

## Georgetown

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Luther M. Collins and his family arrived in the Duwamish River Valley in 1850. Jacob and Samuel Mapel arrived a year later with Henry Van Asselt, and the two families settled nearby (see Mapel, Van Asselt, and Holgate). The town of Duwamish was established in early 1852.

During a brief war between whites and Indians, which followed the signing of several treaties, a blockhouse called Fort Duwamish was constructed on the Collins place to provide protection from attack. Shortly after the war ended in 1856, the first Duwamish School was established in the blockhouse. It closed by 1862 when Van Asselt donated land for a new Duwamish School (see Van Asselt).

In 1890, newly arrived settler Julius Horton plotted two square miles of territory along the Duwamish River and named it after his son George who had completed medical school that year. George's brother Dexter became a noted Seattle banker. The community of Georgetown grew rapidly with its brickyards, breweries, and lumber mills. Until Prohibition, three local breweries made Georgetown the sixth largest beer-manufacturing center in the world.

During Georgetown's first eight years, neighborhood children had to travel south a mile or more to Van Asselt School. In 1898, Georgetown citizens voted overwhelmingly in favor of starting their own school. The first Georgetown School was taught by one teacher in an old store building owned by Mrs. Cross. The store was later demolished, and in 1947–48 was the site of the Riedel Brothers Union Oil Station, at 5526 Airport Way.

After classes were held at the store for a few months, burgeoning enrollment forced relocation of the school to Higgins Hall, across the street and to the north, at what is now the west side of Airport Way at Corson. At Higgins Hall, too, space soon became inadequate, so the school served only the first three grades. Older children attended Van Asselt or South Seattle. Higgins Hall was later demolished and in 1947–48, was home to the Airport Hardware Company, at 5515 Airport Way.

In 1900, a new school was developed on the northeast section of the grounds facing Corson Avenue. The new schoolhouse was "doubled almost immediately," providing a total of four classrooms. After the expansion, it was renamed Mueller School for one of Georgetown's outstanding citizens who was head of the local school board.

Enrollment continued to grow and, in 1903, pupils in the first five grades were taught at Mueller, while the 6th through 8th grades were sent to Bertholdi School at 609–611 Rainier Avenue S, (presently Airport Way near Lucille Street). Like Mueller, Bertholdi School had a principal teacher and three other teachers. Grades 6–7 were taught on the upper floor while the 8th grade was downstairs. After costs were considered, Bertholdi's Hall was closed and the children were sent to South Seattle School.

During the 1903–04 school year, high school classes in Georgetown were held in an old Presbyterian church, which operated as an annex to Mueller (see Cleveland).

Georgetown was incorporated as a city on January 18, 1904. With funds from a bond issue, a larger two-story building was constructed

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Name: **Georgetown School**  
Location: Corson Avenue  
Building: 2-room wood  
Architect: n.a.  
Site: n.a.

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1900: Opened by Georgetown District No. 153  
by 1902: Addition (n.a.)  
1903: Renamed *Mueller School*  
1904: Became *Mueller Annex*  
1907: Building relocated (733 S Findlay Street)  
1910: Annexed into Seattle School District on July 1; renamed *Georgetown* on July 27  
1942–45: Used for a nursery school and industrial training  
1947: Converted into gymnasiums  
1970–71: Closed to school classes  
by 1974: Leased to city, subleased as community center  
1984: Demolished

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later that year on the same site as Mueller, and named the Georgetown School. For a brief time, this building held all grades from first through high school under one roof. The high school class of 1905, however, was the only one to graduate from Georgetown. After 1905, there was room only for the elementary grades; so high school students rode the streetcar to West Seattle High. Through the years, the 1900 building survived as the school's annex.

Around 1907, the railroad bought the school property and moved both buildings approximately one block to a 3.07-acre site. In April 1910, the citizens of Georgetown voted to become part of Seattle. At this time, the school housed eight grades with a total of 523 pupils. The Seattle School Board changed the name from Mueller to Georgetown because of its standing rule that no school should bear a name of a living person.

The main school building held grades 1–8, while the annex housed two additional 1st grade classes. There was no auditorium, so assemblies were held in the lower hallway of the larger structure. The school also lacked a lunchroom, so students brought their lunches and ate in the basement or outside. Kindergarten was added to Georgetown in 1914. From 1912–17, in addition to housing two classrooms, the annex was divided into a boys' and a girls' area. On the girls' side, domestic science courses, including cooking and sewing, were taught. These classes also served girls from South Park. The boys' side housed a manual training shop.

In June 1923, a report told of "a marked falling off in attendance at this school, due to the closing down of the largest plant, and also to the opening of a parochial school." One alternative considered was to turn Georgetown into an intermediate school, serving grades 7–8. Enrollment at Georgetown peaked in 1924–25 with 655 students. The same year Georgetown High School, with 82 students and three teachers, occupied part of the main building.

In 1927, Cleveland High opened and Georgetown became a six-



Mueller Annex and Georgetown, ca. 1904 SPSA 228-72

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Name: **Georgetown School**  
 Location: Corson Avenue  
 Building: 13-room, 2-story wood  
 Architect: Olof Hanson  
 Site: n.a.

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1904: Opened  
 1907: Building relocated (730 S Homer Street); site 2.3 acres  
 1910: Annexed into Seattle School District on July 1  
 1920: Site expanded to 3.08 acres  
 1970: Closed as elementary school on June 9  
 1970–81: Alternative school site  
 1981: Demolished  
 1984: 50-year land lease

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grade elementary school, with enrollment dropping to 405. Vocational training courses were held in the Annex Building, while kindergarten classes were held in a separate portable. In 1937, a plan was considered to demolish Georgetown and replace it with a new brick building. By 1940, vocational classes were transferred to Day.

From 1941 to 1945, Georgetown School joined other schools in wartime activities, such as stamp and bond drives. Red Cross activities, ration book distribution, and nursery school projects were also common during the war years. The girls' side of the annex became a nursery school for the children of working women. The boys' side housed industrial training classes.

After Holgate closed in June 1955, students were transferred to Georgetown. To accommodate them, two portables were brought from Colman and Coe.

In 1966–67, the school grounds were home to the main school, the annex (with a boys' gym and a girls' gym), and four portables. The neighborhood was industrializing steadily, however, and the population was largely transient. The student body underwent a near 100-percent turnover each year, and there was no longer a PTA.

Georgetown closed as an elementary school in early 1971. The 180 students were transferred to the new Maple School, while the principal and all nine teachers went to the new Dearborn Park. The



Georgetown, 1960 SPSA 228-73

annex was leased to the City of Seattle and the main building served as a site for three alternative programs that had come to Georgetown in 1969 and 1970.

Project Interchange was housed at a commercial building (3704 S Ferdinand), beginning in 1969–70 (see Martha Washington). In September 1972, the high school portion transferred to Georgetown, with the junior high segment coming the following year. When Georgetown finally closed in June 1981, Project Interchange moved to Sharples as part of the Seattle Alternative Secondary School.

Project Follow-Through, a federally funded project that was an offshoot of Head Start for disadvantaged children in K–3, started at Georgetown in 1970. In 1975, it moved to Interlake. American Indian Heritage School was also at Georgetown from 1970–74 before moving to South Shore Middle School.

In 1981, the district tore down the main Georgetown building. The Annex was still leased to the City of Seattle, serving as the Georgetown Services Center, and was not demolished at that time. In 1984, the district entered into a 50-year ground lease with Central Park Company. The 1900 school building was demolished and two buildings consisting of 60,500 square feet of office and warehouse space were erected on the site.