

Oregon Historic Site Form

Sabin School
4013 18th Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: <u>4013 NE 18th Ave</u> <input type="checkbox"/> apprx. addr	historic name: <u>Sabin School</u>
<u>Portland</u> <input type="checkbox"/> vcnty <u>Multnomah County</u>	current/ other names: <u>R. L. Sabin Elementary 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>3</u>	total # eligible resources: _____ total # ineligible resources: <u>5</u>
elig. evaluation: <u>not eligible/non-contributing</u>	NR status: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)
primary constr date: <u>1928</u> (c.) <input type="checkbox"/> secondary date: <u>2008</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: _____	
primary style: <u>Mediterranean Revival</u>	prim style comments: _____
secondary style: _____	sec style comments: _____
primary siding: <u>Standard Brick</u>	siding comments: _____
secondary siding: _____	
plan type: <u>School (General)</u>	architect: <u>Jones, George H.</u>
	builder: _____
comments/notes: <u>HRI Rank II.</u>	

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 #: 279
(ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____
ILS survey date: 6/19/2009
RLS survey date: 6/19/2009
Gen File date: _____
106 Project(s)



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ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

Description Summary

Situated in the Sabin neighborhood of northeast Portland, Sabin Elementary School is located at 4013 NE 18th Avenue. The 3.64-acre campus consists of a primary school building (279A), three portables (279 B,C,D), and a covered play structure (279E). The reinforced concrete structure, faced with red brick, rests on a poured concrete foundation. Red pantiles cover the hipped roof. Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style, cast stone belt course, quoins, and cartouches divide the building horizontally and embellish significant architectural spaces. Fenestration consists primarily of grouped, metal frame windows and some original multi-light wood frame windows.

Description

Situated in the Sabin neighborhood of northeast Portland, Sabin Elementary School is located at 4013 NE 18th Avenue. Development in the surrounding neighborhood consists primarily of single family residence built between 1900-1950 (Sanborn Maps 1924-1928; 1908-1950). The 3.64 acre campus consists of a primary school building, three portables, and a covered play structure. The north and south portions of the campus are utilized for play areas.

The reinforced concrete structure, faced with red brick, rests on a poured concrete foundation. Fenestration consists primarily of grouped, metal frame windows and some original multi-light wood frame windows. Red pantiles cover the hipped roof. Designed with modest Mediterranean Revival style elements, the building features cast stone embellishments including a belt course, quoins, and cartouches. Additional cast stone Mediterranean Revival Style detailing distinguishes the primary entry on the east elevation. The articulated arched entry doors are capped by a white stucco panel below a scalloped gable roof.

The interior of the building is divided into three bays accessed by double loaded corridors. The library, auditorium, and the majority of the classrooms occupy the central bay. The gymnasium and kitchen are located in a bay that projects to the south. Additional classrooms and administrative offices occupy the north bay. Flooring consists of a mixture of 6" x 6" tiles, 12" x 12" tiles, carpet, hardwood, and concrete. Tubular fluorescent light fixtures are suspended from the acoustic tile covered ceiling. The building retains some of its original woodwork including base moldings, window surrounds, handrails, and classroom built-ins.

The majority of the classrooms are rectangular. Built-in cabinetry lines the wall facing the windows. Univents provide heat for the classrooms.

Alterations

The original school building, constructed in 1928, was a rectangular plan oriented around a U-shaped double loaded corridor. Two small bays projected slightly from the north and south elevations. In 1952 the north and south bays were expanded. Portable classrooms were added in 1965. Many of the classrooms have since been remodeled, subdivided, and converted to new uses. Other alterations include the addition of sprinklers (1987), window replacements (1987), and skylight replacement (1988) (Portland Facility Profile). The building retains some of its original woodwork including base moldings, window surrounds, handrails, and classroom built-ins.

Due to the many alterations, Sabin Elementary School retains little integrity. The addition on north side of the building dramatically altered the original plan. This addition and later remodels to the interior spaces on the 2nd story have resulted in confusing circulation and interior spaces that show little relationship to the original plan. Although some Mediterranean Revival Style cast stone detail remains on the east elevation it is overwhelmed by the extensive alterations on all of the elevations, particularly the addition on the north side of the building.

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 1928, Sabin Elementary School was part of the last wave of an extensive 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 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 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

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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).

The architect of Sabin 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 Portland Public 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). In 1909 the Portland School district acquired land at 4013 NE 18th Street for \$10,820.05. The parcel included Lots 1 through 4, 7, 8, and 9-14 of Denon Place. On this site, the district began operation of a school in 4 portables. In 1920, the site was given the formal name of R. L. Sabin (Portland Chronology Binder).

In 1923, the district began plans for a new building for the school, announcing that it would demolish the existing portables and construct a new fireproof building for an estimated cost of \$120,000. Although the community agreed with the assessment of the Oregonian staff that a "makeshift structure is unfitted to schools needs, and is an injustice to the children who are forced to attend it", this decision was not without controversy (Oregonian 06-08-1923). The community questioned the cost and decision to proceed with the construction of the full school rather than simply build an initial unit that could be expanded as the neighborhood experienced growth.

Despite the controversy, plans proceeded for the project when the district acquired additional land in the Irvington Heights Addition for \$8,000.00 in 1923. In 1924, Shaver Street was vacated to make room for a new school building (Portland Chronology Binder). Construction on the new building was complete by 1927, although the dedication and ceremonial placement of the cornerstone did not occur until 1928 (Portland Chronology Binder; Oregonian 06-02-1928). The new building opened for use on September 04, 1928 along with Portsmouth School and the new Girls' Polytechnic facility. Constructed for \$250,000, the building featured ten home rooms, a library, gymnasium, auditorium, playcourts, and specialized rooms for manual training and home economics (Oregonian 08-19-1928). The old building, once situated to the south, was subsequently demolished (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, updated to 1950).

Controversy surrounding Sabin school arose again in 1940 when the board closed the school and recommended transferring Edison Vocational School to the building. The board cited the need to better utilize the building's 700 student capacity when enrollment had dropped to fewer than 370 pupils (Oregonian 10-11-1940). The board nonetheless proceeded with its plan whereby the Sabin building was utilized as a specialized training facility for boys until 1947. In 1947, the board announced the decision to return Sabin to use as an elementary school based upon the need to alleviate over crowding at nearby Irvington, Alameda, Vernon, and Highland Schools. The decision was also part of an overall effort to focus resources on comprehensive schools and eliminate facilities targeted to specialized groups (Oregonian 04-10-1947).

Although designed by George Jones during his tenure as Superintendent of Building for Portland Public Schools and one of the few schools built in Portland during the Great Depression, Sabin Elementary School does not retain a level of historical significance and 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. While the Mediterranean style is modestly expressed on the building, the expression of the cast stone is not as sophisticated as that on other buildings erected in the same style designed by Jones. Additionally, the removal of windows, additions, and interior modifications that have blurred the original corridor plan and altered significant interior space have resulted in overall loss of integrity of design, workmanship, and feeling to Sabin Elementary School. Due to the loss of integrity, Sabin 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

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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.
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North elevation facing south



Entry facing east



South elevation



Portable facing northwest



South elevation

**Sabin School
Exterior Photos
ENTRIX, 2009**



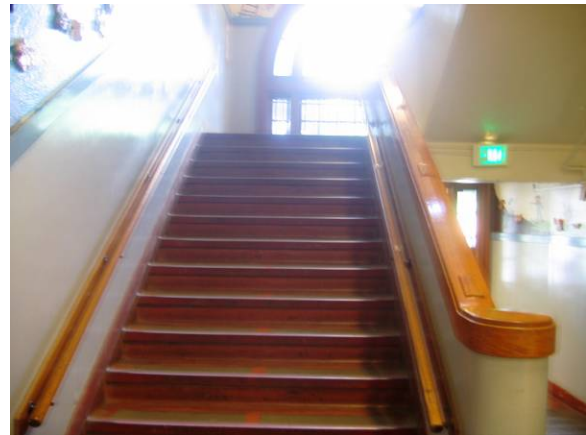
Auditorium facing northeast



Gymnasium facing west



Classroom built-in



Staircase and handrail

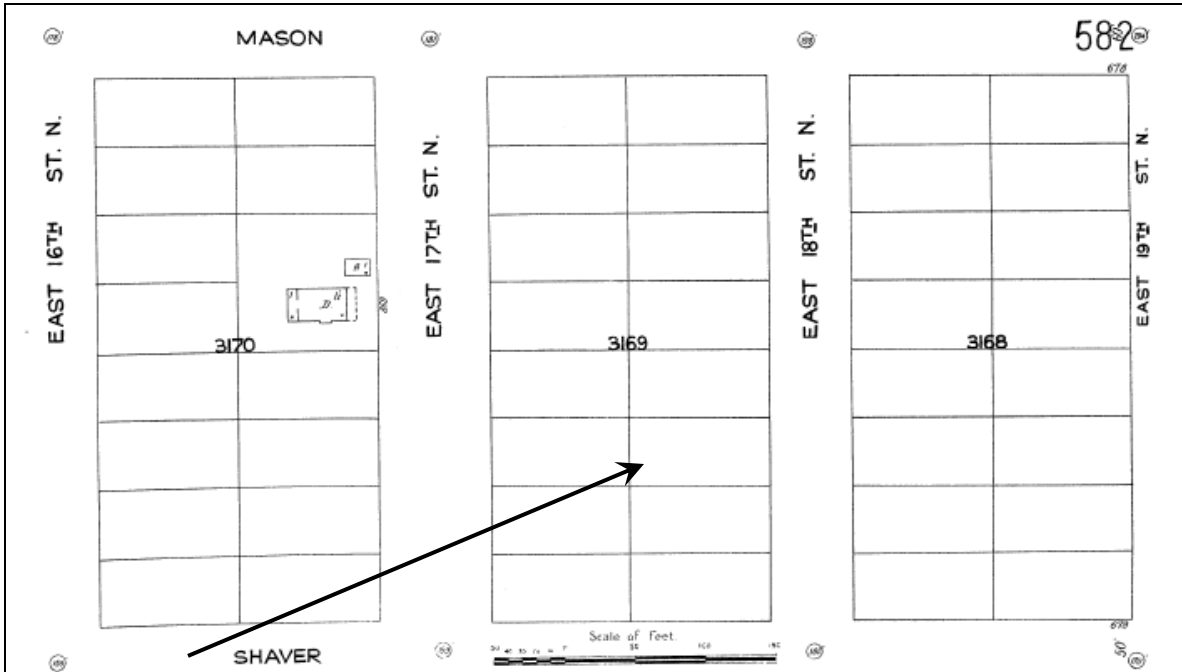


Corridor facing west



ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

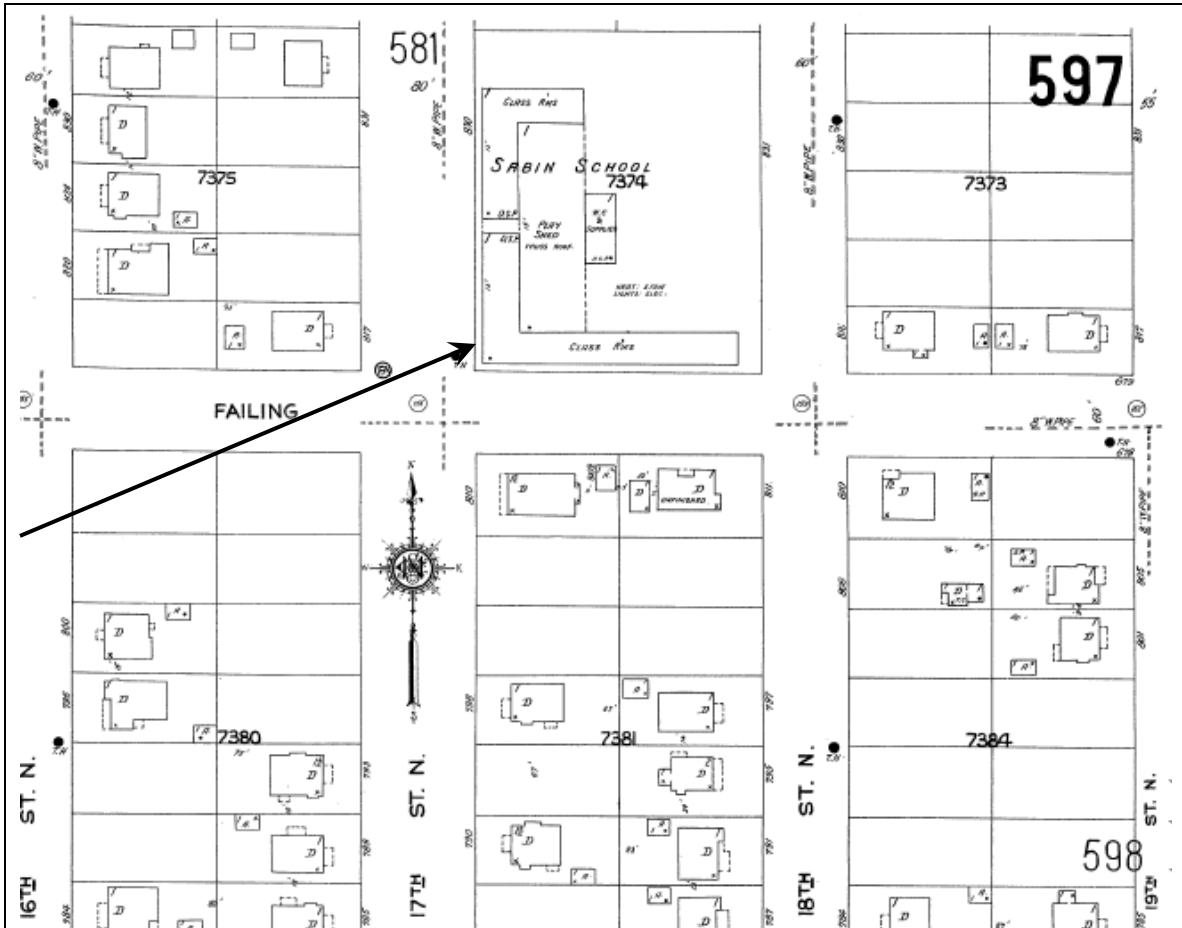


1924-1928, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 581. Arrow points to future location of the Sabin School.



ENTRIX

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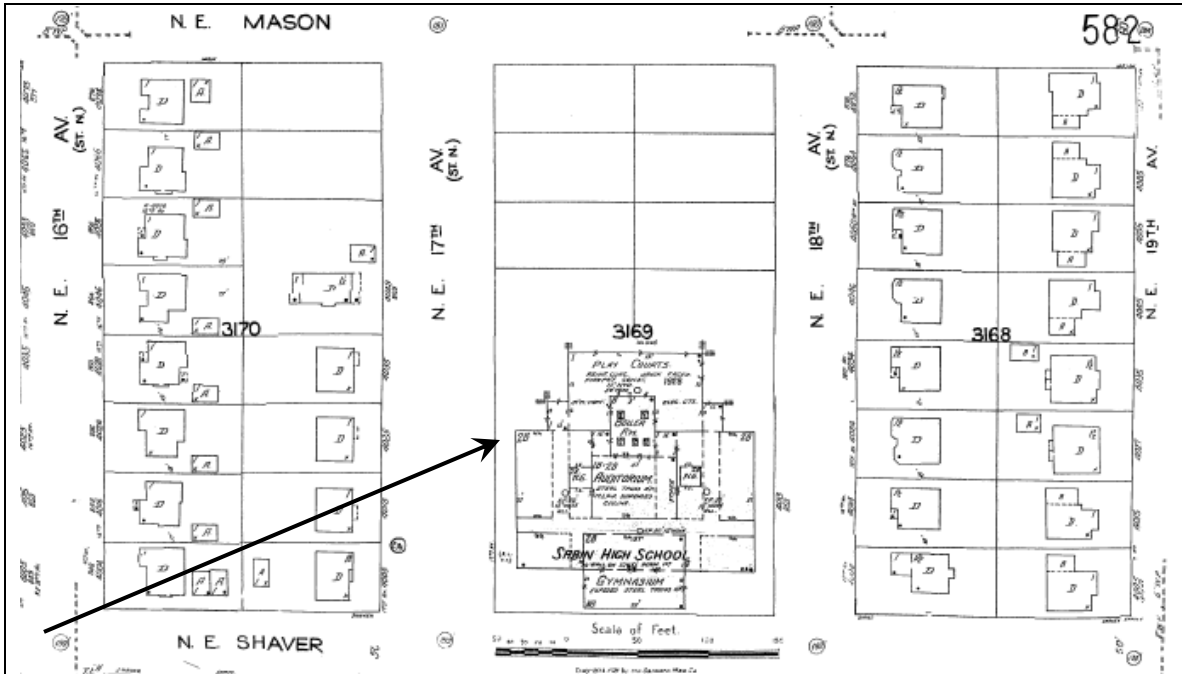


1924-1928, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 838. Arrow points to old Sabin School located on a block to the south of the current school.



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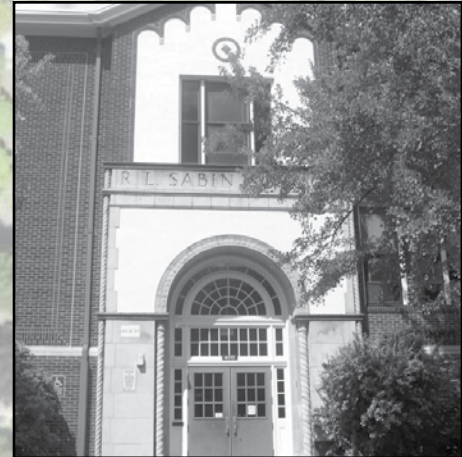
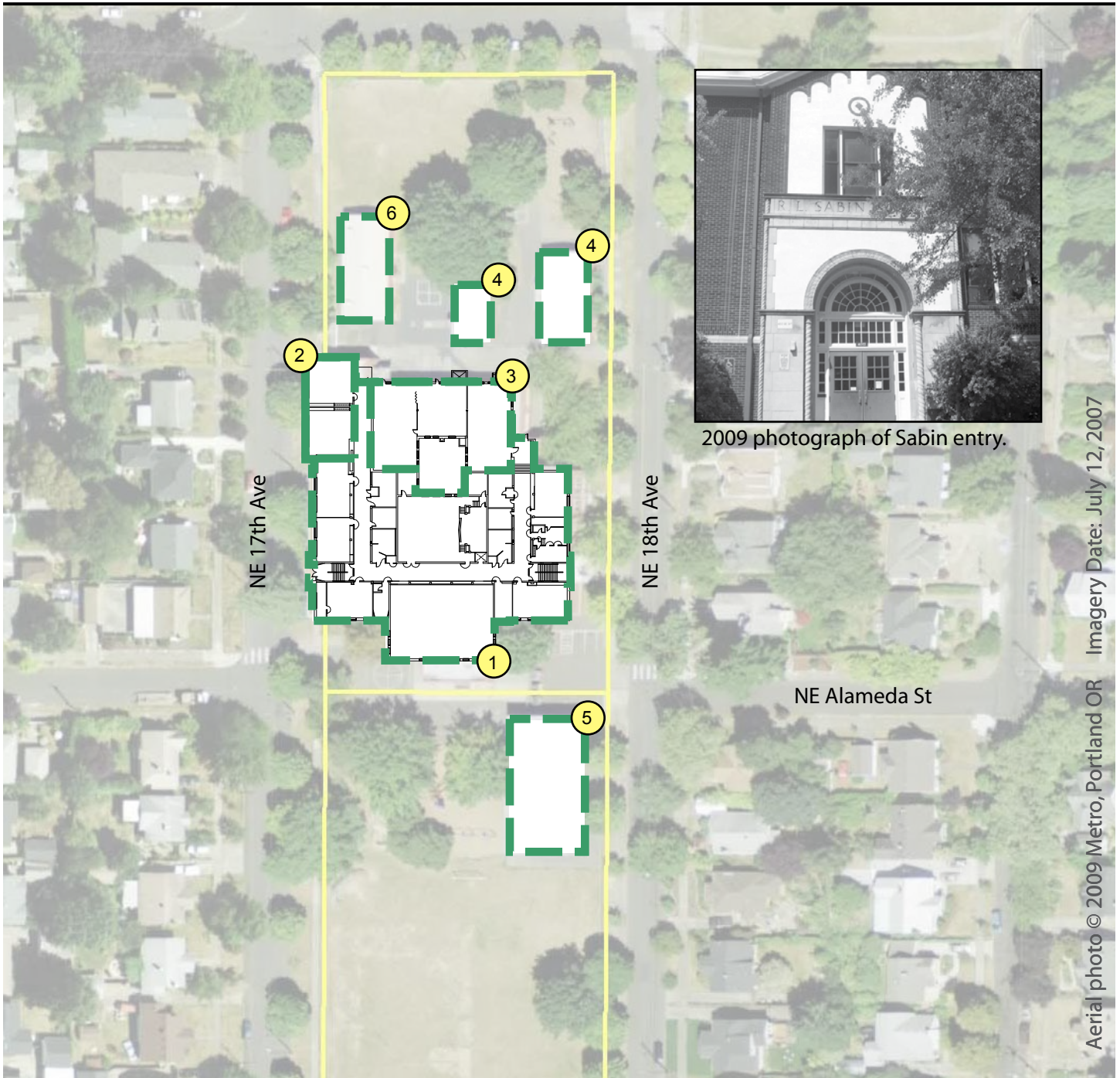


Updated to 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 581.
Arrow points to Sabin High School.

Sabin School

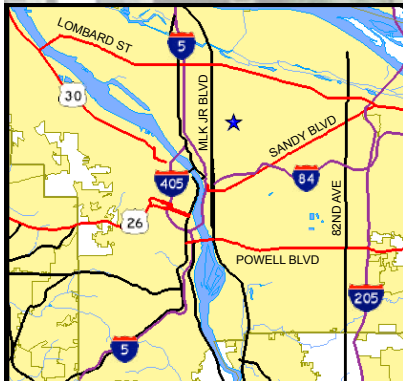
4013 NE 18th Ave, Portland OR, 97212

[View Site in Google Maps](#)






2009 photograph of Sabin entry.

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 (279A), 1927
2. Addition (279A), 1950
3. Addition (279A), 1952
4. Addition (279B,C), 1965
5. Addition (279E), 1970
6. Addition (279D)