

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 Nisqually School
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 341 Nisqually Cut-Off Road SE not for publication
city, town Olympia vicinity
state Washington code WA county Thurston code 034 de 7 zip code 98503

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
	<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 of certifying official *Jacob E. Johnson* Date 7/10/90
Washington State Department of Community Development 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 8/23/90
 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 *for* 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: hipped roof vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls weatherboardroof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located next to a meandering road amid the farmlands of the Nisqually Valley, the Nisqually School is a one-story, wood frame structure sited on the original school grounds. The rectangular school building has a hip roof covered with composition shingles and is penetrated by two small brick chimneys. Walls are clad with drop-siding and pilaster-type cornerboards. The front (east) facade is blank except for a central protruding vestibule with a pedimental gable roof, surmounted by a square open belfry with pyramidal roof topped by a flagpole. (The bell no longer remains.) The double panelled entry doors are topped by a transom and a painted sign reading "School District No. 35". Flanking the entry are two windows topped with a simple entablature. Similar sash windows are on either end of the sides of the vestibule.

The north wall features five tall double-hung windows separated by plain wooden pilasters but sharing a common sill. An auxiliary door replaces the sixth original window. The rear wall has another double entry door with a small porch. A newer window has been cut in the south wall, while other original windows are boarded over. The interior plan is symmetrical, with a central hallway and two classrooms. Originally a play shed stood north of the school which has since been torn down. The building is somewhat deteriorated both on the interior and exterior but retains its original windows, now boarded over, and architectural features, strongly conveying the era of the community two-room school.

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

Period of Significance

1911-1940

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

The Nisqually School is historically significant for its association with public education in rural Thurston County and with the development of the Nisqually community. Built in 1911, the structure was the fourth school to serve one of the state's oldest districts--succeeding a home-taught school, a log school, and an earlier frame school-- and graphically illustrates the evolution of rural education in the county. The Nisqually school was the longest lived of Thurston County's two-room frame schools built just after the turn of the century, remaining in active use until 1962, and serving both Indian and white children in the area. Today, the building is surrounded by its original school yard and retains its historic massing, fenestration, cladding and trim as well as the landmark belfry and pedimented porch entry. It meets the registration requirements established in the Rural Public Schools multiple property documentation form.

Historical Background: The delta of the Nisqually River was an important gathering place for Native Americans in both the prehistoric and historic periods. The delta soil was probably among the most fertile in the county. When pioneer settler James McAllister arrived in the area with his family in 1845, he was directed to the delta by Chief Leschi, and selected rich river bottom land for his donation land claim. The William Packwood and George Shaser families arrived in the area in 1847 and together the families formed the only community in the county outside Tumwater and Olympia.

John McAllister, a cousin of James, tutored the McAllister, Shaser and Packwood children when they first settled at Nisqually. In 1852, a private school was begun at the Packwood home, taught by Elizabeth White. The school was held in one room of the home and attended by the children of the three families. Miss White boarded at the Packwood home during the week and taught a simple curriculum, without books or materials, for \$20.00 a month.

At the fall meeting of the first Thurston County Commission in 1852, William Packwood requested that a school district be formed at Nisqually. Once the district was established, funds were available to build a schoolhouse, and the school moved from the Packwood home into a log building where the nominated building now stands. Less than a mile east of the school grounds in 1854, Territorial Governor Issac Stevens negotiated the Medicine Creek Treaty, clearing title to the land for American settlement.

With increased settlement, a new one-room frame school was built in 1883 across the road from the present school. In the following years the railroad came through the district and the character of the settlement began to change. From 1904 to 1919, Alson Lennon Brown, a Seattle lawyer, conducted a large-scale farming and processing operation east of the school on diked river delta land. Children of the farmhands attended the school together with the children of other residents.

To accommodate the growing population of school children, a new two-room frame schoolhouse (the nominated structure) was constructed in 1911 on land donated by Henry Koenig and John Hachmann, who had purchased the Packwood Donation Claim. Indian children as well as white children attended the school, and in the 1920s and early 1930s, two of the teachers at the school were of pioneer and local Indian descent -- Miss Belle Mounts and her niece, Miss Ruby McAllister.

The school closed for a year in 1950 in a consolidation effort, but re-opened the next year evidently because Indian and other children found it difficult to adjust to larger classes and less personal attention from their teachers at the consolidated school. The school continued in operation for many years and was the last of the turn-of-the-century wood frame schools in active use when it finally consolidated with the North Thurston District and closed in 1962.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bowden, Angie Burt, Early Schools of Washington Territory, Lowman and Hanford, Seattle, 1935.
Hartman, Sarah McAllister, "Untitled Manuscript", Del McBride Collection.
"Elizabeth White Bigelow", Tacoma Sunday Ledger, November 19, 1922, p. 5.
Interviews and information from Cordelia Hawk Putvin, 1985 and Del McBride, April 1989.

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

Acreege of property 1.66 acres

UTM References

A	<u>10</u>	<u>522040</u>	<u>5211850</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Packwood Donation Land Claim #37. Commencing on the south line of the Donation Claim 15 feet west of c/c of Olympia Steilacoom Road, west 235 feet, north 250 feet, east 265 feet southwesterly to the beginning. Also commencing at the southwest corner of above. North 225.2 feet, north 87 degrees 15 feet, west 42 feet, south 227 feet, east 42 feet to beginning.
Parcel #09800041

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire parcel that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Shanna Stevenson, Preservation Planner
organization Thurston County Historic Commission
street & number 2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W.
city or town Olympia

date May 1989
telephone (206) 786-5554
state Washington zip code 98502

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 1

Nisqually School -- School -- Photograph #1
Olympia vicinity, Thurston County, Washington
Photograph by Shanna Stevenson
May 1989
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
Olympia, Washington
View of Front (east) facade
#1

Nisqually School -- School -- Photograph #2
Olympia vicinity, Thurston County, Washington
Photograph by Shanna Stevenson
May 1989
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
Olympia, Washington
View of Front (east) facade
#2