

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Northwest School

AND/OR COMMON

Frank O. Jones School

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

485 Woodland Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First - William R. Cotter

STATE

Connecticut

CODE

09

COUNTY

Hartford

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☒ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Board of Education, City of Hartford

STREET & NUMBER

249 High Street

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

VICINITY OF

STATE

Connecticut

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hartford Land Records, Municipal Building

STREET & NUMBER

550 Main St.

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Hartford Architecture Conservancy Survey of Hartford

DATE

1976/1977

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Stowe-Day Memorial Library

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Northwest-Jones School consists of two buildings located on the northwest corner of Albany Avenue and Woodland Street in the northwest section of Hartford. Albany Avenue is a section of the Albany Turnpike dating from Colonial times and is now U.S. Route 44, running from downtown Hartford to West Hartford and Bloomfield. Woodland Street runs north from Farmington Avenue past St. Francis Hospital to Keney Park. Thus, the corner of Albany Avenue and Woodland Street on which the school is located is the intersection of two important traffic arteries.

The oblong site of the school in its narrow dimension runs approximately 200 feet along Albany Avenue and in its long dimension 765 feet along Woodland Street to Greenfield Street. In addition to the school buildings the site includes about an acre of grass and a large paved playground area. Abutting to the west is Fox Middle School, and across Greenfield Street to the north is Keney Park.

The older and smaller school building (see plot plan, Building #1) faces Albany Avenue west of Woodland Street. Constructed of red brick with brownstone foundations and trim, it consists of two stories plus attic under gable roof. The simple, well proportioned design of the building centers on a shallow arched entranceway on either side of which are three windows at both first and second story levels. Over the entrance is a tripartite window, its two side lights each having a series of six oval panes. This window is the building's sole decorative embellishment. The cornice under the eaves is plain and the lintels and sills are simple brownstone.

The building ends continue the straight forward design with their gables serving as pediments, each with a round window in the center. To the rear (North) is a two story brick ell. A single square chimney rises from the center of the roof over the front entrance.

The larger building, ten times the size of the smaller one, has 50 rooms and 97,000 square feet. Long and narrow in plan, it runs along Woodland Street, is two stories plus attic in height, and, in depth, two rooms separated by a hallway. Built in four distinct sections over the years 1898-1914, the completed structure is a single well conceived school building.

The principal entrance is located in the center block (plot plan, section 3) which is flanked by symmetrical wings (plot plan, sections 2 and 4) while at the south end is a separate department (plot plan, section 5) with its own entrance from Woodland Street. Constructed in red brick with brownstone trim, the school has round arch doorways in the Richardsonian Romanesque mode, but the massing and detailing owe something to the Renaissance Revival, while the vast roof shows the late nineteenth century trend away from jagged Victorian rooflines.

Articulation of the fenestration is sophisticated. The central third of the main section (3) slightly recessed for emphasis, is given over to a composition centered on the entranceway. The entrance itself is a heavy Romanesque wall surface. The second and third floor levels of this section are handled as a single design unit in which two-story

Continued

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1890-1914

BUILDER/ARCHITECTS Isaac A. Allen, Jr.
Johnson and Burns

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

When the school was built (1896-1914) it was called Northwest School. Its name was changed to Jones Junior High School in 1937 upon the retirement of Frank O. Jones who had been its principal for 29 years. Jones came to Hartford in 1908 to serve as Superintendent of the Northwest School District and principal of the school, which he did until Northwest and other independent school districts were consolidated into the Hartford Board of Education. He then continued as principal of Northwest School. At the time of his retirement he was dean of Hartford school principals and was known for his advocacy of special classes for exceptionally able students.

From annual reports of the Board of School Visitors of the Town of Hartford (predecessor of the Board of Education) and from city atlases and land records it is apparent that the first school building at this location was erected in 1870/71. In 1890/91 it was altered and enlarged, the event being noted in the annual report by the entry, "The Northwest District has erected a fine addition to its house." The smaller building (1) as it now stands may be that "fine addition" or it may date from 1870/71. In any event, this first building was originally constructed on the site now occupied by section (5). As compared with most contemporary public buildings with their irregular rooflines, asymmetrical massing, and extensive ornamentation, this schoolhouse is simple in design and mass.

The 1899 School Visitors report stated that a new building was planned for the site of the present structure and was to be erected in sections with the first section to cost \$50,000. The 1900 report had a fine picture of the small building (1) on its original site with new wing (2) in place. The report observed that "...recent opening of large tracts of land in this district for residential purposes will cause increase in registration." Pursuant to this expectation, the central block (3) was constructed in 1906, the north wing (4) in 1910, and in 1914 the original school (1) was moved to its present site to make room for the Primary Department (5).

Thus, the district in 1898 foresaw the coming growth in school age population and laid its plans to deal with the trend. Over the next sixteen years the building program went forward, timed to meet the growth in number of students. The final result was a building of superb unity. It is a highly professional exercise in late Richardsonian Romanesque, restrained yet with a plasticity which marks the architect as a talented practitioner in the profession. The great sloping roof with large but

continued

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Annual Report of the Board of School Visitors of the Town of Hartford, 1870-1914.

Geer's Hartford City Directory, 1901-1914.

The Hartford Times, 3 April 1953

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Rectangular plot, starting from northwest corner of Albany Avenue and Woodland Street 200 feet west on Albany Avenue and 765 feet north on Woodland Street.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

David F. Ransom, Secretary

ORGANIZATION

Hartford Architecture Conservancy

DATE

19 June 1977

STREET & NUMBER

65 Wethersfield Avenue

TELEPHONE

203-525-0279

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

LOCAL _____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Northwest-Jones School

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pilasters and round arches create a colossal arcade. The third floor here (the other sections have only two) adds to the prominence of the central block and also provides the school's assembly hall. Thus, an attractive and imposing entrance facade is created, which simultaneously solves the problem of placing the auditorium while avoiding the engineering problem of classrooms above it.

The wings (2) and (4) are notable for their two-story, three sided bays whose shape carries through the dormers and into the dormer roofs. In the wings the windows of the first floor are in two parts. The lower, principal part is conventional one-over-one sash. Above it is a smaller rectangular transom window of twelve panes. Second floor fenestration is similar to that of the first floor except that the small upper windows have round arches repeating the arch of the principal entrance. Subtle accent is given to the bays by using rectangular rather than round headed upper windows in their second stories. Diaper pattern brick is laid in the section of the wall above the second-story window lintels up to the roof line, which includes the round headed windows. This change in wall texture adds strength to the horizontal emphasis of the long row of round headed windows.

At the end of each wing are dormered pavilions, giving weight to the ends of the building and strongly terminating the facade. These pavilions echo the projecting sections of the center block which flank the main entrance.

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Addendum

Further search of Board of Education archives has turned up additional drawings which throw more light on the designers of various sections of the school. One drawing establishes that Hapgood and Hapgood, a Hartford firm, was responsible for the overall concept of the Woodland Street building.

This important drawing (undated) is labelled "Heat and Ventilating Stacks" and shows the facade of the main entrance section (3). Melvin H. and Edward T. Hapgood, cousins, practiced together only a few years. Melvin H. died in 1899 at the age of 40; immediately afterwards Edward T. dropped the firm name and practiced under his own name. Thus, the latest possible year for the "Heat and Ventilating Stacks" drawing is 1899. From the School Visitors' report it is known that this same year the first addition (2) was built. Consequently, the overall plan must have been worked out by Hapgood and Hapgood in 1899, the year in which the addition (2) was built.

Another drawing which has turned up is a 1910 drawing by Johnson and Burns. As Edward T. Hapgood was practicing at this time, the question of why a change was made in architects is intriguing but unanswered. In any event, the evidence now indicates that Isaac A. Allen, Jr., designed the 1890 building (1), Hapgood and Hapgood designed (2), (3), and (4), while Johnson and Burns executed (4), and designed and executed (5).

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low dormers and with chimneys arranged like marching men reflect a Philip Webb influence usually found in domestic architecture and not elsewhere matched in Hartford.

One indication of good planning was the manner in which the problem presented by the auditorium was resolved to the benefit of the overall design. It was customary at the time to put a school's auditorium in the top floor, thereby eliminating the need to face the challenge of how to support school rooms above it. Here the auditorium is in the central block of the building, giving this section strength and prominence in design by making it three stories tall against two stories in the long wings, and giving opportunity for the two-story arcade over the entrance arch.

The many large, tall chimneys are all ventilating stacks. The heating plant from the beginning was in a separate small building. The stacks rising from the school's roof are an indication of the importance attached at the time to proper ventilation and presumably are part of a gravity system of air circulation dependent on the principle of warm air rising.

The reports of the Board of School Visitors fail to mention the architect for the building program. However, the obituary of Isaac A. Allen, Jr. (1859-1953) published 3 April 1953 by the Hartford Times states that he designed "early units of....Northwest School." Quite possibly Sections (1) and (2) are meant by the phrase "early units."

On the question of who designed the balance of the school, advertisements in Geer's Hartford City Directory by the firm Johnson and Burns (William D. Johnson and Thomas C. Burns) are informative. The firm listed in its ads a selection of its executed commissions. Advertisements from 1901 through 1905 do not list the Northwest School, but from 1906 on they do include Northwest, suggesting that sections (3), (4), and (5) are the work of this firm. The Hartford Board of Education has blueprint copies of the Johnson and Burns plans, signed and dated, for the 1914 Section (5).

If in fact Allen did Section (2), then the faithfulness with which Johnson and Burns carried out the spirit of his work in the balance of the school is remarkable, for the final result is a single structure of great integrity.

Both the small Section (1) structure and the large building are now used as schools. At the end of the 1976-1977 school year the larger building will be closed. The small building is to continue in use.