

Hawthorne

Name:	Hawthorne Elementary School	Enrollment:	460
Address:	4100 39th Avenue S	Nickname:	none
Configuration:	K-5	Colors:	none



Hawthorne, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 233-312

The area east of the Rainier Valley was first known as Southeast Seattle but wasn't annexed into the city until 1907. Hawthorne School opened in 1909 as an annex to the Columbia City School. The school was named for the famous American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne. Designed according to the new "model school" plan, the building was constructed so two wings could be added when needed. The original structure did not have a lunchroom, auditorium, or gymnasium.

Bella Perry, principal from 1911 to 1927, had hawthorn trees planted around the grounds. Beginning with just over 200 students, Hawthorne's enrollment reached 408 by 1921. The school's 8th graders were sent to Columbia for domestic science and manual training. In 1929, a portable was set up for a lunchroom.

Lakewood School opened as an annex to Hawthorne in 1916. The portable building, used for a single class of 1st and 2nd graders, was located at 49th Avenue S and Snoqualmie Street. When it closed in June 1927, after enrollment fell to 16, the students were reassigned to Hawthorne and Whitworth. The district sold the site on May 5, 1942.

Kindergarten was added at Hawthorne in September 1920. Between 1925-26 and 1933-34, Hawthorne's attendance dropped from more than 400 to 250. Eighth grade classes were permanently transferred to Columbia School in 1933-34 in order to save money. In 1942-43, enrollment increased from 192 the previous year to 431 as a result of the wartime opening of the Holly Park Housing Project.

In 1951, the district purchased a lot to the south of the school grounds for an extra playfield. Beginning in September 1952, Hawthorne's 7th grade classes were assigned to Sharples. In 1962, the school board recommended that the Hawthorne building be replaced.

Name: **Hawthorne School**
Location: 4100 39th Avenue S
Building: 9-classroom, 3-story brick
Architect: James Stephen
Site: 1.65 acres

1909: Named on February 18; opened as an annex to Columbia City
1913: Became independent school
1915: Site expanded to 1.9 acres
1951: Site expanded to 2.6 acres
1978: Closed in June
1981: Demolished



Lakewood, ca. 1922 SPSA 233-58

This, however, did not mean an end to improvements at the school. Between 1963 and 1974, a double portable was moved in to serve as a gymnasium. Three other portables were added for classrooms. In 1972–73, the Boys' Basement was turned into the Reading Center, and the following year the Girls' Basement became the Math Center. Each class planted a flowering cherry tree in March 1974 on 39th Avenue S in front of the school.

During the 1970s, enrollment at Hawthorne decreased, with some children moving to neighboring Whitworth, Muir, and Columbia schools, which then became overcrowded. In 1977–78, only 260 pupils remained at Hawthorne and the following year the number dropped even further to 213.

In 1978, the district estimated that it would cost more than \$1 million to remodel the building and add a gymnasium, lunchroom, and auditorium, and an additional \$340,000 to bring the facility up to seismic standards. Hawthorne was closed that year when experts declared it seismically unsafe. Kindergartners were assigned to adjacent schools, while children in grades 1–4 went to Briarcliff and those in grades 5–6 transferred to Blaine, both in Magnolia. When Blaine closed in 1982, the older two grades went to Briarcliff as well. When Briarcliff closed in 1984, all former Hawthorne students transferred to a reopened Blaine. The old Hawthorne building was demolished in 1981, along with the gymnasium portable.

Some district staff's first choice for a new Hawthorne was a site on six acres of land at the Rainier Valley dump (1942–68), just east of Genesee Park. This large site was abandoned, however, because of potential health hazards posed by methane gas buildup. Finally, the district returned to the site of the old school. Because the project was deemed desegregation-friendly, 90 percent of the construction costs were paid by the State of Washington.

In September 1989, neighborhood children returned to a new Hawthorne School after having been bused across town to Magnolia-area



Hawthorne, ca. 1960 SPSA 233-304

Name: **Hawthorne Elementary School**
Location: 4100 39th Avenue S
Building: 3-story masonry veneer
Architect: Waldron, Pomeroy, Smith,
Foote & Akira Architects
Site: 2.63 acres

1989: Opened

schools for 11 years. The school had expanded in size to serve a larger attendance area, which was almost 79 percent minority. The new 51,571 square-foot building features 18 classrooms for grades 1–5 and a separate kindergarten playground adjacent to the two kindergarten classrooms.

As part of a school-wide focus on service learning, the new Hawthorne curriculum includes the application of academic skills to projects at nursing homes, hospitals, and parks. In April 1993, the chess team won the state championship. Hawthorne is a member of the Powerful Schools coalition of four Seattle School District elementary schools.