**Cole School**

The Boise valley was more of a rural community in the 19th century. In this time, the area to the west of Boise City was known as “the Bluffs”. As the city began to expand, a new school was to be built in the bluffs. Mr. and Mrs. Orrie Cole donated the two-acre lot for the intended development of the school. Located four miles outside of town, the school was constructed by the members of the local community. At the time of its opening, the school employed only one teacher, a Cynthia Mann who taught 1st-8th grade. A rather small operation, the schoolhouse had only one room, and would prove to be too little of a building. In 1902, a new school was built and the old school was moved to a location in NW Boise, where it stood until 1984, when a fire took it down. The new school held two floors and the downstairs was the first to gain usage in 1903. By 1906, the entirety of the building was in use, with 3 rooms for classes and the fourth for town meetings. The new building served the community well until 1934 when more space would once again be necessary. Four more rooms would be added in addition to a gymnasium. More changes to the school included the stuccoing of the main building to match the gym, a tunnel that connected the basement of the main building to the gym (1941), seven classes and an office (1952), four temporary classrooms in the gym (1960) to handle overcrowding in anticipation of a bond being passed for new schools, and restoration of the old cupola and new roof on the main building (1991). The Cole School was annexed into the Boise District in 1948 amid a growing Bench area. The School became the center of a controversy in 2008 when the school was shut down and plans for its demolition began. The Cole School was part of citywide plan to move children into newer facilities; several schools were to be torn down in the development. This was met with fierce protest from historical societies and the general citizenry as well. The Boise Weekly, a local newspaper, reported the sad news to the local folk: [Cole School Demolition Project](http://www.boiseweekly.com/CityDesk/archives/2009/09/04/cole-school-demolition-protest). The Idaho Statesman (another local paper) brought in the voices of Idaho Preservationists on the subject: [Cole, Franklin Schools in Boise to be Torn Down](http://www.preservationidaho.org/advocacy/current-initiatives/cole-franklin-schools/statesman-article-08/11/09). Despite strong protests, the school was still torn down in 2009. Picture found here: [Cole School Demolition](http://www.boisedailyphoto.com/2009/11/cole-school-demolition.html)

**Resources**:

[Cole School Demolition Project](http://www.boiseweekly.com/CityDesk/archives/2009/09/04/cole-school-demolition-protest)

[Cole, Franklin Schools in Boise to be Torn Down](http://www.preservationidaho.org/advocacy/current-initiatives/cole-franklin-schools/statesman-article-08/11/09)

[Cole School Demolition](http://www.boisedailyphoto.com/2009/11/cole-school-demolition.html)

[Independent School District of Boise City](http://www.sd01.k12.id.us/schools/oldsch.html)