

# Cooper

Name:	<b>Frank B. Cooper Elementary School</b>	Enrollment:	379
Address:	1901 SW Genesee Street	Nickname:	Lions
Configuration:	K-5	Colors:	Blue and yellow



Cooper, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 216-118

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Name:	<b>Youngstown School</b>
Location:	Delridge Way & W Genesee
Building:	5-room wood
Architect:	n.a.
Site:	n.a.

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1907:	Opened
1908:	Annexed into Seattle School District
1917:	Closed
1929:	Building and portables demolished

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Settlement of the area west of Pigeon Point along a cove on Elliott Bay began in 1885 with the establishment of a sawmill. Early settlers called the cleared area Humphrey Settlement. In 1905, the Pacific Steel Company moved its mill there from Lake City. The location then became known as Youngstown after the hometown of William Pigott, the head of the mill. The mill company erected small houses for the new workers and a one-room school. Youngstown School stood on the tideflats and was reached by walking over pilings. On opening day a single teacher greeted 70 pupils. Quickly, a second room was added and another teacher hired.

In 1907, West Seattle residents voted to become part of Seattle. That same year, Youngstown School moved to a larger building on a new site. The handbell used to call students to the old building was preserved and used in the new school.

The community grew as more men were employed at the steel mill. Fisher Flour Mill, shipbuilding facilities, foundries, and other businesses soon joined the steel mill, and it was apparent that a larger school was needed.



Youngstown, ca. 1917 SPSA 080-1

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Name: **Youngstown School**  
 Location: 4408 Delridge Way SW  
 Building: 8-room brick  
 Architect: Edgar Blair  
 Site: 0.92 acres

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1917: Opened  
 1920: Site expanded to 2.24 acres  
 1929: Addition (Floyd A. Naramore)  
 1939: Renamed *Frank B. Cooper School* on February 15  
 1944: Addition (n.a.) opened in March  
 1989: Closed in June

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The design of the new brick building represented state-of-the-art school planning with a combined lunchroom-auditorium and home economics department. Prior to the building's completion, World War I broke out and hundreds more people moved into the community. By the time the building opened, it was overcrowded and the old frame building was also used along with a number of portables. Once again the original bell was moved to the new schoolhouse.

From 1911 to 1926, tiny Riverside School at Detroit between W Juneau and W Marginal Way served as an annex to Youngstown. The school was opened by Riverside School District in 1888. After being annexed into Seattle School District in 1908, it was used exclusively as an annex until its closure in 1926. Today it is one of the few remaining 19th century schoolhouses in Seattle.

Throughout the 1920s, Youngstown's student population continued to grow. Following the passage of a 1929 bond issue, the building was expanded with an addition blended into the 1917 structure. The new addition included six classrooms, two libraries, a gymnasium, and an auditorium-lunchroom. Rooms devoted to art, music, and shop reflected a new organization of the curriculum. Classes were held in the older building and portables during September as construction stretched on longer than anticipated.

The school was renamed the Frank B. Cooper School in 1939 to honor the man who served as superintendent of the Seattle School District from 1901 to 1922. Some community members favored the name change, feeling it was one way of ridding the neighborhood of its blue-collar image, while others regretted the loss of their community name.

During World War II, another influx of workers brought overcrowded conditions to the school. A wood frame structure, containing three classrooms, was added in 1944, paid for by the federal government. Hired as a 2nd grade teacher at Cooper in 1947, Thelma Dewitty became the first African American to teach in the district.

In 1952, the 7th and 8th grades were transferred from Cooper to



Cooper, ca. 1940 SPSA 216-1

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Name: **Riverside School**  
 Location: Detroit Avenue & W Juneau Street  
 Building: 2-room wood  
 Architect: n.a.  
 Site: 0.29 acres

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1888: Opened by Riverside School District  
 1908: Annexed into Seattle School District  
 1908–09: Annex to West Seattle  
 1909–11: Annex to South Seattle  
 1911–26: Annex to Youngstown  
 1926: Closed in June  
 n.a.: Rented as a residence  
 n.a.: Sold to renter; still a residence in 1950  
 By 1973: Used as a storage building

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Riverside, MOHAI 12,564

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Name: **Frank B. Cooper Elementary School**  
 Location: 1901 SW Genesee  
 Building: 23-room, masonry and metal  
 Architect: Tsang Partnership  
 Site: 14 acres

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1999: Opened in September

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one of two junior high schools in West Seattle, Denny or Madison. The loss of these grades, the elimination of housing projects, and a declining enrollment since the end of the war suggested there would be plenty of room at the school. This assumption proved to be incorrect as enrollment figures climbed, requiring the addition of two portable classrooms in 1958. In 1964, four special education classes were added. Enrollment peaked in the 1960s at about 780 students. By spring 1973, it had dropped to around 400. In 1975, a bilingual and newcomer program was added for students in grades K–6.

By 1983, Cooper again had a serious overcrowding problem with some classrooms and offices being shared. Some 528 children were crammed into the aging structure. Parents met with district officials and expressed their preference for relocation to Boren, located just over a mile to the south, which had closed as a junior high school in 1981. The proposal was rejected by the board in April 1984. That spring the bilingual/newcomer program was moved to Lafayette and Gatewood.

Finally, the Cooper building was deemed dangerous in an earthquake and the school was closed in 1989. Students and staff were sent to Boren as a temporary home while awaiting a new school.

Planning for the new building began in 1996. The district partnered with the city to purchase a new site atop Pigeon Hill. The city plans to develop parkland adjacent to the school.

The new school has second-story bay windows, pitched roofs, and garden spaces, which take advantage of the park-like setting. The building was designed for 535 students. Classroom wings radiate out from a centralized library on the second floor and administrative offices on the first floor. Included are a computer lab, an art-and-science room, childcare facility, gymnasium, multipurpose room, and covered outdoor play area.



Cooper, 1960 SPSA 216-3