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Project No: 22-12878

Amelia Schwartz  
City of Chehalis, Department of Community Development  
1321 South Market Boulevard  
Chehalis, Washington 98532  
Via email: [aschwartz@ci.chehalis.wa.us](mailto:aschwartz@ci.chehalis.wa.us)

**Subject: Cascade School Chehalis City Register Nomination  
89 SW 3rd Street, Chehalis, Washington 98532**

Dear Ms. Schwartz:

This memorandum presents a nomination of the Cascade School located at 89 SW Third Street (APN 004236002000) for listing in the Chehalis City Register. Michael McCowan retained Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) to assist in the preparation of the nomination in support of the local permitting process for the redevelopment of the building. The project applicant is also pursuing incentives provided by the Federal Historic Tax Credits and the State Special Property Tax Valuation. We are in the process of preparing a nomination for the property for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as well as a Part 1 Historic Preservation Certification Application (HPCA) for the Federal Historic Tax Credit program.

As presented in this nomination, the property at 89 SW Third Street, also known as the Cascade School, is recommended eligible for listing in the Chehalis City Register under Criterion A for its association with the board pattern of educational development in Chehalis. It is also recommended eligible under Criterion D as a special example of Chehalis's economic and architectural history. The Cascade School is the only remaining elementary school in Chehalis from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and serves as a reminder of the educational efforts of the city during this time of economic growth and shifting student needs. Built with modern, Progressive-Era ideals, the school's design embodies changing ideas about education. Designed by Hill, Mock & Griffin, in the Neoclassical Revival style it also represents Chehalis's continued commitment to improved education facilities.

This memorandum was written by Rincon Architectural Historian JulieAnn Murphy, MSHP, and Architectural Historian James Williams, MA. Rincon Architectural History Program Manager Steven Treffers, MHP provided oversight. Rincon Principal Shannon Carmack, B.A. provided QA/QC review. Ms. Carmack, Mr. Treffers, Ms. Murphy, and Mr. Williams all meet and exceed the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for architectural history and history.

## Regulatory Framework

### City of Chehalis Historic Preservation Ordinance

The City of Chehalis adopted a historic preservation ordinance to support the recognition, perpetuation, and continued use of buildings, sites, and districts of historical significance within the city in the interest of civic pride and the prosperity of general welfare of the city's inhabitants. The ordinance provides for



the establishment of an historic commission and guidance for designating properties to the local register. The criteria for determining designation in the city register are as follows:

Any building, site, or district may be designated for inclusion in the city register if it has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or nation, is at least 50 years of age, or is of lesser age and has exceptional importance, and:

- a. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, state, or national history;
- b. Embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of design or construction or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- c. Is an outstanding work of a designer, builder, or architect who has made a substantial contribution to the art;
- d. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city's cultural, special, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural history;
- e. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in national, state, or local history;
- f. Has yielded or may be likely to yield important archaeological information;
- g. Is a building removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value or which is the only surviving structure significantly associated with a historic person or event;
- h. Is a cemetery, which derives its primary significance from age, distinctive design features, or association with historic events, people, or cultural patterns;
- i. Is a reconstructed building that has been executed in a historically accurate manner, within a suitable environment on the original building site and which is congruent with the city's history; or
- j. Is a creative and unique example of formal architecture and design created by persons not formally trained in the architectural or design professions, and which does not fit into formal architectural or historical categories. [Ord. 508B, 1993.]

## Physical Description

### Overview Site/Setting

Cascade School is located at 89 SW Third Street Chehalis (APN 004236002000).<sup>1</sup> The building is one story building and is bound by SW Second Street to the north, South Market Boulevard to the east, SW Third Street to the south and SW Cascade Avenue to the west. The building's primary (east) elevation faces South Market Boulevard and is fronted by R.E. Bennett School, and separated by a deep-set lawn area. The area west of the building is comprised of a large, paved play area, playground equipment, and a surface parking lot, all enclosed by a chain link fence. Cascade School is located southeast of downtown Chehalis. The area surrounding Cascade School is a residential neighborhood characterized by single-family houses that largely date to the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>1</sup> The property has a second address – 101 SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street

## Exterior

Cascade School is a one-story over basement brick clad building in common bond, with a concrete base and a cross-hipped asphalt roof. Built in 1922, the building has a U-shaped footprint with a central block portion and extending north and south wings, and features Neoclassical Revival architectural elements.

**Figure 1 Cascade School, View Northwest**



### *East Elevation*

The building's primary (east) elevation faces South Market Boulevard and is fronted by the adjacent R.E. Bennett School. The elevation is symmetrical and features a central main entry beneath a full-height entry porch. The porch is accessed via a short concrete stair and has a simple pediment with a central, round half-circle arch detail topped with a plaster keystone detail and continues with a simple fascia below. The porch is supported by two full-height simple, Doric columns. The flanking ends of the porch are enclosed and have simple pilasters at equal intervals. The main entry includes a paired multi-lite entry door with two multi-lite single-entry doors on either side, also separated by pilaster details. All entry doors feature a rectangular, multi-lite transom. The area above the transom windows features molding and a round multi-lite window that aligns with the half circle reveal in the pediment.

The elevation continues with two identical bays on each side of the main entry that feature a large window opening with a concrete sill that runs for the length of the opening. The window openings have been partially infilled with stucco panels and windows are modern tripartite replacements. The

northernmost and southernmost bays are comprised of the hipped ends of the north and south wings and project from the primary elevation and each feature a central tripartite basketweave brick detail.

The building's basement level is partially visible at this elevation and has a smooth stucco finish. The area that fronts the basement level is planted with shrubs. The southeast portion of the elevation includes a non-historic wood frame accessibility ramp. A flagpole sits just north of the main entry stairs (Figure 1).

### *North Elevation*

The building's north elevation fronts SW Second Street. The elevation extends for seven bays and generally repeats the same composition described above with a brick clad exterior above a partially visible stucco basement level. The elevation includes two secondary entrances. The westernmost entry is accessed via a short concrete stair and continues to a recessed entry below a simple cornice with "Cascade School" etched in the frieze. The entry is flanked by simple columns with pilasters on each end. The door is a paired, multi-lite door with multi-lite sidelites and transoms.

The easternmost secondary entrance is also accessed via a short concrete stair. The entry is recessed and below a simple cornice and unadorned frieze with flanking pilasters. The entry door is similar to other entry doors and has a paired multilite door with multilite sidelites and transom (Figure 2).

**Figure 2 North Elevation Entry, View South**



The bays between and beside each entry repeats the same window configuration described on the primary elevation – a large opening partially infilled with stucco panels and modern windows above a concrete sill that extends for the width of the opening. The basement level bays that flank the easternmost entry feature four single window openings that generally align with the window openings above and have window wells below. One opening at the easternmost basement bay has a vent. There is one basement level entry at this elevation, west of the easternmost entry stair. Similar to the primary elevation, it is fronted by a shallow planted area adjacent to the sidewalk.

### *South Elevation*

The building's south elevation mostly repeats the same pattern described on the north elevation. Similar to the north elevation, the basement level at the south elevation includes windows at the easternmost bays. The easternmost entry at the elevation is simpler than those previously described and does not include a cornice details or pilasters. Furthermore, the entry doors are simpler in design and have paired half-lite doors with simple transoms above. The last bay at this elevation is also differentiated from other openings in that it is larger at both the basement level and the first-floor level, suggesting this portion of the building is a later addition (Figure 3).

**Figure 3 South Elevation, View Northwest**



### *West Elevation*

The building follows the natural slope of the site and the west, or rear, elevation fronts the adjacent paved playground. The west elevations of the north and south wings are near identical and feature a

stucco exterior at the basement level and brick cladding above. Unlike the street-facing elevations, the brick pattern on the building rear is laid in a simple running bond instead of common bond. Each wing has a central paired door entry to the basement level within. Each entry is topped with an awning with a single, and central window above. As described above, the south wing appears to have a later addition and its window is slightly different than that on the north wing and is covered with security bars (Figure 4).

**Figure 4 West Elevation, View Northeast**



The remainder of the elevation is comprised of the courtyard-facing elevations of the north and south wings. The north and south wings repeat the same pattern and extend for two bays from the central block. As described on other elevations, the first-floor level is brick clad in common bond and is stucco at the basement level. Each bay is similar to those described on the street-facing elevations and includes two large openings with a concrete sill and partially infilled with stucco panels and modern replacement windows. At the basement level, which is fully visible at this portion of the elevation features four single windows at each bay and aligns with window opening above. The westernmost bay of south wing elevation features a larger window opening at the first floor and basement levels. There is a single man door entry topped with a flat awning at the end of each wing, where they meet the central block.

The rear elevation of the central block is characterized by a central portion that rises above the roofline of the main block and includes a brick chimney that continues to a smaller one-story addition with a stucco exterior. The chimney is flanked above by two large, rectangular openings with concrete sills similar to those at other elevation opening. The openings are infilled with wood. On each side of the



central portion, at the building's first floor, are two punched window openings. The openings are topped with segmental arched brick details and have marble sills. Windows on the north side are multilite steel sash windows and windows on the south side include one one-over-two double hung window and one infilled opening. The basement level at this portion of the elevation is painted, board form concrete with one opening on each site.

A one-story CMU addition at the rear of the central block portion and has a gable roof that extends from below the large openings of the adjacent central portion. The addition exterior includes a multilite ribbon window along the west elevation followed by a paired entry door and a second multilite window.

## Significance

### Historical Background

#### Development of Chehalis

The City of Chehalis is located in southwestern Washington in the valleys of the Chehalis and Newaukum Rivers.<sup>2</sup> The area was originally inhabited by Upper Chehalis Indians and the Taidnapam band of Cowlitz Indians, who appeared to have used the area primarily as a trade route with the Yakama Indians on the east side of the Cascades.<sup>3</sup>

Chehalis began to be developed in 1850 when a 640-acre land claim was staked by Schuyler and Eliza Saunders. The family built a farm and in 1859 they established the first post office in the community, named Saundersville, but locally known as Saunders' Bottom for its marshy condition and near impassible terrain. The Saunders divorced in 1859, and Eliza retained the northern part of their claim, while the southern portion was sold to Obadiah and Margaret McFadden. In 1863 McFadden built a corduroy road through Saunder's Bottom, thereby improving transportation. He took over the post office in 1870 and changed the name to Chehalis.<sup>4</sup>

In 1864, William West, his wife Elizabeth, son Robert, and son-in-law John Dobson became the second outside residents of Saundersville. West became integral in the development of Chehalis.<sup>5</sup> After establishing his own farm, he helped get the Northern Pacific Railroad to build a station in Chehalis. He then invested in a joint stock company to build the town's first warehouse, organized the first school district, and served the community in a number of official positions.<sup>6</sup> The most transformative improvement arrived in Chehalis 1873 when the Northern Pacific Railroad opened, after West was able to persuade them to build through Chehalis instead of the neighboring settlement of Claquato.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Chehalis Downton Historic District Nomination, NR Registration #97001407

<sup>3</sup> Chehalis – Thumbnail History, [https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20\(NPRR\).,](https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20(NPRR).,) accessed June 2022.

<sup>4</sup> The state legislature officially recognized the name change to Chehalis in 1879.

<sup>5</sup> Blomdahl, George H. "Swamp made Chehalis place to avoid in 1850s," *The Daily Chronicle*, Bicentennial Addition July 1976.

<sup>6</sup> Chehalis – Thumbnail History, [https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20\(NPRR\).,](https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20(NPRR).,) accessed June 2022.

<sup>7</sup> History of Chehalis Washington. [https://www.ci.chehalis.wa.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/Chehalis%20History%20on-line\\_0.pdf,](https://www.ci.chehalis.wa.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/Chehalis%20History%20on-line_0.pdf) accessed June 2022.



Having the rail connect to Puget Sound and the Columbia River opened markets for Chehalis residents. The city's importance began to grow because of its rail access and in 1874 the county seat moved from Claquato to Chehalis. That same year Chehalis constructed a courthouse. As the town grew, Eliza Saunders plotted land around present-day Main Street and the rail line and businesses began to flourish. The city was incorporated in 1883, and development continued with the opening of several businesses including a sash and door factory, the *Chehalis Nugget* newspaper, the Superior Coal Mine, a tin shop, sawmills, and a brickyard.

In 1892, two fires burned the original downtown area. In the years prior to the fires, the Chehalis Land and Timber Company had developed a number of lots along Market Street, north of the town's original core and became the new downtown following the fire and development continued. Between 1850 and 1950, the economy of Chehalis was closely linked to three industries: timber and wood products, agriculture and food processing, and minerals.<sup>8</sup> By the turn of the century, Chehalis's population had grown to over 1700 people and development continued with the founding of the Chehalis Valley Creamery in 1896 and the Lewis County Cannery Association in 1915.<sup>9</sup> In 1910, a new Civic Center was established when a new City Hall and public library were built at Market Boulevard between Cascade and Park Streets, and continues to be the central business district today.<sup>10</sup> By this time, the city's population had nearly tripled to over 4500 people.<sup>11</sup>

In the years before the Great Depression, agriculture and industry continued to dominate the economy and included the Pacific Coast Condensed Milk Company, Palmer Lumber and Manufacturing, Shaw's Cigar Factory, Simmons Glove Factory, and the Pacific Tank and Silo Company.<sup>12</sup> In 1928, the National Fruit Canning Company bought the Lewis County Growers Cannery (National still processes vegetables today).

During the Great Depression, lumbering and agricultural product markets were weak; however, the area was able to survive because of its local agriculture. The onset of World War II and the demand for raw materials revived struggling industries.

The end of World War II marked a change in Chehalis's economy. By this time, lumber on private land was depleted and timber mills, paper mills, and saw mills closed. In 1955 the new US 99 expressway opened, connecting Chehalis to Puget Sound and Portland and helped Chehalis capitalize on its position between the metropolitan areas.<sup>13</sup> In 1956 Chehalis Industrial Commission formed the Chehalis Industrial Park and went to lengths to encourage businesses to lease the space in the park. In 1957 Goodyear opened its tread rubber factory in Chehalis. Today, Chehalis is home to a number of distribution facilities and is home to more than 7000 residents.<sup>14</sup>

## Education in Chehalis

Lewis County was organized in 1854 and the organization of school districts soon followed. Thomas Newland, resident of Chehalis, served as the first county superintendent of schools. At that time, the county was organized into five school districts as follows: No. 1 Boistfort Prairie; No. 2 Claquato; No. 3

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<sup>8</sup> Chehalis Downton Historic District Nomination, NR Registration #97001407

<sup>9</sup> US Census 1900

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.ci.chehalis.wa.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/Chehalis%20History%20on-line\\_0.pdf](https://www.ci.chehalis.wa.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/Chehalis%20History%20on-line_0.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> US Census 1910

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20\(NPRR\).](https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20(NPRR).)

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20\(NPRR\).](https://www.historylink.org/file/8645#:~:text=In%201870%2C%20McFadden%20took%20over,Northern%20Pacific%20Railroad%20(NPRR).)

<sup>14</sup> US Census 2010



Saunder’s Prairie (Chehalis); No. 4 Drew’s Prairie; No. 5 Eden’s Prairie (Cowlitz).<sup>15</sup> The first Chehalis school was established on the second floor of Chehalis’s first courthouse.<sup>16</sup> Following the arrival of William West in 1864, Chehalis witnessed its first pronounced period of development and the need for more formal schools became evident. William West is credited with organizing Chehalis School District No. 3 and was one of its first directors. The first schoolhouse was built in Chehalis in 1876 at the southwest corner of State and Center Streets for a cost of \$600.<sup>17</sup>

In the following years, Chehalis’s school system began to grow to respond to the expanding population. Chehalis’s first all-grade school, known as East Side School, was a wood frame building built in 1889 at a cost of \$10,000 which was raised from the sale of selling eight lots.<sup>18</sup> The school, located downtown on Market Street, was organized with elementary school classrooms on the first level and the high school classrooms on the second floor.<sup>19</sup> The school was moved to a lot owned by the school district on Cascade Avenue between Second and Third Streets in about 1909 (Figure 5).<sup>20</sup> By 1922 it was known as the South Ward School, then Cascade School, and it was demolished in 1926.<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 5 East Side School c. 1922**



Source: Lewis County Historical Museum

In 1891, Chehalis became home to the Washington State Reform School. The school was geared toward students aged 8-18 who committed crimes or who were orphaned. The school, first open to boys and girls, included a farm, workshops, living quarters and classrooms. Its curriculum included technical training. In 1907, the school was renamed Washington State Training School and in 1913 the girls were moved to a separate institution outside Chehalis called Maple Lane. The institution continues to exist today. Now known as the Green Hill School, it is operated as part of the Department of Social and Health Services.<sup>22</sup>

A second school building was constructed in 1894. The three-story school building, known as West Side School accommodated eight grades.<sup>23</sup> It appears the East Side School was being used as the community’s

<sup>15</sup> Bay, W.D. “Lewis County Schools,” *The Coast*, Vol. XVI, November 1908  
[https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Coast/OLARAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22chehalis%22+%22east+side+school%22&pg=RA1-PA316&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Coast/OLARAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22chehalis%22+%22east+side+school%22&pg=RA1-PA316&printsec=frontcover), accessed June 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Blomdahl, George H. “Swamp made Chehalis place to avoid in 1850s,” *The Daily Chronicle*, Bicentennial Addition July 1976.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ci.chehalis.wa.us/visitors/evolution-downtown-district>

<sup>18</sup> “City of Chehalis: The Inland Metropolis of Western Washington,” *The Daily Ledger*, January 1, 1889.

<sup>19</sup> “The History of Lewis County, Washington,” <http://files.usgwarchives.net/wa/lewis/history/lch-pt10.txt>, accessed June 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Zander, Julie McDonald, *Images of America: Chehalis*, Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> Zander, Julie McDonald, *Images of America: Chehalis*, Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Ott, Jennifer. “Washington State Reform School Opens in Chehalis on June 10, 1891.” History Link, <https://www.historylink.org/File/8647>, accessed June 2022.

<sup>23</sup> “School Building at Chehalis Destroyed,” *The Daily Ledger*, February 10, 1910.



high school building by that time.<sup>24</sup> The student population continued to grow and in 1901, Lewis County had 106 school districts and 150 teachers.<sup>25</sup> In 1904, both the West Side School and the high school building received updates for the increasing student population, including a four-room addition to the West Side School.<sup>26</sup> In February 1910, the West Side School was destroyed in a fire and was replaced with an eight-room school.<sup>27</sup>

A new Chehalis High School was opened in January 1910.<sup>28</sup> Just two years later, the school district was overwhelmed with the number of students and schools began to overcrowd and projected that additional facilities were going to need to be expanded to meet the demand.<sup>29</sup> By 1913 the district employed 38 teachers and educated 1200 students between the high school and two grade school buildings.<sup>30</sup>

During this time, Progressive-Era school design began to emerge as the standard, emphasizing a new type of school plant that focused on complete living. Opposite of school house design that was seen as uninviting, monotonous, and inadequate, Progressive-Era school design included an attractive exterior, recreation and gymnasium space, workshops and laboratories, and auditoriums. In addition to serving the needs of the student, it was viewed as a community space.<sup>31</sup>

In 1919, the school board asked the voters to ratify a program to revise the bond system and adopt a new tax in order to purchase needed equipment and prepare for future school development noting that “every school house in the city has been crowded to the limit owing to the great attendance this year.”<sup>32</sup> The school district further explained that it had reached its highest enrollment to date and that the East Side School, known as the Cascade School by this time, was in a deteriorated condition and would need to be replaced within three years.

The construction of new school buildings followed to meet the increased demand and replaced the outdated and small school buildings with Progressive-Era schools. The new Cascade School, an elementary school, opened in 1922 at the school district lot between Second Street and Third Street, in front of the old East Side School building. Shortly thereafter, the Chehalis Junior High School (later renamed R.E. Bennett School) opened in 1928 on the east side of the school district lot, fronting Market Boulevard to further alleviate overcrowding in the Chehalis schools. It is believed to be the second junior high school constructed in Washington, following a new nationwide concept in middle education.<sup>33</sup> School districts began to consolidate in the 1930s and 1940s, and the Chehalis School District was one of the largest in Lewis County by this time.<sup>34</sup>

On April 11, 1949, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake occurred in western Washington and was felt in an over 230,000 square-mile area, including Chehalis.<sup>35</sup> As a result of the earthquake, both Chehalis High School and the West Side School were condemned. Chehalis High School was rebuilt in 1951 and was renamed

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<sup>24</sup> “Splendid Advantages of Chehalis as a Business Center,” *The Seattle Post Intelligencer*, September 11, 1898.

<sup>25</sup> “Excellent Schools Here,” *The Chehalis Bee-Nugget*, May 17, 1901.

<sup>26</sup> *The Daily Ledger*, September 18, 1904

<sup>27</sup> “School Building at Chehalis Destroyed,” *The Daily Ledger*, February 10, 1910.

<sup>28</sup> “Washington State Items,” *The San Juan Islander*, December 24, 1909.

<sup>29</sup> “Chehalis Schools Again Overcrowded,” *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, January 14, 1912.

<sup>30</sup> Zander, Julie McDonald, *Images of America: Chehalis*, Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

<sup>31</sup> Ittner, Wm B., “The School Plant in Present-Day Education,” *The Architectural Forum*, Vol. XXXVII No. 2, August 1922.

<sup>32</sup> “Chehalis Needs More Schools,” *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, October 1, 1919.

<sup>33</sup> Lewis Regional Planning Commission, *Community Cultural Resource Survey*, November 9, 1979.

<sup>34</sup> “About Us,” *Centralia School District 401*, <https://www.centralia.k12.wa.us/domain/8>, accessed June 2022.

<sup>35</sup> Lange, Greg. “Earthquake Hits Puget Sound Area on April 13, 1949,” *History Link*, <https://www.historylink.org/file/2063>, accessed June 2022.



WF West High School in honor of William F. West, son of Chehalis pioneer William West, in 1953 for his many contributions to the local Chehalis schools.<sup>36</sup> By 1951 the Chehalis School District had become Chehalis School District No. 302, as it is today. In 1960, Chehalis opened a new elementary school, Olympic Elementary, for fourth and fifth grade classrooms in south Chehalis.<sup>37</sup> In 1989, the school district opened Chehalis Middle School.<sup>38</sup>

The Chehalis School District closed Cascade School and RE Bennett School (Chehalis Junior High) in 2018, after the district built two new elementary schools - Orin C. Smith and James W. Lintott elementaries. Today, Lewis County is comprised of 11 school districts and Chehalis School District oversees five schools.<sup>39</sup>

### *Cascade School*

Chehalis School District No. 3 purchased the subject property beginning in about 1909, when the former East Side School was moved to Second Street and Cascade Avenue. By 1919, the Chehalis School District determined that a new elementary school would be necessary to meet the city's growing student population. In September 1920, a special election was held to authorize the school district to purchase \$10,000 worth of building lots completing the purchase of 36 lots between Cascade Avenue and Market Boulevard at Second and Third Streets.<sup>40</sup> In 1921, voters authorized the issuance of \$70,000 worth of school bonds to build a new grade school building on the newly acquired site.<sup>41</sup> In May 1921, the school board met with the architectural firm of Hill, Mock & Griffin to discuss preliminary plans for the new Cascade School building.<sup>42</sup>

The new school design was based in new principles of Progressive-Era schools and plans prepared by Hill, Mock & Griffin were drafted in the "unit plan," meaning rooms could be added to the building as needed. The design originally planned for brick and frame construction with 14 classrooms and a gymnasium.<sup>43</sup> The design was reduced to 11 rooms due to insufficient funding for construction.<sup>44</sup> The school opened for the 1922 school year and was described as being the "latest thing in modern school building construction."<sup>45</sup> Designed in the Neoclassical Revival style popular at the time, it featured simple treatment of classical forms including its symmetrical façade, columns at entry pediment, and a parapet with balustrade at the roofline (Figure 6).

The school proved to be popular and was credited with shifting the city's growing population to the southern and eastern part of the town to take advantage of the new school facilities. As a result, in the school's second semester, a teacher from the West Side School was moved to Cascade School. The student population surpassed West Side School, which had more students at the beginning of the school year.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> "History of WF West," Chehalis District Website, <https://chehalisschools.org/wfw/about-w-f-west/>, accessed June 2022.

<sup>37</sup> The Daily Chronicle, August 23, 1960.

<sup>38</sup> "About CSD," Chehalis School District, <https://chehalisschools.org/about-csd/>, accessed June 2022.

<sup>39</sup> "Our Districts," ESD 113, <https://www.esd113.org/about-esd-113/overview/our-districts/>, accessed June 2022.

<sup>40</sup> "Chehalis News," *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, August 9, 1920.

<sup>41</sup> "Voters in Chehalis Approve Issue of Bonds for School," *The Oregon Daily Journal*, April 4, 2021.

<sup>42</sup> "Chehalis News," *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, May 1, 1921.

<sup>43</sup> "Washington," *Domestic Engineering*, 96 Issue 10, September 3, 1921.

<sup>44</sup> "The Total School Enrolment is 1140," *Chehalis Bee-Nugget*, September 1, 1922.

<sup>45</sup> "Chehalis News," *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, April 22, 1922.

<sup>46</sup> "Chehalis Briefs," *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, January 12, 1923.

**Figure 6 Cascade School, c. 1922**

Source: Lewis County Historical Museum

In order to respond to the growing student population, the school received its first addition in 1924, when two classrooms were added.<sup>47</sup> In 1925, the school district announced plans to add four additional classrooms to the building.<sup>48</sup> In 1926 the old East Side School was demolished and in 1928 the Chehalis Junior High School was constructed to the east of the Cascade School with a “great playground area for both schools between (Figure 7).”<sup>49</sup>

The school continued to serve the community and received its next major phase of work when the school was modernized in 1955. During that time, a four-room addition was added to the buildings south wing. Other improvements completed during this time included updated classroom lighting, acoustical tile ceilings, asphalt tile floors, and updates to boys’ bathrooms.<sup>50</sup>

The school remained largely the same in the following years. In 1987 all the exterior windows were replaced to their present-day configuration. It received a new roof in 1999. The school closed after the 2018-2019 school year and has remained vacant since that time.

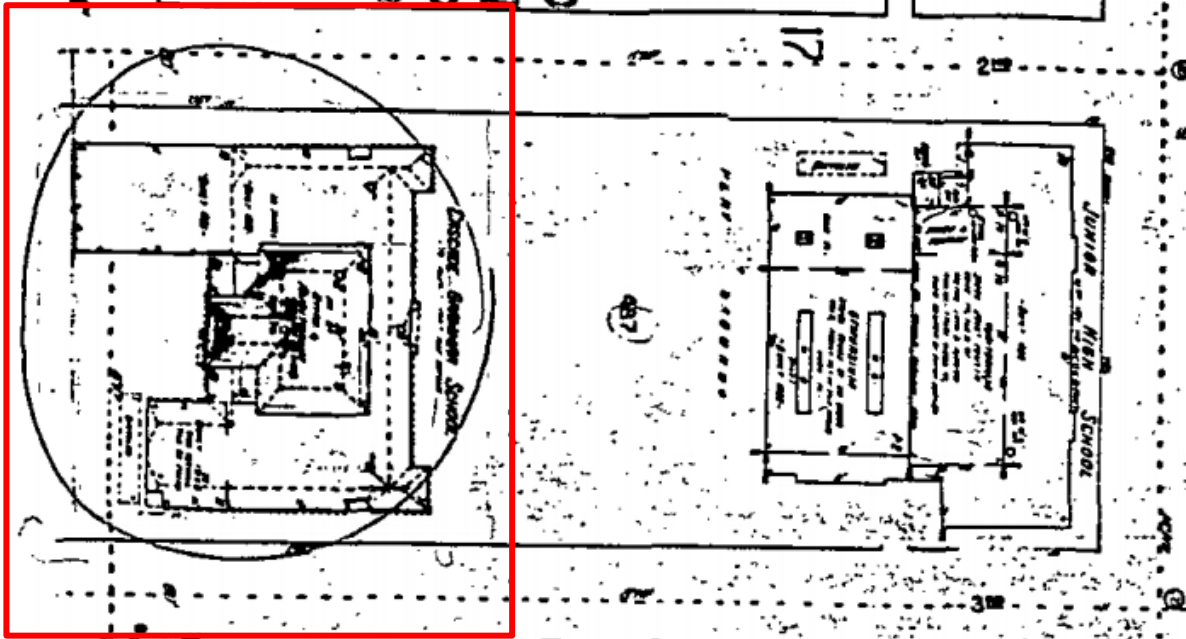
<sup>47</sup> “Cannery to take Wild Evergreens,” *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, August 20, 1924.

<sup>48</sup> “School to Seek Large Tax Levy,” *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, March 3, 1925.

<sup>49</sup> “New Chehalis School Ready,” *The Tacoma Daily Ledger*, April 15, 1928.

<sup>50</sup> “Chehalis School Modernization Project Fate on Outcome of June 7 Election,” *Daily Chronicle*, May 27, 1955.

Figure 7 Sanborn Map, c. 1928, Cascade School in red outline



#### Hill, Mock & Griffin

Cascade School was designed by the architecture firm Hill, Mock & Griffin, including Chehalis-based architect Jacque “Jack” deForest Griffin, who made his name as one of the city’s most significant architects in the 1920s. Griffin was born in Los Angeles on January 7, 1892, and graduated from the University of Santa Clara in 1912. Soon after graduation, Griffin relocated to Seattle, where he appears to have worked briefly under the architect Irwin H. Hill, before joining the firm Hewitt-Lea-Funck. By 1917, Griffin established himself in Tacoma and founded a short-lived partnership with the architect Arnott Woodroof. Woodroof left the firm the following year, and Griffin joined Hill and Ernest T. Mock to found the partnership Hill, Mock & Griffin. The firm appears to have enjoyed a robust business in Tacoma and, by the early 1920s, Griffin set up the partnership’s satellite office in Chehalis. Among Hill, Mock & Griffin’s projects in Chehalis was Cascade School, completed in 1922. Griffin departed the partnership in 1924 to establish an independent practice, choosing to remain in Chehalis.<sup>51</sup>

Over the course of about a decade of work in and around Chehalis, both as a partner in Hill, Mock & Griffin and an independent architect, Griffin produced several of prominent buildings in Chehalis and beyond. Griffin’s designs favored the Beaux Arts and Period Revival styles popular in the early decades of the twentieth century. Griffin’s combined local commissions totaled more than \$1 million. His projects in Chehalis included St. Helens Theatre (1924), the Moose Lodge (1926), Chehalis Junior High School (renamed R.E. Bennett School; 1927), and Boone Mortuary (1928). Projects outside Chehalis included the Fairhart Building (1924) in Morton, a gymnasium for the Boisfort School District (1924) in or

<sup>51</sup> State of Washington, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, “Jack D. Griffin.” Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation [web site], no date, <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-jack-d-griffin>; “Chehalis Gets Tacoma Architect,” *Tacoma Daily Ledger* February 17, 1924.



near Boistfort, a Catholic church (1924) in South Bend, Eagles Lodge (1926) in Centralia, and, and St. Rose Catholic School (1927) in Longview.<sup>52</sup>

Among Griffin's numerous Chehalis projects, the most important was his design for the Lewis County Courthouse on West Main Street. A mark of Griffin's success, the stately Beaux Arts-style courthouse was reportedly profiled in a 1926 edition of *Pacific Builder and Engineer* magazine. The building remains as perhaps the most prominent landmark in the city and is regarded by at least one source as the "jewel of historic downtown Chehalis."<sup>53</sup>

Despite his success locally, Griffin relocated to his native Los Angeles in 1929. Upon his arrival, he built a Hollywood home for his niece, the film actress Bebe Daniels. Among his notable Southern California commissions were Griffin's designs for the planned Eiffel Theater in Burbank, California, which boasted a radio tower modeled the property's namesake landmark. Available sources suggest the project was never constructed, however. Griffin died in Los Angeles in 1951.<sup>54</sup>

## Eligibility Statement

Cascade School, located between Second and Third Streets, in Chehalis, Washington is historically significant under local Criterion A for its association with the broad pattern of educational development in Chehalis. It represents the beginning of a new phase of school development in Chehalis, which pivoted away from school designs of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for Progressive-Era school design that focused on complete living, as evidenced it is attractive exterior, gymnasium space, auditorium, and dedicated classrooms. In addition to representing early 20<sup>th</sup> century education standards, its construction coincided with the city's boom in population beginning in 1910 and extending into the 1930s. The city's flourishing economy during this period, as evidenced through the strong local industries in timber and wood products, agriculture and food processing, and minerals buoyed the city's need for services, including schools for the community's ever-growing child population.

Cascade School is also significant under local Criterion D as a special example of Chehalis's economic and architectural history. Constructed in 1922, its development reflects the changing needs of the community as a result of its economic success. As a result of the city's economic boom of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chehalis schools were constantly facing issues associated with overcrowding. The development of Cascade School in response to the stress on the existing school facilities, demonstrates the community commitment to education. The early success of the school also shifted the city's development toward the southern and eastern neighborhoods with families who were seeing to take advantage of the school's new facilities. In addition to being linked to Chehalis's economic success, it is also a good example of the work of architectural firm Hill, Mock & Griffin, including Chehalis-based

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<sup>52</sup> State of Washington, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, "Jack D. Griffin." Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation [web site], no date, <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-jack-d-griffin>; "Jack DeForest Griffin: Architect that Changed Chehalis," *The Chronicle* [web site], September 5, 2014. <https://www.chronline.com/stories/jack-deforest-griffin-architect-that-changed-chehalis,80648>; "Get to Know Jack DeForest Griffin, the Architect Who Changed Chehalis," *The Chronicle* [web site], February 14, 2018. <https://www.chronline.com/stories/get-to-know-jack-deforest-griffin-the-architect-who-changed-chehalis,19440>.

<sup>53</sup> State of Washington, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, "Jack D. Griffin." Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation [web site], no date, <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-jack-d-griffin>; "Jack DeForest Griffin: Architect that Changed Chehalis," *The Chronicle* [web site], September 5, 2014, <https://www.chronline.com/stories/jack-deforest-griffin-architect-that-changed-chehalis,80648>.

<sup>54</sup> "Jack Griffin Develops Big Hollywood Business," *Chehalis Bee-Nugget* December 27, 1929; Galvin Preservation Associates, City of Burbank Citywide Historic Context Report September 2000, 77-78; "Jack DeForest Griffin: Architect that Changed Chehalis," *The Chronicle* [web site], September 5, 2014, <https://www.chronline.com/stories/jack-deforest-griffin-architect-that-changed-chehalis,80648>. Accessed May 6, 2022.



architect Jacque “Jack” deForest Griffin. It represents one of many works that solidified Griffin’s importance to Chehalis’s local architecture and reflects his substantial contribution to Chehalis’s architectural history. Designed in the Neoclassical Revival style, it represents a stylistic shift from earlier school designs, and its Neoclassical Revival elements are reflected in its symmetrical design, entry pediment with columns, and brick clad exterior.

## Conclusion

The Cascade School is the only remaining elementary school in Chehalis from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and serves as a reminder of the educational efforts of the city during this time of economic growth and shifting student needs. Built with modern, Progressive-Era ideals, the school’s design embodies changing ideas about education. Designed by Hill, Mock & Griffin, in the Neoclassical Revival style it also represents Chehalis’s continued commitment to improved education facilities.

Should you have any questions regarding this nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me at 510-834-4455 or at [jmurphy@rinconconsultants.com](mailto:jmurphy@rinconconsultants.com).

Sincerely,

**Rincon Consultants, Inc.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JulieAnn Murphy".

JulieAnn Murphy  
Architectural Historian Project Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Williams".

James Williams  
Architectural Historian

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Treffers".

Steve Treffers  
Architectural Historian Program Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon Carmack".

Shannon Carmack  
Principal Cultural Resources