

Seattle School District Number 1 History, General Historical and Building Context

May 2019

Appendix 3 to Landmark Nomination Report for
Rainier Beach High School
May 2019

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1. Introduction

This report was prepared by Larry E. Johnson, AIA, principal of the Johnson Partnership, May 2013. Additional input was received from Susan Boyle, AIA, of BOLA Architecture + Planning. The report was updated in 2019 by Ellen F. C. Mirro, AIA, principal of the Johnson partnership. Special thanks to Tingyu Wang of Seattle Public Schools Facilities for updating and reviewing the report.

Note: This general historical survey does not provide a comprehensive list of every school built or operated by Seattle Public Schools from the district's founding in 1882 to the present day.

2. Early Development of Seattle Area Schools

The first school in Seattle was established in 1854 in Bachelors' Hall, a boarding house for single men located near present-day First Avenue and Cherry Street. The sole teacher was Catharine P. Blaine, who arrived in Seattle in 1853 with her Episcopalian minister husband. An initial three-person school board was created around 1861, and in 1862, the first public funds were used to pay a teacher a salary for the twenty-three children attending school then held in the new Territorial University Building on Denny's Knoll, located at University Street and Fourth Avenue. Until 1866, when tuition-free classes were established, public funds were exclusively earmarked for teacher salaries. In 1869, Seattle received a city charter from the territorial legislature, and residents approved a funding levy to build the city's first free public school building, Central School, near Third Avenue and Marion Street. The school opened in 1870 with 120 students and the city's first public school teacher, Lizzie Ordway. Other tax levies were later approved to construct a few smaller schoolhouses of one or two rooms scattered throughout the town.¹

In 1877, the legislature established the Territorial Board of Education, and by 1881, it had granted appointments of school superintendents in incorporated cities. Subsequently, Edward Ingraham was named the first superintendent of the Seattle School District in 1882.²

In 1883, a new twelve-room Central School (1883, Isaac A. Palmer, a.k.a. the Sixth Street School, demolished) located at Sixth Avenue and Marion Street opened, offering Seattle's first high school classes. The following year, the twelve-room Denny School (1884, Stephen J. Meany, demolished) at Fifth Avenue and Battery Street opened for elementary students. The district's first high school commencement was held in 1886, for twelve graduates.³ ***See figures 1-2.***

Student enrollment in the district expanded more than fourfold from 1,500 students in 1885 to nearly 6,650 in 1893, with many students attending classes held in rented rooms. Acute overcrowding, exacerbated by the loss of Central School to a fire in 1888, resulted in a major school construction program. Eight school buildings were built between 1889 and 1890. The city's third Central School (1889, demolished 1953), replaced its destroyed predecessor, and the South School (1889, demolished 1909), located at Twelfth Avenue S and S Weller Street,

¹ Paul Hoerlein, "Introduction," in *Building for Learning, Seattle Public School Histories, 1862-2000*, Nile Thompson and Carolyn J. Marr ed. (Seattle, WA: Seattle Public Schools, 2002), p. x.

² William Gregory Robinson, "A History of Public School Architecture in Seattle," unpublished Masters thesis, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington, 1989) p. 33.

³ Patricia C. Erigero, *Seattle Public Schools, Historic Building Survey Summary Report*, (Seattle, WA: Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority, 1989), pp. 3-5. Hoerlein, p. x.

were Seattle's first brick masonry schools, both designed by the architectural firm of Boone & Meeker.⁴

The district's third superintendent, Frank J. Barnard, was hired in 1890, replacing Julia Kennedy, who had replaced Ingraham in 1888. Barnard oversaw the construction of fifteen schools the district completed between 1891 and 1900. Three were wood-frame school buildings with identical plans designed by the architectural firm of Saunders & Houghton, as well as four schools designed by John Parkinson based on programs developed by Barnard.⁵

See figure 3.

District schools completed between 1890 and 1899 include:

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Mercer School	1890	Fourth Ave N & Valley Street	Saunders & Houghton	Demolished 1948
T.T. Minor School	1890	1700 E Union Street	Saunders & Houghton	Demolished 1940
Queen Anne School	1890	W Galer Street & Fifth Ave W	Charles W. Saunders	Demolished 1895
Randall School	1890	E Union Street & 33 rd Ave	n.a.	Sold and moved 1906
Rainier School	1890	23 rd Ave S & King Street	Saunders & Houghton	Demolished 1957
Olympic School	1891	Norman Street & 26 th Ave S	Walter Smedley	Demolished 1937
B.F. Day School	1892	3921 Linden Ave N	John Parkinson	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Latona School	1892	Fifth Ave NE & N 42 nd St.	n.a.	Demolished 1932
Green Lake School	1892	N 65 th Street & Sunnyside Ave	John Parkinson	Demolished 1928
Cascade School	1893	Pontius & E Thomas Streets	John Parkinson	Demolished 1955
Pacific School	1893	1114 E Jefferson Street	John Parkinson	Demolished 1977
Seward School	1895	Franklin & Louisa Streets	Chamberlin & Siebrand	A.k.a. Denny-Fuhrman, altered, Seattle Landmark
West Queen Anne School	1895	515 W Galer Street	Skillings & Corner	Sold and redeveloped as condominiums in 1983
Beacon Hill School	1899	16 th Street S & S Lander Street	n.a.	Destroyed by fire 1988

⁴ Hoerlein, p. x.

⁵ Ibid.

Lake School	1899	38 th Ave E & E Garfield Street	W.E. Boone	Demolished 1927
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The financial panic of 1893 slowed the development of new schools, but Seattle prospered during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897.⁶ In the aftermath of the Great Seattle Fire of 1889, local designers and builders focused on fireproof masonry as a primary building material, looking to post-fire Chicago and its brick masonry buildings for inspiration.⁷

3. Early 20th Century Seattle Schools and James Stephen

Frank B. Cooper was hired as superintendent in 1901. During his twenty-one-year tenure, he led the Seattle School District’s transformation into a major urban school system. Cooper encouraged this development by establishing many specialized programs, including kindergartens, parental schools, and classes for adults in evening schools, as well as those for special-needs students. Cooper and the school board planned for smaller neighborhood elementary schools and comprehensive high schools.⁸

James Stephen became the school architect and director of construction in 1901, developing a “model school plan” for standard wood-frame elementary schools. This plan was used as a basis for several elementary schools designed for the district, partially offsetting a short-term financial shortfall. These schools provided a flexible and economical approach to school construction. The standard floor plan facilitated a phased construction process in which an eight-, twelve-, or twenty-room school could be constructed and later expanded. While standard floor plans and interior finish materials were used, the exterior elevations and details of these schools varied greatly.⁹ *See figure 4.*

In 1902, the district constructed seven new large wood-frame schools, all based on Stephen’s plan, as well as a new large brick masonry high school. They include:¹⁰

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Green Lake School	1902	6500 Sunnyside Avenue N	James Stephen	Demolished 1986
Brooklyn School	1902	5031 University Way NE	Bebb & Mendel	Later University Heights, sold to University Heights Community Center Association, Seattle Landmark
Interbay School	1902	16 th Ave W & W Barrett Street	James Stephen	Demolished 1948
Ross School	1902	Third Ave NW btw NW 43 rd &	Josenhans & Allen	Demolished 1941

⁶ Erigero, p. 8.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 4, 96.

⁸ Hoerlein, p. xi.

⁹ Kathryn Hills Krafft, “James Stephen,” in *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, ed., (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1994), p. 61.

¹⁰ Erigero, p. 10. *Seattle Sunday Times*, August 31, 1902, p.18.

		44 th Streets		
Walla Walla School	1902	2410 E Cherry Street	Saunders & Lawton	Renamed Horace Mann School, Seattle Landmark, altered, now the site of Nova High School
20 th Street School	1902	E Thomas Street & 20 th Avenue E	W.E. Boone & J.M. Corner	Renamed Longfellow, later Edmund S. Meany Middle School, demolished 1960
Warren Ave. School	1902	Warren Ave N btw N Harrison & Republican Sts	Albert Wickersham	Demolished 1959

Between 1904 and 1909, Stephen designed ten other Seattle schools, all based on his “model school plan,” including:¹¹ *See figure 5.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Park School	1904	6532 Phinney Avenue N	James Stephen	Renamed John B. Allen School, Seattle Landmark
Beacon Hill School	1904	16 th Avenue S & S Lander Street	Saunders & Lawton	Sold to El Centro de la Raza
Interlake School	1904	4416 Wallingford Ave N	James Stephen	Now Wallingford Center, Seattle Landmark
Madrona School	1904	33 rd Ave & E Union Street	James Stephen	Altered
John B. Hay School	1905	Bigelow & Boston Streets	James Stephen	Seattle Landmark
Seward School	1905	2515 Boylston Avenue E	James Stephen	Now TOPS K-8 School, altered, Seattle Landmark
Daniel Bagley School	1906	Stone Way N & N 79 th Street	James Stephen	Demolished 1940
Latona School	1906	401 NE 42 nd Street	James Stephen	Now John Stanford International School, altered, Seattle Landmark
Isaac I. Stevens School	1906	1242 18 th Ave E	James Stephen	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Frantz Coe School	1907	2433 Sixth Ave W	James Stephen	Destroyed by fire 2000
Van Asselt School	1909	Beacon Ave S & S Othello Street	Edgar Blair	Seattle Landmark

¹¹ Erigero, p. 10.

Other district schools during this period that were not based on the “model plan” include:
See figure 6.

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Central High School	1902	6525 E Broadway	W.E. Boone & J.M. Corner	Later renamed Broadway High School, demolished 1974
Parental School	1905	Mercer Island	James Stephen	A.k.a. Burbank school
Summit School	1905	1415 Summit Avenue	James Stephen	Now Northwest School, Seattle Landmark
Franklin School	1906	18 th Avenue S and Main Street	James Stephen	A.k.a. Washington School, demolished ca. 1975
Whittier School	1908	7501 13 th Avenue NW	Newton Gauntt	Demolished 1998
Webster School	1908	3014 NW 67 th Street	Frederick Sexton	Seattle Landmark

Between 1907 and 1908, the district began reconsidering wood-framed school buildings, with the board authorizing the construction of three brick masonry “fireproof” buildings using the model plan developed for the wood-frame schools. These include:¹²

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Lawton School	1908	25 th Ave W & W Elmore Street	James Stephen	Demolished 1913
Fairview School	1908	844 NE 78 th St	James Stephen	Now Fairview Church
Whitworth School	1908	5215 46 th Ave S	James Stephen	Demolished 1987

These James Stephen-designed buildings were nearly identical, incorporating Tudor-style details executed in terra cotta, with flat roofs and projecting entries.

In 1908, a school fire in Collinwood, Ohio killed 172 students, and caused school districts around the country to re-evaluate their building programs.¹³ Among these was school architect James Stephen, who toured the country to prepare a report on modern school design, construction, and equipment. This report led directly to the creation and adoption of the second “model school plan” that incorporated fireproof materials including concrete, masonry, and terra cotta. These “new” school plans also incorporated modern lavatory equipment. The later schools were often executed in then-popular late Gothic or Jacobean styles, and were designed to be expandable as necessary. Schools that followed the “new”

¹² Erigero, p. 18.

¹³ Michael Newbury and Daniel Houghton "The Collinwood Fire, 1908," Middlebury College, <http://collinwoodfire.org> (accessed May 2019).

model are:¹⁴ *See figure 7.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Emerson School	1909	9709 60 th Avenue S	James Stephen	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Adams School	1909	6129 26 th Avenue NW	James Stephen	Demolished 1989
Colman School	1909	1515 24 th Avenue S	James Stephen	Now African American Museum, Seattle Landmark
Greenwood School	1909	144 NW 80 th Street	James Stephen	Altered

Stephen also designed the original portions of two of Seattle's oldest extant high schools:¹⁵ *See figure 8.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Lincoln High School	1907	4400 Interlake Avenue N	James Stephen	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Queen Anne High School	1909	215 Galer Street	James Stephen	Now housing, Seattle Landmark

By 1910, enrollment was at 24,758 students and more elementary school buildings were needed. Annexations of suburban areas between 1905 and 1910 brought nearly two dozen additional schools into the district service area, many of which needed replacement.¹⁶

4. Early 20th Century Seattle Schools and Edgar Blair

Edgar Blair, who had worked with Stephens since 1906, became the district's architect in 1909 after Stephen resigned. Blair, a graduate of Columbia University who had previously worked at the New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, originally retained Stephen's model plan, but eventually shifted away from Stephen's preferred Jacobean style to more Classical- and Renaissance-based schemes.¹⁷

Between 1910 and 1913, eight nine-room reinforced concrete school buildings with brick veneers were constructed from Blair's designs, including the following:¹⁸ *See figure 9.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Gatewood School	1910	4320 SW Myrtle Street	Edgar Blair	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Ravenna School	1911	6545 Ravenna	Edgar Blair	Altered, now Ravenna Apartments Community

¹⁴ Krafft, pp. 61-63.

¹⁵ Krafft, pp. 61-63.

¹⁶ Erigero, p. 14.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

		Avenue NE		Center
Jefferson School	1911	4720 42 nd Avenue SW	Edgar Blair	Demolished 1985
Lawton School	1912	25 th Ave W & W Elmore Street	Edgar Blair	Demolished 1987
Lake School	1912	1617 38 th Avenue E	Edgar Blair	Now McGilvra, altered, Seattle Landmark
F.A. McDonald School	1912	144 N 54 th Street	Edgar Blair	Altered
Concord School	1912	723 S Concord Street	Edgar Blair	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Alki School	1913	SW Carroll St & Chilberg Ave SW	Edgar Blair	Altered, 1965

These similar school buildings were all eclectically styled with wood-framed hip roofs. The later buildings incorporated terra cotta stringcourses and more intricate detailing.¹⁹

Besides these larger nine-room school buildings, Blair was responsible for smaller, four- to six-classroom “intermediate grade of school buildings” designed for less populous neighborhood locations. These include:²⁰ *See figure 10.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Harrison School	1913	3201 E Republican St	Edgar Blair	Altered, sold to First African Methodist Episcopal
North Queen Anne School	1914	2919 First Avenue W	Edgar Blair	Altered
Fauntleroy School	1917	9131 California Avenue SW	Edgar Blair	Altered, now leased to West Seattle Nursery & Garden Center
Frank B. Cooper School	1917	4408 Delridge Way SW	Edgar Blair	Altered, now Youngstown Cultural Arts Center, Seattle Landmark
Crown Hill School	1919	9250 14 th Avenue NW	Edgar Blair	Altered, sold to Small Faces Child Development Center

Blair also designed four school additions, so-called “border” buildings, consisting of linear single-loaded brick masonry buildings intended to be built adjacent to the lot line of existing schools. These include additions to:²¹ *See figure 11.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
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¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

²¹ Erigero, pp. 22-23.

Allen School	1917	6615 Dayton Avenue N	Edgar Blair	Sold to Phinney Neighborhood Association, Seattle Landmark
Seward School	1917	2515 Boylston Avenue E	Edgar Blair	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Latona School	1917	401 NE 42 nd St	Edgar Blair	Demolished 1999
Lowell School	1919	1058 E Mercer Street	Edgar Blair	Altered

Blair designed three high schools during his tenure. These are as follows:²² *See figure 12.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Franklin High School	1912	3013 S Mt. Baker Blvd	Edgar Blair	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Ballard High School	1916	1418 NW 65 th Street	Edgar Blair	Demolished 1997
West Seattle High School	1917	4075 SW Stevens Street	Edgar Blair	Altered, City of Seattle Landmark

In 1919, four “Liberty Buildings,” wood-framed temporary annexes built cheaply to conserve materials during World War I, were built adjacent to Jefferson, Bagley, Bryant, and Fulton schools.²³

Blair resigned as school architect in March of 1918, due to differences with the fiscally conservative Nathan Eckstein, who was then serving as the chair of the district’s building committee.²⁴

5. 1920s and 1930s Seattle Schools and Floyd A. Naramore

After World War I, and as Seattle entered the 1920s, the increased costs of providing educational programs to a growing population strained the school district. Public school enrollment grew from 51,381 in 1920, to slightly over 66,000 ten years later, requiring new construction in newly developed areas like Montlake and Laurelhurst, additions to older schools, and construction of intermediate schools and high schools. Despite a post-war recession in the early 1920s, the district entered into a phase of a well-funded building program due to school construction bond issues passed in 1919, 1923, 1925, and 1927.²⁵

Floyd A. Naramore replaced Blair as school architect in 1919, overseeing the completion of several projects already underway. An M.I.T. graduate who had already designed several schools in Portland, Oregon, Naramore would significantly influence the district’s school design until his departure for private practice in 1932. Most of Naramore’s schools were

²² Ibid., p. 24.

²³ Ibid., p. 25.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

²⁵ Erigeron, p. 26.

designed in a twentieth century version of the Georgian style.²⁶

With Cooper still serving as superintendent, the district continued its vocational and technical programs, building a large reinforced concrete annex (1921, Floyd A. Naramore, altered, later Edison Technical School, now part of Seattle Community College's Central Campus) across the street to the north from Broadway High School in 1921. The same year, the district also completed a new administration and facilities building (1921, Floyd A. Naramore, demolished).²⁷

Cooper left the district in 1922, replaced by Thomas Cole, a former principal of Broadway High School. Cole served until 1931, and was succeeded by Worth McClure.²⁸

The district completed thirteen new elementary school buildings during this period, and altered several others with additions. By 1935, all elementary schools also included kindergarten, and lunchroom service was being added to all schools.²⁹

New elementary schools completed during this period include: *See figure 13.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Bailey Gatzert School	1921	615 12 th Ave S	Floyd A. Naramore	Demolished 1989
Highland Park School	1921	1012 SW Trenton Street	Floyd A. Naramore	Demolished 1998
Martha Washington School	1921	6612 57 th Ave S	Floyd A. Naramore	Originally Girls' Parental School, demolished 1989
Columbia School	1922	3528 S Ferdinand Street	Floyd A. Naramore	
John Hay School	1922	411 Boston Street	Floyd A. Naramore	Now called Queen Anne Elementary
Dunlap School	1924	8621 46 th Avenue S	Floyd A. Naramore	Seattle Landmark, Altered
Montlake School	1924	2409 22 nd Avenue E	Floyd A. Naramore	Seattle Landmark
William Cullen Bryant School	1926	3311 NE 60 th Street	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
E.C. Hughes School	1926	7740 34 th Avenue SW	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Magnolia School	1927	2418 28 th Avenue W	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Laurelhurst School	1928	4530 46 th Avenue NE	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 25-26. Hoerlein, p. xi.

²⁷ Nile Thompson and Carolyn Marr, *Building for Learning* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Public Schools, 2001), pp. 86-87.

²⁸ Hoerlein, p. xi.

²⁹ Ibid., p. xii.

Daniel Bagley School	1930	7821 Stone Avenue N	Floyd A. Naramore	Seattle Landmark
Loyal Heights School	1932	2511 NW 80 th Street	Floyd A. Naramore	Seattle Landmark, Altered

In the early 1920s, the district considered building intermediate or “junior high school” buildings serving students in grades seven through nine, to put itself in line with national educational philosophy and relieve pressure on existing elementary and high schools. The school board officially adopted the term “junior high school” in 1932. Naramore designed four intermediate or junior high schools for the district, including:³⁰ *See figure 14.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Alexander Hamilton Jr. High School	1925	1610 N 41 st Street	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
John Marshall Jr. High School	1927	520 NE Ravenna Blvd	Floyd A. Naramore	
Madison Jr. High School	1929	3429 45 th Avenue SW	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Monroe Jr. High School	1931	1810 NW 65 th Street	Floyd A. Naramore	

These school building were all built according to a “hollow square” plan with a centrally located gymnasium and lunchroom. Each included specialized science, mechanical drawing, cooking, sewing, and art rooms.

Three new high schools were completed between 1923 and 1929. They also featured the “hollow square” plan and had imposing primary façades.³¹

High schools designed by Floyd Naramore include: *See figure 15.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Roosevelt High School	1922	1410 NE 66 th St	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
James A. Garfield High School	1923	400 23 rd Avenue	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Cleveland High School	1927	5511 15 th Avenue S	Floyd A. Naramore	Altered, Seattle Landmark

District high schools during this period adopted specialized programs for science, art, physical education, industrial arts, and home economics.³²

³⁰ Erigero, pp. 26-27. Hoerlein, p. xii.

³¹ Erigero, p. 28.

³² Hoerlein, pp. xi-xii.

The Great Depression of the 1930s was a time of rising unemployment with general school enrollment declining to 57,551 in 1933. Enrollment in adult education classes dramatically increased, however. Seattle schools faced declining revenues, excess personnel and older urban facilities. Sixteen schools were closed, and their students redistributed to nearby buildings. By the end of the 1930s, there were concerns about the lack of maintenance and the conditions of older schools, prompting the district to request a tax levy for another new building program.³³

6. World War II-Era Seattle Schools

A three million dollar school levy passed on March 14, 1939.³⁴ Under this levy Floyd Naramore was hired as an independent architect in partnership with Clifton Brady. He completed the design for one new school building, T.T. Minor, and a major addition and remodel at what was then called Longefellow, later renamed Edmund Meany after the addition was complete. Also, eleven other schools received minor additions and remodels from levy funds.³⁵ Additions included a gymnasium at Colman School, vocation wing at Edison, additional classrooms at Van Asselt, four rooms at Laurelhurst, classrooms at McGilvra and Magnolia, and an addition at Ballard.³⁶ However, due to declining enrollment in this period, sixteen older buildings were closed, including the Ross School.³⁷

During World War II, Seattle became a center of aircraft and shipbuilding for the war effort and experienced a massive influx of defense workers and their families. School enrollment once again grew, especially in areas where there were no existing school facilities. Existing school facilities were expanded for the children of these workers, especially in federally funded housing project areas.³⁸

At the same time, the internment of 1,456 Japanese American families meant that the district lost a large number of students.³⁹

The district also sought to increase efficiency at this time by changing its method for designing new buildings, choosing to hire private architecture firms rather than employing a school district architect for new building programs. Once again, all buildings constructed after 1941 were considered temporary structures to conserve building materials for the war effort.⁴⁰

New schools completed during World II included: *See figure 16.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
T.T. Minor School	1941	17700 E Union Street	Naramore & Brady	altered

³³ Erigero, pp. 28-29. Hoerlein, p. xi.

³⁴ Seattle Times, "Propositions; 3-Mill School Levy (Approved)," March 15, 1939, p.2

³⁵ Hoerlein, p. xii.

³⁶ Seattle Times, "Colman School Addition Starts," July 30, 1940, p.5, and Seattle Times, "Building to be ready next Fall," September 7, 1940, p.17, Seattle Times, "Van Asselt School Addition Dedicated," November 16, 1940, p.3, "Laurelhurst School Addition Dedicated," December 4, 1940, p.5, "Board Doooms Old Buildings in \$589,000 School Programs," June 11, 1940, pp.1&5

³⁷ Hoerlein, p. xii. And Seattle Times, "Ross School May Be Discontinued," February 17, 1940 p.7

³⁸ Hoerlein, pp. xi-xii.

³⁹ Ibid., p. xii.

⁴⁰ Erigero, p. 28. Hoerlein, p. xii.

Duwamish Bend School	1944	5925 Third Avenue S	n.a.	Later Holgate School, demolished
High Point School	1944	6760 34 th Avenue SW	Stuart, Kirk, & Durham	Demolished 1987
Rainier Vista School	1944	3100 Alaska Street	Holmes & Bain	Originally Columbia Annex, altered and partially demolished

Additions and improvements to more than ten other schools were also undertaken as part of a program that demolished and replaced the city’s oldest wood-frame school buildings.

7. Post-World War II Seattle Schools, 1946 to 1965

After World War II, enrollment swelled to a peak in the 1960s of approximately 100,000 students. Between 1946 and 1958, six separate bond issues were approved for new school construction. Samuel Fleming, employed by the district since 1908, succeeded Worth McClure as superintendent in 1945. After Fleming retired in 1956, Ernest Campbell became superintendent.⁴¹

In 1945, the Seattle School District Board commissioned a study of population trends and future building needs. One proposal called for the modernization of all existing schools and the addition of classrooms, along with multi-use rooms for lunch and assembly purposes, covered and hard-surfaced play areas and play-courts, and expanded gymnasiums. Improvements in lighting, heating, plumbing systems, and acoustical treatments were sought as well. This survey occurred at a time when student enrollment in Seattle was stable, at around 50,000. By this time the school district was overseen by a five-member board of directors, and employed approximately 2,500 certified teachers, with an average annual salary of about \$2,880.⁴²

The district completed a large stadium with reinforced concrete stands (1947, George W. Stoddard) in 1947, adjacent to the National Guard Armory at Harrison Street and Fourth Avenue N, at the former Civic Field. In 1951, a war memorial shrine bearing the names of 762 Seattle schools graduates killed in World War II was dedicated at Memorial Stadium.

In 1949, a 6.8 Richter-scale earthquake damaged several elementary schools, resulting in their subsequent replacement by temporary portables. As enrollment continued to swell throughout the 1950s, these temporary structures served as a quick, flexible response to overcrowding. In 1958 an estimated twenty percent of the total Seattle student body was taught in portable classrooms. Despite their popularity, however, the occupants of the portables suffered from inadequate heating, lack of plumbing, and distance from other school facilities.⁴³

Elementary schools included separate gymnasiums and auditorium-lunchrooms. Older high schools gained additions of gymnasiums and specialized classroom space. Despite all the construction, there were still extensive needs for portable classrooms to accommodate

⁴¹ Hoerlein, p. xii.

⁴² William Gregory Robinson, “A History of Public School Architecture in Seattle,” unpublished Masters thesis. (Seattle, WA: University of Washington, 1989), p. 192-193. Aaron Purcell, School enrollment figures from Seattle Public Schools archives.

⁴³ Hoerlein, p. xiii.

excess enrollment.⁴⁴

During this period the quality of construction gradually improved. The earliest school buildings, put up as rapidly as possible, included the three schools constructed in 1949. Designs prepared by George W. Stoddard for these schools were essentially linked portables with a fixed administrative wing. Each of the district's thirty-five new school buildings was individually designed in the Modern style, with nearly all of the elementary schools constructed as one-story buildings, or on sloping sites. To conform to change in building code, each classroom had direct access to grade.

The twenty-two new elementary schools built by the district between 1948 and 1965 include:
See figures 17 & 18.

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
View Ridge School	1948	7047 50 th Avenue NE	William Mallis	
Arbor Heights School	1949	3701 SW 104th Street	George W. Stoddard	Demolished
Briarcliff School	1949	3901 W Dravus Street	George W. Stoddard	Sold to Lexington Development and demolished
Genesee Hill	1949	5012 SW Genesee Street	George W. Stoddard	Demolished
Lafayette School	1950	2645 California Avenue SW	John Graham & Co.	
Van Asselt School	1950	7201 Beacon Avenue S	Jones & Bindon	
Olympic Hills School	1954	13018 20 th Avenue NE	John Graham & Co.	Demolished
Viewlands School	1954	10523 Third Avenue NW	Mallis & Dehart	
Wedgwood School	1955	2720 NE 85 th Street	John Graham & Co.	
Northgate School	1956	11725 First Avenue NE	Paul Thiry	
John Rogers School	1956	4030 NE 109th Street	Theo Damm	
North Beach School	1958	9018 24 th Avenue NW	John Graham & Co.	

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.

Roxhill School	1958	9430 30 th Avenue SW	John Graham & Co.	
Sand Point School	1958	6208 60 th Avenue NE	G.W. Stoddard w/ F. Huggard	
Cedar Park School	1959	13224 37 th Avenue NE	Paul Thiry	Seattle Landmark
Sacajawea School	1959	9501 20 th Avenue NE	Waldron & Dietz	
Decatur School	1961	7711 43 rd Avenue NE	Edward Mahlum	
Graham Hill School	1961	5149 S Graham Street	Theo Damm	Altered
Rainier View School	1961	11650 Beacon Avenue S	Durham, Anderson & Freed	
Schmitz Park School	1962	5000 SW Spokane Street	Durham, Anderson & Freed	
Broadview-Thomson School	1963	13052 Greenwood Avenue N	Waldron & Dietz	
Fairmont Park School	1964	3800 SW Findlay Street	Carlson, Eley & Grevstad	Altered

One of the first priorities during this period was the building of new junior high schools. Between 1950 and 1959, ten new junior high schools were completed: *See figure 19.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Eckstein Jr. High School	1950	3003 NE 75 th St	William Mallis	Seattle Landmark
Blaine Jr. High School	1952	2550 34 th Ave W	J. Lister Holmes	
Sharples Jr. High School	1952	3928 S Graham Street	William Mallis	Now Aki Kurose Middle School
David Denny Jr. High School	1952	8402 30 th Avenue SW	Mallis & Dehart	Demolished
Asa Mercer Jr. High School	1957	1600 Columbian Way S	John W. Maloney	
Whitman Jr.	1959	9201 15 th Avenue	Mallis &	

High School		NW	Dehart	
Louisa Boren Jr. High School	1963	5950 Delridge Way SW	NBBJ	Now Boren K-8 STEM
George Washington Jr. High School	1963	2101 S Jackson Street	John Graham & Co.	
Worth McClure Jr. High School	1964	1915 First Avenue W	Edward Mahlum	

During this period the district also constructed four new high schools, including:

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Chief Sealth High School	1957	2600 SW Thistle Street	NBBJ	Altered
Ingraham High School	1959	1819 N 135th Street	NBBJ	Altered, Seattle Landmark
Rainier Beach High School	1960	8815 Seward Park Avenue S	John W. Maloney	Altered
Nathan Hale High School	1963	10750 30 th Avenue NE	Mallis & Dehart	Altered

Between 1943 and 1954, voters in the rapidly growing unincorporated areas north of Seattle, feeling the burden of new special school levies, and believing that there were advantages to Seattle transportation services and police and fire protection, approved at least twelve annexations to the city of Seattle. This pushed the city limits northward from a line near N 85th street, to a uniform north border at N 145th Street. These annexations brought an additional ten schools into the district from the struggling Shoreline School District.⁴⁵

8. Mid-1960s and 1970s Seattle Schools

After the mid-1960s and throughout the 1970s, the district suffered from declining enrollment and revenue. Repeated leadership changes in the district resulted from the short tenures of three superintendents between 1965 and 1981. Forbes Bottomly was appointed district superintendent in 1965, after Frank Campbell retired. Bottomly resigned in 1973, and was replaced by J. Loren Troxel, who had previously served as assistant superintendent. In 1976 he was replaced by David Moberly, formerly a school superintendent from Evanston, Illinois. Donald Steel, who had previously served as superintendent in Toledo, Ohio, succeeded Moberly in 1981. During this period overall enrollment in the district also declined, from over 93,000 in 1965 to approximately 43,500 in 1984.⁴⁶

The district attempted to address racial desegregation in 1963 with a volunteer transfer

⁴⁵ Roberta Hawkins, ed., *Shore to Shore and Line to Line: A History of the Shoreline School District* (Shoreline, WA: Shoreline Historical Museum, 2007) p. 26.

⁴⁶ Hoerlein, xiii.

program, and multiracial readers that were tried on an experimental basis in 1965.⁴⁷

In 1966, a new type of school was designed based on pedagogical theories of team teaching, open space and synergy. Seven new elementary schools and one middle school were designed and built with an “open concept,” and other schools were remodeled with the removal of walls and the addition of learning resource centers. New programs for Head Start, Title 1 remedial, Special Education and Transitional Bilingual were added.

“Open Concept” schools built by the district include: *See figure 20.*

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Green Lake School	1970	6415 First Avenue NE	Manson Bennett	Altered
Capt. Steven E. Sanislo School	1970	812 SW Myrtle Street	Sullam, Smith & Associates	Altered
Beacon Hill School	1971	2025 14 th Avenue S	Durham, Anderson & Freed	Altered
Dearborn Park	1971	2820 S Orcas Street	Fred Bassetti & Company	Altered
Kimball School	1971	3200 23 rd Avenue S	Durham, Anderson & Freed	Altered
Wing Luke School	1971	3701 S Kenyon Street	Fred Bassetti & Company	Demolished
Maple School	1971	4925 Corson Avenue S	Durham, Anderson & Freed	Altered
South Shore Middle School	1973	4800 S Henderson St	NBBJ	Demolished

By 1977, the Seattle School Board instigated a sweeping desegregation plan that included bussing approximately 12,000 students, with over half of Seattle’s schools involved. As a result, public school enrollment dropped by half from the 1960s, and private school enrollment throughout the city grew. The school board was forced to enact a school closure plan. By 1984, the district had closed two high schools, seven junior high schools, and twenty elementary schools. Mandatory bussing eased in the late 1980s, in response to litigation by community groups in north end neighborhoods and court rulings.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Ibid., xiv.

⁴⁸ Hoerlein, pp. xiii-xiv. *Seattle Times*, “Seattle schools and race: a history,” June 1, 2008, n. p.

9. 1980s to Present-Day Seattle Schools

Deputy district superintendent Robert L. Nelson was appointed superintendent in 1984 to serve a two-year term after Steele resigned. William M. Kendrick was appointed superintendent in 1986, after a national search. Kendrick served nine years and was succeeded by retired army general John Stanford. Stanford proved to be a capable and dynamic leader, but a terminal illness led to his replacement in 1998 by the district's chief operations manager, Joseph Olchefske.⁴⁹

In 1984, many schools needed upgrading or replacement, and a bond issue passed for thirteen new Elementary Schools, upgrading Ballard High and a new facility for Franklin High. Community debates about preservation followed this bond issue. The School Board also decided that excess properties were an asset to the Seattle School District and therefore should not be sold, but rather leased to community groups. Only three of the decommissioned schools were demolished so that the underlying property could be leased, and the rest of the buildings either sit empty or are being revamped for other purposes by long-term leaseholders.⁵⁰

In the 1990s, the school district's major capital construction program continued with passage of three Building Excellence Levies (BEX) approved by voters in 1995 (BEX I), 2001 (BEX II), and 2007 (BEX III), which called for new construction, renovations, additions, and infrastructure and technology improvements. Seattle Public Schools completed the BEX IV program in 2018, funded by capital levy approved by voters in February 2013. The BEX V program was initiated in 2019, funded by a capital levy approved by voters in February of that year.

Schools constructed in the 1980s and 1990s include:

School	Year	Address	Designer	Notes
Olympic View Elementary	1989	504 NE 95th Street	Eric Meng Associates	
Whitworth Elementary	1989	5215 46th Avenue S	WMFL Architects and Engineers	Now the site of Orca K-8 School
The African American Academy	1990	8311 Beacon Avenue S	Streeter & Associates	Now the site of the Van Asselt Elementary school program
West Woodland	1991	5601 Fourth Avenue NW	Olson Sundberg Architects	
J. M. Colman Elementary/Thurgood Marshall Elementary	1991	2401 S Irving Street	Mahlum & Nordfors	
Frank B. Cooper	1999	1901 SW	Tsang	Now the site Pathfinder

⁴⁹ Hoerlein, pp. xiv-xv.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. xiv-xvi.

School		Genesee Street	Partnership	K-8 School
Ballard High School	1999	1418 NW 65 th Street	Mahlum & Nordfors McKinley Gordon	
Highland Park Elementary	1999	1012 SW Trenton Street	Burr Lawrence Rising + Bates	
Whittier Elementary	1999	1320 NW 75th Street	DLR/John Graham & Associates	

See figures 111-126.

For the 2011-2012 school year, the district had more than 47,000 enrolled students, but by 2018-2019 that number had increased to almost 53,000.⁵¹ Although this is less than half the number of fifty years ago, the number of students is gradually increasing. In 2012 the district operated ninety-one schools, of which fifty-four were elementary schools, twelve were high schools, ten were K-8 schools, nine were middle schools, and six were alternative schools. By 2018-2019 the district had added 22 schools, operating 113 different schools. New schools constructed under BEX IV are as follows:

- Thornton Creek School was added to the site of the Decatur School
- Cascadia Elementary and Robert Eagle Staff Middle School were constructed on the site of the former Woodrow Wilson School.⁵²
- Hazel Wolf K-8 School at the site of the former Pinehurst School.
- New school buildings at the sites of Arbor Heights, Genesee Hill, Olympic Hills, and Wing Luke.

Other schools were renovated and upgraded. These include: Cedar Park (Paul Thiry, City of Seattle Landmark), Daniel Bagley (Floyd Naramore, City of Seattle Landmark), Fairmount Park, Jane Addams, Lincoln High School (James Stevens, City of Seattle Landmark), Loyal Heights (1932, Floyd Naramore, City of Seattle Landmark), Nova at Horace Mann (City of Seattle Landmark), Meany Middle School, Queen Anne, and T. T. Minor.

The district has more than 8,000 staff, comprising 3,100 teachers, 835 paraprofessionals, 660 certified instructional staff, and 150 principals. Seattle Public Schools had a general fund budget of \$558.3 million in the 2009-10 operational year.⁵³ By 2018, the general fund budget

⁵¹https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/Enrollment%20Planning/Reports/Annual%20Enrollment/2018-19/Section%201%20w%20ADA.pdf

⁵² Woodrow Wilson was Landmarked in 2014, for Criteria B and C for the significance of Robert Eagle Staff and the Indian Heritage Program at the school. However, the Seattle Landmarks Board voted to not impose controls on the building. The murals associated with the program, painted by Andrew Morrison, were preserved by the district and incorporated into the new school design.

⁵³ Seattle Public Schools, "About Our District,"

<http://www.seattleschools.org/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=192400&sessionid=b4971349d1af6502c8dd8f441e4ab25b&t, p.1>.

had increased to \$857.7 million.⁵⁴ The general fund supports only the teaching and teaching administration for the district. The Capital Projects fund supports the building program and facilities.

⁵⁴https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/Budget/2018%20Budget%20Development/budgetbook18.pdf

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— "Van Asselt School Addition Dedicated," November 16, 1940, p.3.
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Figure 1. Sixth Street School, also called Central School, 1885 (1883-1888, destroyed by fire)



Figure 2. Seattle High School graduating class, June 4th, 1886



Figure 3. B.F. Day School (John Parkinson, 1892)



Figure 4. Green Lake School (James Stephen, 1902)



Figure 5. John B. Hay School (James Stephen, 1905, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 6. Central High School/Broadway High School (W.E. Boone & J.M. Corner, 1902)



Figure 7. Adams School (James Stephen, 1901)

MOHAI 1983.10.6655.1



Figure 8. Lincoln High School (James Stephen, 1907, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 9. Ravenna School (Edgar Blair, 1911)

MOHAI 1983.10.4201



Figure 10. Frank B. Cooper School (Edgar Blair, 1917, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 11. Seward School (Edgar Blair, 1917)

MOHAI 1983.10.9543

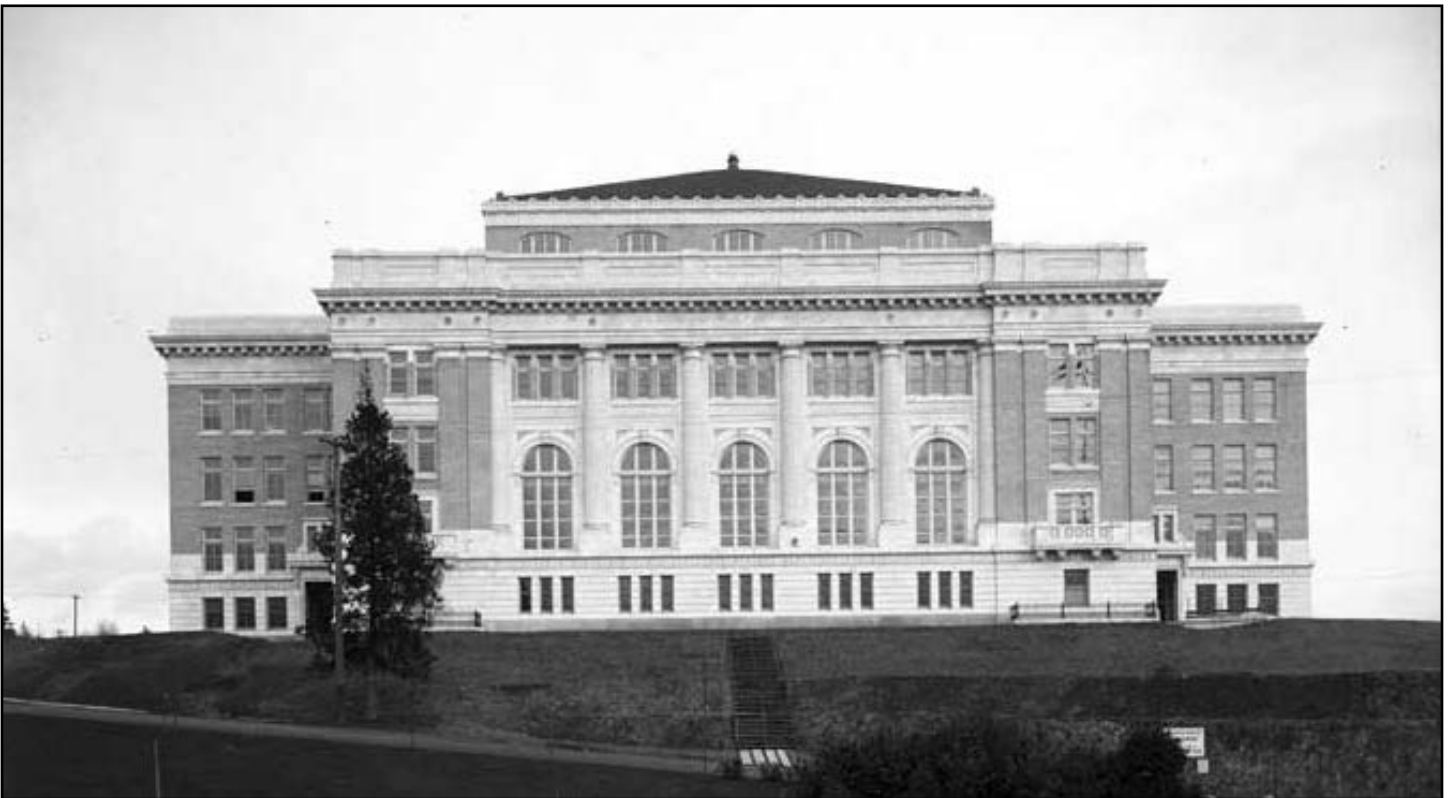


Figure 12. Franklin High School (Edgar Blair, 1912, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 13. Laurelhurst School (Floyd A. Naramore, 1928)



Figure 14. John Marshall Jr. High School (Floyd A. Naramore, 1927)



Figure 15. Roosevelt High School (Floyd A. Naramore, 1922, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 16. Rainier Vista School (J. Lister Holmes, 1943)



Figure 17. Arbor Heights Elementary (George W. Stoddard, 1949)



Figure 18. Cedar Park Elementary (Paul Thiry, 1959, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 19. Eckstein Junior High (William Mallis, 1950, City of Seattle Landmark)



Figure 20. Captain Steven E. Sanislo School (Sullam, Smith & Associates, 1970)

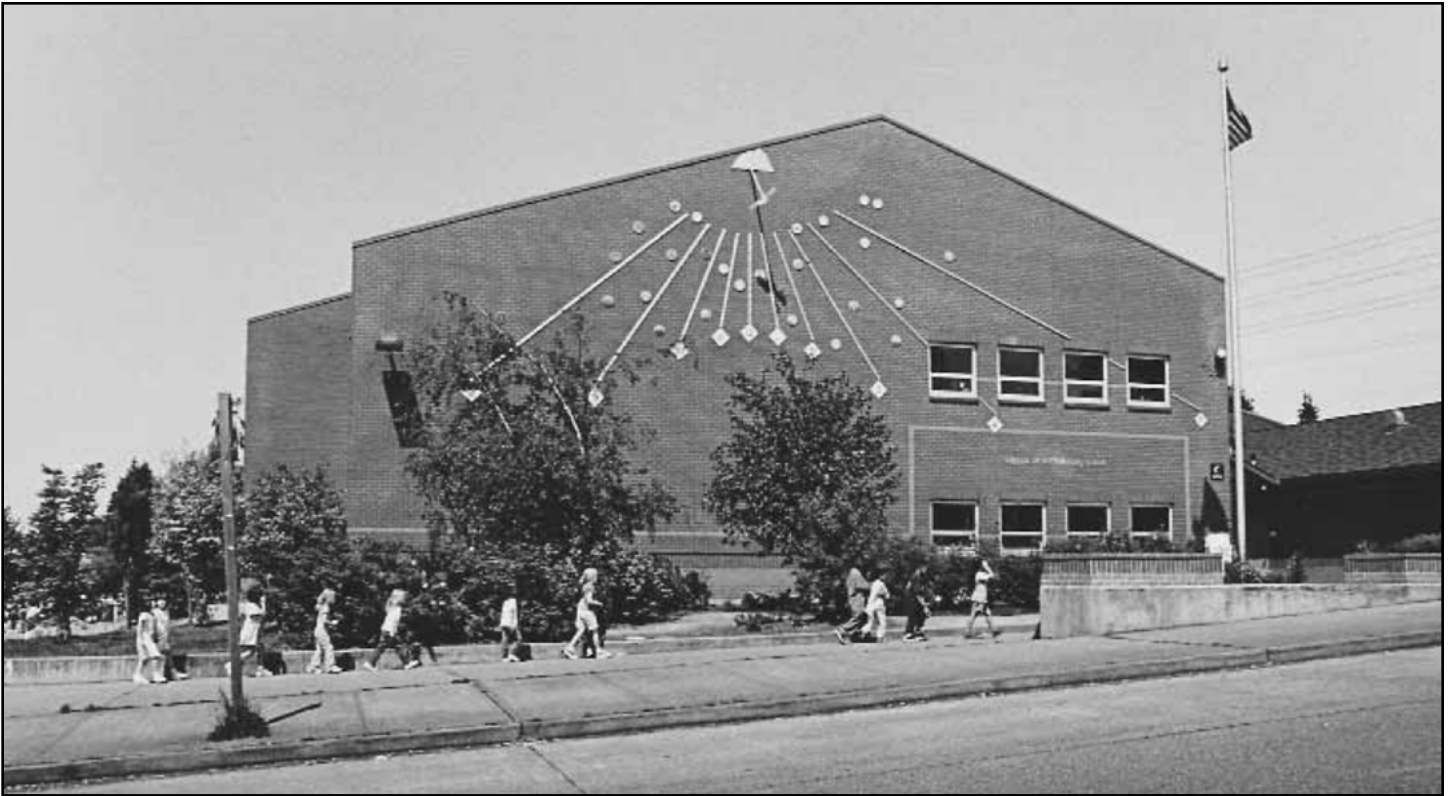


Figure 21. Olympic View Elementary (Eric Meng Associates, 1989)



Figure 22. African American Academy, now housing the Van Asselt Elementary program (Streeter & Associates, 1990)