A History
of
Kenosha Central Senior High School

The First Free High School
in the state of
Wisconsin

PART ONE

FREE EDUCATION: INCEPTION

"Oldest High School in the State of Wisconsin" is the distinctive title given to Kenosha Senior High School by the most conservative historical authorities whose reputations are established in the entire state. Today many old residents will still maintain that the school was the first to be established in any part of the territory of the United States west of the Alleghenies or even outside of New England. This especial distinction may be most easily comprehended by a rapid perusal of the history of the town of Southport, its founders, and its early leaders.

One hundred years ago, on June 14, 1835, just one decade before the first free school in the state of Wisconsin was established in the village of Southport, John Bullen, Jr., the acknowledge founder of the city of Kenosha arrived at Pike creek and encamped near the shore on the north side of what is now Kenosha Harbor. Further settlement followed sponsored by the Western Immigration Company, which Bullen had represented.

Immediately upon their arrival, the pioneers made claims on the land on the vicinity of Pike Creek for the purpose of pursuing the business of farming. The population of Pike Creek during he first winter of its settlement was composed of this small band of thirty-two.

The surroundings of Pike Creek gave little promise of a city. Timber covered the shore half of a mile inland, and the land where Main Street now is was almost a swamp. There being no highways or railroads, nearly all passengers and freight for the thriving little settlement came by Lake Michigan; and there being no piers or harbor, the landing of passengers was a perplexing problem. In 1840, the construction of an outside pier was begun.

For the convenience of navigators of Lake Michigan, it was found necessary to have some beacon answering for a lighthouse at Pike Creek. To supply this want, a huge oak tree on the bank of the lake was cut down so as to leave the stump ten feet high. On the top of the stump was placed a layer of stones and on this foundation a fire of wood was kindled every evening at sundown during the season of navigation. This contrivance for a beacon light served until the year 1848 when an improved lighthouse was built.

By 1837, the little village of "Pike" had outgrown its swaddling clothes and at a public meeting, it was resolved to change the name to "Southport", an appropriate name for a town nearest the Illinois line. Its population then was 717 people.

From the beginning education was a dominant interest in Southport. Colonel John G. McMynn, who came to Southport in 1848, spoke at a school reunion in 1895 and said, "The early settlers brought their books with them, and their love of learning gave a tone to their social life that would not suffer by comparison with that of the present day. It is not remarkable that such a community became a pioneer in the cause of education." Even
during the first winter, 1835-36, when its population comprised only eight families, and homes were rude shanties built of logs and covered with bark, there was a school, and as he population increased, private schools were opened.

It was in the year 1839 that Michael Frank came to Southport. He was born in 1804 in Virgil, Courtland County, New York, and was of German parentage. Before coming west he had gained distinction as an editor, and continued the pursuit of journalism in Southport by becoming joint editor, "The Southport Telegraph", one of the earliest newspapers in Wisconsin. His paper was first printed in June 1840. He was associated in this enterprise with C. Lathan Sholes, now remembered universally as the inventor of the typewriter.

One of the fixed resolutions of Michael Frank was "to engage in no enterprise of doubtful morality, but give his influence, as far as practicable, to all movements calculated to benefit the people." His absorbing purpose being the establishment of free schools, editorials in support of free schools immediately began. The following is an editorial bearing the date of September 15, 1840.

"COMMON SCHOOLS"

> "The encouragement of Common Schools is at this time of incalculable importance in this territory; the success of our future welfare and prosperity depends more upon the character of our common schools than all the natural resources of our territory.
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> "Where primary education is neglected the most fatal consequences to human liberty may be expected to follow.
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> "Education is the precursor of happiness and of freedom; the best safeguard of the people, and the surest means of public defense.
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> "Education is a species of public property, the richest and most valuable a nation can possibly possess."

Almost immediately upon his arrival, Frank obtained the title of "Colonel" because of his leadership in training the male residents of the town in military tactics. In the very first year of his residence in Southport, Colonel Frank displayed his interest in education by establishing a lyceum; and in 1841, he organized an Association of Free School Friends, a group whose aim was the advancement of free education in Wisconsin, and more particularly in Southport, now Kenosha. Among those present at the first meeting held were R. H. Deming, Chas. Durkee, M. Frank, J. B. Jilson, O.F. Dana, and others. In 1843, as a number of the upper house of the territorial legislature, frank introduced the first bill authorizing the establishment of free schools in Wisconsin. The measure was immediately rejected. In 18345, however, he secured the passage of a law authorizing free schools in the corporate limits of the village of Southport. The law was adopted with the conditional provision that is submitted and accepted by a majority of legal voters for the town before becoming effective. This was considered by some as a very radical measure.

At the first meeting for voting on the acceptance of the law, the people were whipped into frenzy over the issues and the meeting ended up in a riot. The injustice of taxing those who had no children was strongly pressed by some. Others who opposed the plan were those who were able to send their children to private tuition school. Colonel Frank for the next two months took part in one of the most strenuous campaigns to which he had ever applied himself. Following is one of the editorials written by Frank during this period.

Copy of Editorial by Michael Frank of March 17, 1845.

> "By an act passed by the recent legislature an expression of the inhabitants of this village is called for in relation to the establishment of a school on a liberal basis, and suited to the needs of our community.

> "The adoption of the plan would secure to every child of proper age within the district, the more ample means of instruction.
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> "Under the existing conditions, there are scores and hundreds in this village who have not the means of common school instruction, or at least, who are not sent to any school.
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> "We have many poor families among us; many parents refuse to send their children to school from a real inability to bear the expense; other, probably, neglect to school their children from an imaginary inability to afford it.
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> "No w none but the most narrow minded will say that it concerns none except those parents and their children that they are not educated. Every taxpayer is interested in the education of the entire mass: the security of life, the safety of property, the preservation of our liberties and of our republican institutions are all dependent upon the general diffusion of the blessings of education.
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> "The plan proposed is not an untried experiment; it has been adopted with entire success in New England, and is now being adopted in the principal villages in the state of New York. It has been found to work admirably, producing the most gratifying results.
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> "That it should be opposed by the narrow minded and selfish is not strange; but that any man of liberal views, and who regards the best interests of the community will fail to give it his countenance and support, we cannot believe."

His efforts were rewarded and at the next mass meeting the referendum was victorious by eleven votes. In spite of the previous opposition, the system soon became popular when the people came to really understand the importance of free education as expressed by Colonel Frank in his editorials.

The new law was put into effect by voting to raise $500 for school advancement. The larger part of the sum was used for renting buildings and purchasing equipment for the three of four schools already established by the trustees in the summer of 1845. Saint Mark's Catholic Church was among the first to open its rooms for the project. The offer was accepted and "on June 16, 1845 there was opened the first free public school in Wisconsin, and one of the first in the United States outside of New England"—Patzer. That this school furnished great satisfaction to Michael frank is proved by these words from his diary: "December 25, 1845—In the evening I attended a school celebration in the basement of the Catholic Church. The exercise and the entertainment were of the most interesting character. Have never attended anything in the territory which gave me greater satisfaction." Unfortunately, the name of the leader of that school is not known.

Although free education under the act of the legislature had been thus carried on after 1845, it was not until 1847 that a public building was completed. It was the old North Side School known as the Second Ward School.

The free school of Southport continued until it was merged into the free school system under the state constitution. C. K. Patzer, in his "Public Education in Wisconsin," says, "The experiment constituted an object lesson to the rest of the territory, a great impetus was thus given to the establishment of free schools in other parts of the territory, and to the shaping of expression in the state constitution." Colonel Frank was one of the commissions of three men responsible for the laying of the foundation for the state constitution. Because he had had so much to do with free school education in the community school fell to him. "The codification of the school laws was the crowing achievement of the life of Michael Frank." For all he had done "history concedes to him the high honor of being the father of the present free public school system of the state"—Patzer. Thus on May 1, 1849, the first comprehensive code authorizing a public school system supported by public taxes was adopted in Wisconsin, and this code led the entire northwest for more than a generation as a model system.

In the same year, 1848, the state legislature passed laws, which attempted to equalize the support of public schools in the state in general. This took the form of township levies secured by per capita taxes and such additional "nuisance taxes" as levies on wood loads brought into town, etc. It was not until the election of Colonel Frank to the upper house of the state legislature in 1848 that any systematic attempts were made to get a solution to the problem.

The experience of two years of free elementary education was sufficient to convince the populace of the need of higher education. Consequently, in October 1847, an appropriation of $2000 was made towards a building to cost $4000, another $2000 being voted in the next year. The sale of the old White School house and lot for $350 enabled the district to erect a building, which cost about $4500. According to legend this was the first free high school building west of the Alleghenies. At any rate it housed the first school of its type in Wisconsin.

At its completion, it was heralded as a splendidly modern structure for free education. This first high school building was dedicated, on July 28, 1849, with more pomp and ceremony than the little village of Southport had ever seen.

The dedicatory ceremony brought out the entire community. The program consisted of music by the Southport Brass Band, and speeches by Josiah Bond, one of the leading personalities on the development of education in the district, Charles Clement, who was associated with the town newspaper, and Z.C. graves, the principal-elect.

The "Southport Telegraph" of August 3, 1849, comments editorially upon the new school building as follows:

"The schoolhouse erected in district no. 1 in this village is decidedly the best in the state. Its dimensions are 43'/70' and 2 stories high above the basement. It is a substantial brick building and well ventilated, the rooms in each story being 14' high in the clear. The first and second stories each contain a hall of about 50'/40'. There are two recitation rooms for each floor all conveniently arranged, a library room, two washrooms, etc. The seats are all constructed on a new plan never before introduced into the west. The standards of the seats and desks are of cast iron and of a pattern, which combines practicability and durability. Each desk is used by two pupils. There are blackboards in each room which measure 40'/12'. The cost of the building thus far has been $4500, this does not include the lot where it stands—S. Fisk, Esq., gave the lot to the district And it is valued at from $500 to $600.

The school was the direct result of a decade of pioneering hardships, carried out through the leadership of Colonel Michael Frank. He was aided by those in the community who were willing to lay aside their personal interests for the common good even though they could not foresee the era of education, which they were opening.

PART TWO

FREE EDUCATION: INERTION

On July 3, 1849, five hundred students entered the first free high school in Wisconsin to participate in the educational advantages, which Southport had given.

The teaching staff for the high school grades was made up of the principal, Zuinglius G. Graves, and his assistant. The staff for the remainder of the school follows with their respective salaries.

Frances R. Phillip	$350
Mary A. Pierce	300
Eliza Murray	200

Mary S. Clapp	250
D.W. Carley	300

It was just about this time that Kenosha County was separated from Racine County. Southport was the largest town in the new area, and once more its name was changed, this time it was incorporated into a city in 1850 as Kenosha. The name Kenosha came from the Indian word for pike, a fish that was common in the lakes of the vicinity.

The school itself was a financial success. The following clerk's report to the superintendent in 1850 is a typical one.

Income

Amount raised by district within the year for support of school and incidental expenses---------- $2400
Amount raise for purchasing and hanging a bell---------- 150
$2550

Expenditures

Teachers' wages	$2092.42
Bell fixtures, freight, etc.	86.78
Insurance for bell	28.24
Belfry on tower	129.64
Fuel, cutting and piling	106.52
Library	29.05
Repairs, painting	15.00
White washing, cleaning	79.15
School books	27.04
Chemical apparatus	32.50
Lighting	16.50
Curtains, chairs	54.28
Stove, scrapers, advertising, etc.	24.36
Total	$2646.48

SCHOOL PROCEDURE

The assembly room of the early high school was each day employed for opening and closing exercises. Gathered together beneath the austere, likenesses of Franklin, Washington, Socrates, Sir Walter Scott and others who looked down from brackets above the windows, the students participated daily in the opening exercises, which resembled both a college chapel service and a mediocre singing class.

In the morning the principal would read a Bible passage and make a brief speech; after this the students would sing several songs ranging in thought from hymns to patriotic ballads.

At closing exercises in the afternoon, "The Roll" was called. This was a stern procedure wherein each student's name was read by the principal. At the Voicing of his cognomen, the pupil was requested to answer "perfect" or "imperfect," the answer being dependent upon whether he had "communicated" during the day. "Communicating" implied any sort of social contact with other students, such as note passing and whispering during school hours. This practice of roll-call, which seems to have been introduced by Principal H.O. Durkee in 1869, failed to accomplish its disciplinary purpose and was finally abolished when it was revealed that lying and cheating rather than self- control, honesty, and good behavior were being inspired. Some teachers emphasized memory in the learning of lessons instead of complete understanding and appreciation of the facts and ideas in an assignment. Visitors were numerous not only at the rhetorical exercises on Friday afternoons, but also in classrooms to listen to recitations.

Even the examinations were public affairs during the earlier years of the school. The final oral examinations were given in the assembly room, and the nervous students were surrounded by parents, friends, and other visitors as they answered the instructors' oral questions. A committee of men, humorously called "scholarly lay-men" by a local writer, was invited by the principal of the school to aid in the questioning process. Languages and sciences were thought to be best understood by clergymen and doctors; those individuals frequently handled that entire section of the examination.

One of the ministers who were frequently present at high school events was the Reverend Reuben H. Deming, a devoted friend of public education and on the active workers in the cause of free schools. The Deming home was an important station on the "underground railroad", for the Reverend Deming was greatly interested in the slavery question. Charles Durkee, one of the prominent early settlers was another regular visitor at the high school. At his death, Mr. Durkee left five thousand dollars to Kenosha high School for the purchase of a telescope. However, the board of school commissioners had to allow the legacy to be put in a fund for the erection of a new grade school. The school was named Durkee School in honor of this pioneer.

ADMINISTRATION

When the first high school in Kenosha was started, Z.C. Graves, a well known educator from Ohio, was made the first principal. Mr. Graves served as principal for one year, from 1849 to 1850, when he was forced to resign on account of his wife's illness. He had received a salary of four hundred and fifty dollars a year.

Graves successor was john M. Coe, who also served as principal for only one year, 1850-51, with the same salary.

Upon the resignation of Mr. Coe, John G. McMynn assured the reins of power and became one of the greatest high school principals in the state. He was principal of the Kenosha High School from 1851 to 1853.

McMynn's early works have been described in this quotation from Public Education in Wisconsin:

"In the fall of 1851 J. G. McMynn was elected principal of the South Side School. He worked out a complete course of study for the elementary and high school. With a corps of able assistants furnished him by a wise and courageous school board, Mr. McMynn transformed the first free public school into an elementary and high school which in scholarship and in matters of the teaching easily occupied the foremost place in the schools of the state. It was visited by delegations from Racine, Milwaukee, Chicago, and other cities, which came to study its organizations, course of study, and management."

As principal John G. McMynn gave the school an elevated character and opened the public mind to an idea of what the free school might be under proper management. Most of the private schools were closed. Prejudice against free schools passed away. The character and position of the school was and is greatly indebted to this able and efficient instructor. Not only Kenosha but also the whole state of Wisconsin was affected by the power and influence of McMynn. He has been portrayed as "a man of accomplished and thorough scholarship, of high and honorable purpose wise in conception, prompt, and energetic in action, stern, but just and true."

For a few years after Kenosha High School was established in 1849, no definite course of study was taught. The students were considered ready for the "upstairs" rooms were, within certain limits, allowed to take up any subjects that were offered, and thus classification was by studies or subjects rather than by grades. When a scholar in this school had received from his study as much as he could or desired, he went his way.

Meanwhile Me. McMynn, the principal, was experimenting on a definite course of study. It was during this period of experimentation that Mr. McMynn was offered a similar position in the new high

school at Racine with a one hundred dollar increase in salary. Immediately upon his resignation from Kenosha in 1853, he places his course of study in use at Racine. In 1857 Racine had its first graduating class, which was also the first in the state of Wisconsin. To this day, much dispute occurs from this incident. Today Racine boasts the first high school graduation class in the state, but because of this boast many people think that it also had the first free high school in the state, but it was not until 1861, twelve years after the founding, that there was a graduation.

The principals who followed McMynn were many, some distinguished, some mediocre. When the Civil War broke out, Thomas J. Conatty was principal of the high school. He resigned in January 1862, to enlist, and served valiantly for two and one half years. This noble man so inspired the boys of the school that many of them joined him in the enlistment. During the war years the male attendance at high school fell immensely.

George S. Able, 1865-68, was one of the best principals ever to direct the destinies of Kenosha High School. Evidence of his ability is shown by the fact that he became president of the Oshkosh Normal School when it opened in 1871, and held tat office for twenty-seven years. Through his leadership and work this school was brought to first place in the state.

Strangely for a city whose interest in its educational system was so great, few of the principals of the school remained more than a few years. Up to 1880 only three of the school heads remained more than three years. Dissatisfaction, incompatibility, and the lure of more lucrative positions elsewhere all contributed to the peculiar condition. As an illustration of the sort of difficulties experienced, one trivial example may be cited: When Hicks held the principalship, he forced the high school students to remain in school on an election day when all other pupils of the city were enjoying vacation leisure. Outraged, the high school students struck, and they celebrated with a picnic their defiance of the order of the administration.

When the new high school was completed in 1891, Francis Cleary was the principal. He served as principal from 1890 to 1894, and he was succeeded by Professor H. C. Wiswall, the second principal in charge of the new building.

Wiswall held his position for eight years, to 1902, and received a salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year. His duties as principal were to teach, at the maximum, one hour a day, and to devote the rest of his time to the supervision of the grades. The first assistant to the principal received one thousand dollars as salary. The second assistant nine hundred dollars, and the third eight hundred dollars, fourth seven hundred and fifty dollars, and the fifth assistant six hundred and sixty dollars.

In 1902 Mr. W. J. Hammill succeeded Mr. Wiswall and served as principal for two years with a salary ranging from fifteen hundred to sixteen hundred dollars. Succeeding Mr. Hammill in 1904 was W.J. Hooking, who stayed for six years. The athletic record, which O. S. Thompson had achieved in college, earned the principalship for him in 1910. He resigned at the end of one year. He was the last of the short-term principals and was succeeded in 1911 by George N. Tremper, present principal, who has held the office for twenty-four years.

From 1845 to 1904 the superintendency was not a professional office, and it was usually held by a lawyer, minister, or well-known businessman, who took over the duties of the superintendent of schools in his spare time. The superintendent noted as secretary of the board of education, and for devoting his extra time to the public schools, he received a small annual fee, meetings, examined and placed teachers, and reported needed improvements to the board.

It was not until 1904 that the superintendency was considered a professional occupation, and that person was hired to devote his entire time to the job. P. J. Zimmers was the first professional superintendent and received a salary of sixteen hundred fifty dollars. In 1910 the salary was increased to twenty-two hundred dollars.

Mr. Zimmers was succeeded by Mrs. Mary D. Bradford in 1910. For sixteen years (1894-1910) she had been working in the teachers' training schools of Wisconsin.

Mrs. Bradford was unanimously elected superintendent by the board of education and was given the same salary as a man and the free right to hire teachers. At that time only one other woman held a similar position in any large city school system in the United States. That other woman was Mrs. Ellea Flagg Young who had held the position of Superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools for one year, when Mrs. Bradford took up her duties at Kenosha. Later Mrs. Susan M. Dorsey, Superintendent of Schools of Los Angeles, joined this trio of feminine school executives.

Qualifications for teaching were far from being stringent during the early years of public education. A slight store of general knowledge could obtain a position for a woman. All applicants were required by an early law to be examined by the clerk of the school board. "Moral character as well as learning and ability" were the points on which the acceptance or rejection of the would-be pedagogues depended.

The very first state law to definitely qualify teachers as to ability and eligibility, passed in 1869, was less consequential than amusing however. It provided that all teachers must speak the English language with facility and correctness. The rule was incorporated in an attempt to prevent the entrance of foreign teachers into Wisconsin schools. Finally the legislature at Madison declared that a university, college, or normal school diploma (or a state certificate of ability) be held by all applicants for high school teaching positions.

Mrs. Bradford in her Memoirs describes a teacher of this period.

"In charge of that roomful of boys and girls was a little woman very pale and frail looking, who spoke in a low voice, through dry, almost immobile lips. She wore a purple dress of soft wool fabric, and according to the fashion of the day, it was full-skirted and moderately well crinolined. It had a white collar, and white lace showed beyond the edges of the wide sleeves. About her neck was a heavy, gold rope chain to which a small gold watch was attached. She wore a plain gold ring, also heavy, which played back and forth on her finger between joints. Her blond hair was in curls reaching to her shoulders. Also, according to the fashion of the day, her waist was drawn in to a small compass and tightly belted. The common wasp, evidently, and not Venus of Melos, being then the ideal for such physical features. Now I can see that with a considerable streak of vanity in her make-up, she furnished a rather extreme example of the enslaving, unhygienic fashions of that day when stiff corseting and tight lacing and shoeing, caused the victims of these fashions to be more appropriately compared in grace, agility, and freedom to a modern robot than to the young women of this untrammeled generation."

Four teachers were adequate to staff the high school until the close of the century. In the fall of 1891 Mrs. Mary D, Bradford was promoted to first assistant to the principal. At the same time Mrs. Beasie E. Wells and Miss Belle Blosson completed the teaching roster. Two years later a third assistant was required and Miss Catherine Manley filled that position. With an increased enrollment more teachers were needed, and Miss Elizabeth Overstreet and Miss Emma Buckmaster were the next instructors to be hired.

The hardships and difficulties the early teachers encountered seem unbelievable to the modern instructors. Free periods were almost unknown. They worked straight through the day going from botany to composition to algebra and so on. The same teachers taught Seniors and freshmen.

With increasingly stringent requirements for teachers and the frequent orders from the authorities, it can be seen that it was not a great pleasure to teach school during this early period. One example of the many instructions that the teachers were required to observe was that they were to use no form of prayer, reading or reciting portions of the scriptures, or any other form of devotional exercises in the school. Previous to this ruling a Bible passage had been a regular feature of the morning exercises. The change came in 1888, when the Supreme Court of Wisconsin acting on a test case, declared the Bible reading practice to be unconstitutional.

Health inspection was not a part of the school's services in the nineteenth century, and when disease gained a foothold, it spread rapidly. The entire school system was closed during the week of April 21, 1892, due to an epidemic of scarlet fever in the city.

During this period, much interest was shown in studying the various school systems in nearby districts. The teachers were given three half days during the year, with pay, to visit various schools and to bring back with them new ideas in teaching and school administration. Kenosha High School was not the only institution of learning that practiced this system, for many times visiting teachers came to witness its class procedure.

As schools have their rules and by-laws, which must be obeyed today, so did Kenosha High Schools in 1891. The rules were compiled in a leaflet called Pupils' Rules and Regulations, which was divided into several sections. One of these rules declared that only on the approval of the members of the board of education could a suspended student be reinstated in the school. This section was later amended, turning the power over to the superintendent of schools. Misbehavior in class and rowdyism around the building were the most frequent causes for the suspension of students.

CURRICULUM

The diary of Colonel Michael Frank states that in the free high school "the studies pursued comprise all the branches of English education usually taught in common district schools and academics, also Latin and French."

There was, however, no regular course of study, and the only vocational subject taught was bookkeeping.

The students used the text Thompson's Arithmetic, Comstock's Philosophy, Wood's Botany, Andrew's and Goddard's Latin Reader, also the grammar by the same authors, Michael's Geography, and Lavigar's Grammar. In a few years the curriculum included geography, intellectual arithmetic, written arithmetic, natural history, philosophy, chemistry, algebra and geometry.

Rapid completion of courses rather than thoroughness of study were emphasized in the school in pre-war years. Instead of the five-month semester of today's schools, there was twelve week courses instituted to speed up the educational process. This tendency was not merely local but widespread throughout the country. Evidence of this fact is given by the names of the test-books used. Brigg's Fourteen Week Physics Textbook and Adam's Geometry in Twelve Weeks are typical examples of the quaint titles the schoolbooks carried. This system resulted in three semester school years, which were not ended until the University of Wisconsin demanded more complete study for its entrance requirements. With the advent of this ultimatum, courses were lengthened to about twenty weeks, and in 1869 Kenosha High School was placed on the university's accredited list.

The great Civil War, which had thinned the ranks of students, also affected the curriculum. In 1871, as a result of the conflict, history and civics were added to the list of subjects necessary for graduation. The same year the state legislature ruled that both the United States and the Wisconsin constitutions be studied in all Wisconsin high schools.

In the succeeding year a course in orthoepy was added to the curriculum. After this, a decade passed without a change in he course of study.

Up to this time, Greek and Latin were deemed of greater importance in the curriculum than at any time in the history of the school.

To some extent the scope of the curriculum at the local high school coincided with the list of suggested high school subjects distributed by the state; more frequently, however, choice of subjects distributed by the state; more frequently, however, choice of subjects was inclined to be haphazard. Only rarely in the early years did the curriculum include more than a few subjects of practical value to the student. A partial explanation of the inadequate method of course planning is found in a sentence written

by Conrad E. Patzer, Wisconsin historian: “When once the textbooks were decided upon, they constituted the course of study.”

According to Mrs. Mary D. Bradford, who was she a student in the grammar and high school, memorizing was the all-important part of the learning process. In her Memoirs, she recalled that, as an eighth grade pupil, Gray’s “Elegy in a Country Churchyard” was committed to memory at the rate of one stanza per day until the entire lengthy poem was recorded firmly in the students minds. From the same volume of her writings is taken this lesser fact. Student essays were written about abstract subjects. “Kindness” and “Ambition” were typical examples of the titles of the papers produced by the students after prodigious research and ponderous, labored writing. Today the former subject would probably be considered an excellent sermon text for a clergyman, and the latter suitable for a dissertation by some famous statesman.

As educational interest grew, it was necessary to extend the number of required and elective subjects. To the regular subjects of literature, arithmetic, language, history, and science were added anatomy and reorganized courses in geography. More modern and up to date books, as in the case of the physics text, were replacing old textbooks, which was changed form Gage’s to Avery’s physics book. In January of 1891, both Colburn’s Mental Arithmetic and Practical Arithmetic by Wheeler were adopted for use in the school, while in September of the following year, Wentworth’s High School Arithmetic was added to the book list. At this same time, an indexed copy of Rand and McNally’s Atlas of the World was purchased for the library. The chemistry class was allowed twenty-five dollars for supplies.

A short time later, three copies of Gaggy’s Anatomical Aids were purchased for the anatomy students, and Latin and German dictionaries were obtained.

Until 1906, the Kenosha High School student’s course of study included only a very few electives. As each new elective was introduced, it met great student approval.

A manual training course was offered as an elective in 1906 after Thomas B. Jeffery, a local automobile manufacturer had donated the equipment.

It was not until 1910 that a four-year commercial course was added to the curriculum in the high school. Shorthand, typewriting, accounting, and business practice were among the subjects included in this course.

In order to give the students actual business practice, the commercial students of Kenosha High School were given employment for one or two hours a day by the business houses in the town during the summer vacation. Wages were only a minor consideration, for the chief aim was to give the students actual practical experience. In this way the graduates of the commercial courses became more efficient and were ready to fill a position in any business immediately upon graduation.

The Card

Record of efficiency from----------to----------19--Filled out by----------
----------Official Firm name----------
----------Date---------- A--Excellent B--Good
C—Fair D—Poor

Responsibility…. 1. Working without direct supervision.
2. Working for results.
Initiative…….1. Energy in going ahead, doing things quickly.
2. Ability to meet emergencies.

Accuracy……1. Few mistakes.
2. Work neat and thorough.
Co-operation……...Ability to work well with others.
Promptness…….Not tardy for work.

Appearance…….Good taste in dress.
Politeness……Courtesy and respect for others.

In this same year another new course was introduced under a sort of cooperation industrial system. The various local manufacturing plants cooperated with the school in teaching boys who had been in high school one year, some trade they desired. Brass roller, machinist, electrician, toolmaker, pattern maker, cabinetmaker, and plumber were among the trades tried. This plan, which was purely experimental, was soon dropped.

THE STUDENT BODY

When the high school opened in 1849, in its building were housed all the children who attended public school classes in the town, from first grade up.

Twelve years passed between the ceremonies that marked the opening of the high school building and the first graduation exercises. The haphazard course of study, which made it impossible to determine the beginning or end of a high school career, was responsible for the long lapse of time.

In 1861 the curriculum had become somewhat organized, and at the commencement exercises nine students received certificates of graduation, the first ever issued by Kenosha High School. The members of the first graduating class were Chauncey Baldwin, E. H. Grant, Sereno Fisk, Rebecca Jones, James Nixon, Josephy Quarles, William Smith, J. V. Starkweather, and Susie Veazie.

Shortly thereafter, interest in the educational project lagged as a condition of war in the country demanded first concern. Almost before the attack on Fort Sumter, thirty-two of the male students of the school thrust aside their textbooks to don blue uniforms, and to seize muskets and other soldierly accouterments. Consequently, enrollment and graduation at the school suffered a severe decline in numbers. In 1864, and for twelve years thereafter not a boy was graduated from Kenosha High School. Even the girls desisted from their studies, and between 1866 and 1874 only twice were there graduates of either sex.

After the war ended the enrollment of the high school slowly returned to its former proportions, though not until after a long, discouraging period of restoration had been passed. The replacing of the high school building by a more modern structure near the end of the century marked the final rehabilitation of the school.

Graduating classes remained small. The class of 1890 had seven members. In 1891 a class of thirteen girls had graduated. Two years later there were eight graduates, and by 1895 the number had reached an even dozen. In 1892 when the first class was about o be graduated from the new building, there were approximately one hundred and twenty students in the senior high school.

The following copy of a high school commencement program is typical of the graduation exercises of the period. Each member of the class had a part on the program.

The High School Commencement Program of 1890

Song of Greeting……C. E. Whiting
School
Prayer…….School
Hymn……....Creation School
Salutatory and Oration……...Our Country’s Greatness Charles I. Yule
Topic…….The Eye Mary E.
McNamara
Vocal Solo……Selected Mrs. Farr
Oration……The Southern Question Louis M. Ward
Essay……The Copper Union Harry Plummer

Song “The Pretty Village Maiden”……Faust

Essay……. Reminiscences of the High School Alice M. Kearns
Topic……...The Air Pump Oscar Hansen
Music……Selected Arion Quartette
Oration and Valedictory……..The Literary Independence of America C. Day Stuart
Song “See How Lightly on the Blue Sea”……From Luorezia Borgia School
Presentation of Diplomas……...
Superintendent D. A. Mahoney
American……

Though the years following the Civil War period saw the decline of public interest in the free high school project, still the taxes for its upkeep were ungrudgingly paid, and the school’s expenditures rarely exceeded the income as recorded in the school treasurer’s books between the years 1861 and 1890.

Kenosha’s school system was evolved in logical sequence from grade to high school. Consequently, the secondary school was a definite fixed part of the school system, which included the lower grades. While neighboring cities and states were being troubled with the difficulties of reconciling township high schools and town grade schools, Kenosha was maintaining a smooth running system wherein students could graduate from lower grades and be assured that their credits would be accepted in the high school, and what was more important, the pupils entered a school designed to fit the needs of students graduating from the grade schools. When the Wisconsin State University accredited the high school in 1889, the Kenosha student could enter college assured that credits for courses he had taken in Kenosha High School would be accepted at face value in the university.

In this era, as in the years before it and the present, the school was highly respected by the community. The fact that it had not closed its doors during the dark days of the Civil war period gained the school especial esteem, and the fact that it was accredited by the state university almost as soon as there was a list of accredited high schools also helped to further the noble reputation first inspired by its distinction of being the “birth-place of free education in Wisconsin.”

A NEW HOME FOR WISCONSIN’S FIRST FREE HIGH SCHOOL

By 1890 there was a general feeling that the high school building was incapable of performing its educational functions adequately. It was quite obvious that the old brick high school building was gradually reading its senility after weathering the wind and the rain for forty-one years. The struggle for a new building was a strenuous one. The two decades after the Civil War had been marked by depression. The townspeople were very hesitant about providing the necessary funds. Nevertheless the stimulus aroused by the educational success in the community finally culminated in the erection of a new high school building.

The old brick walls of the high school were slowly decaying, and the wooden floors were badly worn; the plaster was cracked and stained; the ceiling was decrepit, and even the inanimate busts that adorned the walls wore a discouraged look. It was no wonder that a dilapidated old structure of this kind was deemed unfit for the sons and daughters of the residents of Kenosha. Accordingly, the city council, in 1890, appropriated ten thousand dollars for the building of a new high school.

The eight members of the board of education were quick to take action. From January 1 to December 31 0f that year there were held eighteen regular and fourteen special meetings, during which time an architect and contractor were secured, the construction of a new school building put under way, and many other plans were made for the completion of the edifice. Doubtlessly, it was the busiest year experienced by a Kenosha board of education for several decades.

The meetings of the first six months were spent mainly in deciding upon the many bids submitted by architects and contractors from all over that section of the country. On June 20, F. S. Allen of Chicago, Illinois was selected as architect. After some consideration William M. Rowe was believed to have presented the most satisfactory bid for the construction, and he was awarded the contract. Mr. Rowe, a local man, estimated the erection and completion of the new building at thirty-five thousand dollars, with a

reduction of three hundred and ninety dollars if Berea stone was used. He offered an allowance of nine hundred dollars for the old building, which was condemned and was later razed. The board decided on Bedford stone, and Mr. Rowe was contracted for thirty-four thousand eight hundred and ten dollars.

Construction on the new school started sometime in July 1890. The building was erected in the center of the square northeast pf the old building, which housed high school pupils during 1890 and '91. However the new school could not be erected in a day, and since an old grade school had to be pulled down to give place to it the question arose as to where the pupils would go until the new building was completed. This was thoughtfully taken care of by a committee appointed by Mr. Charles, president of the board. On September 5 the use of the courthouse was secured for elementary school purposes.

The erecting of the new school building, however, was no dragged out affair. It progressed smoothly and rapidly, for in two months the foundation was completed, and by Christmas the framework was constructed.

About February of 1891, Mr. Rowe offered to finish the auditorium, which was deemed the most important part of the school by many of the citizens provided that the plans and specifications are amended to permit the use of Georgia pine in floors and wainscoting. This added fifteen hundred dollars to the cost of the building, but the board granted the request. The auditorium was finished a short time later. As was customary in school architecture of that day, it was on the top floor.

The June class of that year held its commencement exercises in the auditorium. Though the rest of the building was near completion, it was still in crude shape. The graduates and their guests had to make their way carefully up the perilous stairway, which was not even equipped with railings.

Soon the final carpentering was completed, and the things that remained to be obtained were inside furnishings and accessories, such as desks, window shades, blinds, screens, blackboards, etc. The school board ordered each room equipped with a teacher's desk and thirty students' desks. Money for clocks, wastebaskets, charts, and dictionaries was also appropriated, and the orders were given to local concerns.

Insurance for the school, always a vital issue in caring for a new structure was the final expense incurred. A thirty thousand dollar insurance policy was taken out on this presupposed thirty-five thousand five hundred dollar building which finally amounted to forty-five thousand five hundred dollars. This added ten thousand five hundred dollars, which had not been figured on by the board, was brought on mainly in the completing of he auditorium and added expense on inside furnishings. This sum was not the last of the expenditures for the school. However, for several years later numerous repairs and improvements brought the final cost to about eighty-one thousand dollars, almost two and one half times the original intended sum. More care in the letting of contracts would have eliminated much of this expense.

The students entered the modern edifice in September 1891.

It might be mentioned here that although the building was called a high school, it included grades from first through the twelfth, keeping this system until 1912, when the first eight grades were eliminated.

The Kenosha Union, a local paper described the building.

" The foundation and trimmings are of bluish-gray sandstone, and the super structure of cream colored brick. The building consists of a basement and three stories. In the basement can be found the heating apparatus, two recreation rooms for winter use, and water closets.

"On the first story are six class rooms, each sufficiently large to seat thirty pupils. On the second story is the high school room with two recitation rooms adjacent; the grammar room with one recitation; the principal office and library. The third floor will be used for an auditorium. The people of Kenosha now have a high school that they will not be ashamed of."

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Clubs and societies were not much in evidence during the childhood and adolescence of the school. The Friday afternoon rhetorical exercises were the social event of the week.

A literary society seems to have been the first organization. One such society was formed about 1890 and held weekly meetings on Friday nights. It had the honor of holding its discussions in the new auditorium.

Baseball had its admirers among the high school boys. There being no place to play this sport during the winter months, one of the boys suggested that the auditorium, a spacious room ideal for an active game, be used. Because the chairs were not stationary and because it was to be used for a worthy cause, physical education, the boys felt the request logical and appointed a committee to ask Mr. Cleary, the principal, for permission. Mr. Cleary, who probably later wished he had not, brought the request before the board of education and was flatly, denied the request. The honorable members of the board deemed it an insult to have any one running around and damaging their remarkable auditorium.

After the auditorium had been used a few times, the students found that a play or program could not be put on successfully without a drop curtain. Being too modest to ask for any thing more after having received a new school, they decided to raise the needed funds themselves. Several plays were presented with a small admission charge, but still the amount fell far short of its goal. Not to be denied their objective, the students finally asked the school board to furnish the few remaining dollars. The board complied with this request, and the curtain was purchased.

A group of enthusiastic, athletically inclined, young girls decided o organize in1896, a girls' gym club in which basketball and tennis were taught. This accompanied the organizing of the first girls' basketball team in Kenosha High School.

Because of the fact that the auditorium was not very large, the high school was soon forced to rent a local theater for their class plays and commencement programs. In 1899, three years after the first dramatic club was organized, the first big production, David Copperfield, was presented at the Rhode Opera House, Kenosha's only theater.

Great interest had been manifested in every direction toward better music. In the fall of 1902, a girls' chorus, a boys' glee club, and a boys' quartette were organized. The Kenosha High School orchestra, with only nine members, was first started in 1907 and made its debut in October of the same year with Edwin Stringham as director. Before the end of the term the organization was given up, but it was reorganized in 1908.

Rhetoricals naturally led to debating. The intense interest in forensic activities fostered the organization of the Delian and the Castilian Societies in 1902. With the whole school lined up with one side or the other, the Delians and the Castilians debated frequently and passionately against each other.

Social events crept into the school slowly. In 1902 the Junior-Senior Promenade was inaugurated, and it has since become a yearly event.

On Friday afternoon, June 19, 1891, an informal reunion of the old pupils and graduates of Kenosha High School was held because of their desire to gather within the walls of the old school room for the last time before its destruction. The building echoed with greetings exchanged among almost two hundred former school chums, many of who had not met for many years. Professor Francis Cleary, the

Principal, called the meeting to order. It was at this gathering that the Kenosha High School Alumni Association, which is still a prominent organization in Kenosha, was founded.

The year 1895 was the fiftieth milestone in the long rum of education in Kenosha. The obscure spark of education that had flickered dimly in the remote village of Southport in 1845 had been gradually increasing its flame and by1895 it was glowing ardently. The fifty years that had passed away marked a great advancement in the educational system of Kenosha. Colonel Michael Frank lived to see his dreams come true, although he was not living at the time of the celebration of the fiftieth birthday of the founding of the first free school. His death occurred on December 26, 1894, only a few months before the celebration.

On June 28, 1895, the Kenosha High School Alumni Association, which had been formed in 1891, gathered together at the high school building to celebrate the semi-centennial of Kenosha's free schools. From all parts of the United States those who had once been students in the Kenosha school returned to observe the fiftieth birthday.

The meeting of those long separated, some one, some two score years, the prompt or tardy recognition, the effusive greeting, the embracing, the occasional tear, and the flood of reminiscences, all formed a scene that would throw into the shade the first reunion of a class of gushing girl graduates. Colonel John G. McMynn, who was principal of Kenosha High School from 1851 to 1853, was one of the speakers.

A sight worthy to be immortalized on canvas was McMynn as he addressed a bevy of gray-headed, spectacled, wrinkled boys and girls, some of whom had not seen him since he left Kenosha in 1853.

The Honorable J. V. Quarles, United States Senator from Wisconsin and a Kenosha graduate of the class of '61, noted as toastmaster. Mrs. Mary D. Bradford, also a former student, gave a memorial address in honor of Michael Frank.

For many days succeeding the twenty-eighth of June, Kenosha seemed to be in an atmosphere of reunion. Numerous entertainments were held in honor of the visiting alumni.

The closing years of the nineteenth century marked the ending of an old era, and with the twentieth century Kenosha High School entered upon a period of rapid educational advancement.

PART THREE

FREE EDUCATION: PROGRESSION

Transitory periods are usually too long and uncertainly defined to be given an exact date. Only infrequently are they traceable to the influence of a single person or event. In Kenosha High School, where a period of change followed the turn of the century, the condition was the result of a new, wider understanding and appreciation of educational changes by the general public.

The glamour of the first free high school in Wisconsin distinction no longer gold-plated the plain brass of prevalent facts. Repair expenses for the comparatively new school, built in 1891, were rapidly approaching a total equal to the entire original cost of the building. Gradually the city was realizing that parsimony and adequate education could be mixed only at the cost of the latter. The school leaders for future, if not immediate, change were considering modernization and reform, prime needs.

The question of the high school's future was at a critical stage in 1910-11. Oliver S. Thompson, who served as Principal during that year, resigned. On the choice of his successor hung the answer to the question, "Will Kenosha remain a leader in secondary education, or will the school become just one more high?"

Kenosha was fast becoming an industrial center, and the population doubled between 1910-1920. This rapid increase brought numerous problems. While the youth in a population of twenty thousand could be easily accommodated in Kenosha, the speedy growth upset the system.

The coming of George Nelson Tremper, choice of the school board for the principal ship, marked the turning point in a chapter of the school's history. Under his guidance, the school solved its complicated problem and regained a place of importance among mid-western schools.

Principal Tremper came to Kenosha in 1911. Immediately his idealism and perseverance became evident, and he gained a prestige greater than that of any previous principal.

In 1911 the requirements for any principal who hoped to be successful, Kenosha High School were tact, idealism, perseverance, and experience. Tremper's store of theses qualities was unlimited. He became the friend of everyone, the foe of none.

If not aggressive, Tremper is versatile and resourceful. Making alien groups compatible, helping the bewildered boy or girl to acclimate himself to the high school atmosphere are tasks masterfully performed by this principal.

Before 1911 no principal had retained his position at Kenosha High for a period longer than eight years. Principal Tremper has entered his twenty-fifth successful year in the office. Adjudged by this standard, the present principal is three hundred per cent more satisfactory than the best earlier school head.

His sympathetic, understanding nature has made him much loved by the students. Years after they have graduated, students recall his uplifting influence and remember him as a model gentleman.

The Kenosha Evening News speaks of him as follows:

"His helpfulness and executive ability, combined with a free knowledge of the psychology of the boy and girl has made Principal Tremper a figure before the students. Hundreds of high school graduates remember him long after they have left the influence of his guiding hand, and the portals of the high school."

Under Mr. Tremper's guiding direction, the school has grown in student enrollment and in prominence among the schools of the state. The curriculum has been extended, new organizations and activities have prospered, and a million dollar building has been erected to house the students.

The Tremper regime began the year after Mrs. Mary D. Bradford became superintendent of schools. In 1921 Mrs. Bradford resigned and was succeeded by Guy F. Loomis, who still fills that office.

During the decade of 1910-1920, the board of education supported the movements for the advance of the entire school system. Among the presidents of the board during this time were C. H. Curtiss, W. J. Threinen, John B. Maloney, H. O. Whitbeck, and Jay Glerum. Their interest, understanding, and influence aided the secondary school through its problematic days when over-crowding and lack of modern facilities impeded the proper advance of educational instruction.

So foresighted was Mrs. Bradford that in 1916 she argued the need of a new senior high school, an edifice not built till nearly ten years had elapsed between her declaration and the building of the present school.

A steadily increasing staff of teachers carried on the business of instructing a steadily increasing number of students in high school studies. Some suggestion of the rapidity of the growth of the population of the city may be gained from a study of the enrollment in the high school.

Year	Enrollment	Teachers
1913	350	15
1914	380 (approx.)	16
1915	400 (approx.)	17
1916	(change to three year school)	23
1917	300 (approx.)	21
1918	350 (approx.)	19
1919	390	27
1920	401	29
1921	510	36
1922	608	49
1923	652	50
1924	724	55

Better results in teaching were brought about by closer co-operation between the parents and teachers. Consequently, in 1912, the high school Parent Teachers' Association was organized in order to encourage this co-operation and to provide the proper opportunities for consideration of other problems, which were peculiar to the high school. Among the acts of the association was its approval and co-operation in an effort to simplify the style of dress worn by girls at the commencement exercises.

The association also did much in providing school equipment. It purchased and installed an indirect light dome in the domestic science dining room; it presented to the school eight dozen silver teaspoons and five dozen silver knives and forks. It also became a member of the State and National Parent Teachers' Associations and kept in close contact with them. With the high school association as an example, elementary schools began to organize their groups and finally became branches of the high school P.T.A.

MUSHROOM GROWTH ENROLLMENT

The enrollment problem in the high school now turned the tables, and instead of a steady increase in the girls' attendance, as had been the case in the days of the 1890's the boys began to dominate the enrollment increase. This was due to the addition of such subjects as shop mathematics, solid geometry, economics, and commercial law, which appealed strongly to the masculine mind.

Early in 1912 conditions were greatly improved in the high school as a result of the removal of the lower grades from the building. The annoyances, which arose when the students in the high school grades had to mingle with the younger children, were eliminated. The conflicts, which arose, because of differences in the division of time of sessions with varying programs in the different grades, were remedied. At the same time the administration was able to ameliorate somewhat the crowded conditions and to give all but two of the teachers rooms by themselves where all their classes could meet and where more satisfactory conditions for carrying on the work could be provided.

In the year 1910-1911 the enrollment increased from two hundred and sixty-eight to three hundred and three; the 1911-12 enrollment was three hundred and eighty-eight; an increase of twenty-four percent; by 1912-13 the enrollment which was fifty-two percent over what it had been in 1910-11, had reach four hundred and six; throughout all of these years the attendance had averaged ninety eight percent. This unusual growth was due in part to the growth of the city during that time and in large measure to the mid-year promotion plans which held many pupils over from the eighth grade that would probably have dropped out. The addition of many new courses also contributed to the desire of male young people for high school training.

A WHITE ELEPHANT

Although the building completed in1892 had been the pride of Kenosha, it was poorly constructed. Repairs were frequent and costly.

In 1910 the assembly room and auditorium were condemned, which made it necessary to put the senior class in one of the recitation rooms for the following year. All class rooms that were large enough had to be utilized for study rooms for the lower classes while the senior and junior classes were accommodated only at recitation periods. At other times they were obliged to go home, or to the library, or to sit in the halls where it was cold, drafty, and poorly lighted. The result was a great increase in absence.

The remaining students in the school were seated in six separate rooms and because of the small size of the rooms; study conditions were paralyzed when classes were reciting. Since no place was available in which the school could be assembled in a body, the spirit of the school was considerably weakened.

Up until then the total cost of the high school, including the improvements and additions that had been made year by year, was seventy-five thousand dollars. In 1911 again rumors of unsafe conditions in the high school were heard, and this time, the cause was the great stretch of the slate roof. It cost sixteen hundred dollars to remedy this evil. Other expense added to the construction changes in the building brought the cost to eighty-one thousand dollars.

During the summer of 1912, many changes were wrought in the Kenosha High School. The chemistry laboratory and domestic science department were installed; the showers and lockers were placed in the basement of the school for the athletic department. The classes of 1911 and 1912 contributed toward this equipment. Many of the rooms in the building that were poorly arranged were remodeled, and electric lights were installed in most of the rooms; a few rooms continued to be lighted by gas.

Student still continued to hang their wraps in the cloakroom. This was a very crude way to provide for the care of the pupils' clothes, and lockers were greatly needed. However it was not until some years later that definite action was taken.

By 1915 all the rooms in the high school were well lighted. The electric lighting equipment that had been begun in 1912 was finally completed, and proper distribution of current to the various parts of the building finished. Every room was electrically equipped, thus doing away with the old gaslights.

The increasing number of pupils demanded more rooms and possibly an extra building to which the commercial work could be transferred so as to eliminate the noise of the typewriters from the regular recitation rooms, and also to permit more classes in typewriting to be organized. Although this change was expedient, no action was taken to remedy the situation. The organization of the junior high schools relieved the congestion in the high school temporarily.

A NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM

A petit crisis faced Kenosha High School and the city school system at the time that the city proper with the rest of the world was concerned with the problem of the World War.

The high school building was loaded to capacity. The grade schools were overflowing with pupils. A new structure, being erected, was still a term completion. Somewhere room had to be found for Kenosha's abundance of scholars. Mrs. Mary D. Bradford experienced educator who was then superintendent of schools offered a solution for this acute problem. Learning of the so-calledc"6-3-3" plan in successful operation in California, Mrs. Bradford realized that one answer to the question of Kenosha's schools' future lay in the adoption of the junior-senior high school system. She successfully fostered the plan, and in September 1916, with a rehabilitated brick building as the intermediate school, students entered three types of schools in the same city system. The plan, which materially relieved the crowded condition in Kenosha High School, was comparatively simple.

The elementary school consisted of six grades instead of eighth, as had been the custom. The new unit was established between the elementary school and the high school. Seventh and eighth grades and the freshman year of high school were included in the junior high. This left a three-year high school. Besides relieving the crowded conditions in the old schools, the plan had many other advantages. Summarized in the 1915-16 "Report of the Public Schools" in a list prepared by Mrs. Bradford, they are so as follows:

1. "The new plan lessens the harsh jar between grade and high school so discouraging to first year students.
2. It allows for more specialized teaching.
3. It allows for contact with more instructors by students.
4. It allows differentiation of courses to fit the individual student's need.
5. It allows elastic promotion. Students go ahead in subjects they can master while repeating those failed in.
6. Students may start foreign language at an advantageous age.
7. Smaller range of age allows for more and fuller social activity, making school more attractive to youth."

At the time the change was made, a question arose: "How shall we fit a four year Latin or English course into three years of senior high school?" Obviously there must be some way of surmounting this barrier to the success of the plan, but how to do it? Really, no problem existed, for while the student's senior high school careers had been abbreviated, the first year was included in the junior high school course. Consequently, by commencing the instruction of the subject in the last year of the intermediate school, the result was successful and popular, especially when students found that the task of acclimating themselves to the high school environment easier when some of the subjects had been begun in the familiar junior high.

From the first year that the junior-senior high school system went into operation, the expense account of the schools rose. Unnaturally high, wartime prices were prevailing. Prices on all commodities rose to unheard-of figures, but simultaneously with the advent of higher prices came higher wages. Consequently, when the tax rate of the city was raised to provide for, among other things, the ascending cost of education, no especial hardship was imposed on any citizen. Certainly, records show no account of any particular difficulty being encountered in the collection of taxes during the Great War.

Especially rapid in its rise was the salary rate for teachers. With a high premium on labor, the value of instructors doubled, and the once underpaid pedagogues obtained wages that allowed for some semblance of a decent standard of living.

As may be seen in the following table, the expense of instruction rose rapidly, out of proportion to the other costs of high school education during the years shown.

Kenosha High School Expenses

	1916	1917	1918
Instructors' salaries	$26,937	$28,580	$48,240
Operating expenses	$5,066	$6,776	$10,802
School maintenance	$2,449	$1,919	$1,498

An illustration of the rapid rise in salaries is found in the fact that in 1913 only one instructor in the entire Kenosha Public School System received over twelve hundred dollars for his services. In 1924 two hundred and thirty seven teachers received more than that amount.

CURRICULUM

When Mr. Tremper assumed the duties of the principal ship, improvement changes, and additions to the course of study followed almost immediately. In the first semester of the year 1911-12 a department of oral expression, which had existed for several years, took on increased efficiency. The lower classes

were taught how to interpret passages of simple English so that it was intelligible to the listener. In this connection enunciation, voice inflection, and graceful, intelligent, physical expression were given special emphasis. Exercises were written up or given orally, and involved different forms verbal expression, such as story telling, debating, and extemporaneous speaking.

In order to bring the high school course within the capacity of all pupils who cared to take it, a two-year commercial course was introduced in place of the old four-year course. It offered only one year of bookkeeping and one year shorthand and typewriting.

For years before the change from a four to a three-year high school, modern foreign languages were neglected in Kenosha High School. Although the commercial and English courses were constantly being revised, foreign language had meant only Latin. In 1916, G. N. Tremper inaugurated a course in Spanish, which he himself taught the first year. So dubious of the success of the new subject and of its reception in the community was the school's head that he had published in the local newspaper an article containing a detailed explanation of the addition to the course.

It read in part as follows: "--- I feel no doubt whatever that the student who studies Spanish can better understand the syntax of his own language because of the parallelisms and comparisons he can get between the two."

Within a few years, Spanish instruction was extended by the addition of a second year course. After the difficulties entailed in the initiation of modern languages into the curriculum, their popularity spontaneously increased, and they rose quickly in the esteem of students and intelligent, interested citizens. Even German, omitted from the course of study during the World War, regained its favor in subsequent years.

In 1916 several reforms were instigated. Besides the shortening of the compass of the high school course, a regular physical education course was started. Under the care of a supervisor, the domestic science and other practical and cultural arts courses were generally revamped.

Since then many new subjects have been added to the curriculum. Here is a partial list of courses introduced in the various departments: Industrial arts—sheet metal, printing, drafting; English—journalism; Commercial—salesmanship, industrial geography, business science; Foreign languages—French, Italian; Social science—social problems, economics; Music—harmony, band, orchestra; Physical education—swimming, hygiene.

In February 1934, a new class was added to the curriculum. It was called newspaper reading, gave one-half credit, and no homework. In this class students studied various newspapers, compared their merits, and discussed current events. Debating and dramatics were given a place in the course of study and proved very popular. For some years debating and dramatics had been strictly extra-curricular, with the sophomores receiving the only regular public speaking work –one day a week in place of the English class. In 1934 advanced biology was permitted as an alternative to physics or chemistry to satisfy the science requirement for graduation. Hygiene was made compulsory for students of both sexes in 1935.

Every regular student at Kenosha High must carry four full time subjects. English is required of all except during the senior A semester, when it may be omitted if two years of a foreign language have been taken. In the junior year geometry is the requirement, and in the senior year, American history. Each student must take a year of physics, chemistry, or advanced biology. Sophomores and junior B's must take physical education three times a week, while twice a week suffices for junior A's and seniors. No more than two credits of fractional work may be used for graduation.

LUXURY AT LAST

A committee of fifteen citizens was appointed by the board of education in January 1922, to study the school buildings in Kenosha and recommend any necessary changes or additions. An inadequate high school building was found by the committee, which recommended that a new one be built immediately.

After the City Council and the citizens had approved the plan, the board began to prepare for the construction. John D. Chubb, an architect of Chicago, Illinois, designed the building. The contract for the general construction was awarded to the Madsen and Peterson Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota, on August 15, 1924. The contract designated May 26, 1926, as the final date for the completion of the building.

An itemized account of the main expenses incurred in the construction is given in this table.

Central High School Building

General Construction	Madsen & Peterson Minneapolis, Minnesota	$858,710.46
Heating and Ventilating	American Heating Co. Superior, Wisconsin	$76,299.13
Plumbing and Sewerage	Carstens Brothers Ackley, Iowa	$56,597.60
Temperature Regulation	National Regulator Co. Chicago, Illinois	$13,583.00
Electric Works	A. C. Electric Co. Milwaukee, Wisconsin	$47,317.51
Light Fixtures (building)	Domestic Utilities Supply Co. Oshkosh, Wisconsin	5,718.95
Light Fixtures (buildings)	Luminons Fixtures Supply Co.	$2,783.75
Scaffold for Decorating		$519.33
Grills		$4,037.09
		$1,065,567.15

John D. Chubb received $44,137.73 as the architect's fee. The equipment of the building added $93,575.89 to the bill. Incidental expenses, temporary shacks, scaffolds, trucking, traveling expenses, etc. brought the total cost of the building to $1,248.607.59. The powerhouse, located next to the old high school, with all its equipment cost $170,976.58.

Dismal rain ushered in November 20, 1924, the day on which the laying of the cornerstone of the new high school building in Kenosha was scheduled. Not daunted by the drizzle, however, two thousand children paraded through the streets of the town to the ceremony. Inclement weather naturally made a short program necessary. There was some music and several short addresses. Mrs. Rebecca Jones Applegate, O.F. Starkweather, and Emery L. Grant were the only living members of the class of 1861, the first graduation class from Kenosha High. Mr. Starkweather was present at the exercises, and he laid documents on the history of the school in the stone. The new building had now assumed some reality.

Feverish impatience characterized the student body from the fall of 1924 to February 22, 1926. Anxiously the pupils hovered over each stone and timber that went into the construction. Finally, seventy-four days before the contract date of May 15, the conglomeration of building material became a school.

Moving week, February 14-19, was a mad scramble. Excitement was rampant; everyone wanted to help, but in spite of the confusion the job was finally accomplished.

February 22, 1926, Kenosha Central Senior High School conducted classes in its new building; that is, it conducted classes for those students who were not exploring the unknown regions of the edifice. For the first few days many pupils spent a great deal of time going over each inch of their new domain, which was such a contrast to the old building with its rickety stairs. The building completed in 1926 is the one in use today.

A city block entirely covered by school adequately describes Kenosha Central Senior High. Roman-Corinthian is designed and faced in Bedford Indiana Colithic limestone; the three-story building is

a city landmark. It is constructed in three units, the gymnasium and the auditorium each constituting a separate unit on the south side of the building.

The main entrance is on the north side of the building. The vestibule, wainscoted with curly green marble, opens upon the main stairway, the graceful inviting steps leading up through the building. Terrazzo marble is used in corridor floors, stairs, and balustrades, and ceramic mosaic tile id found in floors of vestibules, toilets, and showers.

Floors in the general offices and in the library are covered with battleship linoleum, while maple floors with metal base finish the classrooms and study halls.

The general offices are located on the first floor east of the main entrance. The commercial rooms line the west corridor. On this floor is found the girls' gymnasium, and on the east and west sides of the central open court are shower and locker rooms connecting with the gyms, and the pool.

On the second floor at the head of the grand stairway is the library, flanked by the two large study halls. Standard classrooms occupy the rest of this floor.

On the third floor are lecture rooms, two physics laboratories, chemistry, and a biology laboratory. The biology laboratory connects with the conservatory on the roof of the auditorium, a petit greenhouse where eight or ten students each semester try their skill as gardeners. The third floor also has two art rooms and a room for architectural drawing together with a number of regular classrooms.

Lockers are located in recesses on the on the east and west corridors. There are two groups in each corridor on the second and third floors. The narrow south hall, on which no classrooms open, is lined with lockers. Lavatories on the north and rest rooms on the east corridors occupy the same relative positions on each of the three floors.

The entrance to the bleachers of the swimming pool is in back of the grand stairway on the first floor. The attractive tiled pool on the basement level is seventy-five feet in length, five feet longer than the whole building, which Kenosha High School first used. Modern sanitation is maintained through the recirculation apparatus, which purifies the water, purifies the water and sterilizes it with ultraviolet rays.

The main gymnasium is located in the southwest corner of the building. Balconies on three sides provide for spectators, and there are entrances on two streets.

Prominent in civic activities as well as in school affairs is the auditorium, for it has excellent stage and seating capacities. The main floor and the balcony will seat approximately fifteen hundred people.

The stage back of the drop curtain is twenty by sixty feet, while the proscenium measures twenty-two by forty-four feet. Dressing rooms, fly gallery, rigging loft, complete lighting equipment, five stage sets, and the asbestos curtain make this one of the best places in the city for dramatic performances. An orchestra pit and a projection booth add to the completeness. Two art glass panels in the ceiling admit natural light to the assembly when it is desired.

A striking feature of the auditorium is the mural painting above the proscenium arch, with two side panels next to the stage and above the balcony. Gustave Brandt of Chicago painted the three. One side panel depicts mental training while the other shows physical training.

Kenosha's progress is shown in the painting above the proscenium, which also symbolizes the arts and sciences. Youthful, agricultural-minded Kenosha as it founded its free high school is shown in the left section of the panel. Kenosha is portrayed moving through the years to its latest high school, gigantic factories, and civic recreation. The fulfillment of the desires of the early educators is depicted in this high school building.

The building is heated by vacuum steam equipment, and the central plant a block west, next to the old building, provides the steam. This plant was constructed to take care of any future buildings that may be built in the old site. The heating and ventilating systems in the basement of the academic unit are arranged so that the three sections of the building can be heated and ventilated independently. The air is washed, and humidity and temperature controlled throughout the building. The telephone systems automatic, and the clock and bell systems have central control. A service runs from the basement to the third floor.

Though the school board accepted the building on February 20, and two days later classes began in it, the dedicatory services were not held until April 1926. Then the week of April 11 to 17 was set aside as Dedication Week.

The unveiling of the portrait of Mary D. Bradford, the money for which had been raised by the Kenosha College Club, was the event of the afternoon of April 13. Robert Grafton and hangs on the east wall of the library painted the portrait. It looks across to the west wall where hang portraits of Colonel Frank and Colonel McMynn.

Formal dedication was finally given to the building Tuesday evening, April 13, in the auditorium with the president of the board of education, Lewis W. Powell, presiding. The program began at eight o'clock.

Invocation—Reverend George Cady
Overture—High School Orchestra
Presentation of the Keya by the Building Committee, Chairman George Klotz
Acceptance for the Board, President L. W. Powell
"Kenosha in Wisconsin's Early Educational History",
Former Superintendent Mary D. Bradford
Selection—High School Girls' Glee Club, Miss Edna Cameron directing
Congratulations:
From neighbors, Superintendent F.O. Holt, Janesville
From the State Department, Assistant State Superintendent
C.J. Anderson
From the teachers of the state, E. C. Doudna,
Secretary, Wisconsin Teachers' Association
Address: "The Faith of the Founders",
Superintendent William McAndrew, Chicago
Benediction, Reverend Frank Czerwinski

Wednesday the students held a dedicatory assembly. Citizens' Day was celebrated Thursday with a program. The architect, the contactor, and several local men spoke. Throughout the week the building was open for inspection by the townspeople, and at stated times the high school students acted as guides.

The old high school building was converted into a junior high school due to the overcrowding in the existing junior highs. It was called Central Junior High School. The high school classes in domestic science and manual art still met in that building however.

When the student body was safely installed in its new home, classes were called five minutes earlier. This caused a marked increase in tardiness until Kenosha alarm clocks grew accustomed to ringing earlier.

Kenosha citizens felt sure that there never would be an overcrowding problem in their high school when they learned that eighteen hundred would be the maximum that could be accommodated in it. However, the high school attendance mounted steadily. In the early thirties it hovered around the maximum mark, lacking only forty-eight of the capacity number at the beginning of 1932. Still the enrollment went up and passed the fateful eighteen hundred. In 1933 the enrollment had passed nineteen hundred and seventy. Overcrowding was a real problem. Something had to be done.

Throughout this period the high school had been appropriating rooms in the old high school building. The new commercial rooms had been pressed into service as homerooms long before this, but still more homerooms had to be sent to the Central Junior High School building. Finally Central junior High was abolished, and its pupils distributed among the three other junior highs in the city. A new junior high building had been erected since the high school had been built so the extra students could be easily taken care of in it. In the fall of 1933, the old high school building returned to its duties as a secondary school as it became the High School Annex.

Sophomores were given the old building, and Dwight ZT. John, formerly principal of Central Junior High, was made the associate principal of the high school and put in charge of the verdant sophomores. Thus the crowded condition in Kenosha High School was alleviated, though an obsolete building had to be pressed into service to accomplish it.

A WORLD A BLOCK SQUARE

School used to be reading, 'riting, and 'rithmatic and no tomfoolery, and while the curriculum was never that restricted in this school, the social life was. Kenosha High School now offers forty-three courses, which vary in length from one semester to three years, excluding those in the physical education department.

Extra-curricular activities have grown to hold a prominent place in school life. There are now about thirty organizations in which students can find many sources of benefit and pleasure. This is a far cry from the restricted program and the ascetic social atmosphere of the school during the nineteenth century.

Oratory, the legacy of the Friday rhetorical, has not been allowed to decline, for in the last seven years the forensic teams of Kenosha High School have won eighteen state championships, distributing them among debating, oratory, declamation, and extemporaneous speaking.

Departmental clubs flourish. Each foreign language has its gathering of kindred spirits. The art department calls its organization Da Vinci. Chemistry and physics students each have a club, and the advanced students in printing have formed a guild. This semester a social science honor society has been organized to give that department an outlet for the discussion of its problems.

The Hi-Y and the Red Triangle are strictly masculine, both stressing service to the school. A bookroom in the school through which students can sell their second-hand books with no service charge is the Hi-Y's project.

Fantastic melodrama for the delectation of assemblies, and equally fantastic popularity contests are the wares of one club; another vivifies school spirit and acts as publicity agent for athletics.

The Girl Reserve Club, divided into three units, one for each class, is the leading feminine organization, and is affiliated with the Y. W. C. A. Girl Scouts first formed a high school troop in1922, and now there are two groups.

The school annual is the main publication of the student body, for the school newspaper, THE KENEWS, had to be discontinued in 1933 because of lack of support. The annual, which is called The Spy, was first issued in 1912. After a very modest beginning, it rapidly improved in quality. The 1926 edition, issued the year the present building was opened, shared all-American rating with eight other high school annuals.

Financial hurricanes almost annihilated The Spy in 1933, the same year that the school paper went down in defeat. Determined not to be quite washed out, the Spy staff cut the pages to two-thirds of the former size and eliminated about ten pages. The school press undertook the printing and binding, although its equipment was inadequate. However, the twenty-first Spy came out in June 1933, shrunken in size but

inflated in glory. The next year an inch was added to the length and width of the page, and this same size is being used in the publication this year.

Quill and Scroll, a chapter of the International Society of High School Journalists, sponsors the only other literary publication. For three years the club has published a booklet of creative writing submitted by the students. Buds the appropriate title of the little volume.

Music's charms attract many students, especially since its groups meet during the fifth periods. Vocalists find use for their talents in either the Girls' or Boys' Glee Club, in the ACapella Choir, and in the huge mixed chorus, which has about four hundred members.

The first band provides music for the football and basketball games, besides its unusual concert and assembly programs. The second band is the musicians' training ground.

The orchestra also gives regular concerts and frequently joins the choral organizations in presenting vocal compositions arranged with orchestral accomplishment. Graduation and class play performances are its other duties.

Dancing at the school was unthought-of of when the school was young. It was considered a useless folly and was forbidden. Picnics were the first social distraction sanctioned by the school. Picnics are still good form, and many clubs have them in the spring, but dancing is the accepted social diversion.

The high point in the Kenosha High School social whirl is the early winter Junior-Senior Prom held in the school gym, which is transformed for the evening into an elaborate dance hall by the juniors and art students. Other evening dances are held when a club has sufficient courage and a good excuse, such as a championship to celebrate.

A boon to organizations, in need of funds, is the Dime Dance. These dances are held in the gym Friday afternoons from four to five o'clock, and as the name implies, Uncle Sam's smallest size coin will admit anyone. These dances were banned the first semester of the year 1933-34 due to the outsiders who "crashed" them; but because certain clubs became so impoverished that they had to restrict their activities greatly, the ban was lifted the second semester. Now the club desiring a date for a dance finds Friday afternoons at a premium.

Physical education is required of all students, but besides the regular work in swimming, gym, tennis, etc., sports are prominent in Kenosha High. IN the girls' department, basketball and tennis tournaments are yearly events. There are two permanent girls' clubs in this department, the Girls' Athletic Association, whose members strive for points to earn a "K" and the Trident Club, whose mermaids are lifesavers. Tennis and clubs come and go.

Intra-mural sports have an extensive for program for the boys. The homerooms battle for the intra-mural basketball championship, and interest is high in the free-throw tourney.

Kenosha competes with other schools in tennis and swimming, but conference games are found only in the basketball and football schedules. The Big Eight Conference, of which Kenosha is a member, consists of schools from towns in southern Wisconsin—Beloit, Madison, Janesville, Racine, and Kenosha. Several years ago track was dropped from inter-school competition because of restricted funds, but the spring of 1935 is bringing it back.

1934-35 was indeed a banner year for athletics, for with the undefeated-but-twice-held-scoreless football team perched securely on the football championship, a dazzling basketball team swept through its season undefeated to claim the Big Eight basketball crown. Kenosha's center, Gil Thompson, set up a new Big Eight record for future cagesters to shoot at when he collected one hundred and five points during the ten game season.

The team cast a covetous eye on the state championship, after sweeping through the district tournament in a grandiose manner and adding the district title to their laurels, but Kenosha's state tournament jinx again accompanied the team to Madison. It was a repetition of last year's events. The team dropped the first game to a quintet, which was normally Kenosha's inferior. Returning to form the next day, Kenosha swamped their next opponents, but it was too late. Consolation honors were all for the disappointed athletes who clicked to late.

The Student Council was started shortly after Mr. Tremper became principal in 1911. It has the power is seldom exercised. At first it was composed of members of each class and representatives from the clubs. Then students in each homeroom elected a representative. Each student council member represented approximately thirty students, for the large rooms elected two representatives. The members were stationed in the halls, each taking one period of the day, to maintain order.

The club representatives were abolished. Next the privilege of choosing their own representatives was denied the students. In 1933-34 a new method was adopted. Since then the teachers choose the members from each class to run for council. Each senior class may have seven representatives, the juniors six, and the sophomores four. From the few candidates put up by the faculty the students may make a choice. Only three or four candidates can be defeated. Through this method the membership of the council has been greatly decreased. There are not enough members to man the hall chairs, and the organization's influences in maintaining order and enforcing rules has all but been wiped out.

The honor roll system at Kenosha High School was revised during the year 1933-34 through the efforts of the Student Council. Under the old plan, a student had to have four grades above ninety to get on the first honor roll. The second honor roll accepted one mark in the eighties if presented with three nineties. Believing this system unfair to the student weak in one subject but proficient in the rest, the Student Council brought forth a plan for an honor roll based on a point system. Four points were given for a grade above ninety-five, three for a grade of ninety to ninety-four, two for a mark between eighty-five and eighty-nine, and one for a grade between eighty and eighty-four. Twelve points were the requisite for the first honor roll and nine for the second. A failing grade kept the student off either honor roll no matter how many other points he had amassed. The Student Council points with pride to this remarkable reform.

Books and supplies disappeared too frequently to suit Principal Tremper, so in the second semester of the year 1933-34, he instituted a system of locker guards. Each homeroom has at least one of their numbers among the guards. Mr. Tremper assigns to each one a small group of lockers, which he is to protect with his life. The guards are to be on duty when school opens, fifteen minutes before classes begin, between classes, two minutes before classes end, and two minutes after the next ones have begun, and fifteen minutes after school. They are to familiarize themselves with the owners of the lockers and see that no strangers open them. Whether the lockers suddenly have become barren, or the psychological effect of the locker guards has destroyed the practitioners, cannot be definitely stated; but petty thievery has been materially decreased. Locker looting as a vocation has almost disappeared from Kenosha High School.

Eight o'clock. Any day. Chris and Eddie, the janitors, unlock the doors, and the influx of students begins. During the next fifteen minutes 2324 boys and girls enter Kenosha High School, go to their lockers and deposit their excess wrappings, and then dash madly around to perform eleven million errands before classes begin. At eight-fifteen roll is checked in the homerooms, and at eight-seventeen the daily grind begins in earnest. Seventy-four teachers wait with knowledge in store.

The morning is divided into five periods. The first four are regular class work but the fifth period is an activity period. The homeroom is the headquarters for the student during this period, but he may make any number of field trips. Chorus, glee clubs, and choir meet during this period, and sections of the band rehearse fifth hour. A few clubs hold meetings then.

Banking utilizes the fifth period on Tuesday. Wednesday bears the proud appellation of Home Room Day, when each room elects a chairman and has some sort of homeroom activity. This period was started to create a unified, spirited student body.

Assemblies are held Thursday and Friday. The size of the student body finally brought an end to general assemblies. Before this building was finished, assemblies were held in the Orpheum Theater, several blocks away, but it was an unsatisfactory arrangement. The new auditorium was sufficiently elastic for several years, but in 1932 the assemblies were practically abandoned, for the sophomores had to stand in the aisles, and this created a hazardous condition. In 1933-34 the custom of two regular assemblies was finally established, and now it is an unusual week that does not see a sophomore assembly on Thursday and a junior-senior gathering on Friday.

Besides the afore mentioned activities, the fifth period can be used for play practice, committee meetings, make-up work, work on the annual, or, as a resort, for study.

At five minutes to twelve the doors shoot open, and the students tumble out at least three times faster than they went in.

School convenes again one-thirty, the building having been opened fifteen minutes before. Three periods occupy the afternoon, and school is over at three forty-five.

CULMINATION OF NINE DECADES

This is Kenosha High School, the ultimate goal of every child that enters kindergarten in Kenosha. Since there is only one high school in the city through it must pass all the young people who complete their secondary education at home.

Long before they enter high school, the boys and girls are well acquainted with it. A citywide exhibit of the work of students from kindergarten through the twelfth year is held in the high school gym every odd year. The high school musical organizations give student concerts especially designed for the grammar school and junior-high students. In countless other ways the close bond between the high school and the lower schools is shown.

One hundred years of progress has Kenosha seen, and ninety years of free public education. When the high school was opened, its only resources were the good will of the community and the allegiance and help of the educated early settlers.

The honor of introducing free schools into the state of Wisconsin is a great one. The boast of the old settlers that Kenosha High School was the first free high school west of the Alleghenies is a proud declaration of civic sentiment even though the claim is declared doubtful by some historical authorities.

Through the years this secondary school has helped in the Americanization of children of the immigrants that came to the city in droves. It has gained an enviable reputation through its high educational standards. The goodwill of the community and excellent leaders has never been lost.

Kenosha High School has had a proud history, and it is the privilege of future generations to maintain its excellent reputation.