

Kimball

Name: Captain George W. Kimball Elementary School	Enrollment: 426
Address: 3200 23rd Avenue S	Nickname: Cougars
Configuration: K-5	Colors: Red, black & white



Kimball, ca. 1975 SPSA 288-3

During World War I, when the shipbuilding industry was attracting an influx of new residents to Seattle, there was a perceived need for another school on Beacon Hill. In October 1918, the Seattle School Board decided to build an emergency annex school to relieve overcrowding at neighboring schools, like York School (see Muir) and Beacon Hill School. Robert Fulton School was one of five “Liberty Buildings” erected by the district (see Bagley).

A 250-unit apartment house, which had been proposed for the neighborhood, was never built, and Fulton operated for just three academic years before it closed in June 1922. The school varied in configuration, from two to four classes for grades 1-4 or 1-5, with a special education class included in the final two years. In 1922 and for many years after, the Seattle Parks Department leased the site for a playfield named for Judge Roland H. Denny, an early advocate of youth activities.

Starting in 1960, the site became home to Beacon Hill Annex, an all-portable school, with eight portables. By 1961 there were 11 portable classrooms, a double portable serving as a lunchroom and auditorium, and a portable office.

By 1963, 300 students attended the Beacon Hill Annex, and it was deemed large enough to be an independent school. It was time to select a proper name, and in January 1964 the school was named after Captain George W. Kimball from the Seattle Police Department. Kimball organized the first Junior Safety Patrol in Seattle in 1928 and was director of Junior Safety of the Seattle Police Department from 1931 to 1961. Kimball received national recognition for his innovative work with school safety patrols, and practices he developed have been adopted and followed by police departments throughout the world.

Details:

Name: **Robert Fulton School**
Location: 24th Avenue S & Hanford
Building: 6-room wood “Liberty Building”
Architect: n.a.
Site: 2.56 acres

1918: Named on November 7
1919: Opened as an emergency annex
1922: Closed in June
by 1932: Building demolished
1946-69: Site leased to Seattle
Parks Department

Details:

Name: **Beacon Hill Annex**
Location: 2320 S Horton Street
Building: Portables
Architect: n.a.
Site: 2.56 acres

1960: Opened as annex to Beacon
Hill in September
1964: Renamed Captain George
W. Kimball on January 15
1971: Closed

In the late 1960s, plans began for the construction of a permanent building for Kimball, and the long-term lease to the parks department was cancelled in 1969. Because the new facility was not ready at the start of the 1970-71 school year, 225 students and eight teachers were temporarily housed at Beacon Hill. The new school was constructed with an “open concept” design and opened in February 1971.

Kimball was built with a limited number of classrooms, in anticipation that 5th and 6th graders would be moved into middle schools as part of the district’s desegregation plan. When that plan didn’t materialize, it was necessary to place Kimball’s 5th and 6th grade classes in portables on the lower campus until June 1974. They moved from portable to portable for classes in different subjects. The kindergarten started in the new building but, because of noise from traffic in the hallway going in and out of the office, that program asked to move into a portable.

Because of the rich multicultural makeup of the neighborhood, all annual events at Kimball had international themes. In September 1971, Kimball became the forerunner of the Voluntary Transfer Program when the parents of 20 pupils from Fauntleroy School decided they wanted their children to be exposed to Kimball’s multicultural environment. These dedicated parents carpooled their children to and from school each day. The next year the program was expanded, with 28 West Seattle children coming to Kimball from Gatewood, Fauntleroy, Roxhill, Hughes, and Alki, and 10 Kimball students going to Fauntleroy and Viewlands.

Fittingly, Kimball became the second school in Seattle to receive the Seattle Police Department’s Award of Excellence for its Safety Patrol in 1973 and has won the award many times since.



Kimball, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 288-15



Kimball, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 288-16

In 1990, Kimball hosted a group of Russian students in conjunction with the Goodwill Games held in Seattle that summer. Eight Kimball students and three staff made a reciprocal visit that fall.

Kimball's librarian, Bill Towner, was selected as Washington Library Media Specialist of the Year for 1993. Towner was instrumental in building the school's multicultural media collection and helped Kimball get chosen as the Washington state site for the Technology and Teaching Project.

An addition to the school building was completed in March 1998. Designed by Kubota Kato Chin Architects, the addition included four new classrooms and an art/science and kiln room.

In February 2019, the BEX V levy passed; it included a project for a new Kimball school to be built on the same site. Demolition of the old building began in 2021 and students were relocated to Van Asselt as their interim site.

The new three-story school, which is scheduled to open in 2023, will provide the space and resources for 650 students. The design of the approximately 95,000-square-foot building was organized into learning clusters with classrooms tailored around learning common areas.

When the school is complete, the all-weather surface play area will be slightly smaller than the area defined by the current education specifications due to site constraints. The design is intended to preserve as much as possible of two existing exceptional tree groves in environmentally critical areas on the site. The school will feature a Family Engagement Center, which will be a space for parents and the school community to meet, collaborate, and host groups. Ideally, this space will bring home and school environments closer together, and it was designed in a way to allow it to be adapted for flex classroom use if needed. Extra office space for language support staff also was included in the school design.

Details:

Name: **Kimball Elementary School**
 Location: 3200 23rd Avenue S
 Building: 1-story brick
 Architect: Durham, Anderson & Freed
 Site: 4.9 acres

1971: Opened February 22
 1998: Addition (Kubota Kato Chin Architects; BEX II)
 2015: Seismic upgrades
 2021: School closed for demolition and construction; Students relocated to Old Van Asselt

Details:

Name: **Kimball Elementary School**
 Location: 3200 23rd Avenue S
 Building: 3-story
 Architect: NAC Architecture
 Site: 4.9 acres

2023: New school opened (BEX V)