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LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

Sunshine School

2728 Bryant Street

City and County of San Francisco
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

Planning Department
John Rahaim, Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Cover: Sunshine School, November 2016

The Historic Preservation Commission is a seven-member body that makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the designation of landmark buildings and districts. The regulations governing landmarks and landmark districts are found in Article 10 of the Planning Code. The HPC is staffed by the San Francisco Planning Department.

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2728 Bryant Street

Built: 1935–37
Architects: Albert A. Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, Martin J. Rist, and Smith O'Brien

OVERVIEW

Occupying a quiet mid-block parcel near the intersection of 25th and Bryant Streets, the former Sunshine School was built in 1935–37 as a Public Works Administration (PWA) project for the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). Planned in consultation with public health professionals and teachers experienced in instructing disabled and chronically ill students, the Sunshine School was a collaborative venture of four prominent architects: Albert A. Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, Martin J. Rist, and Smith O'Brien. The former Sunshine School appears eligible as a San Francisco Landmark for its historical associations and its architecture. It was the first purpose-built public "orthopedic" school built west of the Rockies. With a barrier-free first floor level, the Sunshine School anticipated by decades the passage of the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style with Moorish and Art Deco detailing, the former Sunshine School is an excellent and well-preserved public school constructed during the height of San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction. It is also notable as a project of the New Deal-era Public Works Administration (PWA), which funded several important public schools across the city between 1935 and 1940. Frugally built of board-formed concrete with a modest amount of molded concrete ornament, its red clay tile accents and Mexican-style tilework enliven the building. In terms of its layout, the Sunshine School is quite innovative. The school was designed to house two separate special needs populations. Children with physical disabilities were instructed on the first floor level, where they had access to a therapeutic pool and a specially designed gymnasium. Meanwhile, children with chronic and acute illnesses had separate quarters on the second floor level, where they could recuperate in open-air "rest rooms" and eat nutritious meals made at nearby San Francisco General Hospital in their own dining room. The Sunshine School served its original purposes for over a quarter century, until disability rights groups successfully lobbied to have special needs children assigned to "mainstream" schools in the 1970s. Although it has been converted into an alternative high school for teen parents in 1985, the building did not require many changes. Indeed, the former Sunshine School – now called Hilltop High School – remains a well-preserved and greatly loved building that continues to serve San Francisco 80 years on.

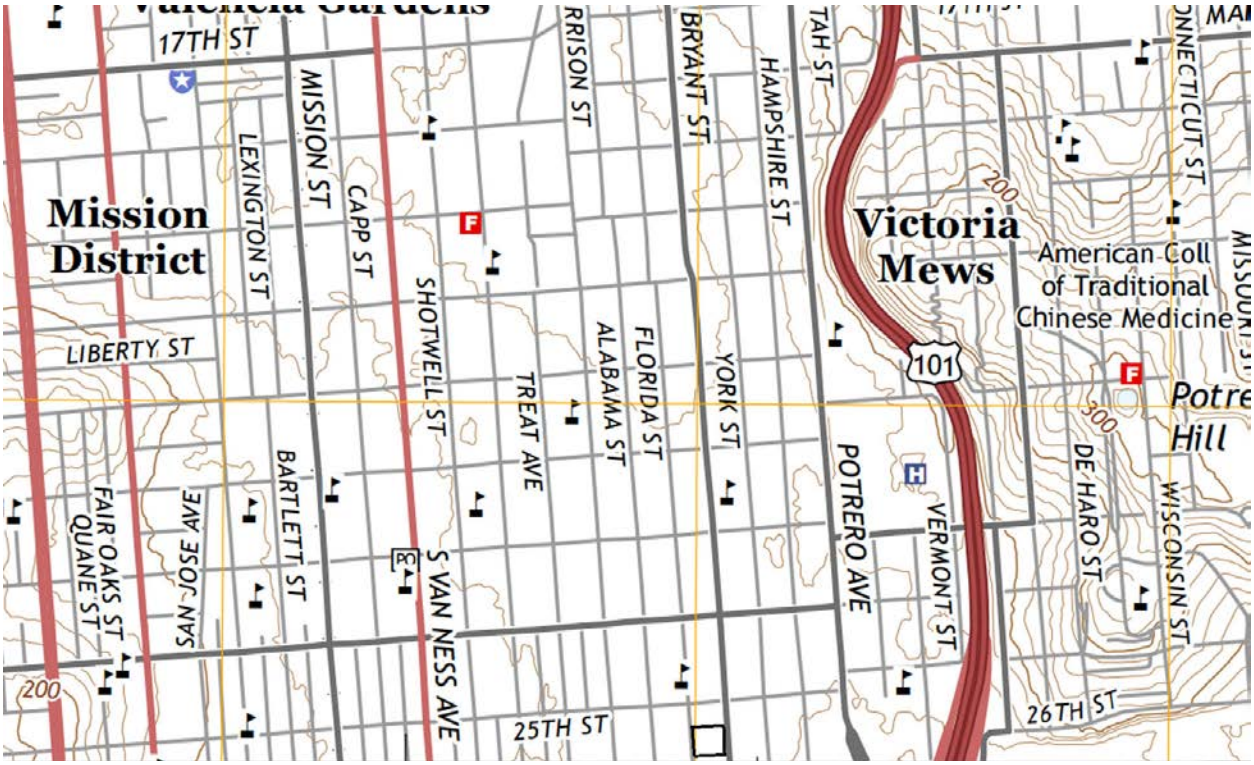

Figure 1. 2012 USGS Map showing the location of the former Sunshine School depicted by a black box at the lower edge of the map.
Source: United States Geological Society; annotated by Christopher VerPlanck

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood Context

The former Sunshine School is located at 2728 Bryant Street in San Francisco's Mission District **(Figure 1)**. It occupies a 38,999-sf parcel bounded by Bryant Street to the east, Florida Street to the west, and residential properties to the north and south. The building was constructed 1935–37 on a site previously occupied by the Columbia Street Grammar School. The site is level, as is the surrounding neighborhood. The southeastern Mission District, where the school is located, is characterized by a dense urban mix of single-family and multi-family residential properties, most of which were developed between 1890 and 1920. The neighborhood was surveyed by the San Francisco Planning Department as part of the South Mission Historic Resources Study (South Mission Survey), completed in 2011.

To the east, the former Sunshine School faces the broad thoroughfare of Bryant Street. The 2700 block of Bryant Street is almost uniformly residential, with the exception of a mixed-use (residential-over-commercial) building at the southeast corner of 25th and Bryant Streets. Construction dates range from ca. 1875 to 1980, but only three buildings, including the former Sunshine School, were constructed after 1928. Architectural vocabulary consist of styles popular during the Victorian and Edwardian eras, including the San Francisco Stick/Eastlake, Italianate, Queen Anne, First Bay Region/Shingle, and Classical Revival styles. Heights range from one-to-three stories and setbacks vary, although most older single-family dwellings are set back at least 10 feet from their front property lines, while later post-

quake flats and apartment buildings typically meet their front property lines. Unlike some other blocks in this part of the Mission District, development on the 2700 block of Bryant Street appears to have been mainly the work of individual builders rather than speculative merchant builders. Although some properties retain their original appearance, many more show evidence of substantial remodeling, including reconfigured entrances, street-level garages, incompatible cladding materials, and contemporary windows, including most of the buildings on the west side of the street **(Figures 2–3)**. The best-preserved dwellings on the block include a row of San Francisco Stick/Eastlake and Queen Anne cottages that are located directly opposite the school, at 2743, 2747, 2749, and 2753 Bryant Street **(Figures 4–5)**.

Figure 2. Residential properties on the west side of Bryant Street, south of the former Sunshine School; view toward southwest.

Figure 3. Residential and commercial properties on the west side of Bryant Street, north of the former Sunshine School; view toward southwest.

Figure 4. The east side of Bryant Street across the street from the former Sunshine School; view toward northeast.

Figure 5. East side of Bryant Street across the street from the former Sunshine School, at 2743 to 2753 Bryant Street; view toward east.

The former Sunshine School faces the 1300 block of Florida Street to the west. Florida Street is a narrow secondary street that is almost uniformly residential. Aside from the former Sunshine School, the only non-residential property is a mixed-use (residential-over-commercial) building at the southeast corner of 25th and Florida Streets **(Figure 6)**. Construction dates on the 1300 block of Florida Street range from ca. 1875 to 1994, with only three buildings constructed after 1930. More than half the properties on the

block were constructed prior to 1900, and most are designed in the Italianate and San Francisco Stick/Eastlake styles **(Figures 7–8)**. Additional styles represented include the Queen Anne, Classical Revival, Mediterranean, and contemporary. Heights range from one-to-three-stories and setbacks vary, with most older single-family dwellings set back at least 10 feet from their front property lines and most post-quake flats and apartment buildings meeting their front property lines. The South Mission Survey determined that eight properties on this block appeared individually eligible for the California Register, including a pair of San Francisco Stick/Eastlake-style dwellings at 1329 and 1331 Florida Street, which are both located directly south of the former Sunshine School **(Figure 9)**.

Figure 6. Mixed-use building at southeast corner of 25th and Florida Streets (at left); view southeast along Florida Street toward the former Sunshine School.

Figure 7. The west side of Florida Street, directly across the street from the former Sunshine School, view toward northeast.

Figure 8. Stick/Eastlake duplex and Queen Anne flats across the street from the former Sunshine School on Florida Street; view toward northwest.

Figure 9. The east side of Florida Street, including 1329 Florida Street, directly south of the former Sunshine School, view toward east.

Properties along 25th and 26th Streets – half a block north and south of the former Sunshine School – share a similar range of construction dates, architectural styles, uses, and height and massing as those on Bryant and Florida Streets. There are very few non-residential properties on either street, though mixed-use (residential-over-commercial) buildings occupy the corner lots, including two-story buildings at the northwest corner of 25th and Bryant and the southwest corner of 26th and Bryant. Standing at the

southwest corner of 25th and Bryant is a one-story building that historically housed a bocce court but that is now used as a warehouse. The rest of the buildings on the 2900 blocks of 25th and 26th Streets include one-to-three-story dwellings constructed between 1888 and 1993. Generally speaking, the integrity level of properties along these blocks is much lower than either the 2700 block of Bryant Street or the 1300 block of Florida Street **(Figures 10–11)**.

Figure 10. The south side of 25th Street between Florida and Bryant Streets, north of the former Sunshine School, view toward southeast.

Figure 11. The south side of 26th Street between Florida and Bryant Streets, south of the former Sunshine School, view toward southwest.

General Description

The former Sunshine School is a two-story, reinforced-concrete building constructed of board-formed concrete and capped with a combination flat, shed, and hipped roof punctuated by skylights. The building has a U-shaped footprint, with classroom wings aligned parallel to Bryant and Florida Streets. These wings are connected by an intersecting auditorium wing located along the north side of the property. A team of four architects, including Albert A. Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, Martin J. Rist, and Smith O'Brien designed the building in the Spanish Colonial Revival style with Moorish and Art Deco detailing. Artistic exterior treatments include cast concrete sculptures, moldings, and entablatures; Mexican-style tilework on the spandrels and door and window surrounds; carved wooden mullions and door and window trim; and wrought iron grilles. Within the interior, the two classroom wings have double-loaded corridors on their first floor levels and single-loaded corridors on the second floor levels. In addition to classrooms, these wings house administrative offices and toilet rooms. The north auditorium wing, which connects the two classroom wings, is the ceremonial heart of the school as indicated by its higher level of ornament; it was historically the location of special-purpose spaces, including a dining room/auditorium on each floor level and the therapeutic pool and gymnasium on the first floor level. At the center of the school is a large, open-air courtyard containing planting beds and an elaborate tile-clad bench/flagpole at the north end **(Figures 12–13)**. Although the building retains its original metal awning-sash windows within the courtyard, the window sashes along the two street facades have been replaced with compatible aluminum counterparts. Nonetheless, windows throughout the building retain their original wood mullions and tiled spandrels. The two main entrances on Bryant and Florida Streets also retain their original wood doors and ornamental trim. The former Sunshine School, which has undergone very few changes, is well-maintained and appears to be in good condition.

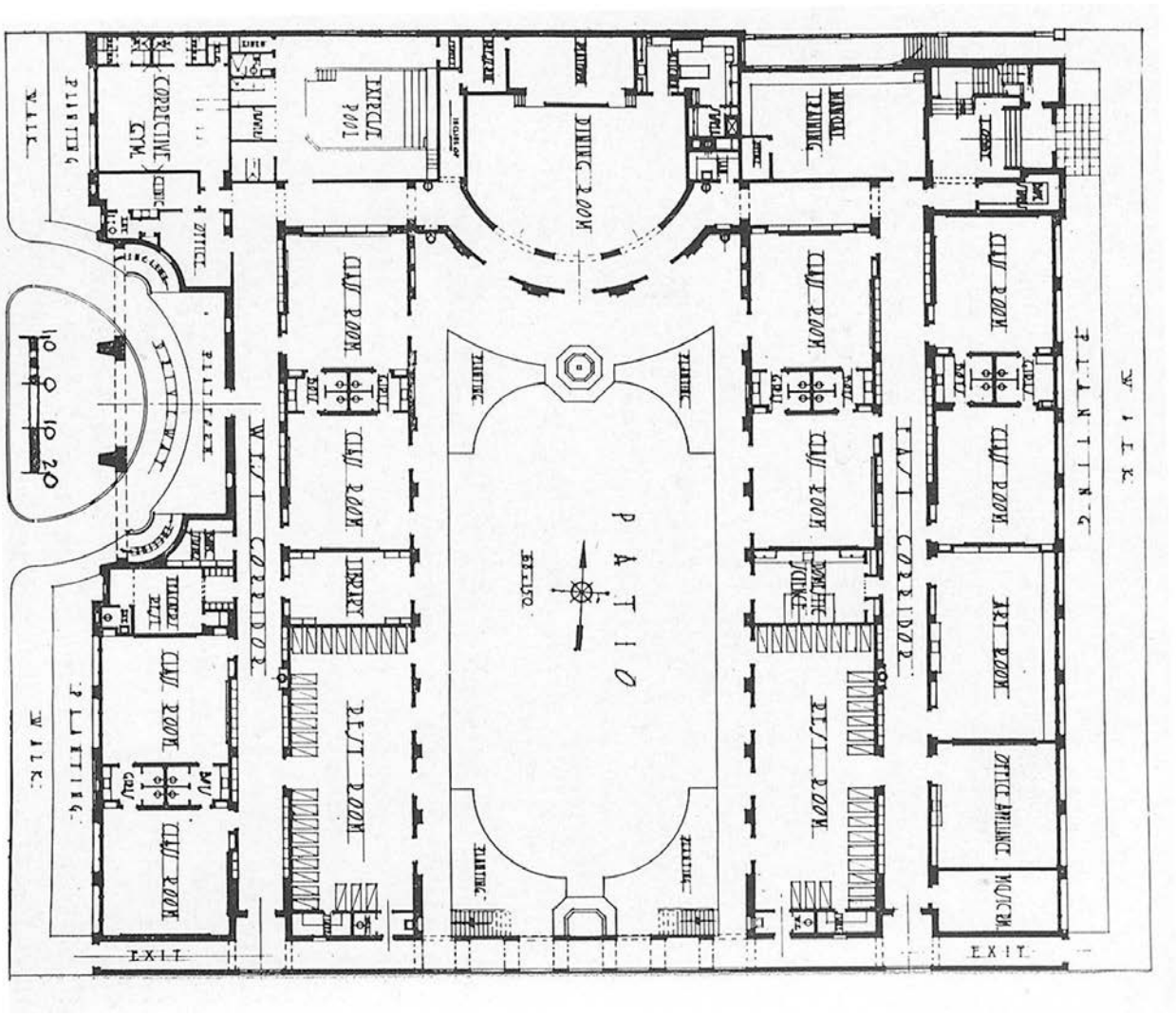

Figure 12. First floor plan of the former Sunshine School; north is up.
Source: ***Public Buildings: Architecture under the Public Works Administration, 1933 to 1939***

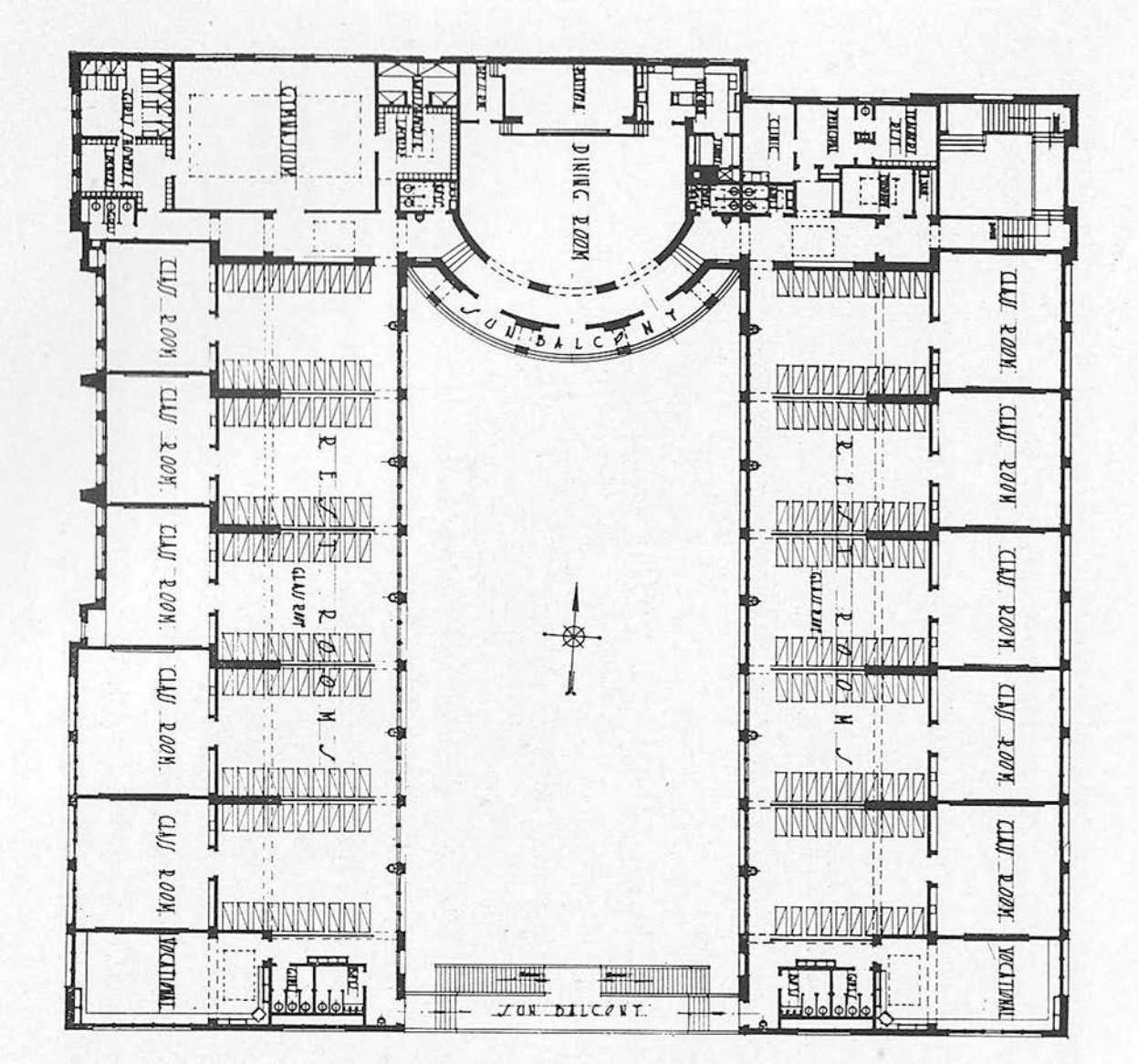

Figure 13. Second floor plan of the former Sunshine School; north is up.
Source: ***Public Buildings: Architecture under the Public Works Administration, 1933 to 1939***

Primary Façade–Bryant Street

The east (primary) façade of the former Sunshine School faces Bryant Street. It is set back several feet from the property line, providing space for a narrow planting bed enclosed behind a non-historic metal fence. Like the rest of the exterior, the east façade is constructed of painted board-formed concrete. The east façade is asymmetrical, with 11 repeating bays at the left forming the east classroom wing and a tower-like entrance pavilion at the far north (right) end **(Figures 14–15)**. The pavilion projects out beyond the rest of the east façade, indicating the former location of the school's entrance for children with acute and chronic illnesses. Because these students were ambulatory, there was no need to place this entrance at grade, unlike its counterpart on Florida Street.

Figure 14. East façade of the Sunshine School (classroom wing); view toward southwest.

A contemporary concrete ramp and stair provide access from the sidewalk to the primary entrance. The entrance contains a pair of six-light, paneled wood doors set within an arched portal **(Figure 16)**. The upper part of the portal is infilled with painted wood paneling and the arch itself is defined by a scalloped molding. The adjoining water table is finished in Mexican-style tilework. Above the water table are two fixed wood windows protected behind wrought iron grilles. The area above the entrance is punctuated by a pair of windows, each consisting of 12 square openings infilled with structural glass. Between the windows, the words "Sunshine School," are incised into the concrete, and above the sign is a niche containing a statue of a male child. The child, executed by a now-unknown artist or craftsperson, is standing on a semi-circular platform supported by a funnel bracket. The niche is capped by a scalloped arch molding marked by a central keystone **(Figure 17)**. A broad scalloped frieze marks the lower edge of the parapet, which steps inward several feet on either side. The parapet terminates with a corbelled cornice and a red clay tile-clad hipped roof.

Figure 15. Entrance pavilion on east façade; view toward west.

Figure 16. Detail of Bryant Street entrance.

Figure 17. Detail of niche, frieze, and cornice.

The remainder of the east façade corresponds to the east classroom wing. It is composed of 11 identical bays articulated by an equal number of vents at the water table level and large tripartite windows at the first and second floor levels. The walls are painted board-formed concrete with a modest amount of cast concrete ornament. At the first floor level, each bay contains a segmental-arched window divided into three sections by turned wood mullions. The windows sit atop a spandrel panel finished in brightly colored Mexican-style tilework. The window sashes themselves are not historic, although they do resemble the originals in regard to design, materials, and functionality **(Figure 18)**. At the second floor level, each bay contains a rectangular window surmounted by a shallow scalloped molding **(Figure 19)**. The bays are separated by engaged piers embellished with a chamfered corner detail and cast concrete capitals. The window sashes on the second-floor level are also demarcated by turned wood mullions. The east classroom wing terminates with a scalloped parapet identical to the frieze atop the entrance pavilion. Above the parapet, each of the engaged piers extends above the roofline, where they are capped by either a finial or an abstract animal figure.

Figure 18. Typical window on first floor level of east classroom wing facing Bryant Street.

Figure 19. Typical condition at second floor level of east classroom wing facing Bryant Street.

Primary Façade–Florida Street

The west (secondary) façade of the former Sunshine School faces Florida Street. Unlike the Bryant Street façade, it sits flush with the property line. The west façade is divided into three distinct sections, with the right and center sections being part of the west classroom wing and the left section being part of the auditorium wing. The south (right) section is five bays wide and it is configured just like the east classroom wing **(Figure 20)**. The main difference is that one of the arched bays at the center has a small three-part window within it, indicating the location of a toilet room inside the building. In addition, there is a gated doorway at the far right side that provides pedestrian access from Florida Street to the central courtyard and to Bryant Street. Finally, the bay at the far left has a distinctive 15-light window resembling the pair above the main entrance on Bryant Street. Otherwise, this part of the west façade matches the east façade in every detail.

Figure 20. South part of the west façade of the former Sunshine School; view toward northeast.

The middle section of the west façade is also five bays wide, although the three central bays are much wider than the narrow corner bays **(Figure 21)**. The corner bays are unornamented and contain only narrow, multi-light windows at the first and second floor levels. The three center bays comprise what was historically the driveway. Taxis carrying children with physical disabilities would enter through the south arch, drop their charges off at the main entrance, and then exit through the north arch. As mentioned previously, physically disabled children were kept apart from the children with acute and chronic illnesses, with the former accessing the building via their own entrance on Florida Street and the latter via Bryant Street. The driveway has not been used since the late 1970s, and the three arched openings are now enclosed behind non-historic metal security fencing. The arches are outlined by scalloped moldings that resemble the one above the main entrance on Bryant Street. Incised lettering above the central arch reads “Sunshine School.” A low concrete planter at the bottom of the central bay, added in ca. 1985, features incised lettering reading “Hilltop High School.” At the second floor level, each of three wide center bays contains three rectangular windows, with the center window in each group protected behind an elaborate wrought-iron grille. This section of the west façade terminates with the same parapet and cornice detailing described previously for the east and west classroom wings, including the scalloped parapet and the tapered piers capped by an alternating arrangement of pointed finials and animal figures.

Figure 22. Central section of the west façade of the former Sunshine School; view toward northeast.

The vehicular driveway has been converted into storage space but it retains its original design, materials, and detailing **(Figure 22)**. The main entrance on Florida Street, which is located on the east side of the driveway, is detailed similar to the Bryant Street entrance, indicating that they were of equal importance. Functionally, the main difference between the two entrances is that the Florida Street entrance is on-grade with the first floor level of the school, indicating that this entrance was used as a barrier-free path of travel. Brought to school by contracted taxi service, the enclosed driveway allowed students with physical disabilities to remain dry in inclement weather. The entrance on Florida Street contains a pair of paneled wood doors, surmounted by a multi-light transom, that are enclosed within a segmental-arched portal similar to Bryant Street **(Figure 23)**. The entrance itself is bordered by Mexican-style tilework that extends along the base of the wall and encompasses the windows in the adjoining bays. The ceiling of the driveway has painted concrete beams supported by three intersecting concrete arches with chamfered corner detailing.

Figure 22. Driveway on west side of the former Sunshine School; view toward northeast.

The northernmost section of the west façade is only two bays wide, and it corresponds to the auditorium wing **(Figure 24)**. It is also on axis with its counterpart, the main entrance on Bryant Street. At the far right side of this section is a wide pier-like element. At the first floor level is a window composed of 15 structural glass lights. Otherwise, each bay of the first floor level contains a segmental-arched window divided into three sections by turned wood mullions. Each window, which contains compatible replacement metal window sashes, sits atop a spandrel panel finished in brightly colored Mexican-style tilework. At the second floor level, each bay contains a pair of narrow casement windows containing non-historic metal sashes. The northernmost section of the west façade terminates with a plain concrete parapet without a frieze or a cornice.

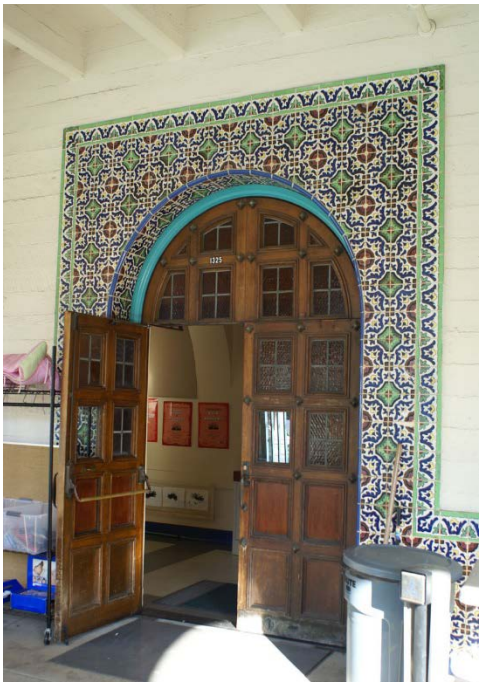

Figure 23. Florida Street entrance; view toward northeast.

Secondary Façade–North Elevation

The north elevation of the former Sunshine School faces the mid-block property line. It is therefore largely obscured from any public rights-of-way. However, a small portion is visible from Bryant Street, where a gated passageway provides access to the building's basement level. The visible portion of the north elevation is made of painted board-formed concrete and it has no ornamentation. It has a few openings, however, including a pair of metal doors–including one at street grade and another at the bottom of a stair–that access the mechanical room in the basement. There is also a large metal window located halfway between the first and second floor levels. This window, which is fitted with obscure art glass, provides natural illumination to the main lobby and stair just inside the Bryant Street entrance. The second floor level of the north façade has several additional metal sash windows.

Figure 24. Northernmost part of the west façade of the former Sunshine School; view toward southeast.

Secondary Façade–South Elevation

The south elevation of the former Sunshine School is set flush with the south property line and is therefore not visible from the street. Aerial photographs indicate that the south façade is made of painted board-form concrete and that it does not have any applied ornamentation. The south façade does contain several openings, including a row of semi-circular lunette windows that illuminate a passageway at the first floor level of the building. There is also a rectangular window at the southwest corner of the building, at the second floor level **(Figure 25)**.

Figure 25. South façade of the Sunshine/Hilltop School; view toward north.
Source: Google Maps

Figure 26. North side of the courtyard of the former Sunshine School; view toward north.

Courtyard: North Elevation

The courtyard at the center of the former Sunshine School was historically used as a protected play area. The north side of the courtyard is defined by the elaborately ornamented and gently curved façade of the auditorium wing **(Figure 26)**. At the first floor level, three arched openings defined by scalloped moldings contain pairs of glazed metal doors set within larger multi-light windows with turned wood mullions. The first-floor fenestration pattern is repeated at the second floor level. At the second floor level, however, a concrete balcony follows the undulating contour of the façade. The balcony, which is supported by four oversized concrete buttresses, has a low concrete balustrade articulated by punched openings resembling keyholes **(Figure 27)**. These buttresses continue upward beyond the balcony, arching over it, becoming piers above the windows, and terminating above the parapet as cast concrete finials. This section of the north courtyard façade terminates as a scalloped parapet identical to what is described previously in this report for the Bryant and Florida Street façades.

Figure 27. Balcony on north side of courtyard; view toward east.

Courtyard: East and West Elevations

The east and west sides of the courtyard are bounded by the classroom wings, which are made of painted board-form concrete and generally resemble their street-facing elevations **(Figures 28–29)**. Both elevations are nine bays long, with segmental-arched, tripartite windows at the first floor level and rectangular windows with flat headers at second floor level. At the first floor level, the arched openings include paired, four-light wood doors flanked and surmounted by multi-lite wood windows. The only exception to this pattern is the second bay in from the north on either side of the courtyard, which contains a blind arched opening containing a small multi-light window protected behind a wrought-iron grille. This detail indicates where the toilet rooms are located inside the school. At the second floor level, each bay contains a pair of nine-light, steel industrial windows ornamented at their corners by metal grilles depicting a floral motif. The windows on the second floor levels are separated by engaged concrete piers capped by molded capitals. The piers extend above the parapet and are capped by cast concrete finials.

Figure 28. West side of the courtyard of the former Sunshine School; view toward northwest.

Figure 29. East side of the courtyard of the former Sunshine School: view toward southeast.

Courtyard: South Elevation

The south side of the courtyard consists of a pair of open-air passageways connecting Bryant and Florida Streets. At the first floor level, a barrel-vaulted passageway with a concrete floor and engaged piers runs along the south side of the property **(Figure 30)**. The piers are capped by molded capitals, from which springs the barrel vaulted ceiling. Semi-circular lunette windows on the south property line illuminate the corridor. Non-historic security fencing separates the passageway from the courtyard. Two flights of concrete stairs that converge at the center provide access from the courtyard to a balcony at the second floor level. The balcony, which is supported by oversized corbels, provides access to the passageway at the second floor level and the second floor of the classroom wings **(Figure 31)**. The passageway at the second floor level is utilitarian in character and sheltered beneath a functional metal canopy supported by metal pipe columns.

Figure 30. Passage at first floor level; view toward east.

Figure 31. South side of the courtyard of the former Sunshine School; view toward southeast.

Landscaping

The courtyard at the center of the former Sunshine School is hardscaped, although there are two planting beds located at the southeast and southwest corners. Students as part of their treatment plans originally cultivated these planting beds. Their counterparts at the north end of the courtyard may still exist beneath non-historic patio finishes. Located at the north side of the courtyard is a flagpole attached to an elaborately ornamented metal base mounted on an octagonal concrete planter/bench finished in brightly colored Mexican-style tilework **(Figure 32)**. All of the play fixtures and the rubberized surface of the courtyard are contemporary.

Figure 32. Flagpole and planter/bench in courtyard; view toward northeast.

Interior

As mentioned, the former Sunshine School has a U-shaped floor plan consisting of two classroom wings along Bryant and Florida Streets and an intersecting auditorium wing. The first floor level of the two classroom wings contain classrooms, offices, and toilet rooms arranged along double-loaded corridors. The second floor level of the classroom wings have single-loaded corridors, with classrooms and offices on one side and open areas formerly used as sunrooms on the inside. Meanwhile, the auditorium wing contains the majority of the special-purpose rooms, including the main lobby/stair, dining room/auditoriums, gymnasium, and therapeutic pool. There is also a basement beneath the auditorium wing containing the mechanical room and storage.

The entrance on Bryant Street leads into the double-height entrance lobby. The lobby is paved in terrazzo laid in a checkerboard pattern and it has blue and sienna-colored tile wainscoting **(Figure 33)**. A balanced-run stair with stepped cheek walls, continuous with the lobby, advances along all four walls of the double-height volume to the second floor level. The lobby/stair space is illuminated by a large segmental-arched window on the north wall, several smaller windows, and an Art Deco pendant fixture suspended from the ceiling **(Figure 34)**. The ceiling of the lobby/stair has exposed concrete beams painted in the Spanish *Mudéjar* style to simulate wood construction **(Figure 35)**. This ceiling treatment is used throughout the building.

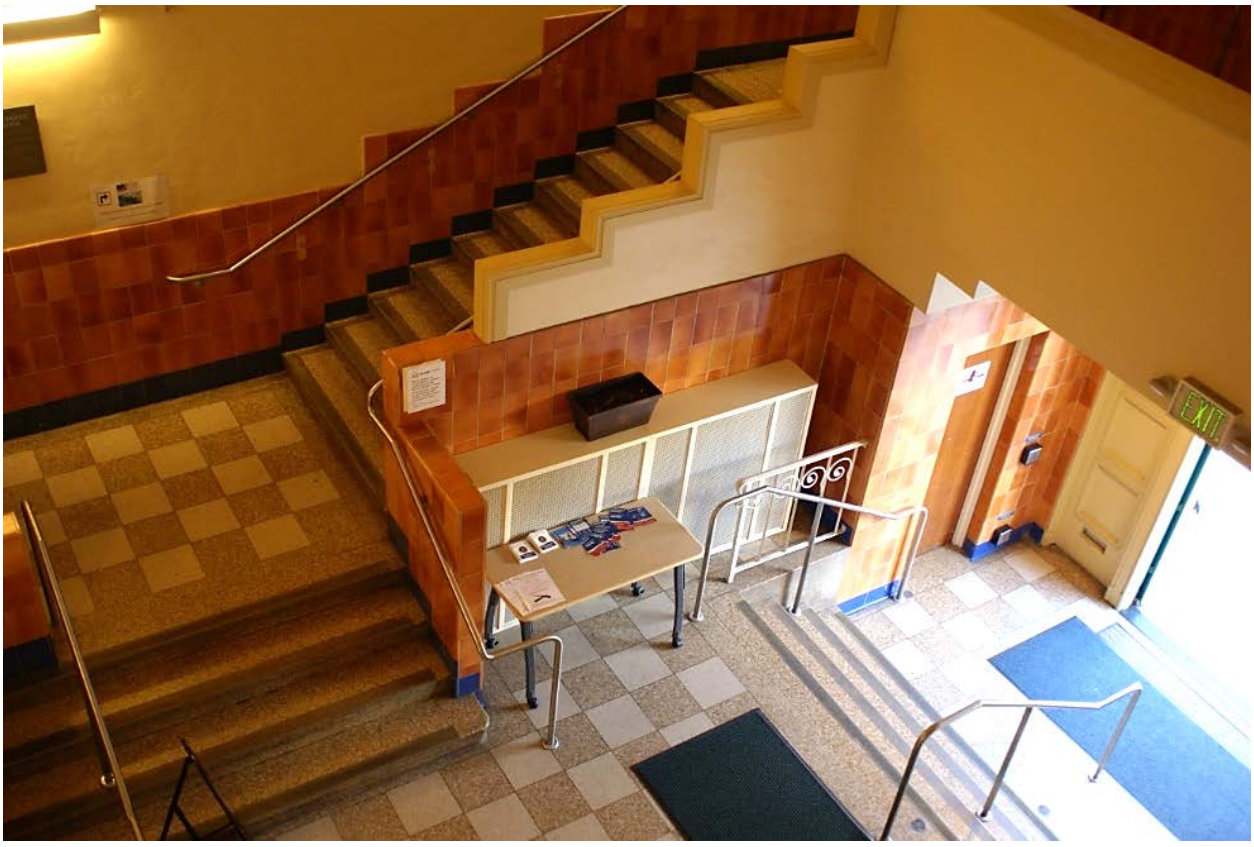

Figure 33. Main lobby/stair of the former Sunshine School; view toward northeast.

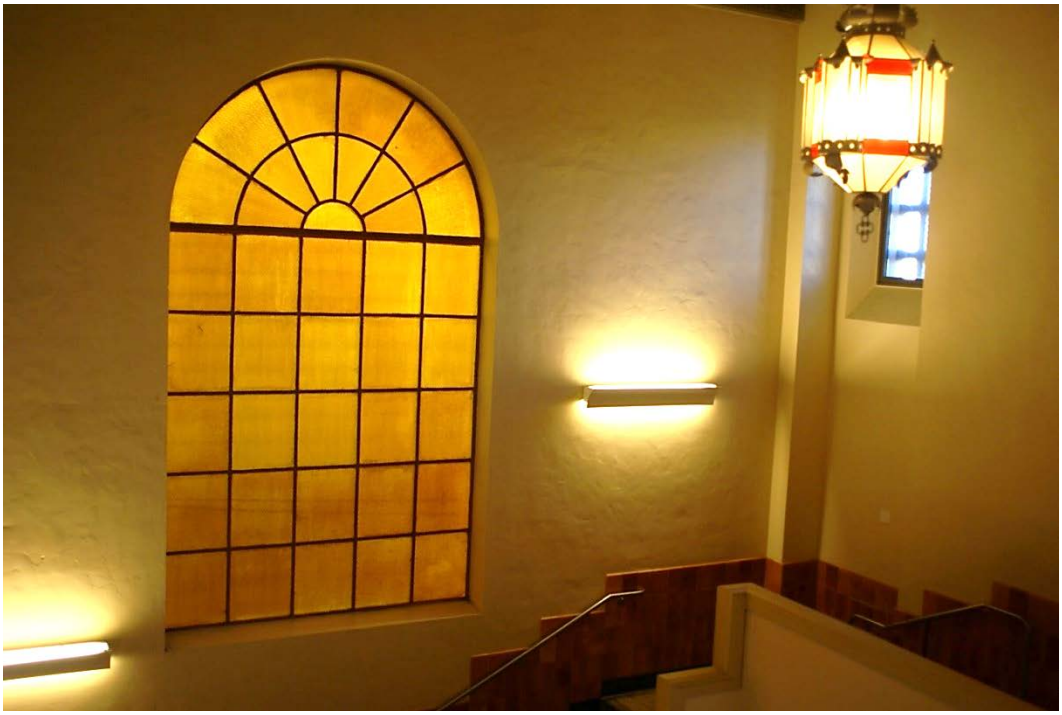

Figure 34. Upper part of main lobby/stair; view toward northeast.

Figure 35. Ceiling of main lobby/stair; view toward north.

As mentioned previously, the north wing of the former Sunshine School contains several special-purpose rooms. Both floor levels have an auditorium that originally also served as a dining room, with adjoining kitchens. Both auditoriums have segmental-arched windows overlooking the courtyard on their south walls and stages on their north walls **(Figures 36–37)**. These rooms, which are the most important interior spaces inside the former Sunshine School after the lobby/stair, contain pairs of brightly colored tile mosaic murals above the radiators in their southeast and southwest corners, respectively. Unsigned and unattributed, these mosaics, which depict a fish, a butterfly, a turtle, and a bird, fit neatly within their semi-circular niches. Based on their design and colors, they appear to have been fabricated and installed in the early 1970s. The second floor auditorium retains all four of its original Art Deco pendant fixtures. At the first floor level of the auditorium wing is the former therapeutic pool, which now houses an industrial kitchen. The pool has been demolished, although portions of it have been retained as part of the counters and much of the tiled wainscoting remains attached to the walls **(Figure 38)**.

Figure 36. South side of first-floor auditorium; view toward west.

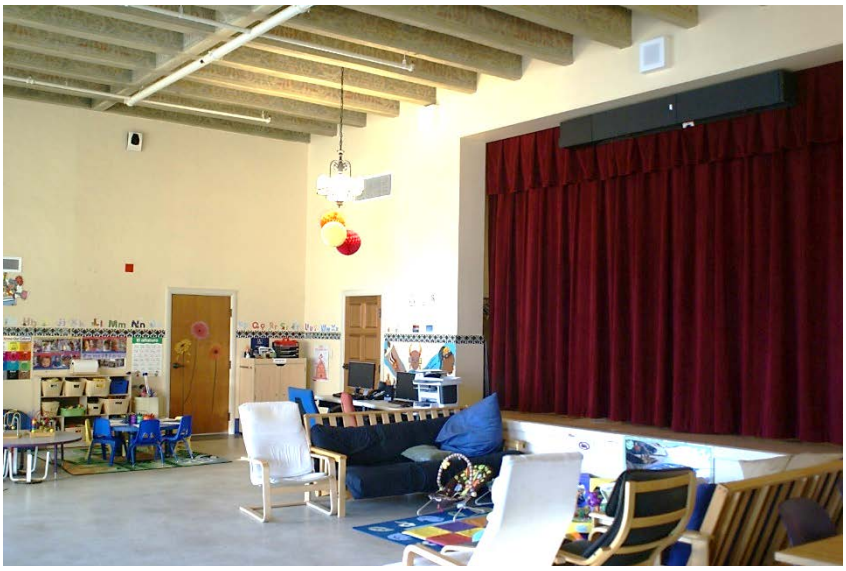

Figure 37. Stage on north side of second-floor auditorium; view toward west.

Figure 38. Remnant of therapeutic pool in kitchen; view toward north.

The double-loaded corridors of the classroom wings have linoleum flooring, lath-and-plaster walls, acoustical ceiling tile, and contemporary fluorescent light fixtures **(Figure 39)**. Portions of the corridor ceilings are vaulted. There are also several tiled niches containing water fountains. Some original casework remains, including several banks of lockers, storage cabinets, and display cases. Opening off the first floor corridors are classrooms, offices, and toilet rooms. All classrooms and offices contain a mixture of historic and contemporary finishes, including contemporary linoleum flooring, lath-and-plaster walls, and stenciled concrete beams with acoustical tiles placed in between. Some classrooms retain their original chalkboards, lockers, and cabinetry, but all have contemporary fluorescent lighting **(Figures 40–42)**. All of the toilet rooms appear to have been remodeled in recent years.

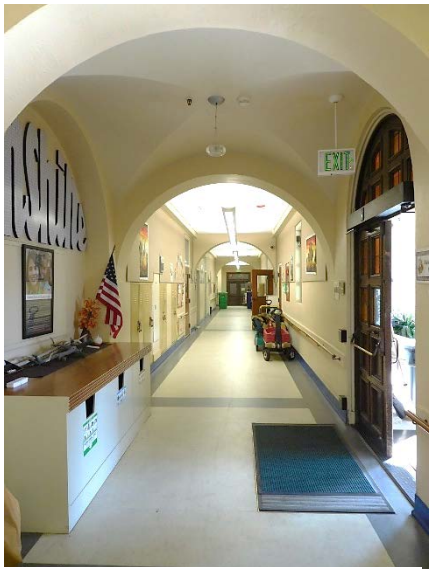

Figure 39. Corridor near west entrance; view toward south.

Figure 40. Typical classroom (now used as an office) in west classroom wing; view toward west.

Figure 41. Original lockers in classroom.

Figure 42. Sink and cabinets in a typical classroom.

Figure 43. Typical corridor on second floor level; view toward south.

Figure 44. Basement of the former Sunshine School; view toward west.

The second floor level of the classroom wings have single-loaded corridors that provide access to open-plan offices on the street side and former "rest rooms" or rest areas on the courtyard side. Originally set aside for children with tuberculosis and other respiratory and pulmonary diseases, these rest areas allowed students to nap or rest bathed in natural light and fresh air, which at the time were believed to be restorative. This is why the courtyard-facing walls of the corridors have large operable windows and skylights that bathe the second floor in natural light **(Figure 43)**. The rest areas were historically divided into smaller areas by demountable wooden partitions. Most of the classrooms on the second floor have been remodeled in recent years and there are consequently fewer character-defining features on this floor level than the first floor level.

As mentioned, the former Sunshine School has a partial basement level, which has concrete flooring and walls. All of the school's utilities are housed in the basement, including some original mechanical equipment **(Figure 44)**.

CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

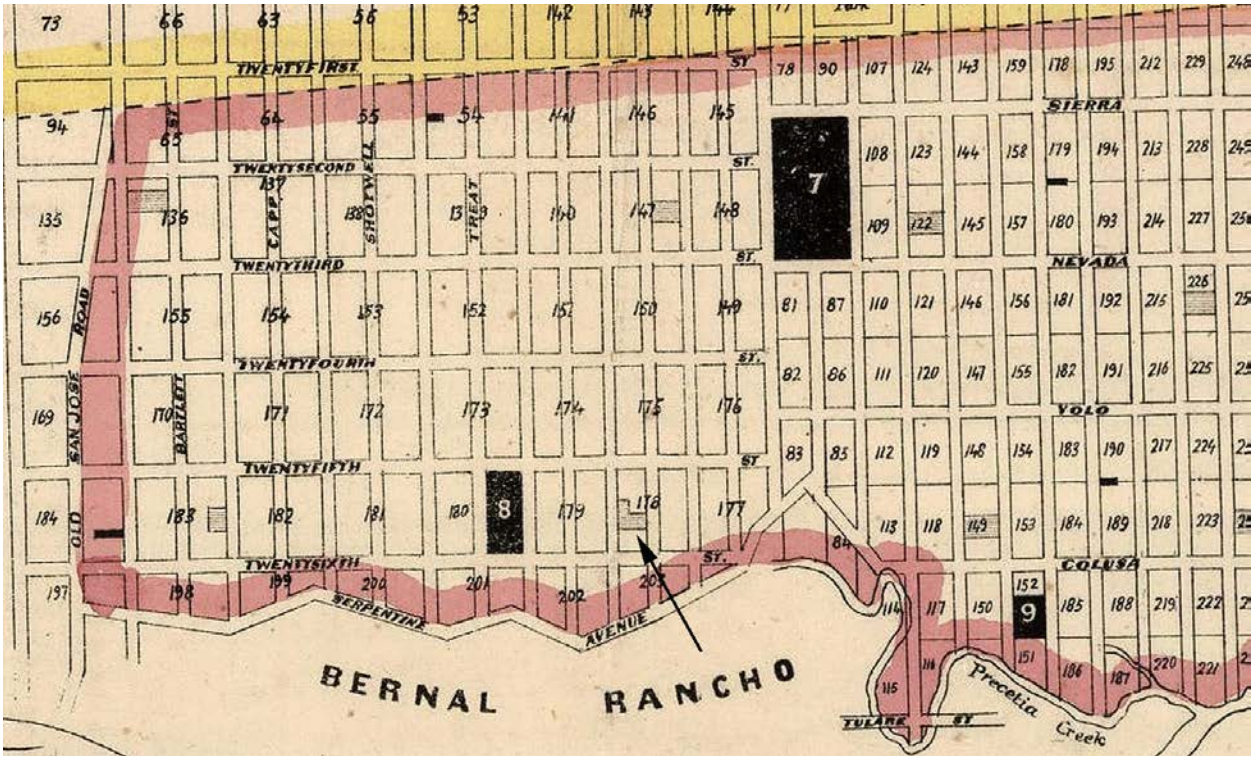

Figure 45. 1868 Outside Lands Map, with black arrow showing the future location of the Sunshine School.
Source: David Rumsey Map Collection

Pre-construction History: 1879–1935

Although its recorded history goes back to 1776, the Mission District did not begin to urbanize until after 1855-56, when much of it was surveyed as part of the Van Ness Ordinance, which paved the way for the city to expand beyond its original 1847 boundaries. However, the southeast corner of the Mission District, where the Sunshine School was built 80 years later, lay just outside the Charter Line, so it was not surveyed. Endowed with balmy weather and within easy reach of built-up portions of the city, the southeast Mission District became ideal for horse racing. Early Anglo-American settlers and Mission District property owners, George and John Treat, built the Pioneer Race Course just west of the site of the future Sunshine School. The Union Race Course was close by as well. In 1863, with urbanization spreading inexorably southward, the San Francisco Homestead Association bought the Pioneer Race Course and subdivided it into house lots. However, property development in this part of the city was complicated by overlapping land claims. The Outside Land Ordinances of 1866 and 1868 were written by city authorities to resolve longstanding disputes and untangle property ownership. The Outside Land Ordinances also provided for surveying much of the city beyond the Charter Line and reserving select parcels for schools, parks, hospitals, and other infrastructure **(Figure 45)**.[1]

[1] San Francisco Board of Supervisors, *The Clement Ordinance, for Settling the Title to the Outside Lands of the City and County of San Francisco* (San Francisco: 1866).

In 1867, the Board of Supervisors set aside the central portion of Mission Block 178 (now Assessor's Block 4273) as a future school site. It remained undeveloped for about a decade, until 1879, when the Board of Education voted to build the Columbia Street Primary School at 25th and Columbia (now Florida) Streets.[2] Built in 1880, this school first appears on the 1889 Sanborn maps. The maps show an L-shaped property with a three-story, wood-frame building facing Florida Street. The property also included a row of one-story sheds along Bryant Street and the north and south property lines, a one-story toilet room at the southwest corner, and a planked play yard at the center **(Figure 46)**. The rest of the block remained sparsely developed with a handful of single-family dwellings, farmhouses, and one mixed-use store/dwelling.

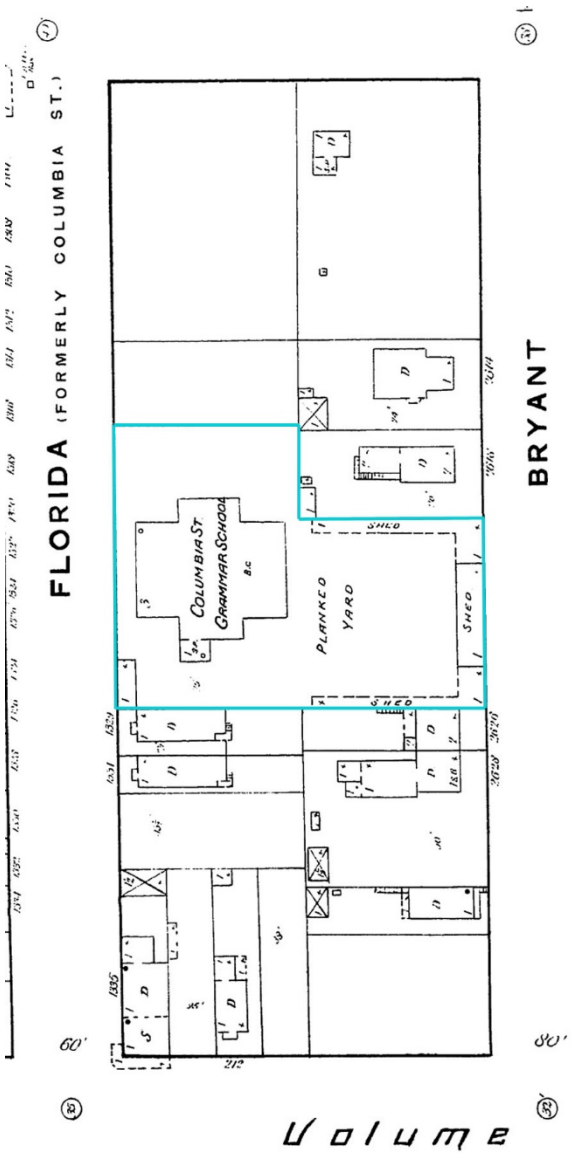

Figure 46. 1889 Sanborn maps showing the Columbia Street Grammar School.
Source: San Francisco Public Library

The Columbia Grammar School, as it was renamed in 1881, was a typical Victorian school in San Francisco. Built of wood and towering three stories above the street, it was designed in the then-popular Italianate style. Largely indistinguishable from other institutional building types of its era, the only exterior features that marked it as a school were its oversized windows, which were designed to illuminate the otherwise dark interiors with as much natural light as possible **(Figure 47)**.

The 1900 Sanborn maps, published about a decade later, show several changes to the Columbia Grammar School campus. Visible on its north side is a three-story classroom wing addition. Also visible are a new one-story toilet room along Bryant Street, a freestanding "school room" northeast of the school, and the former toilet room relocated to the south end of the site **(Figure 48)**. The 1900 Sanborn maps indicate that although the surrounding neighborhood had grown quite a lot since 1889, the subject block was still only about two-thirds developed.

[2] The school's name was changed to the Columbia Street Grammar School in 1881 and the street's name was changed to Florida Street in 1882.

The 1914 Sanborn maps show great changes to the Columbia Grammar School campus, including a new south wing, the relocation of the former toilet room to become an addition, and the construction of a large stair at the rear of the building. The 1914 Sanborn maps also indicate that the subject block had been built-out in the decade and a half that had elapsed since the 1900 maps had been published. Although mostly residential, three of the four corner lots on the block were occupied by commercial or mixed-use buildings. Aside from the Columbia Grammar School, the only building on the block without a residential or a commercial component was the Swedish-Finnish Ebenezer Church at 25th and Florida Streets **(Figure 49)**.

Figure 47. Columbia Grammar School, ca. 1915.
Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-8821

Historic photographs and contemporary descriptions of the Columbia Grammar School suggest that it was not very well-maintained. Indeed, it, as well as many other Victorian school buildings in San Francisco, was viewed as a "fire trap." The addition of the rear stair was almost certainly a concession to the public's concerns over the building's safety. Fears about the building's vulnerability to fire were evidently not misplaced, because in 1926 Columbia Grammar School was heavily damaged in a major fire.[3] No one was injured, but after several months of deliberations over whether to repair the building or not, the Board of Education voted to demolish it in December 1926.[4]

[3] "Board Defers Action on Columbia School," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 17, 1926), 12.
[4] "Board Considers Plan for School," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 8, 1926), 9.

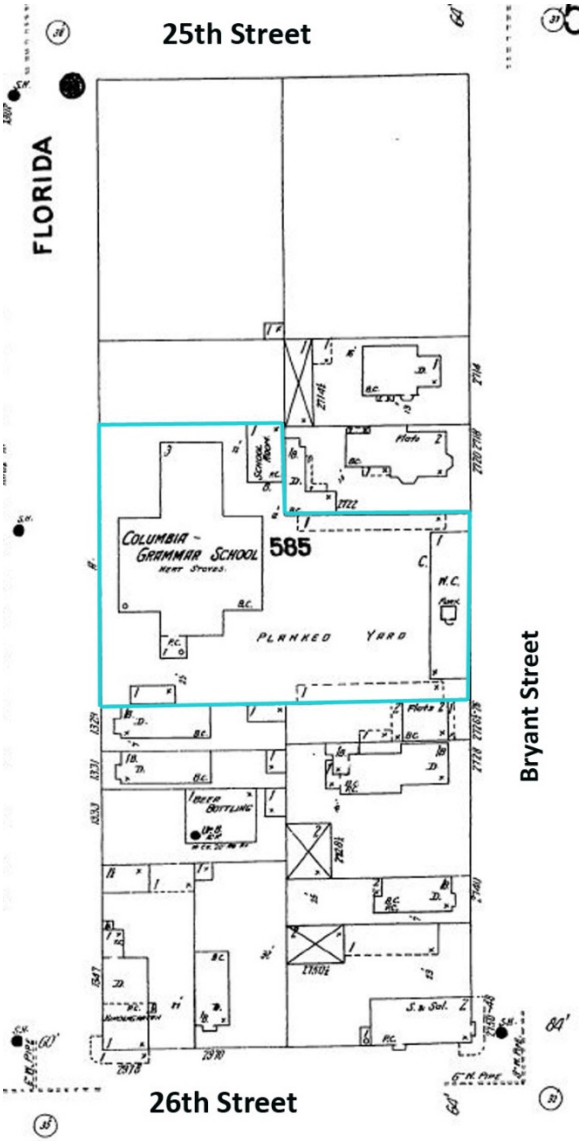

Figure 48. 1900 Sanborn maps showing the Columbia Street Grammar School.
Source: San Francisco Public Library

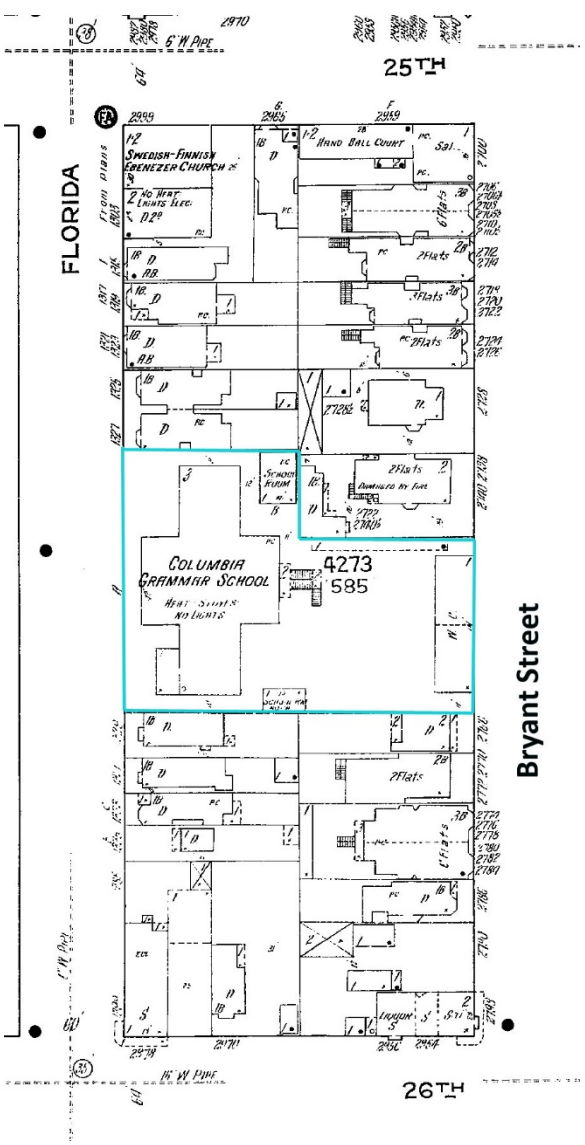

Figure 49. 1914 Sanborn maps showing the Columbia Street Grammar School.
Source: San Francisco Public Library

Planning, Design, and Construction of the Sunshine School: 1933–1937

San Francisco's Sunshine School followed national patterns in addressing the needs of two student populations: children with physical disabilities and those suffering from difficult-to-treat chronic and acute illnesses. Special classes for "crippled" children, nearly all of whom might have been sequestered at home or confined to an institution, grew in number during the early twentieth century. At the same time, several school districts established "open air" or "fresh air" classes to serve children with communicable diseases like tuberculosis. Boston opened the first such school in 1908, abiding by contemporary medical practice that posited that tubercular children needed exposure to fresh, cool air to improve their lungs' functional capacity.[5] However, it was not until the late 1920s that special-

[5] Robert L. Osgood, *The History of Special Education: A Struggle for Equality in American Public Schools* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 62-3.

purpose schools for crippled and chronically ill children were established in cities across the nation. Special education historian Robert L. Osgood writes: "the 1930s was a busy time for constructing such facilities" and lists Philadelphia, Cleveland, Indianapolis, and Sheboygan, Wisconsin as cities that constructed schools specifically geared toward "crippled" children.[6]

The San Francisco Rotary Club organized the Sunshine School in 1924 as an outgrowth of the organization's charity work for physically disabled children, which began as early as 1916. The Rotary Club's efforts occurred around the same time that the Shriners had begun establishing hospitals for "crippled" children. A Rotary chapter in Dayton, Ohio that had opened a school for "crippled children" inspired the San Francisco effort. In 1923, the San Francisco Rotary Club undertook a study to determine the composition of the city's disabled student population and the steps needed to establish a special school for them.[7] With enthusiastic support from the San Francisco Board of Education, the Rotary Club renovated a city-owned "cottage" at 1753 Bush Street, between Gough and Octavia Streets, for the school (no longer extant). The school, which opened with 17 students in autumn 1924, was set back from the street with a generous play yard at the front of the property. It had a level planked driveway which enabled students, who were nearly all transported to school by taxis, to easily access the building. The school had side yards containing planting beds, where students could cultivate flowerbeds and vegetable plots. Rotary Club members supplied equipment and supplies, a daily hot lunch, and funds to pay for a nurse; the School District paid the salaries of three teachers. By the beginning of the second term, the Board of Education took on all responsibilities for the school, though the Rotary Club continued to provide financial and moral support throughout the life of the school.[8]

In 1926, in response to overcrowding, the Board of Education moved the Sunshine School to a building at 440 Dolores Street, behind Mission High School (no longer extant).[9] Carrie Daly, the Sunshine School's principal, described this facility and her 90 students in a 1931 address to the California Society for Crippled Children. The children enrolled "are all mentally normal or above" with the same rate of progress as "normal" children. Transported to and from school via a fleet of taxis, the students engaged in a curriculum that was "the same as that of the regular school," with manual training and sewing offered to older children.[10] Documentation shows that children with disabilities were also served with specialized instruction at Jean Parker, Gough, and Sanchez Elementary Schools; and Everett Junior High School.[11]

The "sister" school for the Sunshine School for "Crippled" Children was the Buena Vista "Health" School. Dating back to 1915, Buena Vista Health School accommodated 126 students in a six-classroom school building in the Mission's "warm belt," at 18th and Bryant Streets. Pupils admitted to Buena Vista suffered from various chronic and acute illnesses, including heart disease, malnourishment, asthma, and

[6] Osgood, 66.
[7] "The Sunshine School," T*he Rotarian* (Vol XXVI, No. 1, January 1925) 3, 47.
[8] Theresa Whitener*, A Tradition of Fellowship and Service: The Rotary Club of San Francisco at 100* (Rotary Club of San Francisco, 2008), 39. "Rotary Club Crippled Tots' School Opens," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 6, 1924), 1.
[9] "Sunshine School under Construction," *San Francisco Public Schools Superintendent Report* (1936), 132.
[10] Carrie Daly, "The Sunshine School," *San Francisco Public Schools* Bulletin, Vol. 2, No. 7 (May 1931), 21.
[11] "Handicapped Pupils Aided," *San Francisco Chronicle* (March 13, 1932), 2.

"communicable and debilitating diseases," such as tuberculosis. The Board of Public Health determined each student's eligibility for the school.[12] Children with especially acute or contagious diseases were instructed in special classes administered at the San Francisco Shriners' Hospital on 19th Avenue or San Francisco General Hospital. In some cases, teachers visited students at home.[13] The wood-frame building housing the school had been erected in 1880, making it one of the oldest school buildings still in use in San Francisco.

San Francisco's $3 million school bond measure, approved by voters in December 1933, included funds to erect a new Sunshine School. San Francisco voters approved the bonds with expectations that the newly elected president Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal public works programs would help financially, and in 1934, the Public Works Administration (PWA) included the school as part of a package of approved funding for building and rebuilding 12 schools for the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD).[14] The Board of Education selected the site of the old Columbia Grammar School, which had burned and been subsequently demolished several years earlier. The site was chosen mainly for its location in San Francisco's "warm belt" and for its proximity to San Francisco General Hospital, located three blocks east on Potrero Avenue, which would supply special meals for the children.[15] After selecting the site, the Board of Education enlarged the parcel to its existing 195' by 200' configuration by condemning and purchasing four parcels along Bryant Street, making the lot just about square. The Board of Education then selected a team of architects, including Albert A. Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, Martin J. Rist, and Smith O'Brien to design the new school.[16]

Despite the involvement of so many designers and advisers, the building has a very cohesive aesthetic and efficient plan that leverages the strengths of each of the four architects. Based on his extensive experience designing public school buildings, it seems likely that Martin Rist took the lead on the overall plan of the school. Built on a compact lot in a dense urban neighborhood, the Sunshine School makes the most of its relatively cramped site by providing a central courtyard, which opens up the interior to natural light and air. In terms of its Spanish Colonial design embellished with high-quality Mexican-style tilework, statuary, and wrought iron grilles, the input of the other three architects is evident, in particular Charles Strothoff, whose Period Revival houses in the West of Twin Peaks area often embody fanciful Spanish Colonial Revival detailing. Smith O'Brien's involvement likely stems from his interest in socially beneficial projects.

In 1934, the Board of Education voted to consolidate the Buena Vista Health School with the new Sunshine School in the new building. However, parents of students at the Sunshine School quickly mobilized to mount an intense campaign directed against the Board's plans to combine the schools, claiming that the needs and activities of the two populations were too far removed. Specifically, they

[12] "Gains in Special Schools and Classes," *A Review of Accomplishments: Report of the Superintendent* (1930), 49.
[13] "Rossi Makes Final School Bond Appeal," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 27, 1933), 11. M.M. FitzGerald, "For Physically Handicapped," *San Francisco Public Schools Bulletin*, 1931, p. 11. The dates for Buena Vista School appear in "Sunshine School under Construction," *Superintendent's Report San Francisco Public Schools* (1936), 127.
[14] "Board to Hear School Protest," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 24, 1934), 13.
[15] "Consolidated School for Cripples and Invalids Believed Assured in S. F.," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 2, 1934).
[16] "A School for the Physically Handicapped," *The Architect and Engineer* (November 1938), 37.

objected that the 1933 bond measure had specified funds only for the Sunshine School and not the Buena Vista Health School. Perhaps more to the point, they argued that a combined facility would endanger their children by placing them in proximity to students suffering from communicable diseases.[17] Parents also argued that the proposed design would disadvantage students with limited mobility because any second floor overhangs would shade their first floor classrooms and play area, depriving the children of sunlight. Both groups of children, they argued, would be psychologically harmed by a joint facility where they would have to "consider and see their different sufferings."[18] Finally, the Sunshine School PTA Protest Committee argued that "crippled" children were especially vulnerable to conscious and unconscious cruelty of "normal children."[19]

To support the Board's decision, Superintendent Edwin Lee formed an "Expert Special Building Committee" of teachers and public health professionals, which met with the architects from July to August 1934 **(Figure 50)**. In addition to four members of the Board of Education, the committee included professionals from the Department of Public Health, several doctors, and a professor of education from Mills College.[20] The committee voted 12-to-1 in favor of consolidating the two schools into one building; the principal of the Sunshine School, Carrie Daly, casting the lone "no" vote.[21]

Figure 50. Group of physicians and educators meeting to discuss plans for the Sunshine School, n. d. (c. 1935). Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4288

During the fall of 1934, the Sunshine School PTA and the Guild for Crippled Children met with Mayor Rossi, Superintendent Lee, and the School Board to register their protests.[22] Journalists initially reported that the Board of Education had ended the conflict by rejecting the two-story design in favor of a one-story structure with separate playgrounds on a large lot near San Francisco General Hospital.[23] Yet a letter dated March 7, 1935 from

[17] "Sunshine School for Crippled Children Parent-Teachers Association Protest Letter" (May 2, 1935) San Francisco Public Library, Vertical File SF Schools, Sunshine School for Crippled Children.
[18] "Plan to Merge Health, Cripple Schools Fought," San *Francisco Chronicle* (October 30, 1934).
[19] "Sunshine School for Crippled Children Parent-Teachers Association Protest Letter" (April 23, 1935), San Francisco Public Library, Vertical File: "SF Schools, Sunshine School for Crippled Children."
[20] "Sunshine School, Expert Special Building Committee," San Francisco Public Library, Vertical File: SF Schools, Sunshine School for Crippled Children." "Sunshine School under Construction," *Superintendent's Report San Francisco Public Schools* (1936), 129.
[21] "Sunshine School under Construction," *Superintendent's Report San Francisco Public Schools* (1936), 129.
[22] Miscellaneous undated news clippings in San Francisco Planning department scrapbook. San Francisco Public Library, Vertical File: "SF Schools, Sunshine School for Crippled Children."
[23] "Health School Row Ended," (November 8, 1934) unattributed article in San Francisco Planning department scrapbook. "School Fire Escape Peril is Charged," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 14, 1934). "Consolidated School for Cripples and Invalids Believed Assured in S.F.," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 2, 1934), 7. According to one newspaper account, a property on Vicente between 26th and 28th Avenues was considered a possible site. "Site Selected for Sunshine School," *San Francisco Examiner* (December 20, 1934).

Frank Marisch, Chairman of the Sunshine School Protest Committee, stated that the Board had reneged on its revised plan and that it had gone "back to the original plans of combining the Sunshine and Buena Vista Schools on Bryant and 25th Streets." The reason given was that there were simply not enough funds to secure the necessary acreage to erect the side-by-side facilities.[24]

In May 1935, a Grand Jury Committee convened to resolve the conflict.[25] However, the Grand Jury upheld the consolidation based on the endorsement of medical and educational professionals, the critical fire danger created by keeping students in the dangerous Buena Vista School, and the prospect of losing PWA funds if construction was further delayed.[26] Indeed, one substantial reason that the PWA had agreed to fund so many projects in San Francisco, including 12 public schools, was that the city had done the necessary fundraising and mobilization of public opinion to ensure that it had what today would be called, "shovel-ready" projects. Holding up the Sunshine School project not only made the city look bad, but it endangered funding for upcoming projects.[27]

In further support of its plans, the 1936 School Superintendent's Report stated: "the idea of a consolidated health school is no innovation" and it listed several schools serving children with a variety of disabilities in St. Louis, Cleveland, Boston, Toledo, Baltimore, and Detroit. The report claimed that the Sunshine School was specifically modeled after the David W. Smouse Opportunity School in Des Moines, Iowa. Dr. Smouse and his wife, Amanda, had both suffered from childhood disabilities and as adults pledged funds to build a special school in Des Moines where Dr. Smouse practiced medicine. The Smouse Opportunity School, which opened in March 1931, served students up through 8th grade with a variety of physical disabilities including limited vision and hearing, "orthopedic cripples," and children with "seriously defective vitality."[28] A telegram from the Des Moines Superintendent of Schools to Superintendent Edwin Lee stated:

> Teachers in school for physically handicapped extremely enthusiastic in favor of consolidated plan. The consolidation is economical as to transportation and overhead. Possible to run better a fuller program with educational advantages to all. Psychologically sound because handicapped child loses self-pity and finds himself [sic] able to excel in some line. He also feels more truly a part of the school than when he is segregated in regular buildings. Children with different handicaps learn to help each other and often form helpful friendships. It is wise to include in such a school the defective vitality group whose members are built up and go back to normal school work as that fact sells school to the public.[29]

However, as a compromise, the Board of Education decided to segregate the Sunshine School's student population, with physically disabled students confined to the first floor and "invalid" students to the second, where each classroom had a glass-roofed "rest area." Each group accessed the facility through

[24] "Letter from Sunshine School P.T.A. Protest Committee" (March 7, 1935) San Francisco Public Library, Vertical File: "SF Schools, Sunshine School for Crippled Children."
[25] "Row on Joint Schools Taken to Grand Jury," *San Francisco Chronicle* (May 23, 1935).
[26] "Sunshine School under Construction," *Superintendent's Report San Francisco Public Schools* (1936), 129.
[27] "Mayor Keeps Hands Off in School Merger," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 31, 1934), 3.
[28] David W. Smouse Opportunity School, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (2002), Section 8, page 4.
[29] "Sunshine School under Construction," *Superintendent's Report San Francisco Public Schools* (1936), 130.

separate entrances as well, with the students with physical disabilities entering at grade via the internal driveway on Florida Street and the students with chronic illnesses entering the building from Bryant Street, where a flight of stairs leads up to the second floor level from the lobby. Both floor levels had their own toilet rooms and dining room/auditoriums as well. The ground floor level held a small therapeutic bathing pool, while both levels featured "corrective gymnasiums" where physical therapy could be administered.[30] In contrast to the Smouse School, which incorporated a pair of semicircular ramps in its courtyard, vertical circulation at the Sunshine School is achieved by stairs because the children with physical disabilities were confined to the ground floor.[31]

The incorporation of a therapeutic pool at the proposed new Sunshine School was likely a nod to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Stricken with a debilitating case of polio in 1921, which cost him use of his legs, FDR worked hard to overcome his disability. Hearing of the curative effects of the warm mineral springs at Warm Springs, Georgia, Roosevelt visited in 1924. After swimming for a day, he was able to move his right leg for the first time in three years. Convinced of its curative effects, FDR bought the resort property and 1,200 acres from George Foster Peabody. In 1927, he founded the Warm Springs Foundation, a non-profit foundation dedicated to curing victims of polio. Although he never regained full use of his legs, by 1928, FDR had recovered enough to return to his main passion of politics.[32] FDR returned to Warm Springs every year for the rest of his life, except for in 1942. After being elected president in 1932, he built the "Little White House" at Warm Springs. Although there is no documentary evidence, it seems quite likely that the decision to build a therapeutic pool at the Sunshine School was likely influenced by the president, who throughout his life remained convinced that soaking in warm mineral springs did provide relief and some level of recovery from polio-induced paralysis.[33]

Figure 51. Groundbreaking for the Sunshine School, 1935. Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4255

Groundbreaking for the new $325,000 Sunshine School occurred on November 10, 1935 **(Figure 51)**. The contractor was Anderson & Ringrose, who submitted the lowest bid of $223,869.[34] Construction took 20 months and the building was dedicated in a small ceremony held on August 17, 1937. Present at the ceremony were the architects and the structural engineer, H. J. Brunnier, a very prominent San Francisco engineer and

[30] "A School for the Physically Handicapped," *Architect & Engineer* (November 1938), 37-9.
[31] David W. Smouse Opportunity School, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (2002), Section 8, page 4.
[32] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Warm Springs Historic District," *Roosevelt's Little White House State Historic Site and Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation: https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/presidents/roosevelts_little_white_house.html, accessed July 31, 2017.*
[33] David M. Ohinksy, *Polio: An American Story* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 35-40. Gray Brechin, "Letters to the Editor," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 19, 2011), A13.
[34] *Pacific Constructor* (1935).

long-time president of the San Francisco Rotary Club. As a Rotary Club dignitary, he was certainly aware of the Sunshine School, but it is not known whether he donated his time to the project or received a fee. The initial dedication of the Sunshine School consisted of a flag-raising ceremony in the courtyard led by Superintendent of Schools Joseph P. Nourse.[35] Nourse stated that the school, built to accommodate 250 students, was the only one of its kind in the West.[36]

A second public ceremony held on November 7, 1937 to coincide with American Education week included more speeches by several dignitaries, including U.S. Commissioner of Education Dr. John W. Studebaker, Mayor Angelo Rossi, Superintendent of Schools J.P. Nourse, and Dr. David W. Smouse, co-founder of the Smouse Opportunity School in Des Moines.[37] Dr. Smouse offered that the Sunshine School was only the "second complete school of its kind" in the U.S., after his own. Commissioner Studebaker, who had supported the Smouse Opportunity School as the Superintendent of Des Moines schools, held the Sunshine School up as a model for the nation:

> The problem we are attempting to solve here is a national one, born of a love for humanity. The Sunshine School was constructed because a Nation is beginning to realize its duty under democracy to be just to all of its citizens.
>
> It is a public act, not of benevolence, but an act which typifies the democratic workings of social justice. In body, mind and spirit these children are fundamentally the same as the rest of us. Are they not, then, entitled to the same rights and opportunities?[38]

He concluded his speech with a plea for American communities to design and remodel existing educational facilities "to meet the needs of the 2,000,000 physically handicapped children of the Nation" and commended San Francisco for "tak(ing) its place among the leaders of the Nation in this national problem."[39] Commissioner Studebaker's language is striking for its assertion that people with disabilities were just as worthy of citizenship as anyone else, as well as the idea that providing accessible facilities was not an act of "benevolence" or much worse, pity, but an act of "social justice." Commissioner Studebaker's words would not be out of place three decades later with the birth of the disability rights movement in the late 1960s. The view of physical disability as a neutral characteristic rather than an abnormal or shameful condition still had a long way to go in the American psyche, but doubtlessly the election of America's first (and only) disabled president had something to do with the changing awareness of the place of disabled Americans in society.

The SFUSD photographed the Sunshine School after its opening. These photographs illustrate a facility that looked very much like it does now. The images show students and faculty touring the facility, disabled children arriving at the Florida Street entrance via taxi, and children resting in cots in the rest areas on the second floor level **(Figures 52–55)**.

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[35] "San Francisco Schools Swing Open to 100,000," *San Francisco Chronicle* (August 18, 1937).
[36] "Crippled Tots to Get Modern School Plant."
[37] "S.F. Sunshine School Opens," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 8, 1937).
[38] U.S. Commissioner of Education Dr. John W. Studebaker, as quoted in "Sunshine School of S.F. Dedicated," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 8, 1937), 11.
[39] Ibid.

Figure 52. Students and staff in the courtyard of the new Sunshine School, 1937.
Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4292

Figure 53. Students arriving by taxi at the new Sunshine School, 1937.
Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4254

Figure 54. Dining room on second floor of the Sunshine School, 1937.
Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4265

Figure 55. Children resting in cots on second floor of the Sunshine School, 1937.
Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4269

Concise History of the Sunshine School: 1937–2016

The Sunshine School educated physically disabled and chronically ill children for almost half a century, from 1937 until ca. 1980. San Francisco's Rotary Club, which had started the school in 1924, continued to raise money to buy supplies and equipment, as well as participate in various events and celebrations held at the school. In 1938, the Rotary Club sponsored an experimental physical rehabilitation program for children diagnosed with "spastic paralysis." The program, overseen by the Board of Education and the Department of Public Health, was apparently successful in restoring mobility to several children who had been previously unable to walk or pick up objects. The program also worked with children who had speech impediments, with specialized instruction carried out at each child's pace.[40]

The therapeutic pool, though it was part of the Sunshine School's initial design, was not ready to use until March 7, 1940, when it was finally opened in a ceremony attended by officials representing SFUSD, the Health Department, and the Rotary Club. The delays were caused by several factors, including technical problems with the heating apparatus, as well as disagreements over the proper treatment procedures to be used. To prevent the perceived danger of drafts, special ventilating equipment was installed so the windows could be closed. A photograph taken of the pool ca. 1941 shows what it looked like before the space was converted into a commercial kitchen ca. 1985 **(Figure 56)**.

Students who graduated from the Sunshine School typically went on to study at Everett Junior High and then Mission High School, both of which had special programs catering to physically disabled students.[41] Countless stories in local newspapers discussed how graduates of the Sunshine School gained confidence in their abilities, allowing them to graduate from high school and get jobs or go on to higher education.

Students at the Sunshine School, as well as the Gough School for the Deaf, were urged to stay home in the weeks following the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor and other Pacific bases on December 7, 1941. City authorities believed that San Francisco would soon be attacked and that physically disabled children would be helpless when Japanese bombers appeared above San Francisco.[42] After a few weeks, when the bombings did not occur, San Franciscans went back to their daily affairs and the Sunshine School reopened. Enrollment at the school spiked upward during World War II, as tens of thousands of defense workers, including many African Americans from the South, came to the city to work in the shipyards and other defense industries. By 1945, Navy buses were transporting 53 handicapped children from the Hunters Point housing projects to the Sunshine School.[43]

[40] "Unique School Cures Children of Paralysis," *San Francisco Chronicle* (May 30, 1938), 11.
[41] "386 to Graduate at Mission High," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 5, 1938), 86.
[42] "More on Defenses of S.F. Schools," *San Francisco Chronicle* (January 6, 1942), 8.
[43] "Navy Asks Rides for Crippled Pupils," *San Francisco Chronicle* (March 2, 1945), 11.

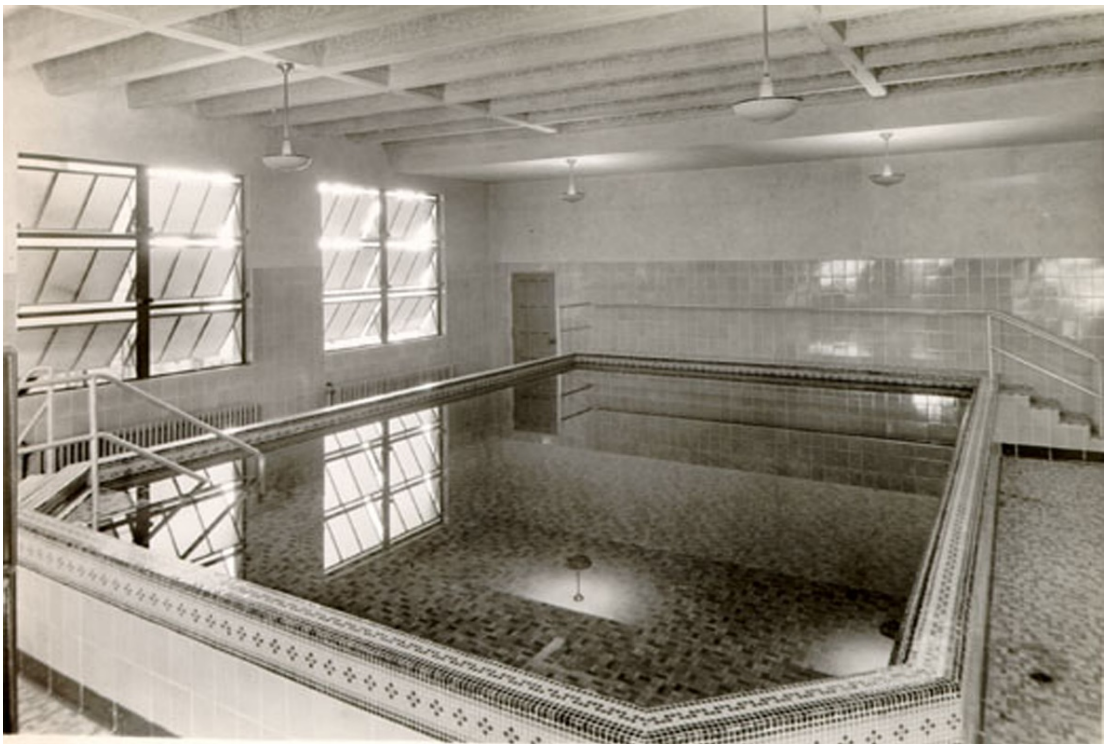


Figure 56. Therapeutic pool on first floor level of the Sunshine School, ca. 1937.
Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library, Photo ID# AAD-4266

In addition to the San Francisco Rotary Club, the Yellow Cab Co. of San Francisco had a longstanding relationship with the Sunshine School. Yellow Cab drivers had worked under contract to drive the students to the school since it opened in 1924, and many drivers were loyal to "their" students, often driving the same children to school every day. Indeed, in April 1948, 30 Yellow Cab Co. drivers volunteered to give blood to a Sunshine School student, Lydia Radich, who had been hit by a truck.[44]

An article in the October 29, 1948 *Chronicle* provides a window into the operation of the Sunshine School a little over a decade after it opened. The article, written to cover the activities of the California Congress of Parents and Teachers, described participants' visits to San Francisco's three schools for children with special needs, including the Sunshine School. The piece on the Sunshine School described how children with physical and/or mental disabilities, as well as chronic illnesses such as asthma, rheumatic fever, and "healed tuberculosis" "laugh, play, and keep track of their own progress on charts. Their teachers envelope them in an atmosphere of kindness, (and) encouragement for every gain they make."[45]

[44] "30 Cab Drivers Donate Blood for Crippled Child," *San Francisco Chronicle* (April 1, 1948), 13.
[45] Zilfa Estcourt, "PTA Plans Tours of Special Schools," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 29, 1948), 9.

The article provided useful information on the organization of the school, whose principal, Mrs. Ursula Murphy, had succeeded longtime principal Carrie Daly following her death in 1945. The first floor, called the "Orthopedic Sunshine School," continued to serve children with physical disabilities. In addition to providing a standard education, the school's primary goal was to improve each child's physical performance, if not heal them entirely. The centerpiece of the rehabilitation program was the therapeutic pool, where children were suspended in the warm water while completing exercises with specialized equipment **(Figure 57)**. In addition to physical therapy, students were given psychological counseling to build their self-esteem and confidence. In 1948, there were 110 pupils in the orthopedic department. Upon graduating, most students went on to Everett Junior High School. In 1948, the department on the second floor was known as the Sunshine Health School, and it was still dedicated to children with chronic illnesses. Children were accepted to the program on the recommendation of a physician. Each child had a custom treatment plan devised for his or her particular health situation. Treatment centered on high calorie breakfasts and lunches, physical training and exercises, and "all the milk they can drink." According to Principal Murphy, most of the pupils of the Sunshine Health School "improve rapidly." "It gives us a thrill to see the roses come out on their pale cheeks."[46]

Figure 57. Nurse with child in pool, 1940. Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library,

By all accounts, the Sunshine School was known and respected not only by local parents and authorities but also by educators and healthcare professionals from around the world. Professional conferences held in San Francisco often included tours of the school, which perennially elicited the praise of educators and public health specialists alike.[47] In an era preceding the disability rights movement, the most important impact that the Sunshine School had was to inspire the creation of similar schools throughout the Bay Area and beyond, including similar institutions in Alameda, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, and Marin Counties.

Despite being held in such high regard, enrollment at the Sunshine School began to decline during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Reasons ranged from the prosaic – in particular mass suburbanization – to the profound, particularly the development of vaccines and cures for many common diseases. Tuberculosis, a frightening and frequently lethal disease, received an effective cure with the

[46] Ibid.
[47] SFUSD also operated the Alta Vista School, at Pierce and Hayes Street, for mentally handicapped students.

development of the antibiotic streptomycin in 1946. This innovation reduced the mortality rate from approximately 50 percent to less than 10 percent. Rising living standards and improved sanitation also reduced the number of new cases, a trend that has lasted until recent years. In 1952, Dr. Jonas Salk developed the first effective polio vaccine and after several years of testing, the polio vaccine became available to the public in 1955. Polio, as well as many other potentially lethal childhood diseases had been effectively eliminated.[48] Vaccines and better public health practices led to a sharp reduction in the number of students with chronic illnesses requiring the services of the Sunshine School's health department. No further mention is made of chronically ill children attending the school after 1960. Indeed, in 1962, Yellow Cab Co. of San Francisco discontinued its longstanding contract with the City to provide transportation to students, suggesting that enrollment had declined.[49]

A similar fall in enrollment in the number of children with physical disabilities began to occur at the Sunshine School in the late 1960s. Taking a lead from the contemporary civil rights movement, the American disability rights movement, which began in the late 1960s, gained momentum in the early 1970s.[50] Based on specifications for barrier-free travel completed in the late 1940s by Dr. Timothy J. Nugent, who developed the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Barrier Free Standard, the independent living movement emerged in California through the efforts of Edward Roberts and other wheelchair-using individuals.[51] Activists like Roberts advocated for removing barriers that prevented wheelchair users and from leading a normal life, including providing only steps to access buildings, unmaintained sidewalks, locations not connected with public transit, or any other physical or social barriers that segregated people with disabilities and prevented them from having the same opportunities as people without disabilities. Of course, what this meant was that separate schools and other facilities for people with disabilities would soon no longer be acceptable.

During the 1970s, Congress passed several laws to allow people with disabilities to join mainstream society, including the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Passed in 1975, this law required that disabled and non-disabled children be educated together.[52] Between 1973 and 1976, enrollment at the Sunshine School continued to decline, shrinking from 140 students to 119.[53] One year later, in 1977, the San Francisco Chronicle reported, "most of the district's handicapped youngsters are in regular classrooms."[54] The remaining facilities dedicated to disabled students, including the Sunshine School and the Louise Lombard School (formerly known as the Alta Vista School), which served students with cognitive disabilities, were pared down and eventually closed. A history of the San Francisco Rotary Club, which had continued its connection to the Sunshine School through events such as an annual Christmas party, stated that the school had closed by 1980. A handful of students who were unable to be "mainstreamed" into the general population of elementary schools were educated at the LeConte

[48] Religious fundamentalists and Libertarians have begun resisting vaccinations on a massive scale.
[49] "Transport of Handicapped is Improving," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 18, 1962), 5.
[50] Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley. "Introduction," The Disability Rights and Independent Living Movement http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/drilm/ ; Accessed February 7, 2017.
[51] Samuel Bagenstos, *Law and the Contradictions of the Disability Rights Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
[52] "Federal Call for Education for the Disabled: Only a Beginning," *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle* (November 6, 1977), 24. "Compromise Bus Plan for Handicapped," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 1, 1976), 2.
[53] "School Bus Strike," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 9, 1976), 26.
[54] "Federal Call for Education for the Disabled: Only a Beginning," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 6, 1977), 1, 24.

School (now Leonard R. Flynn Elementary) at 3125 Army Street.[55] Vacant for several years, the former Sunshine School became a facility for pregnant minors and teenage parents and was renamed Hilltop High School in 1985.[56]

Alteration History: 1937–2016

Sanborn Maps and Aerial Photographs

Aerial photographs of San Francisco taken by Harrison Ryker in 1938 show the recently completed Sunshine School. At least from the air, the school looks exactly like it does now, with the exception of the courtyard, which has been incrementally remodeled over time. The 1938 aerials indicate that there were originally four planting beds – one at each corner of the courtyard – including two on either side of the flagpole. Only the two on the south side of the courtyard remain. The courtyard surface also appears to have been replaced. The 1938 aerials also do not show the shed-roofed canopy added above the stair on the south side of the courtyard ca. 1954 **(Figure 58)**. The 1950 Sanborn maps, published 13 years after the opening of the Sunshine School, show similar conditions, as well as useful information on the building's construction methods, mechanical systems, fenestration pattern, and floor plan **(Figure 59)**.

[55] Theresa Whitener, 126.

[56] The San Francisco Foundation made a multi-year grant for a teen parent program at Sunshine School in 1985, "Teen Dads Are Not All Ogres," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 4, 1985), 31. By the end of 1985, the name Hilltop School was mentioned in "Teens Cope with Babies," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 22, 1985), 56.

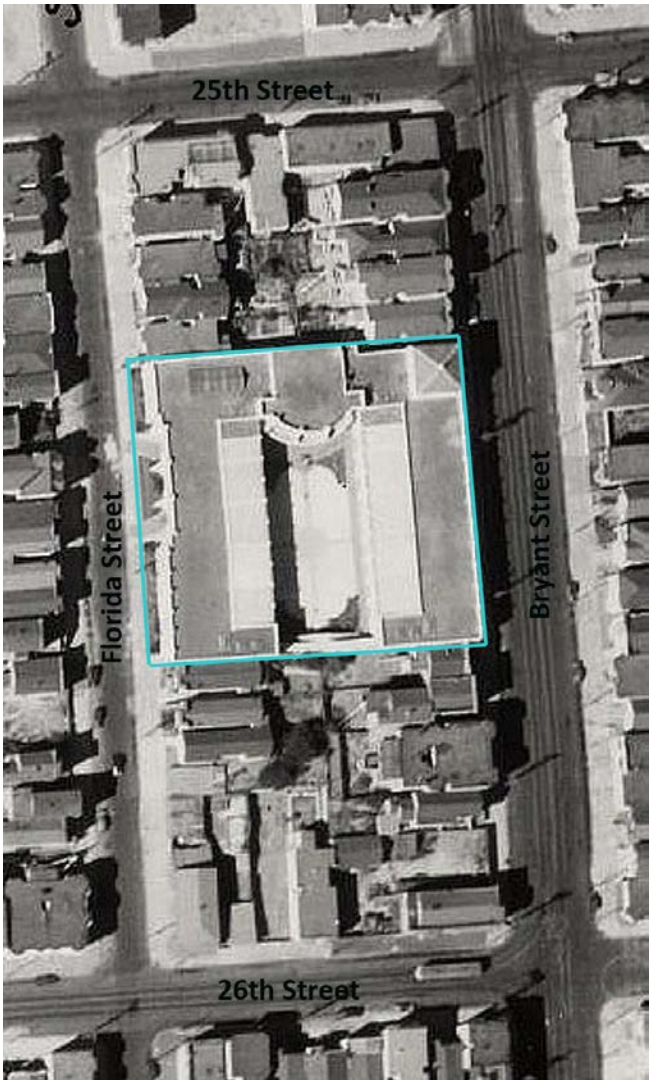


Figure 58. 1938 aerial photograph by Harrison Ryker showing the Sunshine School.
Source: David Rumsey Map Collection

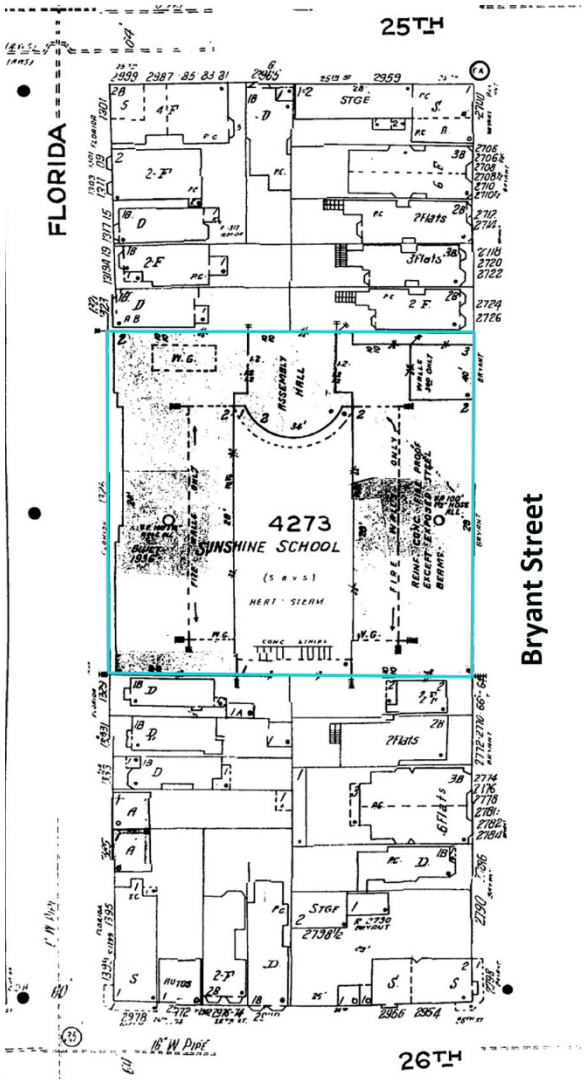


Figure 59. 1950 Sanborn maps showing the Sunshine School.
Source: San Francisco Public Library

Recorded Alterations

Building permits for public school construction are issued directly by the State of California to the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). As a result, there are very few permit applications for the property on file at the Department of Building Inspection (DBI), which is the usual repository for building permits for the vast majority of properties in San Francisco. SFUSD did not make its state-issued permits available to us but we do have access to a maintenance log summarizing changes/maintenance work completed at the building. Records of alterations and additional contemporary alterations were verified in the field. According to SFUSD's building permit inventory, the following alterations were made to the Sunshine School between 1937 and 1969.

- 1940: Venting system for exercise and pool room;
- 1958: Roof repair and skylight overhaul;
- 1959: Exterior painting;

- 1962: Alter Florida Street driveway, external brick paving to remain, new concrete surface inside;
- 1965: Add games to the courtyard, including four-square, shuffleboard, and basketball; and
- 1969: Courtyard surface upgrades.

The maintenance log provided by SFUSD focuses on facility improvements completed between 1988 and 1999. These projects were executed with funds from general obligation bonds passed in 1988 and 1994, as well as Proposition B, approved by San Francisco voters in 1990. In addition to general classroom modernization and structural, fire, and life/safety improvements, alterations completed during this period include exterior painting (1989), roof replacement and exterior door replacement (1990), new partitions in the administrative offices (1995), window sash replacement and miscellaneous site improvements (1996), and general construction (1997).

There are only two alteration permits for Sunshine/Hilltop School on file with DBI.[57] These permits are both for roof work:

- February 14, 1968: Roof rehabilitation – replace skylight bars, install new glazing, roof repairs, and waterproof parapets (Building Permit #316970); and
- August 29, 2002: Reroof building (Building Permit #200208295182).

Additional alterations to the building observed during our fieldwork include the removal of an elevator (itself added in 1954) at the south side of the courtyard and construction of a new elevator near the Bryant Street entrance (ca. 1997); enclosure of the south walls of the dining room/auditoriums at the first and second floor levels (ca. 1985); conversion of the therapeutic pool room into a commercial kitchen (ca. 1985); construction of a concrete planter and gate enclosures at the Florida Street automobile entrance (ca. 1985); and the installation of a metal awning above the balcony at the south side of the courtyard (ca. 1954).

[57] Several additional building permits on file for the addresses associated with Sunshine/Hilltop School (1325 Florida Street and 2728-2762 Bryant Street), and the APN 4273/008 relate to residential buildings located at the site before Sunshine/Hilltop School was constructed.

Concise History of the SFUSD and School Construction: 1847–1940

Public education in San Francisco dates back to 1847, when the first school opened on Portsmouth Square. Three years later, the Free School Ordinance divided the city into seven school districts and for the first time allowed local taxes to be levied to support public schools. San Francisco's first public high school was established in 1856, and the first free kindergarten in the western United States opened in San Francisco in 1878.[58] Compulsory education laws, massive immigration from outside the U.S., and internal migration from rural to urban settings led to an explosion in school enrollment in California and across the nation during the late nineteenth century. As the school system became more elaborate and the numbers of students grew, the teaching workforce expanded and teachers' organizations increased in numbers as well. By the 1910s, members of San Francisco teachers' associations were active in state and local campaigns affecting schools and child welfare alike.[59]

Educational reform efforts during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were part of the overall progressive movement to address government corruption, as well as economic dislocation and social turbulence brought about by rapid industrialization and mass immigration. Schools were seen as vehicles for inculcating moral values, especially in foreign-born children. As San Francisco civic leader John Swett argued, "Nothing can Americanize these chaotic elements and breathe into them the spirit of our institutions but the public schools."[60] Statements such as these offended many members of San Francisco's large Irish, Italian, and German immigrant communities, who found more sympathetic ears in Democratic Party officials who "dominated" the school board from the 1870s through the 1890s.[61]

Progressive campaigns for educational reform included expansion and reorganization of curriculum, improving teacher education, and changes in how schools and school districts were administered.[62] Assessments of San Francisco's school system in 1911 and 1917 found major deficiencies in both educational instruction and facilities.[63] These critiques fueled a "good government" campaign for school board members and the superintendent of schools to be appointed rather than elected. Amendment 37, a citywide initiative calling for these measures failed in 1918, but it passed with a narrow majority of voters in 1920.[64]

Reorganizing school systems to include junior high schools was another feature of Progressive era educational reform. Junior high schools were adopted in California starting in 1909, and by 1913, three San Francisco grammar schools had been converted to serve seventh through ninth grades with modified schedules and curriculum designed for children in early adolescence. Dr. Joseph A. Gwinn, the

[58] "Finding Aid to the San Francisco Unified School District Records 1854–2005, Biographical/Historical Note" (San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, 2005), 3–4.
[59] Ibid., 3.
[60] William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco, 1865–1932: Power, Politics and Urban Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 102.
[61] Issel and Cherny, 104.
[62] Wayne J. Urban and Jennings L. Wagoner, Jr., *American Education: A History* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009, fourth edition), 227.
[63] Sonnier Francisco, *Historic Context Statement: Golden Age of School Construction, San Francisco, California* (San Francisco Planning Department, 2009), 29.
[64] Francisco, 30.

first superintendent hired by the newly appointed Board of Education, championed the transformation from an "8-4" system (eight years in elementary school then four in high school) to a "6-3-3" program that placed seventh through ninth graders in junior high and tenth through twelfth graders in high school.[65] By 1929, San Francisco had nine operating junior high schools with more planned during a time of general expansion in the city school system.[66]

The proliferation of schools in San Francisco's neighborhoods followed logically as residential and commercial development increased in outlying parts of the city. San Francisco experienced major building booms in areas affected by the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, and again during the 1920s, when Mayor James Rolph directed authorities to build schools and other infrastructure in the fast-growing western and southern neighborhoods, as well as rebuilding aging facilities in older neighborhoods. These infrastructure improvements, including newly graded streets and streetcar tunnels, as well as the mass adoption of private automobiles, spurred residential development in what had previously been rural, outlying areas, resulting in new schools being built in the Outer Richmond District, the Sunset District, the Excelsior District, the Outer Mission District, Bayview-Hunters Point, and the OMI District.[67]

The period between World War I and World War II has been called the "Golden Age" of San Francisco school construction.[68] During the 1920s and 1930s, the SFUSD built approximately 50 new school buildings, including several with assistance from New Deal agencies like the Public Works Administration (PWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA).[69] John Reid Jr., who served as City Architect from 1919 to 1927, designed a large number of these facilities. Other prominent Bay Area architects who designed schools in this period include Miller & Pflueger, Bakewell & Brown, Weeks & Day, Albert Schroepfer, and others.[70]

San Francisco School Construction Bonds: 1917–1938

San Franciscans voted four times in two decades to fund the expansion of the SFUSD's physical plant. In November 1917, $3.5 million dollars in bonds were disbursed to address overcrowding, in part a long-term hangover from the devastation wrought by the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, which had destroyed 29 public schools. More than 10 years after the tragedy, more than 170 classes were still reportedly being held in "temporary shacks, lunchrooms, basements, corridors, rented rooms, stores and auditoriums."[71] In December 1917, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that bond funds would be spent on several new elementary and high schools, and on the acquisition of land for a school and playground.[72]

[65] Francisco, p. 32.
[66] Lee Stephen Dolson, Jr., *The Administration of the San Francisco Public Schools, 1847 to 1947* (Berkeley: PhD Dissertation, 1965), 455.
[67] Mary Brown, *Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925–1950: Historic Context Statement* (San Francisco Planning Department: 2013), 19, 21.
[68] The term appears to have first been used in "Civic Architecture: San Francisco's Public Schools," San Francisco Architectural Heritage Newsletter (1988, XVI:3), 5. It is the title of a recent study conducted for the San Francisco Planning department by Sonnier Francisco, "Historic Context Statement: Golden Age of School Construction, San Francisco, California" (San Francisco Planning Department, 2009).
[69] Figure for the 1920s from "Civic Architecture," San Francisco's Public Schools."
[70] "Civic Architecture."
[71] "School Bond Election to be Held Tuesday," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 28, 1917), 8.
[72] "Board Locates First Schools to be Erected," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 5, 1917), 10.

In 1922, voters were again asked to "invest in the future of the children of San Francisco" because "today's school children will be San Francisco's men and women of tomorrow."[73] Mayor James Rolph Jr. described the bond measure as an issue of equity. "Every neighborhood must be given an equal opportunity with every other neighborhood. We must not have good buildings here and poor buildings elsewhere."[74] After the overwhelmingly positive November election results, the SFUSD and other agencies scrambled to coordinate planning and expenditure of the $12 million devoted to rehabilitating 30 schools. "The plan for the rehabilitation of the schools is the most gigantic ever attempted in San Francisco. It is comparable only to the Civic Center project," stated Mayor Rolph.[75] The bond also funded a study of educational needs based on the city's growing population so that future schools could be sited in the most appropriate locations.[76]

A 1933 bond measure approved $3 million for school projects inspired, at least in part, by safety concerns highlighted by a recent fire at the aging Fremont School. Arguments for replacing the older wood-frame Victorian-era schools for just this reason had been made for more than 10 years, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*. In addition to replacing buildings made of timber, the Board of Education planned to use the campaign to make "readjustments of school districts, and in some cases consolidations."[77] Another important impetus was the promise of federal money from the newly founded Public Works Administration (PWA). The PWA provided 30 percent of the cost of labor and materials on approved projects, and cities like San Francisco that had passed bond issues to fund infrastructure projects were in a much better position to leverage PWA funds.[78]

The 1933 bond measure contained funding to build three all-new schools, including George Washington High School, Marina Junior High School, and Lawton Elementary School.[79] It also included funds for building new facilities for several existing schools, including the Sunshine School, a school established for physically disabled children in 1924, which was then housed in an interim location behind Mission High School.[80] Voters approved this bond on December 19, 1933.[81] Another impetus for this bond measure was the Field Act, a state law passed in April 1933 one month after a major earthquake shook Southern California and turned 230 schools into rubble or rendered them unfit for occupation. The Field Act established the Office of the State Architect, which then assumed regulatory overview and permitting for all school construction in California.[82]

Another bond issue in 1938 proposed borrowing $2.8 million to construct a new campus for San Francisco Junior College (now San Francisco City College), as well as gymnasiums and auditoriums for

[73] "Future of S.F. is at Stake at Polls Tuesday," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 19, 1922), 10.
[74] James Rolph Jr. "Rolph Appeals to S.F. to Vote School Bonds," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 19, 1922), 10.
[75] "First Steps Taken on Big School Plans," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 25, 1922), 3.
[76] Ibid.
[77] "Rossi Makes Final School Bond Appeal," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 27, 1933), 11.
[78] Robert D. Leighninger, Jr., *Long-Range Public Investment: The Forgotten Legacy of the New Deal* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 36-37.
[79] "Women Urge Approval of School Bonds," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 10, 1933), 9.
[80] "Rossi Makes Final School Bond Appeal," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 June 1933, 11.
[81] "Lee Expresses Joy at School Bond Issue." *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 20, 1933), 2.
[82] California State Safety Commission, "The Field Act and Public School Construction: A 2007 Perspective."

selected elementary, junior, and high schools.[83] Six other bond issues appeared on the September ballot, but only the $2.8 million measure to fund the school projects was approved. These bonds also depended on contributions from the PWA, which provided 45 percent of the total cost.[84] School projects completed as part of the 1938 bond included the Samuel Gompers Trade School, an addition to Horace Mann Junior High School, and James Denman Junior High School.[85]

Concise History of Education for Students with Disabilities in the U.S.: 1870–1938

Institutions founded to support people with disabilities began in the United States in the early nineteenth century. Based on Enlightenment philosophies and religious commitments to charity, residential facilities for people who were blind, deaf, or "feeble-minded" were established across the United States. Educational historian Margaret A. Winzer writes that institutions at that time held to a reformist, rather than radical, philosophy that embodied three principals: "protection, separation, and dependence" for people with special needs.[86] As American public education increasingly became a state function, schools were forced to address the needs of students with diverse abilities as well as those from different ethnic, cultural, linguistic, or religious backgrounds. Beginning in the 1870s, public schools in the eastern U.S. established special "ungraded" classrooms for students deemed unfit for regular instruction, including immigrants new to the English language, children with behavioral problems, or "defective learners" suffering from physical and/or cognitive disabilities.[87]

By the late nineteenth century, American public education had been transformed into a sprawling, stratified, and highly regimented system that was only beginning to reflect new theories of human development and medicine. According to Winzer, "The child study movement and new psychological and medical findings made professionals, parents, and the public more alert to the educational implications of physical and mental disabilities".[88] Included among the Progressive Era's foundational goals was the idea that intervening in individual lives and among social groups was worthwhile and appropriate if it would make the public sphere more efficient and orderly. Poor and/or immigrant populations were frequently targeted by these interventions. And as a much larger percentage of children attended school than before compulsory education was instituted, "deviant" behavior and performance issues became defined as a growing problem in increasingly regimented public schools. At the same time, teachers and administrators began to focus on conditions among children that had previously gone unnoticed. Attention to the nature and extent of individual differences, especially those that affected the ability to function successfully in society, increased as well.

By 1900, disability had become a key construct and a target of Progressive reformers. The early twentieth century also saw a national transition from ungraded special education programs within existing public schools toward segregated facilities. Compulsory attendance laws required schools to

[83] "Work to Cost Ten Millions on Bond Issue List," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 15, 1938), 6.
[84] Earl Behrens, "Schools Win: Market Line Bond Issue Defeated," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 28, 1938), 1, 11.
[85] "Educational Projects Mark Mission Activity," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 31, 1939), 28.
[86] Margret A. Winzer, "Confronting Difference; an excursion through the history of special education" in Lani Florian editor, *The Sage Handbook of Special Education* (London: Sage Publications, 2007), 24.
[87] Winzer, 26.
[88] Winzer, p. 27.

find placement options for all disabled children, which led to special classes for children who were "crippled," blind, deaf, "incorrigible," or chronically ill.[89] Advocates argued that segregation of these students was necessary for efficient classroom and school operation, and that separate programs for disabled children was in their best educational and psychological interests as well. [90] As American psychologist J.E. Wallace Wallin claimed in an influential 1924 treatise, segregated facilities allowed students to "escape from the taunts, jeers, jokes, and gibes sometimes suffered at the hands of their normal playfellows."[91]

With children with disabilities increasingly segregated from the general school population, the main challenge for school districts became where to put them. In smaller communities, special-purpose classrooms were often set aside in mainstream schools. This was more difficult in larger cities with significantly greater populations of children with special needs. Furthermore, parents of "normal" children often objected to having their children attend school in the same building with "abnormal" children, particularly those suffering from communicable illnesses. In San Francisco, as in other cities, in the 1920s, the Board of Education began repurposing older school buildings as special purpose schools for students with physical or cognitive disabilities and/or chronic illnesses. Unfortunately, these repurposed schools were unsatisfactory by several measures. Many of these older schools were obsolete, wood-frame Victorian "firetraps." Often several stories in height, they were not at all ideal for the mobility-impaired students.

Though it would be a stretch to describe such efforts as being part of any organized disability rights movement, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, teachers, parents, and others began to realize that students with disabilities deserved better than unsafe cast-offs. Instead, they argued that children with special needs required specially designed facilities that would allow them to participate fully not only in their education, but also to take advantage of rehabilitation programs. Although there were several sporadic efforts by physically handicapped people to secure basic rights, including the founding of the League of the Physically Handicapped in New York in 1935, more important was a "sea change" in American culture away from "rugged individualism" and toward collective responsibility toward disadvantaged members of society. This change in the American *zeitgeist* is reflected in Franklin D. Roosevelt's defeat of Herbert Hoover in the 1932 election, and Congress's subsequent passage of a raft of work relief and social programs collectively known as the New Deal. A centerpiece of the New Deal that continues to exist (at least for now) was the Social Security Act of 1935, which among other things, provided government pensions to the aged and infirm, as well as grants to states for maternal and child welfare. In addition to monetary support, the Act extended vocational rehabilitation programs for disabled people.

[89] Robert L. Osgood, 45.
[90] Robert L. Osgood, 12, 22.
[91] J. E. Wallace Wallin. *The Education of Handicapped Children* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924).

Concise History of the Public Works Administration: 1935–1943

The Sunshine School was paid for in part by the Public Works Administration (PWA), a federal agency signed into law on June 16, 1933 under Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA). Not originally envisioned as being primarily a work relief program, the PWA's purpose was to stimulate demand for construction materials by providing a combination of grants and loans to state and local governments for major public works projects. Headed by the cautious and conservative Harold Ickes, the PWA provided 30 percent of the cost of labor and materials to the project sponsor and loaned the remainder, if necessary. The interest rate was 4 percent to avoid competing with private banks. The PWA's contribution was later elevated to 45 percent. To be approved for funds from the PWA, a project sponsor had to demonstrate that its project was both necessary and economically viable, and that it would comply with federal regulations for procurement, labor, etc.[92] Vetting of non-federal (state and municipal) projects was slow and laborious, but nearly all approved projects were eventually built.

The PWA was created to fund permanent infrastructure as a way of stimulating the economy more generally, and employment on PWA projects was not limited to the unemployed. WPA (Works Progress Administration) was created to provide work relief to the unemployed. PWA projects were expected to include a significant expenditure for building materials. WPA projects were expected to make the bulk of their expenditures on wages. In addition, the PWA was supposed to take on only public works projects costing more than $25,000. The WPA, headed by the brilliant and wily Harry L. Hopkins, was often able to get around the $25,000 threshold by splitting larger public works projects into smaller components costing less than that amount. Although there was some overlap between the two agencies, in San Francisco as elsewhere, most PWA projects tended to be major public buildings, as opposed to sewer and water mains, street widening and road construction, parks and playgrounds, and other more ephemeral and lower-skilled work relief projects in which the WPA specialized.

San Francisco was a major beneficiary of PWA funds, in part because it had recently passed a major school construction bond in April 1933, meaning that it already had the matching funds to start building as soon as possible. Because of this, the many of PWA projects in San Francisco were public schools. The tally included eight elementary schools: Buena Vista, Francis Scott Key, Glen Park, Horace Mann, Lawton, Patrick Henry, Starr King, and Visitacion Valley; three junior high schools: James Denman, Marina, and Portola (auditorium only); and three high schools: Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, and Samuel Gompers Trade School. The PWA funded several government buildings and infrastructure projects for the City and County of San Francisco, including the Livestock Pavilion (Cow Palace), O'Shaughnessy Dam, Piers 35 and 37, Pulgas Water Temple, the Richmond-Sunset Sewage Treatment Plant, San Francisco Junior College (San Francisco City College), and Mills Field (San Francisco International Airport). The PWA also built several federal office buildings in San Francisco, including the

[92] Robert D. Leighninger, Jr. *Long-Range Public Investment: The Forgotten Legacy of the New Deal* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 9.

San Francisco Mint, the Federal Office Building at 450 Golden Gate Avenue, and the Appraisers Building in Jackson Square.[93]

Architects' Biographies

Albert A. Schroepfer (1874-1965)

Albert A. Schroepfer was born in New York in 1874 to Albert D. and Annie Schroepfer. His father was a Prussian-born architect and his mother was a native of New York City of German heritage.[94] By 1880, the family was living in San Francisco. The senior Schroepfer was a successful architect, who mainly worked for members of San Francisco's German mercantile community. He was also active in the wine-growing Napa Valley, designing many of the early wineries there, including Rhine House, which he designed for Jacob and Fritz Beringer in 1883-84. Little is known about the younger Schroepfer's education or training, but he almost certainly learned to draft and design in his father's employ. He first appears as an architect in the 1899 San Francisco City Directory as a partner in the firm of Dunn & Schroepfer, with James F. Dunn.[95] The firm designed at least two buildings, including a house at 2250 Vallejo Street (1901–extant) and "Parisian-style" flats at 1347 McAllister Street (1900–extant). In 1903, Albert Schroepfer began working on his own. Between 1902 and 1906, Schroepfer appeared in local newspapers as the designer of several dozen buildings–principally two, three, or four-story, wood-frame flats or mixed-use (residential and commercial) buildings.

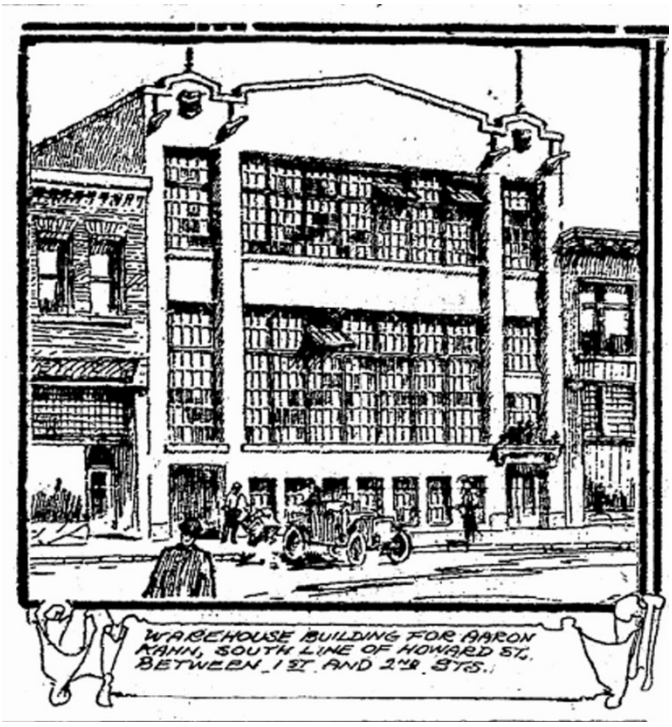


Figure 60. Warehouse for Aaron Kahn, 553-55 Howard Street. Source: *San Francisco Chronicle* (July 8, 1911)

After the 1906 Earthquake, Albert Schroepfer moved to 1215 Golden Gate Avenue, where he lived and worked. Like many of his counterparts, Schroepfer's business took off during the post-quake reconstruction era. During this time, Schroepfer graduated from smaller wood-frame structures to designing much larger and more complicated concrete and brick buildings, including several large apartment buildings and hotels in the Tenderloin and Nob Hill. Schroepfer's growing business led him to form a partnership with Edward G. Bolles in 1910. Nonetheless, many of Schroepfer's projects from this era are attributed only to him, suggesting that he

[93] William Mooser, Jr., Branch Manager, W.P.A., *Report on Progress of the Works Program in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Works Progress Administration, San Francisco Branch, 1938).
[94] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880 Census for San Francisco City, Enumeration District 227, page 10.
[95] San Francisco Great Register of Voters, 5th Precinct, 38th Assembly District.

collaborated with Bolles only on projects that he could not handle on his own. Several examples of Schroepfer's work from this period include the Warburg Estate Building at 657 Clay Street (1910–extant), a tobacco warehouse for Aaron Kahn at 553-55 Howard Street (1911–extant) **(Figure 60)**, and a hotel for I. Mensor at 552 Jones Street (1913–extant). Schroepfer and Bolles, who were good friends, continued to collaborate off and on for another two decades.

Schroepfer did not only design commercial buildings and hotels. He was also involved with other building types, including schools, film exchanges, and single-family dwellings. In 1917, the Colma School District hired him to design two wood-frame schoolhouses in northern San Mateo County. Schroepfer collaborated with architect William Mooser, Jr. on these buildings, including one four-room and one six-room schoolhouse.[96] In 1920, L. L. Lurie hired Schroepfer to design three film exchanges at 201 through 229 Golden Gate Avenue in the Tenderloin (all three extant).[97] Schroepfer and Bolles were also active in Chinatown, having designed several of the characteristic Chinese Exotic Revival-style commercial buildings and residential hotels that went up in Chinatown after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire.[98]

Figure 61. Chambord Apartments, 1298 Jones Street.
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Schroepfer's practice continued to thrive throughout the 1920s-era building boom, when he designed some of his most famous buildings, chief among them the Chambord Apartments at 1298 Jones Street (1922–extant) **(Figure 61)**. This building, which is San Francisco Landmark 106, was a "London style" apartment building built on a prominent corner in one of San Francisco's most exclusive residential areas.[99] By the late 1920s, Charles Schroepfer's work was no longer mentioned in local newspapers as it had been in the past, suggesting that he was not as busy as he had been. Nevertheless, city directories from the early 1930s continued to list him as operating a solo practice from his offices at 618 Market Street. During the Depression, Schroepfer's most notable commission was the Art Deco-style Lindsay Theater (extant) in Lindsay, California (Fresno County). His last major project in Northern California was the Sunshine School (1937–extant). By 1940, he was retired and living in Los Angeles County with his wife Florence and his sister-in-law, Ella J. Pugsley.[100] Albert A. Schroepfer died October 17, 1965 in San Bernardino, California.[101]

[96] "Building New Schoolhouses," *San Francisco Chronicle* (October 7, 1917), 41. William Mooser Jr., was the son of William Mooser II and a grandson of William S. Mooser, a prominent Swiss-born architect in San Francisco. William Mooser, Jr. later went on to become the Assistant Director of the San Francisco branch office of the Works Progress Administration.
[97] "Three Film Exchanges Buildings to be Built," *San Francisco Chronicle* (January 10, 1920), 7.
[98] The Chinese Exotic Revival style is one of several recognized "Exotic Revival" styles, including the Mayan, Egyptian, Byzantine, Moorish, Chinese/East Asian, and Tiki/Polynesian. Survey LA, Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, *Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, Context: Architecture and Engineering, Theme: Exotic Revival, 1900-1980.*
[99] "London Style Building being Erected in San Francisco," *San Francisco Chronicle* (July 22, 1922), 8.
[100] U.S. Census Bureau, 1940 Census for San Antonio Township, Los Angeles County, Enumeration District 19-625.
[101] California Death Index, 1940-1997.

Charles F. Strothoff (1892-1963)

Charles F. Strothoff was a notable San Francisco architect who specialized in designing single-family dwellings for merchant builders active in developing residence parks in San Francisco's West of Twin Peaks area. Charles Frederick Strothoff was born May 9, 1892 in San Francisco to John and Freda Strothoff, immigrants from Germany.[102] His father was a saloonkeeper and his mother did not work outside the home. Charles Strothofff graduated from the Wilmerding School of Industrial Arts, a technical high school for working-class youth, where he majored in architectural drafting. Strothoff, who presumably could not afford a university education, continued his architectural studies at local night schools and architectural clubs. In 1913, he won a medal in a competition that also included the talented Carl J. Warnecke, Ernest Weihe, and Timothy Pflueger.[103] From 1912 until 1913, Strothoff worked as a draftsman in the offices of Albert Farr, a prominent society architect who specialized in high-end single-family homes.[104] Ca. 1915, Strothoff began practicing architecture on his own. Following in the line of his erstwhile employer, Strothoff specialized in designing expensive single-family dwellings, especially in San Francisco's recently established and very affluent St. Francis Wood neighborhood. He worked in the neighborhood for his entire career, eventually designing 25 houses in the tract, nearly all of which still stand.[105]

Charles Strothoff's residential work was simultaneously picturesque and conservative. He favored period revival styles, including the English Tudor, French Provincial, Georgian, and various Hispanic styles that were popular in San Francisco during the 1920s-era building boom. Charles Strothoff often worked in tandem with a Swedish immigrant contractor named Hans Nelson. Working together, the two men designed and built hundreds of houses in several newly developed tracts in the 1920s, including Westwood Park, Westwood Highlands, Monterey Heights, Parkside, Pine Lake Park, and several others. In the early 1920s, the pair was quite active in Westwood Park, where they designed and built dozens of Craftsman bungalows **(Figure 62)**.[106] In 1925, the real estate firm of Baldwin & Howell hired Nelson and Strothoff to design and build all of the houses in the new residence park of Westwood Highlands.[107] By the late 1920s, most of the more desirable tracts on the West Side of San Francisco had been developed and Charles Strothoff began working on the Peninsula, designing houses in several new tracts in Burlingame, San Mateo, and Millbrae. He worked with

Figure 62. Craftsman bungalow in Westwood Park designed by Charles Strothoff.
Source: David Kramer

[102] U.S. Census Bureau, 1900 Census for San Francisco City, Enumeration District 122.
[103] "Architects' League Awards Annual Prizes," *San Francisco Call* (May 31, 1913), 18.
[104] Carolyn Loeb, *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1920s* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2001), 102-3.
[105] Richard Brandi, *San Francisco's St. Francis Wood* (San Francisco: Outside Lands Media, 2012), 140.
[106] "8 Westwood Park Dwellings Planned," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 28, 1924), 8.
[107] Loeb, 102-3.

several different merchant builders on these San Mateo County developments, including the Stoneson Brothers, Niel Schultz, and Gus Moeller.[108]

The onset of the Depression in the early 1930s put a crimp on speculative homebuilding in the United States, and gradually most of the tracts Strothoff was working on ceased construction. Like many San Francisco architects, Charles Strothoff did not design many new buildings for the private market during the Depression. Instead, he began concentrating on government projects, including the Sunshine School (1937 –extant), or anonymous remodeling work. During World War II, Charles Strothoff was appointed Director of the Richmond Housing Authority, and in this capacity, he oversaw the construction of thousands of permanent and temporary housing units for shipyard workers who crowded into the East Bay city. He continued to maintain a satellite office in Richmond from 1947 until 1958. In 1957, he designed Contra Costa Junior College (now Contra Costa College) in the Richmond suburb of San Pablo (extant). Prior to his death in 1963, Charles Strothoff was consulting for the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department.[109]

Martin J. Rist (1888-1956)

Martin J. Rist was born August 17, 1888 in Columbus Ohio. His parents, George and Friederiker Rist, were German immigrants.[110] In 1906, the entire Rist family moved to San Francisco, where they appear in the 1910 Census as living at 315 Mateo Street in Glen Park. Martin Rist, then 22 years old, was already listed as an architect in city directories.[111] Martin Rist first began working as a draftsman for architect William Curlett. In 1914, he took a job as a designer for Charles Gottschalk and Carl Werner. In 1922, he received his license from the California State board of Architecture, and in 1923, he left Gottschalk & Werner to start his own firm.[112] In 1924, Rist collaborated with his old boss, Charles Gottschalk, and the new firm moved into the Phelan Building on Market Street. The partnership of Gottschalk & Rist was very successful, with the firm winning commissions to design estates in Hillsborough and several other affluent enclaves in San Mateo County.[113]

Figure 63. Taraval Police Station, 2345 24th Avenue.
Source: Flickr user Anomalous_A

The onset of the Depression in the early 1930s affected the careers of many San Francisco architects, but not Martin J. Rist, who appears to have done very well, earning commissions for several government buildings, in addition to his traditional base of affluent suburbanites in

[108] "Developers Start Office Building," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 28, 1930), 5.
[109] "Charles Strothoff, Architect, Dies," *San Francisco Chronicle* (March 6, 1963), 28.
[110] U.S. Census Bureau, 1900 U.S. Census for Columbus, Ohio.
[111] U.S. Census Bureau, 1910 U.S. Census for San Francisco City, Enumeration District 73, sheet 15B.
[112] "Granted Certificates to Practice," *The Architect and Engineer*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (October 1922), 106.
[113] San Francisco Planning Department, *Landmark Designation Report: "University Mound Old Ladies' Home"* (San Francisco: 2015), 16.

San Mateo County. Rist's extensive body of Depression-era work was featured in a 17-page spread in the September 1932 edition of *The Architect and Engineer.* The article included brief descriptions, photographs, and drawings of most of Rist's recent works, including the University Mound Old Ladies Home at 350 University Street (San Francisco Landmark No. 269), in San Francisco's Portola District (1931-32–extant); the Taraval Police Station at 2345 24th Avenue, in San Francisco's Parkside District (1930–extant) **(Figure 63)**; the McKinley School at 400 Duane Street, in Redwood City (extant); the Gualt School in Santa Cruz (1931–extant); several estates in Hillsborough, Atherton, and Burlingame; and his own residence at 136 Yerba Buena Avenue in San Francisco's St. Francis Wood neighborhood (1928–extant). Like many architects active during the 1920s and 1930s, Martin J. Rist was proficient in several popular styles, including the Tudor Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Italian Renaissance, and the Georgian Revival.[114]

During the late 1930s, Martin Rist's work became more abstract and increasingly influenced by the contemporary Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and Modernist styles. Some of this may have been the influence of his work for the Public Works Administration (PWA). Indeed, Rist designed three public schools for the PWA in San Francisco, including the Sunshine School at 2728 Bryant Street (1937–extant), the Buena Vista School at 2789 25th Street (1938–demolished in 1968), and Abraham Lincoln High School at 2162 24th Avenue (1940–extant). On the first two commissions, Rist collaborated with Albert Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, and Smith O'Brien. On Abraham Lincoln High School, he worked with Timothy Pflueger, Frederick Meyer, and Wilbur D. Peugh.[115]

After World War II, Martin J. Rist designed several large institutional buildings in San Francisco's West of Twin Peaks area, including West Portal Lutheran Church at 200 Sloat Boulevard (1947–extant), Mercy High School at 3250 19th Avenue (1952–extant), and St. Cecilia's Catholic Church at 2555 17th Avenue (1956–extant). After World War II, Rist's office was based in builder Henry Doelger's headquarters at 320 Judah Street (San Francisco Landmark No. 265). Martin and his wife Alice continued to live at 136 Yerba Buena Avenue in St. Francis Wood until Martin's death on December 3, 1956.[116]

[114] Julian C. Mesic, "Architectural Practice and the Work of Martin J. Rist," *The Architect and Engineer*, Vol. 110, No. 3 (September 1932), 11-26.
[115] San Francisco Planning Department, *Landmark Designation Report: "University Mound Old Ladies' Home"* (San Francisco: 2015), 16.
[116] California Death Index, 1940-1997.

Smith O'Brien (1868–1952)

Smith O'Brien was an Irish-born architect, painter, and sculptor who played an important role in San Francisco's architectural community for many years. Smith O'Brien was born April 21, 1868 in Cork, Ireland.[117] He immigrated to the United States in 1887 as a teenager and became a naturalized American citizen five years later. In Ireland, O'Brien had studied at Stanislaus College. After arriving in San Francisco, he pursued landscape painting at the California School of Fine Arts. Needing money, O'Brien began working as a draftsman for San Francisco architect Clinton Day. In the early 1890s, he started working for the firm of Shea & Shea, where he worked on old San Francisco City Hall.[118] In 1895, O'Brien first appears in city directories as an independent architect, with offices at 126 Kearny Street. In 1902, he formed a partnership with Frederick H. Meyer, a notable collaboration that lasted until 1908.[119] Meyer & O'Brien completed many very important buildings in San Francisco during this period, including the Cadillac Hotel at 380 Eddy Street (1909–extant), the Foxcroft Building at 68-82 Post Street (1908–demolished), the Galen Building at 391-99 Sutter Street (1908–extant), the Hastings Building at 180 Post Street (1908–extant), the Humboldt Bank Building at 783-85 Market Street (1906–extant) **(Figure 64)**, the Monadnock Building at 673-87 Market Street (1906–extant), and the Rialto Building at 116 New Montgomery Street (1910–extant).[120]

Figure 64. Humboldt Bank Building.
Source: Author's collection

Smith O'Brien resumed his solo practice in 1908, working out of an office in the Humboldt Bank Building, a building that he and Frederick H. Meyer had designed two years earlier. In contrast to his earlier commercial work, Smith O'Brien began taking on more religious and public commissions, including the Youth Directory Building at 19th and Church Streets (1909-demolished), St. Joseph's Catholic Orphanage in the Bayview District (1911–demolished), St. Dominic's Priory at Bush and Pierce Streets (1911–extant), and the Novitiate of the Sacred Heart in Los Gatos (demolished). Smith O'Brien also took on several apartment house and hotel commissions in the Tenderloin and Nob Hill, several light industrial loft buildings in the South of Market area, and more commercial buildings downtown. Several of his best-known projects from this period include the Hamman Baths Building at 201-05 Ellis

[117] U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925 for Smith O'Brien, Roll 668, January 17, 1905.
[118] "Plans were Stolen," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 26, 1894), 5.
[119] Finding Aid for the Smith O'Brien drawing of the Youth Directory building (San Francisco, Calif.), Architecture and Design Collection, Design & Architecture Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.
[120] Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage* (San Francisco: Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, 1979).

Street (1909–extant), the Knights of Columbus Hall at 150 Golden Gate Avenue (1913–demolished), and Newman's Furniture Company store at 17th and Mission Streets (1917–extant).

Private construction activity largely came to a halt during World War I, but it resumed in the early 1920s. Smith O'Brien designed several buildings for the Archdiocese of San Francisco, as well as several more for his longtime private clients, during the early 1920s. By 1926, Smith O'Brien, now approaching 60, desired to make art again. Although he continued to take on architectural projects that were of interest to him, he increasingly turned his attention toward realizing his artistic ambitions. By the late 1920s, Smith O'Brien was taking his artistic career seriously for the first time since he was a young man, working in watercolors, oils, and making sepia prints.[121] After being elected president of the California Society of Etchers, O'Brien began exhibiting his work at galleries and museums across the Bay Area. By the time the 1930 Census was recorded, Smith O'Brien was listed as not having a paid occupation, although by then he was most certainly pursuing his artistic career. He lived with his wife Emily at their longtime home at 2032 Baker Street in Pacific Heights.[122] One of O'Brien's last known commissions was the Sunshine School (along with Albert A. Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, and Martin J. Rist). Smith O'Brien enjoyed a long and prosperous retirement doing what he enjoyed most. He died two decades later, in San Francisco, on July 9, 1952 at the age of 84.[123]

[121] Gene Hailey, "Art Exhibits of Small Town," *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 26, 1926), 94.
[122] U.S. Census Bureau, 1930 U.S. Census for San Francisco City, Enumeration District 38-326, sheet 5-B.
[123] California Death Index, 1940-1997.

Spanish Colonial Revival Style

Historically rooted in the domestic architecture of Spain and its colonies, the Spanish Colonial Revival style became the preeminent style in California between World War I and the Depression. During the nineteenth century, most architects in California ignored the state's Hispanic heritage. Nearly all came from other places and they tended to bring their favored architectural styles with them from the East Coast or from Europe. By the mid-1890s, a newfound sense of California identity, combined with the growth of tourism from outside the state, led to the development of an architectural vocabulary better-suited to the state's Spanish/Mexican heritage, dramatic landscape, and temperate climate. The Mission Revival style was the earliest of the Hispanic revivals in California. Influenced by contemporary efforts to restore the state's crumbling missions, architects mined the missions' architectural vocabulary when designing new buildings. The California Building at the 1894 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, designed by San Francisco architect A. Page Brown, is widely recognized as being the first Mission Revival building. The Mission Inn in Riverside, California (1902-35) is another early well-known example.

Most Mission Revival buildings are simple structures characterized by having an overall horizontal massing punctuated by arcades or bands of arched windows, shallow-pitched gable roofs clad in terra cotta tiles, sculpted and/or lobed parapets, and thick stucco-finished walls evoking traditional adobe construction. More elaborate examples of the style, including the Mission Inn, may incorporate a *campanario*, or freestanding belfry tower. The Mission Revival remained the most popular style in California well into the first decade of the twentieth century.

By the 1910s, having largely exhausted the repertoire of California's humble missions, architects began turning toward the more elaborate Spanish colonial buildings of Arizona and Texas, as well as the late Baroque churches of Mexico proper. Taking advantage of these sources, architects designed more complex buildings incorporating towers, domes, and ornate *Churrigueresque* frontispieces. Colorful Mexican tilework, hand-tooled wooden trim, and wrought iron balconies and light fixtures rounded out the new Spanish Colonial Revival style. In California, the style emerged full-blown in San Diego with the Panama-California Exposition of 1915. In addition to several exhibition halls designed by Bertram Goodhue in Balboa Park, probably the best-known early example is the Santa Fe Railroad's San Diego Depot, designed by Arthur Brown Jr. and built in 1915 **(Figure 65)**.

Figure 65. Santa Fe Depot, San Diego

From San Diego, the Spanish Colonial Revival style spread northward throughout the rest of the state. Notable examples include the Santa Barbara County Courthouse (1926), Pasadena City Hall (1927), as well as several new suburban and resort communities, ranging from the affluent rural enclaves of Rancho Santa Fe (San Diego County) and San Clemente (Orange County) to middle-class residential districts such as San Diego's Kensington district or San Francisco's Westwood Highlands **(Figure 66)**.

Figure 66. Westwood Highlands

Source: San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public

Though it never gained the same level of popularity as it did in Southern California, there are many good examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in Northern California. Railroad companies were especially enamored of the style, and many historic rail depots and hotels in the northern part of the state are designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, including the Southern Pacific Railroad's San Francisco Depot (1915–demolished) and Hotel Woodland in Yolo County (1928–extant) **(Figure 67)**. The style was also popular for churches, theaters, and public buildings, including Mission Dolores Basilica (1926–extant), San Francisco's Castro Theater (1922–extant), and a series of fire and police stations and schools designed by San Francisco's City Architect, John Reid Jr., in the 1920s. By the 1930s, the Spanish Colonial Revival style was still popular, but it was increasingly being leavened with other exotic revival influences, including the Moorish, Byzantine, and Art Deco styles. With construction budgets being curbed during the Depression, many architects and builders went in the other direction and stripped the style of many of its features, resulting in the much more restrained Mediterranean style. By the end of the decade, the style had largely vanished in favor of the Streamline Moderne style and Modernism.

Figure 67. Hotel Woodland, Woodland, California.

Public School Design in San Francisco: 1850–1933

During the first decades of the city's existence, San Francisco's public schools were housed in structures built for other purposes, including commercial buildings, churches, and even private dwellings. Post-Gold Rush San Francisco, especially after the Second Vigilance Committee of 1856, was dominated by conservative businessmen who disliked taxes, and infrastructure, including streets, sewers, parks, and schools, all suffered as a result. Nevertheless, a growing population of families in the 1860s increased the demand for public schools. By 1865, there were 37 public primary and secondary schools in San Francisco accommodating around 8,000 students.[124]

Early Public School Design in San Francisco: 1865–1890

Public school buildings erected in San Francisco during the latter half of the nineteenth century were usually of wood-frame construction, three or four stories, and designed in a utilitarian vocabulary incorporating a modest amount of Italianate ornament. A rare and excellently preserved example of this type is the Irving M. Scott School at 1070 Tennessee Street in the Dogpatch neighborhood **(Figure 68)**. Designed by Thomas J. Welsh, a longtime consulting architect to the San Francisco School Board, and built in 1895, the Irving M. Scott School (originally called the Potrero School), which is City Landmark No. 138, is one of the only surviving Victorian-era schools in San Francisco. It is a wood-frame structure massed as a cube that contains two full floor levels above a raised basement. The basement contains storage and the upper floors simply contain classrooms, a principal's office, and a central stair. The classrooms have oversized windows that are designed to admit as much natural light as possible. The windows are also operable and were the sole means of regulating indoor temperatures. Like most Victorian schools in San Francisco, the Irving M. Scott School did not originally have a central heating system, and the toilet rooms were located outside in small one-story structures linked to the main building by covered walkways.

Figure 68. Irving Scott School.

The Progressive Era: 1890–1906

The Progressive movement of the late nineteenth century began to change how Americans thought about education. Among other things, it led to the professionalization of teaching, the application of business/bureaucratic management methods to school administration, and the standardization of school design. School enrollments surged because of Progressive reforms, including the passage of child labor laws and compulsory education statutes in most parts of the country outside the South. In

[124] George Mullany, "New Goals of Public Education," *San Francisco Chronicle* (1939), 5.

response, most large American cities, including San Francisco, found themselves scrambling to build new school facilities to accommodate growing enrollments, as well as to replace outdated facilities.[125]

During the 1890s, the San Francisco School Board launched a campaign to build several new public schools. Many of the city's Victorian schools were reportedly in "wretched" condition, with little or no heat or running water, sewage leaks, and other sanitary and safety issues. Fire was also an ever-present danger with older wood-frame buildings, as evidenced by the destruction of Girls' High School on Scott Street.[126] The School Board decided to replace it with a new, state-of-the-art, three-story-over-basement masonry school building **(Figure 69)**. Designed by Thomas J. Welsh and built in 1892, the new Girls' High School was designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style and built of brick. Its raised basement contained mechanical rooms, a janitor's room, storerooms, two classrooms, a science laboratory, and a recitation [examination] room. Meanwhile, the first floor contained a reception hall, principal's office, library, "museum," four classrooms, and toilet rooms. The second floor contained six classrooms and a "retiring room," and the third floor contained a large assembly room.[127] Girls' High School, which complied with all of the Progressive reformers' guidelines, was much more sophisticated than the contemporary Irving M. Scott School. The growing number of special-purpose rooms at Girls' High School signaled the expanding mission of public schools, as they evolved from teaching basic skills to a limited number of self-selected students toward providing instruction in a range of subjects to a much larger segment of society, including vocational skills, arts and music, and physical sciences.


THE NEW GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING.

Figure 69. Rendering of Girls' High School.
***San Francisco Chronicle* (June 27, 1892)**

Throughout the rest of the 1890s and into the first decade of the twentieth century, the San Francisco School Board replaced several of its older wood-frame "firetraps" with new masonry buildings similar to Girls' High School. Unfortunately, many of these new schools succumbed to the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. In the disaster, 29 of the city's 74 public school buildings, including Girls' High School, were destroyed. Many others were rendered temporarily or permanently unusable. The School Board hurriedly set up temporary schools in the refugee camps and quickly built 36 temporary buildings accommodating 8,000 children.[128]

[125] Dale Allen Gyure, *The Chicago Schoolhouse* (Chicago: The Center for American Places at Columbia College Chicago, 2011).
[126] "Money Wanted for Schools and Jails," *San Francisco Chronicle* (February 15, 1896), 15.
[127] "Girls' High School," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 27, 1892), 3.
[128] City and County of San Francisco, *Municipal Reports: The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of April 1906* (San Francisco: 1907).

Post-Earthquake School Construction in San Francisco: 1906–1915

In 1907, Mayor Edward R. Taylor established the Bureau of Architecture, and appointed Newton Tharp as the first official City Architect. Just two months later, the School Board announced its plan to build 44 new schools, including 16 "Class A" buildings of reinforced concrete and 28 "Class B" schools of wood-frame construction. City Architect Tharp rejected brick construction, given how poorly unreinforced-masonry buildings like Girls' High School had fared in the earthquake. All of the new schools were to be modern in every way, with central heating and ventilation and indoor plumbing. Tharp prioritized four new high school buildings, including replacements for Girls' High School, Lowell High School, and Polytechnic High School, as well as the new Commercial High School. A good example of Tharp's post-quake schools is Commercial High School at 170 Fell Street. Built in 1908, this three-story-over-basement, reinforced concrete, brick-clad building is designed in the Renaissance/Baroque style. Lowell High School, now San Francisco City College's John Adams Campus, is another excellent example. Built in 1911 at the northwest corner of Masonic Avenue and Hayes Street, the former Lowell High is a typical American high school from the early twentieth century **(Figure 70)**. Constructed of concrete with brick facing, the building has a 'U'-shaped plan enclosing a central courtyard and a separate freestanding gymnasium. Its exterior is designed in a restrained Renaissance/Baroque vocabulary with a modest amount of applied ornament.

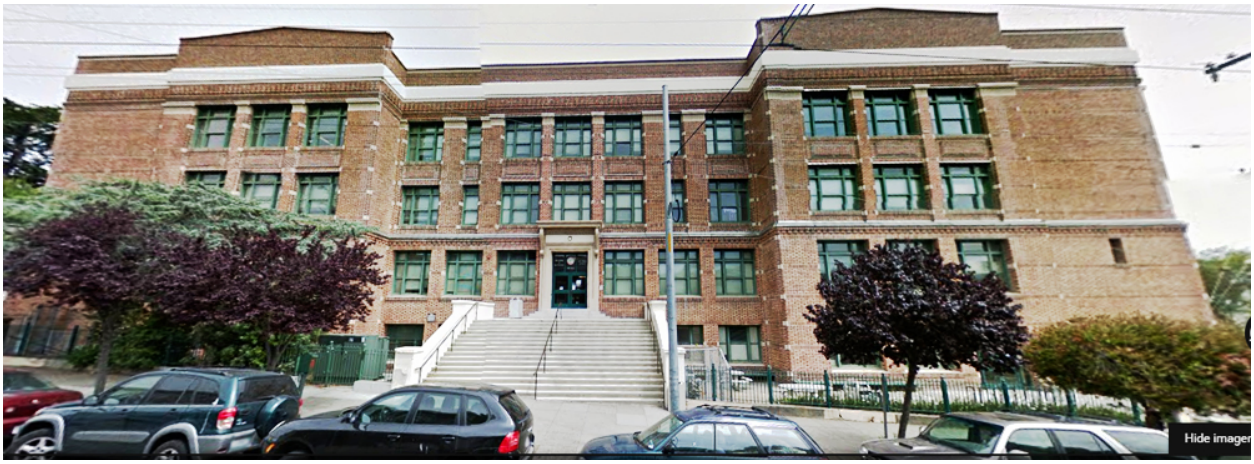


Figure 70. Former Lowell High School (now San Francisco City College's John Adams Campus).
Source: Google Streetview; annotated by Christopher VerPlanck

Golden Age of School Construction: 1915 –1930

The election of James Rolph as mayor of San Francisco in 1911 signaled the beginning of an unprecedented 19-year infrastructure boom in the city. Though registered as a Republican, Rolph was a progressive politician enjoying strong bipartisan support from many sectors, including organized labor and working-class San Franciscans of all stripes. His many infrastructure projects included New City Hall, the Civic Auditorium, the Hetch Hetchy water system, the Panama Pacific International Exposition, the Municipal Railway, Twin Peaks Tunnel, and many roadbuilding projects. His road and transit improvements opened up the vast western and southern parts of the city to development. The rapid development of these areas, including the Sunset, Parkside, and Richmond Districts on the West Side; and the Excelsior, Crocker-Amazon, Portola, and Outer Mission Districts in the southeast part of town, led to demands to increase the number of public schools in these newly developing areas.

Not long after he was elected, Mayor Rolph appointed John Reid, Jr. as the new City Architect. Reid immediately found himself confronted with the huge task of building several new schools and rebuilding many of the city's older schools. The School Board still operated 17 outdated Victorian-era schools and several "temporary" schools built in the aftermath of the 1906 Earthquake. With Reid's assistance, Mayor Rolph oversaw the drafting of two school construction bonds in 1917 and 1922 to fund the work. Desperate for better schools, San Franciscans eagerly approved the bonds, ushering in the "Golden Age of School Construction." City Architect Reid designed about half of the approximately 50 schools built in San Francisco between 1920 and 1930, with the newly formed Board of Education awarding the rest to various private architecture firms who worked under Reid's supervision.[129]

The schools built during Reid's tenure were almost all designed in regional styles appropriate to California's Mediterranean climate and landscape, including the Spanish Colonial Revival, Italian Renaissance, and Mediterranean styles. In conformance with modern building and life/safety codes, all were built of "fireproof" concrete construction with durable stucco finishes and terra cotta and cement plaster trim. Some of the best examples include Mission High School (1925–27), which is San Francisco Landmark No. 255 **(Figure 71)**; Commerce High School (1926), which is San Landmark No. 140; and Balboa High School (1928–34), which is San Francisco Landmark No. 205.

Figure 71. Mission High School, 1926.
Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, AAB-0389

Many of the new schools were much larger than their predecessors. In contrast to the Victorian-era schools, or even the Edwardian-era schools, both of which typically consisted of a single block sited at the center of a paved lot, Reid's schools were usually composed of multiple buildings, as well as adjoining ballfields and other sporting facilities. Since World War I, educational leaders had advocated for the incorporation of physical education into the public school curriculum. This required larger sites to accommodate play yards, running tracks, and ballfields. Accommodating outdoor recreation was not as challenging in the peripheral neighborhoods where land was still available, but it was much more difficult to achieve in already built-up parts of the city, giving administrators the choice of assembling the sites through condemnation proceedings–never a popular policy–or relocating the school to an outlying neighborhood where land was available.

[129] "Message of His Honor, Mayor Rolph," *The Municipal Record* (San Francisco: January 7, 1926), 4.

Another factor in the growth of American public school campuses during the 1920s was the invention of the "comprehensive" school model, which combined academic, vocational, arts and music, sports, and home economics departments in one campus. As the complexity of public schools grew, City Architect John Reid Jr. and contract architects designed sprawling multi-unit complexes that typically included at a minimum an "academic" building, a gymnasium, an auditorium, and a shop/industrial arts building. Typically linked together in an "h," "L," "U," or "O"-shaped plan, each component was expressed on the exterior as a separate building, even though they were all linked together by internal corridors. Balboa High School, the first built in the Outer Mission District, occupies approximately five city blocks. It has an O-plan with academic wings extending along Onondaga and Cayuga Avenues; an auditorium on Otsego Avenue; and a gymnasium and sports fields occupying a swath of land bounded by Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Otsego Avenues **(Figure 72)**. One of the largest school campuses in San Francisco, it is even larger when combined with the adjoining James Denman Middle School campus on Oneida Avenue.

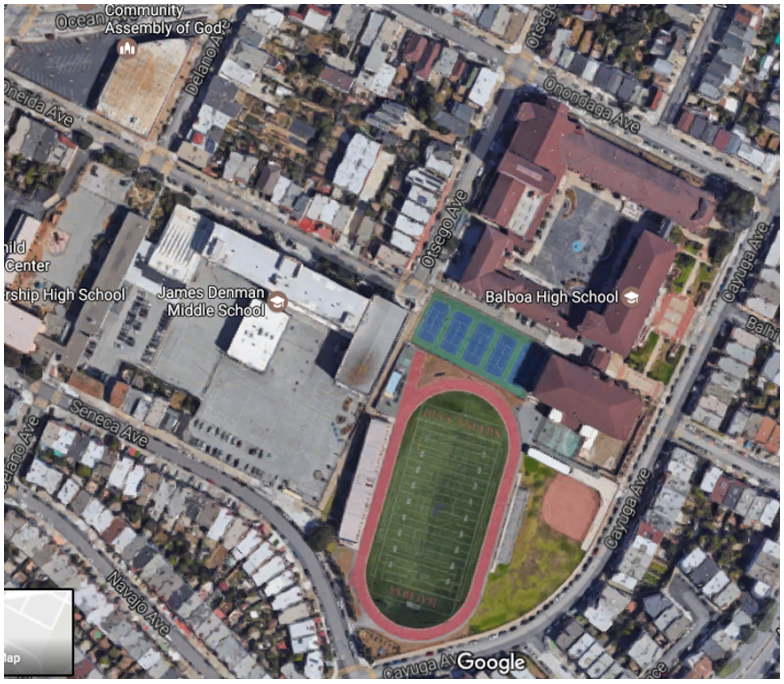


Figure 72. Aerial photograph of Balboa High School.
Source: Google Maps

By the end of the 1920s, San Francisco, which had once been known for having one of the worst public school plants in the nation, now had what many considered to be second-to-none. In 1923, St. Louis architect William B. Ittner praised San Francisco's commitment to building not only functional but beautiful schools: "The creation of an environment, healthful and beautiful, has been the architectural keynote and the school buildings are a sincere expression of the joy, health and beauty that should belong to our school children."[130]

Although he did not take a salary, City Architect John Reid, Jr. received a commission equal to 6 percent of the construction costs of each completed building. Though there was no evidence of actual wrongdoing, Reid was Mayor Rolph's brother-in-law, and following an incident, he resigned his post in 1927 to quash accusations of nepotism. Reid's resignation left a void at the office of the City Architect. His replacement, Charles Sawyer, did not design many new civic buildings, limiting his role to awarding commissions to private firms. The Stock Market Crash two years later also dealt a blow to San Francisco's school construction campaign. Ten days after the crash, Board of Education President Daniel

[130] Don Andreini, "Civic Architecture: San Francisco's Public Schools," *Heritage Newsletter*,XVI:3 (September 1988), 7.

C. Murphy issued a statement calling into question San Francisco's continued ability to build "the fine type of schools" that the city had grown accustomed to during the 1910s and 1920s.[131] Although the San Francisco chapter of the American Institute of Architects argued that the City should continue "providing school buildings of enduring quality and design," the primary question on everyone's mind was where the money would come from.

Nonetheless, several schools that had already been designed and funded were built in the first year or two after the crash, including Miller & Pflueger's Theodore Roosevelt Junior High School (now Roosevelt Middle School), which was built in 1930 near the intersection of Arguello and Geary Boulevards **(Figure 73)**. Roosevelt, designed in a fusion of the Art Deco and Dutch Expressionist styles, is universally recognized as being one of San Francisco's best-designed public schools. Even though it was not a New Deal project, in terms of its architectural quality and advanced styling, it foreshadowed the continuation of the Golden Age of San Francisco School Construction into the 1930s, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal public works programs picked up the mantle.

Figure 73. Theodore Roosevelt Middle School.

[131] Ibid.

ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION

This section of the case report provides an analysis and summary of the applicable criteria for designation, integrity statement, statement of significance, period of significance, inventory of character-defining features, and additional Article 10 requirements.

CRITERA FOR DESIGNATION

Check all criteria applicable to the significance of the property that are documented in the report. The criteria checked are the basic justifications for *why* the resource is important.

X Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

_ Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.

X Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

_ Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

Statement of Significance

Characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation:

Events

The former Sunshine School is significant as the first public school specifically designed for children with physical disabilities built west of the Rockies. Prior to its completion in 1937, children with physical disabilities attended the Sunshine School for Crippled Children (established 1924), which was housed in a bungalow on Bush Street, and then a decrepit wood-frame building behind Mission High School. Meanwhile, children with chronic and acute illnesses attended the Buena Vista Health School (established 1915), which was in an old unsafe Victorian school building in the Mission District. Progressive public health professionals and teachers of children with disabilities increasingly believed that disabled and chronically ill children should attend school in safe and accessible buildings separate from the mainstream. The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the United States' first disabled president, in 1932 signaled a sea change in the treatment of children with disabilities in the U.S. – at least in more enlightened areas like San Francisco. Designed in 1933–34 and built 1935–37, the Sunshine School was designed with a barrier-free floor plan prefiguring the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act over 50 years later. The Sunshine School also contained rehabilitation facilities, sunlit rest areas, and a protected outdoor play area. Built decades before the disability rights movement took off in the 1960s/1970s, those responsible for building the Sunshine School were nonetheless imbued with a sense that they were advancing the cause of social justice, by ensuring that previously marginalized communities had access to the same opportunities as "normal" Americans.

San Francisco's Sunshine School inspired several adjoining Bay Area counties to build their own "orthopedic" schools, including the Sunshine School in Berkeley and the Park School in Mill Valley. More important, throughout its almost half-century of existence, the Sunshine School improved the lives of an untold number of San Franciscans. Public health professionals and teachers from across the nation regularly toured the school and remarked on its caring and competent teachers and the happy and contented demeanor of its students. Many children who could not walk or perform other basic motor skills when they entered the school gained (or regained) the use of their limbs. Moreover, many chronically ill children, whose parents may have given up on their recuperation, recovered their strength with the assistance of nutritious diets (including all the milk they could drink), targeted exercise, and regular periods of rest in sunlit and airy "rest rooms." Kept apart from the occasional insensitive comments of "normal" children, the students of the Sunshine School thrived in a supportive environment, learning confidence and forming lifetime bonds with teachers and fellow students.

The Sunshine School is also significant for its association with the Public Works Administration (PWA), a New Deal public works program that literally changed the face of America. Established in 1933 as part of FDR's National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), the PWA's primary purpose was to boost construction and demand for building materials. Administered by Harold Ickes, the PWA provided a combination of grants, loans, and technical expertise to communities across the nation so that they could construct permanent and modern infrastructure and public buildings. Typically designed by local architects and built by local contractors, the PWA nonetheless carefully supervised its projects, insisting upon quality design and construction to ensure that countless PWA projects continue to serve the nation 80 years on.

Significant Architecture

The former Sunshine School is an architecturally distinguished property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type (public school), period (Depression), method of construction (concrete and tile), and style (Spanish Colonial Revival). Designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style with Art Deco and Moorish details, the building is one of San Francisco's most distinctive public school buildings. Beyond its picturesque styling, comparable to the locally landmarked Mission High School, the former Sunshine School has an ingenious floorplan devised to combine two specialized schools–the Sunshine School for Crippled Children and the Buena Vista Health School–into one campus. A controversial decision, those responsible for its design responded to fears that children with communicable diseases should be kept apart from the disabled children by providing separate entrances. Children with physical disabilities, who arrived by taxi, entered the school on Florida Street via a covered driveway. Meanwhile, children with chronic and acute illnesses entered the building on Bryant Street, where stairs lead up to the second floor. Each floor level had its own classrooms, dining facilities, gymnasiums, and toilet rooms. Designed to take advantage of the Mission's balmy climate, banks of operable windows and skylights allowed fresh air and light into all parts of the building's interior. In addition, the large central courtyard provided a safe play area for the children as well as a place to grown their own vegetables and flowers.

Like so many other PWA projects, the former Sunshine School embodies high artistic values by virtue of its high-quality materials and craftsmanship. Although built of board-formed concrete and other mass-produced materials, the building is embellished with high-quality detailing and other features, including Mexican-style tilework on the water table and around the entrances, tile wainscoting in the lobby/stair and the therapeutic pool room, and the Art Deco light fixtures in the lobby/stair and the auditoriums. Other artistic touches, whose makers' names are now lost to history, include the hand-painted stenciling on the beams in many of the classrooms, the wrought-iron grilles over some of the windows, the statue of the child above the Bryant Street entrance, and the figural animal finials atop the classroom wings.

Finally, the former Sunshine School is significant as the work of four master architects: Albert A. Schroepfer, Charles F. Strothoff, Martin J. Rist, and Smith O'Brien. Although at very different points in their respective careers, with Messrs. O'Brien and Schroepfer nearing retirement and Messrs. Strothoff and Rist still very active, all four were comparable in terms of their output, though Smith O'Brien was responsible for far more high-profile buildings than the other three. Schroepfer was a prolific designer of residential hotels and apartment houses, with the Chambord Apartments being his primary masterpiece. Strothoff was mainly a designer of speculative housing in San Francisco's West of Twin Peaks area, where he specialized in fanciful Spanish Colonial Revival houses for the middle class. Martin J. Rist, who had more experience designing schools than the other three, was also a designer of estates in San Mateo County's most prestigious enclaves. Though there is no record indicating who was responsible for what, the influence of all four architects can be seen in the design of the Sunshine School.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the Sunshine School is 1937 to 1975, beginning with the completion of the school and concluding with the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, which signaled the end of separate schools for handicapped and chronically ill children.

Integrity

The seven aspects of integrity used by the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code are: location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association. In summary, although the Sunshine School has undergone several alterations, chiefly window replacement and some interior upgrades to classrooms and toilet rooms, the building retains ample integrity to convey its association with its original design, use, and period of construction.

Location:

The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of location because it has never been moved.

Design:
The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of design because the school continues to keep its original floorplan, massing, fenestration pattern, and Spanish Colonial Revival ornament. The building has undergone very exterior few changes at all. Many interior spaces have had their original uses change, particularly after Hilltop High School moved into the building in 1985. This resulted in some changes to certain character-defining spaces, including the therapeutic pool, which was converted into an industrial kitchen. In addition, SFUSD has upgraded toilet rooms and added a new elevator to comply with accessibility, life-safety, and energy codes.

Materials:
The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of materials because it has kept virtually all of its original building materials, including its painted concrete exterior walls and trim, exterior tilework, tiled lobby/stair, original Art Deco light fixtures, and more basic interior finish materials. Some original interior materials have been replaced as part of ongoing maintenance, including new resilient tile flooring, acoustical ceiling tiles, fluorescent light fixtures, and toilet room interiors, but for the most part these new materials are additive and entirely compatible.

Workmanship:
The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of workmanship because the school retains its original craftsmanship, including, on the exterior the cast concrete ornament, Mexican-style tilework, and ornate wrought-iron window grilles. Within the interior, the building retains its original tiled wainscoting in the lobby/stair on Bryant Street and the entrance lobby on Florida Street, and the Art Deco light fixtures in the lobby stair. In addition, most of the classrooms retain their original hand-painted stenciling.

Setting
The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of setting because in addition to the surrounding neighborhood not having undergone any substantial changes since the school was completed in 1937, the property itself remains largely unchanged, including the landscaped planting strip along Bryant Street and the central courtyard with its flagpole/bench and two intact planting beds.

Feeling:
The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of feeling, because even though the interior of the school has been upgraded over the years, the building retains enough of its original high-quality materials and hand-crafted ornament and finishes that it still feels like a New Deal-era property.

Association:
The former Sunshine School retains the aspect of association because it has not changed enough that it would not be immediately recognizable to anyone who either attended or worked at the school during the period of significance.

Article 10 Requirements Section 1004 (b)

Boundaries of the Landmark Site

The site proposed for Landmark status encompasses the entirety of Assessor Parcel Number 4273/008, a 38,999-square-foot parcel bounded by Bryant Street to the east, Florida Street to the west, and residential properties to the north and south.

Character-defining Features

A case report for a property proposed for Landmark status under Article 10 of the Planning Code requires an inventory of character-defining features. This is required so that the property owner, Planning staff, and the public know what features and materials (elements) should be preserved in order to protect the historical and architectural character of the proposed Landmark. The character-defining exterior features of the former Sunshine School include all exterior elevations, including but not limited to its form, massing, structure, architectural ornament, and materials. More specifically, its character-defining features include:

- The school's overall height, massing, and footprint;
- All exterior façades and the three courtyard façades, including the painted concrete walls with exposed board form impressions and all molded concrete ornament, including scalloped relief moldings, entablatures, engaged piers and buttresses, frieze, oversized buttresses facing the courtyard, balconies, and figural and animal sculptures;
- All Mexican-style tilework on the exterior, including on the water table of the classroom wings, on window spandrel panels, and flanking the entrances on Bryant and Florida Streets;
- Primary entrance and pavilion on Bryant Street, including paired wooden doors and all paneling above and to either side of the doors;
- Primary entrance on Florida Street, including paired wooden doors and transom;
- Fenestration pattern and turned wooden mullions along Bryant and Florida Street façades but not the aluminum sashes themselves;
- Fenestration pattern, turned wood wooden mullions, and decorative metal screens on courtyard elevations, including remaining historic steel windows;
- All wrought-iron window grilles on Bryant and Florida Street façades and on courtyard elevations;
- The entrance pavilion's hipped roof, including red clay tile accents, finial, and weather vane;
- Incised signage above main entrance on Bryant Street;
- Skylights atop east and west classroom wings;
- Courtyard and remaining sections of original landscaping, including planting bed along Bryant Street and two remaining planting beds at the south side of the courtyard, paved patio at the center of the courtyard (though not the paving material itself), and the tiled flagpole/bench at the north end of the courtyard.

At the time of designation, non-character-defining exterior features include all post-1937 alterations, including the following features:

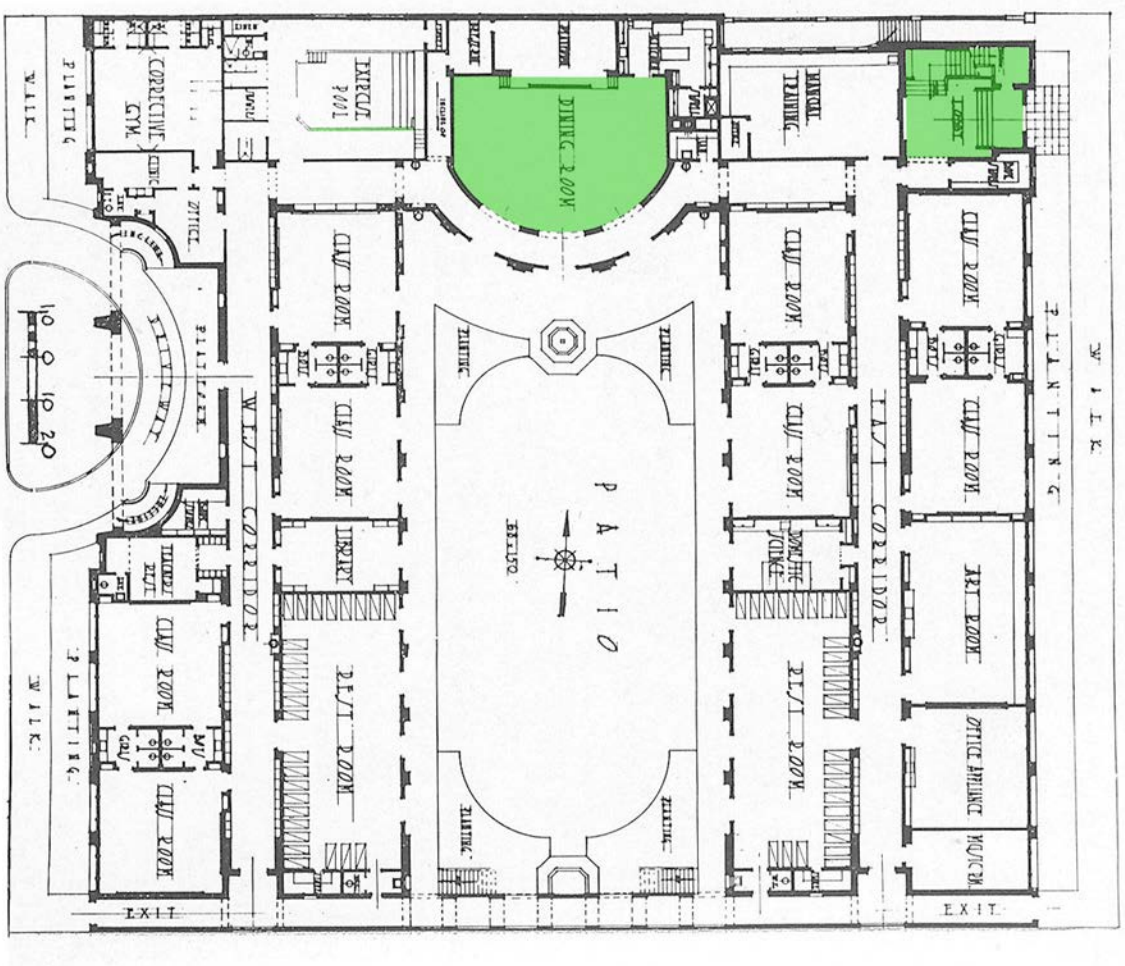
- All non-historic aluminum window sashes along the Bryant and Florida Street façades;
- Concrete pedestrian ramp and aluminum railings at Florida Street entrance;
- Metal security fencing and concrete signage at Florida Street entrance;
- Aluminum doors, flanking sidelights, and transoms in openings on north elevation of courtyard;
- Canopy above balcony on south side of the courtyard;
- Paving and play surfaces in courtyard;
- Play equipment in courtyard;
- Incandescent sconce light fixtures and floodlights on exterior of building;
- Metal fencing along Bryant Street sidewalk;
- Metal security door at south side of Bryant Street and Florida Street façades.

The character-defining spaces and features of the interior of the Sunshine School include:

- Layout, design, and materials of the lobby/stair, including tiled wainscoting, terrazzo flooring, lath and plaster walls, stepped balance-run stair, and remaining light fixtures;
- Layout, design, and materials of the auditorium spaces on the first and second floor levels, including tiled wainscoting, stage area, and light fixtures;
- Layout, design, and materials of the first floor corridor, including remaining tiled surfaces, ceiling vaults, and built-in casework;
- Remaining tile in former therapeutic pool;
- All remaining hand-stenciling on concrete beams in first floor level classrooms;
- All remaining exposed metal trusses on second floor level;
- All surviving Art Deco light fixtures in the lobby/stair and second floor auditorium.

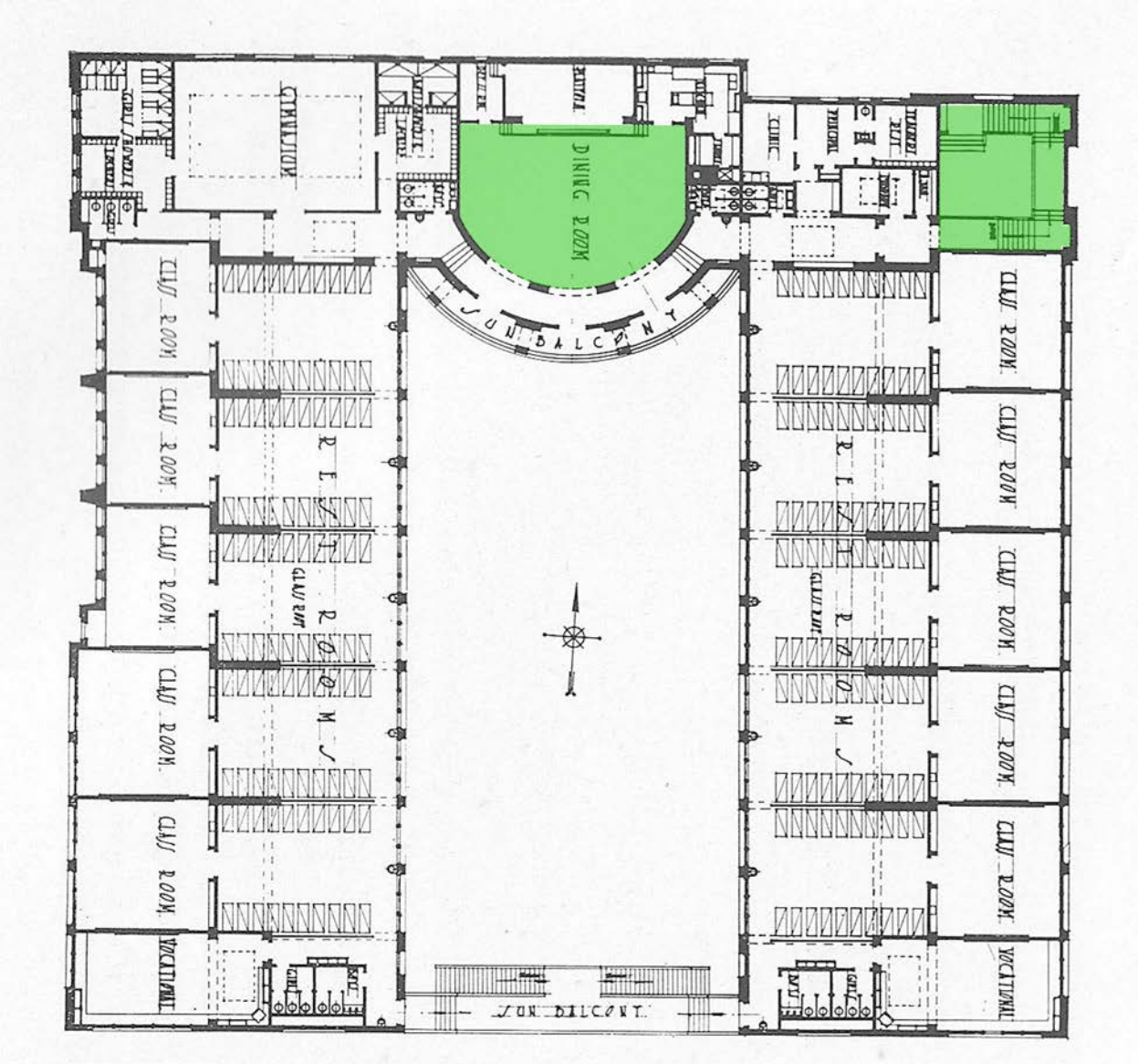
At the time of designation, non-character-defining interior features include all spaces affected by post-1937 alterations, including the remodeled toilet rooms, classrooms (except for the hand-stenciled ceilings), and all utilitarian back-of-house spaces.

Interior Character-Defining Features – First floor



Interior character-defining features are shaded.

Interior Character-Defining Features – Second Floor



Interior character-defining features are shaded.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Historic Name: Sunshine School

Popular Name: Hilltop High School

Address: 2728 Bryant Street

Block and Lot: 4273/008

Owner: San Francisco Unified School District

Current Use: Public School

Zoning: P – Public; 40-X height and bulk

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