

The senior high school

Rochester, N.Y. Board of education

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The Senior High School

Rochester, N. Y. Board of Education

An Extract from President Harding's Proclamation

Issued at Washington November 20, 1922

The strength and security of the nation will always rest in the intelligent body of its people. More than anything else, men and women need the capacity to see with clear eye and to contemplate with open, unprejudiced mind, the issues of these times. Only through a properly motivated and generous inspired process of education can this be accomplished.

In view, then, of these and many other considerations, I hereby proclaim the week of December 3d-9th as American Education Week, recommending the appropriate national, state and local authorities that they give their cordial support and co-operation to making its observance inspirational and beneficial; and particularly it is recommended that the parents enlist themselves in behalf of closer understanding between the school and the home, with the purpose of mutual helpfulness.

Rochester, New York

1922

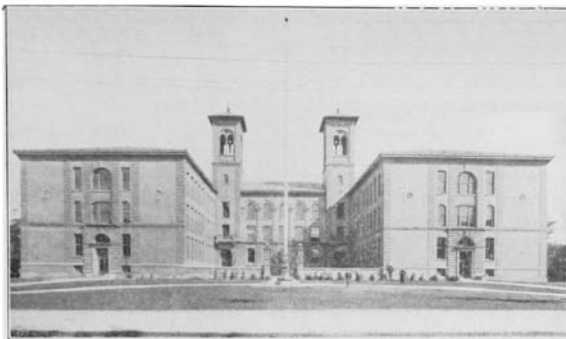
The Scope of the Rochester Public School System

The scope of the work done by the Rochester public school system is shown by the seven following units of school organization:

1. The *ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNIT*, consisting of the kindergarten and the first grades.
2. The *JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL UNIT*, consisting of the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades.
3. The *SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL UNIT*, consisting of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades.
4. The *CITY NORMAL SCHOOL* or *TEACHER TRAINING UNIT*, with a two year course beyond the high school for the training of teachers.
5. The *SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT*, designed for those who vary so much from the normal child as to require special treatment.
6. The "*PART-TIME*" or *CONTINUATION SCHOOL UNIT* for all between fourteen and seventeen years of age, who have withdrawn from the full time day school and gone to work.
7. And, finally, the *UNIT FOR ADULT EDUCATION*, consisting of the so-called Americanization work done by adults and the entire Evening School program.

It is apparent from the above that the public school system is serving all from the child of four in the kindergarten on to the oldest person in the community who desires to avail himself of the Evening Schools.

This bulletin has to do with the SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL UNIT only.



TODAY—TWENTY YEARS AGO

The high school today cannot be understood in terms of the high school of twenty years ago. To those not in touch with the changes of the last fifteen or twenty years it is an unknown land.

No other social institution of our country has undergone in this time so great changes as the public schools. In these changes the high school has a large share.

In 1902 the Rochester Free Academy offered one type of course, the college preparatory; languages, mathematics, history, and sometimes science.

Today the high school offers three types of courses:

- I. Academic and College Preparatory
- II. Commercial
- III. Manual Arts

WHY THREE COURSES INSTEAD OF ONE

The Academic Course appeals to only a limited number of grammar school graduates. In 1902 others attempted it and found it unsuitable, or else they never entered the high school.

The three courses offer education to a wide variety of types of minds and for a wide variety of interests, abilities and environments.

WHAT THE FIGURES SHOW

From 1902 to 1912 the high school population of Rochester increased *sixty-six per cent.*; the enrollment increased from 1392 to 2308 pupils.

From 1912 to 1922 the high school population increased by *ninety-four per cent.*; the enrollment increased from 2308 to 4484.

DO THESE OPPORTUNITIES FUNCTION?

I. In the Academic Course

The Academic Course has not changed greatly in subject matter, but the aims and methods have changed very much.

State laws require graduation from high school as a prerequisite to the study and practice of some ten or twelve professions, such as Law, Medicine, Dentistry, etc.

It prepares for colleges and engineering schools, but a pupil may graduate and not be prepared for college.

College preparation means two things: First, the proper selection of subjects, and second, sound and thorough scholarship throughout the four years. The student who has these, enters college by certificate privilege wherever this is used; i.e., the school certifies him for entrance without examinations. Some of these colleges are Rochester, Cornell, Syracuse, Hamilton, Colgate, Union, Pennsylvania, Lehigh, Lafayette, Oberlin, Amherst, Dartmouth, Rutgers, Brown, St. Lawrence, Penn State, Bucknell, Hobart, Alfred. There are many others.

No college using the certificate plan refuses the privilege to the Rochester high schools. Some colleges do not admit pupils from any preparatory schools without examination. Some of these are Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Smith, Mt. Holyoke, Vassar, Wellesley and Wells.

Within the last two years 488 graduates have entered college from the two senior high schools of the city.

In the same period of time many graduates have received State Qualifying Certificates to enter the study of a profession. Some of this number have also entered college where college training is demanded for certain professions.

The academic course does not merely prepare for colleges or professional schools, but it also functions for many other pupils by laying that broad and essential foundation upon which later specialization and development for a great variety of activities in the world may be built.

II. In the Commercial Course

The Commercial Course covering four years has operated for only ten years. It was developed in Rochester by Mr. Fred G. Nichols, now Associate Professor of the Graduate School of Business Administration of Harvard University. It has served largely as a model for our State and also for other systems.

It answers in one way the demand for immediate utility. It trains the youth for office and counting-house work. He can keep books, take dictation in shorthand and operate the typewriter. He knows other office machines and devices, learns filing systems, knows something about the arteries of commerce and the world's markets and comprehends the fundamentals of economics and of business law.

What Figures Show of Course II:

Graduates of the course are placed in offices by the schools. In two years 164 graduates have gone at once into positions. The reports that have come from their employers have strongly commended this work and indicate a high degree of satisfaction with those trained.

For five years a Part Time Plan has been used. In the senior year some pupils have spent alternate weeks in school and in office positions thereby getting practical experience. This is genuine "laboratory work." One hundred six such pupils have gone into full positions upon graduation where they have been working under this plan.

Why Spend Four Years in Course II?

Special business schools give a course of preparation by short intensive training for a particular sort of office work and to persons of some maturity and general education in one year or even in six months.

But in a public high school the best interests of all concerned, i.e., of both the pupil and the possible employer, are served best by the broadest type of education that can be secured. The high school, therefore, attempts to meet a twofold need: First to afford that type of education which has regard for general values in life. Second, to give therewith as much special skill as is consistent with both the first aim and the interests of individual circumstances.

Hence, it is not the primary aim of the high school to train a pupil simply to earn a living. Rather it aims to train him *for a life*. Every pupil in every course should have just as much all-round intellectual and character development as circumstance will permit.

This is the primary aim. Hence the commercial course includes the fundamental subjects of the academic course,—English,

history, civics, and science. The specialized subjects of business have also a large element of cultural value.

Yet in order to adapt the course for those who cannot stay four years, it is so laid out that after two years, when at the age of sixteen the pupil may legally leave school for work, he has received considerable special training that has increased his value in the office.

III. In the Manual Arts Course

This Third Type of Course is the newest in Rochester. A complete course of four years first became possible in the Annex of the East High School last year, and for the West High School in the building of the Madison Junior High School this year. Other cities have long had this type of work. The demand upon school funds made by the tremendous increase of total school population in Rochester has delayed its development here. Now the opening of this type of work in the Junior High School, carrying the pupil through the first year of high school work there, has made it imperatively necessary to continue the course through the senior high schools as well.

The work is too new to furnish data in figures yet. But the senior high schools have long given a little work of the Manual Arts type. This is in mechanical and architectural drafting, in freehand drawing and design, and in manual training. The opportunity has been very limited but many pupils have "found themselves" in just this work. A number of pupils are known to have gone into positions for skilled work in these lines in drafting rooms, architects' offices and commercial illustrating and design.

An Illuminating Instance

A pupil named C began mechanical drawing as an extra subject. He had no special interest and at first showed no special ability. He was uncertain about continuing, but his interest and ability grew as he went on.

Upon graduation from the high school he entered an architect's office and there designed several houses for actual construction. He had now "found himself" and left the office for college. Here he won a scholarship for designing a first prize house in a contest. He graduated from the college of architecture and is today a leading architect.

This is the type of "self discovery" that the practical Arts Course makes possible in a variety of ways. Who will say that

any pupil in the public school should be denied the type of opportunity this illustrates?

For Whom Adapted?

Many of us have inherent ability to work with the hands; we find great interest in a science laboratory. Shop work is *applied science* and the shop is its laboratory. Many people thus find their best development when hand and brain work together. The various shops afford a variety of opportunity for this.

This course does not teach trades. This fact is often not understood because the course is new and little known. It does lay a foundation upon which specialized skill can be developed later if desired.

Its graduates will have a High School Education, not a trade training.

Its primary aim is exactly that of all courses, the all-round development of intellect and character.

With the special work already indicated are closely coupled the fundamental subjects of English, mathematics, history, and science.

WHAT IS COMMON TO ALL THREE COURSES

These are brief comments on the history and special features of the three types of courses. Back of all three types lie certain common and fundamental values. This is shown by the fact that the subject groups of English, history, civics, science, and some form of mathematics are essential parts of each type course as a requirement for graduation.

DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The Senior high schools are organized with the following departments:

I. ACADEMIC

Of eight subject groups. Some of these are subdivided in departments where the field is too large to be well cared for as one department.

English

Foreign Languages

Mathematics

History and Civics

{ Latin Department
{ Modern Language Department

Science	{	Physics Department Chemistry Department Geography Department
Drawing	{	Freehand, Design, and Color Mechanical and Architectural
Music	{	Vocal Music and Theory Instrumental: Band, Orchestra and other classes
Physical and Health Education	{	Boys Department Girls Department Hospital and School Nurse

II. COMMERCIAL

One department dealing with its specialized subjects.

III. MANUAL ARTS

One department dealing with its specialized subjects

These are the immediate responsibility of *Department Heads* or specialists, or, in case of departments of limited scope, of *head teachers*.

There is not room here for a detailed statement of the general aims, values, and methods of each of the subject-groups of the high school curriculum. Only the most salient points, particularly those points in each department which by emphasis differentiate it somewhat from other departments, can be mentioned.

English is fundamental to all other subjects. It gives correctness in use of the mother tongue, a wider vocabulary, power of expression both written and oral through much practice, and knowledge and appreciation of the best in literature.

Latin, besides the aims given for English, has the special province of developing the ability to express ideas with exactness, precision and nicety in English words. Such ability is fundamental to all clear and accurate thought, for ideas are clear in the mind only so far as we possess and use in thinking exact terms for their expression.

The study of a *Modern Language*, French for instance, is conducted very largely by using the language constantly in the class room for recitation purposes. This gives command of pronunciation and to some extent of idiom but the aim is not to make conversationalists. In other respects the purposes are like those given for Latin.

It should be noted that all foreign language study tends to give an intimate and living conception of history both ancient and current.

The special province of *Mathematics* is to develop clear, clean-cut, logical reasoning with an appreciation of cause and effect and of all law and order both in human society and in the universe at large.

The special province of *History* is to develop intelligent world citizenship through some knowledge of the efforts man has made, to elevate himself and of the process of trial and error by which all government has been developed.

The special province of *Science* is to unfold the laws of nature, to teach the proper process of inductive reasoning, to give some comprehension of the application of science to our environment, and to fill life full every day of keen interest and enjoyment in the world of nature.

Drawing affords an effective means of self expression by training of hand and eye, develops ability to appreciate works of art and beauty of design in decoration and architecture, and cultivates the power to see beauty and design in nature.

The study of *Music* attunes the ear to the harmonies of sound in nature, in musical instruments, and in the human voice. It affords one of the most wonderful opportunities for self expression, and for learning to appreciate what is best in this art in all ages.

The special aim of *Physical and Health Education* is to develop a sound body for a sound mind. This includes the early detection of physical limitations and disabilities, and giving such physical exercises as will remedy these, or calling the attention of the parent to the need of medical or other treatment. It means also, through the school nurse and the physical education department, the immediate care of minor and temporary disabilities, of which many cases inevitably arise daily among two thousand pupils.

COMPARISONS WHICH SHOW CHANGES

In 1902 the Rochester Free Academy curriculum was about complete with the first four subject groups enumerated under the Academic, viz., English, foreign language, mathematics and history. Science had a slight foothold but was mostly an elective. Today two sciences at least are required for graduation.

In 1902 a little work in *drawing* was offered but not advocated. Today the enrollment in this department is always full. Every student ought to take some work in drawing if it is possible.

In 1902 *music* had hardly been thought of in the high school. Today hundreds are studying it. In each high school an orchestra of fifty or sixty pieces and a band of an equal number of players are made possible by the generous gift of Mr. George Eastman of nearly all the musical instruments used and by the provision of a competent instructor by the Board of Education.

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

In 1902 absolutely no provision was made in the high school for physical development, for regulated exercise, or for health precautions.

When the East High School was opened in 1903 its gymnasiums were considered the latest word in education. Today a law of New York State prescribed that every high school pupil shall receive two periods of gymnasium work and one of supervised play per week.

How many know this law exists? Two small gymnasiums and, in suitable weather, the athletic field are kept full continuously. Yet the facilities are so inadequate that we can only carry it out for the first, or at most first two years of the course.

Twenty years ago high schools in general had little if any physical education beyond that represented by a picked few who composed *The Team*, and who were carefully coached and trained for the big contests. Today the motto is "Physical development for every pupil and every pupil in some physical activity."

First and second teams are formed as a legitimate stimulus to interest, but the first consideration is physical development for the masses rather than the few.

Approximately two hundred fifty boys in each school played on soccer teams this fall, not to mention the numbers taking part in baseball, tennis, track, swimming and other sports.

HAVE SCHOOLS ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTH?

We did not think so in 1902. The law now says there shall be medical attendance and supervision in the high school. We have not heretofore been able to meet the requirement. Last year the Rochester Health Bureau provided a trained nurse in constant attendance. Hospital rooms have been fitted up for a sick-bay and for emergency treatment. The nurse is kept busy. How many among 1500 or 2000 pupils will probably each day be ailing or meet with some mishap? Under the Health Bureau also medical examinations of all pupils have been undertaken. ¶

WHAT IS THE STUDENTS' BOOK STORE?

It receives and sells used texts for pupils. It sells many new texts and large quantities of paper and other supplies at a slight advance above the wholesale prices. It has saved pupils thousands of dollars.

It is managed by students. It is financed to the last penny by the student body. Its accounts are strictly audited by the Commercial Department.

WHO PAYS FOR THESE?

Through the schools are found draperies, hangings, rugs, pictures, paintings, statuary, plaques, bronze tablets and other objects of art and interest. Who bought them? Not the Board of Education. They are all gifts of classes, or groups, or individuals.

Nevertheless, these are legitimate and valuable parts of a liberal education.

ARE THERE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE HIGH SCHOOL?

Yes, but these are attended and supervised by faculty members working with the Social Adviser. The schools do not hold any social affairs whatever in down-town clubs, hotels or dance halls and are not responsible therefore for any such social affairs.

FINALLY

These larger opportunities are one of the factors that have greatly increased the high school enrollment.

This is eminently desirable *provided* those who attend are in earnest and willing to *work* for an education.

Two difficult problems confront both the parents and the school: First, to place the pupil in that sort of work he can do best where therefore he can find real development, and Second, to teach the dignity of all labor and the duty of service, and to avoid the false and dangerous notion that education is intended to give a man soft hands and a soft job.

In conclusion the great purpose of a high school education is to build CHARACTER and to prepare for SERVICE. A high and righteous character ready to reveal itself in service, will have a well-rounded trinity of being,—body, mind and spirit. Such a man is educated, and no subject or material is worthy of a place among the tools of education unless it contributes directly and largely to this great end.

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