

# Oregon Historic Site Form

Sacajawea Head Start  
4800 74th  
Portland, Multnomah County

## LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: <u>4800 NE 74th</u> <input type="checkbox"/> apprx. addr	historic name: <u>Sacajawea Head Start</u>
<u>Portland</u> <input type="checkbox"/> vcnty <u>Multnomah County</u>	current/ other names: <u>Sacajawea Primary 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>1</u> total # ineligible resources: <u>0</u>
elig. evaluation: <u>eligible/contributing</u>	NR status: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)
primary constr date: <u>1952</u> (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> secondary date: <u>1991</u> (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> (optional--use for major addns)	NR date listed: _____
primary orig use: <u>School</u>	orig use comments: _____
secondary orig use: <u>Education-Related</u>	prim style comments: _____
primary style: <u>International</u>	sec style comments: _____
secondary style: _____	siding comments: _____
primary siding: <u>Horizontal Board</u>	architect: <u>Raymond Thompson</u>
secondary siding: <u>Standard Brick</u>	builder: _____
plan type: <u>School (General)</u>	
comments/notes:	

## GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name	<u>PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009</u>	<u>Survey &amp; Inventory Project</u>
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farmstead/cluster name: \_\_\_\_\_ external site #: 386  
(ID# used in city/agency database)

## SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: \_\_\_\_\_  
ILS survey date: 6/26/2009  
RLS survey date: 6/26/2009  
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 a primarily residential neighborhood in Northeast Portland, the Sacajawea Head Start facility is located at 4800 NE 74th Avenue. Built in 1953, the International style school building (386A) is situated on a 3.9-acre grass and asphalt-covered campus. The wood frame building sits on a poured concrete foundation. The main mass of the building is covered by a flat roof. The projecting wings on the east and west sides of the building are covered with shed roofs. Cladding consists of a mixture of red brick and vertical board and batten siding. The modified rectangular shape plan houses classrooms, a play room/cafeteria, a kitchen, and an administrative office.

### Architectural Description

Situated in a primarily residential neighborhood in Northeast Portland, the Sacajawea Head Start facility is located at 4800 NE 74th Avenue. The principal entry to the school is from the south on NE 74th Avenue. The playground and playfields are located directly to the north and the east of the school. The parking area is located directly to the north of the building.

Designed in the International style, the school is typical of mid-century school buildings with its low profile and variety of cladding materials. The single story wood frame school is oriented on an east-west axis and sits on a poured concrete foundation. The main mass of the building is covered by a flat roof. The projecting wings on the east and west sides of the building are covered with shed roofs. The main section of the building is clad with red brick. The east and west wings feature vertical board and batten siding. Fenestration consists of a mixture of three-light metal frame hinged windows and double pane windows with hinged openings. The primary entry to the school is located at the east end of the south elevation. Recessed beneath the projecting eaves, the double leaf metal entry doors are flanked by horizontal multi-pane glass panels.

The interior of the school is organized around a double loaded corridor that extends the length of the school. Tubular fluorescent lights are suspended from low acoustic tile ceilings, which are lowered in some sections of the corridor. The floors are covered with linoleum tile.

Wood doors provide access to the classrooms from the central corridor. The L-shaped plan provides an alcove with a sink. Standard features include wood built-ins, closets, and moldings. The classrooms retain their linoleum tile floors. There are tubular fluorescent light fixtures suspended from acoustic tile clad ceilings. In some classrooms, the installation of acoustic tiles lowered the original ceiling height.

The west wing contains the multi-purpose room, kitchen, and boiler room. Folding tables and benches recess into the walls to facilitate the use of the room as a cafeteria. Other finishes in the multi-purpose room include a linoleum tile floor and acoustic tile ceiling. The kitchen is adjacent to the space.

The building is heated by steam boilers located in the boiler room. The radiators, located in the hallways and classrooms, have metal covers.

### Alterations/Integrity

Since the construction of the original building in 1952, the only significant alterations were changes in the west wing to facilitate food service (Sacajawea Facility Plan, Portland Chronology Binder). There have been minimal modifications to the building's hallways, classrooms, exterior cladding, roof lines and fenestration. The Sacajawea Head Start facility retains a high degree of integrity.

## HISTORY

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

### Statement of Significance

In response to residential growth in northeast Portland the district acquired the parcel at 4800 NE 74th Avenue for \$19,242 in 1952. Named in honor of Sacajawea, the Indian guide to the Lewis and Clark party, the building was constructed for \$202,184 in 1953. The school was built 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 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).

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

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(McMath 1974: 628). Classrooms featured extensive built-ins that included sinks, slots for bulky rolls of paper, and coat storage. Many buildings incorporated courtyards or long horizontal plans to facilitate access to the outdoors and expand the opportunities for passive ventilation and daylighting

The architect of Sacajawea Elementary School, Raymond Thompson, was experienced in the design of public buildings from over 20 years of architectural practice. A native of Oregon, Raymond Thompson attended Washington High School in Portland. He obtained a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Oregon in 1929. Thompson married Polly Povey, a fellow student of architecture at Oregon in 1929. The Thompsons left Portland in 1929, residing in Denver, St. Louis and several cities on the east coast, and Ohio before returning to Portland in 1948. Upon his return to Portland, the architect worked in Pietro Belluschi's firm until 1951 when he became the District architect for Portland Public Schools. In addition to Sacajawea School, Thompson designed additions for Ainsworth, Beaumont, Kellogg School, Laurelhurst, and the main building at Normandale, Bridger, and Lewis schools. Thompson worked for the district until 1953 when he established a firm with his wife, Polly Povey Thompson. The two architects practiced together until Polly Povey Thompson's death in 1993. In addition to the buildings for Portland Public Schools, the Thompson firm was known for its designs for the Culver City Hall/Fire Station and the Wasco Fire Station

A good example of the mid-century school design that retains its integrity with its floor plan, interior finishes, fenestration, and cladding intact. The Sacajawea Elementary 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. The school was designed by Raymond Thompson during his tenure as district architect but archival research does not indicate that the school was a major commission. However, the building provides a good example of the small, horizontal plan buildings with limited International style details that were utilized to facilitate rapid construction of new schools after World War II and is 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.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Wood Tradition Expands" 528-647.

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.

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

\_\_\_\_\_. *Portland Public Schools Chronology Binder*.

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

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



South elevation front entry



South (front) and west elevations



East and north elevations



South and east elevations



North (rear) elevation

**Sacajawea Head Start  
Exterior Photos  
ENTRIX, 2009**





Corridor



Cafetorium facing west



Classroom built-in



Classroom built-ins



Media Center

**Sacajawea Head Start  
Interior Photos  
ENTRIX, 2009**

# Sacajawea Facility (Head Start)

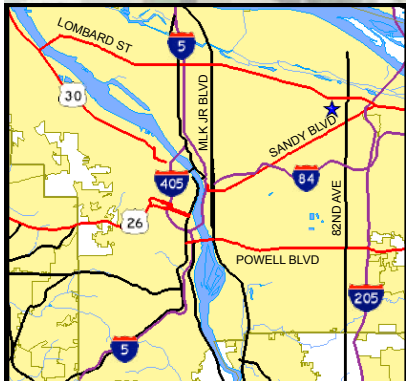
4800 NE 74th Ave, Portland OR, 97218

[View Site in Google Maps](#)






Sacajawea Head Start, main entrance, 2009

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 (386A), 1952

