

Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study



Blaine School, 12th Avenue and 3rd Street N. (1893; razed)

Prepared for the
Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission
Minneapolis, Minnesota

by

Carole Zellie
Landscape Research LLC
St. Paul, Minnesota

April 2005

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Contents

Maps

Map 1. Minneapolis Public Schools, 1883-1962	6
Map 2. Distribution of Public Schools, 1931	34

Introduction	1
<i>Sources</i>	2
<i>Historic Context Summary</i>	6
<i>Table 1: Property Inventory List</i>	7
1.	
Public Schools in the Late 19th Century: 1849-1899	9
<i>Early Buildings</i>	
<i>Minneapolis Board of Education</i>	
<i>The Building Boom</i>	
<i>Progressive Education</i>	
<i>Table 1a: Extant Schools</i>	
2.	
Early Twentieth-Century Public Schools: 1900-1915	13
<i>The Modern School</i>	
<i>Manual Training</i>	
<i>Planning the Modern City</i>	
<i>Elementary Schools</i>	
<i>Open-Air Schools</i>	
<i>Portables</i>	
<i>Central High School</i>	
<i>Table 2a: Extant Schools</i>	
3.	
Public Schools from World War I to the Great Depression: 1916-1930	21
<i>School Program Development</i>	
<i>The Five-Year Plan</i>	
<i>The Bureau of Buildings</i>	
<i>The California Plan</i>	
<i>Unit Construction and Composite Plans</i>	
<i>Evolving National Standards</i>	
<i>Elementary School Design</i>	
<i>Junior High Design</i>	
<i>High Schools</i>	
<i>The Public School Exterior</i>	
<i>Table 3a: Extant Schools</i>	

Contents, continued

4. Public Schools from the Great Depression through World War II: 1931-1949	33
--	-----------

School Program Development
Planning Studies
Depression-era School Design
Table 4a: Extant Schools

5. Post-War Period: 1950-1962 and Beyond	39
---	-----------

School Planning
Design Trends
Table 5a: Extant Schools

Conclusion	43
-------------------	-----------

Sources Consulted	44
--------------------------	-----------

Notes	47
--------------	-----------

Appendix	49
-----------------	-----------

<i>Photo Survey</i> Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study Property List / 2004-5	A-1
---	-----

Charts
“Minneapolis Public Schools 1851-2000” (Minneapolis Board of Education)
“School Buildings and Architects” (Minneapolis Board of Education)

Map
Minneapolis Public Schools, 1883-1962 (Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, 2005)

INTRODUCTION



Humboldt School (1876, razed)

This historic context study spans more than a hundred years and the approximately 140 buildings constructed, acquired, maintained, expanded, and sometimes removed by the Minneapolis Board of Education between 1849 and 1962. The timeframe extends from the first public schools constructed in Minneapolis to the expansion of elementary and junior high schools for the post-World War II baby-boom generation.

Historic contexts provide a framework for evaluating historic resources relative to specific themes, timeframes, and locations and are useful for many types of preservation-planning activity. The development of public-school building types is a primary focus of this study, as school types reflected national trends in educational building design as well as the attention of local architectural firms and the Board of Education's own architects. While public schools have played a great role in the development of the city's neighborhoods and in fact share their names with many of them, this study does not analyze school histories or the variety of local events that have taken place in the facilities. Instead it examines the creation and maintenance of the school plant as evidenced by Minneapolis Board of Education policy and building design and describes the relationship of each remaining property to advances in school construction and program development. The historic context narrative includes an inventory of existing schools, including those now in private ownership. Inventory forms for all properties are on file with the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.

Sources

The records of the Minneapolis Board of Education at the Minnesota Historical Society, inventory files at the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, newspaper microfilm and photo collections at the Minnesota Historical Society, and building permit index cards and clipping files at the Minneapolis Public Library were among the chief resources consulted. Minneapolis Board of Education Facilities Department staff made plans, photos, and other records available. The charts compiled by the Minneapolis Board of Education are a standard reference for construction dates and are included in the Appendix. (Construction dates and designer attributions sometimes vary among sources.) Historic photographs used in this report are from the Minneapolis Board of Education and the Minnesota Historical Society.

Historic Context Summary

Between 1849 and 1962, the Minneapolis Board of Education developed a comprehensive design program that is still reflected in 50 remaining elementary, junior high, and high schools, the oldest dating from 1883. Especially with the efforts of the Architectural Department (Bureau of Buildings) created in 1915, Minneapolis schools were planned to reflect changes in national curriculum standards, a diverse student population that included many immigrants, and advances in architectural technology. The buildings were designed to be attractive edifices but foremost to be efficient, cost-effective shelter for an increasingly complex educational program.



Opening day at Howe School, October 24, 1927

Nearly 30 of the 50 remaining schools date from the period 1910 to 1930, when student enrollment rose from more than 45,000 to 88,000. New mandates during this period included fireproof concrete construction and classrooms designed for specialized use. Natural light and ventilation, steam heating, and modern sanitation systems were of the highest priority and the subject of well-published research. School design reflected the pressure of surging enrollments, rapidly changing educational programs encompassing academic and vocational subjects, and expanded community use of the facilities. The traditional exterior design of early-20th-century schools often disguised the state-of-the-art planning within, while post-World War II construction embraced principles of modern architecture with new glass and steel curtain walls and sprawling one-story plans. Planners of post-World War II schools scrutinized the changing urban environment around new and old buildings and in some cases created community parks around the buildings.

The designers of the 20th-century public-school building conceived it as a work in progress, and change and alteration were an expected part of the building's future. The standard plans developed by the Bureau of Buildings provided for fairly seamless interior and exterior additions. A significant number of schools still show the intentions of that system despite generations of use.

This study examines the development of the school plant through five periods. Each period is associated with rapidly changing school enrollments, curricula, and programs as well as a variety of architects, design approaches, and new materials in an evolving urban environment. The summaries below preview the themes of the context narrative that follows.

1. Minneapolis Public Schools in the Late-19th Century: 1849-1899



Central High School (1878, Long and Haglin, razed)

The late-19th century encompassed the creation of the Minneapolis public-school system and a school plant that included 60 schools and more than 36,000 students by 1900. Only four schools survive from this period; three are now housing, and only Pratt School remains in educational use.

A building boom between 1880 and 1895 produced 35 schools, including three high schools. While most new buildings were intended for graded elementary use and had generally identical classrooms, the new high-school curriculum required buildings with specialized rooms. By 1898, most schools were supplied with indoor plumbing. Fire-prone, heavy timber-frame construction was standard, as were a succession of additions and remodelings. A. M. Radcliffe, Long and Haglin, W. B. Dunnell, W. S. Pardee, and E. S. Stebbins were among architects hired by the Board of Education, and their designs included Italianate and Richardsonian “palaces” with multiple towers and complex rooflines, as well as simple frame and masonry buildings.

2. Early-20th-Century Public Schools: 1900-1915



Central High School (1913, William B. Ittner, razed)

The total of number of public schools reached 76 by the time World War I halted construction. About 23 new schools were erected between 1900 and 1915; six remain, including five in educational use.

New elementary and high schools benefited from an advancing educational curriculum and improved architectural standards, and a focus on fireproof reinforced-concrete construction and modern heating and ventilation systems. New types of programs and specialized rooms were introduced, including kindergartens, manual and domestic education areas, and gymnasiums. The school board employed demographic study to plan future location and space needs, and an emphasis on safety and hygiene was reflected in interior design. Tuberculosis epidemics necessitated development of open-air models and a

new emphasis on window design. Most of the early-20th-century schools were designed by E. S. Stebbins and many were based on an I or H shape with a prominent central entry. Stebbins's Bancroft School (1912), was the result of an architectural competition, and solidified a taste for Collegiate Gothic and other English styles. It was followed by the monumental Central High School (1913, razed) and Barton, Fulton, and Lowry schools (1915), all designed by William B. Ittner of St. Louis. In 1915, the board consolidated its design and construction efforts with a new Architectural Division and appointed R.V. L. Haxby as its first architect.

3. Minneapolis Public Schools from World War I to the Great Depression: 1916-1930



Sanford Junior High (1926, Bureau of Buildings)

Minneapolis public-school enrollment rose from 54,000 in 1916 to nearly 88,000 by 1930. A second building boom during the 1920s produced more about 30 new schools and as many additions. By 1930 the school plant included 111 buildings, ranging from obsolescent 1870s grade schools to new state-of-the-art junior highs. Today, 23 schools remain from the period 1916-1930. Only two are not in educational use.

The Architectural Division was reorganized as the Bureau of Buildings in 1919 and was headed by engineer Edward H. Enger. The bureau designed and contracted all new schools and additions until about 1934, when its staff was greatly reduced. The bureau oversaw the creation of a number of standard building plans, including the composite grade-school plans of 1919 and 1924 (the latter known as “Plan #3”) and the development of a standard junior-high-school plan used for 11 buildings. The bureau also constructed two open-air “California Plan” schools, at Hiawatha (1916), and Longfellow (1918). The standard plans allowed for cost-effective additions that could often be accomplished with little negative visual impact on the older building. Between 1922 and 1925 four high schools were erected; all are extant, and three are in educational use. The bureau exclusively employed Collegiate Gothic and Renaissance Revival styles, with Bedford limestone details concentrated primarily at the entrances and window openings. On some, recessed lancet arches were set into projecting porticos and pavilions decorated with stone quoins and pilasters; spandrels were trimmed with grapevines and carved ornament. Others featured parapets and walls decorated with tapestry brick and glazed tile. Portable frame buildings were used to adjust for fluctuating school enrollment.

4. Minneapolis Public Schools from the Great Depression through World War II: 1931-1949



Sheridan Junior High School (1932, Bureau of Buildings)

By the early 1930s, Minneapolis public schools were evenly distributed across the city. With slowing immigration and birth rates, student enrollment peaked at 90,073 in 1933 and declined to 67,020 in 1949. The number of school buildings also declined, from a high of 112 in 1934 to a steady 93 through most of the 1940s. Only seven new buildings were erected between 1931 and 1949. All remain; only the former Miller Vocational High School is not in educational use.

Depression-era school programs and construction were assisted by PWA funding. Some public schools had a new look, with the Streamlined Moderne introduced at Miller Vocational High (1931) and Sheridan Junior High (1932). The well-tested Plan #3 introduced in the early 1920s and the Collegiate Gothic exterior, however, were repeated at Morris Park School (1939). The Collegiate Gothic was again employed for its 1953 addition, resulting in a building that looks like others completed more than a decade before.

5. Postwar Period: 1950-1962 and Beyond



Kenny School (1954)

The postwar baby boom pushed Minneapolis school enrollment to 75,156 in 1960. By 1962, the Board of Education embarked on a program of school expansion that included nine new schools and additions to at least 20 others. Eight of the schools erected in this period remain, and all are in educational use. (Two private schools constructed in the 1950s were later acquired by the board for public school use.)

While the board struggled to improve obsolescent schools—including some dating from the late 19th century—the new schools included building technology that relied on steel-and-concrete structures and glass-curtain walls. National models for elementary schools called for one-story, open plans, with long wings connected to a central administrative core. Minneapolis architectural firms such as Thorshov and

Cerny and Magney, Tusler and Setter were hired by the board. School planners collaborated with city planners to site the schools, and the Minneapolis park and school boards jointly developed Waite, Kenney, and Armatage Parks. The number of schools remained steady throughout the 1960s at about 99, while planners looked ahead to school and neighborhood changes that included urban renewal, freeway development, and desegregation efforts.

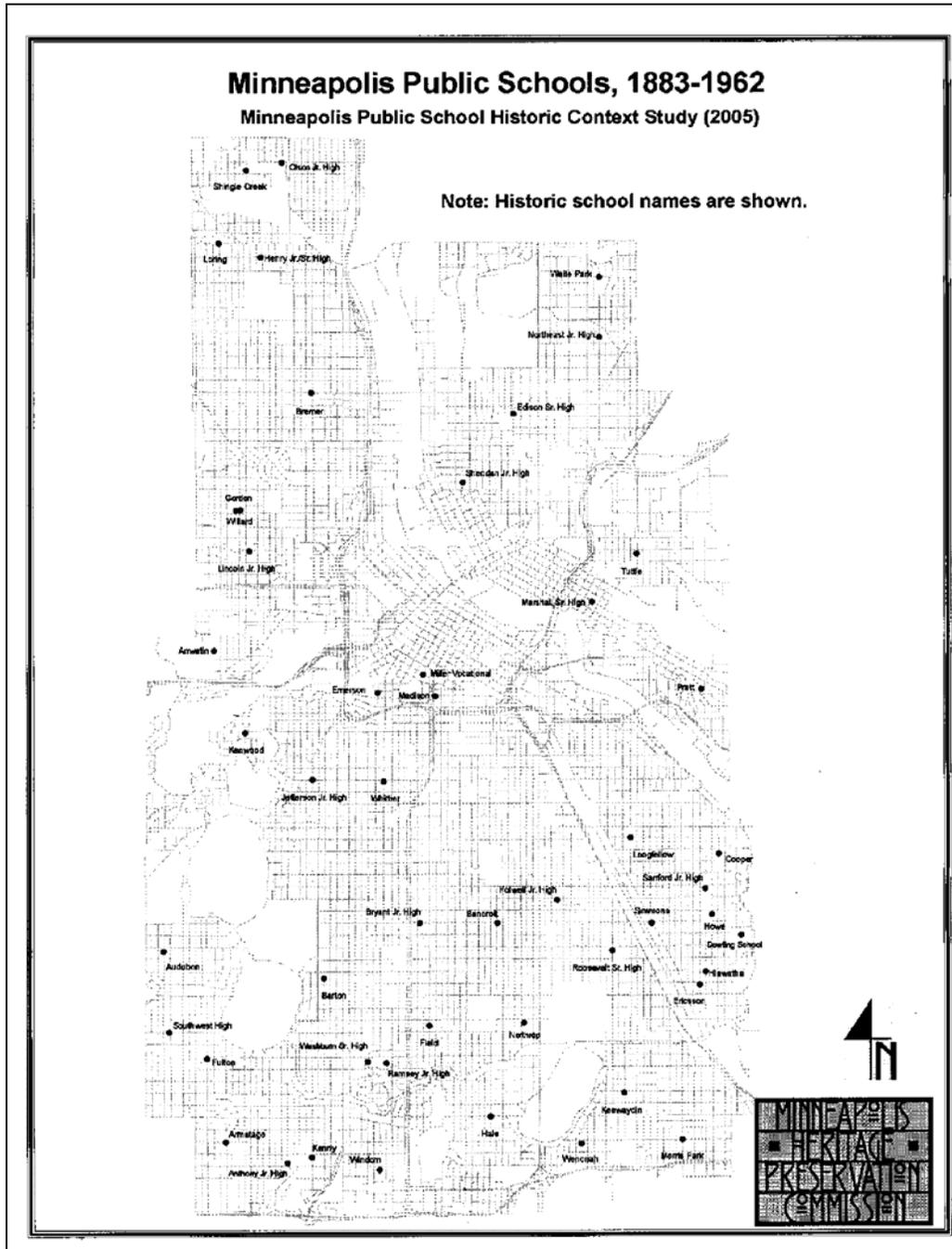


Table 1. Minneapolis Public Schools: Property Inventory List

Source: Minneapolis Board of Education; all are extant

Pre-1900 (Elementary/Graded)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Bremer	1214 Lowry Ave. N.	1887/10/16	W. S. Pardee	Housing
Madison	501 E. 15 th St.	1887	W. S. Pardee	Housing
Pratt	66 Malcolm Ave. S.E.	1898/06/26	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Whittier	2609 Blaisdell Ave. S.	1883/88/03/10/23	W. S. Pardee	Housing

1900-1915 (Elementary/Graded)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Bancroft	1315 E. 38 th St.	1912/20/66	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Barton	4247 Colfax Ave. S.	1915/23/72/1990s	Wm. B. Ittner; Stebbins & Haxby	Educational
Fulton	4912 Vincent Ave. S.	1915/22/66/69	Wm. B. Ittner; Stebbins & Haxby	Educational
Kenwood	2013 Penn Ave. S.	1908/23/65/81	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Simmons	3800 Minnehaha Ave S.	1905/07/10/14	E. S. Stebbins	Housing
Tuttle	1042 18 th Ave. S.E.	1910/26/65/80/81	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Willard	1643 Queen Ave. N.	1910/20	E. S. Stebbins	Educational

1916-1930 Elementary Schools

* Bureau of Buildings E.H. Enger, supervising architect, unless noted

**E.H. Enger and Paul H. Perkins

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Audubon	4030 Chowen Ave S.	1924/54	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Cooper	3329 W. 44 th St.	1923/57	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Michael Dowling	3900 W. River Pkwy	1924/36/61	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Emerson	1421 Spruce Place	1925/26	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Ericsson	4315 31 st Ave. S.	1916/51/80	R. V. L. Haxby	Educational
Field	4645 4 th Ave. S.	1921/24/64/71/74	McElroy & Van Antwerp	Educational
Hale	1220 E. 54 th St.	1930/53/74/89	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Hiawatha	4211 42 nd Ave. N.	1916/23	R. V. L. Haxby	Educational
Howe	3733 43 rd Ave. S.	1927	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Keewaydin	5209 30 th Ave. S.	1928	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Longfellow	3017 E. 31 st St.	1918	R. V. L. Haxby	Educational
Loring	4401 Sheridan Ave. N.	1928/77	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Northrop	1611 E. 46 th St.	1923/50	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Windom	5821 Wentworth Ave. S.	1920/23/25 (acquired 1927)	Stebbins & Haxby	Educational

1916-1930 Junior High Schools

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Bryant Jr. High	310 E. 38 th St.	1922	Bureau of Buildings*	Sabathani Community Center
Henry Jr. High	4320 Newton Ave. N.	1926/29/28/39/56/77	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Jefferson Jr. High	2526 Emerson Ave. S.	1923	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Lincoln Jr. High	2131 12 th Ave. N.	1923/66	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Sanford Jr. High	3524 42 nd Ave. S.	1926/60	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational

1916-1930 High Schools

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Edison	700 22 nd Ave. N. E.	1922/66/72	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Roosevelt	4029 28 th Ave. S.	1922/50/58/66/68	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Marshall (also Jr. High)	1313 5 th St. S.E.	1924	Bureau of Buildings*	Offices
Washburn	201 W. 49 th St.	1925/66-7	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational

Table 1. Minneapolis Public Schools: Extant Property Inventory List
Continued

1931-1949 (all types)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Folwell Jr. High	3611 20 th Ave. S.	1931/37	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Miller Vocational	1101 3 rd Ave. S.	1932/40/55	Bureau of Buildings**	Offices
Morris Park Elementary	3810 E. 56 th St.	1939/53	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Ramsey Jr. High	1 W. 49 th St.	1931	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Sheridan Jr. High	1201 University Ave. N.E.	1932/67	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Southwest Jr. and High	4600 Beard Ave. S.	1940/42/56/68	Bureau of Buildings; Enger with Lang & Raugland	Educational

1950-1962 Elementary and Junior High Schools (all types)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Anthony Jr. High	5757 Irving Ave. S.	1958	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational
Anwatin Jr. High	252-54 Vincent Ave. N.	1950 (acquired 1974)	B.J. Knowles (St. Paul)	Educational
Armatage Elementary	2501 W. 56 th St.	1952/54/56	Magney, Tusler & Setter; Perkins & Will (Chicago)	Educational
Kenny Elementary	5720 Emerson Ave. S.	1954/57/62	Haxby, Bissell & Belair	Educational
Gordon Elementary	1615 Queen Ave. N.	1950 (acquired 1967)	Lang & Raugland	Educational
Northeast Jr. High	2955 Hayes St. N.E.	1956/59	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational
Olson Jr. High	5012 James Ave. N.	1962	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational
Shingle Creek Elementary	5000 Oliver Ave. N.	1958/59-60	Eliot Noyes (CT); Shifflet, Backstrom (Mpls)	Educational
Waite Park Elementary	1800 34 th Ave. N.E.	1950	Magney, Tusler & Setter	Educational
Wenonah Elementary	5625 23 rd Ave. S.	1952/58	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational

Building Use

Total remaining schools, 1883-1962	50
Total in public educational use	43
Total in office use	2
Total in housing use	4
Other use	1

Chapter 1

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE LATE-19TH CENTURY: 1849-1899

The Territorial Assembly established public education in Minnesota in 1849, and common schools were provided to all between the ages of four and 21 years. By 1861, there were 466 public schools serving a state population of about 170,000 in more than 70 districts across the state. Most provided only basic elementary education. In many farming communities, and schools were operated only three months out of the year, but in 1887, a five-month school session was required of all districts receiving state funds.¹

Early School Buildings in Minneapolis and St. Anthony

Public-school districts were created in the early settlements of Minneapolis and St. Anthony, and small private schools supplemented the first attempts to establish public schools. In 1849, a “small board shanty” housed the first school in St. Anthony, under the supervision of Miss Elizabeth Backus.² After holding classes in several temporary locations, Minneapolis founded a graded school and opened the Union School in 1858. The two-story Greek Revival building housed four classrooms. It was destroyed by fire in 1864, and in 1866 it was replaced by the mansard-roofed Washington School (A. M. Radcliffe, architect).

Across the river in St. Anthony, the wood-frame Second Ward (Everett) School was completed in 1851 and replaced by a brick building in 1871. Other eastside schools were the Third Ward (Winthrop, 1868; R. S. Alden) and the Fourth Ward (Marcy, 1872). In 1872, St. Anthony and Minneapolis were consolidated with one municipal government, but separate school boards for the east and west divisions were maintained. The west division erected the Adams School in 1874.³



Union School (1858)



Washington School (1866)



Winthrop School (1868)



From left: Everett School (1871, razed), Adams School (1874, razed), Jefferson School (1868, destroyed by fire 1877, razed)



Minneapolis Board of Education

The Minneapolis Board of Education was created in 1878 as a seven-member body, with each member serving staggered six-year terms. The early board dissolved the east and west divisions and oversaw 12 school buildings with an enrollment of 5,215. It faced a rapidly expanding urban population, the need to obtain state aid, the creation of a high-school program, and the introduction of domestic science, manual

training, and industrial arts. The board soon embraced new educational philosophies that recognized the individualized needs and interests of students, and many programs including naturalization and adult education. State approval for the issuance of district school bonds had been granted in 1866, securing a source for school funding.⁴

State authorization for the creation of high schools had progressed slowly, and a high-school education was not easy to obtain in late-19th-century Minneapolis. In 1860, Minnesota's first high-school program was founded in St. Anthony, but by 1870 there were only 17 high-school programs across the state, and most were of three years or less. State aid for high schools was established in 1878 with the creation of the State High School Board. Although a standardized high-school curriculum was available in Minneapolis by 1872, only city residents could attend tuition-free.⁵



Central High School (1878, razed)

School construction during this period was overseen by a small group of local architects, and some of the city's largest post-Civil War schools were almost undistinguishable from courthouses and other public buildings. Most notably, Central High (1878; Long and Haglin) had thick, rusticated stone walls, picturesque towers, and towers and turrets clad in polychrome slate. Despite often impressive exteriors, the timber structures, heavy use, and rudimentary heating systems made such schools highly fire-prone. The typical school interior plan was square, with poor ventilation. Classrooms were arranged along corridors, with few specialized rooms. Central was among early schools furnished with laboratories and other specialized rooms.

Additions also reshaped many of the buildings, as described in a typical case at Madison School:

A schoolhouse of four rooms was erected in 1870, and a wing was added, in 1874, and a second wing in 1880. This was a brick building, two stories high, with eight study rooms. In 1887 one wing of two rooms was torn down and a modern eight-room addition built at a cost of \$22,600. This made a fourteen-room building. In 1889 the six rooms of the old part were torn down and twelve rooms were added, making a twenty-room building at a cost complete of \$30,000.

Board of Education Annual Report (1900), 40

The Building Boom

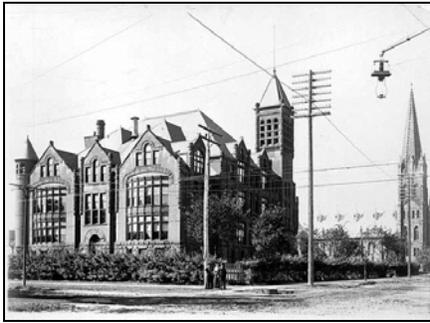
In the period from 1880 to 1895 the city's boundaries expanded in every direction. In 1887 the south city limit reached E. 54th Street, and the north boundary was set at 53rd Avenue N. With housing construction there was a steady demand for new public schools. Student enrollment rose from 6,142 to 29,623 and about 35 new schools were constructed by 1895.



Longfellow School (1882, razed)



Second Washington School (1888, razed)

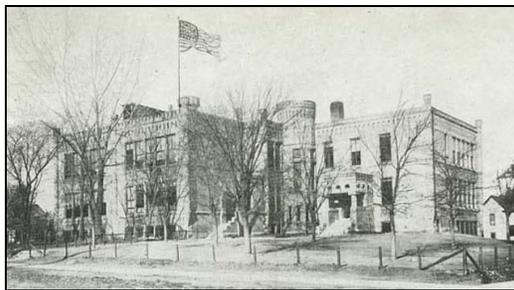


South High School (1892, razed)

In 1887, a program to improve school facilities was launched. Minneapolis architect Walter Stone Pardee designed several buildings that featured a rectangular central block with shallow wings and provided improved light and ventilation. Despite the fortress-like exterior with corner tourelles, towers, and cornices evident at Bremer, Greeley (razed), and the second Everett (razed), these generally simplified buildings provided contrast to some of the bulk and more elaborate features of the previous generation. The heavy-arched Richardsonian Romanesque Style influenced Pardee's other schools, including Madison (1887).



Madison School (1887)



Bremer School (1887)



Everett School (ca. 1888, razed)



Greeley School (1888, razed)

Progressive Education

The early Minneapolis Board of Education was influenced by national education reform that would have its greatest impact on building design after the turn of the century. Faced with rapid and diverse urban population growth by the end of the 19th century, reformers sought to change the old school models and make public education widely available. Beginning in the 1890s, the Progressive Education Movement promoted child-centered education, social reconstructionism, citizen participation in all spheres of life, and democratization of public institutions.⁶ Progressive educators believed that a new education program could play an important role in transforming a society of greed, individualism, waste and corruption for one based on compassion, humanism and equality. Francis Parker, John Dewey, and the influential Laboratory School at the University of Chicago promoted the idea that students be independent and creative thinkers. This was a departure from previous authoritarian models based on memorization.



From left, Douglas School (1894, W. B. Dunnell), the first Bryant School (1898, E. S. Stebbins), and Pratt School (1898, E. S. Stebbins). Bryant and Pratt, along with Simmons (1905) and Kenwood (1908) were among the last built with pitched roofs.

In 1898 the board appointed Edward S. Stebbins as its chief designer, and he authored most new buildings and additions for more than a decade. Some of Stebbins’s elementary school designs were based on a main classroom block with short wings, and prominent hip or gable roofs decorated with heavy cornices and cupolas, while others utilized a square plan. By 1910, Stebbins abandoned pitched roofs and complex exteriors for simplified Classical Revival and Collegiate Gothic modes.

A native of Boston, Stebbins (1854-1934) studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and worked briefly for McKim, Mead and White before establishing a solo practice in Minneapolis in 1881. In 1913, he partnered with Robert V. L. Haxby. Stebbins and Haxby continued to work for the board through the early 1920s.⁷

Although outside the scope of this study, it should be noted that many parochial and private schools also offered elementary and secondary education. The Catholic church created a complete educational system by the turn of the century, and nine of the city’s parishes supported schools for approximately 5,000 students. The Minneapolis Academy and Stanley Hall were among the city’s leading private preparatory schools.

Table 1a. Pre-1900 Public Schools (extant)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Bremer	1214 Lowry Ave. N.	1887/10/16	W. S. Pardee	Housing
Madison	501 E. 15 th St.	1887	W. S. Pardee	Housing
Pratt	66 Malcolm Ave. S.E.	1898/06/26	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Whittier	2609 Blaisdell Ave. S.	1883/88/03/10/23	W. S. Pardee	Housing

Chapter 2

EARLY-20TH-CENTURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: 1900-1915

During the earlier years of our city's growth, lack of funds necessitated the obtaining of the maximum amount of room at the minimum of cost. With the growth of our city, improved character of our homes, together with modern ideas of "safety first, permanency, sanitation, and efficiency," we have been obliged to construct buildings that necessarily cost more money.

Board of Education Annual Report (1912-13), 9

In 1900, public-school enrollment reached 36,166 and 60 schools served the Minneapolis population of 202,718. Approximately 23 new school buildings were completed between 1900 and 1915, with construction halted during World War I. Only six remain; five are in educational use.

A proposal to create ungraded rooms in the larger schools to provide more individual instruction—primarily for non-English-speaking students—was first developed at the Adams School.⁸ In 1900 the board placed its high schools on the state-aid list and stopped charging tuition for nonresidents. Two years later, the Minnesota Compulsory Education Law raised the age of compulsory attendance to 16.

Teacher qualifications were steadily upgraded. By 1909, Minneapolis public school teachers (nearly all of whom were female) were required to complete high school and also graduate from a two-year accredited normal school.



Dedication of Marcy School, 1908 (E .S. Stebbins, razed)

By 1910 the number of public schools rose to 65 and the number of students to 45,144. The Minneapolis school plant included buildings remaining from some of the earliest construction, as well as eight new schools added between 1907 and 1910: Penn, Columbus, Pillsbury, West High, Marcy, Johnson, Willard, and Tuttle. (Only Willard and Tuttle remain). A new generation was begun with Bancroft, Barton, and Fulton (all extant) as well as Central and North High Schools opened between 1912 and 1915. Brick exteriors, reinforced-concrete fireproof construction, and features such as modern heating and ventilation systems with automatic temperature control became standard. New requirements imposed by the state legislature, such as a ban on basement rooms used as classrooms, launched building campaigns focused on compliance and upgrading.⁹

The Modern School: "The Physical Plant as the Basis of Successful School Practice"

Across the country, educational reformers and commissions—especially those affected by state legislation such as that for school consolidation—were increasingly emphasizing the physical plant as the basis of successful school practice. National architectural research and publication increasingly influenced every

aspect of the school building. These efforts were not yet coordinated with national and state building codes, however. No single school type was advertised as exemplary of “reform” or “progressive” ideals. Rather, a set of principles constantly evolved with changes in the curriculum, building technology, and local, state, and federal building codes.¹⁰

A surge of new books and journals that emphasized the collaboration of architects and educators were available to guide the designers of Minneapolis schools. Plans and treatises on school architecture had been published throughout the late-19th century but generally were not aggressively shaped by legislation or educational-reform movements. Warren H. Briggs’s *Modern American School Buildings* (1899) had approached the school-design problem as one of size and materials, and while suggesting the avoidance of stock plans, it was typical of the late-19th century in not mentioning much of changing curriculum needs. With new research on school types and functions and funds made available by new state initiatives, however, designers responded with spacious, well-lighted buildings furnished with a variety of new equipment and specially programmed rooms. Plans were based on I, U, and H shapes, and featured large windows, well-ventilated and heated spaces, and closely studied and carefully planned interior arrangements that provided for hygiene, fireproofing, and student safety.

By 1900, the pitched roof trimmed with elaborate parapets and cornices was on its way out, and the exterior of the Minneapolis school was approaching rational design. The editor of the *American School Board Journal* explained in 1909: “Showy, high-towered and large-roofed buildings of a decade ago have given place to the simple and dignified exterior, correct in proportion and design.”¹¹ In 1911, a *Journal* article noted: “The best school design is that which follows no historical style of architecture, but is developed rationally from the conditions of the problem.”¹² The *American School Board Journal* and special school editions of *American Architect and Building News* and *Architectural Record* focused on assisting the architect and school board in the selection of the best plan and equipment. Hundreds of plans and photographs were published in a typical year, illustrating every possible solution and encouraging the board to select the right designer. University schools of education and state education associations were the chief publishers of volumes on school design, and there were independent sources such as William G. Bruce’s *School Architecture: A Handy Manual for the Use of Architects and School Authorities* (1910). Bruce was also the publisher of the *American School Board Journal*.

Before the 1920s, Minnesota had no law or code specifically regulating school buildings, but plans were prepared in accordance with State Board of Health regulations. Board rules in force by 1910 included requirements for minimum square footage, ventilation, heating, and light. Window space was specified at one-fifth of the floor space of the schoolroom and windows were to be placed as near the ceiling as possible; translucent rather than opaque window shades were to be installed. Sunlight was described as the great health maker and germ killer, and designers were encouraged to provide at least one hour of direct sunlight.¹³

Manual Training

Manual training was encouraged by reformers such as Dewey and Parker, who believed that using the hand for woodworking, metal work, and freehand drawing helped students develop their mental abilities. Basic manual training introduced in Minneapolis public schools in 1900 was not intended as vocational training. Eventually the provision of manual training rooms reshaped part of the school plant, sometimes requiring a separate wing. High-school construction was partially supported by the Putnam Act (1909), which provided aid to schools to establish departments of agriculture, manual training, and home economics.¹⁴



Manual training room, East High School, ca. 1908

There was a demand for vocational training, however. When the state compulsory education law was passed in 1902, it “forced into the schools a large number of pupils demanding a type of education largely vocational in character,” and the growth of Minneapolis manufacturing industries during this period also created a need for skilled workers, especially in printing, baking, and foundry work.¹⁵ Commercial subjects such as bookkeeping, typing, and stenography were added to the high school curriculum in 1915 to meet the demand for business careers.

Minneapolis maintained small vocational schools for boys and girls in the early-20th century, but some questioned whether public funds should be used for conducting industrial education. A solution was secured in 1914 when the William Hood Dunwoody Industrial Institute was established as a privately endowed school that offered free tuition to residents of Minnesota. The institute, which had a cooperative agreement with the Board of Education, was first housed on a floor of Central High School.¹⁶

The provision of library space also began to shape new design and remodeling. The Minneapolis Public Library established branches in North and East High Schools in 1890-91, and by 1900 had substations in 10 other schools.

Planning the Modern City and its Public Schools

The 1912-14 *Report of the Board of Education* noted that the increased cost of schools being planned was because of the “growth of our city, improved character of our homes, together with modern ideas of ‘safety first,’ permanency, sanitation and efficiency.”¹⁷ Elementary schools were increasingly used for neighborhood gatherings such as parent and teacher associations, improvement associations, and polling places. The school interior was increasingly provided with sanitation and safety features,



Health Day, ca. 1920

including better toilets, liquid soap and paper towels, bubbling fountains, and safety doors. Showers and tub baths installed in some schools served those without bathing facilities at home.

School planning was incorporated into the city's new emphasis on modern city-planning principles. The Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association, which sponsored the Committee on Municipal Research, took a lead role in evaluating Board of Education plans. School and especially playground planning were endorsed by the *Plan of Minneapolis*, developed by Edward H. Bennett and Andrew W. Crawford in the early teens and published by the Minneapolis Civic Commission in 1917. In its chapter "Parks, Playgrounds and Part Payment of the Purchase Price of Public Health," this City Beautiful-era plan linked the provision of playgrounds to the call for improved public health and suggested the enlargement of school grounds throughout the city. The *Plan of Minneapolis* included a map prepared by the Minneapolis Park Board that showed acquisition of playground facilities for cramped sites in the oldest settled areas of the city.¹⁸

Elementary Schools

After the turn of the century, older elementary schools were adapted to reflect new mandates for health and an emphasis on a specialized curriculum; new buildings incorporated these features. Among the most important development was the creation of the first kindergarten program opened at Sheridan School in 1900. By 1905, four kindergartens were in operation, with plans to create one in every school building in the city.



Tuttle School, ca. 1915, before 1926 addition (E. S. Stebbins)

A group of remaining buildings by E. S. Stebbins illustrate the rapid succession of changes in early-20th-century elementary-school design. Unlike Simmons (1905) and Kenwood (1908), Tuttle and Willard (1910) adopted what would become the standard flat roof and restrained exterior treatment. Although the massive metal cornices were stamped with dentil and egg-and-dart patterns, and the metal raking cornices lined the parapets, both were relatively stripped boxes on a raised basement (avoiding the prohibited basement rooms), with the exterior devoted to maximum window area. Fireproof construction and automatic temperature controls were now standard features.

Stebbins moved ahead with the crisp, English-inspired design of Bancroft School (1912). The product of a design competition (and opened about the same time as Central High School planning and construction was underway), it was praised for its "modern and sanitary design." The city tested its open-air program here, exemplified by large banks of windows that completely filled the bays at each elevation. Many of the transoms were filled with pivot sash. Described by the *Minneapolis Journal* in 1912 as "A New Model for School Builders of the United States," the interior included tiled wainscoting and floors in all corridors, lavatories and bathrooms, two indoor playrooms for severe weather, physicians' and nurses' rooms, cooking and manual-training rooms, and a kindergarten.¹⁹



Bancroft School (1912)



Pivot windows at Bancroft School (2005)

Open-Air Schools

Ventilation . . . is still a troublesome matter, but the vote of the Board reducing classroom temperature to 67 degrees and permitting the opening of windows at recess and during physical training periods has had a very beneficial effect on the air conditions of the class rooms. The automatic temperature controls, in my opinion, are not satisfactory, as they do not control. I wish to renew the suggestion of last year that there be provided a certain number of rooms that can be shut off entirely from the artificial ventilating plant so that windows may be open all the time, thus furnishing an so-called “open-air room” for the grouping of such children as may be under par physically.

Charles H. Keene, M.D., Supervisor of Hygiene and Physical Training,
Board of Education Annual Report (1910-11)

Health became an educational objective after 1900. With its pivot windows and other features, Bancroft (1912) was the first school designed to fully incorporate all of the new features, and by 1913-14, there were also 15 “open window” rooms in Minneapolis that each contained about 40 children. The cheesecloth-covered windows were kept open all the time.

Open-air schools were designed to supply a maximum amount of fresh air and nutrition to children with tubercular tendencies, as opposed to open communicable cases.²⁰ There was a great deal of literature to guide designers, including Sherman C. Kingsley’s *Open Air Crusaders: A Report on the Elizabeth McCormick Open-Air School Work in Chicago*, and a *Chapter on School Ventilation* (1910). The provision of fresh air became a priority in school operation and was incorporated into new designs. The ideal open-air program provided self-contained classrooms with toilet, bath, dining room, and kitchen facilities.

In addition to the focus on health and hygiene, special schools and classes were introduced for speech therapy and learning disorders, and the Arnold School was opened to “all misfit boys whom the principals and Superintendent might wish to send there.”²¹ Playing fields and gymnasiums were incorporated into standard planning for grade schools in an effort to provide “every boy, and what is more important, every girl . . . a chance for proper exercise under proper conditions.”²² The pre-World-War-I period also saw the birth of various athletic associations, including the Girls Athletic Association of Central High School.

Three other ambitious elementary school designs of the period were Barton (1915), Fulton (1915), and Lowry (1915, razed) by St. Louis architect William B. Ittner teamed with Stebbins and his partner Robert V. L. Haxby. The new buildings relieved nearby overcrowded schools, and the plans could be expanded

easily. With classrooms flanking the corridor on only one side, the rooms were deep and well lighted. Like Bancroft School, these designs were published in the *Western Architect*.²³



Fulton School (1915)



Barton School (1915)

Portables

Portables were a standard part of the elementary-school landscape (see Fulton School photo, above). Typically flat-roofed, moveable structures supplied with a single entry and a bank of windows, they were utilized to keep pace with the growth of the city's elementary-school population. Only after the neighborhood population could fill an eight-room portable building was a permanent structure constructed. They were also brought in to alleviate crowding. By 1914, 56 portables were in use, more than double the number just two years before.



Lowry School portable (1915)

By the 1920s, portables were equipped with all modern conveniences. The development of the “Minneapolis Sectional Schoolhouse” was detailed in a 1920 Board of Education publication that specified every feature of construction.²⁴ Despite their temporary nature, portable buildings had fewer student absences than the regular, fan-heated and cooled rooms. The issue of rapidly shifting school populations remained through the 1960s, and the portable remained a standard for many school sites. New designs were based on prefabricated triangles and could be dismantled, moved, and reassembled on a new site in 10 days, complete with toilets and all other facilities.²⁵

Central High School

Minneapolis is probably making greater advances than any other city in the Northwest in the design and construction of its school buildings. Central High School . . . is one of the most complete institutions of learning in the country.

Western Architect (January 1914), 8-9

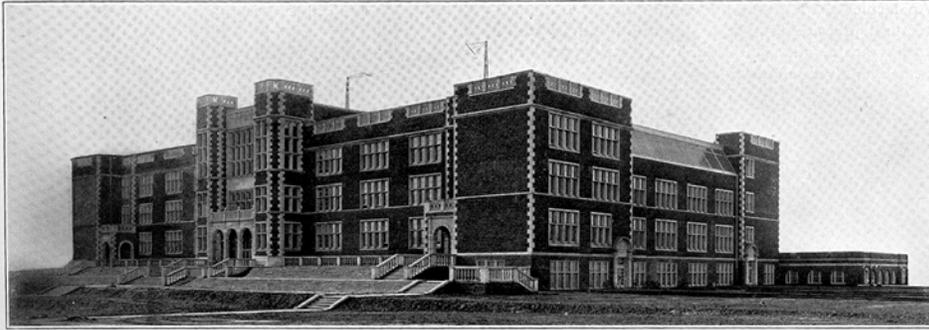


Central High School (1912-13, razed)

Part of the early-20th-century building program focused on new high schools, resulting in the construction of East (1900), West (1907), Central (1912-13), and North (1915). The city's five high schools (also including the older South) had a total capacity of approximately 5,000 students by 1915.

The city's flagship school was the new Central High, completed at a cost of more than \$700,000. Planning for the facility began by 1908, when the old, crowded Central building dating from 1888 was called "deplorable." It lacked fireproof stairways, interior boiler rooms, and separation of the manual training and science rooms. The new Central opened with an enrollment of 1,600 and served 2,200 by 1916. The design reflected the best of school-planning ideas, with fireproof construction, a variety of specialized classrooms including a 20,000-volume library, well-equipped laboratories including a botany laboratory and greenhouse, extensive manual arts areas, a 2,000-seat auditorium, two gymnasiums and a swimming pool, and a maximum amount of wall area devoted to windows. The English-inspired design was placed on a terraced site and featured a prominent central arched entry flanked by towers edged with stone quoins and parapets.²⁶

Although E. S. Stebbins seems to have been an early contender, St. Louis architect William B. Ittner, one of the country's leading school architects, was commissioned for the design in collaboration with the Minneapolis firm of Hewitt and Brown. Central was one of few public schools designed by a nonlocal firm; Ittner was also retained for Barton, Fulton, and Lowry elementary schools. Central High School set a standard for future public-school design, although no facility approached its size or grandeur for the next 50 years.



The New Central High School
 Minneapolis, Minnesota
 W. B. ITTNER, Architect

The entire facing of this building, except the stone sills, lintels and trim, is

Hy-tex Brick

—Hy-tex Velours, in a full range of color.

Hy-tex pavers are used from grade to water table; and the walls of the Manual Training Department are faced with Hy-tex Salt Glazed Brick, No. 625.

Please bear in mind that there's a Hy-tex Brick in every color and texture known to brick-burning.

HYDRAULIC-PRESS BRICK COMPANY

Largest Manufacturers of Face Brick in the World

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Central High School was featured in articles and advertisements in The Western Architect and other publications. Above, the Hydraulic-Press Brick Company of St. Louis advertised its use of Hy-Tex brick at Central High (Western Architect, March 1914).

Table 2a. 1900-1915 Public Schools (Extant)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Bancroft	1315 E. 38 th St.	1912/20/66	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Barton	4247 Colfax Ave. S.	1915/23/72/1990s	Wm. B. Ittner; Stebbins & Haxby	Educational
Fulton	4912 Vincent Ave. S.	1915/22/66/69	Wm. B. Ittner; Stebbins & Haxby	Educational
Kenwood	2013 Penn Ave. S.	1908/23	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Simmons	3800 Minnehaha Ave S.	1905	E. S. Stebbins	Housing
Tuttle	1042 18 th Ave. S.E.	1910/26/65/80/81	E. S. Stebbins	Educational
Willard	1643 Queen Ave. N.	1910/20	E. S. Stebbins	Educational

Chapter 3

PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM WORLD WAR I TO THE GREAT DEPRESSION: 1916-1930

In 1915 Minneapolis enrolled more than 51,000 students in 76 public schools. Over the next 15 years, the city's public school population rose to almost 88,000, with the number of school-age children growing faster than the general population. By 1922, about half of the student population was foreign-born. The Board of Education employed more than 3,600 teachers and staff members. While the city's population increased to 464,356 by 1930, its rate of growth had slowed since the boom years of the late-19th century.

The number of active public schools reached 111 by 1930 and the eve of the Great Depression, with about 30 schools constructed between 1916 and 1930, and nearly as many additions. Only two of the remaining 23 buildings from this period are not in educational use.

School Program Development

Following World War I, organization and centralization of school-planning efforts were apparent at the national as well as local level. The National Education Association (NEA) enjoyed a surge in membership, and the Progressive Education Association was founded in 1918.²⁷ The United States Office of Education was charged with gathering statistics, but also supported the dissemination of pamphlets on new teaching methods and practices as well as architectural plans.

The post-World-War-I school presented a complex architectural problem. The expanded elementary program now included kindergartens, auditoriums, and gymnasiums, as well as nurses' and community rooms. Modern heating and ventilation also required additional space. The junior high was a new design problem, intended to house a large number of students with a variety specialized classrooms. The senior high required expanded gymnasiums and auditoriums, as well as room for an increasing number of industrial, business, and commercial subjects. In 1923, physical education became compulsory in all Minnesota schools. Attention to the health of Minneapolis public-school students included a dental program and a variety of medical-screening clinics. Some of this public-health effort was directed at the large immigrant population. The Michael Dowling School was founded in 1920 to serve physically disabled children, and it occupied a new, specially designed building in 1924. Earlier public-school efforts served the blind, deaf, and learning disabled. In 1925, the schools began to administer the Child Guidance Clinic established at the University of Minnesota as part of the Commonwealth Fund, which promoted national mental hygiene.²⁸



Michael Dowling School under construction (1924, Bureau of Buildings)

Night classes and summer schools enrolled 6,000 pupils by 1926. The night schools were largely for the immigrant population; the 1928 *Annual Report* noted, “These persons are largely of foreign birth, though not all. How some living in a land of compulsory education have escaped its operation is a mystery.”²⁹ An extension program also provided home classes, and a department of academic counseling was established in 1927.

The Five-Year Plan

The first of a series of “Five-Year Plans” was proposed in 1915 and adopted in 1916. The \$5.6 million plan set standards for school location, classroom size, and student-teacher ratios. It analyzed the cost of retrofitting and fireproofing old schools and constructing new buildings. Adoption a new junior-high-school curriculum and a K-6-3-3 grade system underpinned much of the planning. An ambitious program to acquire adequate property for school and playground construction was launched. Purchase of already developed property was called a “costly necessity,” and minimum standards were developed for playgrounds and the acquisition and wrecking of houses where needed.³⁰

Division of Architecture and Architectural Engineering / Bureau of Buildings

Minneapolis people should rejoice that decorations and gewgaws have been supplanted by attractive lines and useful simplicity. The day of rivalry in expenditures for schoolhouses is passing; wisdom learned from unpleasant experiences has succeeded foolish pride.

Board of Education Annual Report (1928-29), 99

The creation of the Division of Architecture and Architectural Engineering determined the character and course of the next 30 years of school construction, although efforts were initially interrupted by World War I. The 1920s saw the fruition of the school-planning ideas introduced just before World War I, notably the Board of Education’s creation of the Division of Architecture and Architectural Engineering. When the division was created in 1915, Robert V. L. Haxby (1882-1947) was appointed as its architect at a salary of \$3,500 per year.³¹ A. L. Sanford was appointed mechanical engineer in 1918. Haxby graduated from Columbia University in 1908 and worked for Clarence H. Johnston before becoming Edward S. Stebbins’s partner in Stebbins and Haxby between 1913 and 1934; Cyrus Bissell joined them in 1920.³²

In October 1918, planning and construction were suspended for seven months due to the wartime economy. In 1919 the division was reestablished and renamed the Bureau of Buildings, Division of Design and Inspection.³³ Edward H. Enger (1889-1972) was named head in 1919 and served until 1954. Trained as a civil engineer at the University of Minnesota, he began working for the school board as a draftsman in 1914. F. H. Hafey was named designing architect in 1919. He was replaced by Paul H. Perkins in 1925. Enger’s name appears on most plans issued by the bureau.³⁴



Burroughs School construction (1926, razed)

The Bureau of Buildings incorporated the wealth of new national school-planning ideas and presided over the second boom in school building, which occurred during the 1920s. Staff studied existing school design in cities across the country. Among the purposes of the bureau was cost-effective centralization of all architectural and engineering work, standardization of the detailing, contracting and bidding process, and flexibility in preparing and changing plans. By 1924, bureau staff members numbered 37, including draftsmen, architects, architectural engineers, and building inspectors.³⁵ Furniture and equipment design were also provided, along with shops for production. When Washburn High School opened in 1925, it was equipped with desks, tables, benches, and other equipment designed and built by the division at a cost savings of \$7,655.00. In addition to building designers, the Division of Repair and Maintenance employed a large force of plumbers, electricians, carpenters, roofers, and other specialty trades.³⁶

The California Plan

The first projects overseen by the division were two “California Plan” schools designed by Robert V. L. Haxby. Hiawatha School (1916) continued the general open-air principles introduced a few years before, especially at Bancroft School (1912). The unique design reflected a national trend for one-story elementary schools that could provide a maximum of ventilation plus exercise and nutritional programs. Although especially well-suited to warmer climates (and hence the name), the plan was built in many regions.³⁷ Hiawatha’s one-story plan allowed each of the 12 elementary classrooms to be fitted with outside doors. Two long wings were gathered around a central play court and an assembly room. The Longfellow School (1918) employed a similar plan but included a small library projecting from the main entry façade.



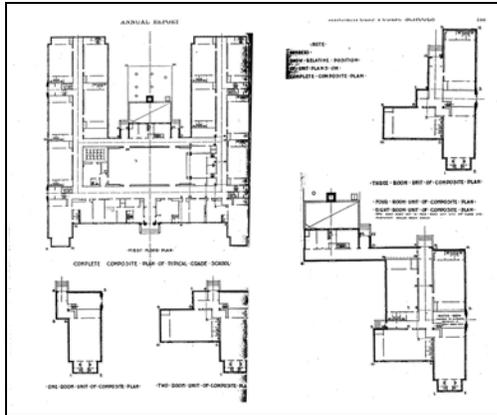
From left: California Plan at Hiawatha School (1916), Hiawatha School (1916), Longfellow School (1918)

Unit Construction and Composite Plans

A simple practical plan has been evolved . . . the unit idea will permit construction of any number of units to meet the requirements of any particular district, with a minimum of temporary work.

Board of Education Annual Report (1928-29), 277

The bureau introduced the first of its standardized plans in 1919 with the “Minneapolis Composite Grade School Plan.” “Plan No. 3,” published in 1924 and adopted in 1925, was a modification of the 1919 plan. It included a variety of classroom units that could be variously combined in a single, complete plan.



*Composite Grade School Plan, 1924, Plan No. 3
(Board of Education Annual Report, 1923-24)*

Such modular plans were especially suited to the growth of elementary and junior-high schools. Standardization was not attempted at the same level for the high schools because of differing educational demands across the city. Plans included those for a typical elementary, junior-high, and vocational school, as well as a five-year building program (1925) and various topographic surveys, soil tests, and cost estimates.

As detailed with the following elementary and junior-high examples, the composite and model junior-high plans led to a variety of solutions. The composite plans allowed seamless additions, producing what the bureau called “an efficient and attractive building.”

Evolving National Standards

Every teacher should be a diagnostician of health.

“The Hygiene of Schools,” in *School Architecture: Principles and Practices* (1921), 213

The call for healthy school environment continued through the 1920s. Other principles underpinning new school development in the 1920s were advantageous location, appropriate size, and accessibility for students. *School Architecture: Principles and Practices* (1921) provided school designers with a 700-page encyclopedia of national models covering every component of school planning from site design to maintenance.

Federal and state regulations increasingly shaped the school building of the 1920s, as did modern methods of demographic analysis. A 1922 survey plotted each student’s residence on a city map and projected future growth. The survey was the basis of the second Five Year Plan (1923), which projected \$1,900,000 in construction and maintenance costs.

In 1925, the National Education Association (NEA) produced *The Report of Committee of School House Planning*. One objective was the adoption of uniformity in state regulations in schoolhouse planning and construction. All aspects of school planning were analyzed by the NEA, and each curriculum area was specified as to its equipment and arrangement. Various scoring systems such as the *Strayer-Englehardt Score Card for High School Buildings* (1925) were developed for existing and new construction and were adopted by the Minneapolis Board of Education. The scoring systems allowed a fairly precise cross-section of school conditions with maintenance and construction needs. Another tool for studying the school plant was an extensive aerial photography project begun about 1928, which provided documentation of the facilities and their surrounding neighborhoods.



Aerial photography from the late 1920s assisted school planning for developing neighborhoods. Above, Fulton School (1915) and the Riley portable (1925-1941), in southwest Minneapolis, ca. 1928.

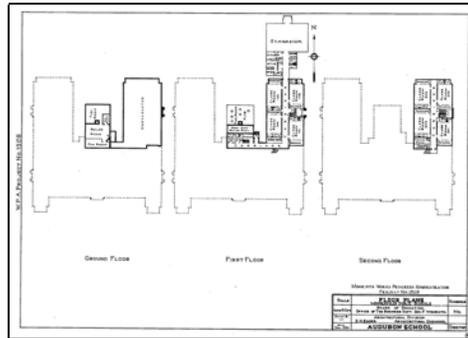


Aerial photography also assisted in planning new playgrounds and the replacement of older schools. Above, Sheridan School, ca. 1928 in northeast Minneapolis; by 1932 it was replaced with a junior high.

More than 50 construction projects totaling more than \$9,000,000 were handled by the Bureau of Buildings in the 1920s. The nine years of peak building activity between 1922 and 1931 resulted in four new high schools, nine junior-high schools, and 18 elementary schools. In just 1927-28, one high school, two junior-high, and 10 elementary schools were completed. A number of additions were made to existing buildings. The school plant also included portable buildings, supply, repair and cabinet shops, a warehouse, and a garage.³⁸ Maintenance and repair responsibilities included meeting the mechanical and electrical needs of more than 3,000 classrooms, and repainting of each building exterior every five years.

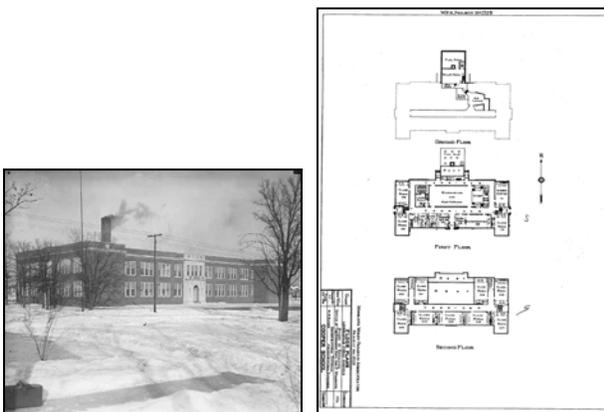
Elementary School Design

Standardized plans guided the construction of the new crop of elementary schools. The Minneapolis Board of Education required that elementary students live no more than .75 mile from the school, and elementary schools received a good deal of study by the Bureau of Buildings. The “Minneapolis Composite Grade School Plan” adopted in 1919 was updated as Plan No. 3 in 1924. Field (1920), Cooper (1923), Northrop (1923), and Audubon (1924) were among schools based on the 1919 plan, while Howe (1927), Keewaydin (1928), and Loring (1928) were among those based on Plan No. 3.

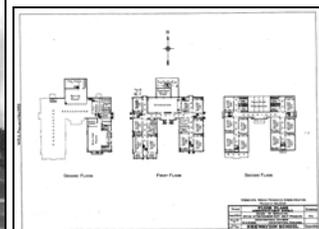


Audubon School (1924)

An example of a basic eight-room plan is still evident at Audubon School (1924), where the two-story block did not have an addition until 1953. The original plan showed how the school could be expanded from its classroom and office core. Most schools of the 1920s were larger than Audubon, and many have had compatible additions that obscure the edges of the original construction.



Cooper School (1920) and its 1919 Composite Plan



Keewaydin (1928) and Plan No. 3

Cooper School (1923) was a much larger but compact plan arranged around a gymnasium and auditorium core. The short wings suggest a U-shaped plan, but there is only one main corridor. At Howe (1927), Loring (1928), Keewaydin (1928), and Hale (1930), the wings were fully built out at initial construction,

each with a central corridor. A school library was incorporated into a corner of the Howe and Loring buildings, and Keewaydin included a park shelter room provided by the Minneapolis Park Board. The park board also developed the surrounding public playground.



Field School (1920) after additions of 1921 and 1923



Hale School (1930)

The administrative offices and heating plant were part of the first component, and the gymnasium could be added as needed. The basic provisions of a larger two-story plan were 12 first-floor classrooms including one kindergarten, one large primary room, one special classroom, an administration suite, a gymnasium with stage and instructor's room, a community kitchen, a teachers' lunchroom, and public toilets. The second floor provided 16 classrooms with toilet rooms, and the basement contained the boiler and fuel rooms. All rooms received direct sunlight for part of each day.

The fireproof reinforced-concrete construction was clad with brick and tile curtain walls. The ceiling of the second floor was concrete slab. Windows were arranged so as to maximize light distribution and exposure to the front blackboard; the glass area equaled 20 percent of the floor area of the room. All features of the rooms, including blackboards, storage, toilets, doors, and wardrobes were carefully specified, as were the gymnasiums and administrative rooms.³⁹ Community rooms were demanded for a growing variety of scout, Parent Teacher Association, and civic and political meetings, as well as social events such as dances. Interior architectural features included terrazzo corridor floors, white-maple classroom floors, oak millwork trim, decorative tile in the main entrance foyer and concourse, and ornamental drinking fountains at the main entrance. Plaster walls were finished with three coats of paint. The boiler-and-fuel room was located in the rear court separate from the building.



From left: Cooper School kindergarten) and classroom interior), ca. 1925. The classroom layout reflected the mandate for natural light from a left-hand source.

Junior-High Design

As proposed by the Minneapolis School Board in 1910 and again in 1916, the purpose of the junior-high program was to “afford some choice of subjects and activities, so that the widely varying interests and ambitions of boys and girls may be adequately served.”⁴⁰ The new program followed national models and was intended to discourage dropouts and better prepare students for high school through exposure to a program based on specialized subjects. Previously, kindergarten through eighth-grade students attended grade schools, and high school for grades 9-12.

The junior high that could house grades 7-9 was a new design problem, with school size and curriculum similar to those needed at the high school. Reducing the bulk of the buildings was a concern, since the specifications for junior-high design included a population of 1,000 to 2,000 students. Junior-high-school siting was based on location of not more than 1.5 miles from student homes, while senior-high siting was based on 2.0 miles. Student lunchrooms, physical education needs, and specialized subjects including manual training and music were among factors that greatly increased the size over elementary schools.



Bryant Junior High (1922)



Jefferson Junior High (1924)

The junior high program was first tested at the already existing Bremer, Franklin, and Seward schools, and the Franklin building was specially remodeled for junior-high use. Beginning with Bryant (1922), 11 new junior highs were erected by 1932.⁴¹ In addition to the junior highs and joint junior-high and high-school programs were 114 schools, including Emerson, Fulton, Kenwood, Longfellow, Pratt, and Windom, offering K-8 programs.

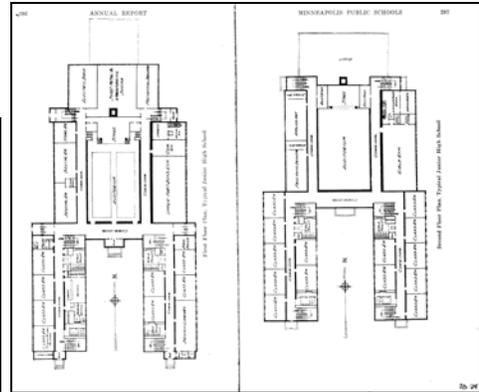
Bryant (1922), Lincoln (1923), Jordan (1923, razed), and Jefferson (1924) Junior Highs were based on much the same plan as that developed for high schools. Each had 26 classrooms and a third story with swimming pool and locker rooms. A core consisted of an auditorium or gymnasium and lunchroom, with classrooms arranged around three sides. An administrative suite was devoted to offices for the principal, visiting teacher, school counselor and nurse, and clerical staff. A library, lunchroom and specially equipped music rooms, science rooms, and industrial-arts shops were provided. A more innovative approach was reflected in a new U-shaped, three-story, 18-classroom plan used at Sanford and Phillips in 1926. The *Annual Report* of 1928-29 included a typical junior-high-school plan that reflected a revision of their design; these principles were next employed in Henry’s 18-classroom design.⁴² (Henry was converted to a junior-senior high in 1940.) At the same time, Bureau of Buildings staff began to build scale models of proposed schools, particularly for those with large sites.



Phillips Junior High (1926, razed)



Henry Junior High (1927)



Typical junior-high plan (1925)

High Schools

In the 1920s Edison, Roosevelt, Marshall, and Washburn were added to the city's existing collection of five high schools; all are extant and three remain in educational use. The Bureau of Buildings did not attempt to create a standard high-school plan as it had for elementary and junior-high schools, since the programs largely reflected the needs of neighborhood demographics with more or less emphasis on industrial and commercial subjects.



Edison High School (1922)

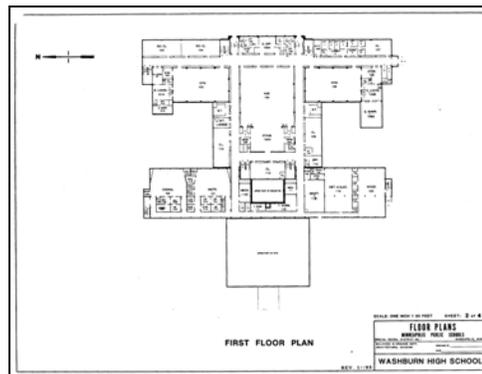
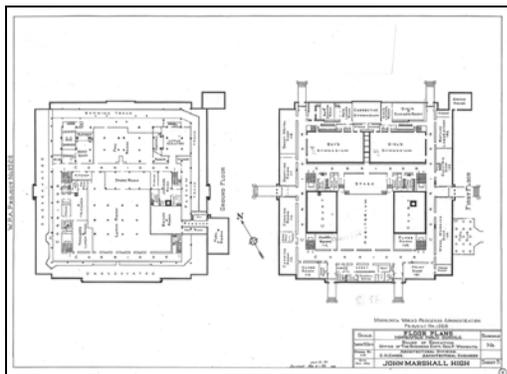


Roosevelt High School (1922)



Marshall High School (1924)

Specialized rooms were similar to those in the junior high, with more study halls, laboratories, and shop and domestic-science areas. All but Washburn have generally similar rectangular plans that devoted the ground and first floors to vocational areas such as shops. Only Washburn has a distinctive plan, one that places a striking long Georgian Revival style classroom façade in front of a gymnasium and auditorium core; a variation of this arrangement later appeared at Ramsey Jr. High and Southwest High School.



Marshall High School ground and first-floor plan (1924); Washburn High School first floor plan (1925)

The Public School Exterior of the 1920s

The design is so simple and attractive that all patrons marvel at the beauty of these new buildings.

Minneapolis Public Schools Annual Report (1928-29), 97

During its first decade of operation, the Bureau of Buildings created a group of well-engineered and carefully designed buildings based on a series of model plans. Exterior design, like the plans, was largely based on solid precedent tested and built elsewhere, with modifications to suit local tastes and budgets.



Washburn High School (1925)

While the bureau's buildings were thoroughly modern reinforced-concrete structures with brick-clad tile walls and increasingly large expanses of windows, their traditional exteriors relied on dark brown brick enriched with tapestry and checkerboard patterns, light Bedford limestone beltcourses and trim, and tile accents. As noted, Edward Enger and the Bureau of Buildings relied on variations of the Collegiate Gothic and English Renaissance styles, which lent themselves well to the blocklike building masses

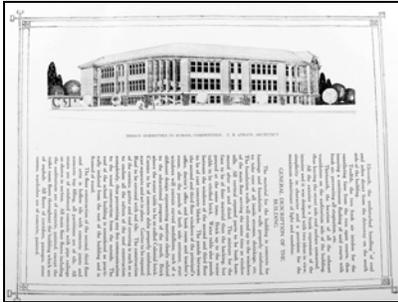
These styles were nationally synonymous with public school as well as collegiate design. Entries were typically set into slightly projecting pavilions framed with round-arched classical surrounds, or recessed into lancet-arched openings below leaded and glazed transoms. Stone plaques, keystones, corner quoins, and other motifs provided additional decoration. Parapets could be finished with balusters or decorative brick. Typical windows were double-hung, with each sash divided into multiple lights. Pivot windows, often set in transoms, ensured additional ventilation. Multipaned oriel windows were added to some junior-high and high schools, as were glasshouses. Heavy paneled oak doors with decorative hardware were standard.

Despite the traditional ornamentation concentrated at the entries, some of the buildings achieved a stripped, pared-down feel. This is especially evident at Sanford Junior High (1925), where the stone-trimmed oriel window and lancet-arched entry openings contrast with the building's sharp massing.



From left: Cooper School (1923); Jefferson Junior High (1923); Sanford Junior High (1926), Howe School (1930)

While the objectives of cost savings and general efficiency were apparently met, the use of the board’s own architects probably limited the range of exterior design ideas. Variations of English Revival styles served the board designers for nearly 40 years, with introduction of the Streamlined Moderne in the 1930s.



Carl Stravs, 20-room grammar school (Western Architect September 1913)



Dwight Perkins, Carl Schurz High School, Chicago (1908)

Prairie School and other modern ideas introduced a decade before and refined by local practitioners were not reflected on the Minneapolis public school exterior. For example, in September 1913 Minneapolis architect Carl B. Stravs (1880-1958) published a “Design for a 20-Room Grammar School” in *The Western Architect*. The design (apparently never built) referenced his background in Vienna and his admiration for European modernism. Elsewhere, the nationally recognized work of Chicago Board of Education architect Dwight Perkins (1867-1941) exemplified the most progressive work of the era. Among Perkins’ more than 40 designs for the Chicago Board was Carl Schurz High School (1908; NRHP).⁴³



Keewaydin (shown ca. 1928) was exemplary of Plan #3 and a Collegiate Gothic exterior. The site required extensive grading and terracing; the completed school was the largest feature on the neighborhood landscape.

Table 3a. 1916-1930 Schools (extant)

* Bureau of Buildings E. H. Enger, supervising architect, unless noted

**E. H. Enger and Paul H. Perkins

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Audubon	4030 Chowen Ave S.	1924/54	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Cooper	3239 W. 44 th St.	1923/57	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Michael Dowling	3900 W. River Pkwy	1924/36/61	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Emerson	1421 Spruce Place	1925/26	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Ericsson	4315 31 st Ave. S.	1916/51/80	R. V. L. Haxby	Educational
Field	4645 4 th Ave. S.	1921/24/64/71/74	McElroy & Van Antwerp	Educational
Hale	1220 E. 54 th St.	1930/53/74/89	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Hiawatha	4211 42 nd Ave. N.	1916/23	R. V. L. Haxby	Educational
Howe	3733 43 rd Ave. S.	1927	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Keewaydin	5209 30 th Ave. S.	1928	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Longfellow	3017 E. 31 st St.	1918	R. V. L. Haxby	Educational
Loring	4401 Sheridan Ave. N.	1928/77	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Northrop	1611 E. 46 th St.	1923/50	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Windom	5821 Wentworth Ave. S.	1920/23/25	Stebbins & Haxby	Educational

1916-1930 Junior High Schools

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Bryant Jr. High	310 E. 38 th St.	1922	Bureau of Buildings*	Sabathani Community Center
Henry Jr. High	4320 Newton Ave. N.	1926/29/28/39/56/77	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Jefferson Jr. High	2526 Emerson Ave. S.	1923	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Lincoln Jr. High	2131 12 th Ave. N.	1923/66	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Sanford Jr. High	3524 42 nd Ave. S.	1926/60	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational

1916-1930 High Schools

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Edison	700 22 nd Ave. N.E.	1922/66/72	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Roosevelt	4029 28 th Ave. S.	1922/50/58/66/68	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Marshall (also Jr. High)	1313 SE 5 th St.	1924	Bureau of Buildings*	Offices
Washburn	201 W. 49 th St.	1925/66-7	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational

Chapter 4

PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM THE GREAT DEPRESSION THROUGH WORLD WAR II: 1931-1949

In 1929, a new Five-Year Plan projected a \$6 million program of new construction and additions. By 1935, school enrollment peaked around 90,000 in the city of 464,356 and declined by 1940 to 81,000 when the population reached 492,370. Only seven new buildings were completed during this 18-year period, which spanned the economic declines of the Great Depression and World War II; all are extant and six are in educational use.

School-Program Development

School buildings and other capital outlays between 1921 and 1931 were financed through the issuance of about \$20,000,000 in bonds.⁴⁴ The struggling municipal tax base of the Great Depression resulted in the modification of budgets and school-building plans, and in 1931 the school board abandoned its major capital-investment program. Nevertheless, within three years the old Sheridan School was replaced with a new junior high, and Miller Vocational High School was completed. Funds from the Federal Emergency Relief Act Administration (FERA) provided salaries for school construction and maintenance and also programs such as adult education and recreation. The composite elementary-school plans were modified to reflect curriculum changes, adjustments because of the creation of new junior highs, and reduced budgets. In 1935, the school board called attention to the deferred maintenance of its school plant valued at \$35,000,000.⁴⁵



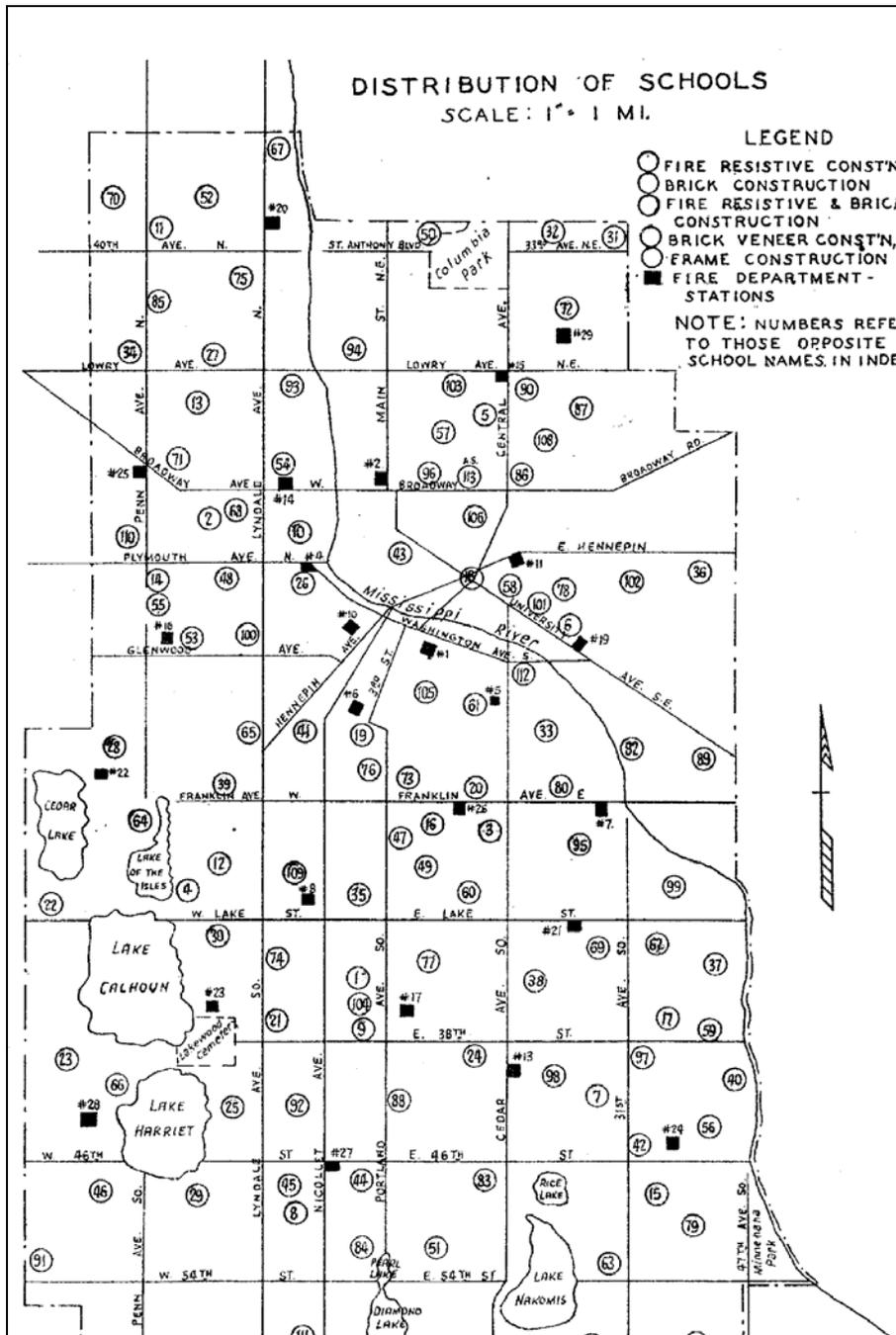
Whittier School (1893), in 1946

Among the most notable of new federally funded programs was the community evening school where education and recreation were conducted in a joint program. An experimental center was established at Folwell Junior High in 1937, followed by programs at five other schools. An art center, little theatre, and elementary evening schools were also maintained. While immigration restrictions reduced the number of persons attending English classes, Sheridan and Lincoln Junior High Schools continued the program. Naturalization, trade courses, and a library were also overseen by the Adult Education Department.

Planning Studies

In the early 1930s FERA supported a variety of architectural studies, including school acoustics, weatherstripping, and wallboard and painting. A fire protection engineering report completed in 1931 concluded that the expansion of industrial arts programs and their combustible and flammable materials presented an increased fire risk. Increased use of sprinkler systems was recommended.⁴⁶ The Minneapolis Board of Education also considered a number of studies that analyzed

population characteristics and projected future school enrollments. Between 1930 and 1940 there was a decrease of more than 12,000 children aged 5-14, and in the period between September 1929 and September 1943 the number of children enrolled in grades 1 through 6 dropped from 40,990 to 28,086. The student-teacher ratio for elementary schools in 1942 was approximately 37:1.⁴⁷ By 1940 the declining birthrate, slowing of immigration, and the decline of elementary-school-age students was well documented, as was the pattern of growth at the city's edges. The birth rate increased by 1943, however, alerting school planners that new facilities would soon be needed for elementary and junior-high students.



Map 2. Distribution of Public Schools, 1931. From General Inspection Bureau, "Fire Protection Engineering Report of Minneapolis Public Schools," March 1931. Note the eight high schools, nine junior-high schools, and 91 elementary schools.

Meticulous record keeping on the school plant was balanced by continued analysis of the student body. The *Product of the Minneapolis Public Schools* (1931) published by the Board of Education was typical of educational studies. One component of the study focused on the proportion of high school graduates who went to school or college, and found that in 1929 slightly over thirty percent went to college or other school. Nearly half found employment right after high school.

12 THE PRODUCT OF THE SCHOOLS						
and one girl out of five entered the University. Even if there were added to this group the 119 who entered all other colleges and universities, only one-fourth of those who graduated went on to school. Teaching high school subjects with the group who are going on to college primarily in mind, as so many instructors do, is giving far too much consideration to one-fourth of the pupils—a fraction which would be greatly reduced if one included the large number of pupils who attend high school but who do not stay to graduate.						
Table II. Schools Entered by High School Graduates						
	Boys		Girls		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Total number in school.....	419	100.00	468	100.00	887	100.00
University of Minnesota.....	328	78.28	308	65.81	636	71.70
Other colleges or universities.....	65	15.51	84	11.54	149	16.82
Other schools.....	26	6.21	106	22.65	132	14.88
Teachers' colleges.....	4		41		45	
Nurses' training schools.....	0		21		21	
Business colleges.....	4		33		37	
Trade schools.....	10		3		13	
Music and art schools.....	8		7		15	
High school postgraduate courses.....	0		1		1	

Only 26, or 6.21 per cent, of the boys who went on to school, as against 105, or 22.65 per cent, of the girls, attended institutions other than colleges and universities. Business colleges, nurses' training courses, and teachers' colleges enrolled most of these girls. Only 10 boys enrolled in schools for trade training.

The proportion of pupils going on to school varies considerably in the different high schools, depending no doubt upon the social and economic conditions in the neighborhoods feeding the schools. Table III shows that the percentage going on to school ranges from 57 per cent in Washburn High School to 16 per cent in South High School. Preparation for college entrance should be a chief concern in Washburn High School; but preparation for entering immediately upon employment should be the chief concern of South High School. Therefore, uniformity in high school programs of study, in content of courses, and in objectives seems undesirable in a city like Minneapolis. The best interests of the community can be served by meeting procedures in each school to conform with the probable post school adjustments of its pupils.

14 THE PRODUCT OF THE SCHOOLS					
part shipping clerks. The girls were doing bundling, cashiering, and stock room work. A surprisingly small number of girls were found working in the stores either as saleswomen or on these clerical jobs.					
The boys who took positions in offices and stores (listed as office work, selling, and store clerical work) numbered 328. This was exactly the same number that entered the University of Minnesota. Much attention is paid in the high schools to preparing the latter group for college entrance; but comparatively little attention is given to preparing this other group for entering the business world. The commercial courses as offered in Minneapolis fit the needs of girls preparing for stenographic, typing, and bookkeeping positions; but few boys enroll for these courses. No courses are offered in the use of calculating machines, in salesmanship, or in advertising. Possibly valuable additions to the program of studies could be made if an analysis were undertaken of the office positions accepted by these boys, with special emphasis upon the general qualifications and specific skills required.					
Only 3 per cent of the high school graduates were found employed in factories; but 25 per cent of the junior high school withdrawals were doing this work when interviewed.					
Eighty-five of the boys, or 14.35 per cent of those who went to work, were employed in jobs which were classified as skilled trades or helpers in skilled trades. Twenty of these were doing some kind of electrical work, such as battery work, repairing or installing telephones, testing meters, and radio service work. Sixteen were doing drafting, fifteen were in machine shop work, eight in automotive work, and seven in printing.					
Salaries. The median salary received by boys after they had been out of school approximately one year was \$14.08. For girls it was \$13.40. Only five girls were receiving over \$24 a week, while salaries of \$24 and up were reported by thirty-nine boys. The girls' salaries tend to group between \$12 and \$16 a week; the boys report a wider range. Beginning salaries for high school graduates are higher than for pupils who withdraw at lower levels.					
Vocational Plans at Time of Graduation. Whether or not a high school education is fitting young people most effectively for community living depends somewhat upon the extent to which these young people carry out the plans they had in mind at the time they chose their high school courses. A comparison was made of plans made by these pupils before graduation, as reported to the school counselor, with the actual situation in which they were found a year later. Of the 1,070 pupils who planned to enter school or college by the September following their graduation, 744, or almost 70 per cent, carried out their plans as made. Of 181 who planned to go to work for a year					

"Occupational Distribution of Pupils who Graduated from Minneapolis High Schools in 1929," from *The Product of the Minneapolis Public Schools* (1931), 12-15.

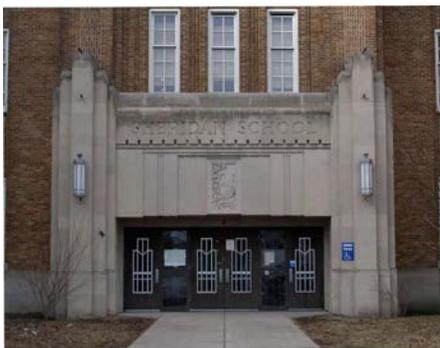
In the 1940s the aging physical plant was analyzed with the finding that close to 50 percent of school buildings were “either obsolete or so obsolescent that a major program of rehabilitation and modernization would be necessary to make them fully adequate for a modern educational program.”⁴⁸ One study noted:

Age is of course no final determinant of the condition of a school building. A recently constructed building might have many undesirable features and might represent a poor job of education planning and construction. A building constructed many years ago might be so well located, have such adequate playgrounds, and represent such quality of construction in its foundations and walls as to justify the investment of a large amount of money for its rehabilitation and modernization. Each individual building has to be studied in detail to determine its present effectiveness for a modern educational program and to decide whether it would be more economical to modernize and rehabilitate it rather than to replace it with a new structure.⁴⁹

In 1942, the school board evaluated all school buildings against nationally published standards presented in the “Holly Arnold Score Card.” Many aspects of the site, building, classrooms, and service and administrative rooms were ranked, and the information was used in planning remodeling and new development. Declining enrollments and wartime equipment shortages resulted the recommended closing of 21 elementary schools.⁵⁰

The evaluation was revisited in 1947, when a report on the school plant recommended replacement of eight elementary schools and the construction of five new buildings. New equipment for visual education was needed in all older schools, and many required combination gymnasium-auditorium additions. Three new junior highs and the upgrade of high schools were recommended. The report noted that the K-6-3-3 plan adopted in 1916 was still not uniform across the city. For example, while there were 10 junior high schools offering grades 7-9, there were nine elementary schools that also offered grades 7 and 8.⁵¹

The Bureau of Building’s design role diminished with the 1930s construction decline, and its discontinuance was recommended in 1942, with the retention of the position of architectural engineer for ongoing technical assistance. When building resumed in the 1950s, local architectural firms were commissioned. The separate Buildings and Grounds Department was responsible for maintenance and operation of the school plant.⁵²



Sheridan Junior High School (1932), main entry

Depression-era School Design

PWA and other federal programs supported planning and construction of most of the schools built during this period. The Board of Education utilized plans developed late in the previous decade for Folwell and Ramsey Junior Highs, and their English-inspired decoration contrasts with buildings of the later 1930s.

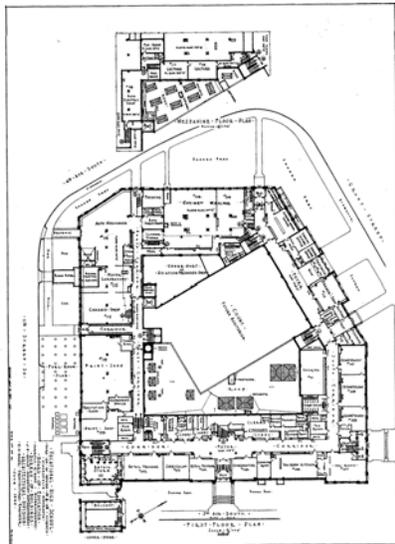


Ramsey Junior High (1931)



Folwell Junior High (1931)

The warm Indiana limestone exterior of Miller Vocational High School (1932), however, provided bands of windows linked by shallow piers and a low-relief parapet and announced the Bureau of Building's adoption of the Streamlined Moderne. The exterior was reportedly designed to harmonize with the Municipal Auditorium and other public buildings. The need for a specialized vocational school for boys and girls was apparent for a number of years, and separate facilities had been maintained at East and South High Schools. Miller's six-sided plan (with a 1940 addition) fit the compact downtown site facing the intersection of Fourth Avenue and Grant Street. The board's designer placed three floors of shops and classrooms beneath a top story of gymnasiums and business and electrical subjects, and included a retail store and tearoom open to the public. A central court (a portion of which could accommodate a future auditorium) provided light to corridors and classrooms.



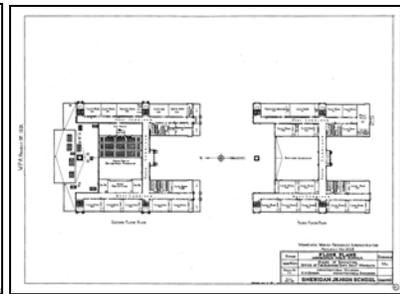
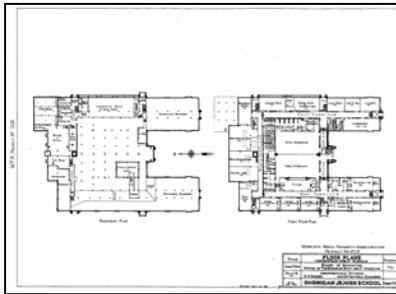
Miller Vocational High School plan, with revisions to 1951.



Miller Vocational High School (1932)



Sheridan Junior High School (1932)



1936 Sheridan Junior High plans, from left: basement and first, second, and third floors.

Sheridan Junior High also referenced little of the previous decade. The lancet or round-arched entries of its predecessors were replaced with a frame of streamlined, shallow geometric and plant-and-animal motifs set against the tan façade. The U-plan was organized around a double gymnasium core that could be converted to an auditorium, with parts of the first and second floors devoted to industrial education and a third solely to classrooms. Similar streamlining was evident at Southwest High School, which was completed with greatly reduced budgets due to the Great Depression, and initially provided only about 12 classrooms, a library, and an art room, as well as a large gymnasium, all arranged along single corridors on each of two floors. (A junior high was added in 1956.) Finally, the two-story, U-plan of Morris Park School provided about a dozen classrooms and a gymnasium. While there are a few Moderne references on the tan brick exterior, the lancet-arched entry pavilions refer to the Collegiate Gothic employed by the Bureau of Buildings 15 years before. Morris Park remains exemplary of Standard Plan No. 3, which was adopted in 1925.



Morris Park (1939)



Southwest High School (1940)

Table 4a. 1931-1949 Elementary, Junior-High, High, and Vocational Schools (extant)

* E. H. Enger, supervising architect, unless noted

**E. H. Enger and Paul H. Perkins

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Folwell Jr. High	3611 20 th Ave. S.	1931/37	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Miller Vocational	1101 3 rd Ave. S.	1932/40/55	Bureau of Buildings**	Offices
Morris Park Elementary	3810 E. 56 th St.	1939/53	Bureau of Buildings*	Educational
Ramsey Jr. High	1 W. 49 th St.	1931	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Sheridan Jr. High	1201 University Ave. N.E.	1932/67	Bureau of Buildings**	Educational
Southwest Jr. and High	4600 Beard Ave. S.	1940/42/56/68	Bureau of Buildings; Enger with Lang & Raugland	Educational

Chapter 5

POSTWAR PERIOD: 1950-1962 AND BEYOND

The postwar baby boom pushed Minneapolis school enrollment to 73,905 in 1962. (It peaked in 1965 at 75,964 before declining to 37,755 by 1985.) By 1962, the Minneapolis Board of Education embarked on a program of school expansion that included nine new schools—including four junior highs—and additions to at least 20 others. Eight schools built by the board remain from this period, and all are in educational use. Two others, dating from 1950 and 1959, were acquired by the board.



Kindergarten addition to Ericsson School (1952)



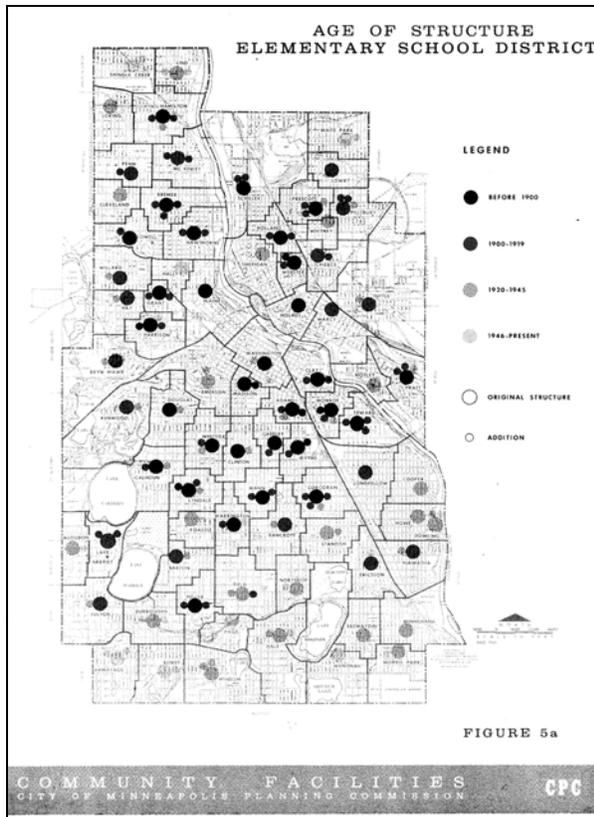
Northeast Junior High (1954)

School Planning

Postwar school planning was guided by new ideas and materials that encouraged open plans, an extensive use of steel (including the “bent beam” structure at Wenonah School), reinforced concrete, glass curtain-walls, florescent light, and large libraries and community rooms. Among new additions to the building program were Cold War requirements for civil defense and integration of radio and film facilities in the building design. A new generation of school designers could consult works such as *Schools* (1949), a volume of the Progressive Architecture Library illustrated with designs by architects such as Perkins and Will, Richard J. Neutra, Eliel Saarinen, and William Lescaze.

An evaluation of the condition of Minneapolis schools in 1947 noted: “Close to 50 percent of the school buildings in Minneapolis are either obsolete or so obsolescent that a major program of rehabilitation and modernization would be necessary to make them fully adequate for a modern educational program.”⁵² While some of the oldest schools had a series of capital improvements to improve fire resistance, lighting, stairways, toilets, and administrative and library spaces, a predicted increase of elementary-school students—the emergence of the baby-boom students—and the growing obsolescence of some older schools supported recommendations to erect at least 10 new schools in the 1950s. The board acted quickly and opened six new schools by 1954 despite a struggle with obtaining building materials because of the Korean War.

The alliance between school and city planning was reinvigorated during the 1960s. In 1962, the Minneapolis Planning Department assessed the progress of school construction since the end of World War II.⁵³ A total of 76 elementary schools, seven junior highs, and 10 high schools represented the crop of new construction as well as a few 80-year-old buildings. Crowding was most evident at the edges of the city where new housing construction increased after the war, and there had been a general decline of school-age population in the central city and southeast Minneapolis. The central city was the location of most of the thirty elementary schools built before 1900. Adams Elementary (1874), Franklin Junior High (1874), and Monroe Elementary (1878) were the oldest structures in the system.



The City of Minneapolis Planning Department published studies that supported the upgrading or replacement of the city's aging schools (Schools Phase I Public Facilities, 1963).

Modern well planned educational facilities are an important factor in insuring the core city's continuation as the residential-commercial-industrial hub of a dynamic metropolitan complex.

Michigan State University, Planning for the Future: Minneapolis Public Schools (1963), 2

Although the Minneapolis population declined to 482,872 by 1960, school enrollment rose during the period and remained fairly steady until 1972. By 1963, a study conducted by Michigan State University (MSU) for the school board recommended continuance of the 6-3-3 organization with the addition of a comprehensive two-year community college.⁵⁴ The community college, realized in 1965, was housed on the top floor of Central High School. The MSU study combined neighborhood and educational analysis, and addressed what it called the "socio-economic character" of the community, notably the loss of population to the suburbs, the growing diversity of the population, the tendency for some pupils to move frequently, and the areas of low income. Measures to reduce segregated housing, and resulting segregated educational facilities were also detailed.⁵⁵ Freeway development and urban renewal were scrutinized for their points of contact with the school plant. The study pointed to "kaleidoscopic community changes [that] are under way, including changes in pattern, and densities of land use arising from urban renewal programs, public housing projects, federal and local highway construction."⁵⁶

Two schools erected in the 1950s by other owners were acquired by the Board of Education in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1967 the former Talmud Torah School (1950), located across Queen Avenue N. from Willard School, was acquired for Gordon Elementary School. In 1974 the former St. Margaret's Academy (1959) was acquired for Anwatin Junior High School. The only other school acquisition was Windom,

which was the former Roosevelt Grade School and was purchased from Richfield in 1927 after the Minneapolis boundary was extended to the south.



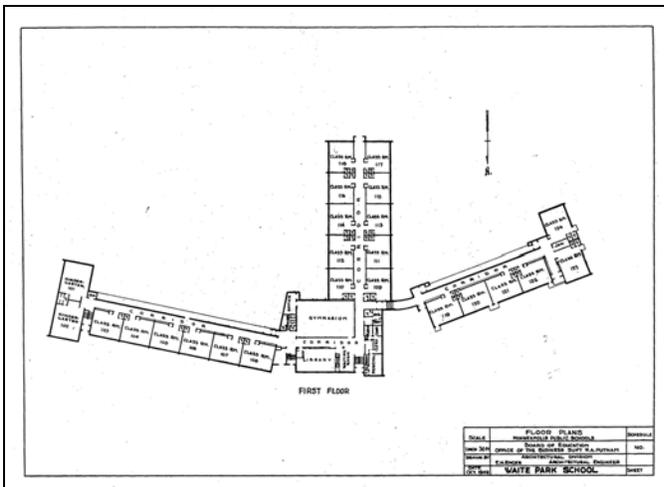
Waite Park Elementary School (1950)



Armatage Elementary School (1952)

Design Trends

Waite Park was the first elementary school opened after World War II. With its companion, Northeast Junior High School (1956), it served the growing northeast corner of the city where returning GIs were among purchasers of the houses in new developments. Waite Park's projected enrollment was 720, but immediately reached 986, necessitating the installation of portables. The plan was typical of the 1950s, providing a spacious library, large gym, and administrative core with radiating one-story classroom wings. The classrooms featured their own entrances, echoing the California plans of Hiawatha and Longfellow Schools.



Waite Park School (1950)

Waite Park was among several new schools developed through a partnership between the Minneapolis park and school boards. Its landscaped 14-acre site included a community wading pool, recreation building, and playing fields. Armatage (1952) repeated a similar formula on its 23-acre site, as did Kenny Elementary (1952; 14 acres), and the adjoining Anthony Junior High (1958; 11 acres). The lack of playground space adjacent to central city schools was an often noted shortcoming, but the new elementary schools were located at the corners of the city where former agricultural land was still available in large tracts. Another four-acre park setting was provided at Shingle Creek (1958), where the plan consisted of five units or clusters connected by corridors around an administration core.⁵⁷

In the 1950s Bureau of Buildings staff no longer designed new schools, instead relying on local firms such as Magney, Tusler and Setter, and Thorshov and Cerny, as well as Eliot Noyes of New Caanan, Connecticut. In 1964, the board engaged the firm of Caudill, Rowlett, Scott and Associates of Houston, Texas to coordinate the building program with local architectural firms.

The 1950s and 1960s were also decades of major additions to older schools, often without regard to the principles of the earlier composite plans that provided for seamless transitions between old and new. Some of the additions required building on playground areas that had been carefully acquired decades before. These were the last decades of service for about 25 of the oldest schools, with demolition for a new generation of construction beginning in the late 1960s.



Addition at Cooper School, 1957

Table 5a. 1950-1962 Elementary and Junior-High Schools (extant)

Name	Address	Original Construction	Architect	Current Use
Anthony Jr. High	5757 Irving Ave. S.	1958	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational
Anwatin Jr. High	252-54 Vincent Ave. N.	1950 (acquired 1974)	B.J. Knowles (St. Paul)	Educational
Armatage Elementary	2501 W. 56 th St.	1952/54/56	Magney, Tusler & Setter; Perkins & Will (Chicago)	Educational
Kenny Elementary	5720 Emerson Ave. S.	1954/57/62	Haxby, Bissell & Belair	Educational
Gordon Elementary	1615 Queen Ave. N.	1950 (acquired 1967)	Lang & Raugland	Educational
Northeast Jr. High	2955 Hayes St. N.E.	1956/59	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational
Olson Jr. High	5012 James Ave. N.	1962	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational
Shingle Creek Elementary	5000 Oliver Ave. N.	1958/59-60	Eliot Noyes (CT); Shifflet, Backstrom (Mpls)	Educational
Waite Park Elementary	1800 34 th Ave. N.E.	1950	Magney, Tusler & Setter	Educational
Wenonah Elementary	5625 23 rd Ave. S.	1952/58	Thorshov & Cerny	Educational

CONCLUSION

Minneapolis public schools constructed between 1849 and 1962 reflect the growth and development of the city's public education system, and are evidence of some of the best of national planning and design principles involving the efforts of local architects and the Board of Education's Bureau of Buildings. The context timeframe begins with the earliest development of a public school system and concludes with Floyd B. Olson Junior High; the next wave of building would incorporate a new generation of curriculum and architectural ideas. Only seven of the 50 remaining schools from the period 1883 and 1962 are not in public educational use.

The city's historic schools include late nineteenth-century picturesque castles with heavy timber structures and ornate brick and stone exteriors, Collegiate Gothic buildings of the 1920s that conceal modern reinforced concrete structural systems, and glass curtain wall designs from the 1950s and early 1960s. The Minneapolis Board of Education intended that school buildings be used by generations of students and then changed, expanded and with obsolescence, removed. Some, however, have accommodated change more gracefully than others. Most have benefited from the Bureau's use of standardized plans that allowed for fairly seamless expansion, while extensive renovations have significantly altered the historic appearance of others.

This historic context study did not evaluate public schools for designation by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission. Future evaluation will apply designation criteria to each property. This study suggests that the schools' planning and design characteristics, and each property's relationship to the creation of the Minneapolis public school plant should be among chief evaluation considerations. Designation Criterion #1 (association with significant events or periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history) and Designation Criterion #4 (distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction) provide a framework for future evaluation.

The study suggests that the period of significance—the timeframe that encompasses the remaining schools and describes the significance of each period of development—is broadly 1883 to 1962. Within this timeframe, Bancroft (1912), Barton and Fuller (1915), Hiawatha (1916), Longfellow (1918), and the collection of composite plan schools developed by the Bureau of Buildings throughout the 1920s and early 1930s are of particular significance for their planning and design characteristics and relationship to the creation of the Minneapolis public school plant. The collection of post World-War II schools that reflect new architectural ideas after the dissolution of the Bureau of Buildings should also be evaluated. Thematic designation for all eligible school properties should be considered, as many properties share similar characteristics.

Part of future evaluation is a determination of exterior historic integrity. This will require assessment of the construction date, appearance, and impact of additions and alterations to the property. While there are a number of unaltered examples of the various composite school plans of the 1920s and 1930s, others have had extensive additions to primary elevations. Nearly all schools have had replacement of oak exterior doors with flush steel doors, and most have had window replacement, often with compatible new units. The removal or modification of pitched roofs, additions that cover entries or windows or infill the original H- and U-plan configurations, and the enlargement or infill of window openings are among changes that have had the biggest impact on historic buildings. Since those without significant incompatible additions or alterations may best reflect associations with public school architectural development, an assessment of such changes should be a part of future evaluation and designation efforts.

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Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study Property List / 2004-5

(Date shown is original construction)



Anthony Jr. High
5757 Irving Ave. S.
1958



Bancroft
1315 E. 38th St.
1912



Cooper
3239 W. 44th St.
1923



Anwatin Jr. High
252-54 Vincent Ave. N.
1950



Barton
4247 Colfax Ave. S.
1915



Dowling
3900 W. River Pkwy.
1924



Armatage
2501 W. 56th St.
1952



Bremer
1214 Lowry Ave. N.
1887



Edison High
700 22nd Ave. N. E.
1921



Audubon
4030 Chowen Ave S.
1924



Bryant Jr. High
310 E. 38th St.
1922



Emerson
1421 Spruce Place
1925

Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study Property List / 2004-5

(Date shown is original construction)



Ericsson
4315 31st Ave. S.
1916



Gordon
1615 Queen Ave. N.
1950



Howe
3733 43rd Ave. S.
1927



Field
4645 4th Ave. S.
1921



Hale
1220 E. 54th St.
1930



Jefferson
2526 Emerson Ave. S.
1923



Folwell Jr. High
3611 20th Ave. S.
1931



Henry Jr. High
4320 Newton Ave. N.
1926



Keewaydin
5209 30th Ave. S.
1928



Fulton
4912 Vincent Ave. S.
1915



Hiawatha
4211 42nd Ave. N.
1916



Kenny
5720 Emerson Ave. S.
1954

Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study Property List / 2004-5

(Date shown is original construction)



Kenwood
2013 Penn Ave. S.
1908



Madison
501 E. 15th St.
1887



Northeast Jr. High
2955 Hayes St. N.E.
1956



Lincoln Jr. High
2131 12th Ave. N.
1923



Marshall Sr. High
1313 S.E. 5th St.
1924



Northrop
1611 E. 46th St.
1923



Longfellow
3017 E. 31st St.
1918



Miller Vocational High
1101 3rd Ave. S.
1931



Olson Jr. High
5012 James Ave. N.
1962



Loring
2600 44th Ave. S.
1928



Morris Park
3810 E. 56th St.
1939



Pratt
66 Malcolm Ave. S.E.
1898

Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study Property List / 2004-5

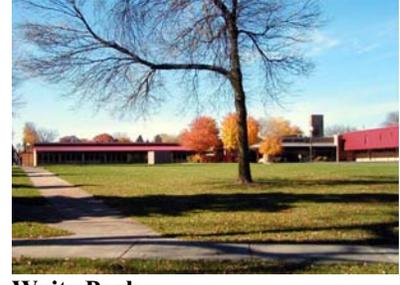
(Date shown is original construction)



Ramsey Jr. High
1 W. 49th St.
1925



Shingle Creek
5000 Oliver Ave. N.
1957



Waite Park
1800 34th Ave. N.E.
1950



Roosevelt Sr. High
4029 28th Ave. S.
1922



Simmons
3800 Minnehaha Avenue S.
1905



Washburn Sr. High
201 W. 49th St.
1925



Sanford Jr. High
3524 42nd Ave. S.
1925



Southwest High
4600 Beard Ave. S.
1940



Wenonah
5625 23rd Ave. S.



Sheridan Jr. High
1201 University Ave. N.E.
1932



Tuttle
1042 18th Ave. S.E
1910



Whittier
2609 Blaisdell Ave. S.
1883

Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study Property List / 2004-5

(Date shown is original construction)



Willard

1643 Queen Ave. N.

1910



Windom

5821 Wentworth Ave. S.

1920