame windows replaced most of the original wood frame multi-light windows.

The Sunnyside School retains a poor-to-moderate degree of integrity. Although the brick veneer and Classical Revival style ornamentation are largely intact, the metal frame replacement windows are incompatible with the building's historic design, features, and materials. Additionally, the wood molding and framing in the hallways and classrooms have been painted. Since 1976 there have been numerous modifications to the classroom's built-in cabinetry and ceiling heights. Other significant interior alterations include modifications to the auditorium and changes in the corridor ceiling height.

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## HISTORY

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

### Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1925, Sunnyside School was part of a dramatic building program begun by Portland Public Schools in the early 1900s. Gradually influenced by John Dewey's Progressive Education Movement, the program responded to changing city demographics and ideas concerning school safety, sanitation, and child centered instructional methods beginning in the first decade of the 1900s (Rippa, 1997: passim; Cremin 1961: 135-153; Cubberley 1915: 283-290). By 1905, it became increasingly clear that dramatic increases in school-age children outstripped the district's existing classroom capacity and existing schools could not effectively serve areas of the city with new residential development (Cubberley 1915: 283-285, 288-290).

After several well-publicized school fires elsewhere in the United States, calls for a more fundamental change in the building stock of the district began as early as 1906 when Mayor Lane called for the construction of new "fireproof" school buildings (Oregonian, 10-31-1906). In 1910, various city neighborhood "advancement clubs" joined forces to discuss the unfit school buildings in their respective neighborhoods (Oregonian 07-31-1910). Soon after this meeting, on August 16, 1910, the Portland City Council enacted a requirement that all schools constructed after January 1, 1911 would have to be of fire proof construction (Powers and Corning 1937: 183). By 1914, in the first joint meeting between Portland city officials, Multnomah County Commissioners, and the school board, officials agreed to work with building code officials to encourage the use of fireproof construction and to implement fire safety measures in all existing and future schools (Oregonian, 03-31-1914).

In 1908, Portland Public Schools created the Bureau of Properties in an effort to centralize the management of the district's various properties (Powers and Corning 1937: 182). Within this office, the District architect took on a more formalized role in the design and maintenance of school facilities. Two of the most influential district architects during this period included Floyd Naramore and George Jones who designed a majority of the schools from 1908 to 1932.

Like Sunnyside these new school buildings were often constructed of brick and concrete and were one or two stories high. To speed the construction of the new schools and to anticipate later growth in the neighborhood, these new buildings were often constructed in units sometimes referred to as extensible schools (Powers and Corning 1937: 182). The buildings also contained more differentiated and increasingly specialized instructional spaces such as libraries, gymnasiums, science rooms, music rooms, and assembly spaces (Powers and Corning 1937: 182).

The architect of Sunnyside School, George Jones, was well versed in the design of school facilities through his role as Superintendent of building for the district. The son of Thomas J. Jones, who had also served as district architect for many years, George Jones was born in Portland in 1887. After attending Oregon State College for two years, George Jones obtained a degree in architecture in 1913. Jones worked in New York for several years before serving in the U.S. Army Combat Engineers during World War I. Following his return to Portland in 1920, Jones obtained his architecture license. He quickly assumed the position of school architect after his predecessor, Floyd A. Naramore, became district architect for the Seattle School District.

In his role as district architect, George Jones designed about 25 new schools and supervised the construction of additions for many existing building. Following his tenure with the Portland Schools, Jones went into private practice in Portland. With architect Harold Marsh, he established the firm of Jones & Marsh. Throughout his career Jones continued to specialize in school design, with projects in Pendleton, Klamath Falls, and Oregon City. The firm of Jones & Marsh also designed additions to Roosevelt High School in Portland, buildings at Concordia Academy, and the Engineering wing and coliseum at Oregon State College in Corvallis (Ritz 2002 217).

For Sunnyside School, Jones employed the Classical Revival style. This style, along with Colonial Revival and Collegiate Gothic styles, was viewed as inspirational and appropriate for educational settings (Betelle 1919: 28; Sibley 1923: 66; Patton 1967: 1-8).

Named for the surrounding neighborhood, the original building was constructed in 1925 for \$226,422 (Snyder: 1979 241; PPS School Chronology Binder). Sunnyside School was designed as an extensible school to accommodate the continued growth of the neighborhood. The school expanded with additional classrooms in 1953 and again in 1976.

Although designed by George Jones during his tenure as Superintendent of Building for Portland Public Schools, Sunnyside School does not retain a level of historical integrity commensurate with other Portland Elementary Schools constructed of similar styles during the same period and is therefore not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). While the Classical Revival style ornamentation is discernable on the building, several alterations have diminished the building's integrity of materials, design, and feeling. These alterations include the removal of windows, additions, and modifications to the auditorium. Due to the loss of integrity, Sunnyside Elementary School is not eligible under either NRHP Criteria A, B, or 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

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## Bibliography: Bibliography

Betelle, James O. "Architectural Styles as Applied to School Buildings." American School Board Journal. Vol. 58 (April 1919).

Cremin, Lawrence. The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957. New York: A. Knopf, 1961.

Cubberley, Ellwood Patterson. The Portland Survey: A Textbook on City School Administration Based on a Concrete Study. Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book Co., 1915.

Oregonian. "Change Favored in School Buildings." 3-31-1914.

Oregonian. "Mayor Lane and the Schools." 10-31-1906.

Oregonian. "School Buildings are Called Unfit." 7-31-1910.

Portland Public Schools. Schools Chronology Binder.

\_\_\_\_\_. Sunnyside Elementary School. Facility Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_. Sunnyside Elementary School. Facility Profile.

Powers, Alfred and Howard McKinley Corning, History of Education in Portland. [Portland]: Work Projects Administration, 1937.

Rippa, Alexander. Education in a Free Society: An American History. New York: Longman, 1997.

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

Sibley, Ernest. "Why I Prefer the Colonial Style." School Board Journal: Vol. 66 (January 1923).



South elevation front entry



West elevation



South elevation front entry



South elevation front entry



North (rear) elevation

**Sunnyside Environmental School  
Exterior Photos  
ENTRIX, 2009**



Auditorium



Cafeteria



Corridor



Stairwell



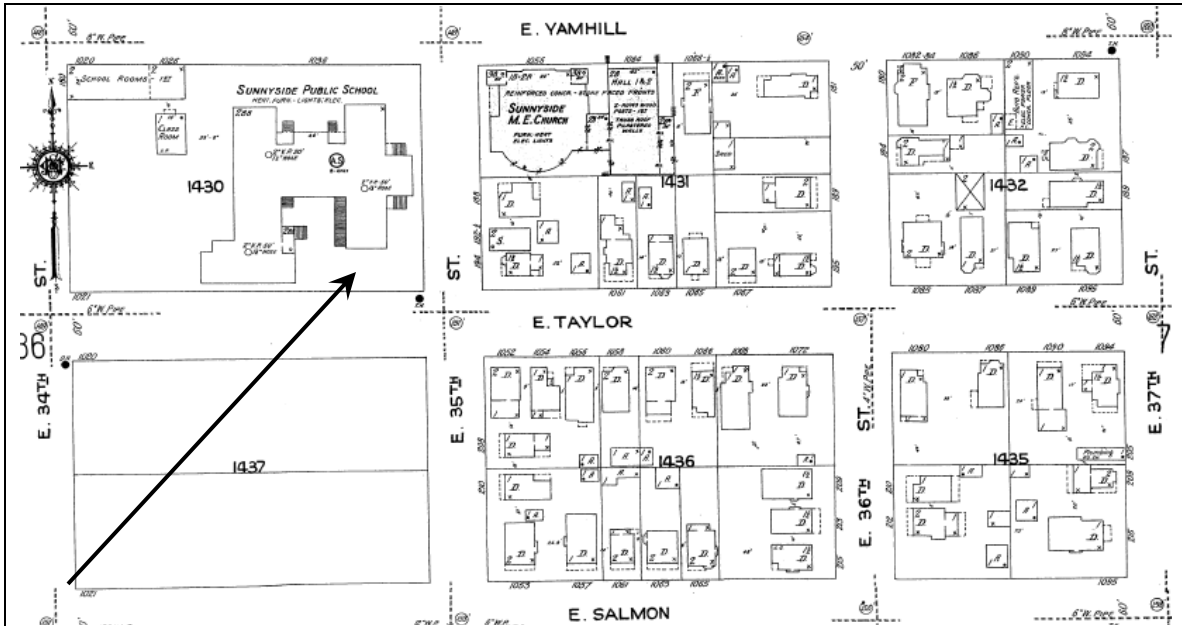
Classroom built-ins

**Sunnyside Environmental School  
Interior Photos  
ENTRIX, 2009**



# ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

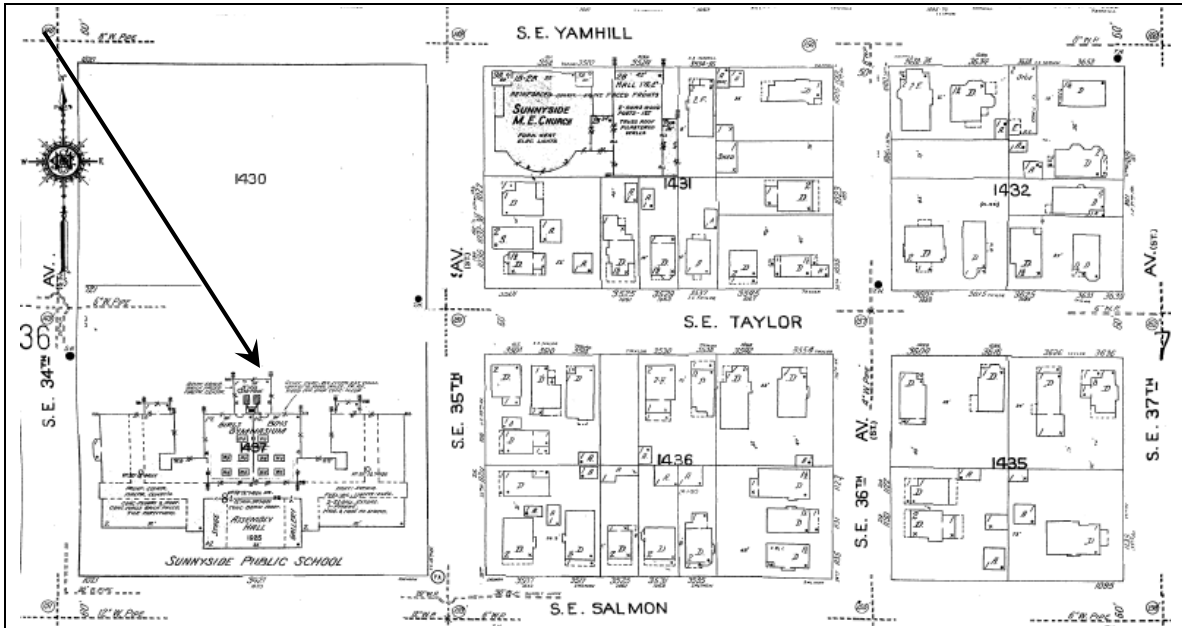


Updated to 1924-1928, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 737. Arrow points to the old Sunnyside Public School prior to its removal and replacement with a newer school facility.



# ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™



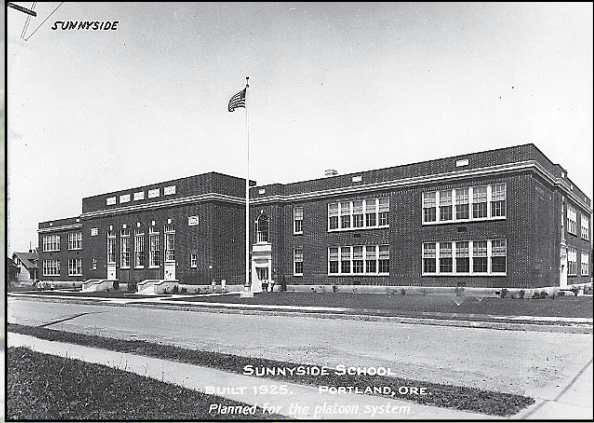
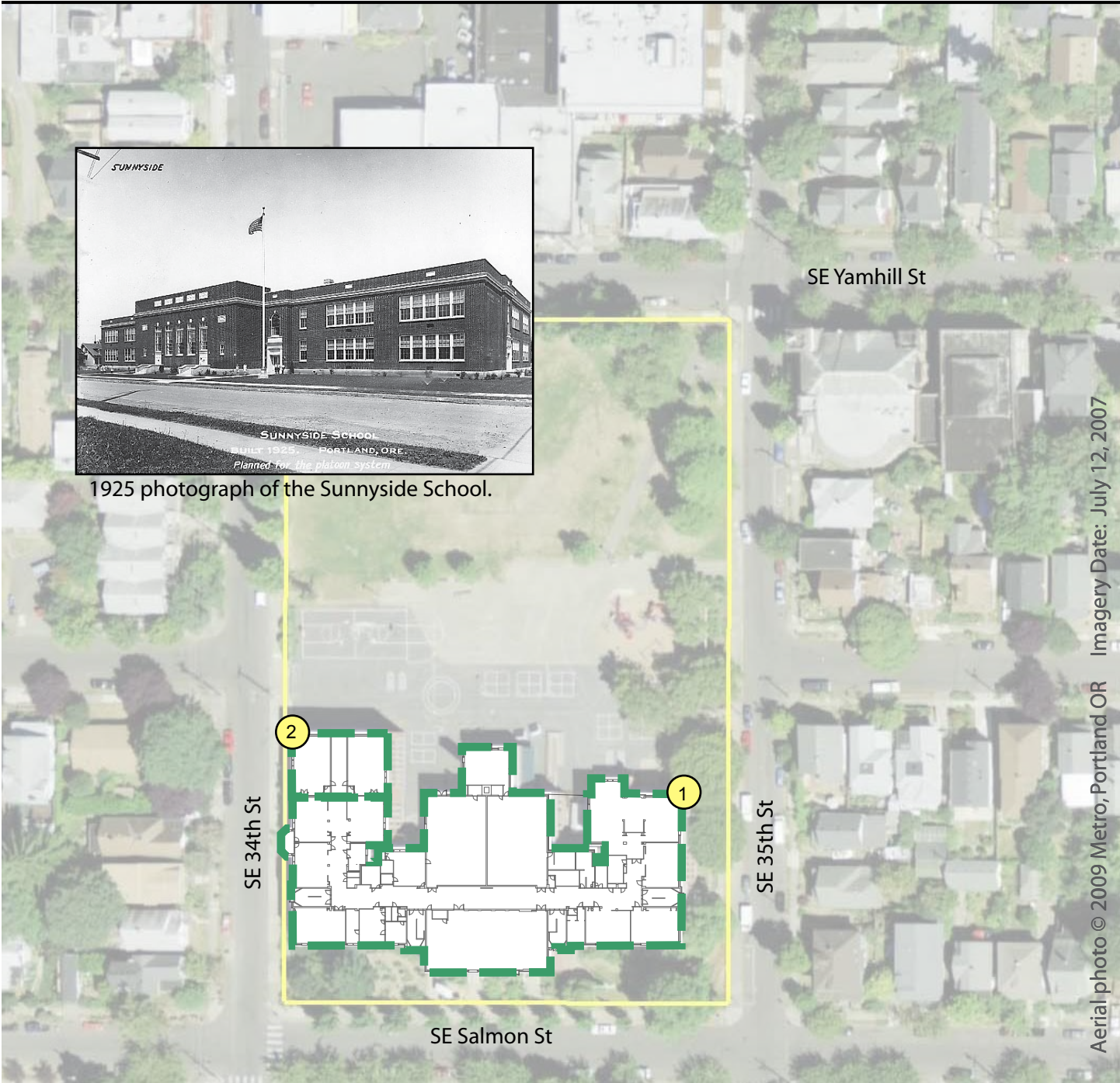
Updated to 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 737.  
Arrow points to Sunnyside Public School. Note street change, building location change,  
and removal of old school building.



# Sunnyside Environmental School

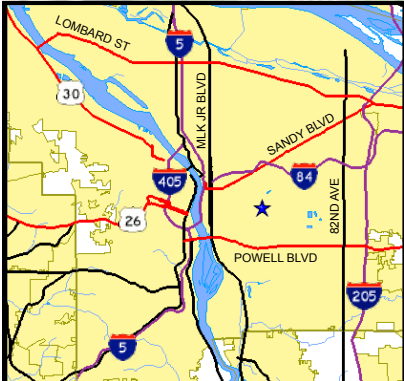
3421 SE Salmon St, Portland OR, 97214

[View Site in Google Maps](#)






1925 photograph of the Sunnyside School.

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 (191A), 1925
2. Addition (191A), 1953