



**Green School Building**  
Renovation/Addition/  
Restoration

**BLRB ARCHITECTS, P.S.**

1145 Broadway,  
Suite 1200  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
www.blrb.com  
Kathleen Bjorkheim  
253/627-5599

**DESIGN TEAM**

Thomas Bates, AIA, LEED AP,  
Principal Architect  
Lee Fenton, AIA, LEED AP,  
Design Architect  
Les Gerstmann, AIA, LEED AP,  
Project Manager

**OWNER/CLIENT**

Tacoma School District 10  
Tacoma, WA  
Arthur O. Jarvis Ed.D.  
253/572-1010  
Type of School and  
Grades Served:  
Elementary School, K-5  
Capacity: 350 students  
Size of Site: 4.7 acres  
Area of Building:  
54,800 square feet  
Volume of Building:  
704,000 cubic feet  
Space per Student:  
156.6 square feet  
Cost per Student: \$33,714  
Square Foot Cost: \$215  
Cost of Construction:  
\$11.8 million  
Total Project Cost:  
\$12.5 million  
Contract Date: June 2005  
Completion Date: Sept. 2006  
Percent of Completion: 100%

# Fern Hill Elementary School

Tacoma, Washington

**BLRB Architects, P.S.**

The challenge of history is to recover the past and introduce it to the present. The historic renovation and addition of Fern Hill Elementary School presented a canvas for BLRB Architects to showcase a community's history while creating a progressive environment. Originally built in 1888, Fern Hill provides a rare window back through time, a source of community pride, and a chance to take history out of books and into everyday life.

With extensive community input, BLRB was able to create a design that preserved and upgraded the original three-story building, and added new construction to house the modern program elements. Shared activity spaces have been incorporated between pairs of classrooms to support individual and small-group learning, and student and community services are dispersed throughout the building. Daylight controlled electric lighting, natural ventilation linked to an HVAC system,



VIEW OF MAIN ENTRY

and a nontoxic interior finish provide a high-performance and healthy environment.

Wood trusses from the 1925 gym were reused in the new foyer, and original exterior brick and sandstone was exposed internally to visually signify the transition from the old building to the new addi-

tions. A new school entrance leads to Heritage Hall, featuring photographs and elements of the historic building. The 1888 school bell was restored and is now prominently located atop the building, with children now lining up to pull the once frayed rope, ringing in every school morning. ■



HERITAGE HALL



COMPUTER LAB

PHOTOS: JOE MANFREDINI PHOTOGRAPHY