

Oregon Historic Site Form

Arleta School
5109 66th Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 5109 SE 66th Ave apprx. addr

Portland vcnty Multnomah County

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

historic name: Arleta School

current/
 other names: Arleta Elementary School

block nbr: _____ lot nbr: _____ tax lot nbr: R28694
 township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____
 zip: _____

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 1

elig. evaluation: eligible/contributing

primary constr date: 1929 (c.) secondary date: 1953 (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: Glazed Terra-Cotta

plan type: School (General)

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

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

orig use comments: _____

prim style comments: Twentieth Century Georgian (HRI)

sec style comments: _____

siding comments: Variegated brick with terra cotta trim

architect: Jones, George (main); Caine, Morton (annex)

builder: _____

comments/notes: The school is listed as an HRI Rank II resource.

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

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

farmstead/cluster name: _____ external site #: 232
 (ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____

ILS survey date: 7/2/2009

RLS survey date: 7/2/2009

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

Arleta Elementary School is located 5109 SE 66th Avenue in the Mt. Scott-Arleta Neighborhood of Southeast Portland. In addition to the main school building (232A) and an L-shaped detached annex (232B) built in 1953, the campus includes a playfield and asphalt-covered play areas situated on a 4.16-acre rectangular parcel. The primary school building is a rectangular, two-story structure covered by a flat roof. The reinforced concrete building, clad in variegated brick, rests on a poured concrete foundation. Designed in the Classical Revival style, the building is divided bi-laterally by a projecting bay embellished with pilasters and rounded arches. Other cast stone detail include a terra cotta belt course, cast stone Corinthian columns at the entry doors, and cast stone entablature. Fenestration consists of a mixture of metal frame windows and multi-light arched wood frame windows above the doors and in the auditorium bay.

Architectural Description

Arleta Elementary School is located 5109 SE 66th Avenue in the Mt. Scott-Arleta Neighborhood of Southeast Portland. Development in the neighborhood consists of a mixture of single family houses, small commercial facilities, and multi-family residential buildings. In addition to the main school building and an L-shaped addition (detached) built in 1953, the campus includes a playfield and asphalt-covered play areas situated on a 4.16 acre rectangular parcel.

The primary school building is a rectangular, two-story structure covered by a flat roof. The reinforced concrete building, clad in variegated brick laid in an all stretcher bond, rests on a poured concrete foundation. Designed in the Classical Revival style, the building is divided bi-laterally by a projecting bay embellished with pilasters with Corinthian Order capitals and three semicircular arched bays. Other cast stone detail include a terra cotta belt course, cast stone Corinthian columns at the entry doors, and cast stone entablature. Fenestration consists of a mixture of metal frame windows and multi-light arched wood frame windows above the doors and in the auditorium bay. A covered walkway connects the L-shaped annex to the main school building. The annex is clad in variegated brick that matches the primary building. The building is covered by a hip roof.

The primary school building is oriented on a north-south axis with its primary entry located at the southwest corner of the building. A U-shaped double loaded corridor system provides access to the principal classrooms, offices, and community spaces. The auditorium and gymnasium occupy the center of the building. The auditorium retains its balcony, stage, seating, and light fixtures. The building features a mixture of floor finishes including 6" x 6" tile, 12" x 12" tile, concrete, carpet, and wood floors in the gymnasiums. Much of the original interior finishes including floor and ceiling molding, blackboard and bulletin board trim, window surrounds, and marble backings for the ceramic water fountains are intact.

The classrooms are primarily rectangular with built-ins lining the interior walls. The current and original kindergarten rooms feature individual restrooms. Many classrooms have original built-ins and sinks.

The building is heated by two oil boilers located on the east end of the building. Heat for the classrooms is provided by univents below the windows.

Alterations/Integrity

Since the construction of the current school building in 1929 there have been only moderate alterations to Arleta Elementary School. The most substantial change to the campus was the addition of the detached classroom building in 1953. Alterations to the interior include changes to lighting, flooring (1983), and other interior finishes. The majority of the windows were replaced in 1987. More substantial changes to the interior include conversion of a play area to a media center in 1964 (Portland Facility Profile). This change modified the circulation for the west side of the ground floor but otherwise the floor plan, including the U-shaped corridor and stair configuration, is unchanged. The 1953 addition was designed to be compatible with the existing building in its location, massing, and materials. This building retains high integrity with its windows, interior finishes, and floor plan intact. Arleta Elementary School retains its integrity.

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

Constructed in 1929, Arleta School was part of the last wave of a dramatic building program begun by Portland Public Schools in the early 1900s. Gradually influenced by John Dewey's Progressive Education Movement, PPS 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 where new residential development was occurring (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 fireproof 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 between 1908 and 1932. These new school buildings were often constructed of brick and concrete and were one or two stories in height. 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, as well as assembly spaces (Powers and Corning 1937: 182). The architectural details of the new schools were largely encompassed by the Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Collegiate Gothic styles; architectural revivals that were viewed as inspirational and appropriate for educational settings (Betelle 1919: 28; Sibley 1923: 66; Patton 1967: 1-8). Between the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 and World War II in 1941, few schools were constructed in Portland, although several schools were recipients of Works Progress Administration funding for artwork, additions, system updates, and playground improvements.

The architect of Arleta 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 with 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 buildings. 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 2003: 217).

Arleta School has evolved in response to the changing educational needs of the Portland school-age children. The 1929 Jones building replaced a 1914 school dedicated to manual training and a T. J. Jones (his father's) 1909 design school. The school, one of the last built during the building program initiated by Portland Public Schools in 1910, is a good example of the two story reinforced concrete buildings designed to meet the need for sturdy, fireproof buildings, with classrooms and other spaces appropriate to new instructional methods. The 1953 addition, designed by Morton Caine, provided 8 additional classroom and cafeteria space. In 1998 an interior remodel developed new space for a media center and new office space.

Arleta School provides a good example of the schools designed by George Jones during his tenure as Superintendent of Building of the Portland Schools. The 1953 annex is modest in scale and located to the south and west of the primary school building. This annex is over 50 years old and a good example of design strategies employed in many of the mid-twentieth century schools in Portland. In comparison with other Portland schools during the same period and constructed of similar styles, Arleta Schools retains a high degree of integrity and is therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as an example of school planning. The school is also eligible under Criterion C as an example of the work of George Jones in the Classical Revival style.

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 checked="" 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: 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. "Three New Schools Ready for Opening. Other Buildings Remodeled and Painted." 8-19-1928.

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

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

Portland Public Schools. Schools Chronology Binder.

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.

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).



West elevation facing east



East Elevation



North elevation



South elevation



Annex looking northwest

**Arleta School
Exterior Photos
ENTRIX, 2009**



Corridor facing north



Auditorium facing west



Bulletin board



Playroom

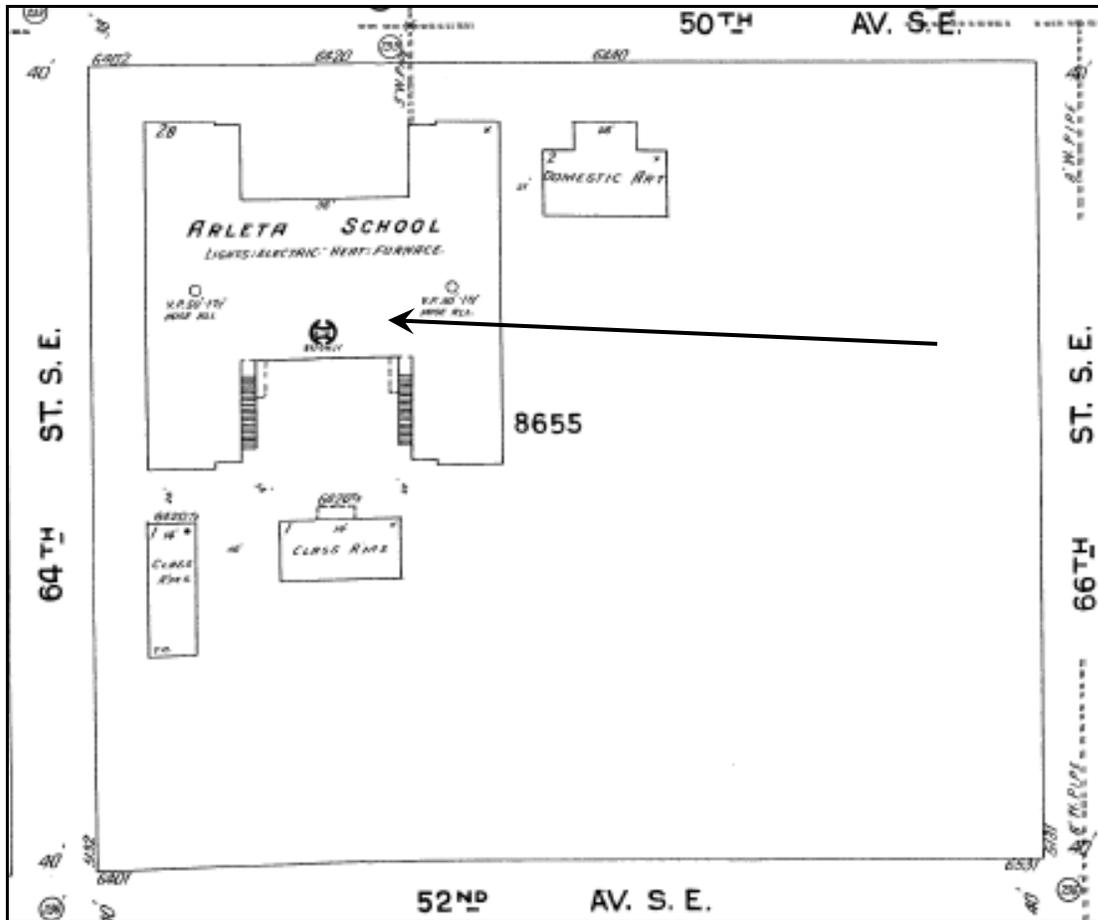


Classroom built-in



ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

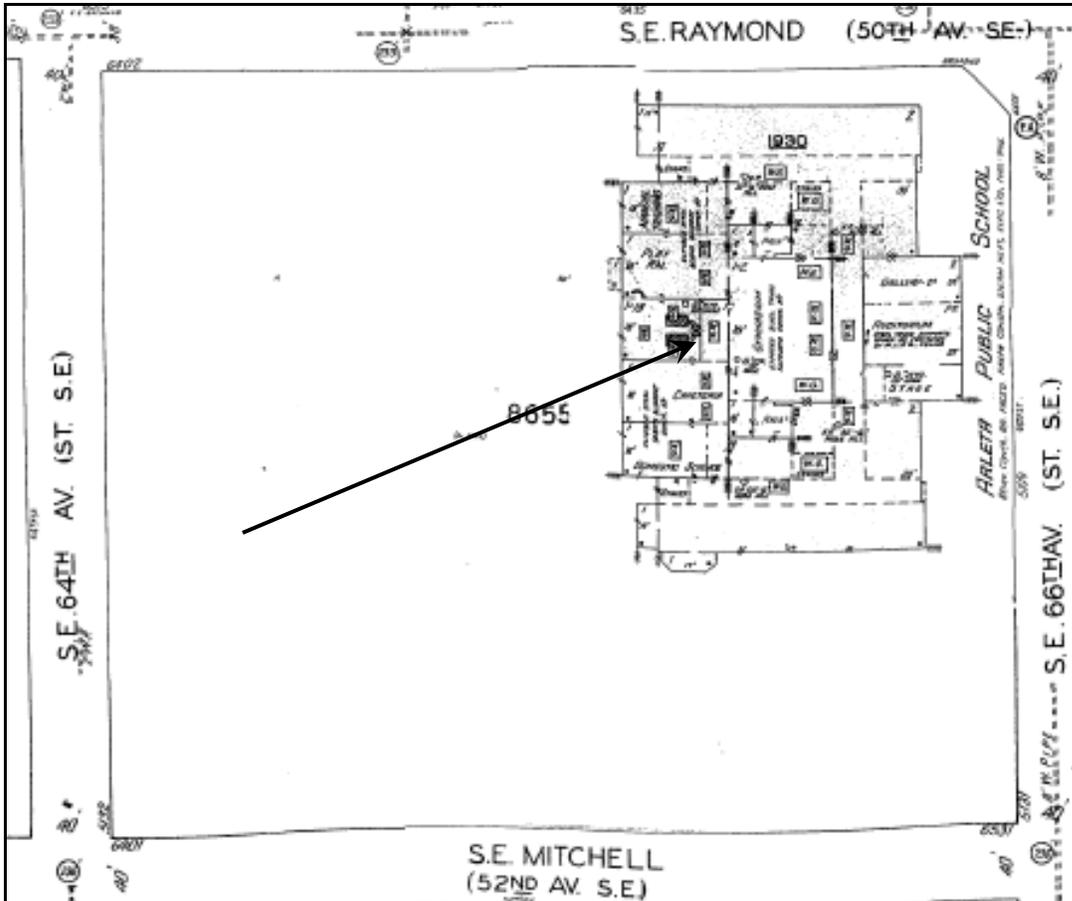


1924-1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 1136. Arrow points to old Arleta Public School which was later replaced by the existing school building.



ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

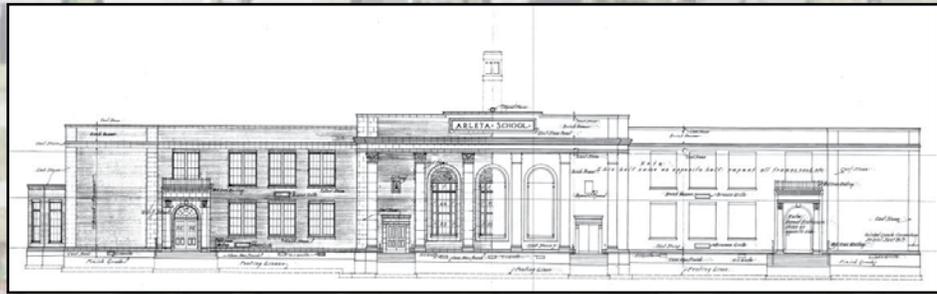


Updated to 1950, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 1136. Arrow points to Arleta Public School. Note the loss of the old H-shaped school building, change in building location, and street name changes.

Arleta School

5109 SE 66th Ave, Portland OR, 97206

[View Site in Google Maps](#)



1929 architectural drawing of Arleta School, east elevation

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 (232A), 1929
2. Classroom Add. (232B), 1953

