

Fairview

Fairview School was founded in 1907 because Green Lake School was extremely overcrowded and Ravenna School consisted of only a couple of portables. The new school was situated in a new real estate development called Fairview, appropriately named for its spectacular vistas of Green Lake, Lake Washington, Mount Rainier, and the Cascade Mountains. Roosevelt Way, the major north-south road, led through cow pastures, and many of today's streets were only footpaths.

Fairview opened three weeks into the school year in two portables at 9th Avenue and (N)E 79th Street. On the first day, one of the two teachers sat outside on a stump while desks and a stove were installed in her classroom. Soon a third portable and third teacher were added to handle 144 pupils in grades 1–5. The principal also was given jurisdiction over Ravenna and walked there daily through the woods.

Construction started soon on a permanent building, which was completed by fall 1908. The school board voted for brick over the usual wood frame for fire safety. The three elementary schools built that year (Fairview, Whitworth, and Lawton) all followed plans virtually identical to the wooden model schools but promised to outlast their predecessors. Fairview's original eight rooms held grades 1–7, and, in 1909, the 8th grade was added. The first 8th grade class to graduate, in June 1910, chose the school's colors of black and orange.

Anticipating the need for additional space, in 1921 the district purchased additional lots, which made up the rest of the block to the west of the school. In 1927–28, enrollment exceeded 450, even though the 7th and 8th graders were assigned to John Marshall Junior High, and five portables provided additional classroom space. A new addition on the east side provided office space, eight new classrooms, and an auditorium-lunchroom. In 1931, a kindergarten was added.

A major “changing of the guard” occurred at Fairview in 1946. Eunice Copeland retired after serving as principal since 1922. Taking

Name: **Fairview School**
 Location: 844 NE 78th Street
 Building: 3-story, 9-room brick
 Architect: James Stephen
 Site: 2.01 acres

1908: Opened
 1921: Site expanded to 2.86 acres
 1928: Addition (n.a.)
 1978: Closed in June
 1985: Sold
 Present: Fairview Church



Fairview, 1909 SPSA 223-131

her place was Arthur Gravrock who would remain until 1970. Each served 24 years.

With growth in the city and an extension of the city limits in 1954, Fairview's student body reached an all-time high of 887 pupils. Again portables were brought in and occupied the west playground.

A gradual decline in enrollment took place over the next ten years for several reasons. Some 180 students left when Sacajawea School (located a little over two miles to the northeast) opened in 1959, cutting Fairview's enrollment to 558 by June 1960. Construction of Interstate 5 in 1963 caused the loss of many homes in its path in the Fairview neighborhood. Also contributing to reduced enrollment were a declining birth rate and a general movement to the suburbs.

As space became available, a special-education class for emotionally disturbed children was located at the school in 1962, and a second class added during the next decade. A new office on the first floor and a faculty lounge on the lower floor were placed in empty classrooms in fall 1969.

In fall 1971, sixth graders left for Wilson or Eckstein Middle School and attendance plummeted further to 316. During the 1973–74 school year, the student body swelled with the temporary closing of Ravenna for renovation. In spring 1976, Fairview was boarded up but reopened by court order the next September.

In early 1978, signatures were collected and letters from Fairview



Fairview, 1960 SPSA 223-189

businessmen submitted in an attempt to block closure of the school. These efforts were unsuccessful, however, and Fairview closed in June 1978. Most of the 165 pupils transferred to Olympic View or Bagley.

The neighborhood fiercely opposed an early plan to sell Fairview School to the Seattle Housing Authority for a low-income housing site. The district received four bids for the site in 1982 and chose the highest, which came from Pacific Northwest Ballet. By June 1983, that deal had fallen through, and the First Church of the Nazarene leased the site. Finally, the building was sold to the Woodland Park Avenue Church in 1985. The building now houses the renamed Fairview Church as well as the Fairview Christian School, a nondenominational Christian school for P-8.