

Whittier

Name:	Whittier Elementary School	Enrollment:	442
Address:	1320 NW 75th Street	Nickname:	Wildcats
Configuration:	K-5	Colors:	Blue and gold



Whittier, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 282-7

Parents in northeast Ballard complained that their children had to walk all the way to Salmon Bay School. In response, Ballard School District No. 50 opened the North End School in 1908 in the former Hubbard house, a single-story structure on the southeast corner of what is now 13th Avenue NW and 75th Street that was remodeled into two classrooms.

Students took turns being the “bell boy” who stood outside, ringing a handbell to summon children to school. At recess, children entertained themselves by balancing on a small, plank bridge that spanned the deep creek running down Railroad Avenue (now 13th) next to the school. They also played among grazing cows in an apple orchard to the northwest. Many students kept gardens on the school grounds.

North End School, in 1906, had four teachers and 136 pupils in grades K-6. A second building was erected to provide another classroom. A portable was added to ease crowding after the school was annexed into Seattle Public Schools in June 1907. When the school closed in 1908, the temporary buildings were removed and the original structure was moved to the other side of 13th Avenue NW where it was remodeled into a private residence. In 1951, it was said to be located south of a Mr. Beach’s home, just off NW 75th Street. It was torn down in 1956.

Construction of a permanent functional-style building to replace the North End School began on property to the northwest in 1907. The

Name:	Whittier School
Location:	7501 13th Avenue NW
Building:	12-room, 2-story brick
Architect:	Newton Gauntt
Site:	1.79 acres

1908:	Named in spring; opened before September
1921:	Grounds expanded to 2.66 acres
1997:	Closed in June
1998:	Demolished



Whittier, ca. 1908 MOHAI 3122

name of the school was changed to honor John Greenleaf Whittier, a 19th century poet, author, and abolitionist. The initial student body of Whittier School was comprised of students from the North End School and 40 students who transferred from Salmon Bay School.

Students from Crown Hill living north of 85th Street, and therefore outside of the city limits, could pay tuition and attend Whittier, rather than walk to Oak Lake School. Eventually a square mile was added to the Whittier service area to ease the financial burden on parents from that neighborhood.

Fall 1913 brought difficulties at the school as enrollment suddenly jumped by 100 students. Many pupils came from families newly arrived from Scandinavia and spoke little English. These children were encouraged to read as much as possible.

An industrial center was established at Whittier in fall 1916 in response to a petition made two years earlier. Overcrowding at Whittier was somewhat alleviated in spring 1919 when Crown Hill School opened as an annex, leaving 580 students at the main school in 1920. In 1921, the old apple orchard was incorporated as an upper playfield.

By 1927, the grounds were dotted with nine portables needed to house the 728 students. Class sizes were finally reduced in 1928 with the opening of a second brick building. This structure, two-story brick in 20th Century Gothic design, was situated on the east side of the 1908 building. Its layout facilitated the district's platoon system, by having specialized rooms for music, physical education, industrial arts, and geography-science.

With the advent of junior high schools, 280 children were transferred out in February 1931, and the school returned to a K-6 configuration. Enrollment peaked at 1,045 in 1954-55.

During the 1960s, Whittier's enrollment stabilized at between 800 and 900 students. Domeneca Del Duca retired in the early 1960s after over 31 years of teaching music at Whittier. "Del Duca would issue each student a recorder flute. Inscribed on it would be the student's name. 'She took the time to etch each recorder herself.'"

Name: **Whittier School**
 Building: 12-room, 2-story brick
 Architect: Floyd A. Naramore

1928: Opened
 1997: Closed in June
 1998: Demolished



Whittier, ca. 1940 SPSA 282-4



Whittier, 1960 SPSA 282-3

Name: **Whittier Elementary School**

Location: 1320 NW 75th Street

Building: 2-story

Architect: DLR/John Graham
& Associates

Site: 2.66 acres

1999: Opened in September

Beginning in September 1981, as part of the district's desegregation plan, 1st and 2nd graders were bused to Gatzert. As a K, 3–5 school, Whittier's enrollment sank to less than 200 students. In September 1989 the school became K–5 and the Horizon Program (now Spectrum) was added. Since then, enrollment numbers have climbed steadily.

After passage of a bond issue in 1984, Whittier received a high priority listing for replacement. Although the 1928 building had some unique architectural features, the Landmarks Preservation Board voted against awarding it landmark status, thereby clearing the path for demolition. In May 1997, an all-class reunion was held to say farewell to the old buildings.

In October 1998, more than 400 Whittier students, teachers, and parents marched from their interim site at Monroe to observe progress being made at the new school. Items were collected for a time capsule to be buried prior to the building's completion.

The new Whittier building incorporates a stained glass window and keystone from the 1928 building. A maritime theme reflecting Ballard's history is carried out in wave-like designs on the exterior of the brick building as well as on interior artwork. Ceramic tiles depicting sea creatures line the wall leading to the main entrance. Whittier students made the tiles with artist Charles Bigger in 1998–99. The playground, which includes a covered area, features a smiling sea serpent.