



5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CAST STONE: Concrete

walls BRICK

CAST STONE: Concrete

roof ASPHALT: Built up

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- # \_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering
- Record# \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1932

**Significant Dates**

1932

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Wells & Dow (Architect)

Lohrenz, J.J. (Builder)

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Name of repository:**

Museum of Arts and Culture  
Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property**      Approx. 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>11</u> Zone	<u>4</u> <u>71</u> <u>120</u> Easting	<u>52</u> <u>82</u> <u>840</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)      See continuation sheet.

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)      See continuation sheet.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Stephen Emerson (Edited by DAHP - Aug 2010)  
organization Archisto Enterprises date August 2010  
street & number 212 W. Dawn Avenue telephone 509-466-8654  
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99218

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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**Property Owner** (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

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name Spokane School District No. 81  
street & number 1807 N. Washington Street telephone 509-353-5405  
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99205

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

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### **Narrative Description:**

John R. Rogers High School is located in the City of Spokane, Washington in the northeast portion of town. It occupies a large block bordered by Wellesley Avenue on the north, Pittsburg Street on the east, Heroy Avenue on the south, and a line defined by the route of Helena Street on the west. The original Rogers school building (1932) is situated on the northern half of this block of land, while the southern half is occupied by the 2009 addition. (For the sake of simplicity, the original 1932 Rogers High School building will be referred to as Rogers, while the new portion will be referred to as the 2009 addition.) The setting is indicative of its blue-collar roots, with its elegant Art Deco façade facing across Wellesley Avenue, a well-traveled arterial, to a row of modest middle-class homes. Landscaped grounds are limited to the front (north) and east sides of the original building, characterized by level lawns, wide concrete sidewalks, recent deciduous tree plantings, and modern light poles. Other elevations are fronted by paved parking lots and concrete sidewalks.

The historic portion of Rogers High School is a brick and cast stone structure built onto a reinforced concrete superstructure. The architectural massing of the building is largely institutional, a solemn, geometrically-balanced edifice with symmetrical rows of large, multiple-pane windows. But this stern appearance, upon closer inspection, is softened by the ornamental use of Art Deco design details. The foot-print of the historic Rogers building is a slightly irregular E-shaped structure. Two rectangular light wells allow ventilation and illumination to reach the auditorium and interior corridors of the building. The auditorium occupies the central space between the two light wells. The roof of Rogers is flat with a single-ply elastomeric surface. A number of utilitarian features are visible on the roof, including plumbing and ductwork vents, ventilation louvers, and elevator penthouses. The skyline of Rogers is dominated by the tall square stack of the chimney, with its massive corbelled brick summit. It emerges from the central south wall of the building, where it originates in the former sub-surface heating plant. The front, east to west, wing of Rogers is three stories high, as is the east rear wing, while the auditorium and west rear wings are two stories high. The original building was more symmetrical, with both the east and west wings being two stories. This symmetry was altered in 1941, when new classrooms were built above the east rear wing. Symmetry was restored in 1969, when the west rear wing was raised to three stories as well. But the new addition lacked windows and walls clad with metal. This anomaly was removed during the 2009 construction of the new school building.

The foundation of Rogers is poured concrete. The base of the exterior walls is delineated by a high skirt of cast stone blocks. The exterior wall surfaces of Rogers are primarily covered with brown brick mostly laid in common bond fashion, but featuring ornamental brick tapestry work as well. Other ornamentation is provided by cast stone Art Deco detailing. Window opening placement has not been altered. Although the original windows have been

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replaced by more energy efficient modern units, they retain the wood sash, double-hung, multiple-pane appearance of the originals.

The north (front) elevation of Rogers exhibits a pleasing symmetrical appearance. To either side of the central entry edifice are banks of windows segregated into cohesive panels by brick pilasters. These panels follow the pattern of A,A,B,C,B,A,A, with C representing the central panel above the front entry. The outer A panels each contain four windows per level, the B panels each contain 8 windows per level, while the central C panel contains three windows at the second and third floor levels, above the front entry. The cornice line is given the appearance of battlements by ornamental cast stone crenellations and capstones atop the brick pilasters. Ornamentation is more complex within the three interior panels than on the flanking panels at either end. Above the top row of windows (the B panels), and below the cornice, are chevrons created by ornamental brick tapestry work. Placed beneath each second story window (again, in the B panels) are cast stone spandrels bearing ornate Art Deco designs that feature stylized floral and paisley patterns. Most of these are bas relief, but the ones at each end of both sets contain hollow spaces that impart a three-dimensional effect that is purely ornamental. The window banks to either side of the central banks are plainer in appearance, without the ornamental panels. At several locations on the building façade are metal-framed ventilation openings, with ornamental Art Deco grill work.

The front entry of Rogers is at the bottom of a central tower-like edifice. At the peak is a massive cast stone cap stone with elaborate Art Deco designs. Beneath a line of zig zags are the words "John R. Rogers High School," executed in bas relief. Beneath this, also executed in cast stone, are three panels with stylized chalice forms. To either side of these are two cast stone spandrels with Art Deco designs of stylized mountain, sunrise, and clam shell motifs. Below the top set of three windows are more Art Deco spandrels, these featuring stylized floral and horn of plenty, or trumpet, designs. These spandrels match those placed beneath the second floor windows. Beneath these is the front entry, with cast stone surround, flanked by triple-tiered brick pilasters with cast stone cap stones. Four metal and glass entry doors are situated between a cast iron framework with multiple-pane transom windows. Chevron design motifs separate the windows from the doors below. To each side of the entry are wall-mounted wrought iron and French glass pendant lights. The doors are preceded by wide concrete steps, of three tiers.

The east and west elevations of Rogers are nearly identical, with banks of multiple-pane double-hung windows and entry doors at the north ends. Cast stone crenellations of the cornice are similar to those of the front. The primary difference between the two elevations is the lack of a third story on the west side. Above the top windows above the side entries are brick tapestry chevron designs. Above the entry doors are fluted cast stone panels with

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stylized floral motifs. Flanking each set of steel and glass doors are triple-tiered brick pilasters topped with cast stone cap stones. The window column at the south end of the east wall is decorated with brick tapestry chevron designs and, at the lower level, by a cast stone panel, again featuring Art Deco stylized floral designs.

The interior light wells of Rogers are similar to the exterior walls, though less ornamentation is utilized. Similar features include the cast stone battlements of the cornice and the banks of multiple-pane double-hung windows. The secondary south wall of Rogers is obscured by the new building. When it was intact, it exhibited a thoroughly utilitarian appearance, without architectural ornamentation of any kind.

The interior of Rogers has been significantly altered during recent efforts to remodel the facilities, augment pedestrian circulation, and to improve classroom and office space. The exception is the entry vestibule and the auditorium, which largely retain their original appearance. The auditorium contains the main floor seating area and the balcony above, both sloping downward to the wide stage that projects out from the performance area, the proscenium arch of which is trimmed with an Art Deco zig zag border. The seats are replacement units but mimic the appearance of the original fold-up wood with metal frame units. The tall multiple-pane windows for the exterior walls are covered with drapery and are separated by pilasters. Between the windows are wrought iron and French glass electroliers. The ceiling is trimmed by a border featuring a stylized Art Deco egg and dart motif, utilizing chevrons and elliptical arches. Below this trim, and between the pilasters, are carved wood panels featuring stylized Art Deco floral and trumpet designs.

The ticket lobby for the auditorium is situated between the auditorium entry doors and the front (north) entry to the school. Original features include the central three-sided ticket booth with green tile cladding, a wood fluted border above the auditorium entry doors and the ticket booth, and the overhead cove ceiling with stylized egg and dart Art Deco trim similar to that of the auditorium ceiling. The green tile also covers the walls enclosing the lobby on either side of the front entry. Wrought iron and French glass electroliers are mounted on these walls.

Between the wood and glass doors of the front entries is the front vestibule, which also features original components, including the green tile wall cladding, sconces, multiple-pane transom windows, the Art Deco egg and dart ceiling trim, and brass ventilation louvers with geometric Art Deco design.

The remaining interior spaces of Rogers have been completely reconstructed in efforts to improve pedestrian circulation and classroom and office sizes and configurations. The north-

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south halls have been shifted off center to create larger classrooms to one side. The original stairways at the northwest and northeast corners have been removed. Original stairways at the southwest and southeast corners have also been removed. Stairwells to the east and west of the central front entry have been narrowed, but remain in their original positions. A new stairway, located along the east side of the western north-south hall, now serves as the main vertical passage for the building. The improved modern hall ways feature acoustical panel dropped ceilings, wood wainscoting, tile floors, wood panel doors, most with windows, and built-in lockers on some walls. The rear east-west hall way, which occupies the space originally formed between the original school walls and structural additions (which have now been replaced by the new school building), retains most of the original brick exterior wall of the 1932 building, as well as modern windows similar in appearance to the original multiple-pane wood sash double-hung units. Interior offices and classrooms throughout the building have been modernized.

The 2009 addition to Rogers High School is a modern, multi-tiered structure with a steel and concrete superstructure. The sprawling, asymmetrical plan is composed of one- and two-story sections, with variable ceiling heights. The flat roofs are covered with a built-up waterproof material. Exterior walls are clad primarily with reddish brick of a uniform color, but stainless steel sheeting is also used to provide contrasting surfaces. Brick pilasters with capstones also add to the textural variety of the walls. The base of the exterior walls is delineated by a high skirt of large cast stone blocks with rock chips pressed into the aggregate to provide variety and texture. Windows are fixed steel sash units in a variety of sizes and shapes. Doors are steel frame glass units as well. The primary façade faces east. At the far right is a two-story section composed of a glassed-in tower with a flat pavilion roof. At ground level is the Main Office entry, with a flat canopy over a pair of double doors. To the left of this entry is wide two-story section with a bowed façade that features banks of plate glass windows. Further to the left is a multi-tiered section that contains the Commons entry, beneath a glass tower similar to that of the Main Office entry, and the Gymnasium entry. The latter is placed within a semi-circular wall of mostly plate glass. Both of these entries have flat canopies. To their left is the two-story front wall of the gymnasium. The south wall of the 2009 addition is a mostly windowless wall of brick and stainless steel sheeting with full-height and upper level brick pilasters with capstones. The rear (west) elevation is multi-tiered, with one- and two-story sections whose exterior walls feature second-story plate glass windows, brick and stainless steel walls and upper-level brick pilasters with capstones. A secondary entry is placed within a semi-circular section placed at the juxtaposition of the main building a west-extending, one-story wing. At the northwest corner of the 2009 addition is another 1-story wing, extending west. This is actually a remodeled building that was first built in 1999 as a supplementary gymnasium. It has been altered to mimic the appearance of the 2009 building, and exhibits similar exterior features.



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Interestingly, it retains several brick chevrons on the walls that, in 1999, were intended to mimic the appearance of the 1932 building. The clock tower stands in the parking lot to the east. It is a brick-clad truncated, battered obelisk with a flat concrete pavilion at the top. It stands on four legs and has four clock faces facing cardinal directions.

The interior of the 2009 addition contains a wide variety of rooms, hallways, and open spaces. Floors generally have tile surfaces, walls appear to be painted sheet-rock panels with wood wainscoting, and ceilings are mostly of dropped acoustical panels. Four primary hallways trend north/south and east/west. One of these incorporates the rear elevation wall and windows of the original Rogers building. Classrooms and offices are generally distributed along these hallways. Staircases are open, with wide landings. Several large gymnasiums and ball courts occupy two levels of the north part of the interior. Both front entries admit to high-ceiling foyers. The commons is a central, open area with high ceilings, with upper hallways looking down on an area used as cafeteria space and a gathering place. Tall glass curtain walls obtain a view to the north of the exterior courtyard called Pirates Cove. This paved area features the Rogers Wall of Remembrance and views of the original Rogers rear elevation and the chimney stack.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

John R. Rogers High School is eligible for NRHP placement, at the local level, as an outstanding example of the Art Deco style in Spokane, Washington as applied to public structures. It also is significant as representing the work of prominent architects John K. Dow & William A. Wells. Although the interior has been significantly renovated, the exterior of the original building largely retains the same appearance as when it was first constructed in 1932. All the projecting distractions of previous years have been removed, leaving behind the impressive edifice of the main building as it was originally designed. One has only to compare historic photographs with the present appearance, to realize how much has been preserved. The only exterior surfaces obscured or hidden by the construction of the adjacent 2009 addition are some of the secondary/rear elevation, which were never imbued with the character defining Art Deco design elements that are present on other elevations.

**Historic Context:** The first schools in the Spokane vicinity were established by Spokane Garry, a Spokane Indian who was educated in eastern Canada and returned to push his knowledge of European religion and culture to his native tribe. In 1875 a Protestant missionary, Henry T. Cowley, came to serve as the first white schoolteacher in what is now Spokane marking the beginning of public school education in Spokane.

The year 1889 was a momentous one for Spokane. Washington achieved statehood, much of downtown Spokane was destroyed by a fire, and schools in Spokane were reorganized as School District No. 81. At the time David Bemis took charge, there were not nearly enough seats to accommodate the nearly 2,000 pupils in the city. An 1890 report issued by president of the board of education, E.A. Routhe, recommended that the school district required "four large ward schoolhouses and a large central building for the high school." This would require \$250,000 more than what was made available through the normal tax levy. Spokane citizens voted to issue bonds for the necessary money, reflecting a new confidence in and support for the local school system. Subsequently, a new high school and six smaller elementary schools were built.

The new Spokane High School building, designed by architect Charles F. Helmle, was completed in May of 1891, at a cost of \$110,000. That year, it produced its first graduates, a class of seven students. By June 1901, the graduating class of Spokane High School had grown to 39. The large number of graduates was gratifying to the community, but increasing enrollment was taxing the ability of the school district to provide enough space for students. In the spring of 1907 a bond issue was authorized and later that year the contract for construction of the new north side high school, called North Central High School, was granted. The new building was opened in 1908. After North Central High School was built, the old central school building became South Central High School. In 1910, this building was

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destroyed in a disastrous fire. A new school, called Lewis and Clark High School, designed by Spokane architect Loren Rand, was completed at the same location in 1912. It would be 20 years before another Spokane high school was built.

The predecessor of John R. Rogers High School was Hillyard High School, which served a separate community that grew up around James Hill's Great Northern Railroad Company yards, northeast of Spokane. The growth of the Hillyard school system, and the funding and support it required, was a major factor that led to the annexation of Hillyard, in 1924, by the city of Spokane. Thereafter, Hillyard schools were consolidated into District No. 81. The first Hillyard High School, built in 1907, was located on the west side of Regal Street between Heroy Avenue and White (now Rich) Avenue.

In just four short years, space in the new school was tight. To alleviate the overcrowding, the District placed a \$50,000 bond issue before the public, a measure which successfully passed. A local architect, R.C. Sweatt, was selected and plans were drawn up for a new high school building, completed in 1912. By 1922, funding was available for a much-needed expansion of the school. Called the Annex, it was designed by Fredrick E. Westcott and Howard L. Gifford.

Following construction of the annex, W.E. Doolittle served as principal until 1925, when his position was taken over by John D. Meyer. By that year the City of Spokane had absorbed Hillyard and the school system was consolidated with Spokane School District No. 81. Space remained a concern for the school. To alleviate crowding some rooms of the adjacent Arlington Elementary School were utilized and four portable buildings were placed along Everett Avenue. The joke was that if a freshman became lost his first day of classes, he would not be found again until the second semester. Because of this campus-like situation, students often referred to their school as the "University of Hillyard." Meyer served as principal until the new John R. Rogers High School was built in 1932.

In 1927 a new Arlington Elementary School was built on Francis Avenue, and the old elementary school building became another annex to Hillyard High School, temporarily alleviating the ongoing overcrowding problem. At that time, the high school reported an enrollment of 554 students, an increase of over 100 from the previous year. By 1929 a delegation of educators, businessmen, and social clubs were calling for a new high school to be built in northeast Spokane. In order to serve both the Hillyard area and other Spokane neighborhoods, it was suggested that the new school be placed to the south and west of the current structure. Then, in 1931, a fire in the old Arlington School building damaged the structure and it was demolished shortly thereafter. The loss of space severely crimped Hillyard High School and solidified support for a new school.

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A document titled *A History of Hillyard High School*, written in 1931, recounts the history behind the Rogers High School, making a metaphoric comparison to a sailing ship. It reads:

*The ship is now old and disabled and it is hoped that in the near future a new ship will shelter its passengers. Not only will the ship be one of beauty, but it will have many added attractions. The auditorium will contain seating capacity for eight hundred and fifty students. Two hundred and fifty seats will be located in the balcony, which will surround three sides of the wall. Several study halls will be located in various parts of the building. The gymnasium is to be located in the wing of the building, which is to be built in the shape of a great E, with a door on the wings and the ends of the building. An attractive library which will have a seating capacity for eighty students is also included in the plans. It will be one of the best in any local school. The home economics department will have a modern kitchen and dining room. The music department is to be constructed as a miniature theater. It will be used by both the public speaking and music department. The plans are being drawn up by J.K. Dow and Mr. Wells. An additional number of class rooms and an increased amount of supplies will make the ship a better one on which to sail [John R. Rogers High School 1931].*

The new school was financed through a \$400,000 bond measure. While few questioned the need for a new school, having such a large bond measure approved shortly after the 1929 stock market crash was nothing short of a miracle. On April 10, 1930, the Spokane School Board awarded the plan and design contract for the new school to the architectural firm of Wells & Dow. The project was a one-time limited partnership for William A. Wells and John K. Dow, two well established and respected local architects.

Little is known about William A. Wells who practiced architecture in Spokane from about 1908 to the 1930s. He received his architectural license (No. 212) in 1920 after being grandfathered when the state began issuing licenses in 1919. Based on his know work, Wells appears to have teamed up with a variety of architects on different projects and may have had a specialty in school designs. Known projects include a large addition to Frances Willard Elementary School in 1917; Dayton High School (1923); and Lincoln School (1929) all in Spokane; as well as Waitsburg High School (1927) in association with architect Henry Bertelson. Other known projects include the National Guard Headquarters at Felts Field (1927), and St. Ann's Catholic Church (1933).

Wells one-time partner John K. Dow was born in Gaylord, Minnesota in 1862. He moved to Spokane in 1889 to take advantage of the many opportunities available in a town where much of the downtown had to be rebuilt following a disastrous fire of that same year. While

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his formal architectural education/training is unknown, it is clear that Dow had a thorough knowledge of his craft and quickly began to receive many important commissions in the city. Among his early projects were the Bennett Block (1890); the Bump Block/Carlyle Hotel (1890, with architect Loren Rand); and the Empire State Building (1900). In 1900, Dow hired Clarence Z. Hubbell who would eventually become a partner. Together they designed the Hutton Building (1907); the Grace Baptist Church (1908); the American Legion Building (1911); and the Paulsen Building (1911). Hubble left the firm around 1910 and opened his own office. Dow continued designing on his own for the next 20+ years. Later projects include the Landsdowne House (1912); the Paulsen House (1912); the Mohawk Building (1915); and the Powell-Sanders Warehouse in Wenatchee (1921). In 1937, Dow retired from architecture and moved to the Seattle area. After many years of pursuing his hobbies of golf and following baseball, Dow died in Kent, Washington in 1961; one year short of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Dow's design for Rogers School may have been one of his last projects. At the time he was 68 years old, but his skill as a delineator who took full command of his designs was clear. None of his other projects have an Art Deco motif, and like many architects who practice in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, his designs include the full breadth of late Victorian and period revivals.

Land acquisition for the school and adjacent playfield began immediately. The owners of 10 residential properties sold their lots. In the end, it appears that 11 houses were either demolished or moved. In January, 1931, Dow notified the School Board that plans were nearing completion and that he hoped construction would begin by March 1. The board announced that they hoped to advertise bids in two weeks. By January 24, however, Dow tempered his optimism and said that the plans should be ready by March 1, the hoped for construction date. It was estimated that the building itself would cost \$400,000.00, and that the grounds and furnishings would cost another \$500,000.00.

In late January, the plans were made available to the public. The school building was to occupy a 600-foot by 270-foot lot southwest of the corner of Wellesley Avenue and Pittsburg Street. Immediately to the west, another two city blocks would be the location of the playfield. The school would consist of three structures, the main E-shaped building and adjacent gymnasium and shop, situated to the rear (south) of the main building. The two secondary buildings were connected to the main building by an east/west one-story corridor. Thus they were connected, to prevent students from having to exit the main building between classes, but remained stand alone structures unto themselves. The local newspaper printed the following description of the main building:

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*The auditorium, rising two floors in the main building, will seat 635 in its first floor and 250 in the balcony. The stage will be 20x70 feet. There is a large lobby on the first floor and wide main corridors running east and west on all three floors. Six stairways will connect the first with the second floors and four stairways the second with the third floors. The third floor is smaller than the other two, and has two sets of classrooms with a large corridor between. The corridors are wide enough to make all parts of the building easily accessible and ample space is allowed for office quarters for the principal and his assistants, teachers and physical instructors. The building will be steam heated. One of the features will be the large cafeteria on the first floor, with its attendant kitchen, smaller lunch room, store room and girls' room. In two relays the cafeteria is said to be big enough to care for 700 and will accommodate 1000 in three shifts. The room will be so arranged that it can be used for other purposes. The floor plans shown give the layout of the first and second floors. On the third floor from left to right in front will be a biology room, physics laboratory, general science rooms, chemistry laboratory, two class rooms, a dark room and two store rooms. Eight classrooms will be on the floor [Spokesman-Review 1931:Sec. 4, p. 6].*

Several innovative features were incorporated into the building's design, including Spokane's first building-wide public address system (controlled from the principle's office), the Pacific Northwest's first 8-circuit electric signal clock which rang class bells automatically, Spokane's first built-in-the-wall student lockers, modern acoustical ceilings, and a new type of ventilating system, called the Ner-Nelco system, which reduced fuel bills by never admitting exterior air unless its temperature was at least 70 degrees.

In March, 1931, the general construction contract was awarded to J.J. Lohrenz, which assigned construction superintendent responsibilities to A.L. Atherton. Other sub-contractors included the Washington Brick and Lime Company, for brick and tile, Jensen-Byrd, for hardware components, John Malnati, for plaster work, and O.N. Wolff, for cut stone (however, cast stone came to be used in place of cut stone). Construction proceeded shortly after the award of the contract. Photographs that appear in the 1932 *Rogers Treasure Chest* illustrate several phases of the work, including the initial laying of poured concrete foundations and forms for walls in April, the completion of most of the concrete superstructure in July, and the application of the brick and cast stone veneer in October.

There were some delays, mostly associated with a unique stipulation in the contract that all construction materials and labor must be of local origin. The intention was to give employment to local workers, who were increasingly becoming unemployed due to the depression. During the summer of 1931, local unions brought an injunction against the contractor claiming irregularities, but it was rejected by the Washington State Supreme

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Court. The case centered on a freight train car of plaster which had come from an out-of-town source. After considerable negotiations, the School Board allowed the use of plaster on-hand, provided that the contractor cancel the rest of the order and buy locally. Nevertheless, in mid-January after a short nine-month construction period, Jack Duchenne, first custodian and engineer of the school, was told to start the boilers and dry out the building. Cost for furnishing the new school was minimized by utilizing refurbished desks, chairs and other equipment and supplies from the old Hillyard High School.

Interestingly enough, the first public event at the new school was a graduation, conducted in January, 1932. In this ceremony, the last 54 students of Hillyard High School were matriculated as graduates of the new Rogers High School, even though they had never attended a class in the new school. More furniture, equipment, and supplies were moved into the building during the mid-winter break, in time for the beginning of classes on February 1, a Monday. Both local newspapers reported the event. Most students arrived an hour before the scheduled 8:30 a.m. beginning of classes. Each was given a floor plan and instructed as to which room they should go. The amenities offered by the new school, as well as the "bright and shiny walls," attracted 55 transfer students from other city schools.

The formal dedication of Rogers occurred on March 1, 1932, in the school auditorium. Dignitaries on hand included, Noah Showalter, the State Superintendent of Public Education and former President of the Washington State Normal School at Cheney (now EWU), Orville C. Pratt, Spokane school superintendent, and board members Evan Berg, Kate Kimpson, Roy Redfield, Alex Turnbull, and Dr. T.D. Burger. Also present were representatives of other Spokane high schools and junior highs. Along with the name change, the Hillyard Panthers became the Rogers Pirates. In 1939, Rogers celebrated the graduation of 191 students in an auditorium ceremony that was attended by more than 1,300 people.

Fittingly enough, the first principal of Rogers, John D. Meyer, was the last principal of Hillyard High School. He first assumed that position in 1925, a year after Hillyard had been annexed by the City of Spokane and the school absorbed into School District No. 81. Born in Iowa, Meyers moved to Washington State as a child. He took his teaching degree from Washington State University and taught at high schools at Lind and Harrington, in Washington, and at Harrison, in Idaho. Meyer was particular involved in student athletics and was an organizer of the Washington State High School Athletic Association. He was still at the helm of Rogers when he died of a heart attack in January, 1948. In a ceremony held on the football field on April 27, 1948, the Rogers athletic field was named in his honor. During many of his years of service to Rogers, Meyer was assisted by his able vice principal, Ernest R. Jinnett. When Jinnett stepped down in 1943, he was succeeded by Jesse L. Purdy, who stepped in as principal following Meyers' death. Purdy was a devoted community servant, active in the Boy

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Scouts and the Lions Club. He received his science B.A. from Hastings College, in Nebraska, and continued his studies in graduate schools at Washington State University and Whitworth College. He joined the faculty of Hillyard High School in 1926, where he taught math and was a drama coach. At Rogers, he directed the school plays. Purdy served as Rogers' principal until his retirement in 1961. He was succeeded by Paul McGowan, who received his education at Whitman College and joined the Rogers faculty in 1938. Before taking the responsibilities of principal, McGowan was a winning track and field coach at the school. He is also credited with advocating for vocational and occupational training. McGowan retired in 1974 and was replaced by assistant principal James R. Hutton, who was in turn replaced by Patricia McKeirnan, in 1978. The current principal at Rogers is Carol Meyer.

Rogers has always been regarded as a school of the blue-collar, middle-class neighborhoods of northeast Spokane. Arguably, the character of that part of Spokane is more complex than that and not so easily stereotyped. None the less, the perception has stuck through the years. It is thus only fitting that the school was named after John R. Rogers. In 1896 Rogers became the first Democrat elected to the office of governor in Washington State. He was re-elected for a second term as a Populist, a name for a follower of the People's Party, a progressive liberal affiliation that was active at the time. His identification with the People's Party put him at the forefront of those who favored political reform and the defense of the less fortunate. Rogers died a year after his 1900 re-election, on December 26, 1901, and was then succeeded by a Republican. But by the Depression years of the 1930s, Rogers was fondly recalled as a crusader for the down trodden. On his monument, located in Olympia, is his epitaph, revealing his concern, and a sense of humor: "*I would make it impossible for the covetous and avaricious to utterly impoverish the poor. The rich can take care of themselves.*" So John R. Rogers was an appropriate choice as the namesake of the new school.

The selection of the architectural style for Rogers High School was cutting edge design for 1930s. At the time the Art Deco style was at the peak of its world-wide popularity. The term Art Deco was coined in the late 1960s by British historian and critic, Bevis Hillier. In his Book Art Deco, Hillier developed the term in honor of the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* held in Paris. At the exposition, twenty-one countries participated in what could be termed as the modern World's Fair of the day. Notably, the United States declined one of the best sites at the fair because President Coolidge proclaimed that "American manufactures and craftsman had almost nothing to exhibit in the modern spirit". Despite the United States and Germany's absence, journalists unanimously heralded the fair as a huge success and identified a pervasive new "modern" style of decoration that used abstract, geometric, and cubist-inspired forms.



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The new geometric vocabulary championed by the French at the exposition was broadly commercialized and spread very rapidly as an international style. In 1926, under the auspices of the American Association of Museums, selected objects from the exposition, toured the United States. As a result American stores followed their French counterparts in promoting the modern style, with Macys & Company and Lord & Taylor in New York holding highly successful exhibitions of largely French designs in 1927 and 1928. The 1927 exhibition at Macy's was organized with advice of the Metropolitan Museum of Art *"in the cause of the furtherance of good taste and art in modern life."*

Eventually the style, as an architectural expression, took a hold in the United States. Reportedly some of the introduction and subsequent spread across the United States, resulted from a 1916 New York City zoning law, which mandated that a building height at the street line be limited and as the mass rose, setbacks at different heights were necessary. The mania for setbacks on buildings swept across the country in the late 1920s and many cities, large and small, received small doses of "metropolitanism" as the style was sometimes called at the time.

The Art Deco style was employed in the design of all kinds of buildings, large and small – banks, retail stores, motion picture theaters, apartment houses, and even service stations. With the onset of the Depression, private commercial construction came to a halt. Public buildings of the mid to late 1930s, many of them funded by the PWA and built by WPA labor, became one of the principle vehicles for the Art Deco style.

First generation Art Deco buildings, like Rogers High School, boast zig zags, chevrons, circles, parallel and stepped back lines, and stylized vegetation. The inspiration came from a wide variety of naturalistic and technological images such as waterfalls, sunbursts, ferns, and flowers. Animals and plant forms were combined with abstract suggestions of energy and speed, such as waves, lightning bolts, new modes of transportation, even machinery. The sources for these patterns were diverse, evolving from earlier decorative movements, such as the Secession in Germany and Austria, the work of C. R. Mackintosh and the Glasgow School of Design, and Art Nouveau or Jugendstil design throughout Europe. Some buildings even have references to forms of mountains and Mayan temples and are believed to have derived from Cubist painting, and Native American, African and Egyptian art.

A variety of Art Deco traits are demonstrated on the three main exterior walls of Rogers High School, and in detailing preserved in the auditorium and at front entry foyer. These include the detailed brick tapestry, geometric and floral cast stone spandrel panels and coping, as well as stepped massing, decorative plaster, and lighting fixtures.

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The utilization of Art Deco ornamental elements in the design of Rogers stands out, especially in a town like Spokane, where the Art Deco idiom is not well-represented. Some of the best examples of Art Deco architecture in Spokane include the City Ramp Garage (1928), Montgomery Ward Building (1929), Sears & Roebuck Store (1929), Paulsen Medical & Dental Building (1928), the Fox Theater (1931), and the Rookery Building (1934 - demolished in 2007). Beside from these landmark buildings, the Art Deco Style is represented in a few lesser structures, including several water reservoirs, and a number of former commercial storefronts, including the former Kress Department Store (1930) and several former Pay 'n Takit Stores grocery stores. Rogers High School (1932) should be considered as belonging to the aforementioned group of premier buildings, and as thus is among the pre-eminent Art Deco buildings in the city.

While Roger High School has undergone numerous alterations, the original 1932 building retains its character defining features and Art Deco styling. The first major addition to the school occurred in 1941, when a third story was added to the rear east wing of the building, creating the asymmetrical configuration discussed earlier. This addition, built by contractor Lewis Larson, contained four new classrooms. In 1947, a salvaged 1-story building from the dismantled Baxter military hospital, in northwest Spokane, was moved to a location directly south of Rogers. It was converted for use as an industrial arts center. Thereupon, the former shop building became a music room and study hall. The new building was among the first to utilize radiant heat provided by hot water pipes installed within the concrete floors. The space was divided into four areas devoted to training in machine shop, carpentry, auto mechanics, and drafting.

In 1956, Spokane citizens passed an \$8 million city-wide school improvement and construction bond. Rogers High School, whose enrollment had jumped from 1035 in 1932 to 1800, used its \$600,000 share to finance construction of a new field house/gymnasium, a new cafeteria, and a 1-story east wing, all completed in 1958. The field house was constructed directly to the south of the old gymnasium. The poured concrete structure, designed by the firm of McClure & Adkison, was large enough to accommodate basketball, gymnastic, and track and field events. Upon its completion, the old gymnasium was reconfigured into a two-floor building divided into locker rooms, padded wrestling room ("sweat box") and rooms for other purposes. The new cafeteria and kitchen were contained in a 1-story addition attached to the west side of the main building. It allowed the old cafeteria to be converted to additional classrooms. Like the field house, it too was a poured concrete structure, also designed by McClure & Adkison. The new east wing, partially attached to the east wall of the main building, but creating a courtyard between the two structures, contained classrooms and offices, devoted mostly to art instruction. Finally, in 1969, the symmetry of the main building was restored by the removal of the windowless

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addition to the southwest portion of the third floor. This, with the addition of various portable classrooms, was the apex of what might be referred to as the "old" Rogers High School. Several minor modifications, especially of the reconstruction of a rear entry on the south, followed between 1969 and 2008, when construction on the new school began. During this process, all of the additions to the main building, both those that were original and those attached later, including the windowless third floor classroom, were removed. Today, although partially attached along the south to the new building, the primary elevations of Rogers High School stand in their original majesty.

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Month. January 4, 1948:N.P.; J.L. Purdy Named Rogers Principal. January 15,  
1948:N.P.; John D. Meyer Field is Named. April 28, 1948:n.p.

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### Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated area is located in Section 04, Township 25, Range 43 of the Willamette Meridian, in Spokane County, Washington; and is legally described as all of blocks 1 and 4 of Cannondale Addition. It is otherwise known as the northeastern portion Parcel No. 35042.0102.

#### Boundary Justification:

The nominated property encompasses the original main Rogers building and the 2009 addition, and does not include the playfields.

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## Photographs

John R. Rogers High School  
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|------|---|-------|---|
| JR1. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) and east elevations,<br>looking southwest         | JR6.  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) elevation, front entry<br>detail, looking south |
| JR2. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) and west elevations,<br>looking southeast         | JR7.  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) elevation, terra cotta<br>detail, looking south |
| JR3. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) elevation, center<br>detail, looking south        | MP8.  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>East elevation, looking northwest                             |
| JR4. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) elevation, entry detail,<br>looking south         | JR9.  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>East elevation, lower left decorative<br>detail, looking west |
| JR5. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>North (front) elevation, upper<br>cornice detail, looking south | JR10. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>East elevation, lower right entrance<br>detail looking west   |

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|-------|--|-------|---|
| JR11. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>West elevation, looking south east                       | JR17. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Front entry detail, looking northeast       |
| JR12. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>West elevation, lower left entry<br>detail, looking east | JR18. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Auditorium ticket lobby, looking southwest  |
| JR13. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Chimney stack, looking southeast                         | JR19. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Auditorium, looking southwest               |
| JR14. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>West light well, looking northwest                       | JR20. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Auditorium, decorative detail, looking east |
| JR15. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Eastern light well, looking northeast                    | JR21. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Second floor stairway, looking southeast    |
| JR16. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Front entry vestibule, looking east                      | JR22. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Main north-south stairway, looking south    |



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|-------|--|------|--|
| JR23. | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>First floor, back east-west hallway,<br>looking west       | JR28 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>May, 2006<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>1958 gymnasium (demolished 2008),<br>looking northwest           |
| JR24  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Second floor, east-west hallway,<br>looking west           | JR29 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>May, 2006<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Original (1932) gymnasium (remodeled<br>2009), looking southeast |
| JR25  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Third floor, eastern north-south<br>hallway, looking north | JR30 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>May, 2006<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>1958 cafeteria (demolished 2008), looking<br>northeast           |
| JR26  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Typical classroom, second floor,<br>looking southwest      | JR31 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>May, 2006<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>1999 classroom addition (demolished 2008),<br>looking east       |
| JR27  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>September, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>Typical classroom, second floor,<br>looking northeast      | JR32 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Historic photograph<br>Charles Libby, 1946<br>North (front) and east elevations, looking<br>southwest                        |

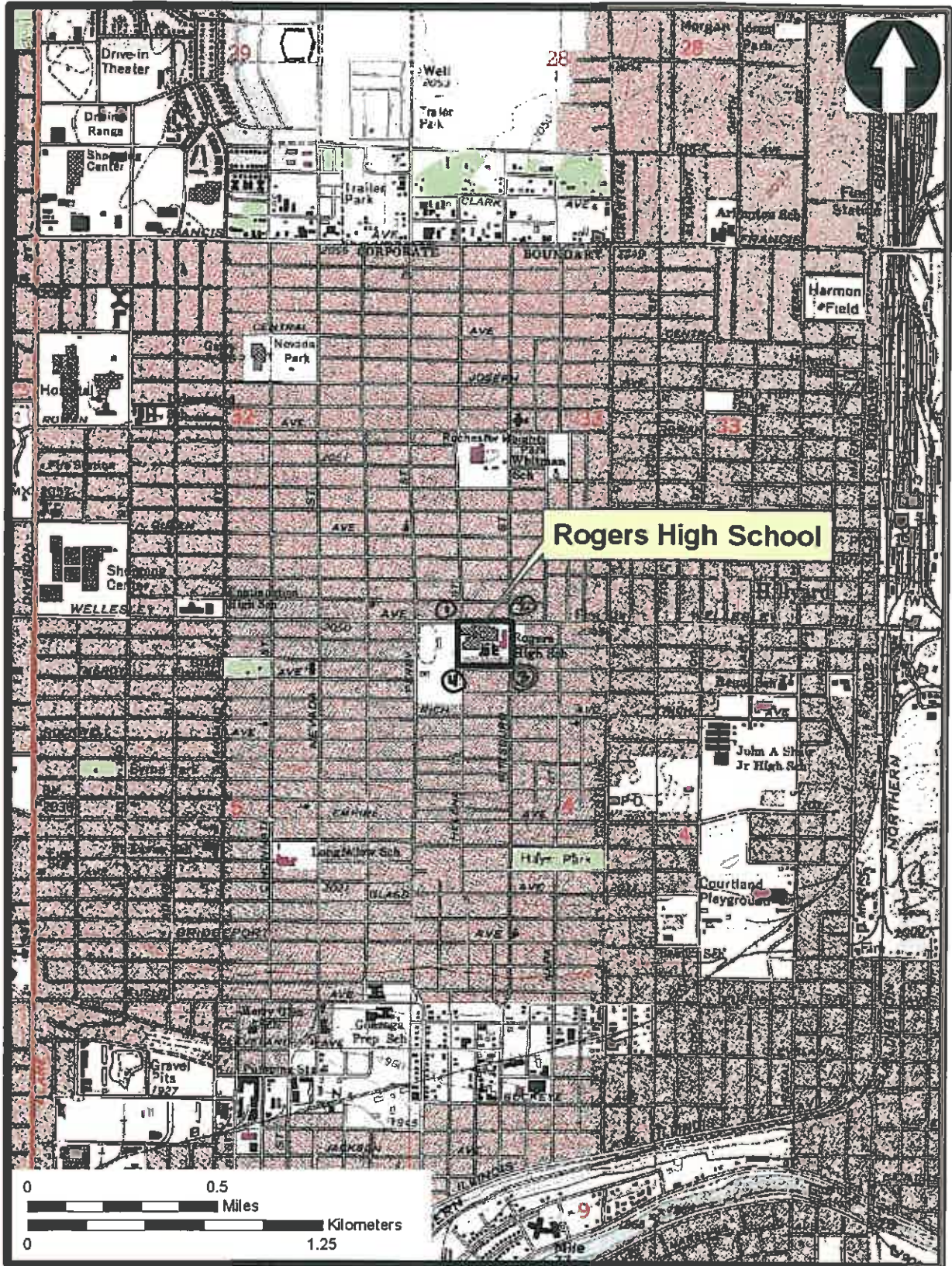
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|-------|---|------|--|
| JR33  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Historic photograph<br>Charles Libby, 1932<br>North (front) entry, looking<br>southwest   | JR39 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, tower east of front façade,<br>looking to the northeast                |
| JR34  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Historic photograph<br>Charles Libby, June 10, 1947<br>Graduating class on front lawn,<br>looking southeast   | JR40 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, entry foyer at southeast,<br>commons at lower right, looking southwest |
| JR35  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Historic photograph<br>Unknown photographer, October 22,<br>1933 Aerial view of original building<br>and athletic field, looking east                                       | JR41 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, stairway and landing at<br>northeast, looking southwest                |
| JR 36 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, east (front)<br>elevation, north end entries, looking<br>west                               | JR42 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, front north-south hallway,<br>first floor, looking north               |
| JR 37 | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, east (front)<br>elevation, south end entry, looking<br>west, original building to the right |      |  |
| JR38  | John R. Rogers High School<br>Spokane County, WA<br>Stephen Emerson<br>November, 2009<br>W. 212 Dawn, Spokane, WA<br>2009 addition, west (rear) and south<br>elevations, looking northeast                                      |      |  |

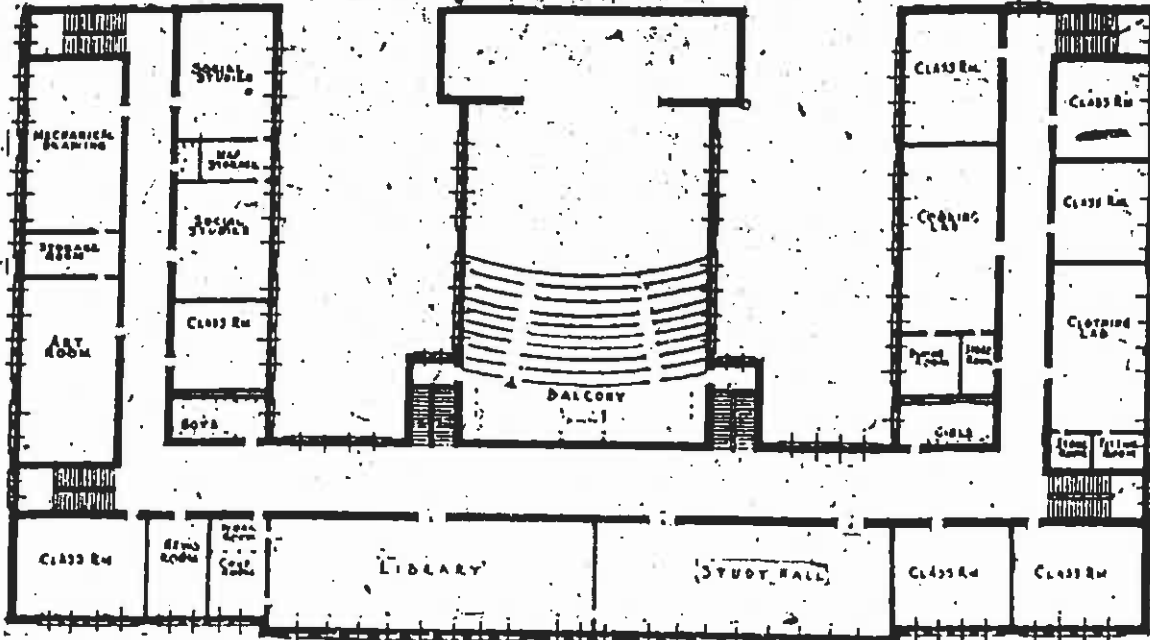
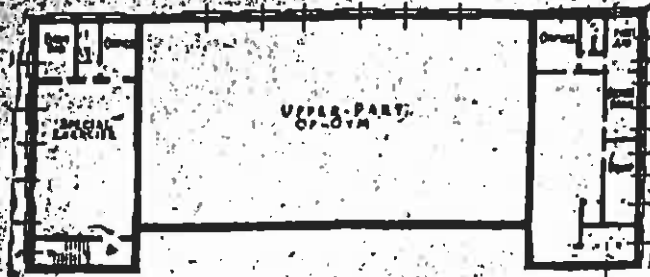


Location of Rogers High School (adapted from Spokane NW and Spokane NE 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles)

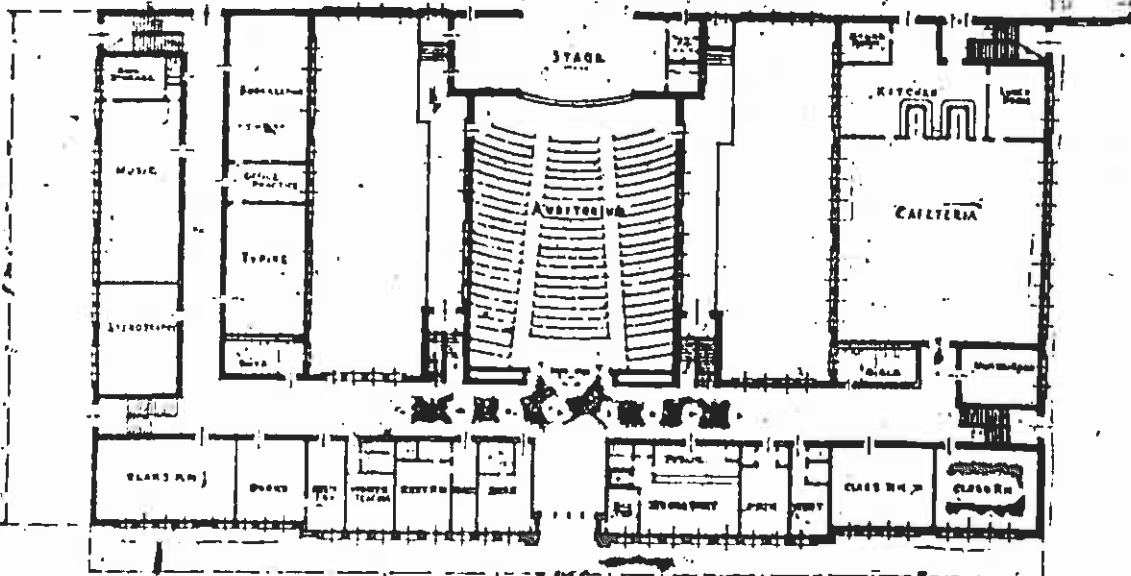
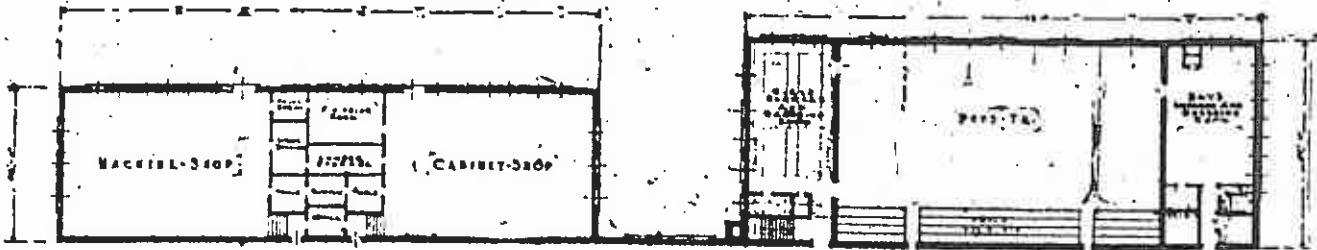


### Second Floor of New Hillyard High School

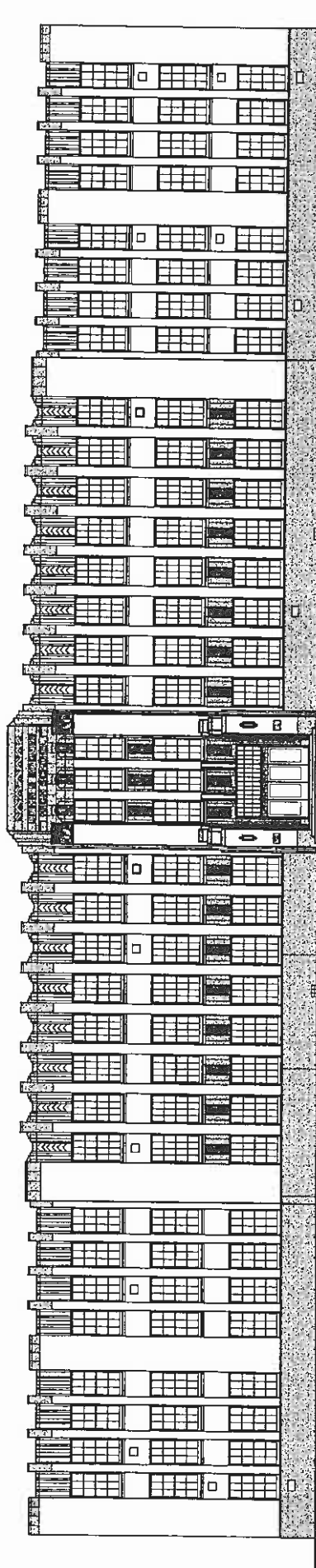
The plans for the new John R. Rogers high school building, to be erected on the south side of Wellerley avenue just west of Pittsburg street, provide for housing 800 students, which can be increased to 1000. The auditorium rising two floors in the main building will seat 635 on the first floor and 250 in the balcony. The building itself will cost \$400,000, and with the ground and equipment the cost is estimated at \$500,000. John R. Dow, architect, says the plans should be ready for the architects by March 1.



### First Floor Plan of New Hillyard High School



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**1** NORTH ELEVATION - 1932 BUILDING

Not to Scale

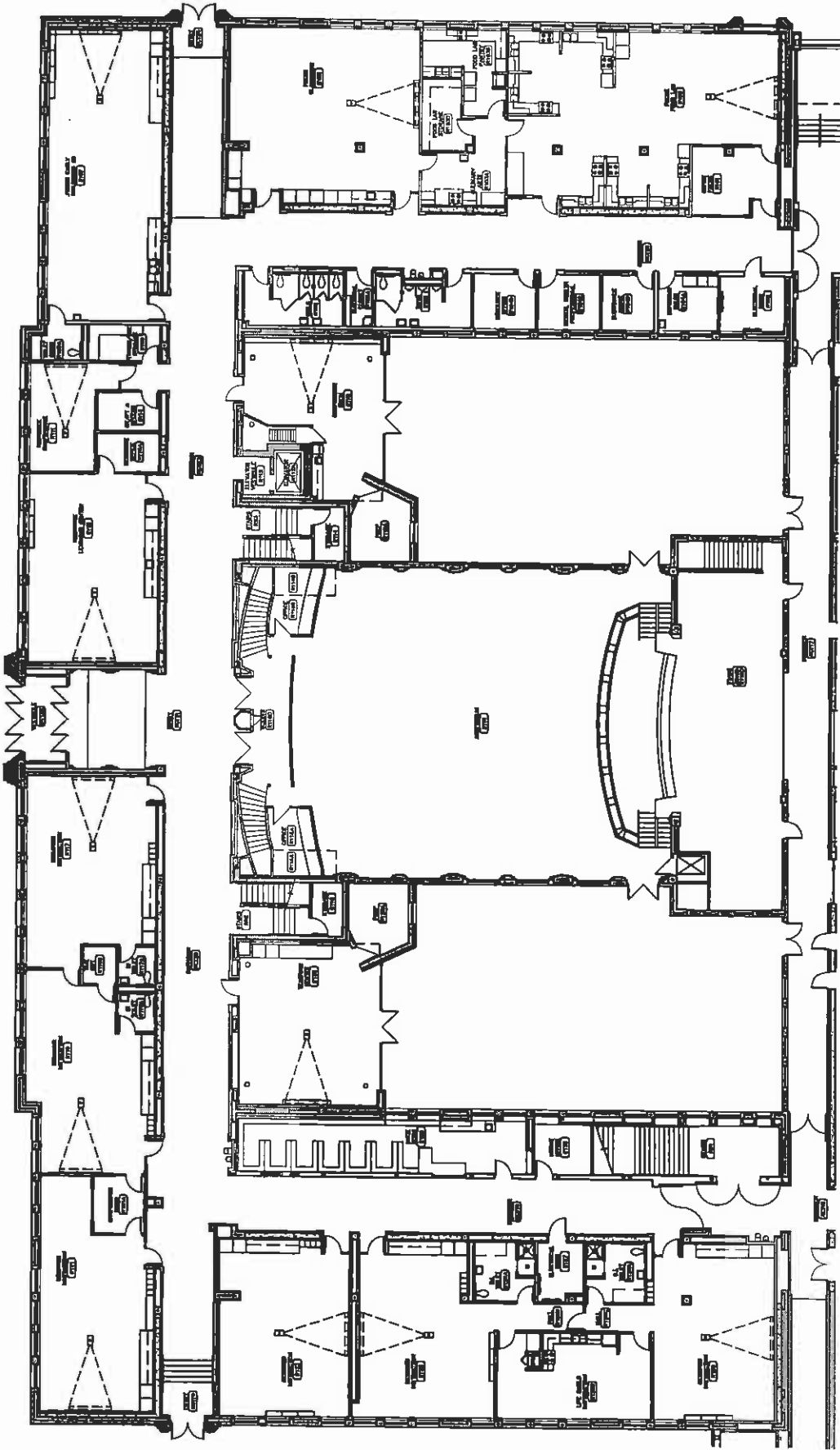
SPOKANE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 81

**JOHN R. ROGERS  
MODERNIZATION & ADDITIONS**

1622 E. WELLESLEY AVE, SPOKANE, WA 89207

**NAC** | ARCHITECTURE

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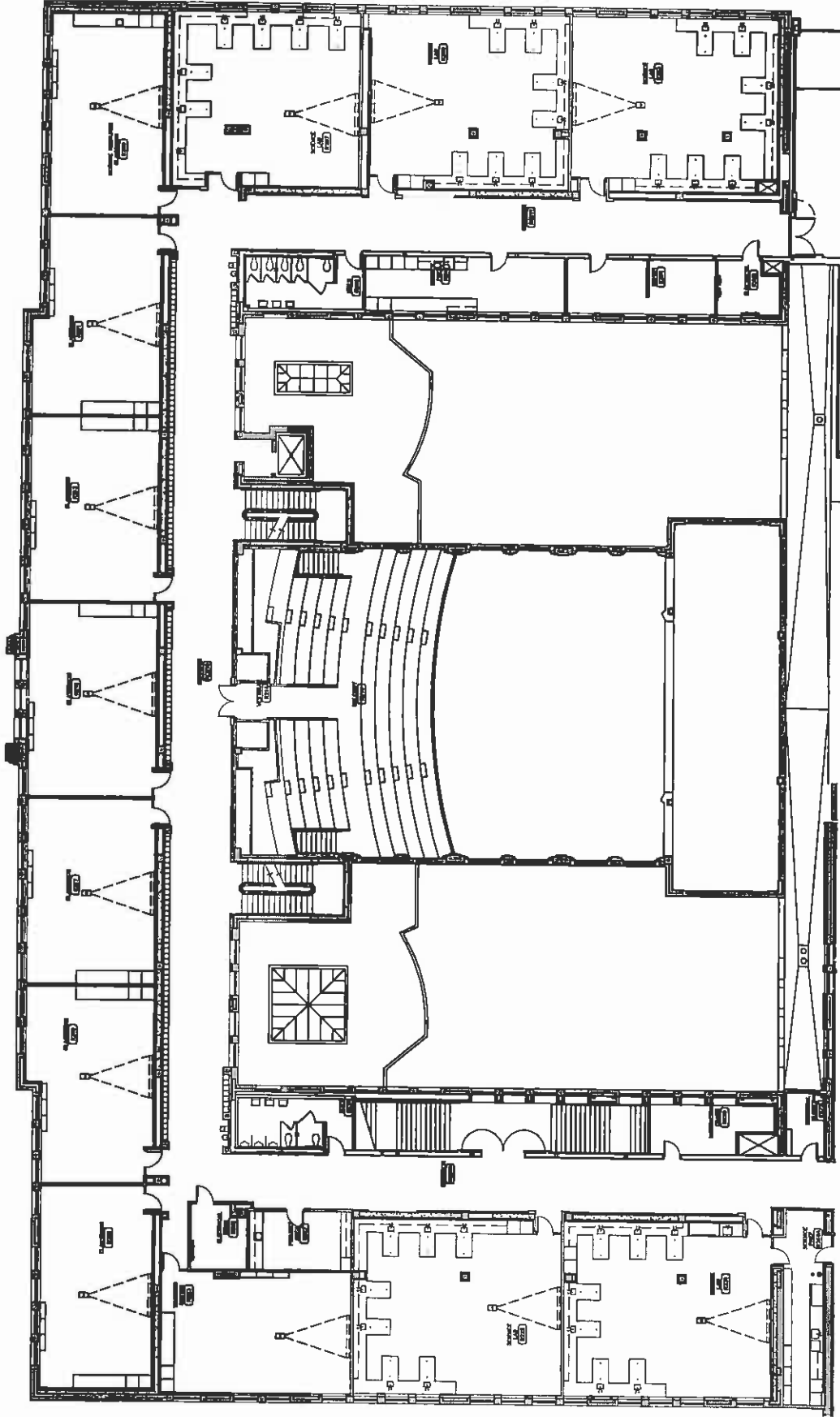

**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**  
 Not to Scale

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**MODERNIZATION & ADDITIONS**  
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**NAC** | ARCHITECTURE




**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**  
 Not to Scale

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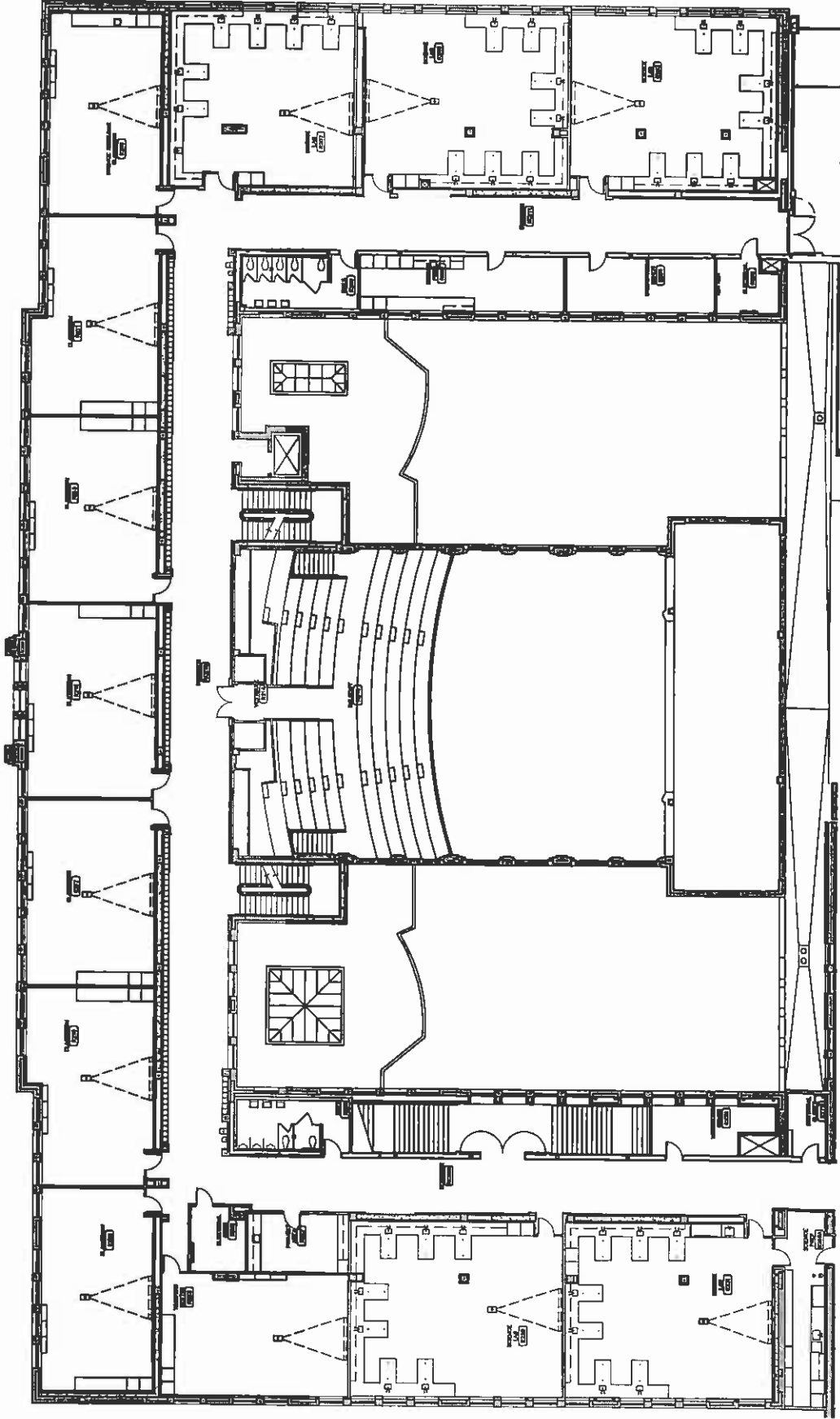
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MODERNIZATION & ADDITIONS**

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**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**  
 Not to Scale

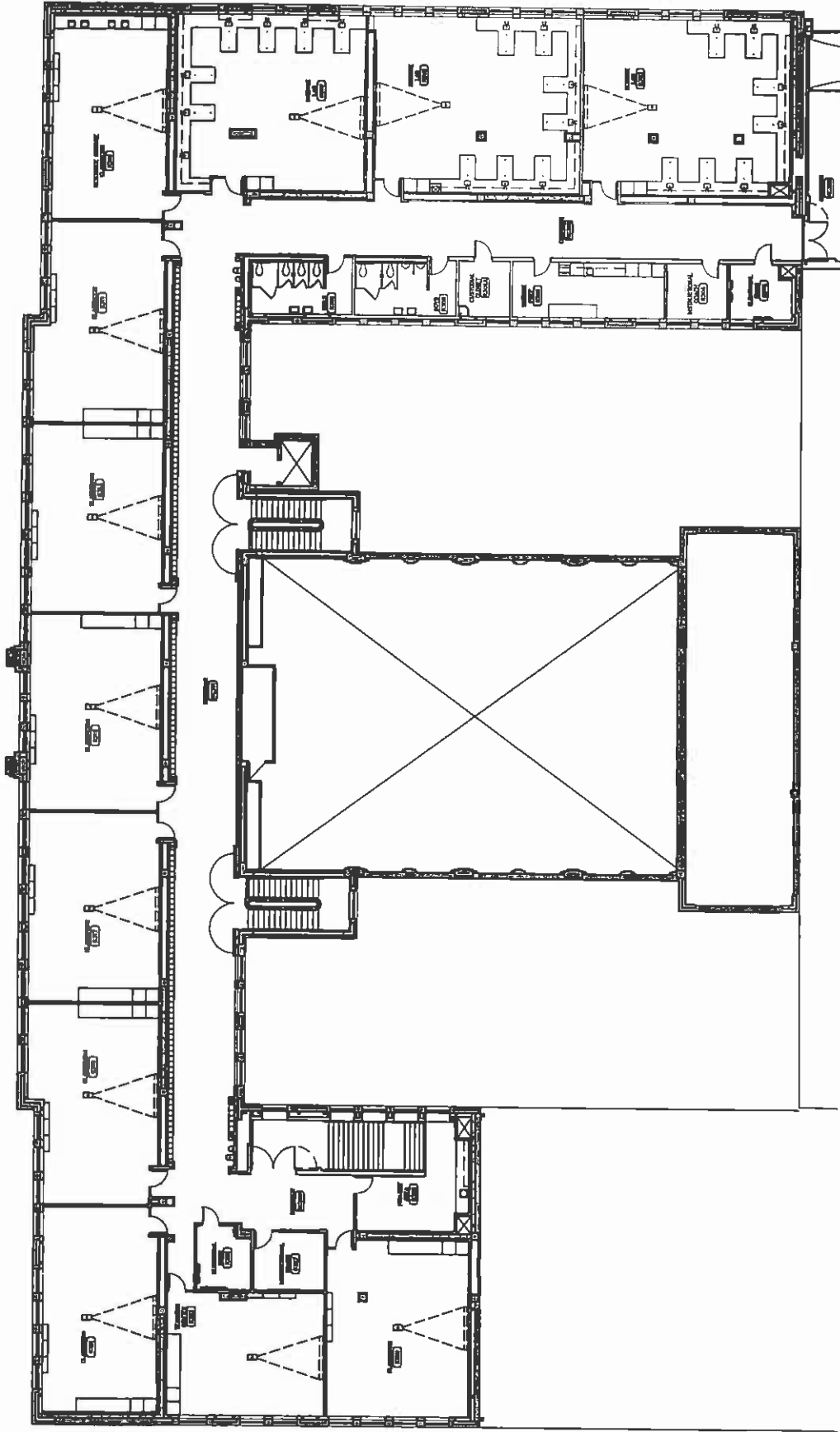
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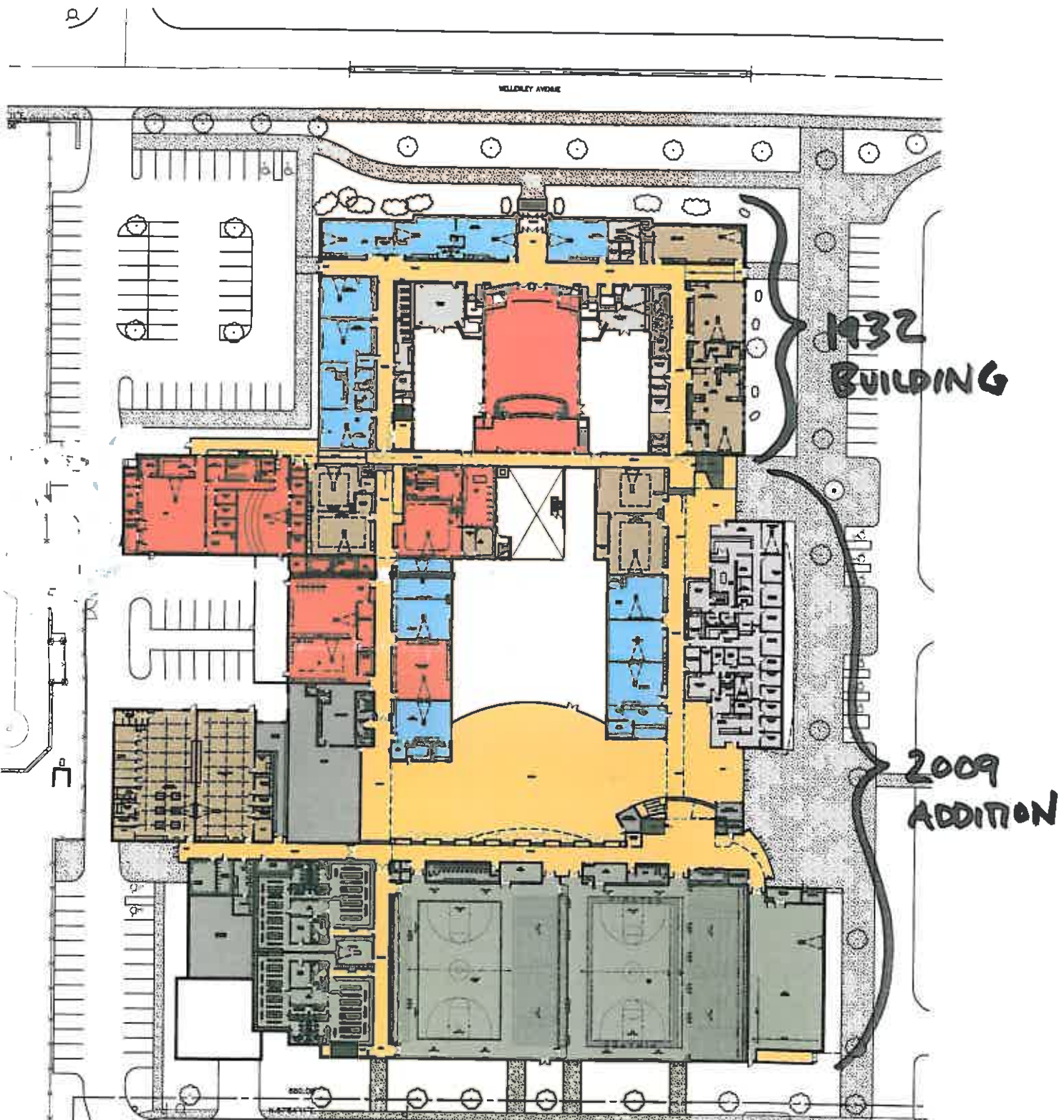

**THIRD FLOOR PLAN**  
 Not to Scale

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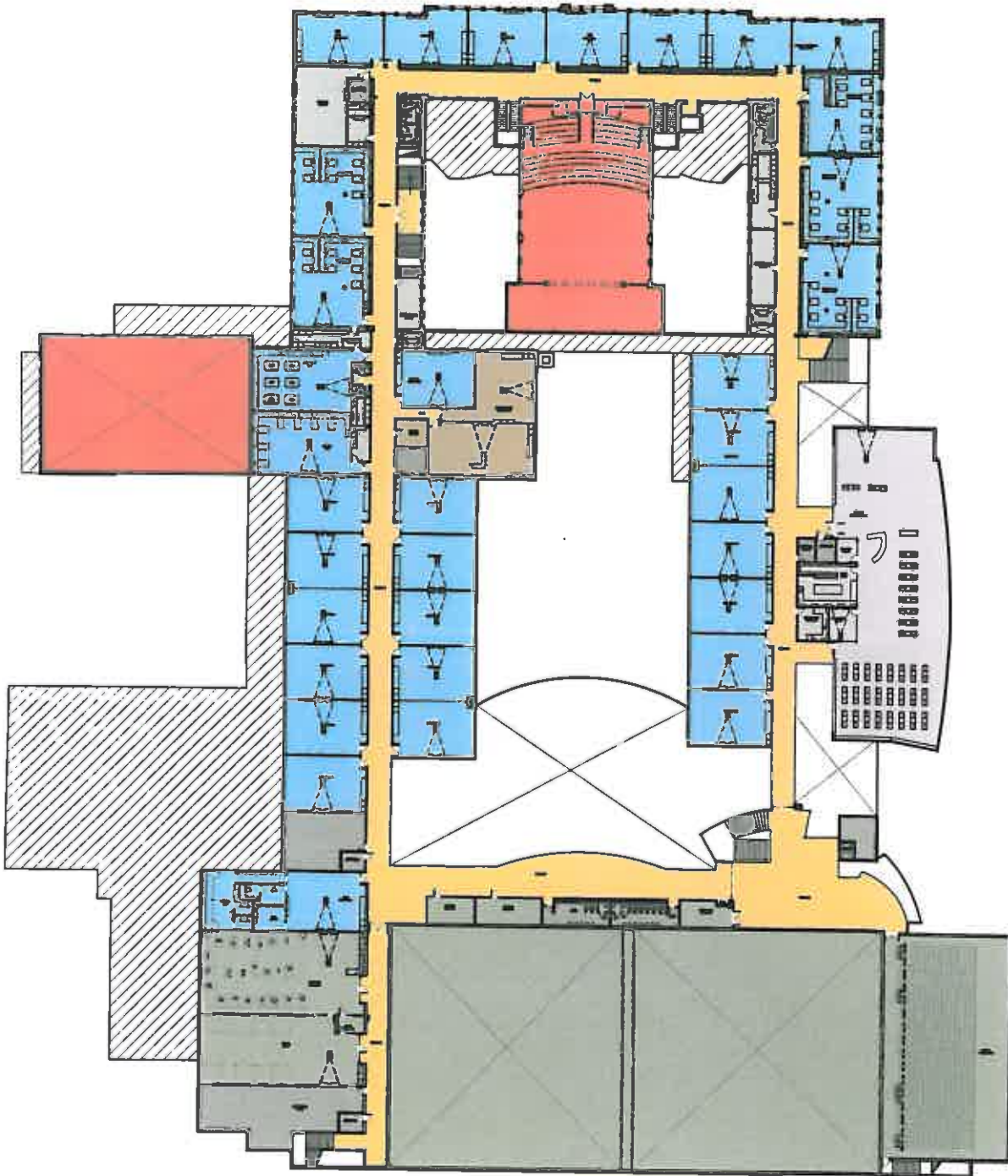
FIRST FLOOR

1932  
BUILDING

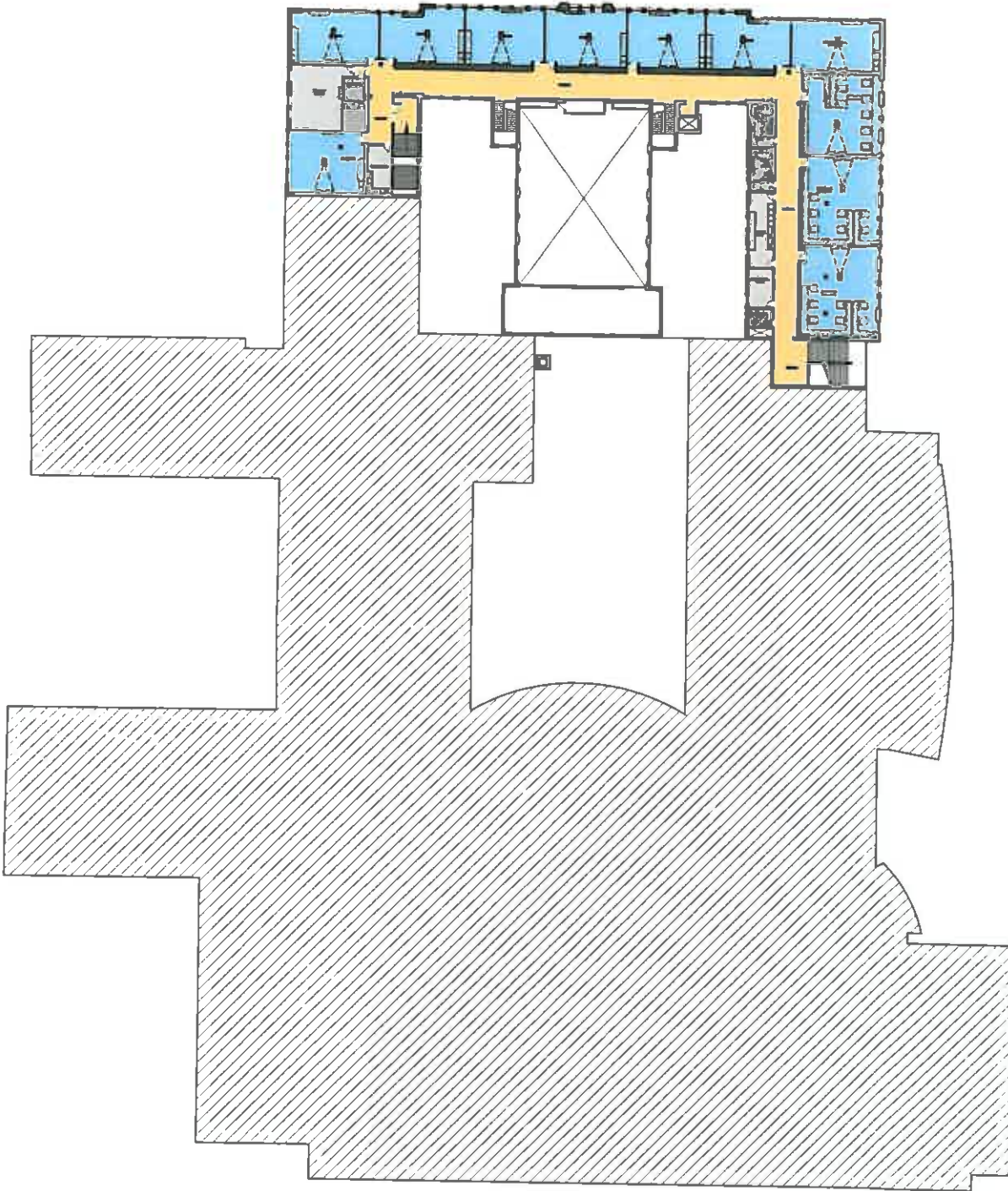
2009  
ADDITION

FLOOR PLAN

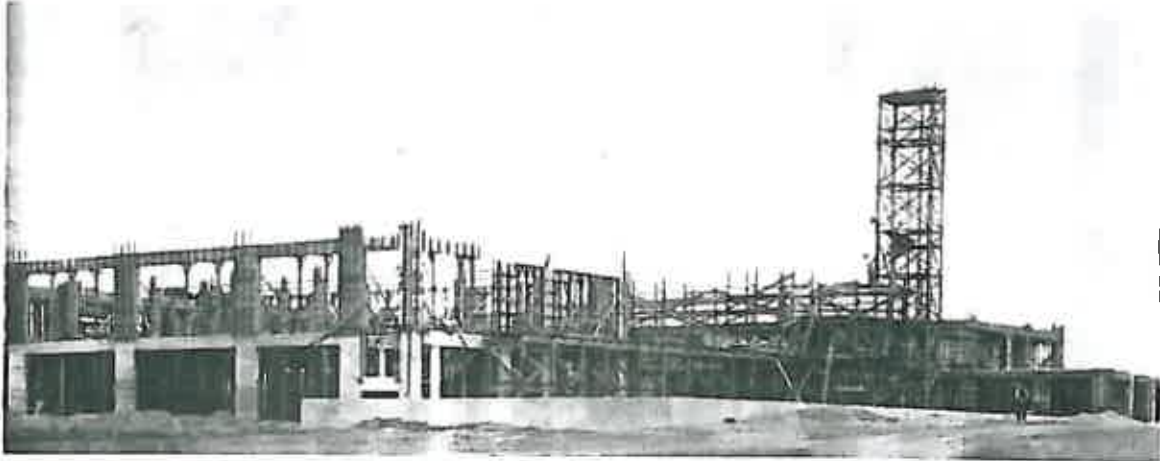
Architect  
Date



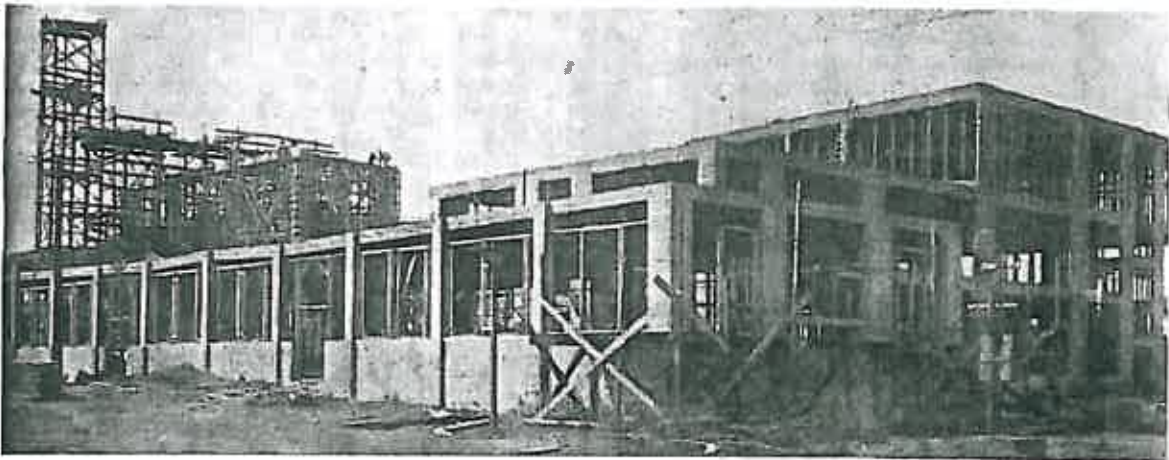
SECOND FLOOR



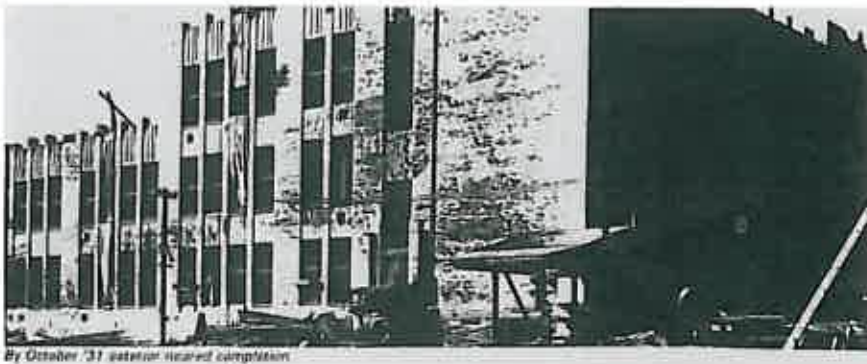
THIRD FLOOR



John Rogers High School under construction, April 1931.  
Photo courtesy of <http://rogers60.com/>



John Rogers High School under construction, Summer 1931.  
Photo courtesy of <http://rogers60.com/>



John Rogers High School under construction, October 1931.  
Photo courtesy of <http://rogers60.com/>



Bird's Eye view of John Rogers High School shortly after construction, October 1933.



John Rogers High School northeast corner, circa 1935.



John Rogers High School entrance detail, circa 1935.





John Rogers High School Class of 1947





















