

History of Highland Magnet School

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. -- Confucius

Kenwood School opened in the fall of 1919 as a new elementary school for the young city of Bend, Oregon. Over the years, Kenwood School has housed elementary and middle school grades, preschool programs, and special needs programs. Kenwood is now the home of Highland Elementary School, a Scottish Storyline magnet school. The enchanting brick building is the oldest in the Bend-La Pine School District in continuous use as a school (for more than 90 years).

The Scottish Storyline teaching method was developed in Scotland in the 1960s by Sallie Harkness, Steve Bell, and Fred Rendell. The Storyline method became the proposed umbrella for the developing Highland Magnet School, providing the basis and structure for a holistic, interactive, and engaging learning environment.

The original proposal for the creation of Highland Magnet School was submitted to Bend-La Pine Schools in 1997 by Highland founders Elaine Smith and Colleen Vallerga. Their application proposed a school “based on a caring community of students, parents, and teachers who work, play, and learn together to create responsible, caring, well-educated new members of our community.”

Highland opened in 1999 at Thompson School in Bend with three Storyline classrooms. Highland moved to Kenwood School in 2000 and started with six Storyline classrooms. Starting in 2006, due to continued expansion and increased interest in Storyline, all fifteen classrooms are Storyline classrooms. The current configuration of classes at Highland is:

- ✓ Two sections of full-day Kindergarten
- ✓ One section of half-day Kindergarten
- ✓ Three sections of Grade 1
- ✓ Five sections of Grade 2/Grade 3 blend
- ✓ Four sections of Grade 4/Grade 5 blend

Highland became the first school outside of Scotland to fully embrace the Storyline method, where all teachers are trained in Storyline and there are active Storylines in every classroom throughout the school year. Highland is an inspiration and a model for other schools that acknowledge the inherent educational value of the Scottish Storyline teaching method and are working to implement Storyline in their own classrooms.

All of us have moments in our childhood where we come alive for the first time. And we go back to those moments and think, This is when I became myself. – Rita Dove, Poet Laureate