

# Broadview-Thomson

Name: Broadview-Thomson K-8 School	Enrollment: 577
Address: 13052 Greenwood Avenue N	Nickname: Bulldogs (Spike)
Configuration: K-8	Colors: Royal blue and gold



Thomson, 1964 SPSA 116-162

Early in the 1900s, a sawmill stood on the western shore of a small lake north of Seattle. The taste of tannic acid left by the logs floating in the water gave the lake its name, Bitter Lake. Playland, an amusement park, opened on the south shore of the lake on May 27, 1930. The Interurban dropped riders off at the Bitter Lake Station, just outside the park. Large crowds from throughout the region came in summer to visit the haunted house and ride the merry-go-round, water slide, and big dipper roller coaster. In winter, visitors were attracted to the lake for ice skating.

In early 1956, members of the Seattle School Board viewed the Playland property as a possible site for a junior high school they planned to construct. Hearing that the amusement park would probably close (which it did in 1960) and fearing the property would be subdivided for residential purposes or a regional shopping center, they chose to negotiate for the site along with the Seattle Parks Department as a location for a community center, park, and school. The parks department paid for a portion of the school construction costs and was given a deed to half of the property.

The new junior high school was constructed on the west side of the lake, with a parks department recreation unit attached to the school gymnasium. The school was named for former Seattle city engineer Reginald H. Thomson, who changed the shape of Seattle by initiating the Denny Regrade and the Cedar River water system projects. R. H. Thomson Junior High opened with 1,065 students. In accordance with the district's desegregation plan, beginning in September 1978, Thomson took in 6th graders from Graham Hill, Northgate, Olympic View, or Viewlands.

By 1980-81, Thomson's enrollment was down to 552. Declining enrollment district-wide forced the school board to decide which schools to close. At the same time, junior high schools were being converted into middle schools. The convenient answer for the Broadview neighborhood was to close the much older Broadview Elementary and shift its program five blocks north to Thomson, which had closed as a junior high.

As an elementary school in the district's desegregation plan, the newly formed Broadview-Thomson was a K, 4-6 school, paired with Muir K-3.

The Thomson building was large and was not fully utilized by the elementary school program, so the district considered other uses for the space. Alternative Elementary School V was also located there in September 1992. It was renamed COHO in 1995-96, and the following year it was moved to Wilson. The name COHO, a homonym of a type of salmon, derives from "Cooperative Holistic Learning."

A Bitter Lake Community Center (13035 Linden Avenue N) opened in 1997 at the southeast corner of the lake. The old community center (13040 Greenwood Avenue N), attached to the school, is

## Details:

Name: **R. H. Thomson Junior High School**  
 Location: 13052 Greenwood Avenue N  
 Building: 43-room brick  
 Architect: Waldron & Ditz  
 Site: 9.8 acres

1962: Named on November 28  
 1963: Opened in September  
 1981: Closed as junior high in June; reopened in September as Broadview-Thomson Elementary  
 2007: Viewlands School students joined; Became Broadview-Thomson K-8 School  
 2019: Phase 1 seismic updates  
 2020: Phase 2 seismic updates



Thomson, 1963 SPSA 116-161



Broadview-Thomson, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 116-164

still used by the parks department as an annex to the new facility. The Seattle Parks Department shares use of the gym that is attached to the school building, and hosts Friday night skating for the community.

Evette Mardesich, Broadview-Thomson's principal from 1996-99, received the district's Principal of the Year Award in 1999.

In 2007, due to declining enrollment, Viewlands School closed and most of the students and staff joined Broadview-Thomson. In the same year, Broadview-Thomson expanded to include grades K-8. K-6 was introduced in 2007, with one grade added over the next two years. In June 2010, 59 students were in the first graduating class of the K-8 school.