

## South Lake

Name: Alan T. Sugiyama High School at South Lake	Enrollment: 40
Address: 8601 Rainier Avenue S	Nickname: Blue Sharks
Configuration: 9-12; Option School	Colors:



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Though South Lake High School was a newer school building in the district in 2008, its program pre-dated the school, and its history was strongly intertwined with Sharples (see Kurose) and South Shore K-8 (see South Shore).

In 1990, when Franklin students returned to their renovated school, Sharples Alternative Secondary School (SASS) returned to Sharples after two years in a leased space. The Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC)

## Details:

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Name: **South Lake High School**  
Location: 8825 Rainier Avenue S  
Building: 32,000 gross square feet  
Architect: BLRB Architects, p.s./Streeter  
& Associates Architects  
Site: 11.4 acres (shared campus)

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2007: Construction started for new school; students relocated from South Shore to Hughes as the interim site  
2008: South Lake High School opened (BEX II)  
2009: South Shore K-8 School opened next door  
2013: New community center opened  
2020: School renamed Alan T. Sugiyama High School at South Lake

also returned to Sharples after being relocated three times in that same two-year period (see Kurose).

In 1999, at the request of the principal of South Shore Middle School, the School Board decided the open-concept plan of the South Shore Middle School building no longer met the needs of its students. It was resolved that the middle school program would swap buildings with the two programs located at Sharples. In June, South Shore Middle School students relocated to the Casper W. Sharples Junior High School building, which had traditional classrooms and corridors. The newly relocated middle school initially assumed the name Sharples Middle School, but quickly changed its name to Aki Kurose Middle School (see Kurose).

The displaced SASS program moved to the South Shore building and was renamed South Lake High School at South Shore (see South Shore). The Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC) also relocated from Sharples to South Shore. Tensions existed between the two programs, so after just a year in their new building, in September 2000, the SBOC was relocated to Hay (see Queen Anne Elementary).

South Lake High School was one of two schools in the district that served students considered at risk of not receiving a high school diploma. The other was John Marshall Alternative High School near Green Lake (closed in June 2008).

The school administrators of South Lake High School were never in favor of being located at South Shore because of the open-concept design of the school (meaning the classrooms had few interior walls), since they did not feel that the design would meet the educational needs of their students. Additionally, numerous programs were co-located at South Shore with South Lake High School students (see South Shore).

In 2005, it was determined that the estimated cost for a new South Shore school building was over the available BEX II funds. District officials voted 6 to 1 to build a new replacement school building for South Lake High School on the northeast corner of the South Shore site using these funds instead. The South Shore project was postponed and the budget to fund the project for a new South Shore was added to the 2007 BEX III levy.

In June 2007, when construction began on the new high school, South Lake students transferred to Hughes in West Seattle as an interim site. Construction did not begin on a South Shore replacement school until the winter/spring of 2008 after the levy passed.

On August 28, 2008, South Lake High School celebrated its grand opening and students arrived in September. The 32,000-square-foot building shares the 11.4-acre site with the community center and South Shore K-8, which opened a year later in 2009. The community center was rebuilt in 2013.

The new two-story South Lake building included a licensed childcare space to accommodate a small number of infants and toddlers of South Lake's students who were also parents continuing their education. A GRADS program (Graduation, Reality, and Dual-role Skills) helped students become better parents and earn credits in early childhood education. The building was designed with adjoining classrooms to allow team-teaching. There are two science labs, a large art room, a multipurpose room, and a commons area that could accommodate everything from community meetings to choir concerts. The school offers opportunities for students interested in acting and recording arts, those preferring a smaller and more personalized high school experience, and those who want to prepare themselves to attend post-secondary education regardless of their academic history.



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In 2014, Barbara Moore, who had been South Lake High School principal for 15 years, won the prestigious Thomas B. Foster Award for Excellence, which recognizes outstanding secondary school principals in Seattle who fostered racial equity and justice. The recipient is selected annually by the Alliance for Education and Seattle Public Schools academic leaders. South Lake High School received \$50,000 as part of the award.

In September 2020, Seattle School Board members unanimously voted to change the program name to honor Alan T. Sugiyama, a respected education advocate who died in 2017. Sugiyama spent his career advancing racial and educational justice. In 1989, he was the first Asian American member of the Seattle School Board, where he served two terms. Upon learning the school would be named for her father, Mari Sugiyama, Alan's oldest daughter, said, "We have visited the school and believe it is exactly the kind of school our dad would have been proud to be a part of—student focused, strong social justice mission with the ability to help students find their individual pathways to success."

When it opened in 2008, the school had 156 students and a building capacity of 200. The school maintains a small enrollment count, since students go through a referral and application process that is distinct from the district's standard enrollment process. Students can transfer all year long into the program if they are not thriving in a traditional comprehensive high school setting.