



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Third Avenue • 4th floor • Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 684-0228

### REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 228/98

Name and Address of Property: **Bryant Elementary School**  
**3311 NE 60<sup>th</sup> Street**

#### Legal Description:

Block 2 University View Addition as recorded in Volume 13 of Plats, Page 96, records of King County, Washington. 144,038 sq. ft. (3.31 acres).

At the public hearing held on July 1, 1998, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of Bryant Elementary School as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25. 12.350:

- C. *It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.*
- D. *It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.*

### DESCRIPTION

#### Setting:

Bryant Elementary School is located at 3311 Northeast 60<sup>th</sup> Street in the University View area of the Ravenna neighborhood in northeast Seattle. The immediate neighborhood around the school is comprised of bungalows dating to the 1920's and there are several churches in the area. The school site is bound by 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE and 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and East 57<sup>th</sup> Street and East 60<sup>th</sup> Street, all local streets serving single family residences. The grounds are two blocks north of NE 55<sup>th</sup> Street, a major arterial crossing the Ravenna and Hawthorn Hills neighborhoods, and approximately one mile north of University Village Shopping Center.

Bryant Elementary School is one of over a half-dozen, two-story brick-veneered 20<sup>th</sup> Century Georgian school buildings designed by the District's third architect, Floyd Naramore, after

detailed with a second line of terra-cotta quoining, emphasizing the corners; each bay has a rectangular terra-cotta panel with the school's name incised in it, and each panel has a curvilinear molded panel and a centered terra-cotta cartouche. The recessed entry doors are paneled and glazed with a rectangular transom above; the doors have been altered. The transom has applied ornamental iron work. The entry portal is faced with molded terra-cotta and a simple entablature above with a broken pediment with an urn centered within it. The pediment is surmounted by a terra-cotta, framed, double-hung wood sash window with scrolls in the outside lower corner. An ornamental terra-cotta shield with garlands is located in the pedimented gable end; the date of the school's construction, 1926, is incised in the shield.

The entry bay is flanked by two banks of four double-hung six-over-six wood sashes on the first and second floors.

The west elevation has two banks of five double-hung sashes on both floors. The east elevation has a centered, recessed pair of glazed and paneled entry doors with multi-light transoms above; it is reached by a set of concrete stairs let into a gently-sloped bank along the east edge of the building. The portal interior is framed with paneled terra-cotta, and its exterior edge is trimmed in molded terra-cotta with ornamental brackets, a plain frieze, and simple molded cornice. A pair of double-hung windows are located in the second story above the entrance. The entry is flanked by banks of four double-hung sashes on both floors.

The rear (south) elevation has one-story wood-frame playcourts, which flank a centrally located brick-veneered boiler room that features the original cast-iron coal chutes. The boiler room has a paneled and glazed wood door and a small double-hung window. A brick chimney, located near the south building edge, once rose well above the parapet and had a terra-cotta cap; it has been shortened. The boiler room is flanked by four playcourt bays; the bays are to the west and divided by rectangular chamfered wood columns with capitals, and all but the end bay are enclosed with original woven wire. The west-end bay is enclosed with brick infill and has paired wood doors. The easterly bays have brick spandrels and tall, wood, sash, awning windows. The easternmost bay has been partially obscured by a flat-roofed porch connected to the 1931 wing. The courts have molded wood cornice trim.

The auditorium wing, located on the southwest end of the building has terra-cotta coping and a narrow, molded terra-cotta string course. It is connected to the southwest corner of the two-story block by a recessed one-story enclosed bridge with large double-hung wood sash windows. The one-and-one-half story wing projects from the southwest end of the building, extending beyond the two-story block's west facade plane; it encloses the auditorium. The auditorium's west elevation has six regularly spaced large six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows with flat brick arches and terra-cotta keystones. A door at the southernmost corner, with a glazed transom above, has been replaced. It is flanked by slender wood pilasters, and is reached by concrete steps with wrought-iron railings, some of which have been poorly repaired. The south elevation (of the wing) has two pairs of double-hung wood sash windows; the east elevation has three large double-hung windows with terra-cotta keystones, and a projecting entry block with a pair of transomed glazed and paneled doors with a flat brick arch and terra-cotta keystone.



The east elevation is linked to the original structure by a recessed bay with a pair of paneled and glazed doors, with a large triple sash window above, trimmed with terra-cotta. The elevation has banks of double-hung wood sash windows on all floors in a four-one-three-one-one-three-four-one rhythm. The basement has a one-story slanted bay window near the south end, lighting the kindergarten playroom in the interior. The slanted bay has a parapeted roof which rises above the water table.

The south elevation has a pair of recessed glazed and paneled wood doors leading to a central corridor; the first and second floors have slip-sash windows above the doors. The building drops to two stories on the west side of this elevation; there are some double-hung windows on this side of the facade. The west elevation of the wing has a one-story physical training room with large double-hung windows with flat brick arches and keystones matching the auditorium wing detailing.

The interior of the 1931 addition matches in style and materials that of the 1926 original structure. The addition is a single-loaded corridor with classrooms flanking one side of the hallway. There are modern steel lockers built into the walls in some hallways, the date of their installation is undetermined. The main difference in the two structures is that some of the molding in the 1931 addition is stained dark with a high-gloss finish in contrast to the 1926 molding which is a lighter stain with a matte finish.

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

In 1918 the Seattle School District bought the north end of the site of the present-day Bryant Elementary School. Due to the increasing population and the conservation policies of wartime, the District erected four "Liberty Buildings" that were inexpensive, wood, six-room buildings heated by individual wood stoves. Bryant School began in one of these temporary school buildings, to which eight portables had been added by 1924 to house almost 400 students. In 1923, the District passed a three-million-dollar school construction levy and funded the design and construction of the new Bryant School. Bryant School is one of over a half-dozen, two-story, brick-veneer, Twentieth-Century Georgian school buildings designed by Naramore after the passage of the 1923 levy.

In 1919, the Seattle School Board brought Floyd Naramore from Portland, Oregon to become the new school architect (Edgar Blair had resigned from the District in 1918). Naramore would serve until 1932, when he went into private practice forming the architectural partnership now known as NBBJ. Naramore had considerable design experience for school buildings and he oversaw the construction of an ambitious school expansion program.

When World War I ended, Seattle's wartime industries closed and somewhat of a recession set in. Population growth between 1920 and 1930 slowed considerably and the enrollment over this ten-year period increased less than 8 percent. In spite of the downturn, the construction of new schools was well funded due to the passage of the 1923 bond issue. The emphasis on the types

and cooking room. Enrollment rose to capacity around 1930, and in 1931, Naramore designed and supervised the construction of the south wing. Included in the new addition were 12 additional classrooms and a second gymnasium. By 1944, enrollment had grown to over 1,200 students. In addition to the brick school structure, seven portables were added to the site to accommodate additional needed capacity. In 1950, seventh and eighth graders were transferred to the new Eckstein Junior High, however, enrollment continued to increase with over 1,300 students attending the school in 1952. Despite the opening of two additional elementary schools in the 1950's, enrollment remained high until overall District enrollment began to decline in the 1960's, and by 1970, enrollment had returned to about 800 students. Today, Bryant has an enrollment of about 570 students, including special education and bilingual education programs.

Bryant has a very highly involved and active parent's group. In 1993, during the assessment of the proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP II), the District contracted with CRSS/TRA consultants for the assessment of all schools including Bryant Elementary School in order to determine the future of District-owned buildings. This process included several large well-attended community meetings. From this study, 14 schools were identified as potentially having historical value. In 1994, the consultants continued to study those 14 schools that had potential historic merit, including Bryant, in workshops specific to each school. The meeting held for Bryant included over 40 participants that counted in their membership principals, District central staff, Board members, historic preservation groups, and community organizations. Both the 1926 and the 1931 structures are recognizable and well integrated into the community and were considered to have some historical merit. The historic renovation of Bryant School is strongly supported in the community.

The presence of a neighborhood school conveys the message of community identity and cohesion, and in the neighborhood surrounding Bryant School, the school is considered the center of the community. The Seattle School District has a long and rich history of encouraging use of the school buildings by the general public for community related events. The neighborhood grade school represented stability, neighborliness and the assumption that the upcoming generation would be educated into responsible citizens. In a brief search of the Seattle School Board's minutes from the 1930's through the 1950's, several requests to the Board to use school buildings are made. The uses vary from church and youth group services, civil defense and military uses, community and social groups and continuing education. Even though specific schools are not listed in the archival records as to where these activities took place, it represents a general philosophy that community use took place historically in the schools. According to school staff, parents of Bryant School students are highly involved with the school, however due to the close proximity to the Ravenna-Bryant Community Center, no community programs or Parks Department programs, other than the occasional community rental, are held on a regular basis at the school. Bryant does feature before and after school programs for students.

Bryant Elementary School is not located within an urban village but generally serves the area identified as the University District Urban Center.