

LINCOLN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
7839 Lincoln Avenue  
Skokie  
Cook County  
Illinois

HABS No. IL-1261

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Midwest Region  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### LINCOLN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

HABS No. IL-1261

**Location:** The Lincoln Junior High School is located at 7839 Lincoln Ave., Skokie, Niles Township, Cook County, Illinois.

The Lincoln Junior High School is located at latitude: 42.012822, longitude: -87.451411. This coordinate was taken from entering the physical address in Google Earth Pro on March 21, 2021.

#### **Present Owner/**

**Occupant:** Present owners: Skokie/Morton Grove School District 69

**Present Use:** The building has been in continuous use as Lincoln Junior High School since its construction in 1927.

**Significance:** The Lincoln Junior High School is a fine example of twentieth-century Collegiate Gothic educational architecture, skillfully and sensitively updated through changing times and shifting building requirements. The growth of the building reflects the growth of the village of Skokie and has been important to the community for nearly a century.

**Historian:** Andrew J. Elders, Architectural Historian. Independent contractor.  
The completion date of this report is December 22, 2021.

#### **Project**

**Information:** Those involved in preparing the documentation for this report include Andrew J. Elders and Susan S. Benjamin, of Benjamin Historic Certifications, LLC. This documentation project was prepared pursuant to Illinois Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420) and its rules (17 IAC 4180) to address Stipulation I. MITIGATION of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Regarding The Demolition of Lincoln Junior High School at 7839 Lincoln Avenue in Skokie, Illinois, signed July 6, 2020.

## Part I. Historical Information

### A. Physical History

- 1. Date of erection:** 1927-28: original building; 1929: additional classrooms flanking gymnasium; 1931-32: front bay classrooms and stair towers; 1952: rear wing behind gymnasium; 1960: gymnasium wing; 2004: eastern addition; 2014, front vestibule.
- 2. Architect:** 1927-28: Hyland & Corse; 1929: presumably Hyland & Corse; 1931-32: Godfrey E. Larson; 1935 (gymnasium remodeling): Emerson E. Raymond; 1952: Alfred P. Allen; 2004: ARCON Associates, Inc.; 2014: Green Associates.

Hyland & Corse was an architectural partnership composed of Paul V. Hyland and Redmond P. Corse. The partnership was formed in 1919, and dissolved in 1931.<sup>1</sup> During that period, they produced a number of commercial and institutional buildings throughout Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

Paul V. Hyland was born in Chicago in 1876. He was well-trained, having studied architecture at Niagara University in New York and worked in various capacities for the following firms: Holabird & Roche, D.H. Burnham & Co., Mundie & Jensen, and Shepley, Ruten & Coolidge.<sup>2</sup> He also worked for Benjamin Marshall and contributed to the plans for the ill-fated Iroquois Theater, which burned in 1903.<sup>3</sup> Hyland was in private practice in 1908-09<sup>4</sup> and in 1910 he formed a partnership with Herbert H. Green, which lasted until 1914.<sup>5</sup> After partnering with Corse until the dissolution of Hyland & Corse in April 1931, Hyland stepped away from practicing architecture but returned to the field in 1933, working for various firms in and around Chicago until 1942. He also held many positions in related fields; he served as estimating engineer for the Federal Civil Works Administrations, architect and appraiser of buildings for Ward T. Huston & Co., engineer inspector for Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, and specification and estimating engineer for Sanderson & Porter.<sup>6</sup> Paul Hyland and his wife Lillian relocated to Los Angeles in 1952, where he died in 1966.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Paul V. Hyland Papers, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "Architect Marshall Dazed By The Awful Disaster," *Chicago Tribune*, December 31, 1903, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/34622551/>.

<sup>4</sup> "Of Interest to Architects," *Western Architect* (June 1908), V.

<sup>5</sup> "Personal," *The American Contractor* (April 18, 1914), 107.

<sup>6</sup> Hyland Papers.

<sup>7</sup> "Paul V. Hyland," *Chicago Tribune*, July 4, 1966, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/376481774/>.

Redmond P. Corse was born in Chicago in 1888. He studied painting and drawing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago,<sup>8</sup> and completed his graduate studies as part of Harvard University's Class of 1913.<sup>9</sup> Less is known about Corse's early career, but he joined with Hyland after serving as a Sergeant in Company D, 503<sup>rd</sup> Service Battalion Engineers in World War I.<sup>10</sup> After the dissolution of Hyland & Corse, Redmond P. Corse continued to practice architecture until his death in Chicago in 1971.<sup>11</sup>

Godfrey E. Larson was born in 1897 in Chicago. He appears to have been a sole practitioner throughout his entire career, specializing in educational buildings. He served as building commissioner for the village of Niles Center and designed several schools there and in the surrounding communities. Larson died in Chicago in 1945.<sup>12</sup>

Emerson E. Raymond was born in 1897 in Chicago. He studied Architectural Engineering at the University of Illinois, graduating in 1922.<sup>13</sup> Over the course of his practice, he designed many residences throughout the North Shore; one, located at 833 Ridge Terrace, is an Evanston landmark. Emerson Raymond died in Evanston in 1986.<sup>14</sup>

Alfred Percy Allen, architect of the 1952 expansion of the school, was born in Ryde, Isle of Wight, England in 1887. He emigrated to the United States via Canada in 1908. He was affiliated with architect Maurice Webster for approximately twenty years before World War II, after which Allen continued to practice architecture on his own. Among his commissions were College Hills School in Evanston, Edison and Kenton schools in Skokie, and a stadium at Beloit College. He died in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1968.<sup>15</sup>

ARCON Associates, Inc. was founded in 1979 and is based in Lombard, Illinois. ARCON provides architectural and construction related professional services to Illinois K-12 education, higher education, park districts, municipalities, and corporate clients.<sup>16</sup>

Green Associates, headquartered in Deerfield, Illinois, was founded in 1979. It is a full-service architectural and construction services firm that exclusively serves the

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<sup>8</sup> The Art Institute of Chicago, *Circular of Instruction of the School of Drawing, Painting, Modeling, Decorative Designing, Normal Instruction, Illustration and Architecture*, (Chicago: n.p., 1909), 105.

<sup>9</sup> Harvard University, *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, (Boston: Harvard Bulletin Inc., 1917), 228.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "Redmond P. Corse," *Chicago Tribune*, October 31, 1971, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/377200382/>.

<sup>12</sup> "Godfrey E. Larson," *Chicago Tribune*, March 30, 1945, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/370878201/>.

<sup>13</sup> *The Illio, 1922*, (Urbana, IL: n.p., 1921), 123.

<sup>14</sup> "Emerson Edward Raymond," *Chicago Tribune*, February 16, 1986, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/388712973/>.

<sup>15</sup> "Alfred P. Allen" *Chicago Tribune*, September 18, 1968, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/376572727/>.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/company/arcon-associates-inc./about/>

educational facility market. In addition to architectural design, their services include educational facility planning and program development, pre-referendum assistance, and construction management.<sup>17</sup>

### 3. Original and Subsequent Owners:

The Legal Description for the property at 7839 Lincoln Ave. is as follows:

Parcel 1:

Blocks 4 in the Circuit Court Partition of Lots 2 to 11, inclusive, and Lots 13 to 18, inclusive of William Lill Administrator's Subdivision of the north east ¼ of Section 28, Township 41 North, Range 13 east of the Third Principal Meridian (excepting therefrom that portion thereof falling within Lots 5 and 6 of the County Clerk's Division of Section 28 aforesaid), in Cook County, Illinois.

Parcel 2:

Lots 10 and 11 (except the northerly 16 feet of Lot 10 dedicated for alley in Document 16051319) in the Circuit Court Partition of Lots 2 to 11, inclusive, and Lots 13 to 18, inclusive of William Lill Administrator's Subdivision of the north east ¼ of Section 28, Township 41 North, Range 13 east of the Third Principal Meridian (excepting therefrom that portion thereof falling within Lots 5 and 6 of the County Clerk's Division of Section 28 aforesaid), in Cook County, Illinois.

Parcel 3:

That part of the northeasterly and southeasterly 16 foot public alley lying southwesterly of the southwesterly line of the northeasterly 16 feet of Lot 10 in Block 3 extended southeasterly and all that part of 66 foot Kirk Street lying south of the south line of Lot 11 in Block 3, north and westerly of Block 4 and east of the easterly line of Harms Avenue, all in the Circuit Court Partition of Lots 2 to 11, inclusive, and Lots 13 to 18, inclusive of William Lill Administrator's Subdivision of the north east ¼ of Section 28, Township 41 North, Range 13 east of the Third Principal Meridian (excepting therefrom that portion thereof falling within Lots 5 and 6 of the County Clerk's Division of Section 28 aforesaid), in Cook County, Illinois.

Parcel 4:

That part of the 16 foot public alley located southeasterly of Lots 1 through 9, both inclusive and the 16 foot public alley lying southwesterly of the southwesterly line of said lot 9 dedicated on the plat recorded as Document 16051319 all in Block 3 of the Circuit Court Partition of Lots 2 to 11, inclusive, and Lots 13 to 18, inclusive of William

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/company/greenassociates/about/>

Lill Administrator's Subdivision of the north east  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 28, Township 41 North, Range 13 east of the Third Principal Meridian (excepting therefrom that portion thereof falling within Lots 5 and 6 of the County Clerk's Division of Section 28 aforesaid), in Cook County, Illinois, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the most southwesterly corner of Lot 9 in said Circuit Court Partition; thence south 58 degrees 06 minutes 15 seconds east being an assumed bearing of the southwesterly line of said Lot 9, a distance of 125.00 feet to the southeasterly corner of said Lot 9; thence north 31 degrees 51 minutes 45 seconds east, on said southeasterly line of said Lots 1 through 9, said line also being the westerly line of 16 foot public alley, a distance of 269.98 feet to the northeasterly corner of said Lot 1; thence north 85 degrees 45 minutes 03 seconds east a distance of 19.81 feet to the most northwesterly corner of Block 4 in said Circuit Court Partition, thence south 31 degrees 51 minutes 45 seconds west on the southeasterly line of said 15 foot alley, said line also being the northwesterly line of said Block 4, a distance of 297.65 feet to the intersection of the southwesterly line of the 16 foot public alley dedicated by Document 16051319, thence north 58 degrees 08 minutes 15 seconds west on southwesterly line, a distance of 141.00 feet to the southeasterly right of way line of Babb Avenue (also recorded as Harms Avenue), thence north 31 degrees 51 minutes 45 seconds east, a distance of 16.00 feet to the point of beginning, all in Cook County, Illinois.

The original and only owner of the building is Skokie/Morton Grove School District 69.

4. **Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:** 1927-28: Stoesser & Co (builders), A. Kutz (plumbing); 1929: Sweiberg & Swartz (contractors).
5. **Original Plans and construction:** Original plans dating to 1927 called for a Lincoln School to be nearly twice the size of what was actually built at the time. The building was of fireproof construction with walls of common brick, with face brick applied to the exterior. It was arranged as three wings of the school surrounding a central gymnasium and assembly hall. The style was a restrained Collegiate Gothic, executed in limestone and red-and-black brick.
6. **Alterations and Additions:** The school building as it stands today is the result of six significant phases of construction, with the oldest section being the core of the building, with wings and extensions added over the course of 87 years. See Appendix II for the various sections of the building and their dates of construction.

## B. Historical Context:

### Lincoln School's Evolution

What is now known as Lincoln School was originally built as Niles Center Public School. In December 1927, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that a new grammar school was to be constructed on land recently acquired from the Cook County Forest Preserve on Lincoln Avenue, next to the main business and residential district of the town. The firm chosen to design the new school was Hyland & Corse, who provided a design in the English Collegiate Gothic style of twelve classrooms arranged in a U-configuration around a central gymnasium/assembly hall space that included a stage. The school was designed to accommodate 480 students with 40 students to a classroom, with a capacity of 500 in the assembly hall.<sup>18</sup> A \$50,000 bond issue was approved, and a bid for the new building was approved for \$70,767, with an additional \$8,754 for plumbing and heating.<sup>19</sup> The building ended up being built at half the capacity of the plans, with only six classrooms constructed around the gymnasium/assembly hall. Four classrooms were contained in the front section parallel to Lincoln Avenue and two first-floor classrooms on the sides of the gym. The school opened with 202 students on September 4, 1928.<sup>20</sup>

By the following school year, the size of the new school was considered a handicap, as enrollment had reached nearly 300 students, necessitating seventh- and eighth-grade classes to be held in the gymnasium, negating the space's original purpose and causing Physical Education classes to be held outdoors in the playground. Kindergarten enrollment had grown to over 40 pupils, much greater than had been anticipated due to the Board of Education having reduced the age requirement to 4 ½. This enrollment necessitated dividing the kindergarten program to two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.<sup>21</sup> At a special meeting of the School Board held on July 1, 1929, the board authorized a new addition to be built by Sweiberg & Swartz, contractors, in a form satisfactory to the architect, costing \$31,344.<sup>22</sup> Presumably, the original, larger plans of Hyland & Corse were being used for the new work. Four additional classrooms were added and were ready for occupancy by November 1929. Three classrooms were for upper grades, and one was specifically built for the kindergarten. The new kindergarten room attracted particular attention, as it "incorporated the latest ideas in design, construction, decoration and furnishings" and because an expert from the Art Institute of Chicago was consulted for the room's wall and ceiling designs, the room "attracted wide attention in kindergarten teaching circles."<sup>23</sup> The newest addition was

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<sup>18</sup> "Niles Center to Build Another Grade School," *Chicago Tribune*, December 12, 1926.

<sup>19</sup> Minutes.

<sup>20</sup> "Untitled," *Greater Niles Center News*, August 24, 1928, 1.

<sup>21</sup> "Niles Center Public School," *The (Arlington Heights) Daily Herald*, September 17, 1929.

<sup>22</sup> Ardis Coninx, notes, November 18, 2011.

<sup>23</sup> "Dedicate New School Tuesday," *Greater Niles Center News*, February 14, 1930.

dedicated on February 18, 1930, to great fanfare which included remarks by Francis G. Blair, state superintendent of public instruction of Illinois, live music, a program of recognition in honor of past School Board President William L. Galitz and several long-standing teachers, and tours by students showcasing the school and their activities.<sup>24</sup>

The expanded facility once again proved inadequate in short order. By the summer of 1931, a bond issue for \$58,000 was approved by the village electorate to construct yet another addition, this time to incorporate a new kindergarten, remodeled gym/auditorium including a stage and locker and shower rooms, a new cafeteria, and six additional classrooms. Part of this expansion was to accommodate a new, two-year high school program in the building in addition to the classes already in place there.<sup>25</sup> The new high school curriculum included instruction in English, Latin, Algebra, General Science, Shop/Mechanical Drawing, and Household Arts.<sup>26</sup> To design the new additions, the school board engaged architect Godfrey E. Larson.<sup>27</sup> Larson was at the time serving as the building commissioner for Niles Center.<sup>28</sup>

Godfrey E. Larson designed the new additions to blend skillfully with the previous work of Hyland & Corse. This scheme includes the two front-facing wings with first-floor bays, which have become a hallmark of the school. These wings housed six classrooms in the basement, first floor, and second floor. Also added were the remaining three classrooms flanking the gym that completed Hyland & Corse's original scheme, and new, ornate stair tower entries on either side of the building. The remodeled school now included classrooms for sewing, art, music, and manual instruction shop, but once again, the new kindergarten and first-grade rooms were the most admired spaces. Housed in the new first-floor room at the southeast and southwest corners of the school, these alcove rooms were noted as being "resplendent with their built-in seats for reading and story-telling classes, ...finished in two shades of green" and with oak furniture. The kindergarten also included a private terrace with a wall fountain and sand boxes, entered from a private door.<sup>29</sup> Other classrooms were finished in two shades of brown and stained woodwork with furniture appropriate to the use of the classroom. The new cafeteria offered a hot lunch program.<sup>30</sup>

Enrollment was anticipated to be 550 in the completed school; in December 1931, there were over 60 kindergartners, 150 pupils in the primary grades, 110 pupils in the intermediate grades of Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, 60 pupils in the junior high of Seventh

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<sup>24</sup> "New School Building is Dedicated," *The (Arlington Heights) Daily Herald*, February 21, 1930.

<sup>25</sup> "Niles Center School to Build Addition," *The Daily Herald*, June 5, 1931.

<sup>26</sup> "Lincoln Public School," *The Daily Herald*, September 11, 1931.

<sup>27</sup> Coninx.

<sup>28</sup> "Enlarging Lincoln School, Niles Center," *Chicago Tribune*, October 4, 1931.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> "Lincoln's New Addition is in Full Use," *The Daily Herald*, February 19, 1932.



and Eighth, and 50 pupils in the high school--for a total of 430 students housed in the building.<sup>31</sup> The new addition was opened for the second term of high school work, on February 1, 1932. The resultant building was considered to be one of the most outstanding two-year high schools in the state. The expanded facilities allowed the district to eliminate the half-day sessions for the first and second grades, as the building could now accommodate all-day learning. The temporary classrooms in the gymnasium were removed, and the space was again used for its intended purpose.<sup>32</sup> As part of this addition and remodeling, the name "Lincoln School" was carved in the stone arch over the main entrance.<sup>33</sup>

In December of 1933, architect Emerson E. Raymond was engaged to work on proposed improvements to the building. Funds totaling \$21,086.66 were awarded by the Civil Works Administration, which remodeled the gymnasium/assembly hall and excavated and added a basement with cement floor beneath the gymnasium.<sup>34</sup> The gymnasium finally received its enduring physical incarnation. The space was formalized with glazed tile lower walls, varnished plywood paneling above, a painted allegorical frieze, and beamed ceiling. The frieze and ceiling of the gymnasium are the most significant historic design features of the gymnasium.<sup>35</sup> Painted by a local artist, panels in the frieze depicted scenes from Niles Center's history. Beginning in the gymnasium's northeast corner, going clockwise, the images were of horticulture, an early economic driver of Skokie's economy; the intersection of Oakton and Lincoln avenues in the village's early days; the village's first fire hall; and an image representing Music. The paintings of the south wall depicted representative images of Drama, Learning, and Physical Education. West wall paintings were images of Art; the old District #7 school on Niles Center Road; the old toll gate on Lincoln Avenue; and an image depicting market gardening, another nod to Skokie's early economic drivers.<sup>36</sup> The new gym and basement spaces were opened with a dedicatory address and live music on February 7, 1935.<sup>37</sup>

With the completion of the 1932-1935 improvements, the school remained in this form until, by 1950, increased enrollment required a larger building once more. In March 1951, a referendum was held to approve an addition to Lincoln School, anticipated to cost \$490,000; after approval, architect Alfred F. Allen was appointed as architect for the expansion.<sup>38</sup> This addition expanded the building to the north of the existing classrooms and gymnasium, elongating the T-form of the plan. The enlargement

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<sup>31</sup> "Wonderful Work at Lincoln School in Niles Center," *The Daily Herald*, December 18, 1931.

<sup>32</sup> "Lincoln High Offers Larger Facilities," *The Daily Herald*, January 22, 1932.

<sup>33</sup> Coninx.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> "Dedicate New Auditorium Thursday," *The Niles Center News*, February 7, 1935.

<sup>36</sup> Coninx.

<sup>37</sup> "Dedicate New Auditorium Thursday."

<sup>38</sup> Coninx.

included twelve new classrooms, a cafeteria annex, manual training shop, a large library at the north end, and a room designed for local civic organizations. At the same time, the older sections of the school were modernized with the addition of updated lighting, classroom remodeling, and the redesign of the home economics room and the school's business offices and health service room. The new addition was dedicated on November 9, 1952, again with dedicatory addresses and live music.<sup>39</sup> The design of the 1952 addition references but updates the previous decorative schemes by Hyland & Corse and Godfrey E. Larson. The new brick was matched to the old, and windows and doors were trimmed in the same Indiana limestone. The windows in the new additions are wider than the historic sections, arranged as horizontal ribbons rather than vertical stacks, with the exception of a group of five vertical-stacks near the center of the east and west facades. Door surrounds are in a very simplified Gothic design, and a wide, three-sided bay rises the entire height of the north façade. The design is clearly simpler, of-its-time, while respecting the historic design of the building.

In January 1960, a special referendum was held to approve building a new school and making alterations to Lincoln School. The referendum passed, and Lincoln gained new music rooms and locker rooms, and a new gymnasium built on the southeast corner of the building by December of that year.<sup>40</sup> That gymnasium was demolished in 2019.

Interior renovations were necessitated by the requirement for asbestos removal, which was done in 1985. At that time, ceilings were lowered throughout the building and new lighting was installed. A handicapped-accessible elevator was installed in 1990, and new windows and doors were installed in 1992. Masonry restoration totaling \$295,000 was performed in the summer of 1998.<sup>41</sup>

The last large-scale alteration to Lincoln School was completed in 2004: an addition at the northeast corner of the building, designed by ARCON Associates, Inc. The design of this addition consciously references the design of the older sections of the school, specifically the 1952 addition. This section includes seven general classrooms, a science room, a technical education room, offices, restrooms, and mechanicals.

In 2014, a glass front vestibule was added, designed by Green & Associates. While only a single-story box at the center of the front façade, it altered the building's traffic flow by diverting the principal entrance to the southwest corner of the building. This was achieved by adding an office vestibule and altering stairs into the interior.

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<sup>39</sup> "Dedicate New Skokie School Addition Today," *The Chicago Tribune*, November 9, 1952.

<sup>40</sup> Minutes.

<sup>41</sup> Minutes.

History of School District 69<sup>42</sup>

Skokie School District 69 was formed in 1897 as School District 7. On July 19 of that year, the Trustees put three propositions on a local ballot, asking 1) Shall directors purchase a school site not exceeding one acre, 2) Shall they issue bonds in the amount of \$5,000.00, and 3) Shall they levy a tax. All three propositions passed. A one-acre building site was procured, and instruction began in the rented Engine House Hall. The district's first school, known as the Niles Centre School opened in 1900 on Madison Street, east of Niles Center Road.

By 1913, a vote passed to add a ninth grade to the existing first- through eighth grade curriculum. As the district continued to grow along with the village, in January 1925 a special election determined that an 8.857-acre parcel of land would be purchased as the site for a new school. The price of the land was \$9,742.50. This parcel would become the site of present-day Lincoln Junior High School, construction of which began in 1927; it would supersede the Niles Centre School.

In 1930, the district voted to receive pupils from neighboring District 73 ½, and the following year a two-year high school was established and classes were held in what was now known as Lincoln School. The high school curriculum grew to include a third year of instruction beginning in 1932. Business courses were added in 1934. In July 1936, a new Community High School District 219 was formed, with classes continuing to be held in District 69's Lincoln School building. District 219 constructed Niles Township High School in 1939, whereupon all high school curriculum was removed from what was now Lincoln Junior High School.

By 1950, District 69 had grown to a point where it could no longer accept as many students from other school districts into District 69 facilities. Enrollment at Lincoln had swelled to 510 students from 348 the year before. In response to this enrollment growth, a new addition to Lincoln School including eight classrooms and a library was recommended, to be built as soon as possible. At this time, Lincoln School accommodated grades five through eight. In 1953, an election was held for the purpose of voting on additional sites for schools in the eastern, western, and southern sections of District 69, eventually to become Kenton, Edison, and Madison schools respectively. In December 1957, the district sold the former site of the original Niles Centre School, and a new post office was erected on the site. Proceeds from that sale funded the construction of the new Madison school.

The dawn of the 1960s saw additional growth in District 69, with approval to build another new school and to make alterations to Edison and Lincoln schools. The

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<sup>42</sup> This history is condensed from transcribed minutes of District 69's Board of Trustee's meetings dating between 1897-1999.

resulting alterations to Lincoln were the new gymnasium wing, new music rooms, and new locker rooms. Despite new tax levies being met with less support than in previous years, the district went on to construct a new \$600,000 Special Education facility next to the Borg School, another district facility. A study was made by architects O'Donnell, Wicklund & Pigozzi to explore a planned replacement for Lincoln Junior High School, a plan which didn't come to fruition due to failure of the October 1969, referendum to obtain funds to build a new junior high school. A similar referendum was held in December of that year, this time with increases to the building and educational fund tax rates, and these propositions failed as well. Finally, in February 1970, the educational fund tax rate increase was approved by a narrow margin, but an increase to the building fund tax rate was not, effectively ending the push for a new building to replace Lincoln School. Instead, a plan was developed to remodel the existing building.

In the 1970s, girls' interscholastic sports were added to Lincoln Junior High's sports program. Lincoln Junior High's remodeling was to commence in the library, cafeteria, industrial arts room, and art room. The Cook County Office approved \$300,000 under the Life Safety Code for this purpose. Bids came in at \$400,000, thus only the library and cafeteria renovations went ahead. Enrollment numbers in the district began to decline, and staffing cuts, the elimination of Cultural Arts funding, a halt in capital outlay, and reduction of supply expenses were made to counteract the reduced income of the district. By the 1976-77 school year, enrollment had declined to 1,367 pupils, down from 2,262 pupils in 1968-69. Enrollment was projected to decline even further by 1980. A decision was made to close Kenton School for the following school year and reassign its students to other district schools. Demographics of the district were changing amid the enrollment decline. By 1977, 18 percent of the students in the district were bilingual. The Kenton School was leased to the Futabaki School, a Japanese full-time school.

Enrollment increased a bit in 1980, and new self-contained modules were needed to relieve crowding at Madison School. Microcomputers made their appearance in the district, with seven being installed at Lincoln Junior High School in the 1982-83 school year. In September 1985, district enrollment fell below 1,000 students. Having been leased out for many years, the Board voted to auction the Kenton School property in 1989, when it was sold to the Arie Crown Hebrew Day School for \$3,000,000.

In 1990, a new Tax Increment Financing district in downtown Skokie was proposed. To offset any negative funding impacts such a district would have on District 69, in 1992 an agreement was made which provided payments after 1999 of up to \$1 million for eligible building improvements for District 69 schools within the TIF district. In that year, enrollment had grown to 1,237 pupils, and decisions were made to enlarge Madison and Edison schools. Diversity in the district continued to grow, with 17 percent of the enrolled students receiving some sort of special education services. Growing

violence in schools led to security improvements in 1997, when school doors were locked during the day, and visitors would have to be buzzed into the building. In 1999, space was again needed at Edison School in response to enrollment growth, which had rebounded by 45 percent since 1988.

More improvements were made in the new millennium. In 2002, Madison School was enlarged, and a new classroom addition to Lincoln Junior High was planned; this was completed in 2004. By 2008, enrollment had increased to 1,619 students, and a budget crisis led to a shakeup in district management and finances. The district's financial position had improved enough by 2016 that the Board undertook a Master Facility Plan that outlined a six-phase, multi-year expansion and modernization program, which was expected to take over a decade to complete. Major additions had already been made to Edison School, including a new gymnasium, cafeteria, modernized library, and entrance modifications. In 2018, Madison School was expanded with additional classrooms and expansion of the Early Childhood Education initiative, providing all-day kindergarten and after-school activities. In 2019, plans were presented to the public, showing an entirely new Lincoln Junior High School building planned. This building, designed to the most current standards for instruction, was completed and put into use for the 2021-22 school year.<sup>43</sup>

### *The Village of Skokie*

What is now Skokie is located in what was originally Potawatomi lands west of Lake Michigan.<sup>44</sup> In 1847, the village's first non-Native settlers, Nicholas and Elizabeth Busch Meyer built a cabin at the intersection of two Indian trails, now Gross Point Road and Lincoln Avenue and began farming 60 acres of land.<sup>45</sup> Before white settlement, most of this area was wooded, with a marshy prairie extending down from the north.<sup>46</sup>

By the 1850s, immigrants from Germany and Luxembourg settled in what came to be known Niles Centre (former spelling).<sup>47</sup> The first school in the village was built in 1858. Known as the Fairview School, it stood at the corner of Howard and Niles Center Road.<sup>48</sup> The railroad came to the settlement in 1872, when a trunk line of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad reached Niles Township in nearby Morton Grove.<sup>49</sup> The

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<sup>43</sup> Information for District 90 from 2000-2021 is condensed from a presentation in December 2020, compiled by Mark Chao.

<sup>44</sup> Amanda J. Hanson and Richard J. Witry, *Skokie* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010), 9.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>46</sup> Janice L. Reiff, Ann Durkin Keating, and James R. Grossman, *Encyclopedia of Chicago* (Chicago, IL: Chicago Historical Society, 2005), 755.

<sup>47</sup> Hanson and Witry, 16.

<sup>48</sup> Richard Whittingham, *Skokie, 1888-1988: A Centennial History* (Skokie, IL: Village of Skokie, 1988), 29.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

town kept growing, and in 1888 the village of Niles Centre was incorporated.<sup>50</sup> The local Germanic community owned and operated a number of businesses around Lincoln Avenue, many of which were destroyed in a devastating fire in September 1910.<sup>51</sup> It was this fire that changed the face of Niles Center by turning it from a village of wood-frame buildings to one with more substantial brick replacements. It also prompted the village to build a central water supply.<sup>52</sup> Remaining isolated from Chicago, farming and greenhouses continued to provide the principal source of income for the area's residents until the 1920s, while the rebuilt commercial district served the needs of the townspeople.<sup>53</sup>

In 1920, the population of Niles Center was 763 residents.<sup>54</sup> A boom of land speculation occurred after 1925 when Samuel Insull built the Skokie Valley line of the North Shore Railroad (what became the Skokie Swift in 1964).<sup>55</sup> Agricultural land was subdivided and sold at skyrocketing prices throughout the rest of the decade, and the footprint of the village increased tenfold.<sup>56</sup> By 1930, the village population had swelled to over 5,000 residents.<sup>57</sup> Although the Great Depression thwarted the real-estate boom, leaving many lots vacant in Skokie throughout the 1930s, by the late 1940s revitalization and rezoning efforts stimulated commercial and residential growth.<sup>58</sup> The village was rechristened as Skokie in 1940.

Postwar growth was spurred by the completion of the Edens Expressway in 1951, providing greater access to Chicago, but leading to the close of the old Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee railroad line. The Old Orchard Shopping Center opened in 1956, generating further commercial development in the area but decimating the village's downtown area.<sup>59</sup> In response to this growth, Skokie's Board of Trustees adopted a Village Master Plan in 1946, promoting the development of single-family residences.<sup>60</sup> During the 1950s and 1960s great numbers of houses were built, often using the streets laid out in the 1920s. Population swelled to 7,172 in 1940, 14,752 by 1950, 65,000 in 1962, and by 1970 the population reached 68,627.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Rieff, Durking and Grossman, 755.

<sup>51</sup> Hanson and Witry, 30.

<sup>52</sup> Whittingham, 65.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>54</sup> Whittingham, 67.

<sup>55</sup> Rieff, Durking and Grossman, 755.

<sup>56</sup> Whittingham, 71-72.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>58</sup> Rieff, Durking and Grossman, 755.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Whittingham, 87.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

Many of the new inhabitants of Skokie in this period were Jewish people moving out of apartments in Chicago. They built a number of synagogues, many of which remain active.<sup>62</sup> The American Neo-Nazi march of 1978 brought unwelcome attention to the village. Although they ultimately marched in Marquette Park instead, the Neo-Nazis provoked thousands of counter demonstrators. To commemorate the Holocaust, of which many of Skokie's Jewish residents were survivors, a memorial sculpture was dedicated in the community's village center in 1987.<sup>63</sup>

Diversity has been increasing over the last fifty years, as Skokie has attracted people from many parts of the world. The 2000 census reported that 21 percent of Skokie's population was Asian, with 6 percent Hispanic and 5 percent African American; 37 percent were foreign-born.<sup>64</sup> The village even hosts an annual Festival of Cultures, drawing tens of thousands to the village.<sup>65</sup> The village of Skokie has not only been a great melting pot of nationalities, but also a center for nearly 400 companies. Rand McNally and G. D. Searle & Company were for years located in Skokie, and although Bell & Howell has facilities in other suburban areas of Chicago, they are headquartered in Skokie.<sup>66</sup> Skokie's 2020 population stood at 67,824 residents.

## **Part II. Architectural Information**

### **A. General Statement**

- 1. Architectural Character:** The Lincoln Junior High School building is a finely detailed example of an early twentieth century public school building, reflecting the Collegiate Gothic style so prevalent in school design at the time. Subsequent additions and alterations to the building were done sensitively so as to harmonize with the existing sections of the building. The design remained singular until 1952, when a large rear addition was constructed in a slightly more modernist style, scaling back but maintaining the massing, detailing, and materials of the original. The last significant addition in 2004 more closely reproduces the detailing of the oldest sections of the building.
- 2. Condition of Fabric:** The condition of the school building is excellent overall, as the building has been consistently improved and maintained since its construction. Some of the historic context of the building has been altered in the ongoing maintenance and alterations to the building when new work was being designed to resemble the existing features of original construction.

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<sup>62</sup> Rieff, Durking and Grossman, 755.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Rieff, Durking and Grossman, 755.

<sup>65</sup> Hanson and Witry, 121.

<sup>66</sup> Rieff, Durking and Grossman, 755.

## B. Description of Exterior

**Overall Dimensions:** The building is an irregular rectangle in shape, emanating from the multiple additions to the building over the course of its history. Overall, the structure is stands one-to-three stories high. Generally, the building is 240' wide x 290' deep.

1. **Foundations:** The foundation of the original section of the building is of common brick. Later sections rest on foundations of poured concrete.
2. **Walls:** Exterior walls are of a variegated red and black pressed brick, laid in an unusual bond consisting of an alternating header and stretcher course every four courses, with all other courses laid as stretchers where the vertical joints do not align. The brickwork is trimmed in Indiana limestone in the form of a continuous water table, a string course connecting the tops of the second-floor windows, and a crenellated cap. The walls are topped by a slightly recessed brick parapet, rebuilt in 1998 to match the original brickwork. Carved limestone panels of Gothic design including features that consist of foiled borders, pointed arches, and carved rosettes are inserted above most of the second story windows in the 1929 corner additions, and windows are separated by brick buttresses with limestone trim. The blank wall surfaces of the north side of the 1952 addition are defined by projecting frames of brick laid in a soldier course with square limestone corners. The 2004 addition is laid in common bond, and wall planes are defined by brickwork frames that mirror those on the north side of the 1952 addition. The glass vestibule added in 2014 to enclose the original main entrance is faced in black glass set into a black metal framework; it has no decorative detailing.
3. **Structural System:** The structural system is fire-proof masonry throughout, with interior walls constructed of hollow clay tile and flooring of poured concrete in the historic sections.
4. **Porches, stoops, balconies, porticoes, bulkheads:** None.
5. **Chimneys:** One chimney is present, on the south façade of the 2004 addition. It is finished in brick matching the walls and rises the entire height of the building.
6. **Openings**
  - a. **Doorways:** The original front, principal, entrance is centered on the south façade of the building, now inside the glass vestibule. It takes the form of a Tudor arch, trimmed by Indiana limestone with symmetrical carved reliefs of students reading and writing, supporting drip molds. There is a transom of limestone tracery containing four multifoiled pointed arches. To the left of the door surround are three carved relief plaques in the shape of shields, representing Reading, Writing,



and Arithmetic. The doorways leading into the 1929 stair towers are formed are topped by Tudor arches, with limestone voussoirs expanding in depth as they rise to the keystone; the outer edges of the surround form a stairstep pattern. Above are pairs of tall narrow windows set in vertical limestone panels. Doorways in the 1952 addition are much simpler, continuing the Tudor arch form in limestone, but with squared edges and beveled triangular panels above each arch. The historic wood doors have been replaced with modern metal two-light doors. The vestibule entrance from 2014 has a door surround of plain off-white limestone with no decorative detailing, and its doors are modern black metal and glass.

- b. Windows and shutters:** Window openings are vertically oriented and generally tall and narrow in configuration in keeping with the Collegiate Gothic style of the building. Centered in the south façade, a tripartite Tudor arch opening with three windows topped by multifoil limestone tracery occupies the space above the original main entrance. In the 1927, 1929, and 1932 sections of the building, windows are positioned as bands of singular openings with the first and second story fenestration set between pilasters that read as buttresses; there are recessed brick spandrels between the floors. Window sills are of Indiana limestone. They are steeply sloped in pairs on the first story and consist of smaller single sills on the second. Limestone window headers on the first story are flat; on the second they are segmented arches flat at the top. In the 1952 addition, the windows have been arranged in seven-part horizontal groupings while maintaining the vertical orientation of individual window units; a group of eight windows with pilasters between them tie into the design of the older sections. The groupings are each set under flat limestone headers following the lines of the older building. The windows of the 2004 addition mimic those of the 1952 addition. All sash has been replaced with modern black metal divided light windows; the bottom half contain operable casements and the upper half are fixed.

## 7. Roofs

- a. Shape, covering:** The roof structure is flat, covered in poured asphalt roofing.
- b. Cornice, eaves:** The cornice is in the form of a simple crenellated cap course of Indiana limestone. There are a greater number of crenellations over the sections of the building where entrances are located.
- c. Dormers, cupolas and towers:** Two towers are present, serving as the stairwells and ground-level entrances to the east and west of the 1929 addition. These towers are each defined by buttresses at the first-floor corners, crenellated cornices, and vertically arranged groups of four windows each, surrounded by carved Gothic-style limestone mimicking balconies at the bottom and arched hoods at the top.

### C. Description of Interior

1. **Floor Plans:** (see Appendix I) The building's floor plan appears to have been designed with future additions in mind, as the spaces flow well together, and the composition is balanced on the outside. Generally, the footprint is a T-plan, excluding the 2004 addition to the east. The classrooms are arranged along outside walls, with internal corridors ringing a central core consisting of the historic gymnasium, two band rooms, bathrooms and utility closets. This general arrangement is repeated on all three floors of the building.
2. **Stairways:** There are six internal stairways throughout the building. These stairs allow access to all floors and are constructed of painted steel with square newels and balusters and a varnished wood railing. All stairs have a half-space landing configuration.
3. **Flooring:** Flooring in internal corridors is of modern resilient material colored and textured to resemble hardwood planks. Classrooms and offices throughout the building are covered in commercial grade carpet as are the corridors of the 2004 addition. The locker rooms are floored in terrazzo, and the gymnasium has maple strip flooring. The science labs in the 2004 addition are covered in vinyl composition tile (VCT). Common areas such as the cafeteria are also floored in VCT.
4. **Wall and ceiling finishes:** Wall finishes throughout the historic portions of the building consist of painted plaster or drywall. Dropped ceiling grids supporting lighting and acoustic tile were installed throughout the building in 1985. Wall surfaces in the 2004 addition are painted concrete block, and ceilings have dropped grids supporting lighting and acoustic tile. The 1929 tower entrances feature a wainscot of glazed brown brick, with inset Arts and Crafts-style tiles depicting a turtle, owl, rabbit, chick, goose, heron, lobster, fish, and windmill. The most significant wall treatment is found in the historic gymnasium, where golden-color glazed clay tile forms the lower quarter of the wall surfaces, with varnished plywood panels above. A frieze located just under the ceiling of the gymnasium is decorated with hand painted panels dating to the 1930s. Interspersed among panels painted in repeating decorative motifs are various illustrative paintings showing the history of Skokie and its school district. The gymnasium ceiling is coffered with decorative painted panels between the beams.
5. **Openings**
  - a. **Doorways and doors:** Classroom doors are modern replacements of veneered wood construction, with various types of lights, some containing wire glass. Some classroom closets retain their original wood doors, in simple multi-panel designs, depending on the age of their section of the building. Trim consists of

historic wood frame moldings, with simple beveled edges. Some of this trim was reproduced in remodeled sections of the building, including in the front offices.

- b. Windows:** All historic sash has been replaced with modern black metal divided light windows; the bottom half are operable casements and the upper half fixed. There are integrated miniblinds set between the glass window panes. Windows have no trim; plaster wraps inside the void to the window frame. The upper classrooms in this section are distinguished by windows on three sides, some of which have arched tops and all of which have glazed brown ceramic tile sills. Some interior corridors are indirectly lit via clerestory windows opening into classroom spaces.
- 6. Decorative features and trim:** Three inset, pointed-arch niches are present in the main east-west corridor in the original section of the building. In the upper floor classrooms original bulletin boards with trim matching that of the doors are present between windows, as are paired wood, glass-fronted cabinets with crenellated tops. Some areas of the second floor retain historic picture-rail molding, and a simple wood dado trim is present in corridors. In the 1929 addition, the basement classrooms contain inset wood bookcases topped by a Tudor arch, with multifoiled trim and contoured shelves.
- 7. Hardware:** Hardware throughout the building consists of modern, commercial grade metal lever doorknobs. Some classroom closet doors have historic brass knobs of simple design.
- 8. Mechanical equipment**
  - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:** Heat is supplied by wall-mounted fin-type radiators, and air conditioning consists of individual wall units in rooms.
  - b. Lighting:** Lighting generally consists of fluorescent tube fixtures set into dropped ceiling grids. Historic Gothic-style metal and glass pendant lights are present in the entrance vestibules in the 1929 towers.
  - c. Plumbing:** Historic showers are present in the locker rooms; these consist of individual glazed-block walled showers in the girls', and a glazed-block open shower room with shower heads mounted to a single pipe with a single control present in the boys'.
- 9. Original furnishings:** None.

**D. Site**

1. **Historic landscape design:** None.
2. **Outbuildings:** There are no outbuildings.

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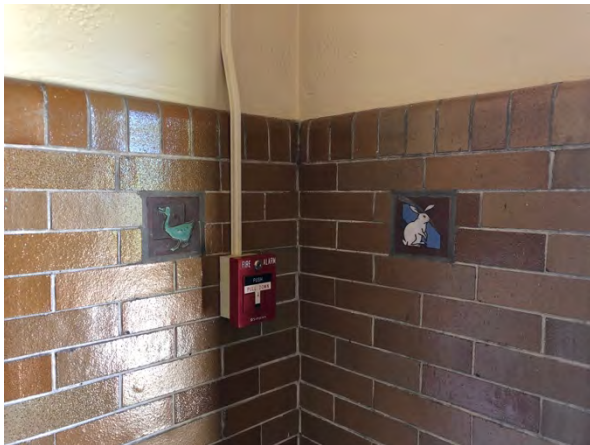
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Appendix I – Floor Plans



**Appendix II – Supporting Images (all images except archival taken by Andrew Elders)**



Details from 1932 stair tower vestibule, showing glazed brick wainscot, decorative tile, and Gothic pendant light



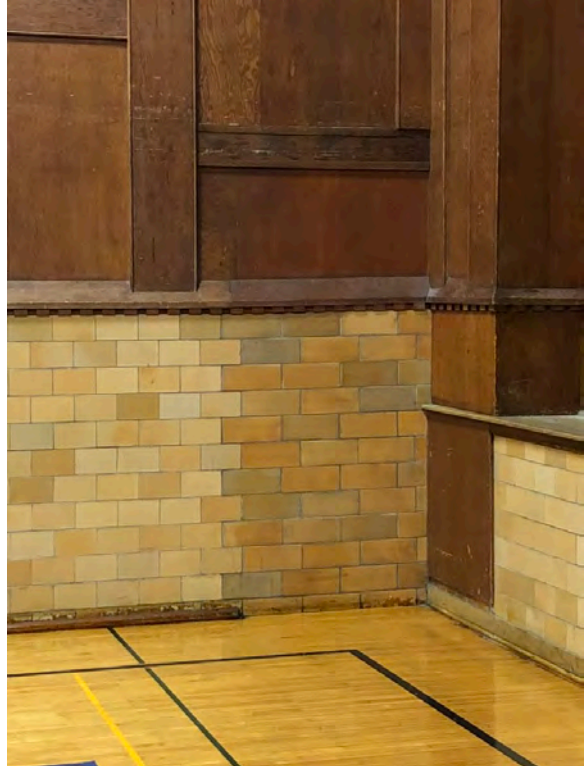
Fireproof Construction



Painted detail on gym stage



Evidence of exterior gym door, filled in 1952



North wall of gym, showing filled windows



Southwest corner of gym, frieze and ceiling



Detail of wood paneling and terra cotta block



1952 library, looking northeast



View to north, showing truncated 1960 gymnasium addition and south wall of 2004 addition



View to south of 1952 addition



View to west, various sections labeled by date



Aerial view, 1927



n.a., *Aerial Photograph of Niles Center, Illinois, 1927*, Skokie History Project (Illinois Digital Archives), 2021-12-30, <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/skokiepo02/id/2046>.

Aerial view, 1930



n.a., *Aerial Photograph of Lincoln Avenue and Oakton Street, 1930*, Skokie History Project (Illinois Digital Archives), 2021-12-30, <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/skokiepo02/id/1793>.

Aerial view, 1951



n.a., *Aerial Photograph of Downtown Business Area in Skokie, 1951*, Skokie History Project (Illinois Digital Archives), 2021-12-30, <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/skokiepo02/id/2363>.

Lincoln School fifth grade classroom, 1935



n.a., *Lincoln School 5th Grade Classroom Photograph*, Skokie History Project (Illinois Digital Archives), 2021-12-30, <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/skokiepo02/id/2131>.

Lincoln School kindergarten or first grade class, 1936



n.a., *Lincoln School Classroom Photograph*, Skokie History Project (Illinois Digital Archives), 2021-12-30, <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/skokiepo02/id/2095>.

Front (south) façade view, 1987



n.a., *Lincoln Junior High School Photograph, 1987*, Skokie History Project (Illinois Digital Archives), 2021-12-30, <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/skokiepo02/id/2436>.

1950 Sanborn map



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Chicago, Cook County, Illinois. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. A, - July 1950, 1924. Map. [https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn01790\\_133/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn01790_133/).



HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

LINCOLN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
7839 Lincoln Avenue  
Skokie  
Cook County  
Illinois

HABS No. IL-1261

Leslie Schwartz, Photographer, July 2020

- IL-1261-1      General view of front (south) façade from south southwest.
- IL-1261-2      General view of west wall from south southwest.
- IL-1261-3      General view of north wall from north northwest.
- IL-1261-4      General view of east wall and south wall of 2004 addition from south.
- IL-1261-5      Detail view of west wall entrance tower from northwest.
- IL-1261-6      Detail view of original front entrance in modern vestibule from south.
- IL-1261-7      Interior view of first-floor south corridor from west showing original 1927 arched niches and plasterwork.
- IL-1261-8      Interior view of gymnasium/auditorium from north, showing stage.
- IL-1261-9      Detail view of gymnasium/auditorium from northeast, showing original beams, frieze, and wood paneled walls.
- IL-1261-10     Interior view of 1929 classroom from north, showing original closet doors and casings and clerestory windows to the west corridor at left.
- IL-1261-11     Interior view of 1932 corner classroom from north, showing original cupboards, arched windows, and bulletin board.
- IL-1261-12     Interior view of 1932 vestibule from west, showing original tile wainscoting, arched door openings, and stairs to basement and main level.
- IL-1261-13     Interior view of 1932 basement corner classroom from east, showing Gothic trim on recessed bookshelves.











LINCOLN SCHOOL

LINCOLN















