

## Loyal Heights

Name: Loyal Heights Elementary School	Enrollment: 470
Address: 7735 25th Avenue NW	Nickname: Beavers
Configuration: K-5	Colors: Blue and gold



Loyal Heights, 2022 ©Arthur Ross SPSA 246-24

Local Ballard legend holds that Harry Whitney Treat, a prominent landowner, donated five acres to the district “with the condition that a school be built and named after his daughter Loyal.” District records from the 1930s, however, indicate that the land was, in fact, purchased.

The original Loyal Heights School consisted of portables and functioned as an annex to Webster School, serving grades 1-3 during 1919-1928. Initially, there were two portables, one a classroom and the other a “Play Portable.” The portables featured “box furniture,” benches made from rough planks supported on apple boxes. Orange crates became bookshelves. Coat hooks ran down one wall and across the back of the room. Hooks near the coal-burning stove were used to dry wet clothing. The lavatories were outside. The school nurse, Rene Myhre, is said to have been the first nurse in the district.

No roads served the school, so children walked on trails through the dense woods. Hills and deep ravines crossed the school property. In the early days, boys had to clear away brush and level off an area for a ballfield. In 1919, a five-room portable to be constructed by the shop department was approved by the Board of Directors. A report issued for 1924-27 calls Loyal Heights “an example of the new type of temporary building developed

### Details:

Name: **Loyal Heights School**  
 Location: (N)W 77th Street & 26th Avenue NW  
 Building: Portables  
 Site: 2.71 acres

1919: Opened in September as annex to Webster  
 1928: Became independent school  
 1931: Closed in December

by the building committee” and describes it as having three buildings. In 1931-32, the school had eight rooms for grades 1-6.

Once roads were built, the property was leveled in preparation for a new building. The permanent Loyal Heights School was designed in 20th Century Georgian style and comprised 10 classrooms. Following the opening of the new building in 1932, much effort was put into the beautification of the grounds. Cherry trees were donated by Loyal Treat Nichols for the first Arbor Day. She also donated two tapestries, depicting Romulus and Remus, that were hung in the auditorium.

It wasn't long before the student body outgrew the school, and portables came into use. In 1946, a six-room wing was added, including a gymnasium, art room, and library. Enrollment exceeded 450, with over 100 pupils in kindergarten. The two new kindergarten rooms were housed in a separate unit, with their own lavatories, cloak rooms, private entrance, and a fenced off blacktop play yard. Ronald Pickett, who taught physical education, became the school's first male instructor.



Loyal Heights, ca. 1927 SPSA 246-5



Loyal Heights, ca. 1927 SPSA 246-6



Loyal Heights, ca. 1940 SPSA 246-12

In 1956, *The Seattle Times* called the Loyal Heights playground a “portable maze” and published a photo showing the seven temporary structures needed to house the overflow of students. To alleviate crowding there and at Crown Hill, North Beach School was opened in September 1958. However, Loyal Heights remained overcrowded as older students were added to the student body because of over-enrollment at Monroe Junior High.

In 1959, the older students left to attend the new Whitman Junior High, and enrollment dropped from 733 to 431. Soon afterward, 80 African American students were bused in from the Central Area as part of the district’s desegregation plan. By late 1973, enrollment was down to 250, and the community became concerned that the school might close. Their fears were realized in spring 1976 when the board announced that Loyal Heights and four other schools would close. A resulting lawsuit led to the reopening of all five schools in September 1976 (see Fairview), and a seismic upgrade was done in 1979.

In the early 2000s, Loyal Heights students benefitted from a new playground and upgraded computer equipment. Pupils in grades 1-4 could choose classes that included a mix of grade levels, which offered flexible grouping and encouraged cooperative learning. New programs included music and integrated arts.

In 2014, Loyal Heights was nominated and received landmark status. The features to be preserved included the site, the exteriors of the 1932 building and 1946 addition; as well as the interior corridors, stairways, classrooms, and auditorium/lunchroom.

## Details:

Name: **Loyal Heights School**

Location: 2511 NW 80th Street

Building: 10-room brick

Architect: Floyd A. Naramore

Site: 2.71 acres

1932: Opened in January

1946: Addition (Naramore & Brady) opened in April

1976: Closed in June; reopened in September

2015: Designated as City of Seattle landmark

2016: School closed for construction; Students relocated to Marshall as interim site



Loyal Heights, ca. 1940 SPSA 246-11

## Details:

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Name: **Loyal Heights School**

Location: 7735 25th Avenue NW

Building: 36-room

Architect: Naramore & Brady and  
BLRB Architects

Site: 2.71 acres

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2018: School reopened; Renovation  
& addition (BLRB  
Architects; BEX IV & BTA  
III); Geothermal wells

In 2010, the BEX IV Levy approved by voters included a project to renovate and expand the school. BLRB Architects was selected to design the project, which began in 2016. However, some parents and community members fought the expansion, taking legal action in King County Superior Court to prevent what they called a “mega school.” After losing an initial appeal, they filed a second in 2016, opposing the courtyard use as a play space. The City of Seattle granted a permit that included the courtyard use as a play area, and the group lost its court fight.

The district proceeded with the project to renovate the existing 36,700-square-foot school and construct a 51,400-square-foot addition. Students were relocated to John Marshall as their interim site until the school reopened in fall 2018. The school entrance was relocated to 25th Avenue NW from 2511 NW 80th Street. The previous administration spaces were combined and converted into the art classrooms. The new space created shared learning spaces for each grade level, and a new gymnasium adjoined a new commons/lunchroom with a partition wall between. The library was relocated to the historic lunchroom on the north side of the building, and the former stage was converted to a reading nook.

An expanded covered play area was built on the one-acre playground, and beneath it, 108 geothermal wells connected to the building’s heating and cooling system. The new school has capacity for 660 students with four kindergarten classrooms, four special education classrooms, two art classrooms, one music classroom, two computer labs, and one before- and after-school care space.