

HIGH SCHOOLS IN TERRITORIAL WASHINGTON (Concluded from page 220.)

5. *The Legal Establishment of Union or Graded Schools*

The law of 1877 provided for the establishment of union or graded schools. Two or more districts were permitted to unite to establish such schools "in which instruction shall be given in the higher branches of education." Any single district was permitted to establish a graded school for similar purposes. In all cities and towns having 500 pupils the district was required to establish a graded school under such regulations as the district boards might prescribe.

The law specified that the common schools should teach "reading, writing, orthography, arithmetic, geography, English grammar, physiology and history of the United States, and such other studies as may be authorized by the directors of the district."²² This last clause clearly gave permissive authorization to establish high schools.

Territorial Board of Education, 1877. A Territorial Board of Education was created by the statutes of 1877. Governor Ferry appointed to membership on the initial Board, Hon. Thomas Burke of King County, Mr. Charles Moore of Whitman County. The Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, John E. Judson, was *ex officio* a member and chairman. The first meeting was held at Olympia, April 1, 1878."

Along with certain specific duties in connection with the examination and certification of teachers a general provision authorized the Board "To prescribe rules for the general government that shall secure . . . efficiency and promote the true interests of the schools."²⁴

Acting under this elastic authority the newly established board proceeded expeditiously to establish several needed measures. They organized the entire plan of examination and certification of teachers, classified the entire public school system, published a detailed course of study for the primary schools and grammar schools and a brief and general course for high schools.

Course of Study for Graded and High Schools. The course of study for graded and high schools adopted by the Territorial

²² *Laws of Washington, 1877, Title IX., Sec. 52, p. 274.*

²³ *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1879, p. 3.*

²⁴ *Laws of Washington, 1877, Title II., Sec. 12, p. 262.*

Board of Education in 1878 was epoch making for the new territory with the unorganized educational activities. While much could easily be criticised from the standpoint of curriculum construction a half century later, it was highly creditable for the time. It marked the beginning of a genuine system of public education in the commonwealth of Washington. Because of its historical significance it is reproduced exactly as stated by the Territorial Board of Education.

It should be noted that the curriculum covered ten years or grades. The elementary school included eight grades, as now, but the high school course included only two years. Following the European tradition the designation of the grades is just the reverse of our present terminology. For example, the sixth grade is the lowest, and the first grade is the highest in the elementary school.

Classification of Schools. Section I. The Union or Graded Schools shall be classified as Primary, Intermediate, Grammar and High.

Section 2. The Primary School shall comprise three classes—sixth, fifth and fourth; the Intermediate, three—third, second and first; the Grammar, two—B and A: and the High, two—junior and senior.

The course as outlined for the grammar schools and for high schools is reproduced entire.

Grammar School. B. Grade. Time: One Year.

Language

Reading—Fifth Reader completed. Reading in United States History.

Spelling—Write spelling lesson. Words to be derived from various sources.

Grammar—Swinton's Language Lessons completed and revised. Give special attention to analysis and parsing.

Writing—Regular instruction three times a week.

Arithmetic—Complete to discount. (Fisk's.)

Geography—Civil and Political, completed and revised. Monteith's.

A. Grade. Time: One Year.

Language

Reading—Read selections from various sources.

Spelling—Same as in B. Grade.

Writing—Same as in B. Grade.

Grammar—Analysis and parsing. Exercises in correcting false syntax.

Composition—Swinton's School Composition, first half year. Word analysis last half year.

Arithmetic: Complete, finished and reviewed.

History—Swinton's United States, completed.

General Directions.

Drawing in Grammar Grades as determined upon by Principal. Oral instruction in Physiology and Physics. Rhetorical Exercises in Grammar Grades. Declamation and original essays once a month.

High School. Junior Class. Time: One Year.

Algebra and English Analysis throughout the year. Physiology and Zoology first half; Philosophy and Bookkeeping second half.

Senior Year.

Geometry and History throughout the year. Botany and the Constitution of the United States first half; Chemistry and Astronomy second half. Rhetorical exercises throughout the High School Course.

Management

Due attention shall be given to physical culture in the public schools. Pupils in all grades shall sit in an erect position, and not communicate with one another. When called upon to recite, they should be required to rise and remain standing until excused. They should be taught to regard it as dishonorable to assist others or receive assistance in their studies, except under the special cognizance and direction of the teacher. Strict order in all movements in the school room, in passing in and out of the building should in all cases be required. Constant employment is the best means of securing good order.

Morals and Manners.

Conversational lessons on politeness and rules of deportment in public places and at home. Habits of personal neatness.

Music.

Singing as far as practicable, and at the discretion of the teachers, in all grades."²⁵

6. *Pioneer Public High Schools*

It is impossible to discover the exact dates when most of the communities launched their high schools. Local records are almost

²⁵ Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Territory of Washington, 1879, pp. 19-23.

entirely lacking. Such local records as were kept have largely disappeared. In many places fires destroyed the frame structures in which they were kept. Fireproof safes were not common. In other communities no importance was attached to preserving the records and they have been carelessly allowed to go into oblivion. Most of the Reports of the Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction were very inadequate. Not one of those reports gives any data concerning high schools. The first Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, published in 1890 by Robert Bruce Bryan furnished the initial statistics regarding high schools.

A number of the Reports of the Territorial Superintendents provide some statistics regarding graded schools. From those it is impossible to tell the number of grades maintained or the number of pupils in each grade. In the territorial period the Superintendent of Public Instruction did not have his office at the Capitol. The law specified that it must be in some place having a post office. Each of the superintendents resided in his home town during his term of office, generally having some regular business besides that of territorial superintendent. The last one, J. H. Morgan, lived in Ellensburg and was superintendent of the Ellensburg public schools at the same time.

High School Courses at the University. For several years the University made arrangements with the school board in Seattle to teach all the pupils of the village. Some we may assume were of secondary grade.

By 1880-81 the primary and intermediate departments had been abandoned as the public schools in Seattle were becoming much larger and better organized. The University still maintained a senior preparatory year in the classical, the scientific, the normal and the commercial courses.

The high school or "Senior Preparatory" offerings at the University in 1880-81 were as indicated on opposite page.

University of Washington, 1880-81.
Senior Preparatory Courses.

Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term
	Classical Course	
Caesar, Greek Lessons, History,	Caesar, Greek Lessons Algebra,	Cicero, Zenophon, Algebra,
	Scientific Course	
Latin Reader, History, Arithmetic,	Latin Reader, Algebra, History,	Latin Reader Algebra, English Composition
	Normal Course	
History, English Grammar, Arithmetic, Penmanship,	Algebra, English Grammar Natural Philosophy, Reading,	Algebra, Elements of Rhetoric, C. S. Bookkeeping, U. S. History
	Commercial Course	
Arithmetic, English Grammar General History, Penmanship,	Algebra, English Grammar, Natural Philosophy, Spelling,	Algebra, Elements of Rhetoric, U. S. History, C. S. Bookkeeping

The enrollment in 1880-81 included 77 junior preparatory pupils, 33 senior preparatory and only 27 college students. The distribution of students among the various subjects is interesting. There were in Reading 42, Orthography 53, Penmanship 40, Mental Arithmetic 33, Written Arithmetic 79, U. S. History 37, English Grammar 69, Geography 44, Latin Grammar and Reader 36, Algebra 43, Trigonometry 6, Analytical Geometry 6, Calculus 2, English Literature 7, Chemistry 11, Zoology 12, Botany 13, Natural Philosophy 27; Psychology 7, Horace 1, Virgil 8, Cicero 8, Caesar 5, Grammar and Reader 9, Homer 2, Herodotus 2, Xenophon 1, Greek 9, German 7.²⁶

The Dayton High School. Probably the first high school in the Territory to be formally organized by a district board of direc-

²⁶ *Annual Register*, 1880-1881, pp. 9-12.

tors was at Dayton. On April 24, 1880, the following item appeared in the *Columbia Chronicle*, a weekly published at Dayton: "Dayton's Future School.—We understand that the directors of this school district intend establishing a thorough graded school next fall in Dayton." On January 3, 1880, bids had been advertised for the construction of a new school building costing \$2400. This was to be finished by August 15 of the same year. School opened on October 4th, with F. M. McCully, Principal, in charge of the "Higher Department."²⁷

The course of study adopted by the board of directors and published in the *Columbia Chronicle* on August 14, 1880, was as follows:

"High Department

Junior Class. Time: One Year

Reading—Sixth Reader begun.

Spelling—Advanced Speller, oral and written.

Writing—Regular and thorough instruction.

Grammar—Clark's Normal completed to Syntax.

Arithmetic—Davies Complete finished; Robinson's Progressive commenced; Mental Arithmetic regularly.

Algebra—Commenced.

History—Barnes' Brief History of the United States.

Geography—Physical, Political and Civil. Monteith.

Senior Class. Time: One Year

Reading—Sixth Reader. Selected extracts.

Spelling and

Writing—Same as in Junior Class.

Grammar—Clark's Normal completed. English Analysis.

Mathematics—Progressive Arithmetic completed. Algebra finished. Geometry throughout the year.

Physiology and Constitution of the U. S. First half year;

Philosophy and Bookkeeping second half year.

General Remarks

Rhetorical exercises, consisting of declamations and original essays, in the Grammar and High Departments."

The schools of the village were graded at the opening in the fall of 1880, as a new building had just been constructed. At that time there were 40 in the higher grade, 50 in the grammar department, 56 in the intermediate, and 57 in the primary department.²⁸

²⁷ *Columbia Chronicle*, Oct. 2, 1880.

²⁸ Western Historical Society—*History of Southeastern Washington*, p. 412.

Steps were taken in the fall of 1881 to formally establish a high school, partially under the public school organization. In the *Columbia Chronicle* on August 20, 1881, is found the following item:

"Public School Matters

At the meeting of the school directors of this district last Saturday evening, a plan was adopted, which we think will not only be satisfactory to the people, but will be of direct and almost immediate advantage to our town. It was decided to establish a "High School and Academy" in connection with the public school, so that pupils after finishing the usual studies in the latter, may enter the former, and prepare themselves at home to enter any college on the coast.

Prof. Burdick will assume charge of the "High School" and until all his time is devoted to this work will assist in the work of the public school. There is at present a demand of higher education in our midst, and year by year men and women are being sent abroad to obtain it, at great expense, when it might as well be acquired at home. This demand will greatly increase as pupils finish the public school studies, and the inauguration of this school will only serve to encourage a most desirable immigration. The "High School" course of study will embrace three years and is most complete: and in addition it is intended to offer special inducements to young men and women preparing for the teacher's profession in our Territory. It is not designed nor intended to apply the public school fund to the support of the "High School," and a reasonable tuition fee will be required of all pupils pursuing the studies as set down in the course.

Prof. McCully is to remain as principal of the public school as heretofore, in accordance with the expressed wish of a majority of the patrons and pupils of his department. . . . The full term of the public school will begin Monday, September 12. All who apply will be received as arrangements have been made to accommodate all."²⁹

The Earliest High School in Seattle. Because the earliest school records in Seattle were burned some of the earliest school history of the city can not be reconstructed. According to the first superintendent's report, published in 1885, "The first move toward grading of our public schools was made in January, 1877. In January, 1878, a course of study and set of rules and regulations were adopted by the Board and ordered printed."

On January 14, 1882, a mass meeting was held in Yesler Hall for the "purpose of agitating the question of sufficient school room

²⁹ *Columbia Chronicle*, Aug. 20, 1881.

facilities to accommodate the youth of our city." Judge Lewis was chairman of the meeting. The following is a digest of a report contained in one of the city papers and filed in the school board records:

"He spoke of the schoolhouses of Seattle as a disgrace to so pretentious a city and said the only respectable public school building in Washington Territory was located in the little town of Goldendale, in Klickitat. The Judge then contrasted our public school shanties with those beautiful and imposing edifices in San Jose, California, which make that little city famous all over the coast. Seattle takes the lead in manufacture, in commerce, in enterprise, in wealth, but is way behind in educational matters. Let us make education and commerce go hand in hand. We have had saloon booms, and real estate booms, and now for God's sake, said the Judge, let's have a school boom."³⁰

A committee meeting was held two days later, January 16, 1882, at which it was reported that,

"The second floor is occupied by those pupils who are farthest advanced in their studies, and is presided over by Prof. Ingraham. The room is a dingy, ill-ventilated apartment, with from 85 to 90 children, crowded together on low uncomfortable benches, three on a seat. Some of the children have to sit uncomfortably near the stove, over which a great false cover has been placed to keep the heat from blistering the faces of those who sit closest to the stove."³¹

On July 24, 1882, the contract for the erection of a new building was awarded to Leslie and Mesener for \$20,877.³² The construction of this new building, the most pretentious school building in the northwest, gave a new impetus to education in Seattle and the territory.

On October 26, 1882, the Board Records show that "After due consideration it was decided to appoint a city superintendent in accordance with the 64th section of the general school laws of this Territory . . . and on motion E. S. Ingraham was unanimously elected to the position of City Superintendent. He was also elected Principal, and O. S. Jones, Vice-Principal." Mr. Ingraham was undoubtedly the first city superintendent of schools in Washington.³³

The first formally recognized high school work under the board of education and paid for out of the common school fund was organized and launched in 1883, according to Superintendent Ingraham's first report. His own words are drawn upon here to recount the story:

³⁰ *School Board Records*, Vol. Jan. 1, 1882-Nov. 1, 1889, p. 5.

³¹ *School Board Records*, Vol. Jan. 1, 1882-1889, p. 7.

³² *Loc. cit.*, p. 38.

³³ *School Board Records*, Vol. Jan 1, 1882-Nov. 1, 1889, p. 49.

“Two years ago those pupils who had finished the grammar school course were allowed to continue their studies in a high school course. Up to that time it could not be said that Seattle had a high school. Instruction was given in some of the higher branches, but, owing to the crowded conditions of the lower grades, those pupils who would gladly have remained to pursue a higher course of instruction, and to give way to the pressure from below and yield their places to pupils of the higher grammar grades. Some of those who were thus crowded out went to the University to receive instruction, while others dropped out of school altogether.

The young ladies and gentlemen of Seattle are to be congratulated that they now have the opportunity to take a full high school course. And it is the aim of those who have the matter in charge to make the course second to none on the coast. For two years the successive classes finishing the grammar school course have been moving steadily upward in the High School. In one year hence the first class will graduate.

The course is at present a scientific one, requiring three years' time for its completion. I am satisfied that a longer time should be given to this course; or that a literary course of four years be established, by taking some of the branches from the scientific and adding others not included in that course. In case of such an arrangement, pupils would have a choice between two courses and the work could be better arranged.”³⁴

The Seattle schools were organized with a Primary Department consisting of the first four grades; a Grammar School Department of the next four grades; and “The High School which shall embrace an English course of three years: Junior, Middle and Senior classes.” The High School curriculum was organized as follows:³⁵

Seattle High School, 1885

English Course—Junior Year

B Class—Algebra, Bookkeeping, English Composition, Civil Government.

A Class—Algebra, Physics, Physical Geography, Zoology.

English Course—Middle Year

B Class—Geometry, Physics, General History.

A Class—Geometry, Chemistry, Botany.

³⁴ *First Annual Report of the City Superintendent of the Public Schools of Seattle, Washington Territory, 1885, pp. 14, 15.*

³⁵ *Loc. cit.*, p. 37.

English Course—Senior Year

B Class—Trigonometry, Rhetoric, Astronomy.

A Class—Arithmetic, Mineralogy, Political Economy.

Spelling, Writing, Drawing, Composition, and Declamation are required throughout the course.

“Every pupil of the High School is expected to acquire a thorough knowledge of English Literature, by a careful study of the leading English and American authors of the past and present. Pupils must also keep themselves posted in passing events by a careful perusal of the best newspapers and magazines of the day.”

The total enrollment in the Seattle schools in 1885 was 1478, of whom 986 were in the Primary Department, 403 in the Grammar Department, and 89 in the High School. In 1889, the curriculum was still three years in length. It was extended to four years in 1890-91. From 1893 to 1895 it was called a Senior Grammar School because the legality of using public school funds to support a high school had been challenged.

7. Slow Development of High Schools

The idea of a complete system of public elementary, secondary and higher education was thoroughly established early in Washington's territorial history. But notwithstanding this ideal the population was so sparse and the task of industrial development so great that the high schools did not multiply in number or become large in size until after statehood. Only a few cities formally established graded schools and still fewer high schools before 1889.

Table IV. indicates the cities having schools with ten or more grades, that is, with two or more years of high school work in 1892. That year is taken because it is the first year for which statistics are available. It shows clearly that high schools were not very numerous during territorial days. In 1892, only five schools, Fairhaven, Olympia, Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma had full four-year curricula. Four more, Aberdeen, Sumner, Walla Walla, and New Whatcom were offering three-year courses. One more, Pomeroy, had a two-year course. Only ten schools in the State had schools with two or more years of work beyond the grammar grades. Local records show that Dayton offered a three-year course, but the Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction does not include it. The table reveals that the number of pupils in the high school grades was very small. Aberdeen, for example, had only 11 pupils enrolled in the three high school grades. Everett had no high school at that

time. Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane, with the three largest high schools enrolled only 227, 200, and 105, respectively.

Table IV.
*Schools With 10 or More Grades in 1892*³⁶

	Number of Grades	Pupils in High School
Aberdeen -----	11	11
Fairhaven -----	12	13
Olympia -----	12	66
Pomeroy -----	10	42
Seattle -----	12	227
Spokane -----	12	105
Sumner -----	11	19
Tacoma -----	12	200
Walla Walla -----	11	44
New Whatcom -----	11	94

With the advent of Statehood, there followed the growth of a network of railways, and an influx of vigorous intelligent immigrants. Highways were carved out of the forests, material resources were developed, cities and towns sprang up with astonishing rapidity. These communities immediately took steps to provide modern high schools. From the opening of the new century no state has excelled Washington in its provision for secondary and higher education. Today the proportion of pupils from the elementary schools who finish the high school and colleges is the highest in the entire world.

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³⁶ Compiled from *Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction*, R. B. Bryan, 1892, p. 132.