



COMMONWEALTH

VANCOUVER SCHOOLS

Establishing Their Heritage Value

City of Vancouver • Vancouver School Board

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

REVISED 13 SEPTEMBER 2006

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1. Contextual History

1.1 Introduction

Preface

This Contextual History provides a history of education and school-building in Vancouver, set in the context of social, political, and pedagogical trends in British Columbia and elsewhere. It offers a historical and intellectual framework for the present study. The essay creates an information base from which to assess the significance of Vancouver schools. It describes, for example, the introduction of various reforms and innovations that manifested themselves in the way schools were built and fit out, enabling us to recognize and understand the importance of schools that possess those features.

The essay was presented as a draft in Spring 2006 to the Working Group that assisted with the larger project undertaken by the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board to establish the heritage value of Vancouver's schools. The Working Group used it to assist it in drafting a thematic outline to inform the assessment of the heritage value of Vancouver schools. In its completed form the essay is intended to be used as a reference for heritage assessment, including the preparation of Statements of Significance, a heritage planning tool used by the City of Vancouver and the Province.

Useful feedback was received from the Working Group on the draft and this has helped to shape the final product. Dr. Mona Gleason, Associate Professor, History of Education, Children, and Childhood, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, UBC, provided valuable assistance throughout the process.

The Rise of Mass Public Education

Children have, of course, always been educated. However, for the most part, through history and across cultures, education has taken place at home, in the course of day-to-day life and work, or in religious institutions. For most children, contact with what today are understood as formal educational institutions was brief, episodic, or absent altogether. Schooling was neither compulsory, free, nor universal.

Mass public education in Western nations is a product of the combined forces of the Industrial Revolution, the rise of democracy, and the spread of nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹ Each of these forces, in different, ways, drove forward the cause of public education: Industry wanted trained and clock-disciplined workers; democrats required educated, or at least semi-literate, voters; and nationalists found in schools the tool needed to create patriotic citizens.²

Closely related to the rise of mass public education is the design and construction of purpose-built schools, separate from home and work. Nineteenth-century educators 'invented the idea that schooling and the schoolhouse were indispensable to education.

They tied the schoolhouse to educational theory and curriculum, making it a full partner in the learning process.’³ For many, the construction of what was deemed a ‘good’ school became a measure of the progress and quality of public education in the community, as well as an indicator of its prosperity and civic pride. Today, ‘most people see the creation of the free public schooling as a sign of enlightened progress and the advance of democracy.’⁴ There is, of course, an aspect of social control to public education. Critics point out that it does not serve everyone equally and that it tends to sustain the *status quo*. ‘In reality,’ educational historian Ken Osborne notes ‘schools have been both a step towards democracy and a form of social control.’⁵

This essay traces the establishment of public schools in the City of Vancouver, setting out the specifics of how public schooling took shape here. It begins with an outline of the establishment of public schools in British Columbia. It then reviews the development of the school system in Vancouver, relating this to the history of the City and of education more generally. With this groundwork in place, the discussion turns to the specifics of school-building in Vancouver – exploring the question of why Vancouver schools took the physical form they did. That part of the essay addresses, in the context of Vancouver, how Vancouver’s ‘schoolmen’ linked schools and schooling, and what the results were.

The essay takes a broadly chronological approach, with important themes clearly identified within this narrative framework. The chronology is divided into two parts – before and after 1940. Tables and charts in ‘Appendix A’ list most of the still extant public schools built in Vancouver, Point Grey, and South Vancouver, as well as some of the schools that no longer exist.

A range of sources was used to prepare the essay. These included published work, annual reports of the constituent school boards, and individual school histories.

Mass Public Education in British Columbia

The structure of public education in British Columbia took shape in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Its development coincides with the creation of first the Colony and later the Province of British Columbia. The crucial debates about education – who would pay for it, who would have access to it, and the role of religious organizations in its content and delivery – took place in the 1860s, just prior to British Columbia joining Confederation (1871). These debates pitted English against Canadians and Americans; Anglicans against non-conformists and Catholics; rich against the poor; and each against each other. The structure that emerged, argues historian of education Jean Barman, while influenced by ideas about public education brought from other parts of North America and from England, was particular to British Columbia and reflected ‘the needs of families living in British Columbia for schools that were universally accessible by virtue of being non-sectarian and free of cost. ... The consequence was an educational consensus so well-suited to the particular conditions of British Columbia that it would endure virtually unaltered for almost a century.’⁶

Under the *British North America Act*, education was a provincial responsibility. One of the first things British Columbia's government did was pass a *Public Schools Act* in 1872. It explicitly stated that all public schools would be officially non-sectarian, distinguishing British Columbia from all other Canadian provinces; and that education would be free. The purpose of public education was clearly expressed in the *Act* as being 'to give every child in the Province such knowledge as will fit him to become a useful and intelligent citizen in after years.'⁷ As white settlers took up space in the province, the needs for a civilizing and 'Britishizing' force – i.e., public schooling – was the next logical step.

With its scattered population and small tax base, British Columbia's early public school system was highly centralized. The Province controlled all aspects of the operation of the system and paid all the bills. Locally-elected school trustees were simply responsible for seeing that the provincial regulations were followed and that property was kept in decent condition.⁸

By 1875, British Columbia had 45 public schools in operation; of these, 25 had been built since 1872. Most schools were publicly owned. Most were one-room wood-frame buildings, with a few more substantial brick buildings erected in Victoria, beginning in 1876.⁹ The standardization of plans happened quite quickly. By 1881 the Department of Lands and Works, which was responsible for new rural school construction, had developed a standard plan for one-room schools. This plan for a 'Country School House' had been printed by 1885, along with specifications.¹⁰ In his survey of British Columbia school architecture, Ivan Saunders argues that central control meant that British Columbia had 'a high and consistent standard of pioneering school construction.'¹¹

Vancouver's First Schools

The first school to be established by the settler community on the south side of Burrard Inlet (later known as 'Vancouver') was built in 1872, the same year in which the *Public Schools Act* was passed.¹² Located at Hastings Mill, at the foot of Dunlevy Street, the school was a 18' x 40' frame building set in a stump-filled clearing.¹³ The student population (of about 15) reflected the diversity of the indigenous and settler population of Burrard Inlet, including mixed race (First Nations and other), Kanaka (Hawaiian), and white children. Miss Georgia Sweeney, the sole teacher, taught the group. A small local board was directly responsible for the operation of the school, but almost all major decisions, and the related funding, flowed from Victoria.



A view of North Arm School, the second school in present-day Vancouver, taken in 1885. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Not everyone was thrilled by the appearance of a ‘proper’ school. Adelaide Patterson, who started at the school at Hastings Mill in 1872, remembers that her older sister, Abbie, liked learning at home from her mother and thought that ‘learning about other parts of the world from the sea captains who came to visit the settlement was a lot more interesting than sitting in a stuffy classroom.’¹⁴ Vancouver’s second school, located near today’s Fraser Street and SE Marine Drive, was known as North Arm School. Established in 1877, it served the fishing and farming families that settled along the Fraser. This school is the forerunner of present-day Moberley School.¹⁵

History of Childhood

Childhood, like education, has a history – in fact many scholars see educational history as a subset of the history of childhood. As with any complex subject, there are different ways of understanding childhood. Some scholars focus on childhood as a biological fact while others are primarily interested in changing social definitions of childhoods/children. In general, historians tend to make a distinction between the history of *childhood*, which focuses on changing ideas about what it means to be young, and the history of *children*, which tends to focus on the individual experiences of young people. As might be expected, it is often much easier to find historical sources that speak to the former rather than the latter. Given that children rarely generated textual sources that were deemed worthy of keeping, we know much about how children were supposed to act and think (often based on documents generated by adult experts such as doctors, teachers, and the clergy) than we do about how actual children responded to shifting conditions in their lives. Public discussions about the behaviour (usually ‘bad’) of children and adolescents are another common theme in writing about Canadian childhood. In very general terms, childhood in Canada in the twentieth century has become longer – in fact, a ‘good’ childhood now extends well into adolescence. ‘Teenagers’ are often described as invention of the twentieth century – it is now uncommon for teenagers to work full time where once it was normal. Likewise, families are now much less likely to depend on the labour of children and teenagers than they were before c. 1945; in the twentieth century

children have been much more valued for their emotional rather than material contributions to family life. While it is difficult to say which came first, more years of schooling or the extension of childhood, there is an obvious relationship between the two.

1.2 Education in Vancouver 1886-1940

Background

After much negotiation and horse-trading, the Canadian Pacific Railway agreed, in 1884, to move its western terminus from Port Moody, at the eastern end of Burrard Inlet, to Coal Harbour, closer to the mouth of the Inlet. This decision, and the subsequent arrival of the railway in 1885-86, transformed the small communities on Burrard Inlet and led to the incorporation of the City of Vancouver in 1886. Vancouver's boundaries, first defined in 1886, extended east to Nanaimo Street, south to 16th Avenue, west to Alma Street, and north to Burrard Inlet. The local economy went 'from servicing the lumber industry to servicing urban growth'¹⁶ and the population exploded. The rate of growth is difficult to comprehend: in 1881 there were 243 people living in Granville (Vancouver); by 1891 there were 13,647.¹⁷ This increased to 27,010 in 1901 and 100,401 in 1911.¹⁸ The peak of growth occurred between 1908 and 1912, when a number of factors came together to create a tremendous economic boom.¹⁹ As a result, the geography and the built form of the City were transformed. Both remained essentially in place into past World War II, and both can still be easily read in the landscape.

Present-day Vancouver is much larger than the city of 1886. Areas that were subsequently annexed include the large District of South Vancouver (incorporated in 1892 and divided in 1908 into Point Grey and South Vancouver), both of which joined Vancouver in 1929; and Hastings Townsite and District Lot 301, which joined the city in 1911. Early settlement in these areas occurred where streams intersected the trails, roads, and electric street railways that connected Vancouver to the Fraser River and New Westminster. Encouraged by the urban markets of Vancouver and New Westminster, settlers established dairy farms, breweries, nurseries, market gardens, and slaughterhouses. Large areas remained unsettled. Significant geographic barriers, such as the 'Great Fraser Beaver Swamp,' separated the individual settlements.²⁰

Vancouver has often been described as a city of suburbs. The story of how these suburbs took shape had important implications for school construction. Until about 1930 development was entirely market-driven. The 'role of government was minor in moulding the form and structure of the City.'²¹ The CPR owned large tracts of land – from Ontario to Trafalgar and from 16th almost to the Fraser River. Here development proceeded in an orderly fashion, block by block. Shaughnessy Heights is one example of a CPR subdivision. Outside the CPR lands, in both South Vancouver and Point Grey, large tracts of land were subdivided and settlement proceeded in a more haphazard manner and stretched over a period of many decades.²²

Numerous schools, both in Vancouver and suburban South Vancouver and Point Grey, owe their genesis to the extension of streetcar service to newly subdivided areas during the 1908-12 boom years. The ‘organic’ character of many Vancouver schools, built in stages over a period of many years, is to a large extent a direct consequence of the patterns of residential development, reflecting in their built form the history of the City and the stages of development in their particular neighbourhood. Naturally, the vicissitudes of school funding also played a role.

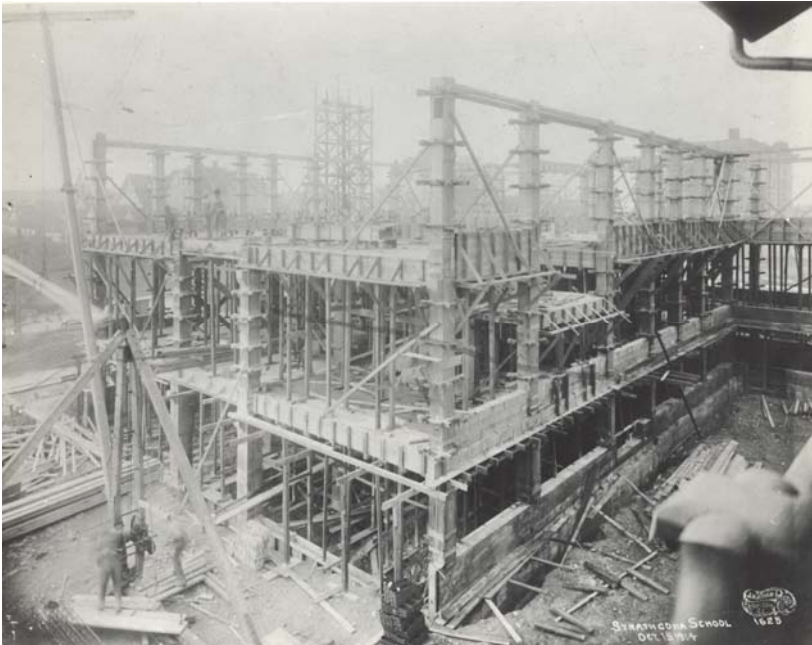
Streetcar Service

The major streetcar lines included:

- Fourth Avenue and Broadway, servicing Kitsilano, Dunbar, and into West Point Grey
- Fairview and Mount Pleasant, with an extension into Shaughnessy; radial lines southeast on Fraser and Main Street
- Interurban line along Kingsway to New Westminster and from downtown along Arbutus to Marpole and then across the Fraser River to Richmond and Steveston
- Along Hastings and Powell Streets to Grandview and Hastings East²³

With the increased population, the racial and ethnic character of the City took shape. So too did the city’s class structure. By 1911 more than 85% of all Vancouver residents had been born in Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, or ‘European parts of the Empire’²⁴ The greatest number of residents was of Canadian origin, followed by those from Britain. Vancouver was ‘a relatively homogeneous society.’²⁵ This racial and ethnic homogeneity was tempered somewhat by class differences, which found expression in residential differentiation. ‘Contemporary and historical commentators portray Fairview Heights, Mount Pleasant, Grandview, and South Vancouver as neighbourhoods of middling status. ... Kitsilano was more uniformly white collar,’ as was Point Grey. Shaughnessy was home to the ‘lumber barons.’²⁶ Chinese people were precluded from owning land in Point Grey, Shaughnessy, and parts of east Vancouver through ‘informal agreements.’²⁷ There were areas of the City that did not conform to this pattern of homogeneity. Strathcona, and nearby Japantown and Chinatown, were home to the working poor and ‘foreigners.’

Settlers of ‘northern European’ origin brought with them the belief that ‘their culture and their institutions were superior to all others.’²⁸ This superiority was used to exclude ‘foreigners’ – which included southern Europeans and Asians – from power and opportunity. Asians, in particular, were denied political rights. Schooling, seen by those in power as a tool of assimilation (and, ironically, the cultivation of citizens), was open to the children of this group, although the segregation of Chinese students was seriously considered and opportunities for Asian graduates, including citizens, were severely limited. First Nations were not educated in public schools; until the late 1940s, they were required to attend separate federally funded day and residential schools.²⁹



The present Senior Building at Strathcona Community School under construction in 1914, near the end of the boom years. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Leften Stavrianos, who started school at Strathcona in 1919, remembers that in his classes ‘behind the desk always sat a teacher with an English or Scottish or Irish name, while the pupils seated in front of that teacher had names like Wong and Hideyoshi and Bertonlini and Svenson and Yerchenko, and one Stavrianos. The resulting culture gap seemed at the time a chasm as wide as the Grand Canyon’³⁰ Neil Sutherland, in his work on education in Vancouver in the inter-war period, concludes that parents across the City agreed in general about the form schooling should take. He found that while childhood experiences differed quite considerably from neighbourhood to neighbourhood outside of school, in school their experiences were remarkably similar. This meant that all children were exposed to a uniform curriculum that shored up ‘Anglo’ values. From this Sutherland concludes that ‘Vancouver schools sorted children within schools rather than between schools.’³¹

The formation of Planning Commissions in Vancouver and Point Grey in 1926, and the subsequent commission of a city and regional plan, signalled a change in the role of government in shaping urban development. The master plan for Vancouver, completed by American planner Harland Bartholomew in 1928, set out a blueprint that guided development into the 1950s. More immediately, following the completion of the Bartholomew Plan, Point Grey, South Vancouver, and Vancouver amalgamated in 1929 to form the present-day City of Vancouver.

These local initiatives reflected many priorities of urban reform that shaped urban development in western Europe and North American in the early twentieth century. Emphasis was placed on the role of the expert in planning and on the capacity of planning

to improve the physical environment and ameliorate social ills through the application of knowledge gleaned from science (including social science). The rational application of knowledge was described as 'efficient'; and maximizing efficiency was the goal of planning. This movement was not restricted to planning. It shaped thinking across various domains, including education, business, and architecture. In fact, the business model was held out as an example to government, which was urged to be more business-like and hence more efficient. Between 1910 and the post-World War II years, historians point to the ascendancy of 'modernism' as a cultural movement that had tremendous influence in art, architecture, music, and a vast array of social arenas. Strands of this thought continue to have considerable influence in the west. This spirit of planning was embraced in Vancouver in the 1920s and influenced thinking about the location and design of schools.

Creating a School System

With the growth of the population, Vancouver's school enrolment increased quickly, from 1,750 in 1890 to 19,000 in 1923.³² While this may seem axiomatic, it is worth noting that a number of other factors also pushed up enrollment. Compulsory school attendance was introduced to British Columbia cities in 1901 for children aged 7-14³³; in 1912 this was extended to all municipalities and in 1921 to the entire province.³⁴ In addition to rising enrollment caused by immigration and migration, school attendance also rose between 1891 and 1901 because of increasing participation rates. In 1891, according to educational historian Timothy Dunn, 42% of the school age population (aged 5-19) in British Columbia attended school for some time. By 1901 the figure had risen to 63%, and elementary education was 'almost universal.' Most of these students attended elementary school, which went to grade seven (later eight), and only a very tiny fraction went to high school.³⁵ What happened in British Columbia was part of a larger pattern that extended more generally across Canada and western nations. While the numbers of students attending high school remained smaller than those in elementary school, secondary school growth increased faster than elementary. Thus in 1890, 244 students in BC attended public secondary school, and by 1920, some 6,636 were enrolled.³⁶ Vancouver's figures reflect the provincial trend; in 1890 there were thirty-one students enrolled in high school; by 1920 there were 2,280 students enrolled in high school. The Vancouver figures reflected increased enrolment as well as the fact that students moved to Vancouver to attend high school.³⁷ Enrollment growth had bulges as well as a geography, which meant that crises in accommodation occurred at different levels in the system at different times, and in different places.³⁸ Overall, enrollment growth is an important factor in the development of Vancouver's schools.

Bureaucratization was one way that society responded to the pressures of increased urbanization and industrialization, as well as to the resulting social unrest. Through efficient administration, the panacea of public and business administration of the time, it was hoped that there would be a 'wider sharing of greater productivity.'³⁹ During the 1890s, Vancouver's educational system developed all the characteristics typical of emerging bureaucratic urban school systems in North America at the time. These included:

- A hierarchy with a superintendent at the top and orders flowing from the top to the bottom of the organization. From 1901, in urban British Columbia, the superintendent (or municipal inspector), were appointed locally, but the Province retained final say over the appointment and their salary.⁴⁰
- Clearly defined differences in roles of superintendent, principals, assistant principals, and teachers
- Graded schools in which students progressively moved from one grade to another
- A graded course of study for the entire school system, to assure uniformity in teaching in all grades in the system
- An emphasis on rational planning, order, regularity, and punctuality⁴¹

Industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and social unrest also resulted in pressure for educational reform. The Vancouver school system took shape during a period of educational reform in Canada. According to Neil Sutherland, ‘from the 1880s to the 1920s, Canadians wrought enormous changes in the schooling of their children,’⁴² implementing an array of changes to curriculum and pedagogy which, taken together, were known as the ‘new education’. Progressivism is closely, but not exclusively, associated with the thinking of American John Dewey. Dewey believed that learning involved both child and curriculum in a dynamic and fluid process.⁴³ Notable reforms that flowed from Dewey and others of similar-mind included efforts to adopt pedagogical approaches less dependent purely on memorization and recitation and to relate what was taught to the child’s ‘world’; and attempts to make school more practical, with the addition to the curriculum of manual training, domestic science, and other subjects. Concerns about physical health, especially in the context of urbanization, led to the development of physical education programs⁴⁴ – which at first took on a military character – and to introduction of health services in schools. The latter featured the application of ‘scientific knowledge’ to childhood, with children categorized as healthy or unhealthy. As part of this overall program of reform, training standards for teachers increased.

The Annual Reports of Vancouver’s Board of School Trustees reveal the progress of reform in Vancouver:

- 1900: manual training courses were introduced in elementary schools
- 1901: the Provincial Normal School (Teacher’s College) opened in Vancouver
- 1902: physical education drills, led by the infamous Major Bundy, were introduced
- 1905: domestic science courses were introduced in elementary schools and commercial courses in the high school
- 1905: a Medical Inspector of Schools was appointed
- 1913: school gardening was introduced



The King Edward High School basketball team won the Thomson Cup in 1912-13. (Photo: First Fifty Years: Vancouver High Schools 1890-1940)

Reforms intended to provide wider access to secondary education and the introduction of adult education (night school and post-secondary) also characterized this period.

Vancouver established its first high school, with the typical academic curriculum, in 1890. In 1911 the Board's Chairman, Dr. W.D. Brydone-Jack, clearly expressed a broad vision of whom education was to serve: 'In a cosmopolitan city like Vancouver is, our educational system should be able to reach out and benefit all classes and all ages, it should be our endeavour to raise the standard of our citizens morally, socially and financially from the youngest to the oldest.'⁴⁵ Debates about the purpose of secondary education tended to focus on the question of academic vs. vocational programs. Some saw vocational programs, whether at the elementary or secondary level, as providing practical opportunities tailored to students' interests and abilities. Others charged that they limited students and reproduced existing class differences.

The rhetoric of citizenship informed much of the debate about the purpose of secondary education, with advocates for a more general program arguing that without adequate and appropriate secondary education, children could not find their place as socially well adjusted and productive citizens. In short, secondary schooling would assure social order.

Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education

In Vancouver, as elsewhere in North America, the history of adult, vocational, and technical education are closely related. The popularity of practical night school classes, first offered at Seymour School in 1909, led the VSB to identify, in 1911, the need for a centrally located technical high school.⁴⁶ These night school classes, aimed at adults interested in gaining promotion at work, formed one aspect of Vancouver's early forays into vocational education. Manual training, offered at the elementary schools, represented another thread in the early development of vocational education. At the high school level, Vancouver introduced a work-preparation program (pro-vocational) in 1916 and technical courses in 1919, both at King Edward High School.⁴⁷ The purpose of these courses varied from providing specific skills training to preparation for work through general exposure to the routines of work. The difficulty of the courses also varied, from preparation for university engineering programs, to trades-focused programs, to remedial classes. Support for these programs came from both the Provincial and Federal governments. Federal involvement in the field of technical education began with a Royal Commission on the subject in 1910. Legislation providing federal funding for technical education followed in 1919 (*Technical Education Act*). Vancouver Technical School opened in 1921 – downtown at the former Labour Temple. This temporary site was abandoned in 1928 when the new Vancouver Technical High School was erected on East Broadway. Federal, as well as provincial, monies and programs continued to play an important part in shaping technical education in Vancouver through the Depression years and into the post-war era.

The planning and layout of early Vancouver schools reflected a consensus as to how education should be organized within the school building. The elementary school was divided into eight grades, defined by age. Each grade was assigned to separate classrooms. Seemingly obvious, since it became so ubiquitous in urban settings, this organizational strategy represented a specific and significant mid-19th-century educational reform, so clearly expressed in school architecture. Devised in Prussia, classrooms replaced large halls housing groups of up to 100-150 mixed-age students, which had characterized schools before the 1850s.⁴⁸

In a development of the classroom system, several Vancouver schools adopted the platoon system. Promoted by efficiency experts, platoons were intended to maximize efficient use of the school plant by rotating classes through the school. This system of organization was introduced at Lord Tennyson School in 1924-25, and was introduced to progressively more schools through to the 1940s. Drawing on the industrial model, systems of electric bells manufactured by IBM, still in evidence in many Vancouver schools, were used to signal and time the rotations precisely.



Miss Howard and her class at Bayview School, 1920. (Photo: Bayview Community School 1914-1989)

Early classrooms were designed to facilitate teacher-centred instruction, with rows of desks, usually fixed in place, facing the front of the room. The class was taught as a group or, sometimes, broken down into smaller groups by ability. Large classes, with as many as 50-60 students, precluded individual instruction and made classroom discipline very important. Typically, primary classes were larger than senior classes. Women formed the bulk of the teaching workforce, with men teaching the smaller, senior classes and also supervising. Men were always paid more than women regardless of how much work they did. This structure resulted in what educational historians describe as a ‘pedagogical harem’ that reproduced the paternalistic hierarchy of the wider society.⁴⁹

J.H. Putnam, Senior Inspector of Schools, Ottawa, and G. M. Weir, Professor of Education at UBC and later Minister of Education conducted a systematic survey of the British Columbia school system in 1925. They found that school reformers had done a better job of adjusting the list of subjects than changing the actual spirit of education. Thus, most classrooms remained quite formal – lessons were teacher-led and subjects were differentiated rather than integrated.⁵⁰ The public and many educators alike believed that education involved training the mind’s ‘faculties’ of reason and memory through the study of discrete subjects. The emphasis was on learning from books through drill. Copy-work, often from the board, was an important part of the instructional routine, and so blackboard space was carefully managed and maximized. This is evident in various Vancouver schools, where fixed boards are supplemented with sliding boards on top, thus maximizing the writing surface (see, for example, Maple Grove).⁵¹ Neil Sutherland, who argues that formalism dominated education in British Columbia well into the 1950s, writes, in a rather gloomy assessment that invokes an exceedingly boring purgatorial experience, that formalism ‘discouraged independent thought ... provided no opportunity to be creative ... blamed rather than praised ... made no direct or purposeful effort to build a sense of self-worth.’⁵²

One notable exception found by Putnam and Weir was a real effort was made to break down the formal subject approach in some of Vancouver's primary classrooms in the 1920s. This method let children explore their world and develop skills through the use of tools such as sandboxes and activities such as paper-cutting and modelling in Plasticine.⁵³ Putnam and Weir, recognizing the relationship between classroom furnishing and pedagogy, suggested carrying this experiment further by replacing the standard fixed desks with movable desks or simply tables and chairs.

The incremental reforms undertaken early in the century were given more formal shape by Putnam and Weir's survey. Its primary recommendations, many of which were administrative, included:

- standardization and broadening of the curriculum, including more practical subjects and physical education
- standardizing the time allotted to subjects
- introduction of 'junior high school' and the shifting to a program of six years of elementary schools, three years at junior high school, and three at high school, with the high school program divided into academic, commercial, general, and normal school preparation
- elimination of high school entrance examinations
- higher standards for admission to teachers' training
- more use of the project method of instruction⁵⁴

The impact of these recommendations percolated through the Vancouver school system in the 1930s and 1940s. Most changes were structural and administrative – new subjects were introduced and junior high schools were built and opened in 1928-29. Facilities for technical education were improved. Very little, for a number of reasons, changed in terms of how instruction happened.⁵⁵ By the 1930s, at the Board level, there was a small group of experts, overseeing school-based programs.

Within this broad context, individual teachers' personalities made a tremendous difference to students.⁵⁶ Most students remember some of their teachers, often for their 'special' talents, such as being able to write with both hands in multi-coloured crayons.⁵⁷ In student's eyes, fairness – i.e., an equal application of the rules in a rule-bound environment – was an important measure of a teacher.⁵⁸ Particular events, such as the Christmas Concert and Sports Day, stand out. Many Vancouver schools included among their staff teachers who spent almost all their career (as many as 45 years) at a single school. Likewise principals, once appointed, tended to stay. This meant that staff and school were closely identified with individual personalities. It is not unusual to find photographs of long-standing principals in the administrative offices (for example at General Wolfe) or prizes named in honour of long-serving teachers (for example the Batchelor cup at Sexsmith). In fact it is at the level of the individual elementary school that the memory of the labour of female teachers – who dominated the workforce – is most evident.

School histories often combine the history of the neighbourhood with that of the institution. Thus the history of General Wolfe School begins with an evocative description of the characteristic landscape of skunk cabbage swamp populated by frogs.⁵⁹ Likewise a former pupil of Laura Secord School remarks on his school years that ‘You all know there are no more bears near the school; we chased them all away. Trout Lake doesn’t have any more fish; we ate them all.’⁶⁰ Student memories and teachers’ careers bind together the physical school with the neighbourhood and individual histories, forming an important theme in the history of schools and schooling in Vancouver.

Perhaps the biggest change in Vancouver’s educational system in the interwar period was the continued broadening of the secondary school curriculum. Junior high schools were promoted as a way to hold students longer in school by providing them with a transitional bridge between elementary and high school, one in which they could explore their vocational options. Senior high school options were also diversified, with vocational alternatives added and with the continued development of specialized high schools, such as Vancouver Technical, which opened at its present site in 1928. Individual timetables and promotion by subject were innovations that helped hold students longer in school.⁶¹



A view of Vancouver Technical Secondary School in 1957. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

These schools emphasized the ideals of ‘social co-operation, leadership, and democratic citizenship.’ While these courses broadened access, they were established within an environment that stressed the use of scientific tools, such as intelligence-testing, to stream students into the vocational stream that best reflected their ‘abilities.’⁶² While this was seen as the most efficient use of educational resources at the time, the streaming system tended to perpetuate and reproduce social inequalities based on class and race. At Kitsilano (under H.B. King, later Chief Inspector of Schools and an keen advocate of

progressive education) and Templeton Junior High Schools, students were streamed in grade eight so that they would be prepared for the work of whichever specialized high school course they were planning to follow – academic, commercial, or technical.⁶³ Various devices, such as school papers (*Tee Jay* at Templeton), houses, and student council were utilized to try to bring this divided student body together. Former students of Templeton remember the emphasis on order and discipline enforced through student monitors. For example, the first act of the student council was to establish a system of patrol ‘officers’ and demerit/merit points.⁶⁴ Vancouver high schools also had quite distinct ‘personalities’ or ‘cultures.’ Neil Sutherland provides some insight into this, based on his own experience at John Oliver in the late 1930s. Sutherland remembers his school as being ‘famous for track and field, high academic standards.’ John Oliver was ‘intense’ and this intensity was closely associated with the personality of its principal, J.T.E. ‘Jake’ Palmer, and the excellent teachers he recruited.⁶⁵

Building Schools in Vancouver

The quintessential image of the early North American school building is the ‘little white schoolhouse’ – a wood frame building that was domestic in scale and contained one or two rooms. Some of the earliest schools in Vancouver fit this image, and a few survive today, as at Sir Guy Carleton (1896) and Tecumseh (1910).



The one-room wood school built in 1896, a component of Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

When communities could afford them, schools were more than expedient classrooms. They were public buildings that expressed the community’s aspirations. Most school buildings were substantial in appearance as well as in size, reflecting the architectural styles of their day. In the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, most public buildings were designed in a classical vocabulary, based ultimately on architectural sources from classical Greece and Rome, as passed down by the Renaissance. So too were schools. The archetypical school in both Vancouver and South Vancouver was

symmetrically designed, its centrepiece adorned with classical columns and pilasters, topped by a triangular pediment bearing an elaborate cornice. This is seen both in wood, as at Seymour (1900), and in brick, in dozens of schools across the city. In the years after the First World War other popular styles were introduced into schools as well, particularly Collegiate Gothic, first seen at Queen Mary (1915) in Point Grey – an affluent municipality whose larger houses often similarly followed mediievally-inspired models.

At first the Province paid the full bill for property acquisition and school construction. However, it quickly retreated from this irksome financial responsibility. And so in 1888, the cities of Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, and New Westminster became responsible for one third of their teachers' salaries, and from 1891 they were required to pay, through property taxes, the full cost of providing school properties and buildings.⁶⁶

The transfer of responsibility to the City of Vancouver resulted in the development of administrative and management capacity. The Board appointed a Superintendent and established a permanent building committee responsible for overseeing school-siting and construction. Schools built in Vancouver in the 1890s and early 1900s were designed by individual architects hired through a competitive process.⁶⁷

Until 1909 the Board addressed school construction on a site-by-site basis, with individual architects for each project. As a result, the schools built during his period show considerable variety. Douglas Franklin and John Fleming, in their study of early Vancouver school architecture, argue that 'there was no widely accepted model for the form or appearance of a school building.' They suggest that this was an expression of late Victorian individualism.⁶⁸ In addition to brick schools, a number of large wood structures were built during this period. The choice of material was a function of economy. Franklin and Fleming believe that for both the wood and brick buildings cost was the overwhelmingly most important factor driving design. They write that, 'the series of large buildings erected in the Vancouver school district from 1900 to 1909 presents a broad array of architectural forms and styles, decoration and material. Such variety of building types reinforces the notion that the school board was more concerned with economies and expediency than architectural significance or uniformity.'⁶⁹ Ivan Saunders, who also writes about school architecture in Vancouver, concurs, stating: 'In style, decorative detailing and construction materials they [the schools built between 1892 and 1908] are indicative of a school board building modestly and conservatively under some financial constraints.'⁷⁰

Typically, these early schools were built in eight-classroom units, with two floors, each with four classrooms. The basement contained play space divided into girls' and boys' rooms. Sometimes the attic housed an assembly hall. Until after 1900, no provision was made for specialized classrooms and administrative spaces were 'found' in hallways or classrooms. None of these early schools had a dedicated library.⁷¹ Most classrooms accommodated between 30 and 50 students.

The decision to hire an in-house architect in 1909 represented an important moment in the Board's history. This brought design expertise 'in house' and incorporated school architecture into the emerging VSB educational bureaucracy, solidifying through administration an important intellectual connection. By the early 1900s a small cadre of specialists in school architecture had emerged within the new colleges of education in the U.S., where teachers and administrators, including many Canadians, trained. These specialists further promoted central control and standardization of school design and construction.⁷² Just as there has been tension over the purpose of public education, there has also been debate about its architecture, with critics arguing that schools were not factories and should not all look the same. In the end, though, 'the savings to be achieved by standardization were difficult to ignore, and in many school districts' imagination and flexibility in building design and construction were sacrificed to economy.'⁷³ Although standardized designs were not popular in city-districts, they were well-established in rural areas. Beginning in the mid-1880s, the Provincial Department of Public Works provided architectural plans to rural and assisted school districts. A few schools in what is now Vancouver have been attributed to DPW standard designs, including the wood-frame buildings at Lord Kitchener, Emily Carr, and Carleton schools.⁷⁴

British Columbia already had a tradition of standardized buildings to draw on, as in railway stations, police stations (many early police detachments throughout BC followed a single model; one survives as the museum in Oliver), and even banks (the Canadian Bank of Commerce used prefabricated structures in BC and the Prairies).

In Vancouver, the hiring of an in-house architect coincided with an upswing in enrollment and the Board's realization that it needed to undertake a major building program to provide adequate accommodation. The Board held a competition, which was won by Archibald Campbell Hope. His duties included 'the planning and designing for all new schools, supervising major repairs or additions to existing buildings and the setting of construction specifications in consultation with the Board.' Retained on contract, Hope was paid \$2,500 for one year's work.⁷⁵ He continued to devote time to his private practice, and during the year he worked for the VSB, he designed only one school – Simon Fraser.

Rather than renew Hope's contract, in 1910 the Board chose the South-African-born Norman A. Leech as its architect. During Leech's tenure with the Board, which lasted from 1910 to 1912, he designed and oversaw the construction of some 8 to 10 large brick schools and the modernization of older buildings. Leech's major contribution was the development of a standard plan often described as a 'barbell' plan, having a central lateral spine, with the entrance in the centre of one long side, and a wing at either end, projecting both towards the front and the back. Typically the schools had two floors of classrooms with ancillary spaces in the basement. The spine usually contained classrooms and the school office, accessed by a corridor and a central hall at the entrance; and each wing would have a further eight classrooms. So, in a sense, the plan connected two traditional 8-room schools with a link (the 'bar' of the 'barbell'). In many cases the full scheme was achieved only in discrete construction phases, and in some cases one of the

end wings would be built first (e.g. Charles Dickens School). Provision was made for the addition of assembly halls.



L'École Bilingue, formerly Cecil Rhodes School (1910-12), is an example of a school with restrained classical features and a 'barbell' plan designed by VSB architect Norman A. Leech. (Photo: Commonwealth)

Leech usually adopted a restrained classical architectural vocabulary, the manner used for most public buildings of the day (e.g. the Vancouver Court House, now the Vancouver Art Gallery) because of its associations with authority and permanence. Architectural historian Douglas Franklin writes that 'stylistically Leech adopted many of the principles of the Beaux Arts academic revival, particularly the emphasis on studied composition and rational planning for civic buildings. All of his work utilized a symmetrical and harmonious facade, a strong horizontal format and a consistent treatment of decorative details.'⁷⁶

In 1911 the Board estimated that it had saved \$30,000 in architects' fees by hiring Leech.⁷⁷ The pressures on the Board during this period of growth were intense. The Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, William Clubb, expressed the situation well in 1912 when he wrote that 'it is a very hard thing to keep up the schools to the necessary capacity.'⁷⁸ Leech worked closely with the Board's Building Committee, which described the planning of school buildings as 'a problem of convention and efficiency, but also a problem of aesthetic training.'⁷⁹ In theory the Committee endorsed the idea that 'there ought not to be in our City one school without ornamentation, no more than there should be a cheerless, bare schoolroom. The flowers, as well as pictures make much for culture and refinement.'⁸⁰ Nevertheless the Board recognized that the 'buildings must be of the best, and at the least cost.' In this careful balancing act, the Board's Building Committee – perhaps anticipating the Trustees of today – was most keenly interested not in aesthetics, as one might assume, but rather in the construction of schools that promoted

health and safety. To this end they specified buildings that would be well lit, ventilated, and properly heated. (This is ironic, given the state of many rural schools, which barely had outhouses.) Reinforced concrete construction was used to fireproof the buildings, washrooms were made sanitary with careful tiling and the provision of individual flushing mechanisms. These features, in the estimation of the Committee, made for modern schools that were the envy of Canada.⁸¹

Aspects of these values are still very much in evidence in Vancouver schools. For example, schools built during the period make generous use of natural light, which penetrates into hallways through the use of clerestory windows, and the emphasis on ventilation, so that air vents are still found in some classrooms.

Spaces inside the school were carefully segregated on the basis of gender and status. Thus, schools had separate entrances for adults and children. Staff lunchrooms were mixed, but separate retiring rooms were provided for male and female staff. Only principals had proper offices; teachers were typically provided with a dedicated classroom cupboard built to standard design. Both indoor and outdoor space was gendered – girls and boys generally played in segregated spaces both inside and outside. They also entered the building through separate entrances; this segregation was often clearly expressed in the architecture with the ‘Boys’ and ‘Girls’ entrances clearly labelled. Basement spaces for indoor play were also segregated. Within these spaces there was also further segregation, by age, and by association.

Educational reforms were reflected in the work of the Building Committee. Specialized classrooms for subjects such as domestic science and manual training (often in a separate building) were included in the new schools or added to existing buildings. The breadth of the Board’s ambitious plan to serve all Vancouverites, regardless of age, was expressed in its rationale for building assembly halls in its new schools. These halls, it hoped, ‘should be made practically useful in connection with the social work in their respective districts, that lectures, illustrative or otherwise, might be given ... whereby our young people and those more mature age might be benefitted socially and intellectually.’⁸² Evidently assembly halls could be justified, but even in the heady days of 1910-11, when money was plentiful, the Board drew the line, excluding gymnasiums and swimming pools from the new schools. These it said ‘do not greatly assist in the actual work of the school.’⁸³

In the end, the intense pace of construction seems to have overwhelmed both the Board’s architect and its Building Committee. In 1913 the Committee’s Chair, W.H.P. Clubb, reported that it had ‘a considerable amount of internal organization to cope with since the first of the year, owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the Architectural Department brought forward from last year.’⁸⁴ Not too surprisingly, there had been considerable growing pains, and numerous complaints about the inadequacies of the modern ventilation and heating systems. As a result the Board chose to retreat from its decision to retain an architect and returned, as the pace of construction slowed, to commissioning consulting architects as well as engineers. Expertise in construction supervision, however, was retained in house. The design attribution for a number of schools built

between 1913 and 1915 is difficult to ascertain. Different sources list different architects. It is entirely possible that these architects simply saw through, perhaps with some modifications, Leech's designs. The last permanent brick school built before the war shut down construction was Strathcona Senior School, which opened (with eight classrooms) in August 1915.⁸⁵

The war years were tough on Vancouver and its School Board. Money was exceedingly tight. Even though school enrollment continued to grow, albeit not at the frantic pace it had in the pre-war years, no funds were available for new construction. The Board also faced a difficult break-in period with its new buildings; having invested heavily in various 'modern' systems, it was disappointed when they did not always work. Inquiries were held and administrative re-organization undertaken. Maintenance also became an issue, a theme that recurs in annual reports. In 1916 the Committee noted, in a statement that expressed a pride tinged with worry, that Vancouver had 'a splendid pile of school buildings; few cities can boast of anything better. Our citizens are proud of them; but they will soon lose their admiration if they are allowed to go into decay for want of proper care and attention.'⁸⁶

The end of the First World War did not resolve Vancouver's woes. Unlike Point Grey and even South Vancouver, Vancouver was unable to convince ratepayers to endorse expenditures on school construction. The Building Committee had to adapt to this situation. Putting on a cheery face, it described the wood-frame buildings it built in lieu of 'modern' fireproof concrete schools as 'cottage schools' that were well-ventilated and well-lit.⁸⁷ Others were less impressed with the situation. Children were being crowded into non-instructional spaces, transferred from school to school, and, in the primary grades, half-time instruction was substituted for full-time. When this proved unsatisfactory, an average class size of 45 was established. The most extreme example of the consequence of this policy was found at Franklin School, which consisted entirely of a series of small 'temporary' wood-frame buildings. All told, by 1924 Vancouver had 167 temporary classrooms.⁸⁸

By 1925, when Putnam and Weir concluded their survey of British Columbia's school system, which included a detailed review of Vancouver's situation, no permanent (e.g., brick or concrete) school buildings had been constructed in Vancouver since 1914. Putnam and Weir were very critical of Vancouver's school building program finding that:

Many schools show an inexcusable waste of public money in their construction. Domes, turrets, cupolas, cut-stone trimmings, ornate cornices, mouldings and beamed ceilings [the gymnasium at Britannia was explicitly criticized], unnecessary outside entrances, are features that have cost the ratepayers an enormous sum and contribute nothing to the efficiency of the school system. In many cases they have added nothing to the architectural appearance of the schools.⁸⁹

Putnam and Weir had a very clear idea of what constituted good school design, and it certainly did not include architectural or engineering 'frills.' In a phrase that middle-

class, Protestant Canadians might recognize as reflective of their values, they wrote that ‘everything really essential can be had at moderate expense.’ By everything they meant ‘good lighting, good ventilation, satisfactory heating and sanitary conveniences.’⁹⁰ These facets of school design were very much catchwords in the ‘hygiene’ movement, which tended to overlay school operation. The obsession with good light was well founded. Some schools were without artificial light, so good lighting meant appropriately design to let in natural light, in order to save children’s eyesight. Ventilation was also a very real issue. Schools were notoriously unhealthy places – especially during the era of contagious diseases and before widespread vaccinations. Washrooms in schools with running water were seen as a boon to attempts to curtail contagious diseases, which ran through schools. Thus, while Putnam and Weir found the temporary buildings inadequate, they suggested that Vancouver examine its priorities and focus its future school-building efforts on the ‘real essentials.’ They cited the recently completed high school in the City of North Vancouver as a model for coastal communities. Using native materials (wood, hollow tile, and grey rock-stucco), the school had been constructed for \$90,000. Fire risk was reduced by placing the furnace outside the building in a fireproof pit.⁹¹

After ten years of minimal funding, Vancouver succeeded convincing ratepayers to pass school-building bylaws from 1924 to 1928. These bylaws funded the completion of a number of the schools built during the 1910-14 era, including most of those designed by Norman Leech. The Board took aspects of Putnam and Weir’s advice to heart and completed these schools for less than the cost of the original construction.⁹² The impact of Putnam and Weir’s critique and recommendations can also be clearly read in the new construction that occurred in Vancouver system after 1925. Kitsilano and Templeton Secondary Schools were first built at junior high schools, in direct response to the survey’s recommendations. Cheaper building methods were adopted across the system, with stucco finishes evident at Kitsilano, Templeton, and most other schools of the period. Exterior ornamentation was more restrained, although not entirely eschewed. The new elementary schools, all of which were built on the east side, were arranged on a simple rectangular plan. Where the Board did not compromise was on the question of fireproof construction (e.g., concrete rather than wood ‘millwork’ construction), arguing that children should be housed in schools should that were ‘artistic, clean, and solid.’ In the long term this would prove to be a good investment, with reduced insurance charges and maintenance, and therefore, in the language of the day, to be more efficient. In addition it was felt that ‘the public generally take pride in their public buildings, which possess a high advertising value to the City.’⁹³ With its shops, auditorium, gymnasium, domestic science, and commercial rooms, Templeton clearly reflected the expanded curriculum of the time as well as the increased emphasis on vocational training.

From the mid-1920s onward, most new schools began to show modernistic tendencies in their design, seen mainly in a comparatively planar and linear exterior treatment that expresses volume more than it does mass. This is seen, for example, in the reduced Classical Revival of Kitchener (1925) and in the concrete classroom building erected at Queen Mary in 1926, which forms a nice contrast with more robust and ornate brick Queen Mary of 1915. In some cases the schools continued to use a decorative vocabulary derived from the Classical Revivals, as at Mackenzie (1930; considered Classical because

of the pilasters beside the entry), or from Collegiate Gothic, as at Point Grey Secondary (1929; Gothic because of the pointed arches). Both were designed by architects Townley and Matheson. In both cases, however, the decoration is quite abstracted and has features of the geometric ornamental style that we call Art Deco, which is familiar locally from the same architects' City Hall (1935-36). By contrast, Quilchena (1926) and Renfrew (1928) are much simpler in form; their style is sometimes known as Moderne or Modern Classicism. However neatly this simplification of form may be associated with the advice dispensed by Putnam and Weir, it remains to be debated whether school architects were following the advice of the two school critics, or whether Putnam and Weir were responding to the universal simplification of architecture in an era when the modern movement was gradually taking hold.



Renfrew Elementary School, built in 1928 to designs by VSB Architect Frank A.A. Barrs and photographed in 1957. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

A problem that faced Vancouver, Point Grey, and South Vancouver was the absence of any kind of long-term plan. Schools were built in reaction to development, not in advance of it. As discussed above, development in the City and its suburbs was not formally planned. As a result sites were often expensive because they were bought late in the development process. They were also often smaller than desired. An accommodation crisis often preceded construction. Putnam and Weir emphasized the importance of planning, writing:

The question of choosing suitable school sites for Vancouver and especially for a Greater Vancouver is scarcely second in importance to a reorganization of the schools themselves. Upon it depends, in great measure, the wise and economic expansion of a metropolitan school system. As yet Vancouver is a mere outline or sketch of what it will be. It

is a framework with the scaffolding plainly visible. What the City will be and what its schools will be cannot be separated. Now, while great open spaces are available, is the time to choose school sites.⁹⁴

Putnam and Weir saw this problem as one to be addressed by school experts, not by businessmen or other 'lay' people. There was a need for both short-term planning and planning for the longer term of at least 25 years. Putnam and Weir's insights were not unique. In parallel with city-planning effort, and informed by the same urban reform ethos, efforts to address this situation had begun as early as 1920, when a relatively informal survey of potential school sites was conducted on the initiative of the Assistant Municipal Inspector, T.A. Brough, in his noon hours.⁹⁵ This grew into a full planning process, with formal reports in the early 1930s.⁹⁶ Board officials and committees drew on the work of the Town Planning Commission to determine possible school locations and determine their size.⁹⁷

School grounds were also the subject of considerable discussion among educators and planners. Three factors drove the development of school grounds. There was the issue of aesthetics: citizens complained about muddy, unfinished grounds. Pragmatic concerns also came into play, Trustees fretted about school grounds that were quite literally washed away in heavy rainfall. A grounds superintendent who was also a trained architect, Frank A.A. Barrs, was hired in 1914 to manage the 'improvements to grounds of a permanent character.'⁹⁸ Another factor was related to the educational reform movement, which combined with urban reformists to urge the development of physical education and supervised playgrounds in schools and parks. In 1920, H.B. King introduced supervised play at General Gordon School, where he was principal. Playgrounds, it was argued 'are scarcely second in importance to good school buildings.'⁹⁹ A logical extension of this, attractive to the efficiency experts, was that the school grounds could then be counted as an additional classroom and therefore as productive space.¹⁰⁰ When Harland Bartholomew prepared his plan for Vancouver in 1928 he reviewed the city's public recreation assets, including its school grounds. He found that, in general, Vancouver's schools 'had not been properly fitted into the recreational scheme.' Play areas were small and underdeveloped.¹⁰¹ Bartholomew recommended the development of elementary schools, housing between 850 and 1,300 children, on sites of 5 acres. High schools sites, with playing fields, needed to be even larger – occupying some 15-25 acres. He saw school sites as community resources and believed that schools should be designed and used as community centres housing gymnasium, auditorium, library, art gallery, and other community facilities.¹⁰²

It was the exigencies of the Depression that resulted in action on a number of Bartholomew's recommendations. Funds made available by the provincial and federal governments were used to pay unemployed men to 'make more beautiful our grounds, more comfortable our playing fields, and more permanent our fencing.'¹⁰³ Many of the retaining walls found at Vancouver schools can be traced back to the work of these men. Provincial and federal funds were also made available to support recreation and community drama programs designed to 'protect the youth of British Columbia from degenerating effects caused by enforced idleness, and to build up the morale and

character which rest on a good physical basis.¹⁰⁴ School facilities were pressed service for these programs which continued to function through the war years and can be linked directly to the development of local recreation commissions and community centres.¹⁰⁵ This trend, combined with changes in the provincial curriculum in 1933, which placed a new emphasis on physical education, created pressure for new recreational facilities.¹⁰⁶ The Board's post-war gymnasium building program is likely a direct product of these pre-war initiatives.

A key pressure point that emerged in the 1920s was secondary education. The increased breadth of the curriculum, combined with the depressed economy, and a small post World War I baby boom, meant more students were starting and staying in school. New facilities, including Kitsilano, Templeton, and Point Grey High Schools, as well as Vancouver Technical, were built in the late 1920s. Between 1930 and 1950, no new high schools were built in Vancouver. This was particularly problematic in the late 1930s, when high school enrollment peaked and the City refused to endorse the necessary spending to provide accommodation.¹⁰⁷ The scope of the problem can be seen in the enrollment numbers: in 1929 there were 5,955 students enrolled in high school, by 1937, there were 9,463.¹⁰⁸

The Vancouver Board retained architectural expertise in house through the 1920s and 1930s. Frank Barrs, who started as grounds superintendent, acted as the Board's architect in the 1920s, retiring in about 1933.¹⁰⁹ He was followed by Harry Postle, who started with the Board in 1928. The Board also retained outside architects during this period. For example, architects Sharp and Thompson were responsible for the design of Templeton Junior High School. Queen Elizabeth Elementary, which opened in 1940, shows the influence of English school architecture on Henry Postle, who designed it, and the Board more generally (Superintendent MacCorkindale toured the United Kingdom in the summer of 1937 and filed a glowing report on school facilities there).¹¹⁰ The cottage-style of the school is unique in the Province and sets it in contrast to earlier and later schools. The full gymnasium/auditorium reflects the increased emphasis on physical education in the curriculum and the idea that the school should be a community facility. The grounds, developed in conjunction with the Parks Board, reflected the spirit of the recommendations of the Bartholomew report.¹¹¹

The problems of school accommodation, described in the Board's Annual Report of 1937, as a 'hardy annual'¹¹² were exacerbated by the Depression. The challenges of the Depression changed the Vancouver School Board and its approach to funding school construction. New sources of funding were developed – for example, the money that paid for the extension of Vancouver Technical and construction of Queen Elizabeth School, among other projects, was borrowed from the federal government using the revenues raised through tuition-based adult education and facilities rental as collateral.¹¹³ Additional funds were raised by leasing commercially valuable property, such as that at Broadway and Granville, the site of the Fairview High School of Commerce, to businesses. At the same time, social dislocation caused by unemployment accelerated the trend toward the integration of community and school planning and programming. The experience gained by Board during the Depression, in tandem with educational changes

through the inter-war period, set the stage for the intense wartime planning and post-war school building discussed below.

Early School Construction in South Vancouver, Point Grey, Hastings Townsite, and DL 301

The accompanying chart lists the schools established in the South Vancouver before the creation of Point Grey in 1908 and in the Hastings Townsite / District Lot 301 before their absorption by the City in 1911. Within these areas, school districts were organized around individual schools and settlement centres. This system of organization ended in 1906 when the Province consolidated the school districts to match municipal boundaries.

Until 1901, the Provincial government paid the full cost of school construction and managed the whole process, from property acquisition to furnishing, outside of the major cities. After 1901, it reduced its financial role, but continued to provide design advice and, where necessary, standardized architectural plans.¹¹⁴ The best known and documented example of standardized Department of Public Works school architecture, symbolic of the important role the provincial government played outside of Vancouver in shaping school architecture, is found at Sir Guy Carleton School, where two wood structures date from 1905 (one room) and 1907 (two rooms) respectively.¹¹⁵ These buildings are not only example of early provincial school architecture, but are also important material symbols of the distinct early settlement history, with its rural character, of the Collingwood neighbourhood, and of South Vancouver more generally.

School Construction in South Vancouver to 1929

Rapid suburban development in South Vancouver between 1908 and 1912 resulted in an increase in school enrolment, from 569 students in 1906-07 to 3,621 in 1912-13.¹¹⁶ This rapid increase resulted in a crisis of school accommodation, which saw students scattered through the area in rented premises. As in Vancouver and Point Grey, school construction followed rather than anticipated an increase in enrolment, resulting in a chaotic transition period during which there were far more students than classroom spaces for them. A school-building program began in 1910 and continued through 1914; under this program twelve schools were built in South Vancouver with a total of 128 classrooms. The majority of these schools were located along Kingsway (Selkirk, Carleton) across 41st Avenue, and on the southern slope, reflecting the pattern of settlement and the closely related street-railway routes.¹¹⁷ At Sexsmith, a small one-room school was built in 1912 with the bigger brick school constructed the following year. These new schools were described as 'a better type of building' with 'more permanent materials used in construction. The walls were of brick, the basement of concrete, while partitions and floors were built of wood, "mill" construction.'¹¹⁸ South Vancouver schools are readily identified, not only by their location, but also by their names which were taken from Canadian history – an idea originating with the students of Cedar Cottage (renamed Selkirk) in 1910.¹¹⁹

During this period, South Vancouver developed the basic components of what was then considered a modern educational system. It established a high school (John Oliver) in 1912 and developed manual training and domestic science centres for its upper elementary students. An educational bureaucracy was established with the appointment of a superintendent. The Municipality took a slightly different approach to school construction than Vancouver. South Vancouver established an ongoing relationship with one architect, Joseph Henry Bowman, who designed most schools built in South Vancouver during this period. The chart at the end of this section lists the schools built in South Vancouver during this period. It is interesting to note that some of these sites feature more than one school building designed by Bowman. Sexsmith is an interesting example of this, with a small wood-frame building and a larger brick structure, both designed by Bowman, built in quick succession. Set side by side, the pairing speaks eloquently to the rapid enrollment growth experienced in South Vancouver in 1908-12.

PHOTO NEAR HERE: PLACED OUTSIDE THE BOX (BELOW).

Caption:

After 1912, South Vancouver's building program collapsed along with its tax base. By 1918 the economic depression that accompanied World War I had resulted in loss of population and the Municipality was bankrupt. Enrollment in South Vancouver's schools increased at a slower pace through the 1920s, and although only one entirely new schools building was constructed (the high school at 45th and Draper) were built many of the schools built in the 1908-12 period were added to. Some additions were small 'temporary' wood-frame structures, but others were substantial brick edifices. J.H. Bowman continued to serve as the Board's architect, giving South Vancouver a continuity of design advice not found in Vancouver or Point Grey.



J.W. Sexsmith Community School has a two-room wood school (1912) and an eight-room brick school (1912-13), both designed by South Vancouver School Board Architect J.H. Bowman. (Photo: Commonwealth)

School Construction in Point Grey to 1929

Point Grey's story is similar to that of South Vancouver, but without the dimension of bankruptcy. Rapid suburban development along developing transit routes resulted in severe enrollment pressures. Small 'temporary' schools dealt with the immediate problem; more permanent accommodation followed. Typically this was adequate to deal with immediate needs, but further enrollment growth, both in existing population nodes and at new nodes, resulted in pressure for new schools. Sometimes temporary buildings remained at school sites and were pressed back into service as school enrollment grew.

As was common in municipal systems throughout the Province, school construction was dependent on funding approved by the ratepayers at municipal referendums. Point Grey's ratepayers approved major funding bylaws in 1909 and 1911-13. Classified as a 'Rural Municipal School District,' Point Grey received assistance from the Province, which donated a number of early school sites, including Queen Mary and Lord Kitchener (the 'Department' also 'erected there a four room school in 1914.)¹²⁰ School design was taken seriously. In 1912 the Board held a competition to select 'the most suitable plans as the basis for a building programme.'¹²¹ As elsewhere, value was placed on fireproof construction and good ventilation – the two criteria that seem to have defined 'modern' in the context of school construction. As in South Vancouver and Vancouver, school construction ceased during World War I. In contrast to Vancouver, Point Grey was able to resume construction quite soon after the War, with another major funding bylaw passed in 1923. Ventilation seems to have especially interested Point Grey which was the first in the Province to install a combined heating and ventilation system (Univent).¹²²

Point Grey's building program came in for some criticism from Putnam and Weir in their 1925 report on British Columbia schools. The Municipality, which received provincial assistance to build its schools, had also borrowed money and built fireproof buildings at the same time as Vancouver, which did not receive provincial funding, could not. This struck Putnam and Weir as 'unjust.' Their report infers, although it does not say overtly, that Point Grey was exploiting the funding formula and that British Columbians generally were subsidizing the construction of expensive schools in a wealthy municipality.¹²³

Enrollment in Point Grey increased from 2,315 in 1921 to 4,977 in 1926, and 'the heavy building program recently completed again proved inadequate.' By 1925 the public seems to have wearied of the problem or the resulting debt load. The Board responded by scaling back its building program. It eschewed its ambitious program of fully fireproof concrete schools and instead built 'exterior walls, heating plants and hall stairways ... of reinforced concrete, the remaining interior to be mill and open joist construction.'¹²⁴ If the earlier schools could be called 'expensive modern' we might label these schools 'cheaper modern.' The fickleness of the public, with which the Vancouver Board struggled in the early 1920s, was visited on the Point Grey Board in 1927 and 1928. First, in 1927, the public rejected a funding bylaw to improve high school accommodation¹²⁵; a year later (likely in response to the accommodation crisis and public relations campaign conducted by the PTA and the Ratepayer's Association that followed),

a bylaw supporting the construction of a junior high school passed with the largest majority of any previous funding bylaw.¹²⁶

Like Vancouver and South Vancouver, Point Grey also developed a small educational bureaucracy to administer its school system. This system, by 1928, included 11 elementary schools and two high schools (Magee and Lord Byng). A junior high (Point Grey), one of the innovations of education in British Columbia in the inter-war period, was under construction when Point Grey amalgamated with South Vancouver and Vancouver in 1928. This building, designed by the architectural firm Townley and Matheson, is notable for its architecture. It used the Collegiate Gothic style – then being adopted at the University of British Columbia – in new, concrete, construction, evoking the ‘dreaming spires’ of Oxford and the academic Gothic of Cambridge’ and is considered ... a fine example of the artistic possibilities of poured-in-place concrete that were explored by architects in the late 1920s and early 1930s.¹²⁷ Other schools built in Point Grey during the 1920s were designed by other architectural firms, including Twizell and Twizell (who had done work for the Board before World War I) and Gardiner and Mercer (where Harry Postle, later the VSB’s architect, was employed).¹²⁸ Fleming describes Point Grey’s buildings as maintaining the picturesque appearance of late Victorian buildings’ into the 1920s.¹²⁹ This was true of some of the schools built in the early 1920s in Point Grey, but not of all. The addition to Queen Mary School, designed by Gardiner and Mercer and opened in 1927, is a remarkably simple rectangular box.

1.3 Education in Vancouver after 1940

Background

Vancouver’s population grew slightly during the 1930s and then, with the influx of war-workers and post-war prosperity and immigration, expanded rapidly – from 275,353 in 1941 to 344,833 in 1951, and 384,522 in 1961.¹³⁰ With the exception of a dip in 1981, reflecting the nation-wide recession that hit BC particularly hard, Vancouver’s population has continued to increase up to the present. The table below traces this:

1961	384,522
1971	426,256
1981	414,281 (recession)
1991	471,844
2001	545,671 ¹³¹

While Vancouver’s population grew in absolute terms, it was the regional population that exploded, as transportation infrastructure and planning decisions fuelled suburban development beyond the city’s boundaries.¹³² This expansion reflected the general growth of British Columbia’s economy, with Vancouver as the commercial hub, as well as the overall urbanization of Canada’s population.

The story of the baby boom and its aftermath is an important theme in the post-war development of Vancouver and its schools, affecting not only the number of schools, but where they were built. Writing about the history of the baby boom generation, historian Doug Owrain points out that most authorities seriously underestimated the size of the boom, believing that it would be a short-lived phenomenon. This was evident in a planning documents prepared by the VSB's Bureau of Measurements. The Bureau anticipated the boom and anticipated the need for new school accommodation—Vancouver's birth rate was already on the rise in 1943,¹³³ but it did not anticipate the scope or duration of the boom. In a 1945, the Bureau of Measurements advised the Board that:

All students of population agree ... that the long-range trend of births will be lower than it was prior to 1940, and no rapid increase is expected in the school enrollment. Thus, probably less than 7 percent of the total population, or not more than 30,000 children, will be attending public elementary schools by 1971.

What the report did predict was increased secondary enrollments: 'more and more youths can be expected to obtain a high school education.'¹³⁴



Intramural athletes wave to the camera at McBride Elementary School, 1961. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

The Board's 1945 predictions were based on past trends; the baby boom defied these trends. It was a product of a number of factors: post-war prosperity and strong social pressures – and desire, after years of war – to marry. These factors, and a relatively large numbers of men and women of 'marriageable age,' combined to mean that in 1946 'more families were formed than ever before in Canada.'¹³⁵ The rate of marriage remained high through to the mid-1950s. The baby-boom children started school in 1952. Enrollment in British Columbia schools increased from 130,605 in 1945 to 321,760 in 1961¹³⁶ to 489,596 in 1969¹³⁷, the fastest rate in Canada. In Vancouver, enrollment grew from 38,581 in 1949 to 59,854 in 1959;¹³⁸ total enrolment seems to have peaked in 1969 at 72,024 (elementary enrollment peaked in 1967; secondary in 1975).¹³⁹ Enrollment in Vancouver began to drop by the mid-1970s, as the end of the baby boom and regional development patterns saw families moving to the suburbs. This meant that even though Vancouver's population continued to grow, the number of children under 15 actually dropped – by 26% between 1971 and 1981.¹⁴⁰ This is a reminder that population and school enrollment do not rise and fall in parallel. By 2004 enrollment stood at 55,487, less than in 1959. Projections call for a slow decline in enrollment, with 54,681 expected in 2014.¹⁴¹

The particulars of Vancouver's history and geography had a direct impact on how the baby boom affected development and schools. Vancouver's housing situation, already tight because of the influx of war workers, became even tighter with the return of veterans and the rapid rate of family formation. Planning for post-war reconstruction, which began at all levels of governments around 1943, had anticipated this, but had not come to grips with the relative roles of the private and public sectors. In Vancouver tremendous pressure from housing activists and veterans, which took the form of eviction protests and extended to squats at the Hotel Vancouver and army camps, resulted in action. Construction of 1,000 houses by Wartime Housing (predecessor of CMHC), a Crown Corporation, began in 1944-45 on already-serviced lots in the area bounded by Main, Fraser, Broadway, and Marine Drive. The first of these houses, located at 5149 Elgin, was occupied in 1945.¹⁴² Systematic development of two subdivisions, expressly built for veterans, followed, with houses in Renfrew Heights ready for occupation in 1948 and in Fraserview two years later. These developments caught the Board off-guard. It had predicated in 1945 little growth in the south and east sections of the City and expected the existing schools in these areas to absorb most population growth for some time to come.¹⁴³

According to historical geographer (and later City Councillor) Walter Hardwick, 'Vancouver became the site of a vast new urban expansion after World War II.'¹⁴⁴ Many people who had not been able to establish themselves in careers during the Depression and through the war finally found themselves able to – and, just as Los Angeles drew people to the west in the United States, Vancouver served a similar function in Canada.¹⁴⁵ Thus, in addition to the planned veterans developments, there was also, throughout Vancouver, a general intensification of residential development, with the tracts of empty land and the numerous empty lots within the existing city boundaries filled in through the

1950s and into the 1960s. The ‘episodic’ character of development is especially evident in east and south Vancouver, where residential construction dating from each of Vancouver’s building boom periods is evident in the streetscape. Streetcar access, which had driven development in the pre-World War I boom, was not as relevant in this post-1945 world, as the private automobile became more available and transit systems switched to the more flexible diesel buses.

The School Board responded to this pattern of development first by expanding and modernizing many existing schools. As a result, many Vancouver schools have a classroom wing or auditorium / gymnasium / lunchroom built during the 1950s or 1960s. Many neighbourhoods with pre-war schools also saw small primary annexes built to absorb overflow. These additions and annexes – often overlooked – are an important part of the history of Vancouver’s schools. The layering of buildings on many school sites directly reflects the layered chronology of neighbourhood histories.



Walter Moberly Annex B, built in 1957 and designed by VSB Architect Alan B. Wilson, is one of many primary annexes built at the time to absorb the growing school enrollment. (Photo: VSB)

In some areas, such as the West End, the character of residential development continued the shift that began before the War to densification, with apartment buildings and rooming houses taking the place of single-family dwellings. Other areas, including parts of Kitsilano, Kerrisdale, Grandview, Mount Pleasant, Marpole, and Hastings East, saw low-density housing torn down and replaced with low-rise apartments.¹⁴⁶ In contrast with earlier trends, this redevelopment was the direct product of planning decisions made by the City. Champlain Heights and the remains of the CPR landholdings were developed in the 1970s and 1980s. The former, an intensively planned community, was the last major

‘greenfield’ development in the City. Conversion or redevelopment of ‘brownfield’ industrial sites, including Yaletown / Concord Pacific lands, False Creek South, and Fraserlands have characterized residential development since the 1980s.

New school populations took shape in places that either never had schools, or had not had one for many years. False Creek School and the recently built Elsie Roy School, in Yaletown, were built in response to this new pattern of development. More than twice as many children lived downtown in 2001 than in 1991.¹⁴⁷ At the extreme western edge of the City, UBC, which lies within the School District, although it is not in the City, is now in the process of developing ‘University Town.’ Both Elsie Roy and University Hill are already full and students are travelling to older schools. The ups and downs of provincial funding and related formulas are part of the issue here, but there has been an enduring caution and a longstanding fear of overbuilding generally both at the Board and Provincial levels.¹⁴⁸ Thus, the 1950 Annual Report of the VSB warned that ‘the danger of overbuilding is always present’ with building programs only recommended after ‘cautious investigations.’¹⁴⁹ Just as it has been in the past, the geography of school populations is a factor. Today, this is complicated by the fact that funding is based on the space available in the District and not in sub-areas or neighbourhoods.

British Columbia in general, and Vancouver in particular, became less British in the post-war period as immigration from continental Europe and later from Asia, shifted the demography. Significant attitudinal and legislative changes that flowed from wartime experiences made Canada more welcoming to non-British newcomers. Some longstanding injustices were addressed in the late 1940s, with legislative changes that made it possible for Asian residents to become citizens and participate more fully in Canadian society. Similar rights were not granted to First Nations people until 1960, who were granted the right to vote in federal and provincial elections only in that decade. In 1966 Canada’s immigration policy ceased to formally favour Europeans, by adopting a ‘blind’ point system.¹⁵⁰ During this period the number of people of Chinese descent living in British Columbia rose by four times, to 100,000, with most settling in the Vancouver area.¹⁵¹ By 1982, more than half of Vancouver school students did not speak English as their first language.¹⁵²

By the 2001 census, the number of people living in Vancouver who were part of a visible ‘minority,’ born here or elsewhere, was 264,495, close to half the population. Of this group, 161,110 were Chinese. Many Vancouverites – whether or not they were born here – do not speak English or French as their first language. In 2001, 268,225 people had learned another language first.¹⁵³ These trends mean that within schools there is much greater diversity of both the teaching staff and student population. Programs in English as a second language (ESL) are very important and the Board has made formal efforts to build mutual respect and understanding through support programs and services such as those provided by multicultural liaison workers. Funding for these programs is an ongoing issue between school boards, provincial, and federal governments. ‘Canadianization’ has continued to be part of what happens at school, while race remains an important issue.¹⁵⁴

Neighbourhoods within Vancouver continue to have ethnic identities, but they are no longer enforced by restrictive covenants or other legal / official means. Class, as defined by income, plays an important role within all ethnic communities in determining residential choices. In fact, arguably it is the intersection of class, race / ethnicity, and often, but not always, recent arrival in Canada, that has remained important in driving neighbourhood identity. When Vancouver designated eight 'inner-city' schools with marked levels of poverty in 1988-89, these included the same schools and neighbourhoods where, in 1920, the Board's medical staff reported significant levels of malnutrition.¹⁵⁵ In 1920 this was addressed with the organization of a free-milk program for students at Strathcona, Seymour, Queen Alexandra, and Grandview.¹⁵⁶ An 'Open Air' School, established in 1925 in Charles Dicken's old annex, took this program further providing food and medical care to seriously undernourished and 'pre-tubercular' students.¹⁵⁷

Major Trends in Education

Described as a 'shock wave of children' the post-war baby boom created a society that 'seemed to revolve around babies.'¹⁵⁸ Superficially at least, this was a child-centred society – more so than previous generation and more so than subsequent generations. Historian Doug Oram, drawing from the books and magazine articles written by experts' notes that parents, shaped by depression and war, were urged to create homes where 'at the centre of a web of social and familial values were the children themselves.' In Oram's estimation, 'this social structure was neither an accident, nor, even in the child-oriented twentieth century, normal.'¹⁵⁹ Of course expert advice and reality are often quite removed from one another, and the 'golden age' of the family, which the experts urged parents to create, has eluded historians who have looked closely at day-to-day life in 1950s Canada.¹⁶⁰

Canadian classrooms did not so much change as they adjusted, slowly, to this generation of children and their parents. The tension between formalism and progressivism continued to influence what happened in the classroom. The progressive agenda was particularly evident in the physical form of schools; especially the kinds of spaces they contained and the physical arrangement of those spaces. New schools were part of the program, but so were additions and alterations to existing facilities. Many of the latter advanced ideas that had been established before the 1940s; post-war prosperity made it possible to, at last, apply these ideas generally.

In 1944 a Vancouver elementary school building committee described the purpose of elementary education as being 'that each child may develop his personality through activities designed for his well-being ... to develop in each individual child the knowledge, interests, habits, ideals, and powers whereby he will find his place to help shape himself, and eventually, our society, towards a fuller life.'¹⁶¹ This approach, which called for learning based on 'project' or 'enterprise,' required flexible learning spaces that facilitated rather than discouraged activity.¹⁶² While never whole-heartedly adopted by teachers for a host of practical and philosophical reasons, new and refurbished

classrooms were built on an ‘open plan.’ In the 1940s and 1950s, this simply meant desks were not fixed in place in rigid rows (although that was still how most teachers chose to arrange them), and in some primary rooms, tables replaced desks. Primary classrooms were provided with equipment that facilitated activity, including a sand table, number table, work bench, and, if possible, a sink. These furnishings can still be found in many Vancouver elementary schools.

The physical legacy of progressive education is evident in both large and small details at many Vancouver schools. For example, audio-visual aids were an important adjunct to progressive education. Seen as a means of breaking down the dominance of book-driven memory-based learning, these aids were introduced in Vancouver schools beginning in the 1920s. The Board officially established an Audio-Visual Department in 1937.¹⁶³ Schools carefully husbanded this expensive equipment with special ‘audio-visual’ storage spaces (see for example Maple Grove School). Projection booths, with their heavy fireproof doors, can be found at many schools. These doors and spaces, vestigial evidence of past uses of technology in education, puzzle and fascinate contemporary students and staff. Likewise, specialized rooms, including art, science, music rooms, and libraries, were added to many Vancouver elementary schools in modernization campaigns undertaken in the 1950s, completing a process begun in the 1930s as elementary schools adopted the platoon system.¹⁶⁴ These spaces were intended to help to foster a more flexible, activity-based education. Many of these spaces are still clearly legible, and some even are still used for their original purpose, in elementary schools.



The Strathcona School Band, seen in an undated photo. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Progressivism also provided an impetus to those interested in addressing the needs of children not well provided for in the standard classroom. Vancouver began work in this direction as early as 1913, when it was informed by the eugenics movement, which focused on the need to segregate disabled children so that they did not 'taint' normal children.¹⁶⁵ This led to the establishment of classes for mentally and, later, physically disabled children.¹⁶⁶ In the 1950s, this work continued, albeit with a more progressive, child-centred, rationale, with the establishment of enriched classes for the gifted, a school for mentally retarded children, and programs for emotionally disturbed children.¹⁶⁷ Some experiments were also undertaken in the instruction of mathematics and with the introduction of French at the elementary level at Queens Mary and Elizabeth Schools and Lord Kitchener School.

The expansion of the role of the state in the lives of individuals continued to be debated in the context of the school being part of a larger social welfare system. The Chair of the Vancouver School Board articulated this in 1945, writing in the Annual Report that 'whether we like it or not, home training no longer plays the predominant role it used to play in the development of the qualities which will make a people great. More and more services are being demanded of the schools. THIS is a trend that will not halt.'¹⁶⁸

Vancouver used schools to deliver dental and medical services beginning early in the twentieth century. These services, severely cut back during the Depression, were revived after the war. Purpose-built medical rooms were included in all new schools and inserted into older ones. Additional dental clinics were built. Lunchrooms were also added to many Vancouver schools in the post-war period. Hot lunch programs, organized by parents are mentioned in numerous school histories in the context of the Depression and malnourished students. By the early 1940s, the Board was under pressure to provide facilities for preparation and consumption of a hot lunch. Whether the pressure for hot lunches stemmed from nutritional concerns or increased numbers of families where parents were not home at the noon hour is not articulated in the Board's Annual Reports, but what is clear is that Parent-Teacher Associations took on the provision of this service in many of the Board's schools in the 1940s and that lunchrooms, with kitchens, were built to facilitate this.¹⁶⁹

One of the most significant developments was the establishment of Vancouver's first kindergartens, at Henry Hudson and Dawson Schools in 1944. The importance of kindergartens had been recognized in 1922, when the Public School Act was amended to permit school boards to establish them, but their establishment was delayed for many years because of ambivalence about funding, combined with social norms that prescribed at-home care for young children. For many years it was seen as a social service to mothers in the 'abnormal' situation of needing to work rather than as educationally important for all children. It was not until 1944 that the Province agreed, on an experimental basis and in the context of the exigencies of war, to fund the first classes. By this time the educational importance of kindergarten had gained relatively wide acceptance. More kindergartens were opened following war, and in the 1950s kindergarten rooms were included in new schools and added to modernized ones. The pace of the growth of this program was slower than the Board and parents hoped for because the Province remained ambivalent about funding it. It was not until 1961, when

the Province agreed to fund kindergarten, that the Vancouver board was able to move forward with opening kindergartens in all its elementary schools. Kindergarten was made mandatory in British Columbia in 1973.¹⁷⁰

Staff Demographics and Organization

Elementary schools in the post-war period saw a shift in staff demographics. The shortage of teachers forced school administrators to allow married female teachers to continue their careers. At first, married women were hired only on temporary contracts, but beginning in 1955 they could be appointed to the permanent staff. Married women continued to be seen not as experienced teachers, but as an unfortunate, if necessary, evil. Maternity leave, in particular, was problematized and women were required to leave their jobs 5 months before giving birth and to stay away for a full year.¹⁷¹ The post-war period also saw the end of at least one aspect of wage discrimination as the principal of equal pay for the same job was established in legislation.¹⁷²

Membership in the BCTF became automatic for all teachers in 1948. Teachers worked hard through the post-war period to improve their working conditions with wages and pensions being major issues on which progress was made. In Vancouver, for historic reasons, different organizations represent the secondary and elementary teachers.

As pointed out by Neil Sutherland, there was a large gap between the rhetoric of progressive education and the classroom reality.¹⁷³ This gap was not always well understood by the public. In the 1950s traditionalists in the United States and Canada attacked progressivism as a ‘watered down’ education, especially at the high school level. It was charged with not preparing students adequately to defend democracy, and so, it was said, communist nations such as the USSR were bounding ahead. Their more rigorous subject-based, traditionally-taught educational programs were held up as the reason for this. This critique was articulated by historian Dr. Hilda Neatby, in her popular critique of progressive education in Canada, *So Little for the Mind* (1953). When the first Sputnik satellite was launched by the Soviets in 1957, putting them ahead of the Americans in the race for space, many pointed to the ‘lax’ school system as the cause. Thus, when the Vancouver School went to the voters in 1957 to ask for funding to build new schools, its advertisements read ‘Catch Russians: Money for Education.’¹⁷⁴

In British Columbia, the recommendations of the 1960 Royal Commission on Education, chaired by S.N.F. Chant, reflected the traditionalists’ (as personified by Neatby) critique of progressivism. The Commission recommended that the aim of education in British Columbia should be ‘promoting the intellectual development of the pupils, and that this should be the major emphasis throughout the whole school program.’¹⁷⁵ More time and effort was to be spent on ‘central subjects’ and less on ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ subjects. Secondary students in particular felt the effect of the Commission; school days were made longer and the overall program was restructured. For mostly practical reasons, grade 7 was returned to elementary schools.¹⁷⁶ Among the numerous other changes, the length of teacher training was to be extended; and, all teachers, it was hoped, would soon be required to have a university degree.

In his report Chant observed that progressive methods had a place in British Columbia schools as long as they were applied with careful moderation – as he found they generally had been. Neatby’s critique, it was felt, did not reflect the classroom reality. Doug Owrap, a historian who has written about the history of the baby boom in Canada, contends that even if instruction in most classrooms remained formal, the content and spirit of what was taught did change in the 1950s. The war had shaken many old assumptions about race and authority. Textbooks placed a greater emphasis on tolerance and equality. This had a real impact on the values of the baby-boom generation and its impact was felt gradually as the generation came of age.¹⁷⁷

High Schools, Comprehensive Schools, Community Schools, and Other Changes

In the 1950s, Vancouver built five new secondary schools (Gladstone, Sir Winston Churchill, Killarney, David Thompson, and Sir Charles Tupper) and modernized its existing high schools. Continuing a policy begun in 1938, it combined junior and senior high schools at single sites, and using federal monies (this also began pre-war), it developed its vocational programs. Vocational education is one of the few places the federal government has played a direct role in education below the university level; this involvement has been justified in the context of federal responsibilities relating to labour force development. The result was the creation of comprehensive (or composite) high schools that offered a wide range of courses and programs to a diverse student body, rather than specialized high schools that offered only academic, vocational, or commercial courses.

Enrollment rose through the decade (John Oliver had 3,290 students in 1955).¹⁷⁸ The increased enrollment reflected the fact that the general population attached more importance to obtaining a high school education. More students were starting and staying in high school through to graduation. The locations of the new high schools reflected not only the growth of the City, but the fact the children from the less affluent southern and eastern areas of the City were now not only starting high school, but staying to graduate. These new schools were symbolic of the promise of post-war society – and public conversations about youthful behaviour reflected social hopes and fears for the future. The behaviour of young people was scrutinized in the press; class played an important part in this with middle class youth represented as the promise of the future and working class youth as disorderly and threatening.¹⁷⁹ These tensions were reflected in how schools in different areas of the city were portrayed, thus, for example, Templeton was represented as ‘tough.’

The VSB and Post-Secondary Education

The Vancouver School Board played a direct and significant role in the development of post-secondary education in the City. Adult education began in 1909 with night school programs. By the 1930s, adult education included vocational, commercial, and academic courses. As well, from 1925, the Board operated the Vancouver School of Art (now the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design). Following World War II, in 1949, the Board established the Vancouver Vocational Institute, built on the site of the original Central School. Adult education was heavily subscribed in the post-war years with returning veterans eligible for assistance under the Canadian Vocational Training Scheme.¹⁸⁰ Vancouver City College (later Vancouver Community College) was established in 1965 by combining the Vocational Institute, School of Art, and King Edward Continuing Education Centre (the latter located at the site of old King Edward High School). Langara College was later developed as a campus of VCC. Vancouver City College remained tied to the VSB until 1974.

The emphasis on a moderate approach or middle-road that characterized Chant's report did not preclude further development of the progressive aspects of Vancouver's educational system. In 1964-65 an entire section of the Annual Report was devoted to 'experiments,' which included:

- planning for a new open area school (MacCorkindale) at 46th and Battison
- extension of continuous progress experiment for grades 1-3 from Henderson to additional schools
- construction of new wing at Hamber and designation of the school as an experimental secondary school, with large group instruction, seminar work, and independent study.
- pilot project funded by the Ford Foundation in graphic design at a number of secondary schools¹⁸¹

The connection between experimentation and facility development is clearly indicated here, with two of the programs involving construction of new facilities. The first open area school in the Province, MacCorkindale, was built with four areas (named A, B, C, and D), rather than discrete classrooms, grouped around two courtyards. This was designed to accommodate more activity-based education and an emphasis on individual student programs (vs. strict grading by age), with more trust placed in students to initiate their own learning. It was seen as 'a bold new vista,' the height of educational innovation at the time and an indicator of the City's modernity.¹⁸² The open area concept was adopted at many schools in the Vancouver system in the 1970s, with existing classrooms and corridors combined to create new learning areas. These spaces remain in place in many schools.¹⁸³ Interestingly, these spaces continue to be seen as 'experimental' – school web sites describe their schools as including both open areas and 'regular' classrooms. Some schools have retained open areas, but others have either re-introduced classrooms (Britannia) or operate separate classes within an open area (MacCorkindale).¹⁸⁴ Dickens Annex, built in 1971, since it opened offered a program of

continuous progress/individualized instruction. It is one of few examples of very long running use of this approach to instruction, and is now a bit of an anomaly in the larger system.

By the mid-1960s there was a noticeable shift in the tone of the change. As the baby boom came of age, it subjected society generally to a radical critique that questioned most existing systems – including the educational system.¹⁸⁵ The BCTF's 1967 report, *The Key to Better Schools*, reflected this climate. It called for more individualized instruction, more experimental schools, and an end to corporal punishment. Alternative programs at the high school level were introduced in Vancouver in 1968 (e.g., Point Grey's Experimental Integrated Programme).¹⁸⁶ A 1969-70 report encouraged the Vancouver to be more flexible – to offer parents greater choice and to involve local communities in determining educational objectives for their schools.¹⁸⁷ Some schools experienced considerable tension over the changes. At Templeton Secondary there was a short-lived free speech 'riot' in 1967.¹⁸⁸ At Lord Tennyson, Principal G.W. Harris found his parents divided into two camps – one that wanted traditional classrooms and the other, principally 'hippies,' that wanted a much less structured learning environment.¹⁸⁹ In the end, Tennyson offered both open area and traditional classrooms.

Ironically, given the tendency to reject tradition, it was during the mid-1960s, that the VSB undertook a concerted effort to document its history; every school in the district produced a history and many schools also created scrapbooks. This systematic work has not been matched since, although major anniversaries have, at some schools, resulted in updated histories being produced. Some new schools, such as Kingsford Smith, seized the opportunity to document their neighbourhood history, contacting early residents and creating as a result an important record of school and neighbourhood history.¹⁹⁰



Children at Waverley Elementary School declare that art, gym, and recess are their favourite activities in a 1971 event. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Community Schools, with programs designed to better integrate neighbourhood and school, were one of the outgrowths of this movement. In 1973-74, Sexsmith and Bayview were the first schools in Vancouver to be designated a community schools. The impact of these programs can sometimes be seen in the physical form. Spaces were adapted for community programs or, in a few instances, new spaces came into being. Britannia Community Services Centre, which combined school, community centre, and library at a single 'site' is a particularly complex example of the latter. It opened in 1974-75. The community schools movement reflected the pressure that schools (and other government agencies) felt to engage with and reflect more fully the neighbourhoods of which they were part.

The late 1960s and early 1970s also saw the transformation of school grounds at numerous Vancouver schools as a result of parental involvement in the creation of adventure playgrounds (ironically, at the same time as formal parental organizations were struggling to attract members). At some schools, the children took a direct role in the design of the playground. Elsewhere they, and their parents, participated in building the playground or planted trees. Some of these playgrounds, such as the one at Emily Carr, where 'Rudolph' the fire engine is resident, are unique, and are seen as part of the neighbourhood's history.¹⁹¹ At Templeton Secondary, students looking for an appropriate centennial project in 1966-67 initiated a neighbourhood campaign to get a pool built. Templeton Pool opened in 1976.¹⁹² Parents, through the Parent Teacher Associations, which date back to 1915 in Vancouver, have helped purchase innumerable pieces of equipment, from gramophones, to pianos, to computers. The recent history of parental involvement continues this tradition, but also includes more engagement in educational issues, and, in Vancouver, in school-building safety.¹⁹³

There was, through the 1970s, a continued diversification of educational choices. With the decision to fund independent schools in 1977, the century long tradition of not using public monies to support religious schools ended.¹⁹⁴ The bureaucratic structures that had been established early in the century, at both the Provincial and local level, began to fracture. The school system became less authoritarian and less uniform. Provincial exams and the strap were both abolished in 1972. At the administrative level, local districts took over the role of appointing superintendents, something Victoria had always controlled. Educational historian Alastair Glegg argues this trend continued into the 1990s, with the result that the 'the school system of the 1990s in British Columbia looks very different from that which was in place two decades ago.'¹⁹⁵ Strong provincial control (exercised in a less personal, more technocratic manner, through standardized tests and financial means) remains,¹⁹⁶ but 'there is more choice for parents, as alternative public schools, ranging in their approach from progressive to traditional, become more commonplace.'¹⁹⁷ Choice has also meant that the close link between neighbourhood and school history and tradition have been somewhat weakened. These observations certainly apply to the situation in Vancouver.

By the 1980s, close to half Vancouver's students were designated as needing instruction in English as a Second Language.¹⁹⁸ The introduction of a five-year cap on eligibility for

ESL instruction in 1999 reduced the overall number of students classified as ESL from 28,435 in 1998-99 to 16,361 in 2001.¹⁹⁹ Issues over funding have been very much part of the public dialogue about education in the City and the Province more generally; budget cutbacks have effected program as well as physical infrastructure.

Building Schools after 1940

The quickly rising enrollment of the baby-boom period meant that school systems across the country simply struggled with the problem of providing sufficient numbers of teachers and classrooms to meet the demand. According to Doug Owram, ‘governments, educators, and parents scrambled to expand a system pushed to the edge of chaos.’²⁰⁰ In the late 1940s and early 1950s, a number of schools in Vancouver were operating on shift systems, usually with students attending morning or afternoon sessions. Gymnasiums and other spaces were converted to classroom use. School boundaries were adjusted and the transition from elementary school to high school either accelerated or delayed, depending on the area of the city and the particular situation.²⁰¹

Planning for new construction began before the war ended. The School Board established committees, which included teachers, administrators, parents, custodians, and others, to prepare guidelines for secondary and elementary school construction. Early in 1944 it appointed E.D. King its architect. He replaced Harry Postle, who had retired in 1942.²⁰² The principles established by these committees, and by the Board’s Building Committee, in the mid-1940s, influenced site selection and school design through the 1950s.

The general direction of the building program is established in the introduction to the ‘Elementary Schools Building Committee Report,’ issued in June 1944. The report’s premise was that ‘the old conception of the schoolhouse is already obsolete. The sooner the change is understood, the fewer dollars will be wasted in school construction along traditional lines.’²⁰³ Like Putnam and Weir, who wrote in the mid-1920s, the committee was did not believe schools should be architectural monuments:

Many traditional and antiquated practices in construction and architecture seriously impede the educational process and must be reconsidered ... the erection of ‘monuments’ to architects at the expense of many thousands of dollars to ratepayers of utility and efficiency in education must be avoided. The ultimate aim in school planning must be to realize a healthful and happy environment which functions for the education and growth of children.²⁰⁴

These ideas reflected contemporary thinking in the fields of architecture and education. The Committee read widely, primarily in the American literature on the subject of school design. It also toured recently-built schools in Washington State.²⁰⁵ The committee’s report is highly detailed, providing specific details for lighting, ventilation, classrooms of various types, and specialized spaces. For example, it recommended that the standard classroom should be, at minimum, 24ft x 38ft x 12ft. Rooms should be ‘cheery and

attractive,' with more than one colour used in a room and colour varying from room to room. One suggested combination was dusty rose and pale green. Generous use of natural light was recommended, with windows extending from floor to ceiling.²⁰⁶ Clearly, the Committee knew what it took to create healthful and happy children.



Superintendent H.N. MacCorkindale advocated that a school's activities should determine its plan. The first open area school in Vancouver, begun in 1966, was named after him. (Photo: First Fifty Years: Vancouver High Schools 1890-1940)

Superintendent H.N. MacCorkindale also expressed clear ideas about school architecture and architects. Quoting from an 'outstanding school architect' he asserted that post-war schools should not be balanced in either plan or elevation. Rather, the plan of the school should emerge from function. The plan should grow out of the school activity rather than the school activity conform to a preconceived plan.' He thought a school architect should 'interpret the curriculum in terms of architecture.' On a less abstract level, MacCorkindale was especially clear of the subject of stairs; he thought they were dangerous to small children.²⁰⁷

Physical expression was given to MacCorkindale's ideas and the Elementary Schools Building Committee recommendations in 1945 with the completion of Begbie Annex in January 1946 (now Thunderbird) and David Lloyd George Annex (later Shannon Park, now closed) in April 1946. Elsie Roy, the Primary Supervisor, credited E.D. King's 'extraordinary appreciation of primary methods' for the creation of two 'almost perfect primary buildings, in which the teaching staff and pupils take the utmost pride.'²⁰⁸ The first phase of Trafalgar, built as a four-room annex to Kitchener and opened in 1947, was built to similar plans.²⁰⁹



Begbie Annex, now Thunderbird Elementary School, was built in 1945-46 to designs by VSB Architect E.D. King. It was praised as the first school to reflect contemporary ideas about architecture and education. (Photo: Vancouver School Board.)

How these ideas were implemented in Vancouver is spelled out quite succinctly in the Board's 1955 Annual Report, which stated that Board architect E.D. King aimed for simplicity of design and the use of economical materials. Schools were built without basements, attics, or ornamentation. The interiors were made attractive with 'a) lively colour combinations b) modern efficient lighting units c) coloured asphalt tile or marboleum on the floors d) tile washrooms e) greater tackboard areas f) improved classroom furniture g) acoustical tile where ever required to affect proper control sound and control.'²¹⁰ The economy of Vancouver's approach was confirmed through research, which demonstrated it had one of the lowest costs of construction per square foot on the continent.²¹¹ With the exception of the primary annexes, which were of frame construction with plywood interior walls, all elementary and secondary school buildings were constructed of reinforced concrete, with pumice brick partitions. From 1963 onwards the annexes were also built of fireproof materials – steel frame and concrete and brick infills, with roofs of prestressed and precast concrete and walls of precast concrete with exposed aggregate. This followed a fire at Edith Cavell Annex in the late 1950s, which completely destroyed it.²¹² The economy of construction must have been of some comfort to sceptics; not all school authorities were convinced of the direct relationship between good schooling and good school buildings. Vancouver's Supervisor of Instruction commented in 1950 that 'good equipment and classrooms are very helpful, but these have very little influence if the teaching is not strong.'²¹³

Architectural historian Rhodri Windsor Linscombe describes the 'socialized architecture polemic' that emphasized the role of the architect as organizer rather than stylist, as the main idea that infused architecture, and informed school design in western Europe and North America in the 1940s and 1950s.²¹⁴ Writing about the British Columbia schools

designed by Vancouver-based Robert Berwick, of the firm Thompson Berwick Pratt, Windsor Linscombe quotes Berwick on his approach to school architecture: ‘A new school must be a pleasant place for children to spend a great proportion of their lifetime, as well as to be practical and efficient workshop for learning.’ While Berwick did not design any of Vancouver’s schools, he did influence the design guidance offered by the Department of Education to school districts throughout the province.²¹⁵

In 1949 the Province established an Office of School Planning and Construction to oversee the massive expansion of the public system.²¹⁶ The office subsequently issued a *School Building Manual* (Victoria, 1954), which defined in some detail what costs the Government would share with districts, including Vancouver, on a 50:50 basis. It also included detailed drawings of interior layouts and specification for architects to follow. After 1956 Vancouver conformed to the guidelines. As a consequence, ‘all Vancouver school construction was shareable.’²¹⁷ Despite the financial benefits, the Board chafed under Provincial ‘supervision.’ In 1958-59 it complained of provincial rigidity, which meant that ‘school design is not adequately adapted to local conditions.’²¹⁸ The Vancouver Board was ambivalent about standardization, whether self-inflicted or provincially mandated. In developing its post-war building program it did not attempt to develop a standardized plan for ‘any type of school;’ although it did set about creating standardized lists of equipment²¹⁹ and in 1946 designed a standardized gymnasium ‘which can be applied to the grounds of a number of elementary schools.’²²⁰ The special committee reports, made in 1944, were highly prescriptive in their detail. It seems likely that some standardization also occurred in the 1940s and 1950s, because it undertook almost all the design work in house under architect E.D. King.

The Board’s ambivalence about the standardization of plans did not extend to planning more generally. Following the model established prior to World War II, the Board worked with various authorities, including the Town Planning Commission, to identify potential school locations well ahead of need. As mentioned above, population projections played an important part in this process. The Board expected, given population densities, that most students would live within no more than one-half mile from an elementary school and one mile from a high school – distances which they could reasonably be expected to walk.²²¹ Annexes were built where ‘enrollment does not yet justify a complete elementary school.’²²² Certainly, annexes were not new in the post-war era.

Of considerable interest to the Board was the size of school sites for physical education and as recreational facilities more generally. The School Board worked with the Park Board to create larger school sites. This strategy was used for the first time when the site for Osler Elementary School and Montgomery Park was acquired in 1941-42.²²³ Interest in scientific planning increased in the 1950s, and it is not surprising to find the Chair of the Building Committee in 1950 hopefully suggesting that the time might be ripe, for the sake of efficiency, to prepare a master plan for the system.²²⁴

The building program of the 1940s to 1960s had a number of components. First, there was new permanent construction – of elementary schools, annexes, and high schools.

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Portables, designed in 1950 by E.D. King, were used at sites where the peak enrollment was not anticipated to endure for any period of time. Portable classrooms were preferred over transportation, which was discussed and rejected.²²⁵ Then there was the construction of major additions, mostly to elementary schools, of classroom wings, auditoriums / gymnasiums, and lunchrooms. Next, there was an aggressive modernization program undertaken at older elementary and high schools, which significantly changed their interiors. The tally for new construction between 1950 and 1959 amounted to:

- 5 new secondary schools
- 4 new elementary schools
- 13 new elementary annexes
- 48 portable classrooms
- 51 additions to elementary schools
- 15 additions to secondary schools

The facilities constructed included:

- 829 regular and special classrooms
- 32 gymnasiums / auditoriums
- 4 single and 11 double gymnasiums
- 34 lunchrooms and 10 cafeterias
- 17 activity rooms and 6 auditoriums²²⁶

The capital cost of this program was \$39 million. So huge an outlay of money was only possible, according to historian Douglas O'wram, because governments at the time had relatively low debt loads and the economy generally remained prosperous through the most intense building period.²²⁷ School-building continued apace through the 1960s (3 secondaries, 5 elementaries, 9 annexes, plus additions and modernizations to existing facilities). Alan B. Wilson succeeded E.D. King as architect during this period and there was a shift to using outside architectural firms on some projects.²²⁸

The new schools and the additions that were erected during this aggressive post-War building campaign utterly transformed the image of the Vancouver school. The design approach and vocabulary had become entirely modernist, turning its back on the revival of historical styles and adopting the progressive features of the new International Style. Schools feature large windows set in flat walls; their designs reduce or eliminate the ornament, contrasts in materials, and relief effects of earlier schools. E.D. King's work at Thunderbird, Shannon Park, and Trafalgar, all designed in 1944-45, introduced this Early Modern manner. John Oliver Secondary School, built in 1949-50 to designs by architects Mercer and Mercer, provides the first mature expression of the International Style. This set the tone for the classroom and gymnasium buildings of the 1950s and 1960s, both those that were designed in house and the ones commissioned from private architects. Some achieved excellence in design, while others were far less inspired and simply followed earlier examples – a new version of architectural standardization that was not unlike the repeated formulas often seen early in the century.



John Oliver Secondary School, designed by Mercer & Mercer and built in 1949-50, is a fine early example of the modernist International Style. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

It was not until the 1970s that the pace of construction slackened, as enrollment growth tapered off. New schools were built in Champlain Heights and False Creek and a number of older schools were replaced (Simon Fraser, Mount Pleasant), but between 1970 and 1986 only nine new school construction projects were undertaken. In 1970 the Board embarked on a ‘new approach to school design when it sponsored an architectural competition for the construction of a new elementary school in the southeast sector of Vancouver.’²²⁹ The competition was intended to give BC architects a chance to ‘create and submit designs embodying new and stimulating ideas for school facilities in tune with modern concepts of education.’ The celebrated firm of Erickson / Massey won the competition for the school, called Champlain Heights. Subsequent annual reports say much less about new construction and more about the issues of managing an aging portfolio of buildings

1.4 Conclusion

As the twentieth century came to a close, in the absence of a concerted building program, new schools were – and are – less alike. The tendency towards standardized design, seen from the earliest days of school design in BC through to the 1960s, passed over. Still, the basic challenge facing school architects has not changed significantly: to provide economical and efficient designs, reflecting contemporary pedagogy in what is understood, according to the design values of the day, an attractive form. The Province continues, through its funding formulas, to shape what gets built. There was, until the early 1990s, greater leeway given to design, but a backlash followed. Economy has once again trumped design, as it did in the 1920s.²³⁰ The Vancouver School Board initiative

that has led to the present project and the writing of this contextual history results from yet another Provincial funding formula, this one for seismic upgrading.

This essay has examined how Vancouver's 'schoolmen' linked schools and schooling, and what the results were. Vancouver's schools tell important stories. With schools ranging in age from more than 100 years to only one or two years, there is an exceptional diversity in the built form. The elapsed time and the diversity mean that Vancouver schools represent no single moment in education history. Some school sites contain within themselves essays in educational and architectural history, revealing the ongoing dialogue between pedagogy and architecture. Clearly, schools are more than buildings – they are communities built over time and connected to place. Some are important icons in their neighbourhood or in the city in generally. All are invested with meaning and memory for neighbourhood residents, past and present students, and staff.

1.5 Table and Charts

Schools built before 1891 in the City of Vancouver

Name/Status	Date Opened	Location
<i>Hastings Mill</i> Closed 1886 following fire	1872	Foot of Dunlevy
<i>Oppenheimer</i> Closed in 1895 (later <i>East</i>)	1887	Cordova Street
<i>West</i> later <i>Aberdeen</i>	1888 1908	Burrard and Barclay
<i>False Creek</i> Replaced by Mount Pleasant in 1892	1887	Broadway and Kingsway
<i>Central</i> Building demolished, site still in use by VCC	1889 1890	Vancouver Vocational Institute site, now downtown campus of VCC
<i>East</i> 1891 building demolished, 1897-98 building standing, site still in use	1891; addition in 1897-98	Strathcona school site

Sources: Diana Bodnar, 'Heritage Inventory of Vancouver Schools' Report Prepared for the City of Vancouver, 1982; Douglas Franklin and John Fleming, 'Early School Architecture in British Columbia: An Architectural History of Buildings to 1930', Report prepared for the Heritage Conservation Branch, Victoria, 1980; Valerie Hamilton, *The Schools of Vancouver*, (Vancouver: VSB, 1986), Ivan J. Saunders, *A Survey of British Columbia School Architecture to 1930*, Parks Canada Research Bulletin No. 225, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1984.)

Schools built between 1891 and 1909 in the City of Vancouver

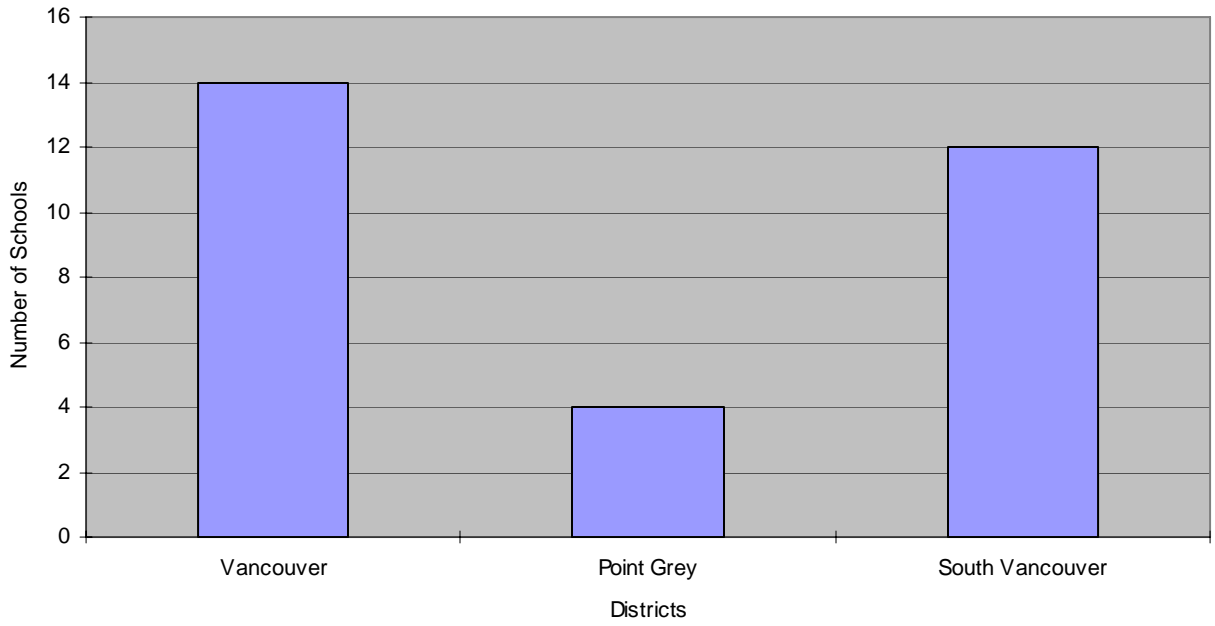
Name/status	Date Opened	Location
<i>Mount Pleasant</i> Demolished	1892; addition in 1897-98	Main and Kingsway
<i>New West (Dawson)</i> Demolished	1892; addition in 1897-98	Burrard and Helmken
<i>High School</i> (permanent building) Demolished	1893	Dunsmuir and Cambie
<i>Fairview</i> Opened at 7 th and Granville, moved to Broadway and Granville demolished	1893 1895; additions in 1900 and 1910	7 th and Granville Southwest corner of Broadway and Granville
<i>Admiral Seymour</i> Exists	1900 1907	1130 Keefer Street
<i>Lord Roberts No.1</i> Demolished <i>Lord Robert No. 2</i> Exists	1900 1907	1100 Bidwell
<i>King Edward High School</i> Destroyed by fire	1904	12 th and Oak
<i>Model</i> Extant, adapted for commercial use	1905	12 th and Ash Part of City Square
<i>Grandview</i> demolished	1905	1 st and Commercial

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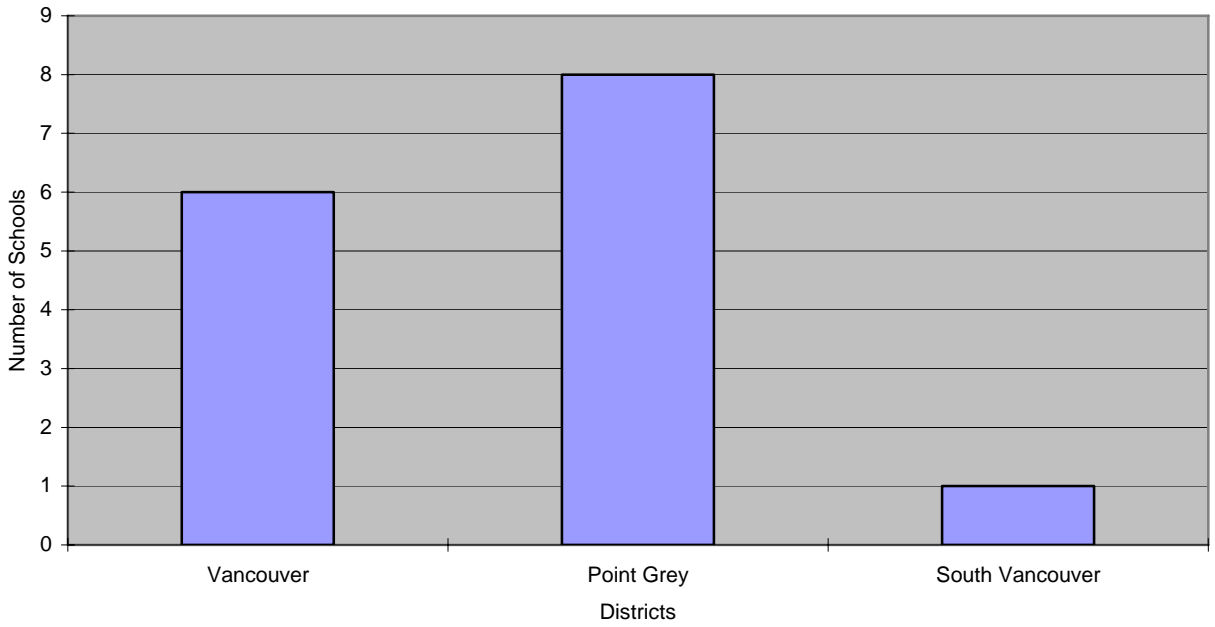
<p><i>Fairview West</i> Replaced by Kitsilano, Seaview Burned</p>	<p>1905</p>	<p>4th and Yew</p>
<p><i>Macdonald (Cedar Cove)</i> 1908 part exists</p>	<p>1903 1905 1908 1929 additions</p>	<p>1950 Hastings</p>

Sources: Diana Bodnar, 'Heritage Inventory of Vancouver Schools' Report Prepared for the City of Vancouver, 1982; Douglas Franklin and John Fleming, 'Early School Architecture in British Columbia: An Architectural History of Buildings to 1930', Report prepared for the Heritage Conservation Branch, Victoria, 1980; Valerie Hamilton, *The Schools of Vancouver*, (Vancouver: VSB, 1986), Ivan J. Saunders, *A Survey of British Columbia School Architecture to 1930*, Parks Canada Research Bulletin No. 225, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1984.)

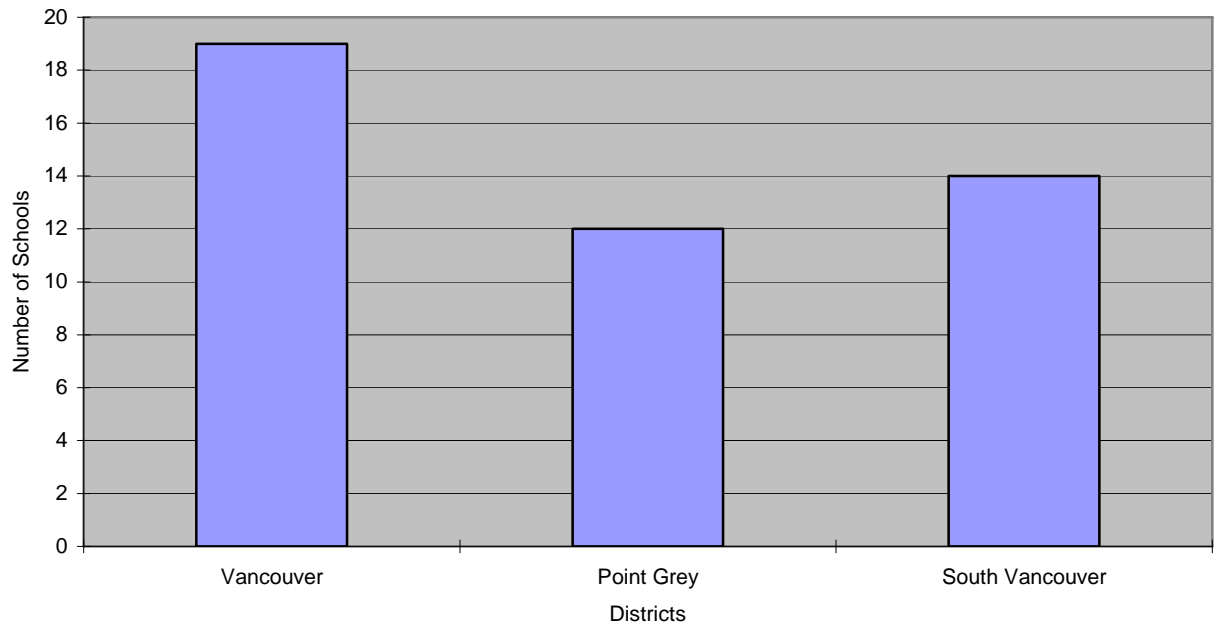
Number of Extant Schools Built From 1905 to 1915



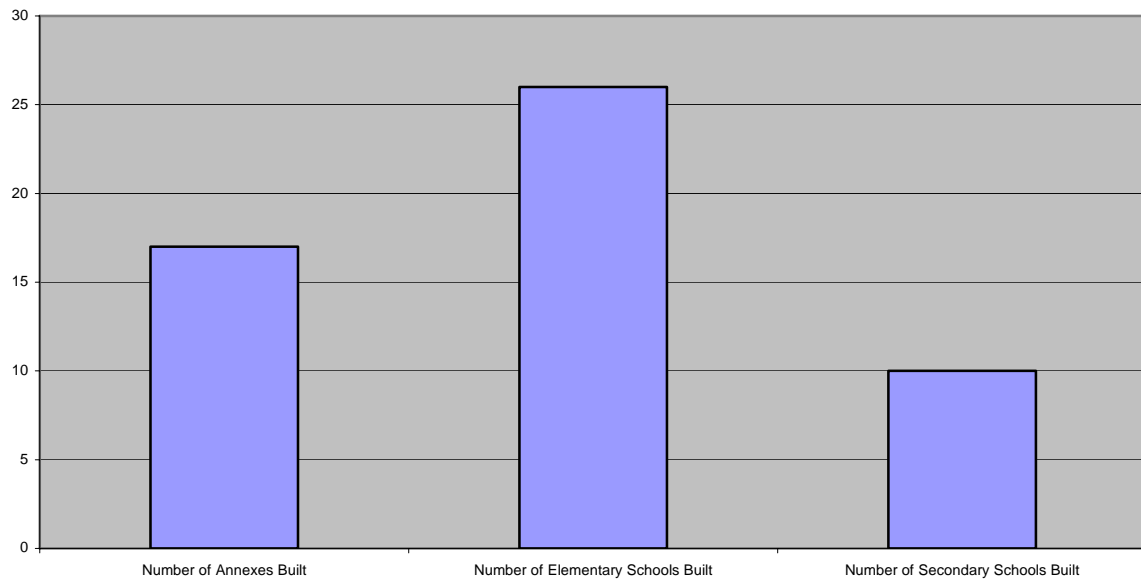
Number of Extant Schools Built 1916 - 1929



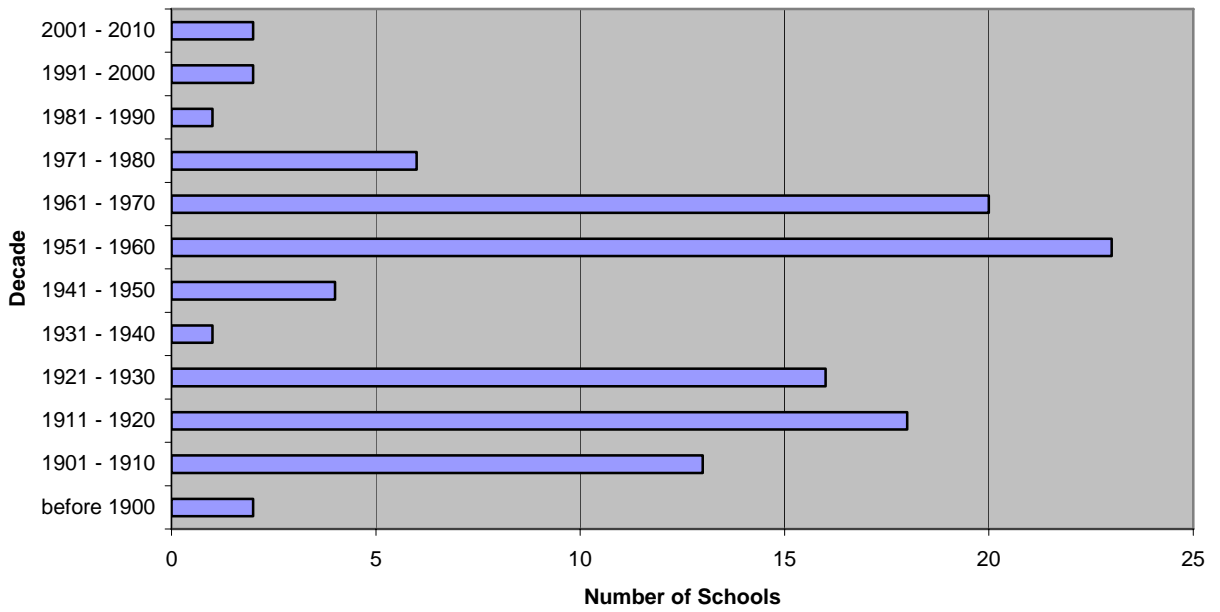
Number of Extant Schools Built up to 1929



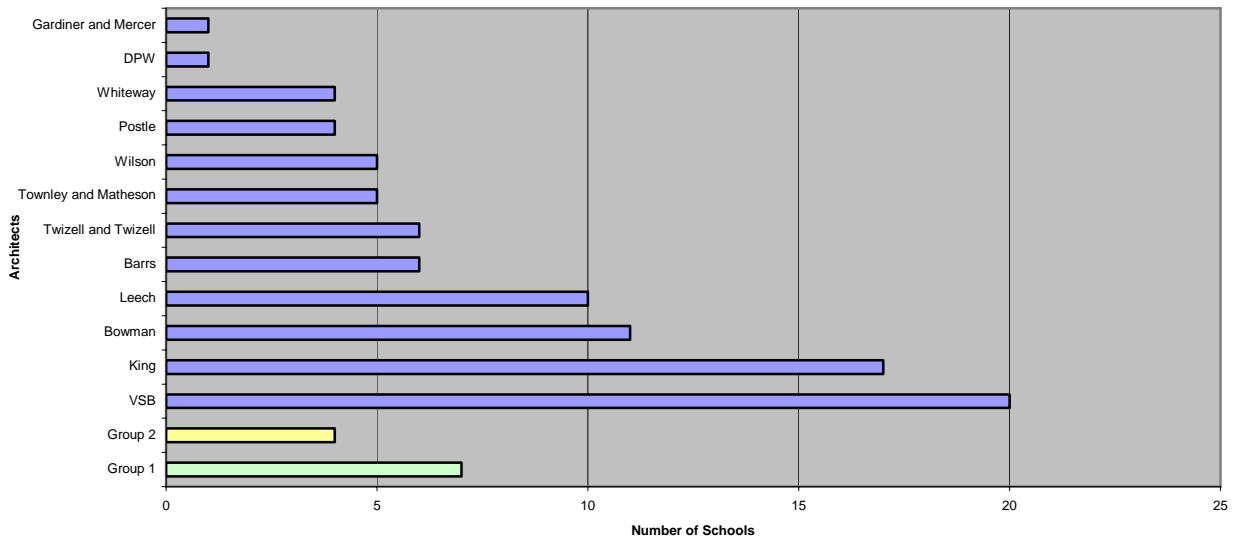
Number of Extant Schools Built Between 1941 and 1975 (VSB Property)



Total Number of Extant Schools Built Each Decade in Vancouver (Including Point Grey and South Vancouver Districts Before 1930)



Number of Schools Each Architects Designed



Group 1 - Architects in Private Practice After 1970: Hughes, Howard, Henriquez and Todd, Davidson, Yuen and Simpson, Erickson and Maesey, Howard and Yano

Group 2 - Architects in Private Practice Before 1970: Blackmore, Watson, Mitton, and Sowichsia

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