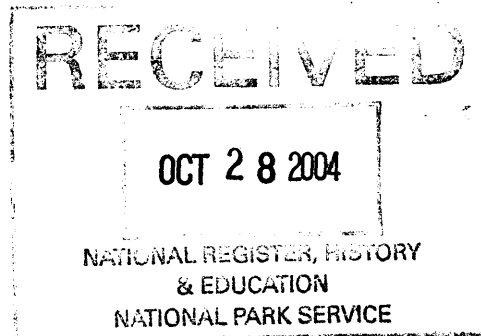


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Joseph J. Bingham Indianapolis Public School #84**

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_ 097-296-22010

2. Location

street & number **440 E. 57th St. / 5702 Central Ave.** N/A  not for publication

city or town **Indianapolis** N/A  vicinity

state **Indiana** code **IN** county **Marion** code **097** zip code **46220-2518**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 of the Keeper

*Edson W. Beall*

Date of Action

*12/6/04*

**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
- district
- site
- structure
- object
- landscape

**Number of Resources within Property**  
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Public School Buildings in Indianapolis Built Before 1940

0

**6. Function 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)

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Mission/Spanish

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Limestone

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof TERRA COTTA

other METAL: copper

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

County and State

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1928-1955

Significant Dates

1928
1955

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kopf, J. Edwin, & Deery

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A-G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Bibliography checkboxes and record numbers.

Primary location of additional data:

- Primary location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	572590	4412280	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

2				4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Suzanne Rollins Stanis

organization HLFJ date 02-18-2003

street & number 340 W. Michigan St. telephone 317/ 639-4534

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

Additional Documentation

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)

Property Owner

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

name City of Indianapolis Board of School Commissioners

street & number 120 E. Walnut St. telephone

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46204

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Joseph J. Bingham Indianapolis Public School 84 is located in Washington Township, Marion County, Indiana within a residential neighborhood composed of mainly twentieth century period revival style homes. The Indianapolis Public School system constructed IPS 84 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in 1927 with a west wing added in 1955. The choice of the Spanish Colonial Revival style is particularly unusual for educational facilities in the Midwest, and is the only school building in Marion County constructed in this style.<sup>1</sup> The building remains in excellent condition with few alterations, and possesses a high degree of interior and exterior integrity.

IPS 84 sits on the northwest corner of Central Avenue, a main north-south artery through the city, and 57<sup>th</sup> Street, a narrow residential street. The main façade faces south on 57<sup>th</sup> Street with a set back of approximately thirty feet from the sidewalk (Photos 1-2). Across 57<sup>th</sup> Street is Immaculate Heart of Mary, a small Catholic church and school. School 84's original site plan included a playground on the east and west sides of the building: one for girls and the other for boys (see p. 18). Today the playground is located on the east side only, with the west and north sides converted to parking. The two-story building with raised basement construction places the two main entrances slightly above street level. Characteristic of the Spanish Colonial Revival style is the school's gabled, green clay barrel tile roof. Visible from grade level are what appear to be two brick chimneys--flush with the wall of the horizontal portion of the building and at the intersection of each wing. In keeping with the Spanish Colonial Revival style, the two narrow chimneys (one on each side) are placed parallel to the wings and are topped with small tiled roofs and limestone dentils. There are five round arch louvered openings with limestone springers. In reality, the chimneys actually serve as ventilation shafts for the building.

The plan for IPS 84 is basically rectangular with an intersecting wing on both the east and west sides. The 1927 building consisted of everything from the west entrance pavilion to the east wall. The west wing with basement entrance was added in 1955. Its nearly identical style to the 1927 building makes it look like part of the original construction. The central area between the wings is set back; however, the location of the gymnasium/auditorium on the first floor causes this area to extend beyond the second floor, whereby forming a limestone capped parapet. The building rests upon a limestone foundation and is constructed of reinforced concrete. The dark red brick veneer is laid in a stretcher bond with stringcourses that are struck back about one-half brick width on the first floor. Each stringcourse extends the width of the main facade, and separates wide rustication bands of brick, interrupted only by the pilasters located on the corners of the wings. Each rustication band decreases in width as the wall rises.

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<sup>1</sup> The Historic Sites and Structures Inventories for Marion County, Indiana and the inventory of Indianapolis Public School facilities document this fact.

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Two projecting entrance pavilions at the intersection of each wing accentuate the central, horizontal portion of the first floor of the main facade. A limestone cornice with brick modillions surmounts each pavilion's parapet, below which is located a large, round limestone arch (Photo 3). Both arches are highlighted by a carved rope mold that surrounds alternating segments of wide and narrow limestone voussoir-shaped splayed jamb blocks. Carved rosettes decorate the narrow voussoirs. Recessed within the main arch is a blind arch outlined in limestone with a tympanum infilled with a brick herringbone pattern. Below the arch of each doorway is a pediment-shaped limestone lintel supported on either side by decorative scrolled limestone brackets. The lintels on the east and west entrances are inscribed with "School Eighty Four." Each entrance contains three original wooden doors with four blind panels below four lights. Above each door is a four light fixed-sash transom. A metal lantern is suspended from a chain at the apex of each arch.

Brick piers with limestone caps and modillions delineate the first floor area between the entrance pavilions. The center pier is decorated by a limestone tablet with "Joseph J. Bingham School" in raised letters. The piers divide this area into eight bays with pairs of six-over-nine aluminum sash replacement windows. Although replacements, the windows maintain the size and light division of the original wooden versions (Photo 1). All of the windows on IPS #84 are aluminum sash unless otherwise specified. The windows rest upon limestone sills. Below each window is a louvered air vent. The second floor has ten pairs of six-over-one double-hung sash windows. The main roof has a close eaves line with a table of stone modillions.

The second floor of the south facade of the eastern wing is ornamented by five, six-over-one double-hung sash windows (Photo 2). Above each window is a round arch with a blind panel. Engaged Tuscan columns with stylized capitals flank each window. The western wing (1955 addition) has a grade level entrance with two wooden doors identical to those found on the main entrances (Photo 1). Above the doors is an oriel window with three, six-over-six double-hung sash windows and limestone surrounds. The oriel is supported by two decorative metal supports. A round, louvered attic vent with limestone accents decorates the gable peak of this facade. Both gables are parapets, masking the gable roof behind.

The west facade reveals windows at the basement (or grade) level, first floor, and second floor (Photo 4). All are identical and divided into three sections that are delineated by copper downspouts. Each floor has six-over-one double-hung sash windows with limestone sills and plain brick headers. They form a pattern of seven-four-seven within the three sections. The limestone veneer of the basement extends halfway up the windows of this level.

The rear, or north, facade is similar to that of the south side, with wings projecting at either end of the central portion (Photo 5). Similar stringcourse and rustication patterns likewise accentuate this facade. The

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western wing has limestone modillions at the cornice line and a circular louvered attic vent with limestone accents. The second floor of the east wing has five, round arch windows like those on the main facade. Adjacent to each wing is a projecting entrance pavilion, much plainer than that on the main facade. The recessed double doors are wood, like those seen on the south facade. The only ornamentation on the entrance is the continued stringcourse and limestone squares at each end of the plain brick header. A small one-story area, next to the entrance pavilions, indicates a bump out for the lavatories. A brick smokestack extends above the roof height, east of center.

Brick piers divide the east facade into six sections (Photo 6). There are no windows at the basement level, only louvered air vents. The first floor has six pairs of six-over-one double-hung sash windows with limestone sills and plain brick headers. The second floor has identical windows, but only on the middle two sections. The blind bays still have the limestone sills. Below the chimney-style vent shaft of the east facade is a limestone tablet with MCMXXVII inscribed. To each side of the date is an open book carved in limestone. Except for the 1955 addition of the west wing, the building's exterior appearance has not been significantly altered. Its complimentary architectural style justifies its significance despite being just shy of 50 years old. Additionally, School 84's interior integrity is also intact, with only a few minor alterations. The interior reflects the style of an early twentieth century school building, and its original elements include oak doors and hardware throughout, chalkboards with oak trim, terrazzo flooring in the main hallways, ten scroll brackets in the gymnasium, and built-in cabinetry in the former manual training classroom. The Spanish Colonial Revival style is also evident in the square, red tile flooring in the two main entrance halls.

According to the original blueprints, the rectangular floor plan housed an auditorium with a stage on the first floor (in the front facade's first floor projection), as well as the principal's office, nurse's station, lavatories, and six classrooms complete with cloakrooms. Photo 7 shows the auditorium, which also serves as the gymnasium, and photo 8 shows a typical classroom with original blackboards and dark trim moldings. The first floor hallways are lined with glazed brown brick approximately halfway up (photo 9). The first floor plan remains intact and the rooms are still used for their original purposes. The east wing houses a stairwell, as does the 1955 west wing addition.

The second story originally contained nine classrooms, plus a domestic science room and sewing room for home economics. Photo 10 shows the former domestic science room. Today it is used as a work space and teachers' lounge. Lastly, Kopf and Deery's design called for a large room and an ancillary supply room on the second story's west end to be used as a shop room for teaching industrial arts classes (photo 11 shows the supply room). Today the shop room and supply area are used as a small instruction space.

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The west wing addition of 1955 includes three floors. The cafeteria and kitchen are located in the basement level (Photo 12), the kindergarten and special education preschool housed on the first floor, and the art room and library (Photo 13) are on the second floor. The entire 1955 addition's flooring is tan asbestos tile and the classes do not contain cloakrooms. Also, the 1955 addition's first and second floors are a half-floor higher than the original section. Thus, a small staircase leads up to this section (photo 14). The cafeteria connects with the rest of the basement via a tunnel, which has a shorter ceiling height and essentially functions as a storage and maintenance area (photo 15).

The school's present interior reflects most of its original character and is in excellent condition. The terrazzo flooring in the hallways and the narrow hardwood floorboards in the classrooms are original, as are all the wooden doorways with opaque glass transoms and original hardware. All of the classrooms built in 1927, excepting the former domestic science, sewing, and manual training rooms, maintain the cloakrooms included in the original design. The interior of the west wing addition resembles the original section, as well, and blends smoothly. The only significant alteration on the interior is the installation of drop ceilings in the classrooms, yet these ceilings only marginally affect the design's original integrity, and have not altered the height of the original window openings. Most of the interior design remains in an unaltered state, and the level of workmanship evident in the interior's detailing significantly adds to the building's overall integrity. Lastly, the property contains a cinder block storage shed with a gray metal roof and two brown metal doors. Located behind the school in the northwest corner, this structure does not contribute to the property's significance. The playground to the east of the school is part of the school's setting; however, it is not counted as a resource.



Joseph J. Bingham Indianapolis Public School 84  
Property Name

Marion Co., Indiana  
County and State

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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Architect/Builder

J. Edwin Kopf & Deery, Architects

Snider and Ratz, Engineers

Service Construction Company, Builders

Edward D. James, Architect, 1955 addition

William P. Jungclaus Co., Inc., Builders, 1955 addition

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The Joseph J. Bingham Indianapolis Public School 84 is historically significant under Criteria A and C for its long association with the development of the Indianapolis public school system in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as for its unique architectural contribution to Marion County. Constructed in 1927, the school's history mirrors the city's attempts to address educational needs in the face of explosive population growth in the northern suburbs. Additionally, Public School 84 exists as the sole representative of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in the entire Indianapolis and Marion County public school system. It is also one of the least-altered examples of the work of architects Kopf & Deery. Both the original 1927 building, as well as a complimentary addition finished in February 1955, maintain exterior and interior integrity. The large rectangular elementary school building, which looks today much like it did in 1927, continues to serve the community in the same capacity.

For a complete record of the development of the Indianapolis public school system, please refer to the multiple property listing. The school meets the registration requirements of the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Public School Buildings in Indianapolis Built Before 1940."

The history of P.S. 84 represents the growing desire of Indianapolis residents to systematically reform their public schools into a modern educational system. In the mid-1920s, only P.S. 70 at 46<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue, and the annexed township school P.S. 80 just east of Broad Ripple, served the expanding northern reaches of Indianapolis located east of Meridian Street. As a result, residents who lived in the area north of 52<sup>nd</sup> and west of Broad Ripple suffered from inadequate school services. In the school board minutes of 14 July 1925 a report on proposed building sites included the "northeast, preferably the vicinity of Broadway and 60<sup>th</sup> to replace the present Broad Ripple School" (old P.S. 80).<sup>2</sup>

More than a year later, on December 14, 1926, the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds recommended a rectangular twelve room school building with an auditorium, complete with manual training and domestic science facilities, to be built in the vicinity of 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue.<sup>3</sup> Meant to alleviate overcrowding at schools #70 and #80, the new school was estimated to cost \$165,000.

The Committee on Buildings and Grounds modified the plans into a ten-room building with an auditorium on December 28, 1926, with the intention that any future additions would make a completed twenty-room structure.<sup>4</sup> The board selected the architectural firm J. Edwin Kopf and Deery to design the

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<sup>2</sup> Board of School Commissioners of the City of Indianapolis, *Minute Book, Book 'A-A'*, May 12, 1925 to January 26, 1926 : July 14, 1925, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Board of School Commissioners of the City of Indianapolis, *Minute Book, Record 'C-C'*, December 24, 1926 to September 14, 1927, p. 3.

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school on the northwest corner of 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue in conjunction with engineering firm Snider and Ratz. The school's revised estimated cost was \$179,500, nearly \$5,000 over the school board's projected budget.<sup>5</sup>

The architectural firm of J. Edwin Kopf and Deery designed P.S. 84, as well as many other important structures in Indianapolis. Born in 1883 in Milwaukee, Jacob Edwin Kopf began his training as an architect in 1914 with the Bureau of Public Buildings, in the Department of the Interior, in Puerto Rico. After serving for the Construction Division of the Air Service for the United States Army in World War I, Kopf moved to Indianapolis and eventually partnered with fellow architect Kenneth K. Woolling in 1919.<sup>6</sup> Together, Kopf and Woolling designed a multitude of public buildings in the Indianapolis area, including a number of public schools and various commercial buildings. The partnership's most notable works were a large number of buildings for the Indiana State Fairgrounds, including the Manufacturers' Building, the Horse Show Building, the Beef and Dairy Cattle pavilions and the Swine Pavilion.<sup>7</sup> They also designed Holy Rosary Catholic Church located at Stevens and East streets in Indianapolis (NR 1986).<sup>8</sup> Woolling left the partnership in 1926, and John A. Deery joined Kopf to form J. Edwin Kopf and Deery. After serving in the army during World War I, Deery returned to Indianapolis to practice architecture. He was an active member of many Indianapolis organizations throughout his lifetime, including the Knights of Columbus and St. Joan of Arc's Men's Club. He also served as the superintendent of Catholic cemeteries in Indianapolis for twenty-five years.<sup>9</sup> In addition to his architectural career, Deery worked for ten years as a building inspector overseeing federal construction projects.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Kin Hubbard, ed., *A Book of Indiana* (Indianapolis: The Indiana Biographical Association, 1929), p. 271.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Donald Brown, ed., *Indianapolis Men of Affairs* (Indianapolis: The American Biographical Society, 1923), 353.

<sup>8</sup> "Indianapolis' Italian Monument: Holy Rosary Catholic Church," Architects File, Indianapolis: Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>9</sup> "John A. Deery Dies; Was Noted Architect," *Indianapolis Star*, 7 November 1973, p. 32.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

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After Deery joined Kopf, the firm continued to focus on designing a number of important public and semi-public buildings and religious structures. Important examples include Shortridge High School (NR, 1983) and Public School 67 in Indianapolis, the Charles Major School and Paul Cross Memorial Gymnasium in Shelbyville, and the Carmelite Monastery in Indianapolis.<sup>11</sup> Kopf and Deery also designed buildings at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, including the old tower at the 38<sup>th</sup> Street entrance and the former fairgrounds grandstand. The firm's significant semi-public buildings include the First National Bank in Shelbyville, the Knights of Columbus Club Building and the Buick Building, both in Indianapolis. Additionally, Kopf and Deery also designed private dwellings, including a housing project for LaFayette Motors in Mars Hill.<sup>12</sup> Their partnership ended with J. Edwin Kopf's death in Indianapolis in March 1942; John A. Deery died in November 1973.<sup>13</sup>

Progress on School 84 came to a standstill when local residents took action against the school board regarding the proposed school's location at the northeast corner of 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue. Area residents filed suit in court to block the school board's action, and the court eventually ruled in the homeowners' favor and enjoined the board from building.<sup>14</sup> For months after the court ruling, local residents and board members attempted to mediate, but it was not until October 1927 that they reached a compromise. Jacob H. Hilken, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, acknowledged that many property owners protested the erection of the new school because they feared the school's "unsightliness" would devalue their property.<sup>15</sup>

The residents acquiesced when the board agreed to reposition the building 300 feet back from Central Avenue. Moreover, they mandated that shrubbery be planted at the foundation's base, and that the green space between the school and the road be maintained and left unused.<sup>16</sup> Lastly, it was agreed upon that the east wing and lawn should remain unchanged between the school and Central Avenue despite any future alterations to the school.

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<sup>11</sup> Brown, ed., *Indianapolis Men of Affairs*, 353.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> "Jacob E. Kopf, Architect, Dies," *Indianapolis Star*, 30 March 1942, p. 1; "John A. Deery Dies," *Star*, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> Board of School Commissioners of the City of Indianapolis, *Minute Book, Record 'D-D'*, September 21, 1927 to August 1, 1928 : October 25, 1927, p. 54-5.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 58-9.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

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School 84 takes its architectural influence from the Spanish Colonial Revival style, a popular architectural trend in the late 1920s. The Spanish Colonial Revival style became popular in America after the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, in which exhibits displayed Spanish Mission and Spanish Colonial-styled rooms and furniture in the California building.<sup>17</sup> The designer and architect of the exhibit, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, wished to promote this sophisticated interpretation, borrowing heavily from Moorish, Byzantine, and Renaissance elements.<sup>18</sup> Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, symbolized by tiled roofs, shaped parapets, stuccoed walls, slightly embellished doorways, ornamental ironwork over windows, and heavy wooden doors, flourished mainly in the southwest, California, and Florida by the 1920s; its popularity waned by the 1930s. The school reflects the Spanish Colonial Revival style in its low-pitched, tile roof, slight eave overhang, roof-line parapet, and a prominent arch placed above the main entrances, as well as a series of five blind arches above a ribbon window on the building's east wing. The use of face brick gives the school a more restrained and permanent appearance than the stuccoed walls so often associated with the style. The style is rare in the city as a whole.

There is nothing in the school board minutes to reflect the selection of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. However, due to the controversy that the school's construction caused with neighbors, it is a reasonable speculation that the school board directed the architect to design a building that would blend well with the period revival styles in the adjacent area. In the greater neighborhood surrounding the school, one finds a variety of residential styles including Tudor Revival, French Eclectic, Italian Renaissance, and Spanish Colonial Revival. The use of tile and slate roofs is also commonly seen. Aside from the now-demolished original St. Joan of Arc Church (4214 Ruckle Street), IPS #84 appears to be the only non-residential example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in Washington Township. In nearby Center Township, Coulter Flats at 2167 North Meridian Street (NR 1990) provides another outstanding representation of the style. Like St. Joan of Arc Church, Coulter Flats employs a scalloped parapet, whereby creating more of a Spanish Mission influence. Indiana Theatre (NR, 1979) was also built in 1927, but is more Spanish Baroque in influence. Cadle's Tabernacle, a large meeting hall downtown on Ohio Street, was one of the biggest Spanish Colonial Revival buildings in Indianapolis before its demise.

The architects designed School 84 to eventually contain twenty rooms, but only those rooms needed immediately were built first. Initially, the design called for the complete finishing of the first floor, with the second floor only partially finished.<sup>19</sup> However, by the time area residents had finally reached a compromise

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<sup>17</sup> John Milnes Baker, *American House Styles: A Concise Guide* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), 126, 130.

<sup>18</sup> Rachel Carley, *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 196.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

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with the school board, the board had gathered the funds to finish the entire second floor, as well. In November, the board approved Kopf and Deery's inclusion of six additional rooms, raising the school's final estimated price to \$233, 013.<sup>20</sup> Finally, in December 1927, the board awarded a building contract to Service Construction Company for \$148,935 to build P.S. 84.<sup>21</sup> After just a few weeks of construction, the school's design changed once more when the Committee on Buildings and Grounds approved revisions to build an east wing as well.<sup>22</sup> The Committee decided to delay construction of a west wing until a later date. Further, the Committee also recommended the completion of the second story since the cost was determined negligible and the student need was evident.<sup>23</sup> After a flurry of last-minute changes, construction on the school finally finished September 1928.

Prior to its completion, P.S. 84 was appropriately named for Joseph Jenkins Bingham, a prominent Indianapolis newspaper editor and publisher.<sup>24</sup> Born in New York City in 1815, Bingham began his career in journalism as an editor for the *Lafayette Journal* before taking over editorship of the Indianapolis newspaper the *Indiana State Sentinel* in 1856. He left the paper in 1865 only to return in 1868 under new ownership. During his second tenure as editor, from 1868 to 1874, the *Sentinel* evolved into one of the state's most prominent newspapers.<sup>25</sup> As a result, Bingham's calls for progressive educational reform heavily influenced state political leaders to address the need for better public education. Because of his advocacy, Bingham was elected a member of the city's first board of school commissioners in 1871, on which he served for sixteen years.<sup>26</sup> Joseph Bingham's death in 1897 ended his crusade for educational reform, but his legacy remains. Local residents may have equated their struggle to persuade the school board to build P.S. 84 with Bingham's lifelong educational reform efforts, which led them to suggest naming the school in his honor. Either way, Joseph J. Bingham School 84 serves as a reminder of Bingham's contributions to the modernization of Indianapolis' educational system.

From its inception, School 84 offered state-of-the-art educational services to its students, including classes in manual training, sewing, and domestic science. The school not only served as an important anchor

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> David J. Bodenhamer and Robert G. Barrows, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 321.

<sup>25</sup> Jacob P. Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis: Volume I* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910), 392.

<sup>26</sup> Bodenhamer, et al. *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, 321.

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to the community, but it also helped shape the lives of its student body. Twenty five years later the community once again found itself in need of a larger school to adequately handle their ever-growing student population. In November 1953, the school board passed an emergency resolution to appropriate money from the Cumulative Building Fund for the construction of an addition to School 84.<sup>27</sup> On December 31, 1953, School 84 received \$225,000 to build the west wing addition.<sup>28</sup> When local parents learned about the school's planned addition, a number of them successfully petitioned the board in March 1954 for the inclusion of a cafeteria.<sup>29</sup> The school board hired architect Edward D. James to design the west wing addition, and William P. Jungclaus Co., Inc. was awarded the construction contract.

A nationally recognized architect, James graduated from Cornell University in 1923 with a bachelor's degree in architecture. Upon graduation he moved back to his hometown of Indianapolis to practice architecture. In 1949, James began his own firm, where he remained until his retirement in 1967. During his career Edward James designed a variety of structures in Indianapolis, from churches, to schools, businesses and residences. Some of his most prominent works include post-World War II student housing for Indiana University, St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Speedway, Indianapolis Public School No. 2, Turkey Run High School in Marshall, Indiana, and the Fall Creek YMCA branch building in Indianapolis.<sup>30</sup>

James designed the west wing of School 84 to complement the rest of the school's architecture, and it closely resembles the east wing's appearance. The west wing housed the kindergarten and preschool rooms on the first floor, and a library and art room on the second floor, as well as a new cafeteria on the basement level. With the completion of the west addition in February 1955, School 84's original concept from 1927 of a rectangular building flanked by a wing on each end was finally realized.<sup>31</sup> With the addition complete, School 84 once again set an educational standard for its breadth and scope of services offered, and it became a source of pride for the local community. Despite homeowners' wishes in 1927 to leave the school's east lawn unchanged, the lawn was eventually transformed into a playground area sometime during the 1960s or 1970s

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<sup>27</sup> Board of School Commissioners of the City of Indianapolis, *Minute Book, Record UU*, 1953 inclusive, p. 1445.

<sup>28</sup> Board of School Commissioners of the City of Indianapolis, *Minute Book, Record VV*, 1954 inclusive, p. 70.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>30</sup> "Edward D. James Unashamed of His Two Loves," *Indianapolis News*, January 23, 1961, p. 19; "Edward D. James; 71, Noted Architect, Dies," *Indianapolis Star*, March 4, 1969, p. 28.

<sup>31</sup> Board of School Commissioners of the City of Indianapolis, *Minute Book, Record WW*, January 1, 1955 to June 14, 1955, p. 142.

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as the need for parking spaces eliminated playground space behind the school building. This change represents the most significant alteration made to the grounds.

Today, School 84 serves as a well-preserved representation of the city's educational history as well as an example of unique local architecture. The school clearly reflects not only the city's response to increased population growth in the northern suburbs, but also the community's unwavering dedication to quality education for its children. Moreover, the school's unique and well-crafted Spanish Colonial Revival Style design calmed anxious residents who feared the school would be an "eyesore" in their neighborhood. Far from the case, P.S. 84's architectural integrity remains sound, and the school's function and beauty combine to enhance and strengthen the surrounding neighborhood.



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### **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

(See continuation sheet 10 for site plan)

Starting at the northwest curb of 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue, travel approximately 200 feet north to the driveway. From the driveway, proceed approximately 450 feet to property's northwest corner at the fence line. From the fence line, travel approximately 200 feet south to the north curb of 57<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn east and follow the north curb of 57<sup>th</sup> Street for approximately 450 feet to the point of origin. This route completes a rectangular-shaped boundary.

### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

This description comprises the boundaries of the land acquired to build School 84. The school building is the only contributing resource.

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### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

The following information is common to photographs 1-15:

Photographer: Suzanne Stanis

Photos taken on April 8, 2004

Negatives on file at Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, Indianapolis, Indiana

1. Front (south) façade of school; camera facing northeast
2. Front (south) façade; camera facing northwest.
3. Main entryway detail, west wing; camera facing north.
4. Side (west) façade; camera facing southeast.
5. Rear (north) façade; camera facing southeast.
6. Side (east) façade; camera facing southwest
7. Auditorium/gymnasium, first floor; camera facing west.
8. Typical classroom, Room 9 on first floor; camera facing southwest.
9. First floor hallway; camera facing west.
10. Former domestic science classroom; camera facing west.
11. Former manual arts ancillary storage room; camera facing northwest.
12. Cafeteria in basement, 1955 addition; camera facing north.
13. Second floor media room, 1955 addition; camera facing south.
14. Second floor small staircase leading to 1955 addition classrooms; camera facing west.
15. Basement corridor used for storage; camera facing east.

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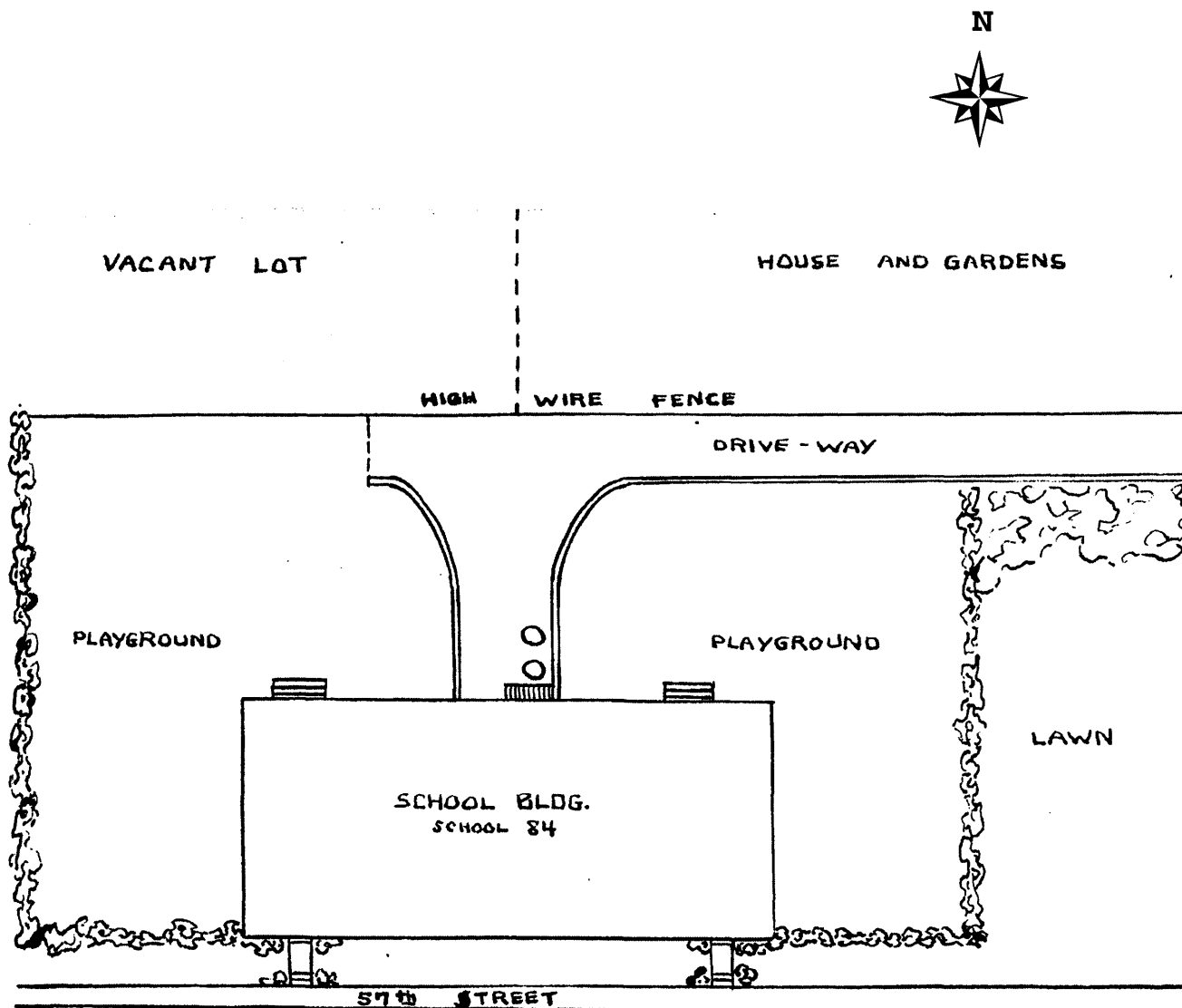
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Joseph J. Bingham School 84  
Site plan prior to 1955 addition(not to scale)

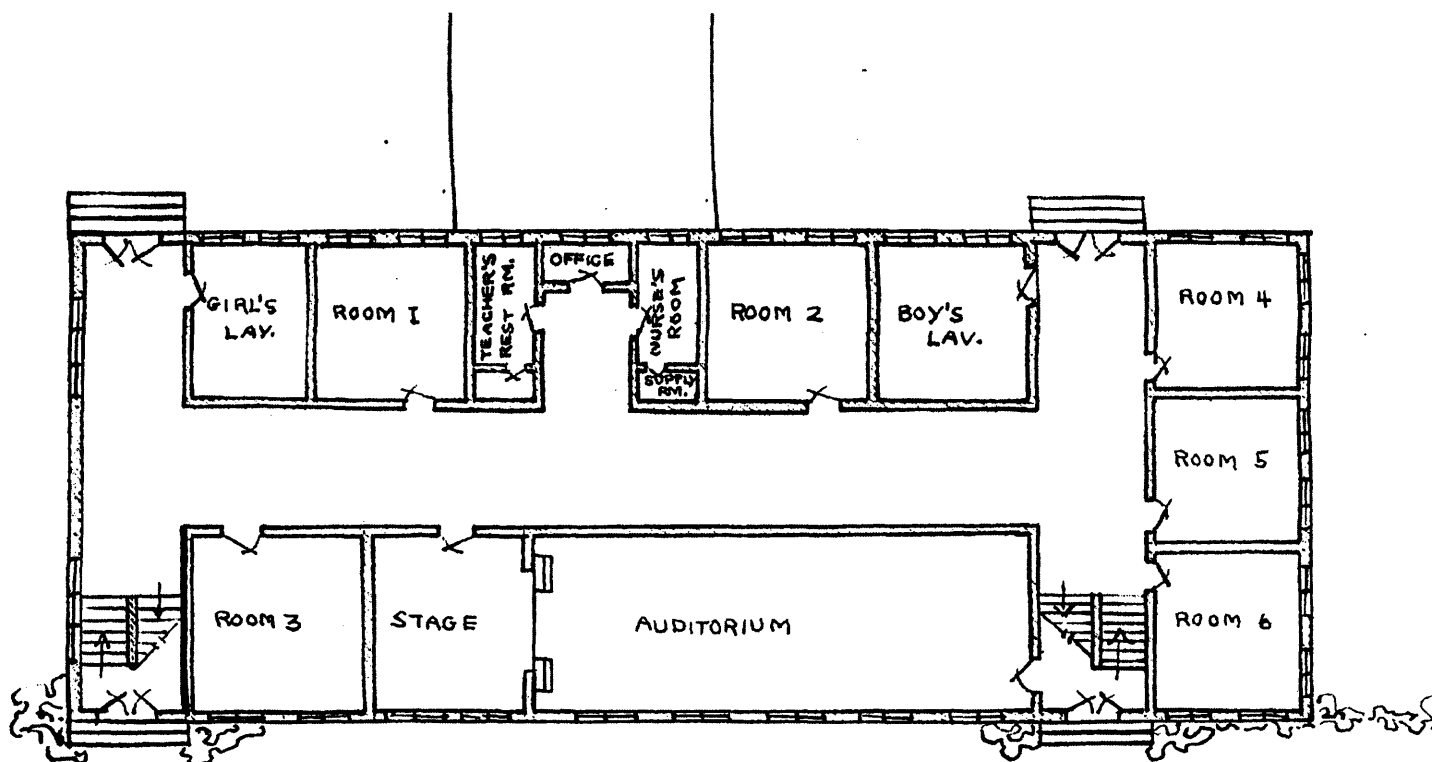


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Joseph J. Bingham School 84  
First floor plan prior to 1955 addition



SCHOOL #84 - FIRST FLOOR PLAN

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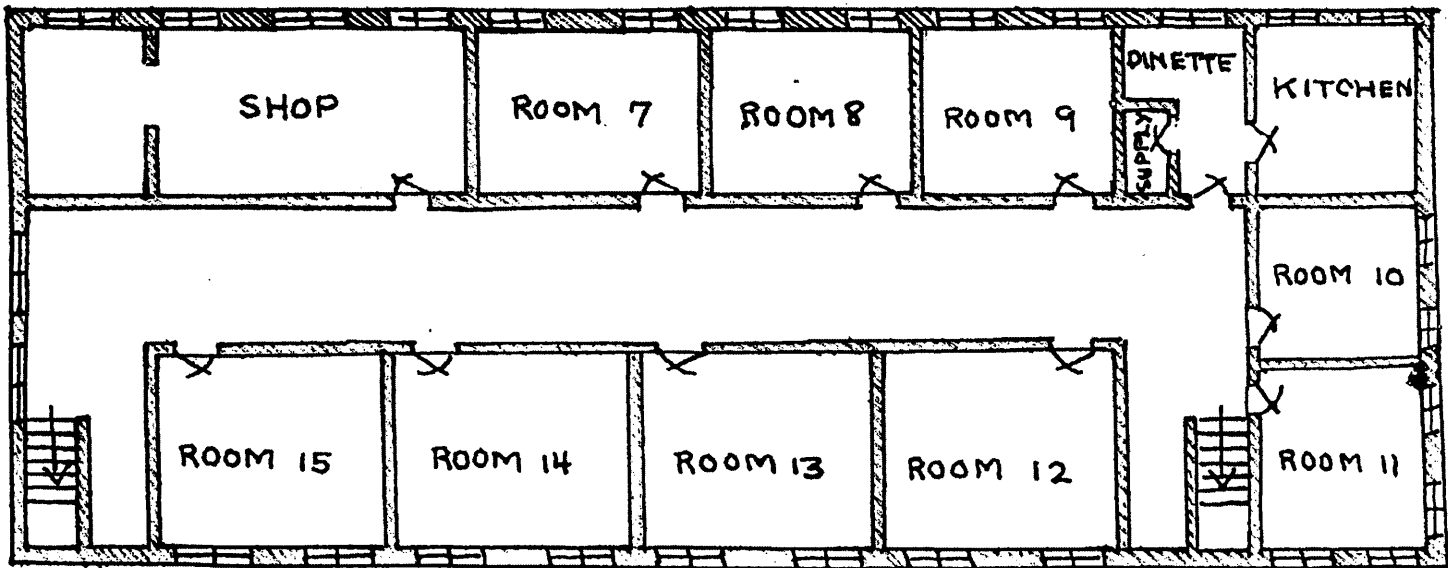
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Joseph J. Bingham School 84  
Second floor plan prior to 1955 addition



SCHOOL #84 - SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Joseph J. Bingham Indianapolis Public School 84  
Property Name

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County and State

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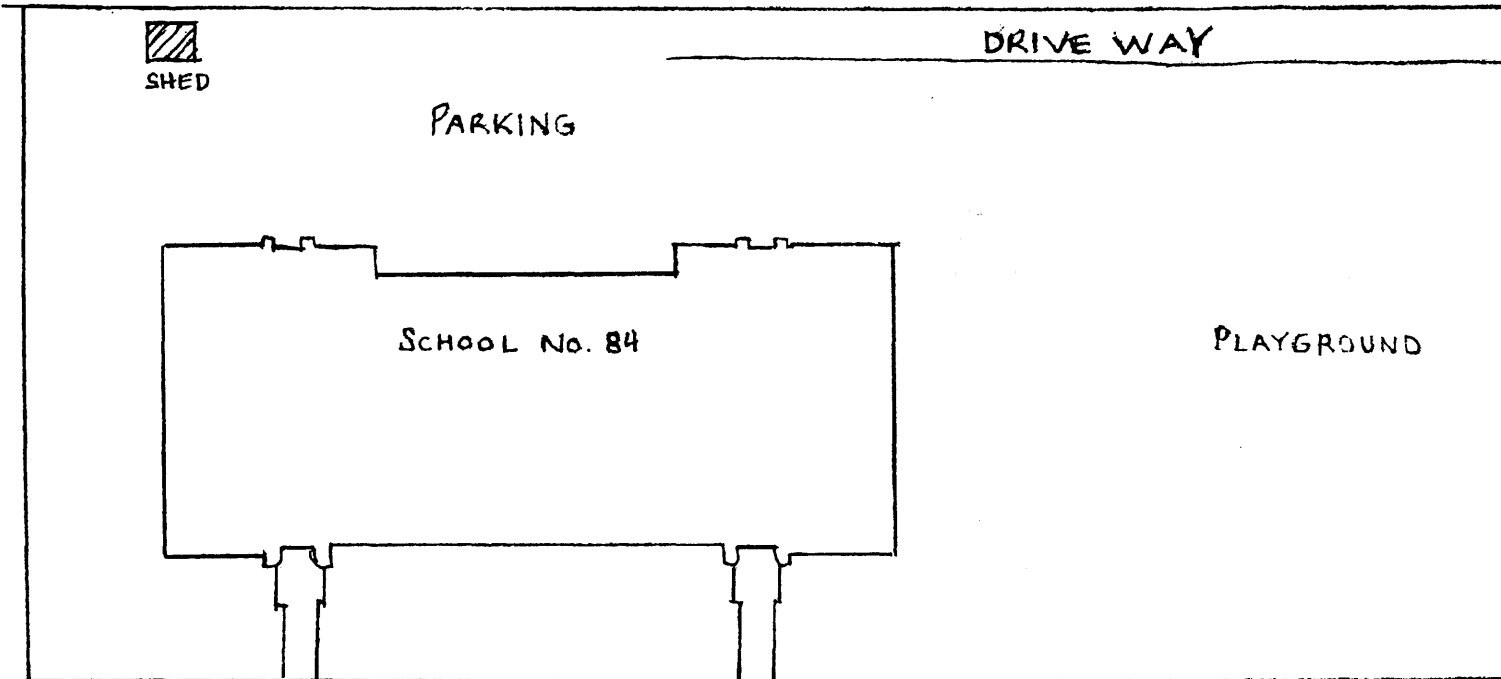
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Joseph J. Bingham School 84  
Plot plan showing current building and grounds



57<sup>th</sup> Street