

Switzer-West

1829 Madison

Kansas City, Missouri

PHYSICAL BUILDING ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:

Rosin Preservation and SWD conducted a site visit to the buildings on April 30, 2011. The site visit examined the school site and the exterior and interior of the buildings. The site is composed of three building, North, Center and South buildings. The team visited all floors of the buildings. The roofs were not accessible for review, and mechanical and electrical systems were not reviewed. No invasive or destructive review techniques were employed.



The team also reviewed written information provided by the owner. These documents included:

- 2006 Building Dialogue dated 11/20/2006. Dialogue was incomplete. Building conditions are still similar to those noted in the 2006 dialogue.
- CADD floor plans. Basically accurate, but noted with numerous missing items including windows, door, etc.

CONDITION RATING: **

The South Building appears to be beyond repair with all building elements noted in poor condition. The center and north buildings appear structurally sound with the exception of some roof framing areas. The exterior envelop of the center and north buildings are generally in fair condition. Wood windows are in poor condition and have no remaining usable life. The interior finishes are in fair condition with typical wear from use and age. Wood floors are buckled in multiple areas from water infiltration. The electrical system's operable condition is unknown, and the mechanical system is inoperable. The exterior site requires multiple repairs.

HISTORIC RATING: *****

Despite the long period of disuse, the building(s) retains a majority of features and fabric that define its functional property type, its architectural style, and its period of construction. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2009.

PHYSICAL OBSTACLES TO REUSE: Building has been closed for an extensive period; actively leaking roof has caused extensive damage to ceilings and wood floors; building is on multiple levels; one small elevator.

DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING BUILDING ELEMENTS/FEATURES AND VISIBLE ISSUES

Building Structure (North and Center buildings)

- Foundation: Multiple types including concrete with stone in oldest section of the building.
- Floor Framing: Multiple types including concrete, and wood in oldest section.
- Roof Framing: Multiple types including concrete, and wood.

Note: Roofing framing and floor framing that have been taking water should be reviewed by a structural engineer. Masonry cracking noted on west elevation of the original building should also be reviewed.

Exterior Envelope (North and Center buildings)

- Exterior Wall Construction: Brick generally in fair to good condition considering the age of the buildings. Multiple areas requiring repointing, brick replacement and crack repair were noted. Terracotta elements are generally in good requiring cleaning and repointing. Metal cornice and soffit at the center building

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appears to be in fair condition. Stone foundations are generally in good condition with areas requiring repointed noted.

- Exterior Windows: Multi-light wood double-hung sash; some 1/1 aluminum hung sash; steel fixed and awning sashes. Windows are generally in fair to poor condition.
- Exterior Entrances: Multi-light wood doors; metal doors. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Roof: condition unknown.

Building Interior (North and Center buildings)

- Corridors: Wide corridors with polished concrete or VCT flooring and integral concrete base; plaster walls with chair rail; some plaster ceilings and some lay-in grid dropped ceilings with integral florescent light fixtures; some metal lockers set into walls. Materials generally noted in fair condition.
- Classroom Entries: Historic multi-light wood classroom doors and casings; some doorways have operable transoms. Materials generally noted in fair to good condition.
- Classrooms: Plaster walls with wood chair rail; picture rail is intact in some classrooms; ceilings are plaster, acoustical tile or exposed concrete structure; floors are wood, carpet or VCT. Some built-in cabinets and wood-framed chalkboards; classrooms in oldest parts of building retain "school house" pendant light fixtures. Material condition ranges from poor to fair. Condition is dependent on moisture exposure.
- Trim: Wood chair rail in most corridors and classrooms; picture rail molding visible in some locations; many built-in cabinets, chalkboard frames, and coat closets; wood door and window casings; wood base in classrooms; wood-framed display cases in the corridors; ornamental plaster ceilings in auditorium and library; classrooms in oldest portion have beadboard wainscot. Materials are generally in fair condition. Plaster ceiling in auditorium is in poor condition.
- Stairwells/Egress: Concrete stairwells with wood cap and wood or metal railings. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Restrooms: Walls have plaster above marble panels; hex tile floor; some historic metal stall partitions; historic single, double and triple water fountains. Materials and fixtures are generally in good to fair condition with normal evidence of use and wear.

Conveying System (North and Center buildings)

- The building has an elevator. It was not operational for review during the site visit.

Fire Protection Systems (North and Center buildings)

- Fire Alarm system information was not included in the 2006 Building Dialogue. Fire Alarm system appears to be a simple manual system with horns, strobes and pulls located in corridors. No smoke detectors.
- Fire sprinklers are not provided.

Mechanical / Electrical Systems (*Information from the 2006 Building Dialogue*)

- Low pressure steam boilers provide heat for the buildings. Steam radiators and fin tube heaters are located in the classrooms providing heating. Boilers are inoperable and building ventilation systems have not been operated for approximately 17 years. Operable condition is unknown.
- Air-conditioning is not provided.
- Electrical system information was not provided in the 2006 Dialogue.

Site

- Retaining Walls: Cast in place concrete along west side and at area wells. Generally noted in fair conditions with a few minor areas of damage. Stone retaining walls throughout the site are generally in poor condition with multiple areas noted requiring repointing, some stone replacement or replacement.
- Sidewalks: Concrete, generally in fair conditions. City owned sidewalks surrounding the site generally in fair condition with damaged areas noted on the east side.
- Parking Lots: Asphalt and concrete is in poor condition. All surfaces should be replaced.

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- Lawn and Landscaping: Poor condition. The entire site is overgrown.
- Fencing: Chain link is in fair condition with some areas of damage noted.
- Exterior railings: Typical steel pipe, fair condition with some damaged areas. Repainting recommended.

Key Public Spaces

- Auditorium – Large raised stage; balcony; decorative plaster at walls and ceilings; historic pendant light fixtures; fixed wood and metal seats; significant water damage at southeast corner.
- Library – Was a public library and has exits to main entry vestibule as well as into the school corridor; carpet, marble base, ornate plaster ceiling, built-in wood shelves, historic wood doors.
- Gymnasium – Two small adjacent gyms (girls and boys), each have a two-story space; concrete balcony; concrete ceiling; wood floors; brick and plaster walls; large multi-light wood windows
- Pool – Narrow rectangular pool in sub-basement; pool, floor/deck, and walls are 1" ceramic tile; connects to separate pool locker rooms; pool area has windows due to change in grade.
- Cafeteria – VCT, plaster walls, acoustical tile ceiling, metal awning windows, significant water damage and mold growth.
- Office - Similar finishes to classrooms, with historic desk and cabinet built-ins.

Other Special/Distinct Features

Wood trim and doors throughout building; many historic pendant lights in older parts of building; auditorium and library are highly intact and character-defining spaces.