

## Webster

During the early 1900s, Ballard's population grew at a rapid pace and temporary buildings were pressed into service for classroom use by Ballard School District No. 50. One of these, called Bay View, began with two portables facing what is now NW 68th Street and was later expanded to include two more portables facing NW 69th. A small building to the west of the portables served as the principal's office.

When Ballard was annexed into the City of Seattle, the plans and contract for a permanent structure were ready. The Seattle School Board reviewed and accepted the plans and began construction. Prior to completion, the school population increased so much that more classrooms were needed. The Methodist Church directly south, across the present NW 67th Street, provided additional space.

The new building was built on the block between old Bay View and the church. Although the Ballard School Board had used the name Olympic School, the school opened as Bay View. On opening day, in January 1908, students from old Bay View and nearby Ferry Street School marched over to the new building with their books in hand.

Ferry Street School occupied two portables on the west side of Ferry Street (25th Avenue NW) between the present-day NW 67th Street and NW 70th. It was opened by Ballard School District about 1904 as an annex to Bay View. The portables are said to have been converted into private residences after it closed. Another school that closed with the opening of Webster was North Street School, which had opened about 1905 on the southwest corner of North Street (NW 64th Street) and present-day 22nd Avenue NW.

Two months after the new school opened, it was renamed after Daniel Webster, American statesman and renowned orator. It is said that the name was changed to help ease the rivalry between the former Bay View and Ferry students. When the school reopened the following fall, it was filled to the brim and one of the portables, then called the Webster School Annex, had to be used.

Webster School maintained a steady enrollment of 400–500 pupils through the 1920s. Alumni from those years recall that some immigrant

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Name: **Bay View School**  
 Location: 7th Avenue and New York  
 (30th Avenue NW and  
 NW 67th Street)  
 Building: Two portables  
 Site: n.a.

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1903: Opened by Ballard School  
 District  
 n.a.: Two portables added  
 1907: Annexed into Seattle School  
 District  
 1908: Closed in January; most  
 portables sold and converted  
 into private residences  
 1908–09: One portable in use as  
*Webster Annex*  
 1911: Leased to Ballard  
 Presbyterian Church for  
 mission Sunday school  
 n.a.: Site sold

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Bay View, ca. 1903 SPSA 278-32

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Name: **Bay View School**  
Location: 3014 NW 67th Street  
Building: 2-story, 14-room brick  
Architect: Frederick Sexton  
Site: 1.83 acres

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1908: Opened in January; renamed *Webster* on March 27  
1930: Addition (Floyd A. Naramore); site expanded to 2.4 acres  
1979: Closed; leased to the Pacific Nordic Council  
Present: Site of Nordic Heritage Museum

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Webster, ca. 1940 SPSA 278-4

children could not speak English, so fellow students helped them out. In 1930, an addition gave the building four more classrooms, a large auditorium, a gymnasium and a playcourt. The school served eight grades until 1931 when Monroe Junior High School opened. In 1957, a kindergarten room was constructed on the ground floor in space previously not used for classes. In 1968, a team-teaching station was added.

Webster closed in 1979. For a short period of time, the building was rented to a motion picture producer. Near the end of the rental period, a fire caused considerable damage to the roof and other parts of the structure. At this time, a group representing the city's Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Finnish, and Swedish communities leased the site for a museum. The Pacific Nordic Council received credit for repairs and improvements made to the damaged building. The Nordic Heritage Museum, which opened in April 1980, now attracts thousands of visitors from around the world each year. Renewal of the museum's lease is currently in question, and plans are being made for relocation.



Webster, 1960 SPSA 278-2