Castle Rock, Washington

Castle Rock School District is located in the heart of Washington State timber country, between the Cowlitz River and Interstate 5, at the western foot of Mt. St. Helens. Castle Rock, 134 miles south of Seattle and 63 miles north of Portland, Oregon, is the northernmost city in Cowlitz County, with a population of about 2,000 in town and about 8,000 additional residents living in the surrounding area. The Spirit Lake Memorial Highway connects the city to the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument and breathtaking views of the famous volcano and surrounding recreation areas.

The town’s namesake, a 190-foot-high volcanic land formation resembling a castle, was a landmark for Cowlitz Indians and Hudson’s Bay Company traders and other river travelers as early as 1832.

Castle Rock prospered as a Cowlitz River steamboat port and trading center for valley farms. The community became the center of a rich timber industry; logging and sawmill operations were for many generations the strength and principal source of the area’s economy.

Castle Rock is centered primarily on a donation land claim of an early pioneer family who settled here in 1852. The community was founded in 1883, one of the oldest territories in the State of Washington. The city was platted in 1888 and incorporated in 1890. The landmark that gave the city its name remains today; the city has preserved this site and visitors can hike to the top of ‘The Rock’.

Students have been attending school in Castle Rock classrooms since soon after the town was founded in the 1880s. The schools became organized into an official school district in 1918. Today Castle Rock School District serves approximately 1,350 students in three schools: Castle Rock Elementary, Castle Rock Middle School, and Castle Rock High School. Like most rural communities, the schools are the hub of activity. Student athletic and artistic performances are sources of pride and entertainment for the entire community. The middle school mascot is the pirate and the high school's mascot is the rocket. Castle Rock school colors are red, white and black.