

# South Side FACTS

**Hello!** Schools have long been part of South Side life. The front of this fact sheet tells you about some of South Side's first schools, and on the back you'll find facts about schools today.

## Schools Long Ago

In 1850, Birmingham No. 1 opened. It was the largest public school on the South Side at the time. Eighty pupils studied in the original four-room building. The boys attended classes on one side; the girls on the other!

The school's name was changed to **Bedford Public School** in 1872 in honor of Dr. Nathaniel Bedford. He



*Bedford Public School*

was a physician at Fort Pitt, as well as a large landowner on the South Side. In his will, he gave the land to the Borough of Birmingham for a school.

Today, this building has been made into condominiums. The original blackboards still hang on the walls!

**Humboldt School** was built in 1867. The original building had nine rooms and was referred to as an academy. In 1881 nine more rooms were added and the building became known as a "school house." The school was torn down in 1957, and a new school, Phillips Elementary, was built on the same piece of land.

**Birmingham Public School** opened around 1870, on South 14<sup>th</sup> Street, and was renovated in 1925. The red-brick building served as a school for just over 130 years. After Birmingham Public School closed, the school re-opened in 1940 as St. Adalbert's School, then became South Side Catholic in 1969, and then became Prince of Peace School in 1992. Prince of Peace closed in June 2002 and the building is now vacant.

Another of the schools on the South Side was **Morse School**. It was built in 1874 and an annex was added in 1905. The annex later housed the first evening grammar and night schools in the City of Pittsburgh. This new school housed a radical change from the older forms of education. Many of the men and boys who worked in the shops and mills during the day attended classes there at night. They learned the basics of their crafts from a scientific viewpoint.

When South Side students reached their mid-teens, they went to **South Side High School**. The original building was built in 1898, and

students from all districts south of the Monongahela River attended. Students came from Mt. Lebanon, Dormont, Sheraden, Carrick, and Brentwood.



*South Side High School*

Two additions were built in 1924 and 1936. South Side High School was the first city school to have all-weather turf installed in its stadium. From September 1985 through June 2004 the school was used for vocational and technical training, and was renamed South Vo-Tech.

Years ago, some high school students chose to go to schools set up by their parishes. Some of these schools included **St. Casimir's**, **St. Michael's**, **St. Peter's**, and **St. Adalbert's**, (these were combined to form Prince of Peace), **St. John the Baptist**, **St. Matthew's**, **St. John the Evangelist**, **St. Josaphat's**, and **Holy Cross**. All these schools are now closed.

**OVER →**

*Humboldt School, c. 1906*



# Schools on the South Side and in Surrounding Areas

## 1. Phillip's Elementary School

1901 Sarah Street

**Built:** 1958

**Named After:** John MacFarlane  
Phillips and Harriet  
Duff Phillips

**Grades Served:** K-5

**Attendance:** 300

## 2. Arlington School

2500 Jonquil Way

**Built:** 1961

**Named For:** The neighborhood

**Grades Served:** K-8

**Attendance:** 350

## 3. Bishop Leonard Catholic School

434 Ormsby Avenue

**Built:** 1881, 1925, 1956 (newest addition)

**Former Name:** St. Joseph's School

**Named For:** Bishop Leonard of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He was the first Pittsburgh-born priest to be appointed as bishop. He served from 1969 to 1983.

**Grades Served:** Pre-K-8

**Attendance:** 271

## 4. Philip Murray Elementary School

800 Rectenwald Street

**Built:** 1955

**Named After:** Union leader  
Philip Murray

**Grades Served:** Pre-K-6

**Attendance:** 300

## 5. Prospect Elementary and Middle School

45 Cowan and 161 Prospect Streets

**Built:** 1931

**Named For:** Location on Mt. Washington overlooking Pittsburgh

**Grades Served:** K-5 (elementary)  
6-8 (middle)

**Attendance:** 223 (elementary)  
362 (middle)

## 6. Knoxville Elementary and Middle School

90 Georgia Avenue and 300 Charles Street

**Built:** 1935

**Named For:** The neighborhood (Knoxville takes its name from Jeremiah and Mary Morgan Knox, who settled there in the early 1800s.)

**Grades Served:** K-5 (elementary)  
6-8 (middle)

**Attendance:** 315 (elementary)  
370 (middle)

## Questions

1. Where do you go to school?

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2. How old is your school building?

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3. How many students are attending your school this year?

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4. How many students are in your class?

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5. Did your parents go to school on the South Side?  Yes  No  
Grandparents?  Yes  No  
Great-grandparents?  Yes  No

6. If so, which schools did they go to?

Parents:

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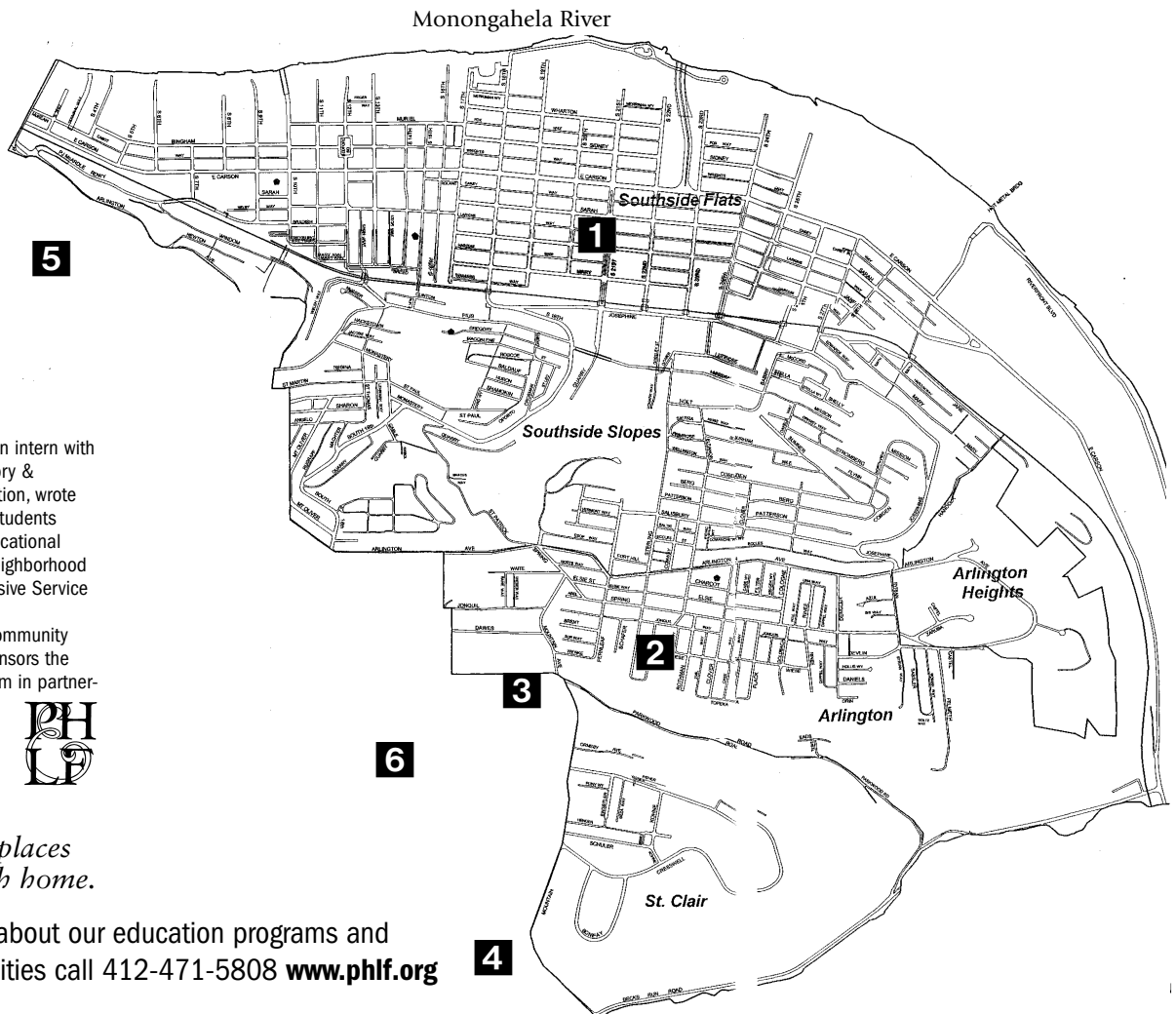
Grandparents:

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Great-grandparents:

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*The map shows the area served by the Neighborhood Assistance Program/Comprehensive Service Program, and the schools that are within the area or just beyond the boundaries.*



Megan Heilmann, an intern with the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, wrote this fact sheet for students participating in educational

programs offered through the Neighborhood Assistance Program/Comprehensive Service Program. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development sponsors the Neighborhood Assistance Program in partnership with the South Side Local Development Company and PNC Bank. For details call the SSLDC at 412-481-0651.



*Help us protect the places that make Pittsburgh home.*

For more information about our education programs and membership opportunities call 412-471-5808 [www.phlf.org](http://www.phlf.org)