

Cleveland

Name:	Grover Cleveland High School	Enrollment:	752
Address:	5511 15th Avenue S	Nickname:	Eagles
Configuration:	9–12	Colors:	Red and white
Newspaper:	<i>Cleveland Journal</i>	Annual:	<i>Aquila</i>

The roots of Cleveland High School can be traced back to early Georgetown High School that began in a Georgetown church building as an annex to Mueller School from September 1903 to June 1904 (see Georgetown). The following year the high school operated on the top floor of Mueller School. The Class of 1905 was the only class to graduate from Georgetown High School. In fall 1905, the Georgetown School District gave high school students streetcar fare to attend West Seattle High School. After the City of Georgetown was annexed into Seattle in 1910, south end high school students went to Queen Anne, Broadway, and Franklin. At the time, it was felt that the south end would not grow sufficiently to warrant building a new high school.

South end residents, however, continued to ask for their own high school. In 1918, they petitioned the school board for a new high school for students finishing at Van Asselt, South Park, Concord, South Seattle, South Beacon Hill, and Georgetown. By 1923, the district was also considering a new intermediate school at the site of Georgetown or Maple, or at a new site.

To launch a new secondary program, the 7th and 8th grades from South Seattle and Maple were brought to Georgetown School in September 1923. The next fall students who had just completed the 8th grade at Concord and Van Asselt were added at Georgetown, and the program for 82 students in the 9th grade was called Georgetown High School.

In 1925, the board voted to construct the new building on Maple Hill at the site of Maple School because the site could be enlarged. New property was purchased that same year and, in 1926, Maple and its annex were moved two blocks to the south. In accordance with their general policy to name schools after famous Americans, the name of the new school, along with the existing program, was changed to Grover Cleveland High School, in honor of the nation's 22nd and 24th President. Other names that were considered were South, Duwamish, Georgetown, and Woodrow Wilson. At the recommendation of Superintendent Thomas G. Cole, the board decided to plan a six-year intermediate-senior high school, the first in the city.

The school, in 20th Century Georgian style, was built in two phases with the west wing completed in December 1926 and the final east wing (containing the gymnasium) completed a year later. The transfer to the new site occurred in the middle of the 1926–27 school year as older pupils carried their books from Georgetown School, marched over the Lucile Street Bridge, and up the hill in a parade to the new building. The first graduation was held that spring, with 52 receiving diplomas.

Cleveland maintained a separate junior and high school, each with a different organization but sharing the same principal and vice principal. The programs were Cleveland High School and Grover Cleveland



Cleveland, ca. 1940 SPSA 012-16

Name: **Grover Cleveland High School**

Location: 5511 15th Avenue S

Building: 18-room brick

Architect: Floyd A. Naramore

Site: 5.1 acres

1925: Named on July 24

1927: Opened on January 3

1931: 1.02-acre playfield acquired

1944: Site expanded to 7.3 acres

1958: Addition (J.W. Maloney)

1967: Site expanded to 8.6 acres

1970: Addition (Edward Mahlum)

1981: 1927 exterior designated
City of Seattle landmark
on June 17

Intermediate School from 1926–27 through 1927–28, and then the latter became Grover Cleveland Junior High School.

Traditions took shape in the early years of the high school. The nickname “Eagles” was chosen in 1929, replacing the previous name “Highlanders”. In 1933, a contest for naming the annual was held. The winning suggestion, submitted by a member of the senior class, was *Aquila*, the Latin word for eagle. The annual Cleveland Day was held on March 17, the former President’s birthday. Ray Imus came to Cleveland as a history teacher in 1929 and a year later became vice principal. “Mr. Cleveland,” as he came to be called, served the school until his retirement in 1964.

The link between Cleveland High School and environmental education was established very early. Joseph Hazard, who began teaching history there in 1938, took students on numerous field trips. In summer, he served as head of guides at Mount Rainier and climbed the south slope of the mountain several times. At a time when the school was searching for ways to honor former students who died in World War II, Principal Kenneth Selby (1940–45) suggested a living memorial. Using \$344 contributed by the Class of 1943, 131 acres of land on the Issaquah-Fall City Road east of Issaquah was purchased. This was named the Cleveland Memorial Forest and dedicated to the 29 Cleveland graduates who lost their lives in that war. Today this district property is still used for outdoor and environmental education by schools in the district.

During the 1940s, when wartime workers built planes at the near-



Cleveland, 1927 SPSA 012-3

by Boeing Aircraft plant, enrollment increased by over 200 students, reaching 1,241 in 1945–46. This caused the district to recommend building an addition to Cleveland.

An extensive history project involving Cleveland students was undertaken in 1949. The resulting publication, *The Duwamish Diary*, describes the development of schools in south Seattle. It refers to Cleveland as a symbol of progress because a high school had for so long been the dream of residents in this part of the city.

In fall 1957, the 7th and 8th grades were transferred to the new Asa Mercer Junior High School. This left Cleveland for the first time as a four-year high school. In 1958, a new wing was added to the north side of the school. It contained a metal shop, art room, and band and choir rooms. The school was enlarged again in 1970 when a new gymnasium and administrative rooms were added to the facility.

In 1979, when the school board was considering closing Cleveland, students gave Ray Imus a standing ovation when he came to a board meeting to speak against closure. In the late 1980s, Cleveland had the largest percentage of minority students in the district.



Cleveland, 1960 SPSA 012-17



Cleveland gymnasium, 1970 SPSA 012:10

Cleveland remains the smallest regular high school in the district. About half of the student body is Asian American. Recently the City of Seattle gave the school \$51,000 for a new rose and vegetable garden. A new \$200,000 aquaculture building was donated to the school so students can raise and sell fish, a program called “Fish and Roses.”