

HISTORICAL DATES AND EVENTS



Poughkeepsie City School District

NOTES AND QUOTES: History of the Poughkeepsie City School District,
1841-1955

NOTES AND QUOTES: Curriculum in the Poughkeepsie City School District,
1843-1929

Peter Anders Edman
Vassar College Field Work Intern
June 1985

INTRODUCTION

"Notes and Quotes -- History of the Poughkeepsie City School District" and "Notes and Quotes: A History of the Curriculum in the Poughkeepsie City School District" are byproducts of a field work project I undertook in January 1985, my senior year at Vassar College. My assignment was to prepare an informal history of the Poughkeepsie School District, with a focus on the changes in the curriculum. The following pages represent some of the "notes and quotes" that I used.

I am making these personal notes available because I feel that this collection of information will be useful to others. I hope they can be used as a starting point or reference guide for information on either the Poughkeepsie City School District or on education in general. The following points, however, should be kept in mind:

- Many statements mark "firsts" in the Poughkeepsie schools although others are simply items that were found, and therefore do not necessarily imply significance for the years under which they are listed.

- Items included in the following pages are not intended to be complete accounts of the School District's history -- they represent some of my notes and are those items which were of interest to me and which I felt were needed for the project.

Peter Anders Edman

Peter Anders Edman

June 1985

NOTES AND QUOTES -- HISTORY OF THE Poughkeepsie City School District

1841. - "In March, 1841, an educational meeting ...received the report of a committee which had been investigating the general condition of the village in the matter of school attendance. A census had been made of the children between the ages of 5 and 16 years in the sections west of Washington and Market Streets, and the rest were estimated. Of the 1,641 children in the village the committee stated that about 382 attended no school, though some of these had attended for a few terms. {1 sentence skipped here} This meeting reported in favor of an extension and improvement of the Lancaster system. The Journal was opposed to a free school system, of which it said the Eagle and the Telegraph were 'the especial advocates.'" -- Platt, p.144

1843. - "Abraham Bockee, who was a member of the State Senate from 1842 to 1845, introduced and advocated early in 1843 a special act creating a village board of education of twelve members, with authority to borrow \$12,000 for the erection of buildings and to raise by taxation about \$7,000 a year." -- Platt, p.144

- "The act was nevertheless passed April 18th and was approved at a special village election, May 17th, by a majority of 168 in a total poll of 976 voters. It directed an annual election on the first Tuesday of June each year for members of the board of education, who were at once 'to build and furnish one good and substantial school house, containing two rooms of sufficient capacity to accommodate not less than one hundred and twenty-five pupils each, and to rent five other rooms for primary schools.'" -- Platt, p.144

- "At the elections for the first b of e.... The opposition of the school law put an opposition ticket in the field and attempted a stratagem, withholding their votes until the afternoon, when they cast about 324 for each of the following:....{but the members} were chosen with a vote ranging from 330 to 424." -- Platt, p.145

- Persons elected "at a special meeting held June 13, 1843"; first meeting and oath on June 20; Egbert B. Killey was elected President but he declined the office; William P. Gibbons was then elected President and Thomas Austin elected Clerk -- The beginning pages of the 1843-1854 Minute Book

- The first 12 commissioners were elected on June 13, 1843, "...and on the 20th...they assembled in the room of the village trustees and organized the first B of E." -- Historical Sketch, p.2

- "In 1843 the village corporation owned no school building and the B supplied the want by the rental of the building formerly occupied as a theater situated in Market street near Jay...for the term of three years and nine months, at \$80 a year.

A room was also rented in the building situated on the corner of Clinton and Thompson streets, for the same rent and same term.{...}

About the 1st of August, 1843, the B established a primary school in each of these places, and on the 1st of December, 1843, it rented a room in the coach factory at the junction of Mill street and Dutchess avenue, and organized a third primary school." -- Historical Sketch, p.16

- At this meeting, the Board reported the purchase of a lot -- Mill and Bridge Streets for \$500, from L.B. Trowbridge (which became the Grammar school for boys) -- R, Aug 2, 1843, p.21

- "Resolved, That all admissions to the schools established by the Board, shall be by tickets to be issued by the visiting committees." -- R, Aug 23, 1843, p.27

- "Visiting Committee Reported that the tickets for Primary School No. 1 were all taken by the applicants for admission, and that said school is now full." -- R, Aug 30, 1843, p.28

- Josiah I. Underhill hired "as Principal and Assistant of the Grammar School for boys" -- R, Aug 30, 1843, p.28

- A statement that the Committee on examining schools had visited the Primary School "and found said school in a highly prosperous state" -- R, Sept 6, 1843, p.29

- "...library passed to the Board on the 12th of September, 1843..." -- p.88, 1879 A.R.

- Board to rent for six months a room "known as the Coach Factory at the Junction of Dutchess Avenue and Mill Street..." -- R, Oct 11, 1843, p.37

- "Resolved That as soon as the means of the board will permit it is expedient to place one of the Primary Schools permanently under the charge of a male principal; to establish one Primary School exclusively for girls. And also such a coloured school as shall be sufficient to educate the coloured children of the village." -- R, Nov 15, 1843, p.41

1844. - "The Building Committee reported the completion of the Grammar School." -- R, Jan 10, 1844. p.48

- B to give notice, post handbills "...that Mr. Underhill will commence the examination of candidates for admission into the Grammar School..." -- R, Jan 11, 1844, p.49

- The B resolved that the Grammar School be opened on Jan 29 -- R, Jan 24, 1844, p.50

- "...and on Jan. 29th 'the first grammar school for boys under the free school act' was opened in the building ...with 119 'qualified scholars' in attendance, under the superintendence of Josiah I. Underhill." -- Platt, p.145 **
"The private schools and academies had the prestige, and the free schools were at first expected to take care only of those children whose parents were not able to

pay tuition, ..." -- Platt, p.145

-- "Permit me to direct the attention of the friends of our public schools to the necessity of being vigilant and punctual in their attendance on Tuesday next, at the village election when our supplies for the support of these schools will be voted. Perhaps it is not generally known that the opponents of the free schools are making their calculations to VOTE DOWN the money recommended to be raised for their support during the coming year. If this is done, the schools must necessarily be closed, and 570 children turned into the streets, to be educated in idleness and vice. -- Would it not be well to call a public meeting, and stir up our friends to activity. O." -- Article in the Poughkeepsie Journal and Eagle, March 2, 1844, p.2

- "Resolved that ... be a committee for opening the Female department of Grammar School No 1 on the 1st Monday in May." -- R, April 10, 1844

- "This colored school {School No. 9} was originally established May 1, 1844, when the Board rented the Primitive Methodist Church room in Church street, and in it established a school for colored children with 35 pupils in attendance." -- Historical Sketch, p.19 (until 1875)

- Board reports they rented the "Primitive Methodist Church room in Church St" -- R, May 1, 1844, p.60 // Reports that are 35 scholars in the CS -- p.62, May 14, 1844

- Opened on May 6, 1844 : The Female Department of the Grammar School and the Colored School -- R, May 14, 1844, p.62

- Opened on Dec 2, 1844 : Primary School No 4 for Boys; reported by a committee; 79 pupils admitted, transferred from the other schools -- R, Dec 4, 1844, p.79

1846. - "Resolved that the Board will hereafter furnish pens and ink for all the schools where necessary." -- R, Nov 10, 1846, p.147

1847. "Resolved that the board expect that the teachers will see that their school rooms are swept every afternoon after the hour for closing school." Adopted. -- R, February 2, 1847, p.158

1850. - Committee on Teachers report: "Gentlemen, our attention being called to the impropriety of the girls and boys occupying the same rooms in the Primary Schools Nos 1,2, and 3 we deem it expedient to offer the following Resolution, namely -

Resolved, That the girls and boys of the Primary Schools Nos 1.2, and 3 occupy separate apartments." : DEBATED AND LAID OVER -- R, March 5, 1850, p.258; The resolution is laid on the table -- R, April 2, 1850, p.262

1854 - P became a city {charter passed} on March 28, 1854 -- King, p.61

1856. - In July the Board notes the resignation of Josiah Underhill -- July 31, 1856

A special meeting called, "For the purpose of making arrangements for furnishing the new School Building in Church Street and ..."; "The report of the committee on the organization of the New School was called up and after some discussion the following Amendment was offered by Mr. Warring. Resolved. That the upper floor of the new building in Church St. be devoted to the establishment of a "High School" for the admission of pupils of both sexes. After some further discussion, on Motion of Dr. Andrus, the report and amendment were laid on the table." -- R, March 14, 1856

- "On March 14th, 1856, a motion was offered that the upper floor of the new building in Church street, (School No.2,) be devoted to the use of the High School for the admission of pupils of both sexes. This motion, after some discussion, was laid on the table.

Subsequently a HS was established there and continued until 1865, when at a meeting held August 23rd a resolution was adopted discontinuing the school for one year." -- Historical Sketch, p.20

- Annual reports often state that the HS was established in 1856 -- 1901 A.R., p.214; 1906 A.R., p.160 (although opened June 1857)

1857. - HS attendance first listed in the minutes on June 25, 1857, with an attendance of 40 and an average attendance of 37 -- R, June 25, 1857

- A piece of paper in Adriance says: "Names of the Scholars that went from the First Ward Grammar School to the High School in Church Street to form the opening class on June 15th. 1857." -- Piece of paper received March 23, 1937, in Adriance, 373.7 P (Misc Pamphlets/programs 1857-1968)

- "The New Building in Church Street opened last Monday, and is full to over-flowing, except the Highest Department, which will be opened in a few days, as soon as a proper principal can be obtained." -- "To the Tax Payers of Poughkeepsie", a letter signed by "A Member of the Board", in the Poughkeepsie Telegraph, June 9, 1857

1862. - "On motion it was Resolved That we furnish the scholars in our Public schools with pens and penholders." -- R, Oct 29, 1862.

1863. - "A motion was made 2nd and carried that an appropriation of Fifteen Dollars be made for the purpose of hiring Pine Hall for an Exhibition and awarding Diplomas to the Graduates, on Wednesday evening July 15th."; (might possibly be the first commencement exercises); exams on July 10,13 -- July 1, 1863

1864. - Mentions exams for graduating class, and exercises to again be at Pine Hall; "The class consists of seven members." -- June 1, 1864

- A Committee appointed "to ascertain the expediency of discontinuing the H S and of raising the grade of the Grammar schools;" -- R, Nov 2, 1864

- Committee report: "Reported in favor of continuing the HS, and recommended that it be earnestly sustained by all the members of the B, so that its efficiency might be increased."; unanimously adopted, ordered printed -- R, Dec 7, 1864

1865. - Resolution offered: "Resolved; That we discontinue the HS at the close of this term;" It LOST; However, they did adopt to notify the HS principal "that his services will be dispensed with at the close of this term." -- R, June 6, 1865

- "Moved and 2d that the HS be discontinued from this date." ; laid on the table until another meeting -- R, Aug 2, 1865

- Special Meeting called "For the purpose of acting upon the resolution . . . in reference to the discontinuance of the HS . . ." ** "Resolved; That the HS be discontinued for one year from this date." ** Approved by a 7 to 3 vote -- R, Aug 23, 1865

- "The High School was discontinued for one year, 1865, after the war, apparently as a measure of economy, but the demand for its reestablishment was strong." -- Platt, p.204

1866. - "On motion, it was unanimously resolved, That we reopen the HS on the 1st of September next." -- June 6, 1866

- "The B of E takes pleasure in announcing to the citizens of P that the Public High School (which was closed for one year) will be reopened on Monday, the third day of September next. All residents of this city who are qualified to enter will be admitted free. By order of the Board." Signed by Richard Brittain, Clerk -- An ad placed in the Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle in late August 1866

- "The Academy trustees appreciated the situation and realizing that both institutions could not continue, did what they could to facilitate their union. In 1866 the Academy {Dutchess County Academy, 'losing ground'} building was rented to the city and the High School was reopened there." -- Platt, p.204 ** "A demand soon arose for a new building in a more central location, and the trustees, in response to a petition from the citizens, decided to sell the Academy and donate the proceeds to the Board of Education to be used towards the construction of a High School and Public Library." -- Platt, p.204

1870. - "In the year 1870, the second floor of the building on Market street, known as Mulrein's Marble Front, was rented and the school transferred here." -- Historical Sketch, p.20

- "The old Dutchess County Academy, situated on the corner of Montgomery and South Hamilton streets, was sold in 1870, and the proceeds of the funds raised by the city were used for the erection of the High School and Library." -- Historical Sketch, p.20

1871. - "In 1871 the lot corner of Washington street and Lafayette place was purchased and the erection of the present building begun, which was completed in April, 1872, and the school {HS} transferred" -- Historical Sketch, p.20

- The property was purchased for \$13,000; the HS "found temporary lodgment in the second floor of the Mulrein Building, then recently finished on Market Street.", between time the new opened and the Academy sold in 1870. -- Platt, p.204

1872. - The HS "was opened in April 1872." -- p.263, 1870-1878 Minutes; (its construction was initially voted down but it passed a second election -- p.260)

1873. - "A communication from pupils of the High School asking that the reading of the Bible and prayer be continued as a part of the opening exercise of the school."; received and laid on the table -- R, August 28, 1873, p.202; The use of the Bible and prayer is affirmed -- p.211-212

- Commissioner Parker proposes that the Board appoint a Superintendent: "Resolved, That it is expedient that a Superintendent of Schools be appointed." -- R, July 16, 1873, p.197

1874. - NYS COMPULSORY EDUCATION bill passed on May 11, 1874; ages 8-14 have to attend school for a certain period of time per year; under 14 can't be employed "during the school hours of any school day..." -- Man. 1887, p.3;

- The Poughkeepsie compulsory education regulations, "under, and pursuant to" the NYS bill can be found in the minutes, December 23, 1874, p.339-341 [additional info on pp.335, 359]

- "In 1874 the Board procured the passage of an act, (Chapter 380, Laws 1874) making the High School subject to the control and visitation of the Regents of the University of the State, and entitling it to share in the funds distributed by the Regents. Since that time the pupils attending the High School have participated in the examinations directed by the Regents..." -- p.156-157, 1886 A.R.

- NYS bill passed May 8th, 1874 : Poughkeepsie High School to be "subject to visitation and control of the Regents of the University...{and shall}... share in the annual distribution of the literature fund, and of all other moneys" -- Manual 1887, p.11

1877. - "Resolved, That the Senator from this district and the member of Assembly from this City are hereby requested to obtain the passage of an act authorizing this Board to employ and appoint a superintendent of the schools in charge of this Board." -- R, April 4, 1877, p.478

- Special meeting about a superintendent; reports received; "Resolved that the Board now determine to appoint a superintendent." -- R, Oct 22, 1877, p.510

- Rules adopted concerning a superintendent -- p.512 // Applications for super were read; "Edward Burgess having received a majority of the votes cast was declared elected to the office of Superintendent of schools."; on the 3rd ballot he won 6 to 5 -- R, Nov 7, 1877, p.516

- "It was principally through his {Commissioner O.D.M.Baker} efforts that the necessary legislation was secured under which we could appoint a superintendent of our schools." -- a tribute to the deceased O.D.M.Baker in the 1890 A.R., p.133.

- "Before 1877 the only supervision had of the schools was such as the Commissioners personally gave them....The superintendent's earnest efforts have accomplished much in increasing the efficiency of the schools, and the Board considers the selection a wise one, and the present favorable conditions of the schools largely due to his action." -- p.86, 1879 A.R.

1883. - "An Act to Amend the Charter of the City of Poughkeepsie", passed June 2, 1883, Chapter 523 : Section 91 requires the board to "estimate and certify to the Common Council, the amount of money required for the expenses of its department for the next year, stating in detail the purposes for which the money is required." -- Man. 1887, p.13

1884. -

The High School principal of 9 years resigned, and the Board was faced with the question "of continuing the High School"; Decided YES by a unanimous vote. -- p.167, 1884 A.R.

1887. - "School Regulations", Manual (aimed at teachers) : "...they shall strive to impress on their minds, both by precept and example, the great importance of improvement in morals, in manners, and deportment, as well as in useful learning." -- Man. 1887, p.34

- "87. At the close of each school session, the windows and doors of each school room shall be opened sufficiently to change the air in the room." -- Man 1887, p.36

- "Resolved: That in all proper ways the children should be taught economy and thrift; and to this end the children be advised to deposit their pennies in the Savings Bank, and that the teachers lend them such assistance as is convenient and proper." -- R, Jan 24, 1887, p.6

1895. - The NYS Legislature in 1893 provided "for the appointment of truant officers..."; One was hired in 1895 -- pp.141-142, 1895 A.R. - "97. A pupil who is not clean, or one coming from a family afflicted with any contagious or infectious disease, shall not be allowed to remain in the school room;..." -- Manual 1895, p.39

1898. - "During the year a Mothers' Association has been formed. This looks towards a more-complete union of home life and school life. The Association is constantly growing and is bound to exercise a healthful influence over our schools." -- p.108, 1898 Annual Report

- Adriance opened (Oct) , and Library moved out of lower floor of High School. Also, the City Library was removed from the control of the Board -- Platt, p.253

1901. - First kindergartens started -- p.166, 1901 A.R.

1903. - "The retirement fund...{passed 1902} will take effect January 1st, 1903." -- p.94, 1902 A.R.; "...sets aside two per cent (2%) of their salaries as part of the fund." -- p.118, 1902 A.R.

- "Duties of Principals" : "110. They shall set apart one or more rooms in their respective buildings in which those pupils who are permitted to bring their dinners to school, may eat the same and where they may remain until the other school rooms are open." -- Manual 1903, p.27

- Duties of janitors: "They shall remove all ink-stains accidentally made upon the floor or walls, and shall clean and fill all ink-wells as often as required." -- Manual 1903, p.36

1909. First issue of the Phois, the student yearbook, although an issue of a student newspaper in 1908 included senior pictures.

1912. - "An enthusiastic mothers' meeting was held in the Elsworth School, and a permanent organization formed." -- R, March 6, 1912, p.160.

1914. A new high school is opened.

1920. - "This is the justification for special classes and in 1920 according to State law which reads 'The board of education of each city and each Union Free School district in which there are ten or more children, three years or more retarded in mental development shall establish such special classes of not more than fifteen as may be necessary to provide instruction adapted to mental attainments of such children,' a special class was formed in the Administration Building." -- RSD, p.103

- "The State law requires that children who are mentally deficient shall be given special instruction." -- p.195, 1920 A.R.

- Report of the head teacher of the special classes: "We are coming to realize that the basic principle of good school management is the conception that children are fundamentally different from one another in every conceivable way." -- RSD, p.102

1922. - "After some discussion it was regularly moved, seconded, and carried that serving milk to children in the schools should be tentatively undertaken by the Board of Education." -- R, Sept 6, 1922, p.111

1927. - "P Summer HS was first organized for a seven weeks term in July, 1927. This was brought about because the State Department planned to give regular Regents examinations in August. The attendance for each year has averaged between 250 and 300." Aimed at those needing "make up" and those who want to advance. -- RSD, p.14

1929. - "This year the work [immunization] was discontinued in the schools as the Board of Health has taken over the task of immunizing the pre-school child." -- RSD, p.98

1930. - On March 13, 1930 "...the Superintendent was authorized {by the Board} to organize libraries in the elementary schools. Since that time libraries have been developed in the schools, ranging from 1400 to 3000 volumes {as of 1935}."; [several already existed, however] -- 1935 Report, p.9

1932. - "In order to encourage scholarship an honor society was formed in PHS in the spring term of the year 1932-3 to present awards for scholarship." -- 1935 Report, p.24-5

1937. - "...the Citizens' Committee of 21 appointed by Charles Hopkins, then president of the B of E, made a study of the problem. This committee recommended the acquisition of a new site and the construction of a new high school." -- [A], p.3

1938. - "...two bond issues for a new high school were presented to the taxpayers of the city and both were voted down." -- [A], p.3 {several more recommendations between this date and 1953}

1953. - "...the B of E presented another bond issue for the construction of a new high school on the Springside Site. This, too, was voted down."; the Board and the Chamber of Commerce "re-evaluated", studied, and "recommended the Forbus Street Site." Purchased it and hired architect Rolf Dreyer. -- [A], p.3

1954. - "In May, 1954, the B of E presented for the approval of the voters, a bond issue in the amount of \$2,975,000 for the construction and equipment of a new high school for the City of P on the Forbus Street Site. The citizenry of P approved this bond issue by an overwhelming majority." -- [A], p.4

1955. - April 18, 1955 -- Ground breaking ceremonies for Forbus St. High School -- [A], p.4

NOTES AND QUOTES: A HISTORY OF THE CURRICULUM
IN THE POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

1843. - "Resolved That the Committee on employing Teachers be instructed to employ an instructor for giving lessons on vocal music in the public schools if the means of the board will warrant {sic} it." -- R, October 23, 1843, p.39

1846. - A committee suggested the possibility of book keeping {sic} in the Female Dept. and the Grammar School -- R, 1/12/46, p.118

- Introducing writing in Primary School 3, putting in ink stands: referred to a committee, with power -- R, Late 1846, p.154

1847. A person's "proposition to teach music in the schools is rejected -- May 12, 1847, p.166.

- "Resolved, that no pupils shall be admitted into the Grammar Schools under the age of 10 years, who are not able to read with facility, find places on the maps, and understand the first four Rules of Arithmetic, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division __{unintelligible word} and compound -- If they are over 10 years of age the latter qualification may not be rigidly adhered to." Adopted. -- R, October 19, 1847, p.182.

1849. Mr. --- again requested the privilege to teach Geography in the Grammar School, "at the expence of the scholars..."; Approved, "providing he taught them after school hours..." -- R, June 4, 1849, p.239

1851. - textbooks in use as of May 1, 1851 include (the dashes mean that I could not read the word):

Grammar School - Male: Mitchells --- Geography, Perkins Elementary Arithmetic, Hales History of the United States, Comstock's Natural Philosophy, Benett's Book Keeping, Linds 1st Book of Etymology, Mandevilles 4th Reader, Comlys and -- Grammar, Various dictionaries

Grammar School - Female: Mrs. Lincoln's Botany, Comstock's Chemistry, Burnett's Geography of the Heavens, Mitchell's Intermediate Geography, Hales and -- United States, -- England and France, Comstock's and Phelps Philosophy, Cutters Physiology, -- and McCords Arithmetic, Comlys Grammar, Mandevilles 3 and 4th Readers -- [R. May 6, 1851]

1854. - "On motion of Dr. Andrus a Special Committee be appointed to carry out the 2 articles of the rules and Regulations in relation to the teaching of Vocal Music in the Public Schools, whereupon the President appointed . . ." -- R, July 5, 1854

- Committee on Vocal Music reports favorably to employ George King to start on September 1 as teacher of vocal music. -- R, August 1, 1854

1855. - That E.C. Andrus be employed as "Teacher of Music" -- R, September 4, 1855

1863. - "...were appointed a Committee to investigate the propriety of dispensing with classical studies, and confining the scholars in the High School to the study of the English branches." -- R, May 6, 1863

- "The Committee on High School made a report, Recommending the lowering of the grade, as follows: That the study of the compound rules in arithmetic be dropped from the Primary Department, That the study of Algebra and of the National Arithmetic be dropped from the Grammar Schools, allowing them to enter the High School without having pas " [the entry just ended] -- R, June 3, 1863 - "Resolved, That the Committee on Grammar Schools be directed to send all the first classes who are prepared to commence the study of Algebra to the High School." -- Oct. 7th, 1863

1864. - Committee appointed "for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency of introducing the study of Chemistry into our Schools..."; NO report is forthcoming in the records, however -- R, August 3, 1864

- HS principal requests a chemical chart -- R, February 6, 1867

1868. - "Resolved, That in the Introductory and lower classes of the Primary Schools, each pupil shall have a lesson in reading and spelling both in the morning, and afternoon..." -- R, Dec. 2, 1868

Course of Study in the High School:

(Source: Minutes, August 7, 1868. The names listed are the names of the books; many of these subjects are continued in different terms, but I only wrote down when a book was first introduced.

First Year

First Term:

English Grammar
Arith., mental and practical
New Univ. Algebra
Citizens Manual
Reading and elocution
Analytical speller
Composition-Rhetoric
Latin Lessons

Second Term:

(many cont. or completed)
Latin Grammar and Reader
Bookkeeping {sic}
Physical geography

Third:

Several completed
Greek lessons

Second Year

First term:

Algebra completed
Latin
Greek lessons -cont-
Natural philosophy
Physiology

Second term:

Greek Grammar and Reader
Ancient History

Third Term:

Chemistry
Latin, Virgil

Reading and Elocution
Geometry

Third Year

First term:	Second term:	Third term:
Astronomy	Latin, Cicero	Plane surveying
Chem -completed	Mensuration	Manual of Parliamentary
Plane trigonometry	Political Economy	practice
Latin -cont-	Moral philosophy	Greek, Homer, Iliad
Latin, Prose composition	Intellectual philosophy	
Govt Class book		
Greek -cont-		

1869. - An amendment to HS studies: "Bookeeping {sic} optional with female pupils" -- R, May 5, 1869

- For HS : "Exercises in Reading, Spelling Composition, Elocution, Penmanship and Vocal Music, throughout the Course." -- R, August 18, 1869

1870. - HS class praised by the HS Principal: "Our Fall term has opened under very encouraging auspices. Ten pupils have returned to finish the new course of study, intending to remain for graduation. Three of these have not studied Latin; and I would recommend since the old course did not require them to do so, that if they finish...", -- R, p.39, 9/9/70; "There are twenty four in the ...or second year class. Of these eighteen are studying Latin in the regular course...There are Thirty seven {in the 1st yr class} Thirty two are studying Latin. The five who are excused have been so excused by the special request of the parents who have in each case represented that the pupil would only remain in the school during the present year." -- p.42, 9/9/70; "I find the plan of fewer studies and shorter lessons to work admirably in the school. We do not tax the Physical or Mental powers, while yet we make more real and rapid progress than under the old system." -- p.43, 9/9/70

- "Resolved; That the course of instruction in the High School be so arranged that penmanship may be taught." -- R, Nov 11, 1870, p.53

-Penmanship: to adopt Prof. Eastman's system of penmanship -- R, Dec 21, 1870, p.57

1871. - "Resolved, That drawing be introduced and taught in the different grades of the Public Schools as one of the regular branches of study." -- R, September 6, 1871, p.81

- "Resolved, That the study of Latin in the High School, be optional." -- R, September 6, 1871, p.81

1872. - "Physical exercise of five minutes with open windows, twice in the morning and once in the afternoon..." -- A report that was adopted, August 28, 1872

-A resolution was defeated which would have transferred money from instruction of music in the HS to modern languages -- R, Aug 28, 1872, p.137

- Report on regrading the public schools, prepared by Commissioner Bolton; adopted. Parts of the report follow: "Text books are too much relied on and the children are pushed along too rapidly...while the objective system so valuable for bringing out the observation of children themselves has been almost wholly neglected.....the admirable objective system which prevails in many of our Western Cities...most of our teachers have been educated in the old orthodox rut of reliance on Text Books."...."And oral teaching and abject lessons to be chiefly relied on..." -- An adopted report on regrading the schools, Aug 28, 1872

1874. - A committee report, received and printed: while "radical changes" are being made in the course of study, "...the aim is throughout to make the important and fundamental studies, Reading, Writing, Spelling, Arithmetic and Geography, the principal occupation of the pupils from the first to the last and let other branches of knowledge be subordinate to them..." -- R, 2/11/74, p.245

1875. - A section discussing the resignation of the HS principal: after he leaves, there is no one capable of "giving proper instructions in the following classes of Doctor Jewett, 1st The class in Greek Grammar consisting of three pupils 2nd The Senior class in Latin consisting of seven pupils 3rd The Class in Chemistry which receives experimental instruction and consists of nineteen pupils; 4th Mental Philosophy by oral lessons..." -- p.360, Feb 10, 1875

- A state law passed "to embrace instruction" in drawing -- p.8, Mar 1887

1877. - "The Literature class had not committed to memory any long passages from reviews, but had read freely and had during the term intelligently discussed passages from various authors. The recitation accordingly was not so brilliant as some we have heard this year in other schools, but close questioning revealed an intimate and thorough, if not superficially polished acquaintance with English Literature..." ; "The other mathematical recitations..." ; "...her classes recited to other teachers..." ; "A new departure has been made this year in having every Friday afternoon general exercises, consisting of recitations, orations, readings, &c. Singing as well as elocution has also been cultivated during the year." -- an article entitled "High School Examinations", June 29, 1877, in Adriaance, 373.7 P

1878. - "A communication was received from the Principal of the High School asking permission to form a class in Trigonometry...": Board agreed [Has been taught in the past, however] -- R, March 6, 1878, p.528

1879. - "At present all pupils of the grammar or lower grades are seated with and under the exclusive control of the teacher to whom they recite..." -- p.86, 1879 A.R.

1881. - "It has been the aim of all instruction, while not forgetting discipline and culture to open the pupils eyes to the world about them, and give each such knowledge of his own capabilities as to enable him to fall into such vocation for life as is best suited to his capacity and promises largest measure of success." -- p.5, 1881 A.R.

1883. "Instruction in drawing by a special teacher was begun in September, 1883." -- Historical Sketch, p.34

There is a 12 year course of study in place: 3 years in introductory school, 3 years in primary school, 2 years in grammar school, and 4 years in the high school (2 departments) -- 1883 A.R., p.134.

1884. Are two HS departments: "Since 1873 there have been two departments maintained; one, the second...is in fact a Grammar School, continuing the course of study one year longer, and more advanced than our general Grammar schools." -- p.169, 1884 A.R.

- "Prior to about ten years ago the schools were conducted upon the class-room plan with a principal and two assistant teachers in each department."; had a large room and 2 recitation rooms -- p.165, 1884 A.R.; "Each half hour a class passed from the main room to a class room, and there recited to the assistant in charge." -- p.165-166, 1884 A.R.; CHANGED to "...each teacher had continuous charge of her room and class..." -- p.166, 1884 A.R.

1887. - "Resolved: That this Board would emphatically encourage instruction in manual training in the industrial arts and to the extent of the means in its power, give the same a proper place in the curriculum." -- R, January 24, 1887, p.6.

- Some HS course changes made, "which also made it possible to secure a larger number of Regents' intermediate certificates and academic diplomas. Until this change was made, one study was lacking -- physical geography -- to complete the number in which a pupil must pass to entitle him to the intermediate certificate...{otherwise} obliged to pursue this study out of school..." -- p.233, 1887 A.R.

1888. - A committee report "also advises that a regular teacher of writing be appointed to instruct in penmanship in all the schools by periodical visits." ; "Proper instruction in penmanship is one of the most essential things in school work..." -- p.118, July 9, 1888; on p.119, reports that Elizabeth Schickle be appointed, and it is adopted.

- "a teacher in penmanship was selected..."; "This was in a sense experimental, but was deemed necessary by reason of the great lack of uniformity and progress in writing observed in the different rooms..." -- p.103, 1888 A.R.

- Report of writing teacher: Appointed 7/9/88; started initially with the low grades; 30 min. in each room every week -- p.150, 1888 A.R.

1889. - "The advantage of having a special teacher for this work {writing} is, that these mistakes may be promptly corrected -- mistakes liable to be made by any regular teacher, since her attendance is divided..." (comment by the Super.) -- p.145, 1889 A.R.

- writing -> "Each room in the Primary and Grammar grades has been visited every alternate week and a lesson of thirty minutes given." -- p.161, 1889 A.R.

 This chart illustrates the effects of the changes made in 1887:

	Preliminary Certificate	Academic Intermediate Certificate	Coll. Entrance Certificate	Academic Diplomas
	-----	-----	-----	-----
1882	12	2	0	0
1884	41	6	1	3
1886	58	6	0	1
1887	56	53	6	17
1888	57	26	5	24
1889	64	17	10	18
SOURCE: p.109, 1889 A.R. (also have Board diplomas)				

1890. - Written on a Regents exam card dated June 1890:

"The Preliminary Examinations determine what pupils are qualified to begin academic work and count as academic students in the Regents' annual report to the Legislature."

"The Academic Examinations test the work done in the academies and fix a definite standard of graduation. They lead to academic certificates, and, on completion of the full course, to academic diplomas." -- A Regents card found in ADR, Misc Pamphlets/programs 1857-1968 (373.7 P), Adriance.

1892. - "At the opening of the fall session the study of German was introduced in both departments of the High School..." "The study is optional with the students." --p.5, 1892 Annual Report

"The addition of this language {German} to the High School curriculum now makes it possible for pupils to enter Vassar and some of the other colleges without additional outside preparation." -- p.41, 1892 A.R.

- Special teacher in German first appointed: A. Osterhold in July 1892 -- Listed in school directory for 1893, BE misc. papers 89-97, p.41, Adriance.

1893.

- The grades are renumbered, so that the first year of school is now called the first grade -- 1893 A.R., pp.5-6.

1894 -new system of promotion: "...pupils are allowed to pass to a higher grade, whenever in the judgment of the teacher in charge, they are entitled to such promotion, without waiting as heretofore for the final examinations..." -- p.5, 1894 A.R.

- Superintendent describes the new promotion system: "This plan requires the separation of a class into two sections or divisions..."{advanced and other}; can then "advance one class faster than the other"; says it has stimulated the pupils to work harder.

-Pres. B of E: "...yet our course of study as at present arranged, {in HS} does not fit our pupils for admission to college."; recommends that this be changed -- p.6, 1894 A.R.

- Special Teacher in "Training Class" first appointed: Mary E. Sykes, September 1894 -- School Directory for 1895, B Miscellaneous papers 1889-1897, p.47, Adriance.

- The Board President notes: "The good results of special instruction in writing...the children are learning...the foundation principles of penmanship..." -- 1894 A.R., pp.8-9.

1895. - High School course system is readjusted to enable people to enter college without needing additional preparation; implemented in 9/95 -- pp.10-11, 1895 A.R.

- New system creates three tracks: English ("Latin or German"), Latin Scientific ("Latin and German"), Classical ("Latin, Greek, German"); notes: "3. Pupils who do not desire to study a foreign language may choose, subject to the approval of the Principal, such subjects of study as they are qualified to pursue." -- pp.138-141, 1895 A.R.

"This revised course of study entirely irrespective of its work in fitting a pupil for college is deemed by the best educational authorities that which gives to the pupil the best and most servicable training for meeting the responsibilities of life, ..." -- p.141, 1895 A.R.

- "This changed course will necessitate making the time for High School four (4) years instead of three (3) as at present..." -- p.136, 1895 A.R.

- July 1895 changes: "involved the discontinuance of Arithmetic and American History from the Second Department of the High School and substituting therefor Algebra and Physical Geography." -- p.135; Therefore, must pass Am. Hist, Geogr., and Arith "before entering the High School" -- p.136, 1896 A.R.

- "One of the features of this year's school work is the increase of interest in the Institute Drawing Class." -- p.3, Nov 1, 1895 issue of "The Independent", ADR

- "82. In all the schools except the High School, the pupils shall be exercised in singing fifteen minutes each day, such exercise to be conducted in accordance with the directions of the special teacher of music." -- school regulations in the Board Manual for 1895, p.36 [Note: in the 1887 Manual, the wording was "may", if there was a qualified teacher]

- "Especial efforts have been made since September, 1895, to improve the written language work of the pupils." -- p.108, 1897 A.R.

1896. - a state law passed to provide visual aids for subject: "Under this appropriation we received in the summer of 1895 a lantern, cylinders, screen and all the necessary apparatus for showing stereoptican views."; slides of Niagara, Manhattan, Catskills, Adirondacks, etc. -- p.130; pictures projected on a

screen; *** the use of these pictures: "while they give pleasure, they will also have an educational value of no small importance." -- p.132, 1896 A.R.; "...of stereoptican views, these views will be and have been used to furnish subjects for composition." -- p.134, 1896 A.R.; "In order to make these views as educational as possible, and to utilize them for language exercises, it is my purpose to have some one industry fully illustrated in each lecture." -- p.131, 1896 A.R.;

- Composition Work discussed; "in accordance with the plan" of July 1895; may require rewrites, can select topics, often on the visuals -- p.133-134, 1896 A.R.

- due to reorganization, "...and in the near future the graduates will be able to enter any American college without further preparation." -- p.113, 1896 A.R.

1897. - Illustrated lectures for 5th-9th grades -- p.106, 1897 A.R.; Notes that these do more than just provide subjects for composition: "By it is cultivated the habit of attention..." -- p.108, 1897 A.R.

- Composition work required of those in 4th-9th grades -- p.108-112, 1897 A.R.

1898. - "The teaching of music in the public schools is everywhere regarded as of high educational value. It promotes independence and concentration of thought, with active application, as well as adding to the cheerfulness of school life." -- p.99, 1898 A.R.

- "Daily physical exercises, instituted among all the classes, have materially promoted the comfort and capacity for study of the children." -- p.138, 1898 A.R.

- "While the school furnishes superior preparation for college, its main purpose is to prepare its pupils for the active duties of living." -- p.159, 1898 A.R.

1900. - "...we have attempted to secure the benefits of individual instruction in our work.", rather than having associate teachers, to have teachers -- p.156, 1900 A.R.

1901. - "...the organization of two Kindergartens...The educational value of these institutions, which develop the activities of the child and which teach him to help himself and do things for himself are beyond question, but the social advantages are, in our judgment, still greater." // "There is no place where little children can learn the lessons of courtesy, kindness, self-respect, and unselfishness, so well as in a real Kindergarten." -- p.166, 1901 A.R.

- "Zoology was for the first time introduced into the school this year." -- p.210, 1901 A.R.

- "The High School has three courses of study -- the English, the Latin-Scientific, and the Classical." -- pp.220-221, 1901 A.R. (when mentioned in 1903, the latter two are college prep)

1903. - "Steps have been taken to introduce manual training, which is but a start on the road to this important branch." -- p.114, 1903 A.R.

- Manual Training: introduced, "only thirty minutes a week"; mentions making raffia; "The value of Manual Training in the public schools is no longer disputed. The education that this age demands is a training of the intellect so that the child may think correctly and reason accurately. A training of the hand by manual exercise so that he may be able to put ideas into realities; a training of the character so that he may be able to respond to the rights and duties of American citizenship." -- p.142, 1903 A.R.

- "The number of post-graduates now in attendance is very small, and the day of post-graduate work as a feature of the school is past. The increased requirement(s?) for graduation accounts for this decrease. Now, good pupils may enter any college or scientific school upon graduation from the High School in the classical or scientific course, and need not return to do extra work in order to meet the entrance requirements. -- p.155, 1903 A.R.

- only the classical and scientific courses are college prep -- p.155, 1903 A.R.

1904. - Course of Study -- High School : Course areas are: English, Latin, Greek, German, French, History (Greek, Roman, English, U.S., Civics, Economics), Algebra, Advanced Algebra, Geometry, Solid Geometry, Trigonometry, Physiology, Physical Geography, Geology, Zoology, Botany, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry. -- 1904 Course of Study (Vassar and Adriance)

- Manual Training -> "We do not allow the manual work to interfere with the regular studies. Friday afternoons from 3 to 3:30, after the regular work of the week is finished, is given to hand work." -- p.162, 1904 A.R.

- Mentioned in the report of the supervisor of drawing and m.t. : "In the new Manual Training, which tries to develop the inventive, artistic and manual skills of the pupil..."; Raffia, "sewing, fancy-work, paper and wood construction..." -- p.187, 1904 A.R.

1905. - "The Regents of the State...made Biology a required study for the first year pupils of the High School." -- p.131, 1905 A.R.

1907. - "Physical education was incorporated into the curriculum in 1907, and..." -- King, p.77; a "desire to introduce systematic physical instruction in each grade..." but can't afford so "introduced exercises under the regular teacher between classes..." -- p.139, 1907 A.R.

- "Commercial Arithmetic has been introduced as a required subject in the first year of the High School for those who do not take Latin I. This subject is the first of those to be introduced of the commercial course which ought to be a part of the High School curriculum." -- p.145, 1907 A.R.

1908. - "The Regents Preliminary certificate or equivalent work ...is required for admittance to the High School." -- p.4, Courses of Study 1908-1909, (375.009 P), Adriance

- For primary grades: "Group system" -- "...classes are made up of three divisions...and given separate instruction at the same time. Division A for instance, will be reciting, Division B studying and Division C at the blackboard." -- p.97, 1907 A.R.

- "The High School offers the following courses of study: The English Course and the Commercial Course for students who intend to finish their education with the High School; the teachers' course for those who enter the Teachers' Training Schools or the State Normal Schools; the College Preparatory Courses for those who enter college, scientific or technical schools." -- p.4, Courses of Study 1908-1909, (375.009 P), Adriance

- "In the past year the board has supplied a teacher for the Domestic Science Department..." -- p.95, 1908 A.R.; "We consider the establishing of this course of work for our girls of much importance..." -- p.121, 1908 A.R.; the course in "domestic and industrial science": "It was only introduced last year...being then entirely elective." -- p.129, 1908 A.R.

1909. - In report of the President, Jan 1, 1909: "The commercial department of the High School is of growing importance...subjects of bookkeeping and commercial law, typewriting and stenography are taught."; recommends a manual training department -- Jan 1, 1909

1910. - The pros and cons of Industrial Education are presented -- p.103, 1910 A.R.

- Superintendent S.R.Shear: "We have now come to believe that the study of every subject develops every mental faculty and that all work, mental or otherwise, has its influence upon our ego as a whole."; "Pupils require a variety in order that their attention may be held; all children have constructive tendencies which should be developed; dignity of labor needs to be impressed; the physical powers are as important as are either the mental or moral; the solution of a problem in manual training aids in the mastery of similar problems in other subjects."; "Manual training keeps boys and girls in school; it enlarges their understanding of and sympathy with the great industrial activities of te ages; it trains for citizenship and it may be the foundation of some useful trade." -- pp.132-133, 1910 A.R.

1912. - "When sewing was added to the curriculum in January, 1912, the course outlined was in accordance with the trend of the times, purely constructive. There were small models made, merely samples of what might have been done." -- RSD, p.93

- "During the month of February, sewing and physical training were introduced in all the schools." -- R, March 6, 1912, p.160

1916. - A 1916 NYS law "provides that all schools...give serious attention to the physical well-being of the pupils, and to the development of those qualities essential in meeting the obligation of citizenship."; to "receive definite physical instruction and training." -- p.153, 1917 A.R.; NYS is the first State to require this -- p.154, 1917 A.R.

1918. - "A new subject has been added to the list and it seems to be very popular. It is 'gym.' Two periods a week are set aside for 'gym' work and games. The classes have started and everybody seems to enjoy them. This is the first time that many of the students have ever seen the inside of the gymnasium." -- Oct 1918 issue of the Apokeepsian, p.32, ADR 379 A, Adriance

1920. - "In 1920, the first course in Industrial Arts was offered." -- p.159, RSD

- "In 1920, general Manual Training courses were offered for the first time in the P public schools. At that time eighth grade boys were admitted to this work." -- RSD, p.13

- "Instruction in woodworking and printing was introduced in 1920 and 1921." -- RSD, p.124 - "The Continuation School Law became effective in September, 1920." Many young leave school, compulsory attendance; Commissioner Finley: "The purpose of these schools is of a two-fold nature: for participation as citizens in the political life of the State; for the guidance toward and the training of youth for useful occupations." -- p.167, RSD; "We began the work in September, 1920, requiring the attendance of those between 14 and 15 years of age who had left full-time school."; on Sat. from 8-12; initially taught woodworking, homemaking; then added printing and commercial (for both) -- p.168, RSD; by 1922-1923, compulsory attendance for those aged 14-17 years -- RSD, p.168; 1929 provisions: * operated from 8 - 5 on weekdays * required of minors under 17 without a diploma or attendance at school: "Employed minors must attend four hours per week."; "Minors out of regular employment must attend twenty hours per week."; "Attendance upon night school may not be substituted..." -- RSD, p.170; 1929 courses: boys->woodworking, electrical, plumbing, commercial; girls->homemaking, home nursing, commercial

- Special education classes are started -- further information is available in "Notes and Quotes - History of the Poughkeepsie City School District"

1921. - "In September, 1921, a course in Printing was added ...and a shop equipped for the instruction of twelve boys." -- RSD, p.161

1922. - "In 1922, an advanced course in Printing was added to the curriculum...The production of Phois, the high school annual, was attempted and successfully completed." -- RSD, p.162

- Superintendent's Report: "Until a few years ago, we were inclined to believe that the complete function of the High School courses was to prepare for College. We are now awakened to the fact that this group represents a very small fraction of the High School population." -- p.157, 1922 A.R.

1923. - "In 1923, a third course in Printing was necessary to permit the advancement of the work. This year the Apokeepsian, the monthly magazine of the school was printed. This project would not have been possible without the cooperation of a local printer who set the text matter for us." -- RSD, p.162

- "Advanced Drawing was added to the Industrial Arts curriculum in September 1923..." -- p.162, RSD

- "Folk dancing was added as a requirement for the girls in 1923." {HS} -- RSD, p.107

- "Elective courses in public speaking, debating and dramatics were introduced in 1923." -- RSD, p.124

1924. - Change this year which "provided for an advanced course in cabinet making." -- RSD, p.159

- In 1924, "...a course in Architectural Drawing was added..." -- p.163, RSD

- "Lectures on Hygiene have been given to all the students {in the high school} since 1924." -- RSD, p.107

- "Upon recommendation of the Superintendent the Home-Making Course prepared for High Schools by the State Board of Regents was adopted." -- R, May 13, 1924, p.181

- "Since 1924 each student is required to pass a physical ability test." -- RSD, p.106

1925. - "Homemaking courses as outlined by the State Department of Education were introduced in 1925." -- RSD, p.124 // "In September, 1925, the four-year State aided Homemaking Course was added. This course leads to an academic diploma in vocational subjects..." -- RSD, p.156

1926. - "In 1926 it was felt that a further revision in the course and the addition of power machines would permit a greater diversification of the work." {in Industrial Arts} -- RSD, p.160

"...in 1926, additional growth in the department {Ind Arts} necessitated the addition of a course in Machine Drawing." -- p.163, RSD

1927. - Poughkeepsie Trade School: "two-year unit course" -> "The first class was started in February, 1927..."; located in the Continuation School but is different from it: "...this is a trade course and a graduate..."; "In the classroom the student is given the science and mathematics as applied to machinery and in the shop he puts his theories into practice."; "...and a graduate from that course is able to go into Industry with a good working knowledge of the trade." -- p.177, RSD

- "Vocational education in Poughkeepsie was begun in 1927, when a two-year course in machine shop practice was established at the Cannon Street School." -- King, p.78

- "Poughkeepsie Summer High School was first organized for a seven weeks term in July, 1927. This was brought about because the State Department planned to give regular Regents examinations in August. The attendance for each year has averaged between 250 and 300." Aimed at those needing "make up" and those who want to advance -- RSD, p.14

1928. - "In the summer of 1928, classes for the children of the elementary grades were opened in three buildings with a total registration of 843." -- RSD, p.14

1929. - Superintendent Moon: "Visual instruction has become an accepted part of public education. All children are constantly being stimulated by the world in which they live as well as by moving pictures, illustrated periodicals, and other similar means, to learn through the eye." -- RSD, p.19; HOWEVER, the head of the English Dept. stated the following as one of the needs: "8. Serious investigation of the worth of moving pictures and radio connection for the classroom." -- RSD, p.130

- Math Department report : "Ten years ago the type of Regents examination was such as to induce the teacher to place emphasis on the memorizing of certain forms rather than to employ a method of teaching that induces mental growth." -- RSD 1929, p.137

- English Department Report : "The department has attempted to assign the memory question to its proper place, and the "dictation teacher" is a creature of the past. Questions which stimulate thought, questions which suggest a mental activity and a breadth of horizon hitherto undreamed of by the student -- these are being used more and more. Teachers are trying to teach their students how to think and not simply to remember." -- RSD 1929, p.127

- Written under the section on primary grades: "This informal way of teaching is growing through all grades and today many teachers of the intermediate and upper grades are far removed from the old monotonous, uninteresting question and answer method." -- RSD, p.71.

The 1985 graduating class will leave Poughkeepsie High School this month with a far different education than the one attained by their predecessors. The High School first opened in June 1857 with a registered attendance of 40 students, 14 years after the first public schools were established in Poughkeepsie.{1} The world has changed dramatically from the days before the Civil War, and the curriculum has expanded to meet the needs of each new generation.

The High School apparently offered a classical education similar to what was being taught in private academies. Although the traditional college preparatory curriculum was in place, interest in concentrating on "the basics" was expressed as early as 1863 when a committee was appointed "to investigate the propriety of dispensing with classical studies . . .".{2} However, the 1868 Board minutes show a focus on the study of Greek, Latin and algebra. Bookkeeping was the only subject that had a practical application, and had been taught as early as 1851 in the Grammar School. Science studies at this time included chemistry, physiology, and astronomy.{3}

Music has traditionally played an important role in all levels of the Poughkeepsie schools. The first specialized teaching position to be created was that of music teacher in 1854. In 1883 a teacher was hired to specifically provide instruction in drawing to pupils of all grades, and a writing teacher was hired five years later to teach penmanship.

Originally, many students had to take courses after they had graduated to be able to meet college entrance requirements. A German teacher was employed in 1892 in order to enable students to meet language requirements.{4} Further curriculum changes in 1895 made it possible for students to enter any college without additional preparation.{5} This new system offered three academic tracks to students, two of which were college preparatory programs. The Latin Scientific Course required the study of Latin and German while the Classical Course required Latin, German and Greek. Pupils who did not plan to attend college enrolled in the so-called "English Course" which required Latin or German, although other subjects could be substituted for these languages with the Principal's approval.{6}

The number of high schools in the country had greatly increased by the turn of the century, even though most children still went to work at young ages. In 1874, New York State had enacted a relatively early compulsory education law which required that children aged 8 - 14 attend school for at least 14 weeks per year.{7} In practice, this meant that many of the students left school before entering the high school. Superintendent Edward Burgess noted this trend in the Poughkeepsie High School in 1887: "...the boys in

1. Record of the Board of Education, June 25, 1857.
2. Record, May 6, 1863.
3. Record, August 7, 1868.
4. Annual Reports of the City Government, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 1892, pp.143, 179.
5. Annual Reports of the City Government, 1895, pp.135-136.
6. Annual Reports of the City Government, 1895, pp.138-141.
7. Manual of the Board of Education, 1887, p.3.

larger numbers go to work at this time, their parents deeming their education sufficient for the vocation in life they will be called upon to fill."{8} Stricter compulsory education and child labor laws eventually led to a nationwide increase in the number of children attending school. Attitudes towards the high school also changed, and it became the right of all and not just the few who were preparing for college.

The School Board recognized the need to provide alternate types of courses to attract and retain students who planned "to finish their education with the High School."{9} In 1903, the introduction of Manual Training established the beginnings of current industrial arts and home economics programs. Superintendent William A. Smith noted in 1903 the value of Manual Training: "A training of the hand by manual exercise so that [the student] may be able to put ideas into realities . . ."{10} The exercises initially offered included work with raffia, sewing, and limited woodworking. Sewing and cooking were integrated into a domestic science course in 1907.{11} A commercial program was introduced in the same year and soon offered classes in bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, commercial law, typewriting, and stenography.{12} Industrial arts as we now know it was officially established in the public schools in 1920 when a woodworking course was begun.{13} Several printing and drawing courses were added in the next few years. Vocational education similar to current BOCES offerings was begun in 1927 with the opening of the 2-year Poughkeepsie Trade School.{14}

By the end of the 1920s the basic course directions had been established, meeting the needs of the pre-World War II society. Since that time the course offerings have continued to respond to the needs of the changing world. High School offerings now include courses such as graphic communications and architecture in the Industrial Arts Department; BOCES Occupational/Vocational courses which range from automechanics to licensed practical nursing; and Child Care and Development in the Home Economics/Family Life Department. Advanced Placement classes, which may earn a student college credit, are offered in English, calculus, chemistry, physics and PASCAL. Last fall, a K-12 computer education curriculum was introduced to prepare students for daily life and careers in this age of rapid technological advances. Underlying the many changes in the curriculum and the schools is the same goal once stated in 1898 by James Winne, the High School Principal: ". . . its main purpose is to prepare its pupils for the active duties of living."{15}

8. Annual Reports of the City Government. 1887, p.224.
9. Course of Study for the Poughkeepsie Public Schools, 1908-1909, p.4.
10. Annual Reports of the City Government. 1903, p.143.
11. Annual Reports of the City Government. 1908, p.129.
12. Annual Reports of the City Government. 1907, p.145.
13. Report of the School Department to the Board of Education. 1929, p.13.
14. Report of the School Department. 1929, p.177.
15. Annual Reports of the City Government. 1898, p.159.

Poughkeepsie City School District
SELECTED HISTORICAL DATES AND EVENTS: 1843-1927

Compiled by Vassar College Intern, Peter Edman, June 1985

- 1843 The Poughkeepsie School District is created by State legislation, the first Board of Education is elected, and the first primary schools are opened.
- 1854 The first specialized teaching position is created when a teacher of vocal music is appointed.
- Poughkeepsie is incorporated as a city.
- 1857 A high school is opened on Church Street.
- 1870 A night school is first offered.
- 1872 A new high school is opened at Washington Street and Lafayette Place.
- 1874 The High School becomes subject to the control of the State Board of Regents.
- New York State passes a compulsory education bill.
- 1875 Poughkeepsie public schools become racially integrated.
- 1877 The position of Superintendent of Schools is created.
- 1895 The High School curriculum is revised to allow students to enter any college.
- Stereoptican views are first utilized, marking the introduction of audiovisual equipment into the schools.
- 1897 Free textbooks are provided for all students.
- 1901 Kindergartens are established.
- 1903 A retirement fund is established for teachers.
- 1909 The first yearbook, the "Phois," is published.
- 1912 The first female member of the Board of Education is appointed.
- 1914 A new high school is opened at North Hamilton Street.
- 1927 A summer high school is introduced.
- Vocational education courses are established.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

In April, 1843, State Senator Abraham Bockee was able to pass an act to create a 12-member Board of Education for the village of Poughkeepsie.¹ The proposal was then submitted to the people of the village in an election held on May 17th. It was reportedly passed by a margin of 572 to 404.² As in many areas of the country, there was substantial opposition in Poughkeepsie to the establishment and support of the free schools. The opponents then attempted, but failed, to elect their own ranks as members of the Board.³

The Poughkeepsie Board of Education first met on June 20th. Egbert B. Killey was initially elected President of the Board, but he declined the position and William P. Gibbons was subsequently elected. Thomas Austin was chosen to be the Clerk.⁴

The first two schools were opened in August: primary schools were established in rented buildings on Market Street and at Clinton and Thompson Streets.⁵ A third primary school was opened in December at Mill Street and Dutchess Avenue.⁶

A grammar school for boys was opened next. The Board had reported in August the purchase of a lot at Mill and Bridge Streets on which to build the school; the building was reported to be completed at a Board meeting on January 10, 1844.⁷ Handbills were posted and notice was given that the principal of the new school, Mr. Josiah Underhill, would "commence the examination of candidates for admission into the Grammar School . . ."⁸ One-hundred nineteen scholars passed the exam and were admitted into the school when it opened on January 29th.⁹

In November, 1843, the Board passed the following resolution:

Resolved That as soon as the means of the board will permit it is expedient to place one of the Primary Schools permanently under the charge of a male principal; to establish one Primary School exclusively for girls. And also such a coloured school as shall be sufficient to educate the coloured children of the village.¹⁰

The Board chose instead to open a female department of the Grammar School. Both it and the Colored School opened on May 6, 1844.¹¹ The school system grew rapidly during its first months. Between August, 1843 and December, 1844, a total of seven schools were opened, which served an average of 761 children.¹²

1. Edmund Platt, The Eagle's History of Poughkeepsie, (Poughkeepsie: Platt and Platt, 1905), p.144.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p.145.

4. Beginning pages of the 1843-1854 Record Book.

5. Historical Sketch of the Poughkeepsie Public Schools and Public Library from 1843-1893, (Poughkeepsie: Enterprise Publishing Co., 1894), p.16.

6. Ibid.

7. Record, August 2, 1843, p.21; Record, January 10, 1844, p.48.

8. Record, January 11, 1844, p.49.

9. Record, January 24, 1844, p.50.

10. Record, November 15, 1843, p.41.

11. Record, May 14, 1844, p.62.

12. Record, January 8, 1845, p.82.

THE FIRST MUSIC TEACHER

Music has traditionally held an important position in the curriculum of the Poughkeepsie Public Schools. The Board considered hiring a music teacher shortly after it had opened the first schools. The following resolution was adopted on October 23, 1843:

Resolved That the Committee on employing Teachers be instructed to employ an instructor for giving lessons on vocal music in the public schools if the means of the board will warrant [sic] it.¹

No action was taken, however, and someone's "proposition to teach music in the schools" was rejected in 1847.²

On August 1, 1854, George W. King was hired as the first teacher of vocal music.³ This was the first teaching position in the school district devoted to one specific subject (the next one was created in 1883 when a drawing teacher was hired). Enos C. Andrus replaced King in 1855, worked until 1860, and then returned for a stint from 1867 to 1873.⁴ Richard R. Hayman occupied the position from 1860 to 1867 and from 1873 to 1898.⁵ After Hayman resigned, the President of the Board reaffirmed the importance of music in the schools:

The teaching of music in the public schools is everywhere regarded as of high educational value. It promotes independence and concentration of thought, with active application, as well as adding to the cheerfulness of school life.⁶

1. Record, October 23, 1843, p.39.
2. Record, May 12, 1847, p.166.
3. Record, August 1, 1854.
4. Helen Josephine Andrus, A Century of Music in Poughkeepsie: 1802-1911, (Poughkeepsie: Frank B. Howard, 1912), pp.29,40,46,65.
5. Ibid., pp.45-46,65,173.
6. Annual Reports of the City Government 1898, p.99.

THE HIGH SCHOOL

The first public high school in the nation was established in Boston in 1821. The State of Massachusetts gave an early push to the organization of these schools when it passed a law in 1827 that required towns of 500 or more families to open a high school.¹ Nevertheless, one source states that "there were not many more than thirty" in the country by 1850.² Several were started in this decade, resulting in the existence of more than 300 high schools in 1860.³

In Poughkeepsie, the question of establishing a high school was raised in 1856, 13 years after the public schools had first been opened. At a Board meeting on March 14th, Commissioner Warring offered the following amendment to a committee report:

Resolved. That the upper floor of the new building on Church St. be devoted to the establishment of a "High School" for the admission of pupils of both sexes.⁴

The proposition was laid on the table at this meeting. It was accepted at some later point -- the Board minutes are not clear on when this occurred and the Board's 50-year historical sketch only makes this statement: "Subsequently a High School was established there . . ."⁵

Several sources, such as the City's Annual Reports, state that the High School was established in 1856. It did not open until June 1857, however, when it recorded a registered attendance of 40 pupils and an average attendance of 37.⁶ Average attendance increased to a high of 103 in October, 1861, six months after the first shots of the Civil War had occurred at Fort Sumter, but fell to only 38 pupils in September, 1864.⁷ In November of that year, a committee was appointed "to ascertain the expediency of discontinuing the High School and of raising the grade of the Grammar schools . . ."⁸ The following committee report was

1. David B. Tyack, Turning Points in American Educational History, (Waltham, MA: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1967), p.354.

2. Frank L. Clapp, Wayland J. Chase, and Curtis Merriman, Introduction to Education, (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1929), p.96.

3. Ellwood P. Cubberly, The History of Education, (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), p.701.

4. Record, March 14, 1856.

5. Historical Sketch of the Poughkeepsie Public Schools and Public Library from 1843-1893, (Poughkeepsie: Enterprise Publishing Co., 1894), p.20.

6. Record, June 25, 1857. This is the first attendance report for the High School. Other items of interest: an unattributed piece of paper in the "PHS Miscellaneous Pamphlets 1857-1968" box [Adriance, 373.7 P] lists "Names of the Scholars that went from the First Ward Grammar School to the High School to form the opening class on June 15th. 1857"; and a letter in the June 9, 1857 Poughkeepsie Telegraph mentions that the "Highest Department" will open in a few days.

7. Record, October 30, 1861; Record, October 5, 1864.

8. Record, November 2, 1864.

unanimously adopted:

Reported in favor of continuing the High School, and recommended that it be earnestly sustained by all the members of the Board, so that its efficiency might be increased.⁹

Average attendance was only 20 students in May, 1865, one month after General Lee had surrendered his troops and President Lincoln had been assassinated. A resolution in June to "discontinue" the High School was defeated¹⁰ but it was resubmitted in August. A special Board meeting was called and the following resolution was passed by a 7 to 3 vote: "Resolved; That the High School be discontinued for one year from this date."¹¹ The Board's reason for considering and taking this action is not mentioned in the minutes, although Edmund Platt says it was taken "apparently as a measure of economy" in his history of Poughkeepsie.¹² The Board voted unanimously to reopen the school the next year.¹³

The question "of continuing the High School" was raised again in 1884 when the principal resigned after 9 years of service. The committee assigned to consider this question reported the following: "So far as the Committee can ascertain there is no popular desire for the discontinuance of this department."¹⁴ The Board again voted unanimously to maintain the school.¹⁵

9. Record, December 7, 1864.

10. Record, June 6, 1865.

11. Record, August 23, 1865.

12. Edmund Platt, The Eagle's History of Poughkeepsie, (Poughkeepsie: Platt and Platt, 1905), p.204.

13. Record, June 6, 1866.

14. Annual Reports of the City Government 1884, p.171.

15. Ibid., p.167.

THE NIGHT SCHOOL

The Poughkeepsie School District first offered a night school in the winter months of 1870-1871. A committee report in October, 1869 stated the advantages of establishing a night school:

. . . such a school may become the means of greatly benefitting a large number of the youth of our city of both sexes, who are unable to avail themselves of any other method to obtain a knowledge of subjects taught in our common schools.¹

The Committee recommended that an evening school be opened "in which shall be taught Reading, Spelling, Arithmetic, Geography and Grammar."² No action was taken until December, 1870 when a resolution was passed providing for the opening of a school.³ Attendance was high: in February, 1871 the figures for attendance and average attendance were 110 and 84 respectively. For the same month, the High School had an attendance of 72 pupils while the 4th Ward Grammar School registered 121, the highest figure for any of the grammar schools.⁴

While apparently successful, the school did not reopen until 1902. The President of the Board had noted its advantages in the 1883 Annual Report⁵ and a special appropriation by the Common Council in 1901, "at the request of many of our citizens," made its re-establishment a reality.⁶

It was noted in 1902 that the evening school was of "much educational advantage to many of our residents who in earlier life were without the advantages of our public school system."⁷ It soon proved to be of significant value "to persons who are but little acquainted with our language and system of government . . ."⁸ The growing number of immigrants in the city led the Board to establish several "Americanization" classes. In 1902-1903 work had only been offered in reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, English, history, and civil government.⁹ By 1921-1922, instruction was being provided in mathematics, English, commercial subjects, "Household Arts and Sciences," vocational and trade courses, and Americanization classes.¹⁰

1. Record, October 20, 1869.

2. Ibid.

3. Record, December 7, 1870, p.55.

4. Record, March 1, 1871, p.65.

5. Annual Reports of the City Government 1883, p.135.

6. Annual Reports of the City Government 1901, p.141.

7. Annual Reports of the City Government 1902, p.91.

8. Annual Reports of the City Government 1905, p.110.

9. Annual Reports of the City Government 1903, p.170.

10. Public Evening School program brochure for 1921-1922, Adult Education Box, Adriance Library, 374.8 P.

THE HIGH SCHOOL BECOMES SUBJECT TO THE CONTROL OF THE REGENTS

The Board of Education was able to secure passage of an act in 1874 which made the High School "subject to visitation and control of the Regents . . ." of New York State.¹ Specific results of this act are that it enabled the Board to receive funds from the Regents and that students began to take Regents' examinations.²

COMPULSORY EDUCATION

On May 11, 1874, the New York State Legislature passed a compulsory education bill entitled "An Act to Secure to Children the Benefits of Elementary Education." The bill basically required that children aged 8-14 attend school for at least 14 weeks per year, and that any child under the age of 14 could not be employed "during the school hours of any school day . . ."¹ This measure was a relatively early attempt at compulsory education: only sixteen of the thirty-eight states in 1885 had reportedly passed a bill of this nature, while thirty-one states had taken this action by the turn of the century.² The Poughkeepsie Board of Education soon added its own specific regulations to the New York law in order to implement the act: these can be found minutes for December 23, 1874, pages 339-341 (with additional information on page 335).

1. Manual of the Board of Education, 1887, p.11.
2. Annual Reports of the City Government 1886, pp.156-157.

-
1. Manual of the Board of Education, 1887, p.3.
 2. David B. Tyack, The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p.71. Attributed to John Philbrick.

THE COLORED SCHOOL

The education of Black Americans has been a controversial issue in the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries. In October, 1843 the Poughkeepsie Board of Education received a "Communication" from Nathan Blunt "in relation to establishing a school for Coloured Children . . ."¹ A resolution adopted in November provided that a "coloured school" would be opened "as soon as the means of the board will permit . . ."²

The school opened on May 6, 1844, less than a year after the first public schools had been established in the village. It was originally located in the Primitive Methodist Church in Church Street, and had a registered attendance of 35 students.³ Over the next three decades, attendance varied dramatically, the school moved many times, and it was occasionally discontinued.

At a meeting in August, 1873, the Board recognized that a New York statute completed what the 15th Amendment had started, and that "it is unquestionably a violation of law to refuse a colored child admittance in a public school . . ."⁴ Integration into the public schools had already begun and was fully realized in 1875 when the Colored School was "discontinued" for the final time.⁵

1. Record, October 23, 1843, p.39.
2. Record, November 15, 1843, p.41.
3. Record, May 14, 1844, p.62.
4. Record, August 28, 1873, pp.204-206.
5. Annual Reports of the City Government 1879, p.83.

THE FIRST SUPERINTENDENT

The creation of the position of Superintendent of Schools had been proposed by Commissioner Parker as early as 1873,¹ but it wasn't accepted and acted upon until 1877. In April of that year, the Board passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Senator from this district and the member of the Assembly from this City are hereby requested to obtain the passage of an act authorizing this Board to employ and appoint a superintendent of the schools in charge of this Board.²

The Board adopted rules and regulations concerning the superintendency at a meeting on November 7, 1877, and received applications for the position. Edward Burgess was elected by a 6 to 5

1. Record, July 16, 1873, p.197.
2. Record, April 4, 1877, p.478.

margin on the third ballot.³ The Board was immediately pleased with the results of its first superintendent:

The superintendent's earnest efforts have accomplished much in increasing the efficiency of the schools, and the Board considers the selection a wise one, and the present favorable conditions of the schools largely due to his action.⁴

Mr. Burgess remained in this position until 1898.

3. Record, November 7, 1877, pp. 512, 516.

4. Annual Reports of the City Government 1879, p.86.

STEREOPTICAN VIEWS

The introduction of stereoptican views into the Poughkeepsie Public Schools in 1895 marks the beginning of audio-visual instruction as an educational tool in the school district. New York State passed a law in that year which provided visual aids to certain school districts -- Poughkeepsie received "a lantern, cylinders, screen and all the necessary apparatus for showing stereoptican views."¹ The first illustrations to be shown were of the geography of New York State.

Superintendent Edward Burgess noted the benefits of these slides:

These views, therefore, are not merely a succession of isolated pictures calculated to give pleasure for the moments and then be forgotten; but while they give pleasure, they will also have an educational value of no small importance.²

One tangible benefit of visual instruction was said to be the "cultivation" of the "habit of attention."³ In addition, the educational value of these slides was supplemented in two ways. First, the geographical views were combined with additional views and descriptions of industries such as "Lumbering and Logging" and "Coal and Petroleum."⁴ Second, the students wrote compositions on the illustrated subjects as part of the increased effort "to improve the written language work of the pupils."⁵

1. Annual Reports of the City Government 1896, p.130.

2. Ibid., p.132.

3. Annual Reports of the City Government 1897, p.108.

4. Ibid., pp.131-132.

5. Ibid., pp.107-108.

FREE TEXTBOOKS

Free textbooks were provided for all students in the Poughkeepsie Public Schools in September, 1897.¹ Prior to this time it had been necessary for most pupils to purchase or obtain the books themselves. This had been a requirement for entrance into the first grammar school in 1844: ". . . none shall be admitted without such books."² This system could have prevented some children from obtaining an education because of inability to purchase such books. The Board remedied this problem in 1846 by passing the following resolution:

Resolved that hereafter this Board will not furnish any scholar with books or stationery unless by reason of poverty such scholar shall be unable to furnish them . . .³

The system then operated for the next 50 years in the following manner:

No pupil shall be allowed to retain his or her connection with any of the public schools, unless furnished with the books regularly required in the respective classes; yet in cases of inability to purchase the books, the Supply Committee is authorized to provide pupils with the necessary books upon the written application of the parent . . .⁴

The Board of Education recognized by 1896 that there were problems with this system: some who could not afford the books were too proud to ask for assistance while others who could pay for them were receiving aid.⁵ The Board introduced free textbooks a year later.

1. Annual Reports of the City Government 1897, p.99.
2. Record, January 24, 1844, pp.50-51.
3. Record, May 12, 1846, p.129.
4. Manual of the Board of Education 1887, p.41.
5. Annual Reports of the City Government 1896, pp.125-126.

THE FIRST KINDERGARTENS

The first kindergartens in the Poughkeepsie City School District were established in 1901, although they had been desired for several years. The idea of the "kindergarten" came from Friedrich Froebel of Germany and it was reportedly introduced to America in 1855 when Mrs. Carl Schurz established one in Wisconsin. Yet this kindergarten was conducted in German; the first English-speaking kindergarten was reportedly started in 1860. The first public school kindergarten was organized in St. Louis in 1873.¹

1. Ellwood P. Cubberley, The History of Education, (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), p.766.

The Board discusses the desirability of kindergartens in several of the Annual Reports before 1901. In that year, two kindergartens were started and the Board made the following comment about them:

The educational value of these institutions, which develop the activities of the child and which teach him to help himself and do things for himself are beyond question, but the social advantages are, in our judgment, still greater.²

2. Annual Reports of the City Government 1901, p.166.

TEACHERS' RETIREMENT FUND

A retirement fund for teachers in the Poughkeepsie School District was approved by the Legislature in 1902 and took effect in 1903. For further information, see these Annual Reports:

1901 -- pages 141-142 state some reasons why teachers deserve to have pensions;

1902 -- pages 94 and 118 discuss the establishment of the system.

FIRST FEMALE BOARD MEMBER

The Board of Education made a special note of its first female members in its 1912 Annual Report:

For the first time in its history, the Board has this year had a woman member. The work done by Mrs. Josiah Bartlett, who resigned in August, and by her successor, Miss Caroline Cossum, has demonstrated Mayor Sague's wisdom in appointing them.¹

Miss Cossum continued to serve as a Commissioner until 1924.² There had originally been 12 elected members of the Board but this was changed in 1900 to seven appointed members. The Board is currently composed of five elected female members [May 1985].

1. Annual Reports of the City Government 1912, p.153.
2. Record, May 13, 1924, p.180.

SUMMER HIGH SCHOOL

A summer high school was started in 1927 "because the State Department planned to give regular Regents examinations in August."¹ The school was intended both for students who needed to make up work and for those who wanted to advance in their studies.

1. Report of the School Department to the Board of Education 1929, p.14.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

"Vocational education" was officially started in 1927 with the opening of the Poughkeepsie Trade School. This school offered a two-year course focusing both on the development of trade and machine skills and on regular studies such as English, math and science. The school's director stated:

In the classroom the student is given the science and mathematics as applied to machinery and in the shop he puts his theories into practice . . .¹

Instruction in manual and vocational skills had already been offered for several years. Industrial Arts was introduced in 1920 and soon offered courses in woodworking, printing and drawing. The evening school provided instruction in 1921 in classes such as Mechanical Drawing, Joinery and Cabinet Making, and a Foreman Training Course.²

The Continuation School also offered vocational instruction. This school was organized in 1920 in accordance with State law. By 1923, attendance was mandatory for minors aged 14-17 who had left school, requiring at least four hours a week for those who were employed.³ Courses for boys eventually included instruction in woodworking, plumbing and electricity. But the idea of vocational education was met with the establishment of the Trade School, which provided a full-time course of study in the regular branches of study and in vocational training.

1. Report of the School Department to the Board of Education 1929, p.177.

2. Public Evening School brochure for 1921-1922, Adult Education Box, Adriance Library, 374.8 P.

3. Report of the School Department 1929, p.168.

Educational History of Poughkeepsie (Public Schools)

No.	Time	Leaders	Events	Reference	Page
1	1795	Governor George Clinton	*Proposed Free Education	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
2	1796	Jacob Radcliffe	*First Commissioners of Education	"	
3	1814	Board of Education Commissioners	*Old No. 2 School	Old Files on Poughkeepsie	
4	1843	William Gibbons	*First Poughkeepsie Board of Education	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
5	1844	Josiah Underhill	*First Free School	"	
6	1844	Board of Education	*Primary Schools Started	"	
7	1854	A. J. Coffin	*Commissioners of Schools	"	
8	1858	Board of Education	*Old No. 3 School	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
9	1859	George McClellan	*First Academic Education	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
10	1860	Board of Education	*Old S. F. B. Morse	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
11	1866	George McClellan	*Academy Moved	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
12	1870	Commissioners	*High School Built	"	
13	1872	Commissioners	*High School Begun	"	
14	1875	Commissioners	*Old No. 8 School	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
15	1877	Edward Burgess	*First Superintendent of Schools	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
16	1898	Edward Harris	*Second Superintendent of Schools	"	
17	1901	Board of Education	*Livingston School Built	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
18	1902	William A. Smith	*Third Superintendent	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	

Educational History of Poughkeepsie (Public Schools)

No.	Time	Leaders	Events	Reference	Page
19	1904	Board of Education	*Benjamin Franklin School	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
20	1906	Board of Education	*Abraham Lincoln School	"	
21	1910	Mr. S. R. Shear	*Fourth Superintendent	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
22	1911	Board of Education	*Edward Elsworth School	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
23	1912	Robert Sanford	*Property for New High School	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
24	1918	Board of Education	*Warring School Built	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
25	1919	Ward C. Moon	*Fifth Superintendent	Eagle News 100th Anniversary	
26	1922	Board of Education	*8-room addition to Warring	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
27	1922	Board of Education	*8-room addition to Smith	"	
28	1922	Board of Education	*8-room addition to Franklin	"	
29	1925	Board of Education	*New Governor Clinton School	"	
30	1926	Board of Health	*Aided School Health Dept. with Toxin Antitoxin	Poughkeepsie Public Schools 1935	19
31	1928	Board of Education	*New S.F.B. Morse School	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
32	1929	Physical Education Dept.	*Started Corrective Work	Mr. Kalloch	
33	1929	Board of Education	*Christopher Columbus School	Old Poughkeepsie Files	
34	1929	Board of Education	*George W. Krieger School Built	"	
35	1930	Board of Education	*Libraries started in Elementary Schools	Poughkeepsie Public Schools 1935	9

*Article follows

Educational History of Poughkeepsie (Public Schools)

No.	Time	Leaders	Events	Reference	Page
36	1931	School Health Department	*Hearing Tests started in schools	Poughkeepsie Public Schools	20
37	1933	Miss Dewey	*Dental Hygiene Work Started	Poughkeepsie Public Schools	19
38	1938	Mr. Carl Lewis	*Assistant to the Superintendent	Mr. Lewis	
39	1939	Fox D. Holden	*Sixth Superintendent	Poughkeepsie Files	

*Article follows

1 - Governor George Clinton Recommended Public Schools

The beginning of the present public school system was made when Governor George Clinton in his message read at Poughkeepsie in 1795, recommended an act for the encouragement of schools. As a result of this recommendation an act was passed which laid the foundation for school aid to schools. This money went to the schools operating privately at that time so that a few pupils were admitted free.

2 - The First Commissioners

The first commissioners of schools for the Town of Poughkeepsie were Jacob Radcliffe, Archibald Stuart and Samuel Luckey, elected in 1796. The only public schools then were the Dutchess County Academy and the Lancaster School. Public, however, was not used in the fullest sense, since these schools were supported partly by State appropriation and partly by tuition paid by those children whose parents could afford it. This system was unsatisfactory because many children were deprived of the privileges of education.

3 - Old No. 2 School

Old School No. 2 constructed about 1814, was located at 197 Church Street. Now this building is in use by the Germania Singing Society.

4 - The Village School Board

Overcoming the objections of many that children who could not afford to attend private schools would not attend public schools, a village school board of twelve members was created by an act passed on 1843.

This board, under the leadership of William Gibbons, was authorized to borrow \$12,000 for the construction of a new school, and to raise by taxation \$7,000 a year for the rental of five schools.

5-6 - The First Free School

The first free school became a reality when in January, 1844, a grammar school for boys was opened on the corner of Mill and Bridge Streets with 119 pupils in attendance. Josiah I. Underhill was the first superintendent. Primary schools were opened in August in a building formerly occupied by a theatre at Market and Jay Streets, and at the corner of Clinton and Thompson Streets. The Clinton Street school was known as School No. 1, and the Market Street as School No. 2. In December No. 3 was opened in a room over a coach factory at the junction of Mill and Dutchess Avenue.

7 - Commissioners of Schools

The members of the Board in charge of public schools at that time were called Commissioners of Schools. The first regular meeting was held in the Library room April 18, 1854 with A. J. Coffin as president.

8 - Old No. 3 School

Located on Lower Church Street, Union Square, Old No. 3 School was constructed in 1858. A 2-room addition was built in 1907. This school was last used in June, 1929. Miss O'Hare, for years was principal of this school.

9-11-12-13 - First Academic Education

It was not until 1859 that academic education was provided for the children of the city. In that year a high school known as the Free Academy was opened in Church St. George W. McClellan was the principal. In 1866 this school was moved to the building which had been abandoned by the Dutchess County Academy, the famous institution of learning in South Hamilton Street.

It was at the demand for a more central location that the building now the administration was constructed at the corner of Washington St. and Lafayette Place in 1870. The money used was from the sale of the Dutchess County Academy. The lot was purchased for \$13,000 and the school was opened in April, 1872.

10 - Old S.F.B. Morse School No. 5

Old S. F. B. Morse School, No. 5, was constructed in 1860 at 32-34 Clinton Street. This building now is used as an annex to the high school

14 - Old No. 8 School

Constructed in 1875, at 150 Cannon Street, Old No. 8 School for many years was under the leadership of Miss Elizabeth Mahar. The continuation school and machine shop school are conducted today in this building.

15 - The First Superintendent

At a regular meeting of the Board of Education November 7, 1877 Mr. Edward R. Burgess was elected as the first Superintendent of Schools of the City of Poughkeepsie, who served until 1898.

16 - The Second Superintendent

Mr. Edwin S. Harris was chosen the Second Superintendent of Schools and served until 1902.

17 - Livingston School

In 1901, on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Dean Place the Livingston School was built. Miss Blanche Decker, for years was principal of the school. Today this building is not used for school purposes.

18 - The Third Superintendent

In 1902, William A. Smith became the third superintendent of schools and served until 1910.

19 - Benjamin Franklin School

The Benjamin Franklin School located at 50 Delafield Street was built in 1904. Miss Shanahan, principal for many years, exerted a worthwhile influence on the pupils and their families in her school district.

20 - Abraham Lincoln School

In 1906, on the site of the first free school, the Abraham Lincoln School was built in 1906. Today this building is used as a Trade School

21 - Mr. S. R. Shear

During his nine years as the fourth Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Shear became well known as an educator. Under his supervision the system gained recognition. His death in 1919 terminated his service.

22 - Edward Elsworth School

The Edward Elsworth School was built in 1911 at the corner of Pine and Jefferson Streets.

23 - The New High School

The property of Robert Sanford in North Hamilton Street was purchased by the city about 1912, and in November, 1914, directly after Thanksgiving vacation the high school students moved into the present building, which accommodated about 1,200 pupils.

24 - C. B. Warring School Built

The C. B. Warring School, on the former site of Dr. Warring's Military School, was built in 1918 on the corner of Smith Street and Mansion Street. Mr. Carl Lewis, Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools, is now principal of Warring School. A sight conservation class is held here.

Mr. Ward C. Moon assumed his duties as the Fifth Superintendent of Schools in 1919. Mr. Moon served in this capacity for many years, and during his administration the type of teaching took on a progressive aspect. He retired in 1939, after serving a full and worthwhile period.

26-27-28 - New Additions

In 1922, there was a great deal of need for additions to the schools to accommodate the growing pupil population. Therefore an eight-room addition was built to the Warring, Smith and Franklin Schools.

29 - The New Governor George Clinton School

The new Governor George Clinton School, 100-108 Montgomery Street, was constructed in 1925. Superintendent Fox Holden was a former principal.

30 - Toxin-Antitoxin Given Children

Immunization with toxin-antitoxin was inaugurated in the schools in 1926, with the assistance of the Board of Health, and an intensive educational campaign was carried on at the same time.

31 - New S. F. B. Morse School

In 1928, when the old building became the High School Annex, a new Morse School was built at 101 Mansion Street and is one of the largest elementary schools today. Miss Mary V. Rowley, former Grade Supervisor, is now principal of the school.

32 - Corrective Work

In 1929, the Health and Physical Education Departments made a united effort in corrective posture work. The analysis of defects was studied and corrective work planned to improve the condition.

33 - Christopher Columbus School

The Christopher Columbus School was built in 1929 on South Perry Street. This took the place of Old No. 3 School.

34 - George W. Krieger School

The latest of the new schools was built also in 1929 and named for one of Poughkeepsie's leading citizens, George W. Krieger. This building is located on the corner of Southeast Hooker Avenue and Grand Avenue.

35 - Elementary Libraries

At the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Education, March 13, 1930, the Superintendent was authorized to organize libraries in the elementary schools. Since that time libraries have been developed in the schools, ranging from 1400 to 3000 volumes. Trained librarians are in charge, ever ready to assist both teachers and pupils.

36 - Hearing Tests Given

In 1931-1932 the hearing of all children above the third grade in the elementary schools was tested with the audiometer, loaned to us by the State Department of Education.

37 - Dental Hygienist

The addition of a permanent dental hygienist in 1933 made an appreciable difference in the number of fillings made by the dentist, during the same period of the previous year.

38 - Assistant to the Superintendent Appointed

Mr. Carl E. Lewis assumed his duties as Assistant to the Superintendent of schools in August, 1938. Mr. Lewis has complete supervision of the elementary schools in the city.

39 - New Superintendent Appointed

Mr. Fox D. Holden became the city's Sixth Superintendent of Schools in 1939. Before this appointment Mr. Holden was principal of Governor George Clinton School for several years.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOME AVAILABLE MATERIAL RELATED TO THE
POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Adult Education Box (Adriance 374.8 P). Brochures of course and registration information for the evening school -- 1921-1940, 1949-1969, 1971, and 1976. Subject areas offered include Math, English, Commercial, Household Arts, Vocational, and Americanization.

Annual Report of Poughkeepsie High School -- 1880-1888. (Administration Building). The information provided is mostly financial and attendance figures, with a brief description of the High School building. Some reports include the names and ages of the students.

Annual Reports of the City Government, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.. (Adriance has books from 1872-1932; Vassar [352.073 P863] has the reports from 1883-1932; Adriance also has the Board reports by themselves for 1873-1920 [379 P]). Most of the reports from the Board of Education are very informative and complete accounts of all aspects of the school system -- curriculum, teaching methods, financial statements, building conditions, social life, etc. They usually include reports from the President of the Board, the Superintendent, the Principal of the High School, and instructors of special subjects. This is probably the best source for information about the school system.

Course of Study pamphlets, 1893, 1898, 1904, 1908-1909, 1913, (Adriance 375.009 P). Lists course offerings and requirements for the schools. Includes lessons to be given, material to be covered, books to be read, and poems to be memorized.

Historical Sketch of the Poughkeepsie Public Schools and Public Library from 1843 to 1893. Poughkeepsie: Enterprise Publishing Co., 1894, (Adriance 373.747 C; also included in the 1893 Annual Report). "Prepared under the direction of a special committee composed of President George E. Cramer and Commissioners E.Q. Eldridge and J.S. Van Cleef." Provides a brief descriptive history of each school building. Lists the Board members for each year, the High School graduates from 1873-1893, and the High School principals. Includes information about some of the Board members. Has enrollment and attendance figures for each year. Gives a history of the City Library, including a list of the librarians.

Manual of the Board of Education, 1887, 1895, 1899, 1900, 1903. (Adriance 379.7473 P, Miscellaneous Pamphlets Box). Rules and regulations of the Board. Includes powers of the Board, duties of Board Committees, duties of the Superintendent, regulations affecting teachers and pupils, course requirements, the school schedule, and certain legislative acts affecting

the schools.

Miscellaneous Pamphlets 1835-1968 (Adriance 379.7473 P). This box includes such material as the Board Manuals, Arbor Day programs for the late 1800s, a 1914 exercise program for the opening of the new school, an 1855 school directory, an announcement of the 4th public school concert in 1859, and letters informing a Board member of his election.

Miscellaneous Pamphlets/Programs - Poughkeepsie High School 1857-1968 (Adriance 373.7 P). Includes newspaper pictures of the 1913 Senior class, play programs from the 1920s-1930s, information on the Class of '22, articles on the school location vote in the 1950s, and a program for the 1956 High School dedication exercises.

Phois, 1909-Present. Student yearbooks.

Poughkeepsie High School Commencement Programs, Newspaper Clippings 1876-1883 (Adriance 373.7 P). There are two scrapbooks in this box: one contains commencement programs while the other has newspaper articles about the final exams and the commencement exercises.

Poughkeepsie Commencement Programs 1872-1963 (Adriance 373.7 P). The programs list the names of the graduates, the commencement schedule, and occasionally include the class song.

Record of the Board of Education, June 1843-present (Administration Building). Minutes of the Board.

Report of the School Department to the Board of Education, 1929.

Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 1929 (Adriance 379.7473 P). This report details the changes in the school system and the curriculum for the past decade and states current conditions and needs. It includes reports from the Superintendent, the principals of each school, and the supervisors of the course departments. Prominent themes include overcrowded school conditions, language problems due to large numbers of immigrant children, and the need to adjust the school system to better meet individual student ability. Industrial Arts and Physical Education are two departments which greatly expanded during this decade.

Report of the School Department to the Board of Education, 1935. (Vassar Library 379.7473 P862). Similar to the 1929 Report. Few prominent themes, although there is much discussion about the establishment of libraries in all the schools.

Scrapbook of miscellaneous papers of the Board of Education and City Library

1883-1897 (Adriance, 2 volumes, 379.7473 P). Includes school directories (names of Commissioners, committee assignments, names and salaries of principals, teachers, and janitors), school forms (examples of report cards, suspension blanks, sealed proposals, supply requests, etc.), commencement programs, and newspaper clippings. Also has many clippings about the library.

Student newspapers available at Adriance:

The Vidette (1883-1884);

The High School Recorder (1899-1900) (the box also includes a few papers from the 1860s and the early 1890s);

The Apotheosian (1904-1925) [379 A].

Andrus, Helen Josephine. A Century of Music in Poughkeepsie: 1802-1911. Poughkeepsie: Frank B. Howard, 1912. This survey includes a lot of information about both the development of music in the schools and the importance of school musical performances in the city.

King, Charles Donald. History of Education in Dutchess County. Cape May, N.J., 1959.

Platt, Edmund. The Eagle's History of Poughkeepsie. Poughkeepsie: Platt and Platt, 1905.

Compiled by Peter Anders Edman
May 1985