

## Holgate



Duwamish Bend, 1944 SPSA 501-1

Seattle's booming wartime industries brought an influx of new residents during the 1940s. To accommodate the growing population, chiefly employees of the Boeing Airplane Company, the federal government funded a 901-unit housing project called Duwamish Bend. Nearby Georgetown School could not accommodate many more students, so a new school was needed for the children of the families living in the housing project.

For the 1943-44 school year, Duwamish Bend School was established in two rows of housing project units (6120-6139 Naches Place) as an annex to Georgetown. The transformation of the apartments into classrooms was not completed by the opening of school on September 29, 1943. Despite the cold and rainy weather, and lack of heat or furniture, students and teachers pitched in to help prepare the building. By the end of the first week of school, seats and blackboards had been installed. Each classroom had a range, refrigerator, circulating heater, and bathroom. The teachers did the janitorial work until Thanksgiving, earning an extra 75 cents a day.

The first year at the Duwamish Bend School was full of changes. During the first two weeks, a temporary arrangement was set up with Ida Hermann, principal of Georgetown. She served as principal and seven new teachers handled the initial enrollment of 88 pupils. Later in the term, as more families moved into the housing project, the classrooms "burst at the seams" and four more teachers were brought in. The students and teachers were mostly new arrivals to Seattle, coming from many different parts of the country.

In September 1944, a new school on federal property, built and equipped with federal funds, was ready to open. This single-story frame building had 16 rooms. In addition to classrooms, there were two large storage rooms, an auditorium, a kitchen, and administrative office. A year later the new Duwamish Bend School was large enough to warrant its own principal.

In 1947, the district purchased the school site from the federal government. The deal was a bargain for the district, which acquired a building constructed for \$1,086,000 and equipped for \$12,000, plus the land, all for a total of only \$30,000.

In 1952, the school board decided to change the name of Duwamish Bend because of continual confusion with neighboring Duwamish School in the South Central School District. The name Holgate School commemorated pioneer John C. Holgate, who arrived in the Duwamish River Valley in fall 1849. The following year he left for a time, and when he found the property taken over by the Collins family (see Maple and Van Asselt) upon his return, he moved to another nearby location.

By 1952, the gradual closing of the housing project had reduced Holgate's enrollment so low the school was again placed under the principal of Georgetown School. In January 1955, foreseeing no need to operate both Georgetown and Holgate, the district reached an agreement with the Boeing Company. Boeing agreed to pay for the establishment of the Holgate Branch of Edison Technical School at the Holgate School. Edison's aircraft classes were to be moved to Holgate from Boeing property at 6736 Ellis Avenue. The agreement allowed Holgate elementary students to complete the current school year. The following year they were transferred to Georgetown.

For a brief period in 1959-60 after the Warren Avenue School closed, Holgate Branch also housed pupils with cerebral palsy. The next year that program moved to a permanent home at Lowell.

Beginning with the 1961-62 school year, Holgate Branch was promoted to sister-school status with Edison Technical School and renamed Holgate Technical School. While other off-site facilities remained with Edison, the Aircraft Branch moved under Holgate (see Holgate Aircraft Branch). Holgate Technical formed part of Seattle Community College in 1966 and was transferred to Washington State the following year. General college courses were taught at Holgate prior to the opening of South Seattle Community College. Once that campus was built, the Holgate property was sold and the building demolished. Gensco Inc. and Fidalgo Distribution Center occupy and use the location as of 2020.

## Details:

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Name: **Duwamish Bend**  
 Location: 5925 3rd Avenue S  
 Building: 16-room wood  
 Architect: n.a.  
 Site: 2.05 acres

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1944: Opened in September as annex to Georgetown  
 1945-54: Operated as independent school  
 1947: Purchased by school district in summer  
 1952: Name changed to Holgate on July 11  
 1954-55: Operated as annex to Georgetown  
 1955: Closed as elementary school in June; opened as Holgate Branch, Edison Technical  
 1959-60: Also housed Holgate Temporary Cerebral Palsy School  
 1962: Became Holgate Technical School  
 1966: Became part of Seattle Community College  
 1967: Transferred to State of Washington  
 n.a.: Demolished