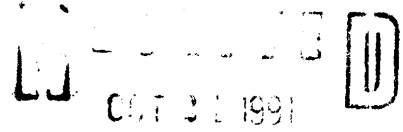


1706

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**NATIONAL
REGISTER**

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 10-900-a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name West Valley High School
other names/site number Argonne Junior High School

2. Location

street & number N. 2805 Argonne PC not for publication
city, town Millwood vicinity
state Washington code WA county Spokane code 063 zip code 99206

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	—	— sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	—	— structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> objects
			Total
			<u>3</u>

Name of related multiple property listing:
Rural Public Schools 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.

Jacob E. [Signature] 10/16/91
Signature of certifying official Date
Washington 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. **Entered in the
National Register**
 See continuation sheet. 11/21/91

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet. _____

determined not eligible for the National Register. _____

removed from the National Register. _____

other, (explain:) _____

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Education: schoolCurrent Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Education: school

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:
Italian Romanesque Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick

roof tile
other granite

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located on three and one-half acre grounds near the intersection of Trent Road and Argonne Road in the Spokane Valley town of Millwood, West Valley High School is a two story brick structure distinguished by an Italian Romanesque Revival design and ornate stone detail. Originally built in 1924, and expanded substantially in later years with the addition of two classroom wings and a rear gymnasium, the school features variegated brickwork, carved granite trim, and multiple-light wood sash windows, all of which remain well preserved. The site has been reduced in size since it opened in 1925 (when the grounds covered 11 acres), but the school retains its prominent setting, with a large front lawn bordering Trent Road, a major arterial that traverses the valley. To the sides and rear of the schoolhouse are playing fields, tennis courts, and parking areas. Three noncontributing structures are also located on the school grounds, including a one-story multi-bay garage and workshop, constructed of brick and concrete block, located immediately to the west; a one story brick classroom annex located across a driveway to the east; and a metal storage shed located northeast of the school. The surrounding neighborhood includes a one story brick elementary school (c. 1960s), small scale commercial structures, and wood frame houses. The historic school is the largest and most distinctive building in the vicinity.

West Valley High School rises two stories above a full basement, and is constructed of brick walls laid in common bond. The brick facade achieves depth of color and texture through varied hues ranging from light tan to dark brown, and a wire-cut finish. The roof of the building is covered with red clay tiles. The building is constructed on an "E" plan, with a hipped roof central block (with rear auditorium wing) built in 1924, two perpendicular side wings added in the 1930s and expanded in the 1940s and 1950s, and a rear gymnasium added in the early 1940s.

The front (south) facade of the original block is dominated by a central arched entryway, set within a projecting granite portal. The parapet of the portal is ornamented with two carved owls, representing wisdom, perched on carved panels and a frieze ornamented with intricate foliated and geometric designs. Beneath the parapet, the arch is enframed by compound archivolt supported by engaged Romanesque columns. The outside columns are marble, and the inner columns are granite. The capitals of the columns feature ornate carvings, as does the face of the outer archivolt. The face of the inner archivolt is inscribed with a quotation from Pope that reads "education forms the common mind; just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." The tympanum of the arch is divided into three panels, each richly ornamented with patterns of swirling leaves and vines and incorporating three symbols of learning--books, a globe, and a lamp. The double doors of the entry were replaced with glazed, aluminum frame units in recent years.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

Section number 7 Page 2

To either side of the portal on both stories are wood frame windows with six-over-six double-hung wood sash. Above the portal on the second story of the facade are three narrow double-hung round arch windows. A parapet above the second floor auditorium rises above the center of the main block and is ornamented with a blind arcade of round arches, corbelled brickwork at the cornice, and finials. On the rear (north) elevation of the main block, projecting brick piers divide the wall surface into bays of three windows. The windows on the second floor have round arches, separated by rounded mullions. Brick dentil work underscores the cornice on the north side.

The central block is framed on the facade by two projecting gabled pavilions, each ornamented with large blind arches and articulated with dentilated brick work at the cornice. The arches are ornamented with carved granite and the tympani are decorated with carvings of fluted Doric fountains from which peacocks drink, surrounded by entwined oak leaves.

Recessed from the side pavilions are the east and west side wings, the first sections of which were added in the mid-1930s, according to blueprint plans and drawings from the office records of Whitehouse and Price, records of the school district, and the reminiscences of students of the era (including present-day Millwood Mayor Jeanne Batson, who attended the school in 1935-1939).

The proposed side wings were first illustrated in detailed plans drawn up by Whitehouse and Price in Fall, 1933. The plans, which are similar to what was actually built, include basement, first floor and second floor levels for both wings, entry vestibules on the side elevations with stairwells to provide access to the upper and lower levels, and classrooms on each floor of both wings. The wings were 8 bays long (plus entry) on the west, and nine bays (plus entry) on the east.

Although designed a decade later than the original building, the wings carefully retain the existing character and design motifs. The wings are set back from the facade, and there are no visual discrepancies to denote a change from older building to newer wings. The wings are entered through doors set within recessed round arched openings in gabled portals. The classrooms are lighted by rows of six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows separated by narrow brick piers, with a decorative tapestry brick pattern in the spandrels. The wings were extended further to the north in the 1940s to accommodate several additional classrooms and again in the early 1950s (thus tripling the size of the wings), according to school district blueprints. Again, there is little to distinguish the newer from the older portions, except that the northern extensions do not include the daylight basement. The 1948 expansion added 23 window bays to the west wing and 6 window bays to the east. In 1952, 15 bays were added to the east wing.

In the courtyard formed by the two long side wings is a central wing extending north from the main block. This central wing includes the original two-story auditorium and gym and an adjacent one-story

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

Section number 7 Page 3

gymnasium annex constructed in 1941. The walls of the older auditorium wing are divided into bays by engaged brick piers. Within each bay on the second floor of the auditorium are groups of three round arched windows, separated by engaged colonettes. A brick dentil course underscores the cornice. The gymnasium annex, which is attached to the auditorium, also features brick walls divided by engaged piers. The gym is entered on the north elevation, through three round arches with single leaf doors surmounted by fanlights. The gym is ornamented with corbelled brickwork at the cornice and blind arches outlined with granite trim. A two story brick locker room annex is located adjacent to the original gym on the east side.

The school building is entered through the front entry portal, which leads to a circular vestibule faced in brick with a mosaic tile floor. The interior floor plan includes wide classroom corridors on the side wings, and a library, offices, first floor gym and second floor auditorium in the central block. The auditorium, which originally seated 500, retains good integrity and is characterized by the original sloping floor, curved ceiling, stage with proscenium arch, and mustard and teal color scheme. The space is lighted by round arch windows placed along the upper walls, and separated by cast stone colonettes. The first floor gym includes the original running track. Windows and door frames are ornamented with terra cotta lintels and sills, and the walls and ceiling feature terra cotta moldings. Elsewhere in the school building, plaster walls and wood millwork are retained, although some floors have been covered with linoleum and some ceilings have been lowered with acoustical tile.

Recent engineering studies have indicated that the structure would be seriously damaged in an earthquake because the building lacks vertical reinforcing in the masonry walls, and, in some cases, only minimal mortar joint horizontal reinforcing. In addition, there are insufficient connections tying the roof and floor diaphragms to the sheer walls, and insufficient anchorage of the structural beams to their supports.

8. Statement of Significance

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

 nationally statewide locallyApplicable National Register Criteria A B C DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Education
Architecture

Period of Significance

1924-1941

Significant Dates

1924-25, 1933

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Whitehouse & Price, architects
Alloway & George, builders

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

Originally built in 1924 and designed by Spokane architects Whitehouse and Price, West Valley High School was the first union high school to serve the expanding student population of seven communities in the west Spokane Valley. Construction of the school represented the culmination of efforts by three rural districts to collectively provide a modern facility for the entire region. Designed in the Italian Romanesque Revival Style, and expanded several times in a manner that complements the original, the school remains a well preserved example of academic architecture from the period, and a symbol of the area's commitment to progressive educational ideas. The school meets the registration requirements established for the property type in the Rural Public Schools in Washington State Multiple Property Documentation Form.

Historical Background: When it opened to students in February, 1925, West Valley High School was the only high school for the rural school districts on the west side of the Spokane Valley. Nearly a year earlier, on March 11, 1924, voters in the Orchard Park, Trent, and Pleasant Prairie districts overwhelmingly approved creation of a union district for the purpose of providing high school classes in the region. "Union districts," in which several districts pooled their resources to establish one common high school program, were first created by the State Legislature in the late 19th century as a method of helping smaller or less wealthy districts construct high school facilities.

The newly-established Union High School District 202 encompassed virtually the entire west side of the Spokane Valley as well as Pleasant Prairie (encompassing seven communities). It stretched six miles long and four miles wide, and was traversed by Trent Road. The new school, located in Millwood at the intersection of Trent and Argonne, was situated at the geographic center of the new district.

Creation of a union high school reflected dramatic population growth in the Spokane Valley in the 1920s. Although the area was first homesteaded by white settlers in the late 19th century, Millwood and the surrounding west valley communities remained sparsely settled until the early 20th century. In 1911, the Inland Empire Paper Company established a mill near Woodard Station. The new mill became the major industry in the valley; by 1916, 200 employees lived in the company town of Millwood, and in 1927, Millwood became the first incorporated city in the Valley.

The growth of that decade precipitated a need for more schools. The Orchard Park district, which by 1924 included Millwood as well as the Dishman, Orchard Avenue, Pasadena, and Parkwater communities,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

Section number 8 Page 2

was formed in 1900 with one school and \$100,000 of taxable property. By 1924, the district had five schools and two million dollars of taxable property.

One of the most dramatic areas of growth was in the high school program. The first high school "department" was tentatively organized in 1910 in the Orchard Avenue School (following the destruction of South Central school in Spokane). The enrollment was about a half dozen students. But the program quickly grew. In 1914, the high school department moved to the Millwood school because it was more centrally located. The enrollment had now increased to 43 students and the school was placed on the two-year accredited list by the state high school inspector. By 1916, high school enrollment had grown to 65, and the following year (1917) voters approved the construction of an addition to the Millwood school to accommodate the high school program. In the meantime, the school was placed on the four-year accredited list.

The growth in the high school program reflected growth generally in the valley. From 1916 to 1925, the student body population of the district exploded by 269 percent, with 190 students enrolled in 1923. In 1924, school district officials expected to enroll 250 pupils the following year. The growth in the student body precipitated the need for an entirely new structure devoted solely to the high school curriculum.

As a result, Orchard Park Superintendent Arthur B. Ness and school board member A. H. Syverson led a campaign for a new high school facility capable of serving the entire west valley. The pair spoke at numerous public meetings in the area, and achieved success on March 11, 1924, when voters in the Trent, Pleasant Prairie, and Orchard Park districts approved creation of a union district, supporting the measure by a 95 percent majority.

The next step was to finance construction of a new building that would house the several hundred students. Orchard Park had already passed a recent series of special levies to clear up indebtedness and prepare for a building campaign that included construction of new schools at Orchard Avenue and Pasadena. Now the district joined with the Trent and Pleasant Prairie districts in proposing a \$95,000 bond issue for construction of the high school. Students themselves campaigned enthusiastically for the measure, and the bond issue passed on May, 1, 1924, with 90 percent of the voters approving. That spring, the school district purchased approximately seven acres immediately south of the Millwood school grounds and extending to Trent Road. On June 24, voters approved that purchase by 90 percent. In the summer, architects Whitehouse and Price were selected to draw plans, and on September 13, 1924, the cornerstone for the new school was laid.

Under the direction of union district superintendent Ness, the school opened in February, 1925 (with University of Idaho president Dr. A. H. Upham delivering the dedicatory address), with 12 teachers, 13 classrooms (including domestic science, manual training, and laboratories), library, superintendent's office,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

Section number 8 Page 3

an auditorium with stage, gymnasium with basketball court and running track, and 11 acres of grounds including four acres of athletic fields. Students worked through the spring to complete the landscaping, and built a football field and tennis courts.

As the student body grew, the school was expanded several times. Classroom wings, also designed by Whitehouse and Price, were added in the mid-1930s in a manner identical to the original building. These wings (which accommodated chemistry and physics classrooms, domestic science, bookkeeping and typing, and a study hall) in turn were expanded in the 1940s and early 1950s. Once again, the additions were indistinguishable in style from the earlier portions of the complex. During the early 1940s, a gymnasium annex was added to the central wing. Growing to meet the demands of the district, the school thus remained the major educational facility in the west valley until 1963, when a new high school was built and West Valley was renamed Argonne Junior High School. In 1988, the building was closed as a school, and the building remains vacant today.

Architectural significance: The architectural firm of Whitehouse and Price was among the most distinguished in Washington State in the early and mid-20th century, specializing in institutional commissions, often executed in various Gothic and Renaissance Revival motifs. Harold Whitehouse, the design partner, was a New Englander who arrived in Spokane in 1905. A few years later he returned East to complete professional training at Cornell University after which he returned to Spokane and established a partnership with William Price. The firm completed numerous major commissions beginning in the teens, including the Georgian campus of Lakeland Village near Medical Lake (1915); the Tudor Revival Hutton Settlement House east of Spokane (1917); the Spokane Chamber of Commerce building in the Riverside Avenue Historic District (1931); and numerous churches, including examples in Yakima, Seattle, and Spokane, highlighted by the Gothic Revival St. John's Cathedral (1926-54), widely considered Harold Whitehouse's masterpiece. The firm also designed the Music and Art Building on the Academic Quadrangle of the University of Washington in Seattle (1949-50).

As with the firm's other major commissions, West Valley High School was distinguished by a skillful adaptation of historic forms and modern function. The building incorporates considerable refinement of detail, including carved stone trim, arched openings, and variegated and textured brickwork. The motif was successfully carried through on the additions as well as the original school. The Italian Romanesque motif was originally selected, according to reports of the day, because it evoked the era of "the dawn of educational ideals." A few other institutional commissions of the firm reflect the same theme, including, for example, the John Finch Memorial Nurses Home on Summit Avenue in Spokane (1929; National Register, 1991), although West Valley is distinguished by its greater degree of refinement. Recent survey work in the Spokane Valley, conducted by the Spokane City-County Historic Preservation Office, indicates that West Valley is among the dominant architectural landmarks in the Spokane Valley.

9. Major Bibliographical References

West Valley High School at Millwood Will Be Finished This Fall," (Spokane) *Spokesman-Review*, September 14, 1924, p. 6.

West Valley High School Dedicated To Service, Spokane Valley Herald, February 21, 1925, p. 1.

"West Valley's \$90,000 High School Dedicated Last Night," (Spokane) *Spokesman-Review*, February 22, 1925, p. 7.

"Argonne Junior High Faces Final Exam," (Spokane) *Valley Voice*, August 2, 1990, pp. 4-5.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 8.5

UTM References

A 11 478670 5280720
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C
Zone Easting Northing

D
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is legally described as Parcel No. 07541-1816, Tract A of Horton's Addition to Millwood, Spokane County, Washington.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is the entire legal parcel that includes the Millwood School, auxiliary structures, and grounds.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title	<u>Leonard Garfield</u>	date	<u>November 1990</u>
organization	<u>Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation</u>	telephone	<u>(206) 586-2901</u>
street & number	<u>111 W. 21st Ave.</u>	state	<u>Washington</u>
city or town	<u>Olympia</u>	zip code	<u>98504</u>