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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Midway School
other names/site number Artondale School

2. Location

street & number 5115 38th Ave. N.W. not for publication
city, town Gig Harbor vicinity
state Washington code 053 county Pierce code 053 zip code 98335

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Rural Public School Buildings in Washington State
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
[Signature] ASLPO 5-20-87
Signature of certifying official Date
State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)
[Signature] 7-15-87
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

education: school

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

other: gable front vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation wood

walls weatherboard

roof asbestos shingles

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Midway School is a one-room, gable roofed frame schoolhouse constructed in 1893 and located on the Gig Harbor Peninsula in Pierce County, Washington, midway between the city of Gig Harbor and Point Fosdick, the southernmost part of the peninsula. The building rests at its original location and is still partly surrounded by forests although some new housing has encroached on the original school grounds. Nevertheless, the rural setting is reflected on the west and north and the school is characterized by good integrity of exterior form, fabric, and fenestration as well as by an unaltered and undivided interior.

The single story wood frame structure is rectangular in shape with a wood post and beam foundation. It has weatherboard siding and cornerboards. The gable roof originally had wood shingles but is now covered with composition shingles. The roof has a fascia board beneath the cornice. Multi-light windows are placed on the north side of the building, banded in three groups of three two-over-two double-hung sash windows. On the rear (east) of the building is a makeshift storage shed of later construction.

The front facade (west gable end) of the building has a full width porch with a hipped roof covered with wood shingles. Originally open, the porch was enclosed in 1913 and transformed into a cloak room and entry. The original double panelled doors were refitted into the entry along with fixed windows on each side. After vandalism in 1965, the present owner installed a new door. Above the porch roof, in the front gable end, is the original wooden school sign.

Although now used for storage, the one-room interior of the building is still intact and unchanged from its historic appearance. Still inside are the blackboards and heating stove. Outside, the two original elm trees still stand on either side of the entry. The school grounds originally had a play shelter located to the south of the main building, but that has been destroyed and that portion of the original school grounds now has a house on it. The rural setting, however, has been retained to the north and east of the building.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Education

Period of Significance
1893 - 1936

Significant Dates
n/a

Cultural Affiliation
n/a

Significant Person
n/a

Architect/Builder
J.J. More, Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Midway School is historically significant for its association with the development of public education on the Gig Harbor peninsula in Pierce County, Washington. Perhaps the oldest extant school in Pierce County (constructed in 1893), the structure is distinguished by a well preserved gable roofed, rectangular form and one-room interior. Although the school grounds have been compromised by new housing and an overgrown landscape, the building is an outstanding example of the first era of pioneer public schools in the county. In addition, the school is the only surviving building of any kind that reflects the now-extinct settlements of Midway and Artondale.

Historical Background: Like other counties in the Puget Sound region, Pierce County was settled in the mid- and late 19th century by Americans from more eastern states and by European immigrants attracted by the area's vast forests, rich mineral deposits, fertile farmland, and saltwater harbors. Given these physical features, it is not surprising that the economy was dominated by extractive industries--principally logging but also mining, fishing, and farming. Even as late as the 1930s, when other industries (notably manufacturing and commerce) dominated the cities, the county's rural economy was fueled by the products of its forests, fields, and the Sound.

This economic base led to the creation of widely scattered rural communities (usually unincorporated) close to natural resources but often accessible to urban areas only by difficult water or overland transportation. While Tacoma had a diversified economy--the node for trade, manufacturing, railroad, and government activities--the sparsely settled rural areas were independent and isolated communities characterized by a single economic mainstay.

Without exception, each of these small rural communities established a school district shortly after the first settlers arrived. As elsewhere in the state, the creation of a district and the construction of school buildings signalled the formation of a community and reflected a belief in both the importance of universal education and the permanence of the community itself. The school buildings were often the first and sometimes the only public structures in the area, and thus served as social and cultural centers as well as places of education. The typical schoolhouse served all school age children in the area and often doubled as a meeting place for their parents. Between 1853, when Washington

9. Major Bibliographical References

Along the Waterfront: A History of the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula Areas, Gig Harbor, 1974-75.

Auditor's Annual Exhibit, Pierce County, Bell Press, Tacoma, 1910.

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 Buildings
Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Pierce County Dept. of Planning & Development, Tacoma, Washington

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A

1	0	5	3	1	1	8	0	5	2	3	8	9	3	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Quadrangle name: Gig Harbor
Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Midway School is located on the east side of 38th Avenue N.W. at Midway. It is in Section 17, Township 21 North, Range 2 East, W.M., and is legally described as the north half of Parcel No. 01-21-17-3-089/700.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes only the northern part of the parcel where the building sits, including the trees at the front entry. It excludes the southern part of the parcel where there are newer non-related buildings.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Caroline Gallacci, Preservation Planner (Edited by L. Garfield)

organization Pierce County Planning Division date December 20, 1986

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city or town Tacoma state WA zip code 98409

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

became a territory, and the 1940s, when rural school consolidation resulted in the construction of larger schools serving several communities, the small schoolhouses were the primary public structures on the rural landscape and today they often are the only surviving evidence of the once thriving rural communities that dotted the county.

Pierce County's rural schoolhouse construction reflected three general periods of development. Shortly after initial settlement, a one-room log or frame schoolhouse was constructed on land usually donated by an early homesteader. As the community grew, two- or four-room frame schoolhouses were constructed, indicating increased community stability, the growth of the school age population, and the expansion of the school curriculum. Schools built between statehood (1889) and World War I often reflected this second period of growth and expansion. A third phase of growth is reflected in buildings constructed after World War I, when many frame buildings were replaced by larger brick structures and ancillary structures--including gymnasiums and play shelters--were constructed adjacent to the schoolhouse. This period, which lasted through the 1930s, included structures built by the federal Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression. This third period ended by 1940 when the last WPA projects were constructed and the move toward rural school consolidation was well underway.

Western settlement began on the Gig Harbor peninsula in the 1870s and ultimately seven communities were formed in the vicinity of floating or permanent docks. All had their own school district. Because the peninsula was heavily forested, logging activity was predominant during the first years of settlement. Gradually, diversified farming, particularly fruit production, supplanted logging as the primary activity. This rural atmosphere was maintained until the completion of the second Tacoma Narrows bridge in the 1950s when the area was opened up to suburban development.

The pioneer community of Artondale was founded in 1877 near the M.B. Hunt homestead. By 1888, the settlement had two brickyards, a lumber mill, and the first school on the Gig Harbor peninsula. Children living in what ultimately became the City of Gig Harbor also attended the school.

Midway was founded to the east of Artondale and by 1892 settlers there had formed their own district. The Dow family donated one square acre of land for the sole purpose of building a school. J.J. More built the structure and had it completed in time for the 1893 term. For the next 20 years the school was known as the Artondale school and served students from the Midway-Artondale area. In 1914, the school officially was named Midway because of its location midway between Gig Harbor and Point Fosdick at the peninsula's southern tip. The sign (still hanging on the building) was painted and secured in place at this time. Classes continued to be held in the building until 1941 when the consolidated Peninsula School District was formed and Midway was closed. At that time, ownership of the property reverted back to the Dow family who later sold it to the present owners.

Of the schools on the peninsula which predate consolidation, only Midway represents the earliest phase of schoolhouse construction. The Crescent Valley school has been seriously altered and represents a later period of construction. The Wollochet and Arletta schools are well preserved two-room schools constructed by the WPA.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

Of equal importance is that the Midway School is the only public building remaining which reflects both the Artondale and Midway communities. The only other properties from the Artondale community are the cemetery and the altered Artondale Methodist church constructed in 1912. Finally, there is no evidence to suggest that any other major building was ever constructed at Midway. The school therefore serves as an example of a community formed solely around the school building, an association maintained from 1892 until 1941.

The project of surveying and documenting Pierce County's rural schools was conducted by James Widrig, architect of the Pierce County Landmarks Board, and Caroline Gallacci, Preservation Planner for Pierce County. The nominated schools were drawn from a list of 84 school buildings and associated sites included in the countywide historic sites survey. The project followed federal survey guidelines and the results are filed in the Washington State Inventory of Cultural Resources at the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in Olympia. Each property was physically evaluated to determine its integrity. In addition, traditional research methods were used to place the building in its local historic context as well as to evaluate the property within the statewide context of rural public education.