

Muir

Name:	John Muir Elementary School	Enrollment:	368
Address:	3301 S Horton Street	Nickname:	Lions
Configuration:	K-5	Colors:	Blue and gold



Muir, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 256-20

Name:	Wetmore School
Location:	33rd Avenue S and Horton Street
Building:	2-room frame
Architect:	n.a.
Site:	n.a.

ca. 1903:	Opened by Columbia School District
1907:	Annexed into Seattle School District
1910:	Closed
1911-59:	Used as gymnasium for York School
by 1959:	Called " <i>York School</i> "; used for manual training
1973-89:	Used as gymnasium
1989:	Demolished

The small suburban community of York was founded by settlers from England. Wetmore School in York was named for Birdsey Wetmore, an early settler in the area. Although it is said to have opened in 1903, minutes from Columbia School District No. 18 show that its board that year instructed an architect to advertise for bids to construct a basement "under the School at York." From 1907 to 1910, it housed grades 1-5.

A new school opened in 1910. It was named York School after the neighborhood. Residents of the neighborhood petitioned the Seattle School Board in September 1915 to rename the school John L. Wilson. The board chose to delay making any change. In 1921, Principal Jessie Lockwood was asked to select a new name for the school. She chose to honor Scottish-born naturalist John Muir, who founded the Sierra Club in 1892 and was instrumental in establishing Yellowstone National Park and the National Park Service. Part of her motivation for selecting Muir was the hope that students would develop a love of nature and a desire to conserve natural beauty.

By the 1920s, Muir, like many grammar schools in the district, was severely overcrowded. Nine portables were in use. In January 1922, Lockwood volunteered to inaugurate the first school safety patrol in



Muir, ca. 1924 SPSA 256-2

Name: **York School**
 Location: 3301 S Horton Street
 Building: 9-room brick
 Architect: Edgar Blair
 Site: 1.5 acres

1910: Named by January 10; opened as annex to Columbia
 1921: Renamed *John Muir School* on February 4
 1924: Site expanded to 2.7 acres; addition (Floyd A. Naramore)
 1936: Site expanded to 3.3 acres
 1971: Addition opened in November (Bridges/Burke)
 1989: 1910 structure demolished; 1924 addition demolished
 1991: Addition (Streeter/Dermanis & Associates)

Washington. The City of Seattle approved the plan and placed a young policeman named Captain George Kimball in charge. (See Kimball)

The addition of a north wing in 1924 provided nine new classrooms and an auditorium-lunchroom as well as two playcourts.

Under Lockwood (1910–1936) and her successor, Kenneth Selby (1936–40), numerous trees and shrubs were planted on the school grounds, including a number of redwoods. In June 1935, the John Muir School Tract was dedicated in the Mather Memorial Parkway in Snoqualmie National Forest, en route to Chinook Pass. A brief district account of the naming of elementary schools published around 1939 claims:

Probably no group in the city holds the name of their school in higher esteem than do all connected with the John Muir; the name, life and character of John Muir being honored and beloved, and a constant inspiration to pupils.

By 1969, there were 14 portables on the Muir playground. To reduce overcrowding, an annex for 5th and 6th graders was created in 1970 by moving the portables to a site at 1730 South Bradner Place. The Muir Annex operated for at least 10 years and then became Mt. Baker Central Youth Services.

Moving the portables created room for an addition at the south end of the building. The new wing included two open configuration teaching stations and a library.

In the early 1970s, the Urban Suburban Environmental Education program was developed with the Bellevue School District to carry on the tradition of naturalist John Muir and to capitalize on the rich cultur-

al mixture of Muir Elementary's student body. Students in 5th and 6th grades participated in an outdoor-education program that culminated in a year-end four-day field trip to the Cispus Environmental Center near White Pass.

In 1980–81, the Zone 1 alternative program was located at Muir School. Pupils in grades 1–3 learned and practiced basic skills (reading, writing, and mathematics) by producing films and publishing a monthly newspaper.

The 1910 structure and the 1924 addition were demolished in 1989 and a new addition was constructed to accompany the 1971 addition. A new gymnasium was also built to replace the 1903 building. The stained glass from the old entry was incorporated into the west stair area of the new building. The 1924 terra cotta arched entry with the building's nameplate was preserved and set in a landscaped area in front of the new building on Horton Street. During the construction (1989–90), students were bused to Magnolia School.

While preparing for the school's renovation, staff members found a Haida Indian canoe on a shelf in the library. A volunteer investigated the artifact and discovered it was a rare example of the work of master carver, Charles Edinshaw. It has since been loaned to the Seattle Art Museum.

Students at Muir have worn uniforms since fall 1997. Programs include Spectrum for the highly capable and DISTAR (Direct Instruction Strategies for Teaching Arithmetic and Reading).

A partnership with the Seattle Art Museum provides art enrichment. Muir is also part of the Powerful Schools coalition, which supports tutors, artists, and writers in residence and Family Night dinners at the school.



Muir, 1960 SPSA 256-18