

Oregon Historic Site Form

Vestal School
161 82nd Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: <u>161 NE 82nd Ave</u> <input type="checkbox"/> apprx. addr	historic name: <u>Vestal School</u>
<u>Portland</u> <input type="checkbox"/> vcnty <u>Multnomah County</u>	current/ other names: <u>John L. Vestal Elementary School</u>
Optional Information assoc addresses: (former addresses, intersections, etc.) location descr: (remote sites)	block nbr: _____ lot nbr: _____ tax lot nbr: <u>R22196</u> township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____ zip: _____

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: <u>Building</u> height (# stories): <u>2</u>	total # eligible resources: _____ total # ineligible resources: _____
elig. evaluation: <u>eligible/significant</u>	NR status: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)
primary constr date: <u>1929</u> (c.) <input checked="" 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: _____	
primary style: <u>Late Gothic Revival</u>	prim style comments: <u>Collegiate Gothic</u>
secondary style: _____	sec style comments: _____
primary siding: <u>Standard Brick</u>	siding comments: <u>Brick with terra cotta ornament</u>
secondary siding: <u>Terra Cotta: Other/Undefined</u>	
plan type: <u>Modern School</u>	architect: <u>Jones, George H</u>
	builder: _____
comments/notes:	

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name	<u>PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009</u>	<u>Survey & Inventory Project</u>
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farmstead/cluster name: _____ external site #: 284
(ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____
ILS survey date: 7/7/2009
RLS survey date: 7/7/2009
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 Montavilla neighborhood of east Portland, the Vestal School campus consists of a primary rectangular shaped building (286) and three portable buildings. Located at 161 NE 82nd Avenue, the primary building is two-stories in height and constructed of reinforced concrete with brick veneer. The 1929 Collegiate Gothic style building is ornamented with buttresses, stone belt courses, and decorative motifs. Bands of aluminum windows with stone surrounds provide the fenestration. The front entrances, located along a central projecting bay with Tudor arched windows, feature stone surrounds and fan lights. The building is covered by a flat roof with stone cap along the parapet. The rectangular mass rests on a poured concrete foundation. Double loaded corridors provide access to the administrative offices, classrooms, and recreation spaces.

Architectural Description

Vestal School is situated in the Montavilla neighborhood of north east Portland at 161 NE 82nd Avenue. The neighborhood consists of single family residences built around the 1920s (Sanborn Maps 1924-1928, Sanborn Map updated to 1950). The primary entrances to the facility are from NE 82nd Avenue. Play areas and open space occupy the western end of the campus. South of the main building are three rectangular portable buildings arranged in a row from east to west featuring drop siding, fixed and hopper windows, and poured concrete foundations. The western and eastern buildings have flat roofs, while the central building is capped by a gable roof with shed roofed addition.

The two-story building rests on a poured concrete foundation. A stone capped parapet masks the flat roof. The brick cladding is laid in an English bond pattern and ornamented with stone belt courses. Other Collegiate Gothic style ornamentation includes projecting bays, projecting windows and entrances, and stone decorative motifs along the parapet. Single, paired, and bands of aluminum windows with stone surrounds provide the fenestration. The front entrances are located along a central projecting bay that is ornamented with buttresses, segmental arched windows and cast stone details. Entrances consist of segmental arched openings with stone surrounds. The more ornate entrances on the east (front), north and south (side) elevations are recessed and feature fanlights and elaborate stone work.

The pair of entry doors that flank the projecting auditorium bay provide the principal entry to the school. Additional doors on the north and south (side) elevations open into short hallways illuminated by windows that cap the doors. Two short hallways located at the rear of the building extend the principal U-shaped corridor. The auditorium and the cafeteria/gymnasium (located immediately across the hall) are the largest spaces within the building. Light wells are situated at the north and south end of the building, providing additional light and ventilation for the cafeteria and other adjacent spaces. Rectangular classrooms and administrative offices comprise the other spaces located along the main U-shaped corridor.

The school features a mixture of original and replacement finishes. The double loaded corridors are lined with wood molding and pilasters. The central corridor, which runs between the gymnasium and auditorium, features wooden bulletin boards bearing the school's first initial. Tubular fluorescent light fixtures are suspended from the acoustic tile clad ceiling. The hallways on the second floor feature skylights. Wood doors with center or side lights provide access to the classrooms. Flooring consists of concrete, linoleum tile, and carpet.

The classrooms feature a rectangular plan with a recessed area for cupboards, shelves, and closets. Classroom windows line the exterior walls and retain their wood surrounds. The building is heated by boilers located behind the auditorium on the east (rear) elevation of the building. Standing heating units are located along walls in the classrooms and hallways.

Alterations/ Integrity

The primary two-story Collegiate Gothic building was constructed in 1929. Interior alterations include the alteration the cafeteria kitchen in 1949, the alteration of the cafeteria and kitchen into one kitchen and the addition of drop down seating in the gymnasium (now cafeteria) in 1955. Other alterations include the replacement of windows (1983, 1989), floor tiles (1989), interior doors, ceiling tiles (1953), lighting fixtures (1953, 1974), and some of the classroom built-ins. In 1949 a door was installed to provide access to the light courts. In 2005 a staircase was installed as a means of secondary egress from the auditorium balcony for fire safety requirements.

Three wood clad buildings are located to the south of the primary building arranged in a row on an east-west axis. The central gable roof building (bldg 2) was moved to the property from Creston Elementary School in 1948 (PPS Facility Profile). In 1949 the two flat roofed buildings were moved to the property from Glenhaven School (PPS Facility Profile). The western building (bldg 3) was remodeled in 1991. While these buildings are notable historic resources, they are not associated with the development of the primary 1929 Collegiate Gothic building. As a result, the portable buildings are non-contributing (not significant) historic resources.

HISTORY

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

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Statement of Significance

Vestal School was constructed for \$313,542.73 during a period of progressive era growth that responded to changing city demographics and ideas concerning safety, sanitation, and child centered instruction (Portland Chronology Binder; 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 the existing schools could not effectively serve areas of the city with new residential development (Cubberley 1915: 283-285, 288-290). Portland Public Schools (PPS) District Architect, George Jones, designed Vestal Elementary School. George Jones was one of the most influential district architects. Jones along with Floyd Naramore designed a majority of the schools from 1908 to 1932. Beginning in 1908, with the emergence of the Bureau of Properties, PPS district architects took on a more formalized role in the design and maintenance of school facilities. The Bureau of Properties was created by PPS to centralize management of the district's properties (Powers and Corning 1937: 182).

For Vestal Elementary School, George Jones adopted the building program and principles that dominated the discourse for school design during the first half of the twentieth century. After several well-publicized school fires in U.S. cities, calls for a more fundamental change in the building construction began as early as 1906 (Oregonian, 10-31-1906). 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).

Many of Portland's new fire proof buildings, such as Vestal, were constructed of brick and concrete. While Vestal deviated from the U-shaped plan characteristic of schools constructed during this period, the building plan is similar, with a long lateral corridor connected to other wings of the building by short hallways. Like other PPS buildings constructed during this period, Vestal contained more differentiated and increasingly specialized spaces (Powers and Corning 1937: 182).

Named in honor of John L. Vestal, a Portland businessman who bequeathed \$200,000 to Portland Public Schools, Vestal School was constructed in the Collegiate Gothic style popular for educational buildings during the first half of the twentieth-century (Snyder 1979: 241). This style, which is characterized by symmetry, bracketed cornices with pilasters, quoins, round-arch or square multi-paned windows, is well suited to portray the civic stature of the schools during this period. Architectural revivals such as Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Collegiate Gothic were viewed as inspirational and appropriate for educational settings (Betelle 1919: 28; Sibley 1923: 66; Patton 1967: 1-8).

In the late 1940s, the Vestal School campus expanded to accommodate an increasing number of students. Three portable buildings were moved to the campus from other Portland public school facilities. In 1948 a gable roof building (bldg 2) was moved to the property from Creston Elementary School and two flat roofed buildings were moved to the property from Glenhaven School the following year (PPS Facility Profile). Each portable provided one additional classroom and a boys and girls restroom.

Vestal School retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association with minimal alterations to its plan and exterior and interior finishes. The 1929 Collegiate Gothic School is recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its association with progressive era public school construction in Portland (Criterion A). The school was built during the PPS program of progressive era construction and is a strong example of the principles that characterized the design of schools during this era. Further, Vestal Elementary School is a good example of the two-story Collegiate Gothic style school buildings constructed during the early-twentieth century. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of the style as applied by George Jones to school buildings in Portland and therefore is also eligible for listing in the NRHA 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

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

Patton, Glenn. "American Collegiate Gothic: A Phase of University Architectural Development." Journal of Higher Education. Vol. 38, No. 1 (January, 1967).

Portland Public Schools. School Chronology Binder. PPS Archives, Portland, Oregon.

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_____. Vestal Elementary School. Facility Profile.

_____. Vestal Elementary School. Building Plans.

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.

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.

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

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



Main building (286A), east (front) elevation, looking west.



Main building (286A), north (side) elevation, looking southwest.



Main building (286A), south (side) elevation, looking northeast.



Portable building (No.2), north and west elevations, looking southeast.



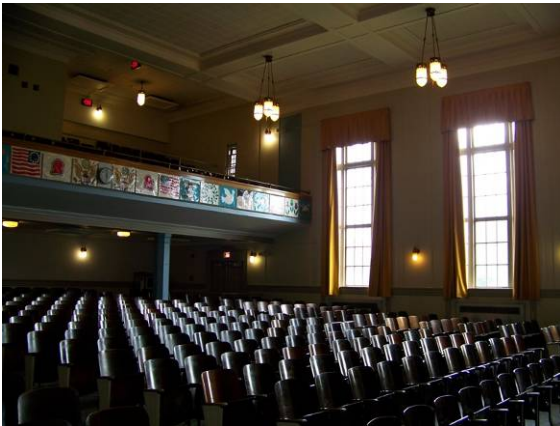
Main building (286A), west (rear) elevation, looking southeast.



Main building (286A), main corridor, looking north.



Main building (286A), library, looking north.



Main building (286A), auditorium, looking northeast.



Main building (286A), wooden bulletin board (with school's initial) in main corridor, looking west.

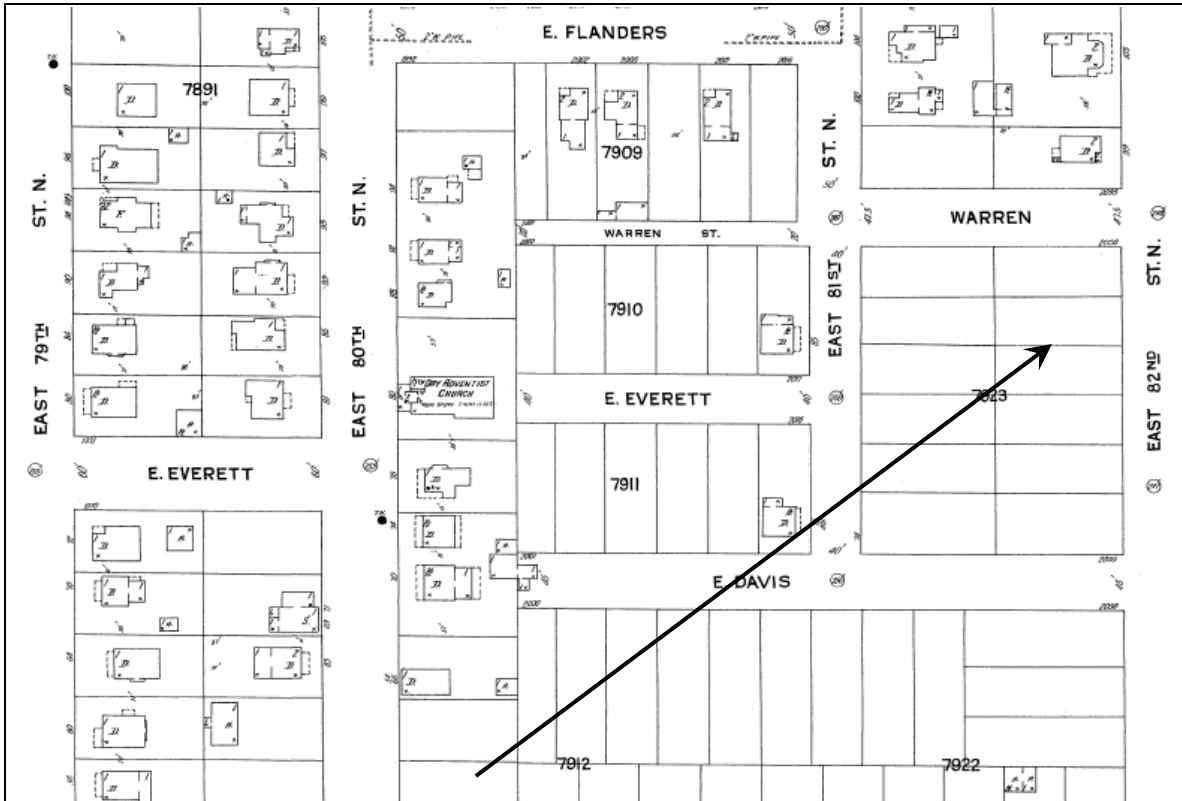


Main building (286A), gymnasium, looking northwest.



ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

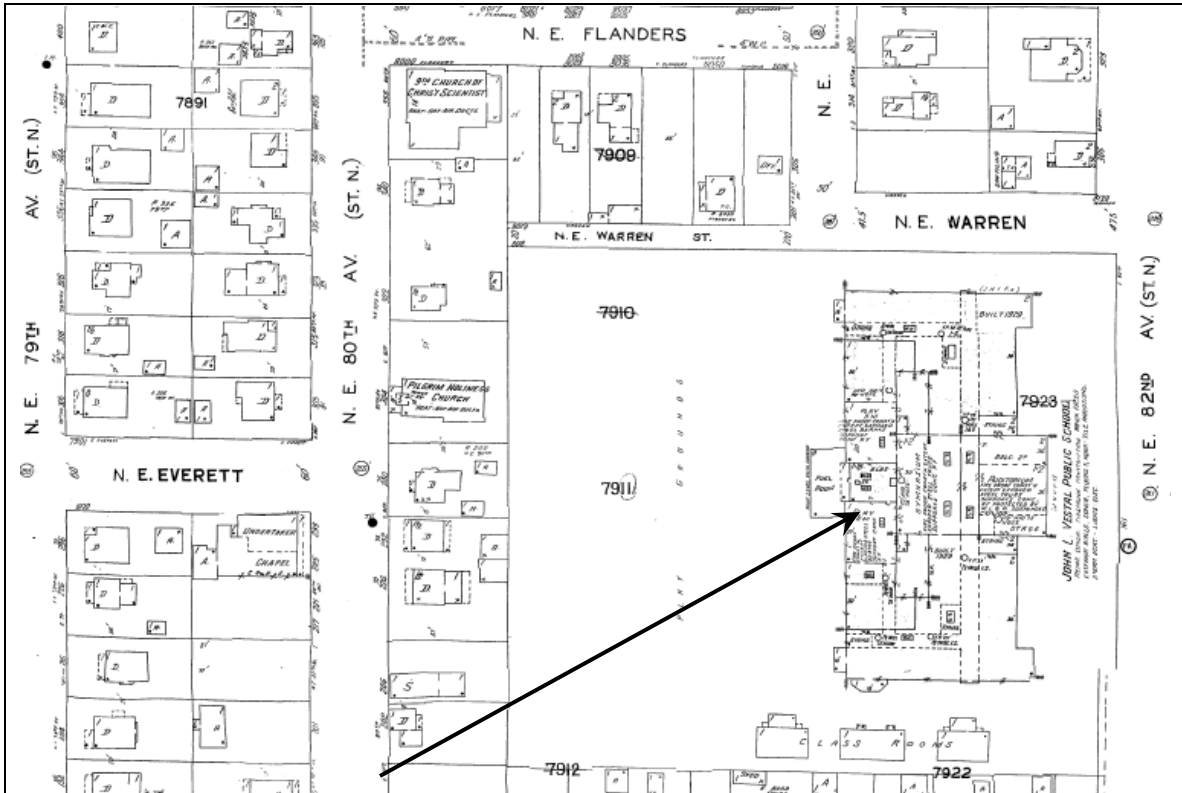


Updated to 1924-1928, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 910. Arrow points to future location of John L. Vestal Public School.



ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

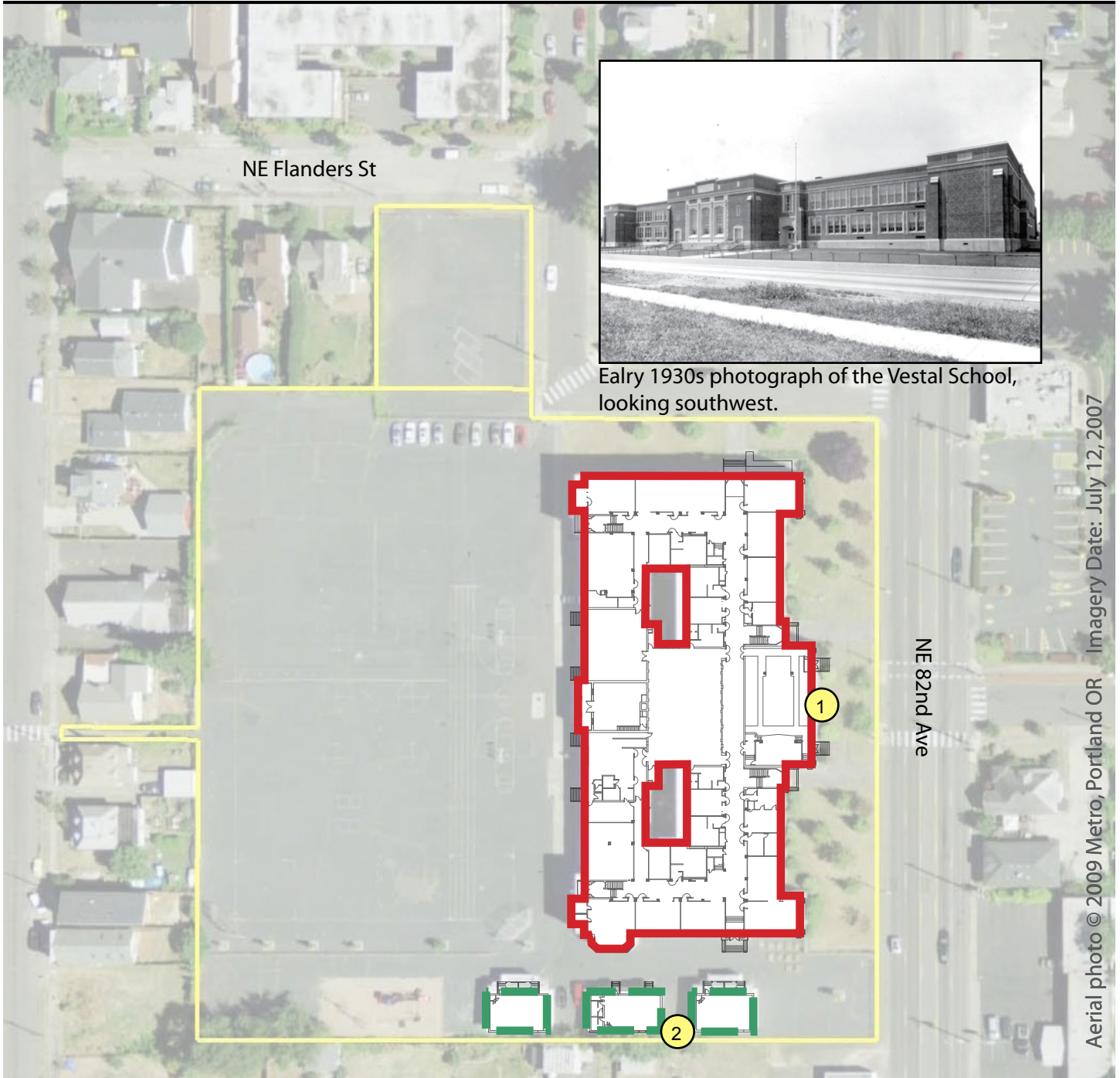


Updated to 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 910.
Arrow points to John L. Vestal Public School. Note street change and removal of houses
at school location.

Vestal School

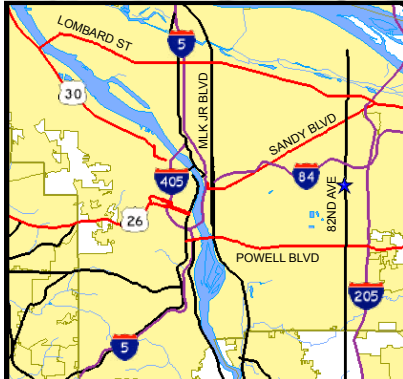
161 NE 82nd St, Portland OR, 97220

[View Site in Google Maps](#)






Early 1930s photograph of the Vestal School, looking southwest.

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



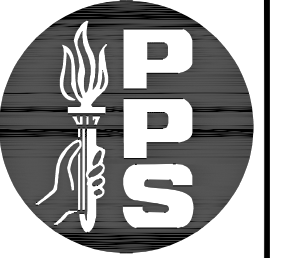
Historical Significance and Building Integrity

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



Building Periods

1. Original Building (284A), 1931
2. Portable Classrooms (284P), 1948



VESTAL ELEMENTARY – 286

161 NE 82ND AVE 97220

PPS HISTORIC ASSESSMENT



DRAWING: ANNOTATED PLAN

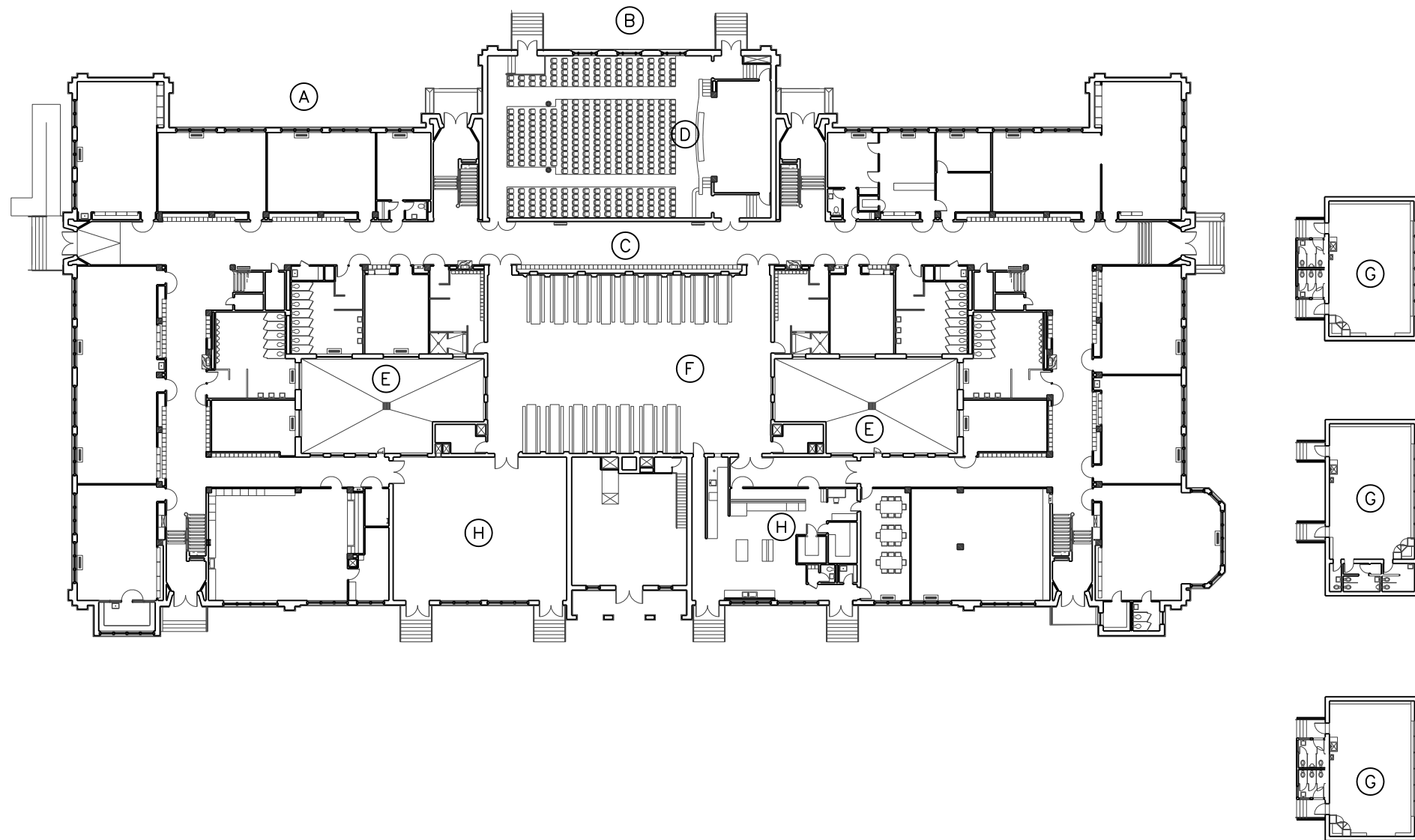
DATE: Sept. 4, 2009

KEYNOTES:

- (A) THE PRIMARY 1929 TWO-STORY BUILDING IS ORNAMENTED BY A SERIES OF HORIZONTAL ELEMENTS THAT INCLUDE CAST STONE CORNICES AND BELT COURSES.
- (B) THE FRONT ELEVATION IS MARKED BY A PROJECTING CENTRAL BAY THAT IS ORNAMENTED WITH BUTTRESSES, SEGMENTAL ARCHED WINDOWS, AND CAST STONE RELIEF PANELS. THE PRIMARY ENTRANCES FLANK THE CENTRAL PROJECTING BAY AND FEATURE CAST STONE SURROUNDS AND PANELS WITH QUOTATIONS.
- (C) THE TWO-STORY BUILDING HAS A U-SHAPED PLAN AND A SINGLE-STORY BUILDING IS LOCATED BETWEEN THE ARMS OF THE U.
- (D) THE INTERIOR OF THE CENTRAL BAY IS THE SCHOOL'S AUDITORIUM, WHICH FEATURES A COFFERED CEILING, WOOD MOLDING, AND PILASTERS ALONG THE WALLS. THE AISLE SEAT ENDS FEATURE A DECORATIVE MOTIF.
- (E) LIGHT WELLS ARE LOCATED TO THE REAR OF THE BUILDING AND SERVE TO LIGHT THE REAR CORRIDORS AND CAFETERIA.
- (F) LIGHT WELLS PROVIDE NATURAL LIGHT IN THE REAR CORRIDORS AND CAFETERIA.
- (G) THESE 1948/1949 PORTABLE BUILDINGS WERE MOVED TO THE CAMPUS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS.
- (H) ONE STORY SECTION OF THE BUILDING.

GENERAL NOTES:

- 1 THE EXTERIOR WALLS ARE CLAD IN BRICK ARRANGED IN AN ENGLISH BOND PATTERN AND FEATURE DECORATIVE BRICK WORK, BUTTRESSES, AND BAY WINDOWS.
- 2 THE BUILDING FEATURES A FLAT ROOF WITH CAST STONE COPING ALONG THE PARAPET.
- 3 THE CLASSROOMS FEATURE A RECTANGULAR PLAN WITH A RECESSED AREA FOR CUPBOARDS, SHELVES, AND CLOSETS.
- 4 ALTERATIONS INCLUDE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE ORIGINAL CLASSROOM WINDOWS (1983, 1989), BUILDING FLOOR TILES (1989), INTERIOR DOORS, CEILING TILES (1953), LIGHTING FIXTURES (1953, 1974), AND SOME OF THE CLASSROOM BUILT-INS.



1

VESTAL ELEMENTARY – 1ST FLOOR

SCALE: 1" = 40'-0"

