

Hawthorne

Name: Hawthorne Elementary School	Enrollment: 420
Address: 4100 39th Avenue S	Nickname: none
Configuration: K-5	Colors: none



Hawthorne, ca. 1960 SPSA 233-304

The area east of the Rainier Valley was first known as Southeast Seattle but was not annexed into the city until 1907. Hawthorne School opened in 1909 as an annex to the Columbia City School, but the school became an independent school just four years later. The school was named for the famous American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne. Designed according to the new “model school” plan, the building was constructed so two wings could be added when needed. The original structure did not have a lunchroom, auditorium, or gymnasium.

Bella Perry, principal from 1911 to 1927, had hawthorn trees planted around the grounds. Beginning with just over 200 students, Hawthorne’s enrollment reached 408 by 1921. The school’s 8th graders were sent to Columbia for domestic science and manual training. In 1929, a portable was set up for a lunchroom.

Lakewood School opened as an annex to Hawthorne in 1916. The portable building, used for a single class of 1st and 2nd graders,

Details:

Name: **Hawthorne School**
 Location: 4100 39th Avenue S
 Building: 9-classroom, 3-story brick
 Architect: James Stephen
 Site: 1.65 acres

1909: Named on February 18; opened as an annex to Columbia City
 1913: Became independent school
 1915: Site expanded to 1.9 acres
 1951: Site expanded to 2.6 acres
 1978: Closed in June
 1981: Demolished

Details:

Name: **Lakewood School**

Location: 49th Avenue S and
Snoqualmie Street

Building: Portable

1916: Opened as an annex
to Hawthorne

1927: Annex closed

1942: Property sold

During the 1970s, enrollment at Hawthorne decreased, with some children moving to neighboring Whitworth, Muir, and Columbia schools. Those schools became overcrowded. In 1977-78, only 260 pupils remained at Hawthorne, and the following year the number dropped even further to 213.

In 1978, the district estimated it would cost more than \$1 million to remodel the building and add a gymnasium, lunchroom, and auditorium. An additional \$340,000 was needed to bring the facility up to seismic standards. Hawthorne was closed that year when experts declared it seismically unsafe. Kindergartners were assigned to adjacent schools, while children in grades 1-4 went to Briarcliff and those in grades 5-6 transferred to Blaine, both in the Magnolia neighborhood. When Blaine closed in 1982, the older two grades went to Briarcliff as well. When Briarcliff closed in 1984, all former Hawthorne students transferred to a reopened Blaine. The old 1909 Hawthorne building was demolished in 1981, along with the gymnasium portable.

Some district staff members favored building a new Hawthorne on six acres of land at the Rainier Valley landfill (1942-68), just east of Genesee Park. This plan was abandoned because of potential health hazards posed by methane gas buildup. Finally, the district returned to the site of the old school. Because the project was deemed desegregation-friendly, 90 percent of the construction costs were paid by the State of Washington.

In September 1989, the new Hawthorne school opened under the Controlled Choice desegregation plan. This plan meant that in addition to neighborhood children, Hawthorne was one of the options available to students from

was located at 49th Avenue S and Snoqualmie Street. When it closed in June 1927, after enrollment fell to 16, the students were reassigned to Hawthorne and Whitworth. The district sold the Lakewood School site on May 5, 1942.

Kindergarten was added at Hawthorne in September 1920. Between 1925-26 and 1933-34, attendance at Hawthorne dropped from more than 400 to 250. Eighth grade classes were permanently transferred to Columbia School in 1933-34 in order to save money. By 1942-43, enrollment increased from 192 the previous year to 431 as a result of the wartime opening of the Holly Park Housing Project.

In 1951, the district purchased a lot to the south of the school grounds for an extra playfield. Beginning in September 1952, Hawthorne's 7th grade classes were assigned to Sharples. In 1962, the school board recommended that the Hawthorne building be replaced. This, however, did not mean an end to improvements at the school. Between 1963 and 1974, a double portable was moved in to serve as a gymnasium. Three other portables were added for classrooms. In 1972-73, the Boys' Basement was turned into the Reading Center, and the following year the Girls' Basement became the Math Center. Each class planted a flowering cherry tree in March 1974 on 39th Avenue S in front of the school.



Lakewood, ca. 1922 SPSA 233-58

the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods. While the attendance area was almost 79 percent minority, the school opened with a very racially diverse student body due to the Controlled Choice plan.

The new 51,571-square-foot building, much larger than the previous school, featured 18 classrooms for grades 1-5 and a separate kindergarten playground adjacent to the two kindergarten classrooms.

Emboldened by the fresh start of a new building and entrusted with considerable autonomy, new Principal John Morefield worked tirelessly to improve Hawthorne's student achievement and experience through extensive outreach and a broad array of innovative programs. He visited the homes of all incoming kindergarteners and held weekly community meetings. He hired retired SPS teacher Leahe "Mom" Wilson, who created and led what became a renowned volunteer program and a community center for collecting and giving food and clothing to those in need. Morefield recruited professional vocalist and musician Sonny Byers to serve as Hawthorne's artist in residence to bring students together through choir. Morefield also collaborated with three other Rainier Valley public schools (Columbia, Whitworth, Muir) to create the "Powerful Schools Project" in which schools shared resources and opened classrooms to community use after school and on weekends. The project's program included tutoring, gardening, art, music, fitness, and computer skills. Through additional efforts led by Hawthorne's technology expert Jay Franco, Hawthorne became the first school in the district wired for the internet in 1995.

Within a few years of these reforms, Hawthorne students' achievement dramatically improved. By spring of 1999, the scores of 3rd and 5th graders for the Iowa Test of Basic Skills were at or above the national average in reading, language, and math.

After Morefield's departure in 1996, Hawthorne endured the challenges of frequent changes in leadership, staff, and vision through 2009. In 2010, revitalized efforts to improve student achievement at Hawthorne resumed under new principal Sandra Scott.

Similar to Morefield, Scott worked closely with families. During her first year, Hawthorne received a three-year federal Student Improvement Grant. Then, through the school district's "Creative Approach Schools" program in 2013, Hawthorne received policy waivers to foster innovation. As a result, test scores rose by double digits. The following year, Hawthorne received the Partnership School Award from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at John Hopkins University for family engagement, an award it has earned every year since.

Details:

Name:	Hawthorne Elementary School
Location:	4100 39th Avenue S
Building:	3-story masonry veneer
Architect:	Waldron, Pomeroy, Smith, Foote & Akira Architects
Site:	2.63 acres

1989: Opened

1995: Daycare Center opened



Hawthorne, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 233-312