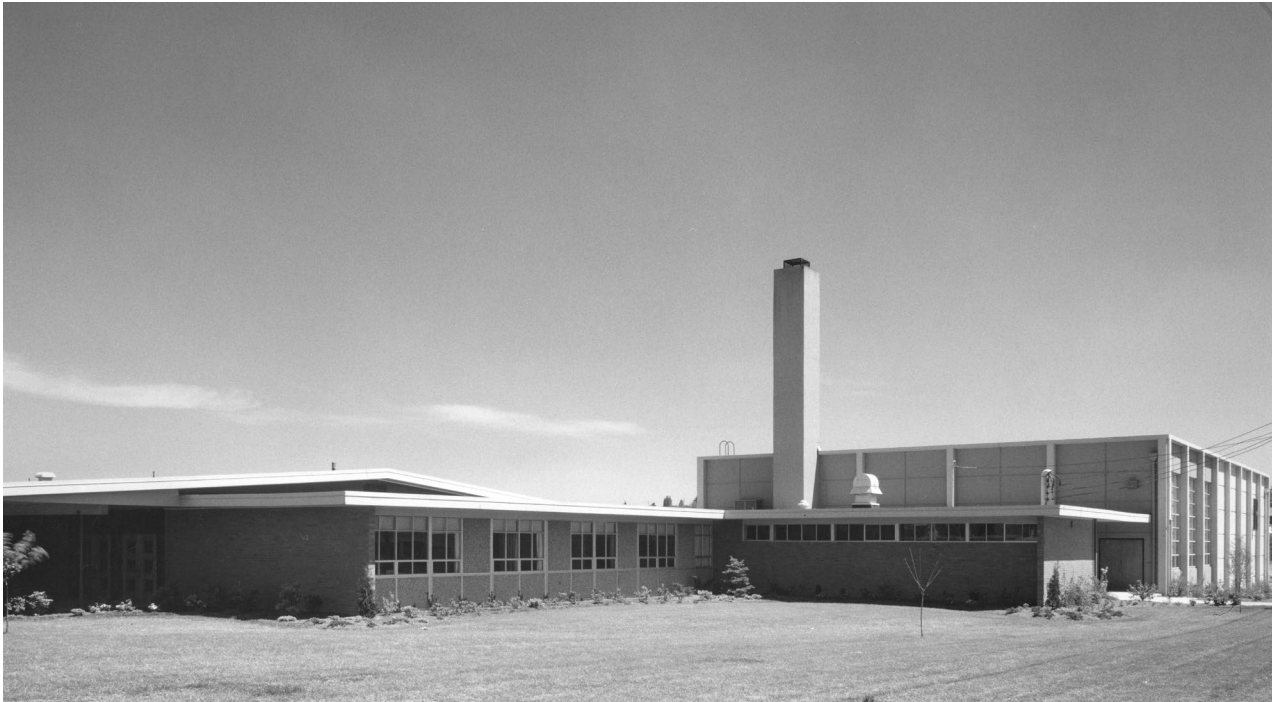# Roxhill

Roxhill, 1960 SPSA 267-4

Details:

Name: **Roxhill Elementary School**
Location: 9430 30th Avenue SW
Building: 18-room brick
Architect: John Graham & Co.
Site: 3.01 acres

1958:	Opened on September 3
1979:	Changed to K-3
1989:	Changed to K-5
2018:	Roxhill program moved to E. C. Hughes; Site for Interagency, BRIDGES, and In Tandem programs; Building maintained Roxhill name
2021:	Seismic upgrades
2022:	In Tandem program decentralized

In the early 1950s, residents of Roger's First Addition in West Seattle decided they needed a community club to improve and protect the neighborhood. They chose the name "Roxhill" to define their location on the hill north of Roxbury Street. After organizing their club, the members focused on two priorities, acquiring a neighborhood playground and a school for the 140 children in their four-square-block area.

While investigating a possible site, the community group stumbled upon a vacant block of city-owned land that had been deeded over by King County in 1937 for a small airport that never materialized. In August 1954, the Seattle City Council granted the community a 10-year lease on the property for a playground. At an October 2, 1954, meeting of the Seattle School Board and parks department, a proposal for a school and a five-acre playfield on the site was announced. The community relinquished its lease so this proposal could move forward.

A number of portable classrooms were moved onto the newly cleared 3.1-acre site at (S)W Roxbury and 28th Avenue SW in summer 1955. The school opened on September 7 with 237 pupils as an annex to Gatewood. The next autumn two more portables were added, along with an office portable, to accommodate an additional 100 students, some from newly annexed Roxbury Heights. Still another portable was needed in fall 1957 as enrollment climbed to 437.

After serving as vice-principal at Roxhill during the school's first year, Harrison Caldwell advanced to principal in 1956 and became the Seattle School District's first African American principal. The school was officially named Roxhill Elementary on February 7, 1957.

The pattern of adding portables for increased enrollment was broken in 1958 when a permanent building opened for approximately 500 students. The sprawling single-story structure is wood frame with brick veneer. In 1971, two classrooms were combined to provide room for a learning resource center.

Roxhill, 1960 SPSA 267-1

Roxhill became a K-3 school in 1979 and formed a triad with Dunlap (K, 4-6) and Fauntleroy (K-3) in accordance with the district's desegregation plan. Alternative Education No. 4 (AE#4) began in portables at Roxhill in September 1992 with 77 students in grades K-3. Parents actively worked to establish this first alternative school in West Seattle as a child-centered place. In September 1993, AE#4 moved to Boren, and the following year it went to Genesee Hill and was renamed Pathfinder (See Cooper).

Through at least 2000, Roxhill boasted an award-winning handbell choir, directed by the same teacher for nearly three decades. About 75 students participated in a yearlong study of Native American cultures of the Northwest and the salmon industry. Roxhill later became a K-5 school in 1989 when the triad relationship was dismantled and the district's Controlled Choice model for desegregation was implemented.

Under the leadership of Roxhill librarian Pat Bliquez, Roxhill made considerable investments in improving its library and student reading skills going into the twenty-first century. With funding from the John Stanford Book Fund and other sources including Bliquez's own financial contributions, Roxhill's library collection expanded from roughly 3,000 books when Bliquez started in 1992 to 12,000 books by 2010. Under Bliquez's direction, Roxhill ran a family reading and literacy night and "partnered with the Frye Art Museum in a curriculum to develop critical thinking, communication, and visual literacy skills." For her outstanding work, Seattle's public television station KCTS awarded Bliquez with the Golden Apple Award for making a difference in children's lives.

As enrollment throughout the district began to grow after 2010, with Roxhill peaking at 423 in 2014, the district began planning for major renovations, expansion, and reopening of school buildings. Part of this plan included the complete renovation of the then vacant E. C. Hughes school building 1½ miles north as the new home for Roxhill Elementary students. With plans prepared by DLR group, construction was completed in time for Roxhill students to occupy the Hughes building starting in the fall of 2018 under the name Roxhill Elementary School at E. C. Hughes (see Hughes).

After the departure of Roxhill Elementary School students, Roxhill School became the home of numerous special programs. The Interagency Academy, an alternative high school program previously located at Youngstown Cultural Arts Center (see Cooper), along with special education programs BRIDGES and In Tandem, which were previously located at Van Asselt, moved into the Roxhill building. In 2022, the In Tandem program was modified so that students who participate receive support from an intensive behavioral intervention team in their neighborhood schools, so the program no longer operated out of a single building.