

Acknowledgement

Seattle Public Schools has grown and evolved dramatically in its 160-year history. Some of that evolution is easy to see in the rain gardens and technology centers that make up a modern school building. We also have learned that schools are more than buildings. Schools must be a place that is safe and welcoming for students and educators alike. The Seattle Public Schools of today translates communications to families into multiple languages, embraces a broader understanding of American history, and is deeply embedded in community. The district of 2022, however, remains rooted in its history and the history of our city.

As we focus on our future, we respectfully acknowledge previous generations of students and staff whose contributions have allowed us to commit to our vision and values—focusing on student outcomes, supporting schools, and building an anti-racist institution that better serves students of color furthest from educational justice.

I also recognize the time and effort of those who have taken on the task of updating our school history books. With the encouragement of Eleanor Toews, this project began with Melinda Lamantia who approached Richard Best, Director of Capital Projects and Planning, to secure funding to update the 2002 edition of the Seattle School Histories.

The committee formed to update and publish the book consisted of current staff and district retirees: Melinda Lamantia (manager records and archives), Meaghan Kahlo (archivist), Eleanor Toews (retired, archivist), Kathy Johnson (capital planning analyst), Tingyu Wang (capital planning analyst) and Gretchen DeDecker (retired, self-help projects), with additional assistance from Michelle Hanshaw (capital planning analyst), Rebecca Asencio (K-12 planning manager) and Lewis Carlson (real estate supervisor). Thank you.

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As a product of Seattle Public Schools, I recognize that we cannot move forward without understanding the history and the legacy of our district. The work that goes into preserving and building on that history is important, though often unsung. I thank the many contributors, named and unnamed, whose efforts produced this 2022 update to “Building for Learning,” an invaluable resource about the history of the buildings in Seattle Public Schools.

Dr. Brent C Jones

