

Use Authorization

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at Idaho State University, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for inspection. I further state that permission to download and/or print my thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School, Dean of my academic division, or by the University Librarian. It is understood that any copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature _____

Date _____

Educational Reforms in Pennsylvania:
Momentum and Stagnation in the Keystone State, 1890-1930

by

Joshua M. Eppley

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Historical Resources Management
in the Department of History
Idaho State University
Spring 2015

Committee Approval

To the Graduate Faculty:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the thesis of JOSHUA M.
EPPLEY find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

Kevin Marsh, Ph.D.
Major Advisor

Paul Sivitz, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Matt Sanger, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support and unwavering patience of my thesis committee. Dr. Paul Sivitz guided this process from start to finish and this work would not have been possible without his help. Opening up not only his knowledge on subject material, he and his father opened up their home to me while I conducted research in Philadelphia, a city I had never been to and now feel like a hardened local. Dr. Kevin Marsh illuminated and guided my research into Progressive Era reform, which contributed heavily to the major arguments with the public school system in the two cities. Beyond the research advice, both encouraged my growth as a professional, who provided me the flexibility in time and ideas to create this work. Through many revisions, I found that progressive education reform is one of the most complicated topics I have ever tackled in my academic career. Without the suggestions and advice from Dr. Matt Sanger, I would still have been lumping in Dewey and Thorndike in the same ideological group. I believe this error in understanding their theories would have had them both spinning in their graves.

The faculty at Idaho State University was so welcoming; it almost made me forget that everyone I have ever known was a long trip away. The history department administrator, Teri Henderson, is especially to thank for her cheerfulness day in, day out, and unrelenting support. Dr. Robert Edsall advised and guided much of my digital work, not particularly with this project, as by this time I was confident enough in the skills he taught me to succeed on my own. Dr. Justin Stover was always available for a quick, or not so quick question, on citations, formatting, and archival research trips.

My family and friends are of utmost importance to me, I could not have done any of this without them. Ultimately, their support and trust gave me the courage to move 2,500 miles away from everyone I knew to begin this process. I miss them all every day.

Thank you to Kristine Hunt, Nate Williams, and Ian Berdanier, and all of my graduate student colleagues in the history department have provided countless hours of insight and argument. To them I owe my sincerest thanks for always having time to look at the grammar of a sentence, help me flesh out an idea, or to “turn-two” at the pub.

Perhaps most importantly, I must thank the endless pool of patience and understanding that emanated from my partner. Without her, I surely would have slipped into madness during this process. I believe that she is as happy that I am done with this as I am.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Evolution of the Field of Curriculum Development.....	6
Chapter 3: Philadelphia: School Restructuring in the City of Brotherly Love.....	19
Chapter 4: Pittsburgh: Forging Workers in the Public School System.....	41
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	66
Bibliography.....	69

Educational Reforms in Pennsylvania:
Momentum and Stagnation in the Keystone State, 1890-1930

M.A. Thesis Abstract – Idaho State University (2015)

This study examines the relationship between educational reforms and the societal, economic, and political disposition of the state prior to and during the Progressive Era. Curriculum developed from long-established traditional subjects to a scientifically-based pedagogy. During the first decades of the 1900s, educational reformers divided into two general camps, administrative and pedagogical progressives. Philadelphia labored for educational reform, but local political resistance and a strong private and parochial school presence stalled public school reforms. Pittsburgh's public schools simply become entrenched with the omnipresent industrial agenda of the city and endeavored to guide immigrants and natives toward work in the mills and mines of the region. Both exhibit actions from both camps, but ultimately administrative progressives had the more lasting impression in the state. By examining school board records, newspapers, curricular theory, course catalogs, and superintendent reports, a trend emerges, that illustrates the reflection between public school curriculum and society.

Chapter One

Introduction

Pennsylvania, since its inception in the seventeenth century, used education as a foundational pillar. First as a British colony, then as a state, Pennsylvania continued to stress the importance of education. More than two centuries later, this emphasis remained in place, but not without conflict within the ranks of educational decision-makers. The Progressive Era during the turn of the twentieth century and the inter-war period remains one of the most divided eras of educational and curricular theory. Yet, even with an early tradition of education, immigration and economic agendas affected Pennsylvania and stalled its education reforms at varying levels across the state. During this era, Illinois, New York, Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts, Iowa, and other states investigated grand classroom experiments. Prominent educational philosophers, Francis Wayland Parker, John Dewey, G. Stanley Hall, Franklin Bobbitt, Edward L. Thorndike, and others of the period conducted these experiments. Factions formed and arguments ensued as the study of curriculum developed.

Chief among these arguments was the method in which reform should be initiated and implemented. David F. Labaree and David Tyack describe the amalgamation of multiple schools of pedagogical thought that merged into two major camps during the Progressive Era. In no particular order, there were *pedagogical progressives*, who believed that education reform should come from a revision of America's public school curriculum. The other group, the *administrative progressives*, proposed a restructuring of the administration and organization of the public school system would improve student achievement and increase the efficiency of schools. Although separate, both groups

agreed in the diversifying of curriculum through the abolishment of traditional approaches to education. However, where they differed, in terms of how to administer curriculum diversity, can still be seen in modern education. With the ability to prove their theories with empirical evidence to policy makers, administrative progressives centralized school systems across the nation under the call for greater efficiency. Pedagogical progressive thought has been relegated to education schools, where theory is taught to new teachers, but is seldom practiced in the classroom with any longevity. According to Labaree, administrative progressives are on the ground, while pedagogical are left to the air.¹ From 1910-1919, only thirteen books on curriculum circulated through the nation, including foundational works of the emerging discipline, such as Franklin Bobbit's, *The Curriculum*, published in 1918. However, during the 1920s, the interest in, and publication of, texts on curriculum increased exponentially, and nearly one hundred were published by the end of the decade.²

By analyzing school board records, newspaper clippings, curriculum conferences, superintendent reports, and other sources in chiefly Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, a theory develops as to how Pennsylvania applied education reform with allegiance to either the pedagogical, administrative, or a combination of both. Pennsylvania engaged in progressive reforms typical during the period, especially the consolidation of municipal and local authorities into centralized agencies. However, neighborhood and ward systems, although officially eliminated in both cities by the 1910s, continued to have a lasting effect on public school policies. Entrenched political beliefs continued to

¹ David F. Labree, "Progressivism, Schools and School of Education: An American Romance," *Paedagogica Historica*, 41, no. 3 (February 2005): 287.

² William F. Pinar et al., *Understanding Curriculum* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc. 2002), 102.

influence both public school's administrative policies and curriculum development. Indeed, the changes to curriculum reflect the changes in society.

The Allegheny Mountains physically divide the Keystone State, each side reflecting different cultural, historical, and demographic backgrounds. This dichotomy created disparate curricular policies and educational motivations, prior to and during the first decades of the 1900s. The comparison begins in Philadelphia in eastern Pennsylvania. Here, precedent-setting universities were established before America was an independent nation. Established by Benjamin Franklin, the Academy of Philadelphia initiated the first utilitarian values into a curriculum in America. These lessons provide a precursor to the social efficiency movement that came to characterize the diversifying of curriculum and industrial education movement during the Progressive Era.

Philadelphia's longevity and continued vitality allowed the city and its residents to acquire substantial wealth before the establishment of many cities that today are comparable in size. The reorganization of the Philadelphia public school system began in the 1870s, but through repeated failures from political discourse, the bill did not pass until a generation later in 1905. The actions of citizen's reform groups waged a tireless war against what they saw as an anachronistic system. Paradoxically, many of the reformers came from upper-class homes who did not send their children to public schools. For decades, wealthy benefactors chartered private schools or had enough income to allow their children to travel abroad for their education. Traditionally private schools trained students for college, the reforms in education during the progressive era attempted to mitigate this prevalence and shift some of the responsibility to the public schools.³

³ Robert H. Weibe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 119.

The nation's curricular agenda concentrated on the public school sector, with movements for compulsory education and applying scientific methods to classroom structure. However, the abundance of newly built and long-established private schools thrived in the city. Quaker (or Friends) schools, Jewish, Catholic, or other parochial schools, and charter or other secular schools employed progressive reform to their curriculum at different times and intensities. As industry became increasingly specialized, business leaders, citizens, politicians, and educators hoped to meet demand for workers through public education. Due to this desire, the Philadelphia Board of Education established the first trade school in America within their public school system in 1907.⁴

Pittsburgh, the Steel City, lies to the west of Philadelphia, near the Ohio border. The industrial city delayed reforms by over a decade compared to the public school systems of New York and Chicago. Although a hallmark of progressive reforms, particularly, the industrial education movement, the city's determined focus on the vocational and industrial arts pervasively reflected the economic agenda of the city. Simply put, education in Pittsburgh was education about Pittsburgh. With the high demand for skilled and unskilled workers for the mills and mine of the surrounding area, a massive population of immigrants settled in Pittsburgh. These groups brought their cultural customs and work ethics that influenced the type of curriculum and the attitudes towards compulsory education in the city. Children and their families pressured one another to secure jobs before completing school to contribute to their collective economy. The role of education was a limited focus, especially in the public school sector, which due to the massive influx in population had become exceedingly over-crowded.

⁴ Herbert M Kliebard. *The Struggle for the American Curriculum* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004), 117.

Pittsburgh, with unrelenting focus on its industrial and manufacturing economy, and an endless supply of dispensable unskilled labor, managed their school system as a steel mill operates. Workers (students) began their shift, were assigned a task, completed said task, and their output transformed into a monetary value. As social efficiency established itself as the prevailing ideology in the nation's curriculum, for students in Pittsburgh, the output of the efforts in school was their social utility. For many, their ability to obtain and maintain a job in Pittsburgh came more from familial ties and work ethic, rather than their education. Naturally, there are exceptions, some ultimately did not work in the mills and mines, but the omnipresence of industry in Pittsburgh's societal atmosphere influenced the curriculum on a massive scale.

Analyzing the history of curriculum development and educational reform provides a parallel of societal changes and economic agendas. The Progressive Era, responding to the preceding decades of unregulated free-market capitalism, became a battleground for economic and societal reform and established new institutional and governmental regulations to increase efficiencies and reduce volatilities. Throughout this conflict, the curriculum of the public schools adjusted accordingly to the contemporary ideology that pervaded a city. Ultimately, the study of curriculum and educational reform in Pennsylvania provides a window into a city's societal, political, and economic disposition.

Chapter Two

Evolution of the Field of Curriculum Development

For the analysis of education reforms in Pennsylvania during the Progressive Era, it is important to identify the different types of reform the Keystone State had to choose from. Beginning with traditional curriculum during the nineteenth century, a multitude of reforms began to argue against this ideology. Memorization and recitation of facts, foundational to traditional, or classicist, pedagogy was challenged as reformers promoted a more natural approach to learning. Natural learning, however, was a spectrum, with a laissez-faire attitudes on the left, to a scientifically mandated approach on the right. Developing curriculum became more of a science in the early decades of the 1900s. This culminated into the social efficiency movement, which then became corrupted by those who would see the public school system as a mechanism to stratify students based on ability, which many times became dictated by ethnicity, race, and gender. To understand the reform ideologies that Pennsylvania considered when faced with its own needs for reform, it is important to understand the evolution of curriculum theory and how it was applied across the nation. In a broad overview, the development of curriculum moved from classicist, to child-centered, to social efficiency to create the conditions for utilitarian curriculum for training workers and consolidated school boards for greater administrative efficiency.

I. Classicist, or Traditionalist Curriculum

The classic belief and standard of reading, writing, and arithmetic, among other topics such as history and geography maintained as primary to school lessons during the nineteenth century. At Yale in 1828, groups of men collaborated and conducted a study

on the university's course of instruction. The subsequent report remains a foundational work on curriculum development and heavily influenced America's schools during nineteenth century.⁵

During the final decades of the 1800s, the National Education Association (NEA) appointed three committees to improve America's school systems and curriculum policy: the Committee of Ten on secondary education, the Committee of Fifteen on elementary education, and the Committee of College Entrance Requirements.⁶ Chiefly citing the *Reports on the Course of Instruction in Yale College* and other sources, the committee's reports prominently endorsed and ensured confidence in classical curriculum at all level of education. Members promoted a focused, subject-matter exclusion, with minimal attention given to pupil abilities, societal needs, or any form of differential training. Prominent educational scholars selected by the NEA to chair these committees validated the success and credibility of these reports. Those involved included Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University, who chaired the Committee of Ten and the United States Commissioner of Education William Torrey Harris, who chaired the Committee of Fifteen.

A major development to the classicist belief was the addition of, and relation to *faculty psychology*. Comparing the brain to any other physical muscle, this emerging theory believed that strenuous mental exercise bolstered cognitive abilities. To classicists such as Eliot and Harris, this scientific approach to their educational system reinforced their theories. According to classicists and faculty psychologists, memorization and recitation of facts exercised the brain to exhaustion, effectively making it stronger and

⁵ *Reports on the Course of Instruction in Yale College*, (New Haven: Hazekiah Howe, 1828).

⁶ Pinar et al., *Understanding Curriculum*, 73-75.

students more knowledgeable. Particularly urged by Eliot and Harris with their “furniture of the mind” and “five windows of the soul” theories, classic subjects further reinforced the report’s conclusions.⁷ Eliot stressed science, history, and English, which had heavy linguistic influences, especially Latin which maintained an esteemed and independent curriculum classification, due to its curricular legacy.

Harris promoted arithmetic, geography, grammar, history, and literature. Beyond the subject material, the methodology of mastery of simple tasks continued to be an axiom of daily instructions, such as, the manufacturing of quills, proper mixing of ink, and precise penmanship.⁸ Due to the marriage of classicism and faculty psychology, both men inherently depended on memorization for comprehension and promoted a strong emphasis on the textbook. Their influence urged schools to adopt curriculum encouraging these habits of the mind. In theory, adopting classicist’s methods spurred student’s focus and attention. Regardless of the efficiency, this curricular model remained the standard for schools through the 1800s to the turn of the century. Harris was the most prolific and vocal authority for traditional curriculum and defended his beliefs against the growing number of researchers and theorists whose ideas ran counter to the nation’s dogmatic curriculum.

II. Child-Centered Curriculum

Contrasting the classicists, revivals of century’s old beliefs and theories gained ground and provided transitional concepts toward child-centered education reforms in the 1910s and 1920s. Johann Francis Herbart (1776-1841) was a German philosopher whose

⁷ *Reports on the Course of Instruction in Yale College* (New Haven: Hazekiah Howe, 1828), 7-9.

⁸ Konstantine Dierks, *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 74-76.

works regarding education remained largely overlooked until scholars revived them in response to the reports of the three committees and other publications by classicists.

Herbart's work echoed earlier theories by Michel Eyquem de Montaigne. In a commissioned letter titled, *On the Education of Children*, he expressed his educational views and values to a pregnant duchess in the late 1500s.

According to Montaigne, education must engage the child in multiple ways, not simply by reading and writing. Rote memorization, the preferred curricular method of the era, perpetuated an inadvisable and educationally hollow process. Rather, an active involvement with subject materials stimulated comprehensive understanding of a topic. Hoping to instill well-rounded beliefs in children, Montaigne argued the importance of not only developing cognitive abilities through critical analysis of practical problems, but also including physical exercise into the child's curriculum to strengthen the body. In the letter to the wealthy duchess, Montaigne stressed tolerance of other cultures and encouraged the student to study abroad to gain personal experiences with foreign cultures. Indeed, a strong social conscience rejected near-sightedness and promoted other respectable qualities. Montaigne urged to instill a love of education in the child, not for personal gain, but rather personal fulfillment. Ultimately, if the child only learned for economic purposes, he will not become truly "educated."⁹ This belief heavily influenced Herbart's work two centuries later at the turn of the eighteenth century.

Agreeing with Montaigne, Francis Herbart reasoned that the child's mind was active and memorization and recitation presented mere outward show. Instead, Herbart proposed that cognition functioned through powerful ideas, which are considered active

⁹ Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, "On the Education of Children," in *A World of Ideas: Essential Readings for College Writers 7th edition*, ed. Lee A. Jacobus (St. Martins: Bedford Books, 2006), 231-243.

forces. In cognitive learning new knowledge has its roots in a prior experience or lesson, a process called appreciation. Herbart emphasized the principles of *concentration*, the value associated with a particular subject within a curriculum, and *correlation* between these subjects.¹⁰ Years after Herbart's death in 1841, educational scholars flocked to Germany from the United States during the 1880s and 1890s to study his work. Chief among these returning researchers were Charles De Garmo and Tuiskon Ziller, who modified the theory by incorporating new elements.¹¹ Thus, creating the Herbartian movement. These modifications integrated scientific theory and psychology and bridged the child-centered classroom to the scientifically-managed classroom that continued to grow in popularity through the Progressive Era.

Although, the height of the movement only lasted during the closing decade of the 1880s, its lasting effects on curriculum development extended well into the inter-war period. Ziller integrated the concept of *concentration centers* to Herbart's original concentration theory, which organized different curriculum subjects by parallel topics and promoted inter-disciplinary approaches to both student learning and academic research. Additionally, *cultural epochs* emerged, an idea grounded in biology and evolution. In educational terms, this meant that a child's individual development mirrored the fundamental stages of human history. This contribution had an important role in curriculum development by further advancing the notion that a scientific approach to understanding and improving curriculum was essential. Cultural epochs gained in popularity among educational leaders such as John Dewey. However, other scholars

¹⁰ Pinar et al., *Understanding Curriculum*, 78-80.

¹¹ Claude Eggertsen, ed, *Studies in the History of American Education* (Michigan: University of Michigan School of Education, 1947), 16-17.

either corrupted the theory with racist and sexist undercurrents or refuted it outright as curriculum became its own respected discipline.

The work of these new scholars culminated into the organization of The Herbartian Society. The club changed names multiple times, eventually becoming the National Society for the Study of Education in 1909. Future leader of progressive education John Dewey wrote “Interest Related to Will” in the *Second Supplement to the Herbart Yearbook for 1895*.¹² However, Dewey later criticized many Herbartian concepts, although he continued to serve on the executive board of the Herbartian Society. As Dewey began his famous experimental school in Chicago, the Laboratory School incorporated many values influenced these theories. Herbartians vocally opposed the mental discipline approach of classicist views propagated by the three committees, which soon began to decline in popularity and credibility. Although short-lived, this movement provided a transition to child-centeredness in the classroom.

As child-centeredness gained academic respectability after 1900, another education reformer contributed to the belief that the nation’s curriculum should be dictated by science. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician, naturally approached the education of children with a scientific methodology and understood that child-centered classrooms are critical for success in education. This translated into a unique type of curriculum and classroom, where the design was just as important as the pedagogical methodology. Montessori criticized stationary desks, referring to students in these conditions as “butterflies pinned to a board,” and argued for moveable classrooms with tables and chairs that shift with the changing lessons. Here, Montessori provided further

¹² Pinar et al., *Understanding Curriculum*, 79-82.

evidence that not only the curriculum needed reformed, but all the structure of the classroom itself needed attention. She reasoned that students, particularly young children, should have the freedom to move about the classroom unimpeded, reflecting her belief in process over product. The result, or product, of learning was ambiguous because the student was either rewarded or punished with grades or other incentives provided by the teacher. Montessori believed this resulted in an unnatural motivation for learning and eventual corruption of their ability to learn. This echoed Montaigne's beliefs that children should not be educated for mere economic purposes or academic rewards.¹³

The child study movement posed the most direct criticism to traditional curriculum promoted by classicists like Harris and Eliot. Two important intellectuals effectively ushered in this new ideology, Francis Wayland Parker and G. Stanley Hall. Although neither conducted work or research in Pennsylvania, the utilization of their policies occurred at varying degrees across the state. Stating that the work of Herbart and his disciples "have been a source of inspiration," Parker's *Talks on Pedagogics* in 1894 became a foundational piece of literature for progressive education. As the principal of the Quincy Normal School in Massachusetts, he developed the "Quincy System," where children learned to read, write, spell, and think simultaneously. According to Parker, teachers must emphasize the context of words when teaching their students, resulting in a more natural learning style. This "word method," replaced the traditional drill of phonetics that typified most early education.¹⁴ He believed that curriculum should build on the child's instinctive learning capabilities, echoing Montaigne and influencing

¹³ Maria Montessori, "The Montessori Method," in *A World of Ideas: Essential Readings for College Writers 7th edition*, ed. Lee A. Jacobus (St. Martins: Bedford Books, 2006), 281-294.

¹⁴ Kliebard, *Struggle for the American Curriculum*, 36.

Montessori, and the Herbartian belief in nurturing a child's intellect through their natural, inquisitive nature.¹⁵ Parker's work at Quincy, and then Chicago, transitioned Herbartianism to child-study, and anticipated John Dewey's future work in education with linking democracy and education.

Herbart and his American followers also heavily influenced G. Stanley Hall, particularly, the long-established credibility of cultural epochs as a scientific principle since the seventeenth century. This ideology had come to be associated with Darwinism and provided further credence that science should dictate curriculum. According to the theory, subjects should reflect the evolutionary stage or epoch of the child in relation to mankind's evolution. For example, the youngest child in the classroom was still in the "savage" stage of their development and should be taught ancient myths and legends. Hall, a believer in social Darwinism as well, did not believe that all children went through educational epochs at the same rate. In fact, it was crucial that children be taught at their own level, determined by ability.

Unfortunately, racist undercurrents permeated this theory, as non-white races, particularly black, were fundamentally lower on the sliding scale of humanity's progression. Thus, according to the theory, children of color should be placed on a lower "epoch" than their white counterparts. Even those of the same race, Hall advocated that "dullards" be placed in separate schools as well as maintaining a gender segregation.¹⁶ Hall influenced and helped transition child-study toward social efficiency. It was not a far

¹⁵ Francis W. Parker, *Talks on Pedagogics: An Outline of the Theory of Concentration* (New York and Chicago: E.L. Kellogg & Co., 1894), iii-vi.

¹⁶ Kliebard, *Struggle for the American Curriculum*, 39-41.

leap from stratifying students based on ability, race, and gender, to encouraging teachers to place students into specific lesson plans to pre-determine their future.

The culmination of this marriage of science and education blossomed in the 1910s. Edward Thorndike and his magnum opus, *Educational Psychology*, published in 1913, advocated a stimulus response to behavioral psychology, which would enable educators to alter human behavior. According to Thorndike, by understanding “what human beings are in order to choose the best means of changing them for the better to create men that are more wise, skillful and efficient.”¹⁷ Thorndike actively refuted Hall’s beliefs that humans behavior can be predicted, instead arguing that mankind could be changed.

In his doctoral dissertation, Thorndike sharply critiques Hall’s Darwinian theories further, stating that humans “out to make an effort as she (nature) does, to omit the useless and antiquated and get to the best and most useful as soon as possible; we ought to change what *is* to what *ought to be*, as far as we can.”¹⁸ The role of the educator, actively influencing a student’s behavior, became canon. The inclination to quantify these experiments ushered in an era of testing and evaluation of students and teachers. Through quantifiable, empirical data, educators could now prove their theories to policy-makers. This method effectively ushered in administrative and structural reform to public school systems across the nation in the upcoming decades.

Scientific management continued to dominate the educational landscape at the turn of the century. Science, particularly its methodological nature, influenced industry

¹⁷ Edward Lee Thorndike, *Educational Psychology Volume III* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1914), 143-144.

¹⁸ Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated, 1964), 112-113.

and contributed to the growth of the nation's industrial might. As a result, the role of industrial arts and education came to the forefront of the discussion as America looked toward schools to train its future workers. For many, industrial education was the answer to multiple concerns the nation attempted to address in the early decades of the 1900s.

A rising immigrant population and the specialization of skills required for industrial occupations forced educators to analyze what exactly is being taught in schools, and perhaps more importantly, who is being taught what. Social efficiency became the banner under which many reforms held high. Although in general, two different schools of thought emerge out of this movement. For administrative progressives, the structure of the school system proved to be essential to reform. According to their theories, children should not be consolidated into a single classroom, but rather should be stratified based on their ability levels and effectively corralled into tracks that dictated the profession and role they would fill in society upon graduation. Unfortunately, racism and sexism pervaded the nation on many levels.

III. Social Efficiency

A contemporary of Herbart, who likewise had his ideas initially overlooked, laid the foundations of later works in the industrial education movement. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, a Swiss pedagogue, introduced a curriculum method that “tried to connect study with manual labor, the school with the workshop, and make one thing of them.”¹⁹ His ideas centered on the belief in a balanced development of the child with manual activity as a means to “satisfy the twin purposes of sensorial development and gaining a

¹⁹ Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, “An Experiment in Education,” in *The Teacher and the Taught*, ed. Ronald Gross (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., 1963), 77-78.

means of livelihood.”²⁰ Influential education reformer, U.S Representative, and champion for universal public education, Horace Mann, visited Europe during the 1830s and 1840s and visited schools that had adopted Pestalozzian methods. His efforts to establish these ideals in the growing public school system met resistance in his home state of Massachusetts. Many still believed the ideology of the *Yale Report* and classicist curricular agendas. Pestalozzian marriage of manual labor and bookish education would not gain ground in America until the efforts of Edward A. Sheldon of Oswego, New York. Like Pestalozzi, Sheldon first used these methods to teach destitute and orphaned children. After initial and encouraging success, his methods spread across the county as the “Oswego Movement” during the 1860s.

The bottom-up approach to “object learning” education was taught at the Oswego Normal School, which proliferated these ideals, while simultaneously stimulating the origins of the nascent industrial education movement.²¹ In the wake of the Oswego Movement, John D. Runkle of M.I.T. and Calvin M. Woodward of Washington University in St. Louis began to introduce manual training, the learning of tools specific to different handicrafts. Like Pestalozzi’s theories, manual training aimed to go beyond mere apprenticeship training and act as a “vehicle for communicating desirable habits.” Through manual training, a student should improve their abilities in “attention, observation, accurate thinking, aesthetic nature, executive powers, and foster the habit of

²⁰ Leigh J. Altadonna, “The School, Curriculum, and Community: A Case Study of the Institutionalizing of Industrial Education in the Public Schools of Philadelphia, 1876-1918” (PhD diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1983), 32.

²¹ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 32-35.

accomplishing something.”²² This belief that manual labor provided more than a wage, excused curricular developers from establishing syllabi beyond vocational training.

As America became increasingly industrial, the role of public schools further shifted. The schools functioned as an incubator for tomorrow’s workers. Naturally, the desire to further increase a steady supply of domestic workers for the burgeoning economic agenda of America encouraged the industrial education movement. Leading this conversation, Frederick Winslow Taylor provided methodological guidance for the social-efficiency movement. At first, this movement related to the theories of labor management, and then translated by Taylor for curriculum development. As such, the foundation of Taylor’s theory promoted education for economic success, thus, running contrary to the ideas promoted by Montaigne, Montessori, the Herbartians, and others. Belief in effectiveness and efficiency were paramount. *Task analysis*, or breaking down a task into its fundamental parts and outlining the specific performance of these tasks were central to the theory. This theory was tested first at Bethlehem Steel in Pittsburgh, and continued to influence the curriculum of other industrial cities. Translated to education, school subjects became categorized and divided into parts. Which created a “curriculum that became the assembly line by which economically and socially useful citizens would be produced.”²³ Social utility became the sole judging value of a proficient curriculum.

Mass production required discipline and hard work and created increased productivity and profits. Alongside Taylor, Franklin Bobbitt out of the University of Chicago became interested in the relationship between education and the economy.

²² William Henry Issel, “Schools for a Modern Age: Education Reform in Pennsylvania in the Progressive Era” (Phd Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1969), 18-19.

²³ Pinar et al., *Understanding Curriculum*, 94-95.

Influenced by Thorndike and Taylor, Bobbitt insisted that curriculum must directly prepare students for tasks for work. According the Bobbitt, the task of the curriculum scholars was to study industrial, manufacturing, hospitality, and business methods to reflect the major tasks or activities comprising it into the schools.²⁴ In Pittsburgh especially, the philosophies of Bobbitt and Taylor reflected the industrial attitude that pervaded the city and influenced the Pittsburgh public schools for decades. Whereas Philadelphia, emphasized Progressive reforms in education ahead of its state neighbor to the West, but still lagged behind much of the nation.

²⁴ John Franklin Bobbitt, *The Curriculum* (Boston, New York, Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918), 18-22.

Chapter Three

Philadelphia: School Restructuring in the City of Brotherly Love

By the turn of the twentieth century, Philadelphia's citizens and officials knew that a reorganization of the public school system was in dire need. Social efficiency continued to be the most influential school of thought for progressive education reform and Philadelphia organized their reform along this avenue. Particularly, the administrative progressive's tactics for reform proved most effective for the City of Brotherly Love. A massive movement from citizen reform groups and the media eventually convinced the city officials after multiple failed attempts during the 1890s.

Robert H. Weibe's, *The Search For Order*, describes the relationship between all levels of education, noting, "the main lines of educational development late in the century ran downward from universities and upward from primary grades, meeting at the high schools."²⁵ Despite having precedent setting historical universities, the public school system of Philadelphia lagged behind other cities of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Among the issues surrounding the public school system, the lack of expenditure allocation to schools and teachers proved critical. In fact, in 1904, Philadelphia was the third largest city in the nation, but "in per capita expenditures in the schools it fell to thirty-fourth place."²⁶

In 1905, the Philadelphia Reorganization Act passed legislation and the city vastly changed the structure of its public school system from a combination of over five hundred independent wards to a central board of education with twenty-one members.

²⁵ Weibe, *Search for Order*, 118-119.

²⁶ V.A. Ciampa, "Martin Grove Brumbaugh, Pioneering Superintendent of the Philadelphia Public Schools." *Pennsylvania History*, 7, no. 1 (1940): 32.

The media onslaught after numerous charges of corruption maintained the momentum for reform in Philadelphia. While continuous calls for reform certainly helped in the passage of legislation, the end of Philadelphia's stagnation for reform was its approach. A major reason that administrative progressives were so successful in the practical application of their policies was their emphasis on empirical data. In Philadelphia, reform groups gathered continued to gather evidence of other comparable cities in order to prove to policy makers that reform was necessary. In fact, the data collected for the Philadelphia Reorganization Act became the foundation for the preliminary studies that culminated in the 1911 Pennsylvania School Code.

A major reform movement had begun decades prior, but to no avail, as stubborn local politicians adhered to the stagnant system. This followed similar patterns of municipal consolidations for means of greater efficiency in Progressive America. For Philadelphia's education reform, once again the administrative progressive had the most lasting impact.

However, the pedagogical progressives did not lost out entirely in Philadelphia, as both camps both wished to see a diversified curriculum opposite of the traditional lesson plans promoted by Eliot and Harris. For Philadelphia, like much of the nation, this curricular shift came from vocational training and industrial arts. Some scholars believe that this national movement can be traced back to the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876.²⁷ America had reached its hundred year birthday and to celebrate the momentous occasion, Congress created the United States Centennial Commission. Philadelphia, once the capital of the early nation, was a natural decision to represent the commemoration.

²⁷ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 90-92.

Lasting all year, the grand exhibit fixated on “American arts, products, and manufactures.”²⁸ America was steadily becoming the greatest industrial power in the world, with Pennsylvania as major leader in this development.

The belief in industrial might permeated nearly every aspect of American life, particularly its education system. New philosophies and modern science created a new, recognized intelligence, that of ingenuity and craftiness, rather than erudition and book-learning. However, whether this was a respected acumen, continued to divide class lines in Philadelphia. During the complicated municipal and public school reform, critics of reform argued that the movement’s most influential organizations were disproportionate in their membership. The reform movements of Philadelphia’s public schools did not include an egalitarian consensus, not from outright exclusion, but merely from the strong presence of the wealthy Philadelphians. Of the twenty-one members of the Board of Public Education after the 1905 Reorganization Act, sixteen registered in Philadelphia’s Blue Book.

Industrial education became a focal point in the City of Brotherly Love due to the success of the Centennial Exposition. The first public trade school in the nation was founded in Philadelphia in 1907. A decade later, one of the first women’s trade schools, funded by the Smith-Hughes act and local benefactors came into practice as the industrial education movement began to lose momentum. However, the inclusion of utilitarian lessons into a school’s curriculum actually occurred much earlier, before the United States had become a nation in fact. The Academy of Philadelphia, the first public

²⁸ “Centennial Exhibition Digital Collection, Timeline, accessed April 4, 2015. <http://libwww.library.phila.gov/CenCol/exh-timeline.htm>

institution of higher education in the colonies, incorporated a curriculum that taught practical skills and an emphasized the English language.

I. The Curriculum of the Academy of Philadelphia

In the founding days of Philadelphia, before the bloody revolution with England, Benjamin Franklin, either stooped over a secretary's desk or meeting with his contemporaries in candle-lit taverns, launched an incredible chain of correspondence to establish the first public institution of higher learning in America.²⁹

The Academy of Pennsylvania was founded in January of 1750 after months of acquiring resources, materials, and gaining support from the community. The communicative abilities of eighteenth century print culture, a personalized, communicative web that spanned vast geographies and softened class distinctions. Through these interactions, not only were the brick and mortar and financial necessities for the Academy established, but also a dialogue of the proposed curriculum. To begin establishing a curricular base for the Academy, Franklin sought out to obtain one of the most crucial elements of any university, books. Integral to this initial plea, William Penn's prior secretary and initial trustee of the Academy, James Logan responded to Franklin's request in September 13, 1749. He informed Franklin that portions of the core curriculum literature necessary for the Academy are at Franklin's disposal and, in fact, already in transit.³⁰ Five months later, friend of James Logan, London merchant and botanist Peter Collinson, secured more books for the Academy's use.³¹ Franklin not only

²⁹ Perhaps "quasi-public" provides a more accurate term. Although not steeped in religious tradition like its New England counterparts, Harvard and Yale, Franklin's plans limited admission to male students only. Furthermore, tuition was not within the reach for many of Philadelphia's families. Thanks to Dr. Paul Sivitz in the Department of History at Idaho State University for supplying this information.

³⁰ James Logan to Benjamin Franklin, 7br. September 13, 1749. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, Packard Humanities Institute, franklinpapers.org. (Hereafter cited as *Franklin Papers*).

³¹ Cadwallader Colden to Benjamin Franklin, November, 1749, *Franklin Papers*.

received aid with physical donations, but also gained advice and reconsiderations of the proposed Academy Charter that had drafted in November of 1749. Further contributors, such as New York physician, botanist, and government placeman Cadwallader Colden,³² sent Franklin his charter revisions and suggested that the Trustees and Rector of the Academy “be paid well to keep them highly motivated and involved.” He also believed that the Academy should reside in the country rather than in the city, advice that Franklin received but ultimately decided to ignore due to obtainable property within city limits. The most influential advice given by Dr. Colden was perhaps that Greek and Latin should have a limited focus, a tradition that was canon in European schools of the age. Instead, the focus should shift to English literature with an emphasis upon the correct pronunciation and mastery of the English language.³³

English and modern languages as a focal point became an important aspect of the Academy of Philadelphia and countered the Latin and Greek curricular foci of Harvard and Yale. It was written in the charter that there should be an English Master employed at the Academy. Franklin went into great length describing a rigorous six-class English curriculum ladder for the young scholars of the Academy, beginning with: spelling, History and Chronology once the English language had been grasped, and ending with essay writing and advanced literature.³⁴ This particular proposal was heavily influenced by other correspondents of Franklin, especially Samuel Johnson and George Whitefield.

³² Colden is best known for being Lt. Governor of New York during the Stamp Act Crisis of 1765. Protestors burned Colden’s extravagant carriage during the mob actions surrounding the much-despised (although quite small) tax designed to refill British coffers after the Seven Years’ War. Historians of science know Colden as the man who first translated the Linnaean classification into English for use by his daughter Jane, a talented botanist in her own right. Thanks again to Dr. Paul Sivitz for this information, especially concerning the Linnaean system.

³³ Cadwallader Colden to Benjamin Franklin, November 1749, *Franklin Papers*.

³⁴ Benjamin Franklin, “Idea of the English School,” January 7, 1751, *Franklin Papers*.

Furthermore, Johnson and Whitefield constantly urged Franklin to include morality into the Academy's curriculum.³⁵ The core of this course would rely on teaching religious studies and by select pieces of literature with major themes of morality and ethics, especially Dr. Johnson's own *Ethices Elementa* which Franklin had personally reviewed for him.³⁶ Due to Johnson's prominence as a minister, Franklin attempted to secure Johnson as preacher at the Academy. Johnson respectfully declined as Franklin continued to entice him with the possibility of building Johnson his own church, if a large enough congregation manifested.³⁷ Although Mr. Johnson does not make a trip to Philadelphia due to the fear of small pox and inoculations, he does continue to offer advice for the Academy's curriculum, focused on morality, rhetoric and oratory as art, and other great works of English literature.³⁸ Although some believed Franklin moved too hastily with the Academy, it became a rousing success. Roughly a year after opening, the roster had almost 100 young scholars who "showed much promise and excelling rapidly through their studies."³⁹

A major factor in the success in such a speedy founding was the excellent response time Franklin had with his most influential correspondents. While the Academy achieved success, it would not be for over a century that the public school system of Pennsylvania reached the same level of esteem. Franklin's Academy mostly encapsulated the top-down approach to education that typified the curricular agendas of the era.

Although his academy had a classicist curriculum that would later agree with the *Yale*

³⁵ George Whitefield to Benjamin Franklin, February 26, 1750, *Franklin Papers*

³⁶ Samuel Johnson to Benjamin Franklin, December 14, 1750, *Franklin Papers*.

³⁷ Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Johnson, August 9, 1750, *Franklin Papers*.

³⁸ Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Johnson, October 25, 1750, *Franklin Papers*.

³⁹ Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Johnson, July 11, 1751, *Franklin Papers*

Report and the findings of the Committees a century later, the focus on the English language and literature, rather than Latin and Greek, created a unique institution in early America. Franklin suggested that students “could be taught everything that is useful and ornamental.”⁴⁰ Ultimately, the Academy produced a curriculum that amalgamated traditional coursework and utilitarian values, a precursor to Pestalozzian manual labor incorporations, Herbartianism, Bobbitt’s social efficiency, and finally Taylor’s scientific management.

II. Private and Parochial Institutions

Due to Philadelphia’s long history, as compared to much of the nation, many families had made substantial fortunes and established roots in the city and surrounding neighborhoods for generations. Typically, the wealthy preferred private schools funded out of their own coffers, while the devout favored parochial school to preserve their religious beliefs and heritage. The private and parochial school systems saturated the city and surrounding neighborhoods, which were not subject to the scrutiny or regulations of the city, state, or national debate of curriculum development. However, these schools did incorporate progressive educational policies. Indeed, parochial schools typically had better paid, and therefore, more concerned teachers, principals, and administrative staff.

William Penn’s 1741 charter secured that “no Person or Persons...shall be in any Case molested or prejudiced, in his or their Person or Estate...nor be compelled to frequent or maintain any religious Worship.”⁴¹ Unfortunately, the altruistic promises in Penn’s charter never completely manifested itself. Initially in Europe, the government

⁴⁰ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 26-27.

⁴¹ William Penn, Esq., “The Charter of Privileges Granted by William Penn Esq; to the Inhabitats of Pensilvania and Territories (Philadelphia: B. Franklin, M DXX XLI) 4.

mostly built and maintained Catholic schools and institutions. However, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the widespread withdraw of this support severely threatened religious institutions. In America, the responsibility for finances rested in the hands of community contributions under the direction bishops.⁴² Lobbying from the wealthy, the community, “continued to patronize an ever-flourishing private school system in the city and environs.”⁴³

A rise in anti-Catholic sentiments in Philadelphia erupted in violence during the Nativist Riots of 1844. Churches were destroyed, blood stained the streets, and fear disseminated through the Catholic community. Catholic schools rebounded and reestablished themselves during the mid-1880s and into turn of the century. During the debates that culminated in the Philadelphia Reorganization Act of 1905, reformers did not consider parochial and catholic schools. They argued, “most moral and conscientious Catholics send their children to their own parochial schools.” This acknowledgment extended to all private schools, which gave opponents of the reorganization bill ammunition for their argument. Most of the reformers came from the wealthy or upper-class stratification of Philadelphia society. Even the groups themselves admitted the paradox, stating at a meeting with the American Academy of Political and Social Science that “the wealthier wards do not even send their children to public schools.” Interestingly, they continued, “that the only class which the religious and moral portions interest themselves in the public schools, are the colored population, because they send their children to them, and are obliged to do so, since none of the private schools will admit

⁴² Charles Morris, *American Catholic: The Saint and Sinner Who Built America's Most Powerful Church* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 183.

⁴³ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 69-70.

them.”⁴⁴ For these children, an efficient and properly funded public school system was in dire need. For decades, beginning in the 1880s, a long battle for public school control ensued. By 1905, the city of Philadelphia consolidated its ward system of public school in favor for a centralized agency.

III. The Reorganization Act of 1905

Philadelphia encouraged public school reform at the turn of the twentieth century, chiefly through municipal consolidation typical of Progressive Era America. However, centralization met resistance and resulted in heated debates between upper-class reform groups, entrenched local politicians, muckraking journalists, charismatic superintendents, young teachers, frustrated principals, government regulatory bodies, and a concerned public.

Educational reform groups argued that the structure for managing public education, by the 1870s, was anachronistic. Cities such as Boston and Cincinnati had already incorporated a city superintendent into their public school system, while Philadelphia elected their first superintendent in 1893. James Macalister, who previously held the same post in Milwaukee, began his career in Philadelphia and soon met and collaborated with the President of the Board of Education, Edward T. Steel, and the Philadelphia Education Association. Steel came from a manufacturing background and was the president of the Board of Education from 1879 to 1887. His desire to establish industrial education policies into Philadelphia echoed the wishes of James Macalister.⁴⁵ Much earlier in the 1870s, Macalister urged Philadelphia’s curricular policy makers to adopt curriculum with an emphasis in industrial education. Support for these policies

⁴⁴ Issel, *Modernization in Philadelphia*, 375.

⁴⁵ Issel, *Schools for a Modern Age*, 31.

reached their apex in the 1880s through support of the manufacturing, industrial, and business sectors of the city. However, these efforts abated with minimal political support.

Beginning in 1880, a coalition of upper-class Philadelphians created the Committee of One Hundred, which focused primarily on municipal restructuring. Their platform promoted a “nonpartisan police force, limiting the intake of those who received their salary from taxes, prosecution of those accused of election fraud, and misappropriation of funds.”⁴⁶ To reinforce the policies of the Committee of One Hundred, members of the Society for Organizing Charity created the Public Education Association (PEA) in 1881.

Focused on state-funded institutions, the PEA sought to centralize the ward school system and elect a city superintendent through political and legislative action.⁴⁷ The PEA backed the Committee of One Hundred financially and philosophically, when met with local resistance in the political sphere. Undeterred by unproductive attempts to keep an elected mayor with their beliefs, the Committee continued to work within politics. Led by John C. Bullitt, The Committee of One Hundred drafted a reform charter, aptly named the Bullitt Bill, and passed legislature in 1885. This bill, “vested executive power into the mayor”, and consolidated the twenty-five municipalities into nine departments, including Department of Education.⁴⁸ However, Philadelphia’s public school system did not have a strong centralized agency to reinforce through the Bullitt Bill. Principals controlled individual wards, who gathered periodically to administer teacher examinations, while a weak Board of Public Education only oversaw high schools.

⁴⁶ Issel, *Modernization in Philadelphia*, 359-360.

⁴⁷ Lewis Reifsneider Harley, *A History of the Public Education Association of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Public Education Association, 1896), 27-28.

⁴⁸ The Legislature of Pennsylvania, “The Bullitt Bill” Article 1, Section 1 and Article 2, Section 2, 1885.

Those in favor of the ward system argued that the wards were “controlled by people of their own class, status, and neighborhood, and to which they had immediate and personal access.”⁴⁹ Localism pervaded the Philadelphia public school system during the latter half of the 1800s, while the city underwent significant changes to its urban, industrial, and demographic dynamics. Although future laws consolidated the wards into a centralized system, historian Conrad Weiler believes this was mostly aesthetic in nature. Weiler argues that “party influence, an informal arrangement and therefore not regulated, continued to heavily influence the city’s public schools system through ward politics.” Ultimately, the ward politicians still influenced school policy, although the Board of Controllers in each ward had been broken up, in many ways nullified multiple reform laws decades later in 1905, 1911, and 1931.⁵⁰

Many city officials found the Committee of One Hundred’s goal of total abolishment of the ward system too radical. The Committee soon fell apart and other reformers agreed that the Bullitt Bill should be modified. However, their influence did not disappear entirely as the Committee’s beliefs established the PEA’s and other reform group’s future work. In 1885, the PEA codified their philosophy into a resolution that guided the organizations motives during the next two decades. Through this directed approach, the PEA garnered support from the president and several members of the Board of Public Education. Reformers, using the Committee of One Hundred as a model, formed the Municipal League. The newly formed Municipal League and the PEA drafted

⁴⁹ William H. Issel, “Modernization in Philadelphia School Reform, 1882-1905.” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 94 (July 1970): 359-360.

⁵⁰ Conrad Weiler, *Philadelphia: Neighborhood, Authority, and the Urban Crisis* (New York: Prager Publishers, 1974), 77-78.

a new bill in 1891, supported by Edward T. Steel, former president of the Board of Public Education.

Steel had gained support through reform groups and eventually the political sphere of Philadelphia.⁵¹ However, just before Christmas in 1888, Steel retired. Reported in the Philadelphia Times, Steel's farewell address summed up his view of the disharmony between reform groups, politicians, citizens, students, and members of his board. In his speech, he addressed a key Progressive Era educational ideal toward child-centered classrooms echoed by Herbart, Dewey, and Montessori, among other educational reformers. Steel stated, "before the right of the child to the best possible instruction and highest moral environment every other consideration must give way." Furthermore, he described his disgust toward politics inferring with this reform as, "insulting to common sense to abridge these rights upon claims for local patronage or reward for party services."⁵² Steel described the "deplorable conditions" of the primary schools with inadequate teachers and the absence of a superintendent. In fact, the absence of superintendents, argued Steel, remained to be "the most remarkable deficiency of the school department of old days." After retirement, Steel still held influence over educational policies in Philadelphia. Indeed, as reforms in the public school system incurred, the superintendent continually gained authority of curricular policies, teacher hiring, and financial allocations.

Two years after Steel's departure, Macalister retired as well in 1891. His successor, Edward Brooks, continued the belief that the role of the superintendent should be decidedly more influential. Brooks oversaw the most tumultuous era of educational

⁵¹ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 87-89.

⁵² "President Steel Retires," *Philadelphia Times*, December 22, 1888.

reform and the eventual signing of the Philadelphia Public School Reorganization Act. During his tenure, in 1897, Brooks looked toward the University of Pennsylvania to establish a link between public schools and institutions of higher education. After a survey in 1897, it was clear that “there was a complete divorce between the body of teachers in Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania, none of the teachers attended lectures or courses at the university, and the institution seemed as indifferent to the public schools as if they did not exist.” Upset by this development, his interest intensified due to his previous position as a normal school professor. After five years of tireless efforts, Brooks negotiated a deal with the university that waived the A.B. degree required for the Ph.D. program for public school principals. The connection between the two educational levels continued to strengthen during the 1900s. By 1906, the university established a complete curriculum for teachers to continue their education with afternoon and evening courses.⁵³

At the beginning of Brook’s tenure as superintendent, the various reform groups yet again proposed a legislative action for reorganizing the Philadelphia public schools system. The Porter Bill, named after the Pennsylvania senator that oversaw the measure, once again called for the abolishment of ward school boards. The bill also included further “financial autonomy” of the Board of Public Education and extended the powers for the Superintendent of Schools. Opposition increasingly mounted. Nearly half of the ward schools boards sent representatives to the state capital in Harrisburg to debate and help defeat the legislation. In the House, the bill met its ultimate demise. Worried about losing the favor of the more abundant ward constituents, the Philadelphia delegation

⁵³ Issel, *Schools for the Modern Age*, 56-58.

never reached a unanimous consent and killed the Porter Bill of 1891. Two years later, the reformers introduced another reorganization bill, and although read again by Senator Porter, it was never reported by the Education Committee. Another group took center stage after the disheartening defeats of the previous educational reform bills and helped the reform gain political and popular support.

Prominent and well-educated women formed the Civic Club in 1894, led by Mrs. Cornelius Stevenson.⁵⁴ Once again, the reform movements of Philadelphia constituted an overwhelming amount of wealthy socialites. Indeed, by 1904, the nine officers of the Civic Club were all listed in the Blue Book. However, the women of the Civic club denounced women of their class for not assuming a public role in educational reform. Stevenson, in her first address to the Civic Club, stated these women focused on “darken our moral condition through their love of ease, self-indulgence, and of luxury.”⁵⁵ Modernization of Philadelphia’s public schools was paramount to the Club’s efforts and soon after inception, the Civic Club met with the PEA. A large attendance at this initial meeting in March of 1894 encouraged both groups to re-draft a new reform bill.

Unfortunately, once again, the bill did not pass. Through much debate and aggravation, the advocates of the bill responded finally with the belief that the current ward-based school system “fostered a point of view essentially parochial and neighborhood oriented, rather than scientifically oriented.”⁵⁶ Countering this belief, a local newspaper, the *Taggart Times*, accused the reformers of having “no faith in the

⁵⁴ No sources discovered on Mrs. Cornelius Stevenson’s first name. Obviously, this language is outdated.

⁵⁵ Issel, *Modernization*, 364-366.

⁵⁶ Issel, *Modernization in Philadelphia*, 373.

wisdom of boilermakers, carpenters, and painters.” “Education is a science,” the Civic Club responded, “every chance man cannot administer it.”⁵⁷

Another reorganization bill failed in 1897. However, reform groups steadfastly remained convicted to their cause. They continued to gather empirical evidence of the public school system in order to compare Philadelphia’s status with other cities. However, their research gained minimal support from the city council. Although a reform-minded councilman introduced an ordinance to conduct further studies of the public school system with the aid of nationally recognized experts, it was defeated. Most of the council believed that they alone could handle the evaluation and opposed any outside expert involvement.⁵⁸ The reform group’s initial cry of corruption inherent within the ward system ultimately led to their downfall and the passing of the Reorganization Bill of 1905. A scandal that reached national attention, known as the “Twenty-Eighth Ward Scandal,” provided the momentum reform groups needed to gain popular and political sway.

The nearly defunct Municipal League reinvigorated its members and gained the allegiance of the newly formed Philadelphia Teachers Association, who advocated for reform. Not only teachers declared their unity in reform, but also principals. As newspapers and chronicled the corruption case, reform groups, including the PEA, Civil Club, Philadelphia Teachers Association, and collective groups of principals, concerns citizens, and sympathetic policy makers voraciously published their ideologies. The overwhelming support garnered from media dissemination tipped the scales for reformers

⁵⁷ Issel, *Schools for a Modern Age*, 199.

⁵⁸ Issel, *Modernization in Philadelphia*, 376.

and on April 11, 1905, the Reorganization Bill of Philadelphia finally became law.⁵⁹ The law consolidated power considerably. Twenty-one members of the Board of Public Education represented the city as a whole and replaced the authority of 540 elected members of the combined wards. As in Pittsburgh, this was the first major step in a larger reform movement occurring state-wide, which culminated in Pennsylvania's School Code of 1911.

III. School Code Act of 1911

Like the reforms in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and the nation, the Pennsylvania School Code of 1911 was a decade's long process as well. Pennsylvania policy makers had attempted to codify a sweeping reform policy as early as 1877 under the direction of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, James P. Wickersham. Gaining little traction during these early years, the state, instead, focused on compulsory education laws and fought against child labor. It was not until 1900, when efforts focused once again on standardizing education legislation.

The determination of the PEA and other groups in Philadelphia provided the impetus for state-wide reform. Although the PEA had failed three times too successfully reorganize the Philadelphia public school system, their efforts had not been in vain. The incredible amount of empirical evidence gathered on school administration in the city and around the country provided the foundational ground for the School Code of 1911. Finally, in 1905, Philadelphia succeeded in reforming its public school system and on the same day a bill to establish a commission for state-wide educational reform passed the Senate. However, when the House Committee on Education received the bill, they stalled

⁵⁹ Issel, *Modernization in Philadelphia*, 376-381.

it within their own group, and kept it away from deliberation on the floor.⁶⁰ The bill died within the committee's chambers. Two years later, in 1907, two conventions of superintendents met to discuss education reform and reflected the division between the two camps of educational reform. They met in the state capital because of the "school legislation of importance under consideration in both Senate and House." At the annual convention of City and Borough Superintendents, attendants urged policy makers that, "it is not necessary to prove that the schools of this state has outgrown our school laws. We simply confess it." The president of this group, Superintendent James B. Richey, dedicated his address to an analysis of the practical problems for administering public schools. For these administrative progressives, the most pressing issues of Pennsylvania's public school stemmed from inefficiency of the state's public school organization. More provisions for teacher training, particularly in cities, smaller boards of education and further dismantling and limiting of power to ward representation, and further unifying standards were some of the issues the city and borough superintendents discussed. They concluded their meeting with a plea for complete codification of state-wide standards. To decide the nature of these demanded standards, they urged policy makers to create a commission to thoroughly investigate the schools of the United States and Europe to gather and study empirical evidence.⁶¹

A week later, another conference for county superintendents met in Harrisburg and continued to lobby for a state-wide reform bill. While city and borough superintendents were concerned with restructuring the organization of public schools, the county superintendents were pedagogical progressives and argued that a curricular

⁶⁰ Issel, *Schools for a Modern Age*, 225-227.

⁶¹ Iseel, *Schools for a Modern Age*, 228.

standardization was the most important concern. Speaking directly to the state superintendent attending the conference, speakers pointed out that “it is clear that the state should provide the course of study for its common school.” They believed it was necessary to secure the best success rates for students without relying on substantial state funding. One superintendent argued that it was “no longer possible to adhere to traditions which are still embraced because an uneducated public sentiment causes them still to be held in reverence.” Which sectors of the public the superintendents blamed for stalled educational reform remains a mystery, since public reform groups had been calling for reform policies over the last four decades.

Regardless, the impassioned speeches at both conferences led to the legislative passing for a commission to study and make a report of the state’s educational system. The commission created a code for the 1909 session, but was vetoed down. Some Democrats still disliked the proposed bill, due to their desire to reject child labor and compulsory education laws, which their agricultural constituents deemed unfair. Resubmitted in 1911, the code passed with bi-partisan support.⁶² Under the School Code of 1911, more children, and their parents, must follow the compulsory education and child labor laws. State-wide educational reform continued to expand in Pennsylvania after this landmark legislation. In Philadelphia, where a similar victory had occurred six years prior, the school system continued to improve under the direction of a new and determined superintendent.

The strength and influence of the superintendent continued with the election of superintendent Martin Grove Brumbaugh, who served until 1915. An integral, supportive

⁶² Issel, *Schools for a Modern Age*, 229-230.

voice for the Pennsylvania School Code of 1911, he continued to work tirelessly to modernize the Philadelphia public school system along administrative progressive ideologies. In 1907, Brumbaugh initiated a plan to incorporate more recreation space for students. Mayor Rayburn, upon Brumbaugh's recommendation, created a commission to investigate playgrounds in other cities and make a report. Two years later, the commission recommended creating a separate board solely for recreation. Elected as President of this board, Brumbaugh's popularity increased exponentially within the public school system and the middle-class parents of the city.⁶³

However, under Brumbaugh's leadership, the city furthered its efforts to reorganize the structure of Philadelphia's public schools through the stratification and segregation of its students. In 1907, he urged the city to create separate buildings for black children and Negro teachers. Brumbaugh believed that it allowed "colored children to move at their own rate of progress, which is in some respects a different rate from other children." As described prior, the followers of Thorndike and others believed that children can and should be separated based on their ability levels, unfortunately, due to outside circumstances of racist and bigoted administrators this usually translated into placing colored children and women in less intelligent groups than their white, male counterparts. However, Brumbaugh continued and stated that a segregated public school between whites and blacks enabled the now centralized Board of Education to "give employment to a group of deserving members of the colored race."⁶⁴ Essentially blacks could only teach blacks. Whether Brumbaugh wanted segregation because of racist

⁶³ Ciampa, *Martin Grove Brumbaugh*, 34-35.

⁶⁴ David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 227.

beliefs or if he had the foresight to understand that if schools became mixed, black teacher would undeniably lose their jobs to white teachers is lost to history.

With industrial education gaining support across the nation and state, he oversaw much of the work to encourage this growth. During his time campaigning for the School Code of 1911, Brumbaugh became a powerful voice for child labor laws. Together with the Child Labor Association, he initiated a law that required children to attend a nine hour school day.⁶⁵ Although, to the modern education system, this seems appalling, it was a victory for children who worked eighty hour weeks in the unsafe working conditions of industrial era.

Brumbaugh retired in 1915 and became Governor of Pennsylvania the same year. John P. Garber succeeded Superintendent Brumbaugh and oversaw the development of the public school system's desire to incorporate the city's female population and expand school infrastructure.

IV: Women's Education and the School Infrastructure in the 1920s

As Philadelphia neared the 1920s, women began to receive similar levels of education, especially with the establishment of the Trade School for Girls in 1918, argued by some to be the end of the industrial education movement. Although, Temple University had offered manual training for women since 1888, a small percent of the city's residents could afford the tuition.⁶⁶ Once again, public groups led the campaign for educational reform. Notably, the Civic Club emerged as the strongest proponent for women's education. As early as 1907, an association between Consumers' League, the Pennsylvania Association of Women Workers, the Girls Friendly Society, and the Civic

⁶⁵ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 233.

⁶⁶ Altadonna, *School, Curriculum, and Community*, 237.

Club established summer classes for training women in various vocational trades. These efforts culminated into the public trade school for girls, which officially opened on January 1, 1918. Many citizen groups donated money to the school, but most importantly, the school was supported by the Smith-Hughes act. A year prior, the climax of the industrial educational movement on the national stage occurred with the passage of this act.

After decades of political reform and the reorganizing of the Philadelphia public school system, a surge in school infrastructure occurred. During the 1920s, the construction of numerous elementary and secondary schools became the primary focus of the now centralized school system. Over the past thirty years, the number of “supervisory officers” in Philadelphia’s school system ballooned from sixty-six to two hundred and sixty-eight.⁶⁷ Moreover, most school districts now employed more administrators than teachers.

Philadelphia undertook their public educational reform through restructuring the administration of the public schools. These efforts had the most lasting practical effects on the city and continue to maintain their presence in modern times. However, the diversifying of curriculum also played a major role throughout the city’s entire development. Since the Academy of Philadelphia in colonial times to the Trade School for Girls in 1918, Philadelphia has incorporated utilitarian lessons into its curriculum. Like many metropolitan areas, the diversifying of curriculum did not go far beyond the inclusion of vocational training into public schools. This is especially true for Philadelphia’s neighbor to the west. In Pittsburgh, the role of vocational training and

⁶⁷ Tyack, *One Best System*, 185.

industrial arts became so pervasive that the city effectively turned its public school system into a factory to train and endless supply of workers to the steel industry powerhouse.

Chapter Four

Forging Workers in Public Schools

Standing at the miles-long viewing platform that lines the crest of Mount Washington, overlooking the Three Rivers, one sees an evolving city. Skyscrapers, sports arenas, and highways punctuate the landscape, as bridges connect the trifurcated landmass, where the Allegheny to the north and the Monongahela to the south meet to form the Ohio River. Barges and ships cruise along the rivers; trains glide parallel to the water's edge, leaving a sillage of smoke behind as they disappear around the mountainside. Incline planes climb the ore-rich hills that nestle the valley in which Pittsburgh lies. Local access to raw materials, multiple avenues of mobility for commercial trade, an exceptional labor force, confident investors, and prolific figures chiefly allowed Pittsburgh to become an industrial powerhouse during the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. Most directly, the backbone of the city, the hard-working men and women, forged Pittsburgh by the sweat of their brow.

This is not simply poetic representation of the working class of Pittsburgh, but rather a window into the demographic and cultural customs of the city, which shaped its process towards education reform. Immigrants brought old-world attitudes of hard work to the mills and mines of southwestern Pennsylvania. Southern Blacks, only a generation removed from slavery, anxious to make a life that their mothers and fathers could never achieve, moved north beginning in the 1910s to find work in the cities. Although there were hardships and prejudices for minorities, Pittsburgh offered job opportunities that were nearly unmatched in many parts of the country. As industrial complexes developed, more workers, skilled and un-skilled, became a necessity.

Education was paramount to proliferating the industrial and manufacturing foundation of the city. Science class became lessons on the processes of steel manufacturing, while administrators urged teachers to be sympathetic toward students who dropped out to work in the mills and mines of the region. In other parts of the country, Chicago, New York, Ohio, for example, engaged in a fierce debate ensued to develop curriculum and manage schools. Compulsory education in the latter half of the nineteenth century changed the lives of nearly every young man and woman. The dedication and longevity of a young person's academic career was in sharp contrast to the work-heavy childhood and adolescence of their elders.

In Pittsburgh, entrenched political influence over a ward-based school system helped maintain a status quo. Schools focused on industrial education that was encouraged by many of the students due to the earned reputation of hard, physical labor that many immigrant groups brought with them from their home country. Pedagogical progressivism wished for a diversified curriculum apart from traditional subjects and lessons. While Pittsburgh shifted away from classicist views, to maintain the presence of Pittsburgh's economic goals, the school curriculum intensely concentrated on vocational training. A survey of Pittsburgh's public school in 1928 shifted the intense vocational focus of the city's curriculum. A more diversified curriculum arose and the administration of the schools began to further evolve. After the 1911 Pennsylvania School Code, Pittsburgh's schools were still influenced by ward politics. The survey of 1928 sought to correct the stagnation of administrative efficiency in the Steel City and lambasted the former Board of Education since 1911. Pittsburgh's curriculum related more closely to the theories of Thorndike, Fredrick Winslow Taylor, and Franklin

Bobbitt, who provided a methodological approach to education that focused on “task analysis,” the breaking of a task into its basic parts.

Scientific management theory was first applied to labor management policies. In fact, one of the first locations to test the theory’s efficiency was on the workers at Bethlehem Steel in Pittsburgh. Bobbitt modified the theory for curriculum development; the ultimate goal became producing “economically and socially useful citizens.”⁶⁸ Bobbitt’s *The Curriculum*, published in 1918, describes an educational philosophy that promotes the “ability to produce,” rather than the “ability to live.” By denouncing traditional subject matter that simply enriches the minds of the pupil, Bobbitt argued that the practical results of education should be paramount.⁶⁹ This belief permeated Pittsburgh schools during the early twentieth century. In short, to be educated in Pittsburgh was to be educated about Pittsburgh. To more clearly understand the relationship between the city’s economic and educational goals and the lack of contribution to the national conversation on developing curriculum, it is important to understand the economic and demographic factors that defined and encapsulated Pittsburgh at the turn of the century.

I. Pittsburgh’s Early Industrial History

Above all, geography created the conditions that allowed Pittsburgh to thrive. It is difficult to originally describe the unique and picturesque setting, only lurid and poetic recounts of natural vistas are comparable. Less than a hundred years after the founding of the city in 1758, authors and writers found difficulty in originally expressing the geographical beauty and fortune of the valley. Samuel Jones in his 1826 annotated city directory, *Pittsburgh in the Year 1826*, found it difficult to contribute, stating, he would

⁶⁸ Pinar et al., *Understanding Curriculum*, 95.

⁶⁹ Bobbitt, *The Curriculum*, 3-4.

“flatter himself as possessing considerable originality to advance anything new as it regards to a description of Pittsburgh.”⁷⁰ First serving as a defensive position during the French and Indian War, as the Seven Years’ War was called in America, “Fort De Quesne,” served as the nucleus for the modern downtown Pittsburgh. Originally chosen for its defensive capabilities along the confluence, focus shifted to the exceptional economic opportunities of access to a flowing avenue. From the convergence of the Three Rivers at Pittsburgh, a continuous water-way flows southwest and forms part of the Ohio-Kentucky border. Then it rushes west past Cincinnati, creates a section of the Indiana-Kentucky border, and passes south west through Louisville. The Ohio River gathers more volume from the convergence of the Wabash River and forms a portion of the Illinois-Kentucky border. Finally, at the convergence of the Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri borders, the Ohio River empties into the Mississippi River and flows toward the Gulf of Mexico.

Not only goods trickled down to the Gulf, but information dispersed as well, as early communication sped along water ways. The expanding web of letter correspondence and printing during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries allowed Pittsburgh’s trade routes to become an information highway to the Midwest and South. The surrounding hills provided quality timbers to create barrels for storing goods, building ships and barges for transport, constructing homes and buildings, and generating charcoal for fuel. Under the hills’ lush landscape, the belly of the mountain provided bountiful coal and other minerals, which defined Pittsburgh’s fate and fortune for the

⁷⁰ Samuel Jones, *Pittsburgh in the Year 1826* (Pittsburgh: Johnston & Stockton, 1826), 1.

majority of its existence.⁷¹ By 1816, Pittsburgh had become a full-fledged city with self-governing powers and a healthy population of 10,000 and continued to expand its trade network with the completion of the Pennsylvania Canal system. Built to compete with the Erie Canal to the north, human ingenuity bested the rolling Allegheny Mountains with a series of inclined planes and locks and channels. A new direct route between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico became possible from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. Soon after in 1834, the Allegheny Portage Railroad began construction. In 1852, the railway successfully ventured its first continuous rail trip from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, further shortening the time to transport goods and people from either side of the state and through the country.⁷² Not only did this bring economic prosperity to both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, but encouraged incoming migrants to travel further into the country beyond the cities along the eastern seaboard.

A decade later, the unity of a juvenile United States threatened to disband at the beginning of the American Civil War. The demand for products of war became crucial for Union success as the American Civil War raged. Much of the weaponry and transportation lines for the war effort forged out of Pittsburgh's industrial complex. As early as 1860, nearly half of the city's workers engaged in the production of industrial goods, from textiles, engines, glass, pottery, paper, tobacco products, and steamships. The Civil War caused the economic diversity to consolidate to a heavily focused agenda of "heavy industrial goods."⁷³ Spurred by the region's vast quantity of high-quality

⁷¹ Stefan Lorant et al. *Pittsburgh: The Story of an American City*: (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1964), 45-50.

⁷² Nathan Shappee, "A History of Johnstown and the Great Flood of 1889: A Study of Disaster and Rehabilitation" (Phd Diss., Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940), 53-55.

⁷³ John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 14.

coking coal, a natural advantage emerged in Pittsburgh. By 1865, Pittsburgh was producing two-fifths of the nation's iron. New technology, company mergers, and a shift from iron to steel production further stimulated industrial gains. Andrew Carnegie introduced the Bessemer process to Pittsburgh in 1868 at the Edgar Thomson Works, becoming the prototype for the industry.⁷⁴ Carnegie's steel empire and Henry Clay Frick's coking coal operation merged companies in 1881, creating the largest and most powerful example of vertical integration in the manufacturing of steel in the world. By the turn of the century, Pittsburgh was the nation's largest steel-producing center, employing more than 150,000 workers for 105 firms.⁷⁵ Pittsburgh had become synonymous with industry.

As the city's labor force increased in size and diversity, employers continually demanded tougher working conditions from workers for efficiency during at the beginning of the twentieth century. During America's Industrial Revolution, companies continually commanded more from their employees, while offering little in return. In Pittsburgh, labor disputes commonly made front page news and lasted for decades. Unfortunately, the discrepancies between labor and management culminated violently at the Homestead Mills in 1892. The Homestead Steel Works, managed by Henry Clay Frick under the interests of Andrew Carnegie, employed 30,000 men at the time of the strike. Most of these men were *hunkies*, a pejorative term to describe not only Hungarians, but most eastern and southern Europeans, including Poles, Greek, Slavs, and other nationalities. When the wage contract expired with the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of America (AAISWA), negotiations converged in a

⁷⁴ Lorant et al., *Pittsburgh*, 145-150.

⁷⁵ Bodnar et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 1, 15-17.

conference on June 23. The AAISWA responded by firing the entire labor force a week later, with the promise of individual contracts to re-sign with the company under its specifications.⁷⁶ The strike continued and tension mounted. On July 6, the company hired three-hundred Pinkerton agents, essentially a private police force, who launched an amphibious assault on the workers. Blood and bullets erupted on the streets, resulting in the death of ten strikers and three Pinkerton agents.⁷⁷ The strike and unprecedented violent response brought labor issues to the fore front of the national discussion during the timely presidential elections in 1892. Unfortunately, the tenacity and resilience of the workers did not have the resulting consequences they had hoped for. The threat of violence and unemployment nearly broke unionism in particularly the iron and steel industry in the country after Homestead.

Pittsburgh and the steel industry wholly intertwined with one another by the first decades of the 1900s and continued their close relationship for the incoming decades. This marriage contributed to the pervasive nature that industrial education supplanted into the public school curriculum of Pittsburgh. Not all changes were pedagogical however, as in Philadelphia, administrative progressives made great strides in restructuring the organization of the public school system through the elimination of a ward system to a consolidated city-wide agency.

II. Pittsburgh's School System Evolution

The school system of Pittsburgh reflected the earliest state educational policies practices. Throughout the state, private schools were the first educational institutions. In the fall of 1790, Frank Reeder, secretary of the commonwealth, and his contemporaries

⁷⁶ Lorant et al. *Pittsburgh*, 211-218.

⁷⁷ "Pattison's Position," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, July 7, 1892, 8.

met to discuss the establishment of their state to draft the first constitution for Pennsylvania. Education clearly held an important role in the future and success of the state. Article VII of the constitution was dedicated to the agreed upon belief that the state legislature, “as soon as conveniently may be, provide by law for the establishment of schools throughout the state in a manner that the poor may be taught.” Further sections illustrate the curricular focus for arts and sciences and guaranteed the “rights, privileges, immunities, and estates of religious societies shall remain unaltered.”⁷⁸ However, this idealistic conviction did not take effect until over a century later. Governor George Wolf and Joseph Rittner, with the ardent support of Thaddeus Stevens, championed free public school into law in 1834. Near the corner of Eighth and Penn Avenue, a tiny little red schoolhouse with only five pupils, planted its foundations as the first tax-funded school in Pittsburgh the following year.⁷⁹

Between 1834 and 1854, independent and autonomous wards governed the Pittsburgh school system. State legislation in 1854 combined the wards into a school district that placed its educational affairs in charge of a Central Board of Education. However, the legacy of the wards remained. Wards became sub-districts, which shared power with the Central Board in the administration of the evolving Pittsburgh school system. Prior to 1911, these thirty-nine sub districts had inconsistent standards of student achievement goals, curriculum, and teacher certification with one another due to separate school boards. Acting together, a representative from each ward or sub-district congregated and managed the Central Board which levied taxes, dealt with mainly financial concerns, such as teacher wages, text-book prices, and other general supplies,

⁷⁸ Pennsylvania Const., art. VII, sec. 1-3

⁷⁹ Annual Report of the Superintendent (Pittsburgh: The Board of Public Education, 1933-1934), 71-73.

and elected the Superintendent of School every three years.⁸⁰ The shift to a stronger, centralized school system with the School Code Act of 1911 met resistance from these self-governing wards, which according to the 1928 study of Pittsburgh's public schools, "often practiced in such a way as to interfere with, rather than to promote, the highest efficiency of the school."⁸¹ A nascent Pittsburgh school system emerged in 1911 that mirrored Philadelphia's shift from the use of ward to city-wide system across the state.⁸² The success and historical influence from the City of Brotherly Love provided credence to Pittsburgh's system. Like Philadelphia, the Teachers' Association of Pittsburgh proved to be a dominant force in reform, once again for administrative purposes. In 1904, more than six hundred members campaigned for centralization of the schools and wanted them to be administered by appointed, rather than elected, experts.⁸³ The neighboring city, and county namesake, Allegheny, faced similar challenges in 1907.

Economically and demographically intertwined with Pittsburgh, the city of Allegheny consisted of fifteen wards with distinct school boards. The six elected members of each ward joined together into an administrative body called the Board of School Controllers. In 1907, Allegheny was absorbed into the city of Pittsburgh. However, the school systems did not merge into the Board of Public Education until the enactment of the new school act four years later in 1911. For those four years, both cities had their own school boards and separate superintendents.⁸⁴ One of the first decisions of the newly established Board of Public Education revitalized the superintendent's role.

⁸⁰ Tyack, *One Best System*, 88-89.

⁸¹ Thomas E. Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department of the Pittsburgh Public Schools* (Pittsburgh: The Board of Public Education, 1928), 28-30.

⁸² Franklin Davenport Edmunds, *Public School Building of the City of Philadelphia from 1853 to 1867* (Philadelphia: F.D. Edmunds, 1917.) 1-2.

⁸³ Tyack, *One Best System*, 101, 140.

⁸⁴ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 32.

Historically, superintendents possessed minimum power in Pittsburgh, serving merely as a figure head, with no authority for hiring, firing, establishing curriculum, or other administrative duties. The first superintendent under the new policies of 1911 was Dr. William M. Davidson, who addressed the inefficiencies that afflicted the Pittsburgh's schools. His first tirade referred to the "long continued local self-government," referring to the wards that still clung to their independence and fought integration. Davidson further addressed other inefficiencies over the separation between the elementary and high schools and called for further communication between the two institutions. Most interestingly, not only did he criticize the administration of the wards, but also made note that there is a "community psychology, which has made difficult of accomplishment much needed reforms in the school administration in Pittsburgh."⁸⁵ The demographic breakdown of the Steel City, the role of neighborhood identity, and school attendance points to a statistically significant number of immigrants or children born to immigrants within the school system.

The influence of immigrants in the public schools remained a concern for Pittsburgh throughout the Progressive Era. The 1928 report noted, "the number of children of foreign parentage enrolled in the schools of Pittsburgh gave these schools a serious problem."⁸⁶ Most groups, such as Poles, Russians, and Italians, typically lived within neighborhoods, which reflected their own ethnicities, while Blacks remained geographically dispersed throughout the city.⁸⁷ As engrained into the city's conscious as the bellowing mills, the diverse immigrant population created the societal implications

⁸⁵ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 32-34.

⁸⁶ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 211.

⁸⁷ Bodnar, et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 7-9.

the city faced. Therefore, in the argument for curriculum development, it is important to further analyze Pittsburgh's historical demographics to understand exactly who the public schools educated.

III. Americanization Movement in Pittsburgh

Despite turbulent labor conditions, industrial demand for workers continued to entice immigrants from Europe to leave their homelands to find new opportunity in America. Additionally, a swell of migration in the 1910s from blacks from the south came to Pittsburgh, where work was plentiful for unskilled labor. Across the Atlantic, Britain's Industrial Revolution was now about a century old, and workers who had acquired expert knowledge in their respective fields, came to America in search of new opportunities. Not only did they bring expertise with them, but also their cultural heritage of respecting hard work and physical endurance, which resonated with the grit and grime of Pittsburgh's societal atmosphere.

Until 1880, the majority of Pittsburgh's population was English, German, Irish, or Scottish decent. Soon after, large waves of eastern and southern Europeans, especially Poles and Italians arrived in Pittsburgh.⁸⁸ According to John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, in their co-authored exploration of Pittsburgh's immigrants in the 1900s, *Lives of Their Own*, three particular groups, Blacks, Italians, and Poles, highly identify with the working class culture the perpetuated through Pittsburgh. In 1890, a polish immigrant named Kajetan Kuczmariski wrote to his family in Poland. This letter presented a window into immigrant, particularly Polish, views of American life in an industrial city. Asking if his younger brother was old enough to cross the Atlantic and

⁸⁸ Lorant et al., *Pittsburgh*, 164-170.

join him in Pittsburgh, he tells his family to not worry about their young son's education, for "if he wants to earn a living here with a pen that is not for America. America does not like writers but hard working people."⁸⁹ This account illustrates the prevailing values of Pittsburgh's workforce as tenacious, strong-armed, blue collar, and predominately male.

With a major wave of immigrants entering the United States, many looked toward to institution of education to be the major catalyst of assimilating the new arrivals. However, as much as schools were touted as perfect mechanisms to adjust immigrants, it only modestly occurred in practice. Some schools incorporated night schools that focused on English speaking skills and sometimes civics, but these were piecemeal attempts to preparing immigrants for their new life in America.⁹⁰ The immigrant experience in some night schools, particularly English language instruction, was at best slightly helpful and at worst, an abomination of pedagogy. Working adults recited poems back to their teacher, "I am a yellow bird. I can sing. I can fly. I can sing to you."⁹¹ The obviously lack of context to the lesson was lost to many teachers. Educator John Daniels described the perceived success of Americanization from a few courses of English, he quotes an unknown man who told Daniels that, "we used to have an Americanization problem, but we haven't got one any longer. Several years ago we got all the foreigners in our town in some English and civics classes and in two or three months we Americanized 'em all."⁹² It is no wonder that many immigrants after a few classes avoided night schools entirely.

⁸⁹ Bodnar et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 1.

⁹⁰ John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Anthenum, 1963), 235-236.

⁹¹ Cremin, *Transformation of the School*, 73.

⁹² John Daniels, *America Via the Neighborhood* (New York & London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920), 5.

Educators who believed that only English and civics courses fully Americanized immigrants expressed a naivety toward immigrant education.

Poles experienced physically demanding labor in their fertile agricultural fields of Poland. This experience transmitted to America and influenced the work ethic of Polish immigrants. Sociologist Helena Lopata explained that their behavior echoed the notions of status competition that originated among peasants in Poland. Status competition existed both internally and externally outside of the Polish community. The inherent belief that simply working harder translated into a higher social status prevailed among the community, although family ties and social connections secured most jobs for incoming Polish nationals and kinfolk.⁹³ Polish traditions placed a high value upon steady work reflected the careers of life long residents, for many worked at the same place and position for fifty years. Thus, within the status system of the Polish community, there was not strong support of extensive secular education. However, religious instruction was important, but work and family came before educational enrichment of the individual.⁹⁴ Unfortunately, immigrants continued to be relegated with the extensive immigration bans passed by the U.S. government. In 1917, a literacy test became standard practice for incoming immigrants; however, learning to speak English had been the primary concern for new arrivals for decades.

Beyond English instruction, many immigrants took civic courses that went beyond learning about the organization and procedures of the American government. Schools were tasked to teach proper manners and etiquette, ultimately to promote the

⁹³ Helena Znaniecka Lopata, *Polish Americans* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers Inc., 1994), 13-15, 245.

⁹⁴ Bodnar et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 42-43.

culture of white, upper-middle class Americans. Hygiene became particularly important, even whole classes on proper ways to bathe became popular.⁹⁵ For some, there was no room in America for hyphenated Americans. However, this was not the case across the nation. In Chicago, the Immigrants Protective League, founded at Jane Adams, famous Hull House, obtained information from incoming immigrants and referred them to the appropriate schools in their area. Most often, the role of education for immigrants and in many ways assimilation into American society came from the immigrants themselves. Newcomers to cities quickly found and moved to neighborhoods that reflected their unique cultural identity. Within these communities, social clubs such as the Polish Falcons, Scandinavian Turners, and others taught courses on English and other subjects, built libraries, and perhaps most important, created an atmosphere that relieved the anxieties of new arrivals who struggled with the acculturation of America.⁹⁶

Immigration bans followed World War I, English instruction for immigrant children became a focused objective. From 1897 to 1915, many states passed legislation that mandated English-only classrooms, especially in elementary schools and vocational training that was popular among working-class immigrants. Ethnic newspapers lamented to its readers that other ethnicities were enrolling their languages at far greater numbers, spurring a language competition. Educational historian, Jonathan Zimmerman proposes that Americanization movements, particularly the push for English-only classrooms and standardized behaviors added to the contemporary pedagogy, was not the primary factor of language loss for immigrants. Rather a resistance from other ethnic groups of the era dissuaded the continuation of native tongues. World War I was the impetus for these

⁹⁵ Cremin, *Transformation of the School*, 68.

⁹⁶ Cremin, *Transformation of the School*, 70.

sentiments and created for immigrants one of the most oppressive environments in American history. The national desire for cultural cohesion surmounted and many believed that the loyalty of immigrants was key to victory.⁹⁷ This led to an urgency to further homogenize and even persuaded some immigrants to abandon their parent's culture in favor of an American identity, while harassing other immigrant groups into assimilating. Many times, this happened through one of the most utilized mediums of Americanization, English-language instruction.

Instead of campaigning for different languages to be taught, there was more interest in disbarring other languages, especially German, than to promote one's own. This resulted in a shift to foreign languages becoming more of a private affair. Although as anti-immigrants sentiments rose with WWI, Zimmerman alludes to a shift in foreign-language print, while some resisted such as the Polish student run newspaper *Echo Mlodziezy*, or "Echo of Youth," or the PWA published newsletter entitled *Glos Polek*, or "The Voice of Polish Women." However, the growing anti-immigration sentiments ultimately hampered community leaders as they began to believe that the best way to preserve their culture was, paradoxically, through English.⁹⁸ Ultimately, most bilingual education took place within the community, particularly in the Catholic Church. Another large immigrant group, Italians, shared similar working cultural and educational practices and customs.

Many Italians moved into Pittsburgh during the final decades of the nineteenth century and continued to flourish in the twentieth. Similar to Poles in their dependence on

⁹⁷ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 245.

⁹⁸ Jonathan Zimmerman, "Ethnics against Ethnicity: European Immigrants and Foreign-Language Instruction, 1890-1940," *The Journal of American History*, 88, no. 4 (2002): 1386-1390.

family ties, the Italians congregated into strong ethnic neighborhoods and depended upon their children to assist in the income-producing activities of the family.⁹⁹ Families encouraged children to leave school early to contribute to their collective economy. For instance, Pittsburgh Italians received letters from family members overseas in Italy, who urged parents to make sacrifices to allow their children to finish school.¹⁰⁰ Other scholars say this generalization went too far, most children, didn't see the need for education even if encouraged by their parents. Many immigrants were discouraged from school because of reported discrimination from teachers ranging from continual mispronunciation of names to outright bigotry. Foreign sounding names often led to humiliation, one immigrant described her child's "suffering in school because they make fun of his name." She continued, "I prefer to keep with my own people because I feel more comfortable with them."¹⁰¹ On the playground is where children were typically first introduced to terms like "dago," "polack," and ridiculed for their dress and looks.¹⁰² The ridicule at schools and a strong belief in family over the individual in immigrant groups such as Poles and Italians resulted in pressure to drop out of school to get a job. Ultimately, most did not enroll past grade eight.¹⁰³

This predisposition to work in the mills reflected the curriculum of Pittsburgh during the first decades of the twentieth century. The prevailing ideology was that "sociology, not pedagogy," should guide any reform efforts to increase the efficiency of the public school system. Although compulsory education laws were established in 1895,

⁹⁹ Bodnar et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 212.

¹⁰⁰ Bodnar et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 95.

¹⁰¹ Phillip Klien, *A Social Study of Pittsburgh: Community Problems and Social Services of Allegheny County* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 247.

¹⁰² Tyack, *One Best System*, 236.

¹⁰³ Bodnar et al., *Lives of Their Own*, 95-97.

the administration of Pittsburgh's public schools encouraged its teachers and students to sympathetic with drop-outs due to the economic circumstances. To compensate, the school system shifted focus and funds into establishing its first evening school in 1907.¹⁰⁴ However, as noted before, night schools were not always the most effective forms of education.

The Continuation school also supplemented young men and women's education. The mandated educational branch allowed children during their compulsory education years of eight to sixteen to withdraw from full-time school to work. This law required children until the age of sixteen to attend school part-time for at least eight hours a week if also working, however, this reality seldom manifested as more children waived an education for work in the mills to support their family. Again, the cultural beliefs in family over the individuals compelled children to forego education for economic opportunities.

Ultimately, the public school system failed to assimilate immigrants to the desired level of "Americanizers." Due to naivety from teachers, peer pressure from their neighbors, and the enticement from steady work from the mills, many adjusted to American culture through their own ethnic groups and neighborhoods. The curriculum of schools incorporated manners, civics, and other life skills to aid relieving the anxieties of acculturation in America. However, these lessons did not prove to be entirely effective, especially for adult education. The population booms from immigrants also strained many city's public schools to their limit, as such, the need for reform became even direr. The response was the consolidation of power for greater standardization.

¹⁰⁴ Issel, *Schools for a Modern Age*, 31-32.

While Pittsburgh did consolidate its ward system into a city-wide organization, the curriculum remained highly concentrated toward vocational training. A year before the Great Depression, the Steel City published a massive report on the city's public school system. This survey proved to be the fulcrum that divided the agenda of the public schools from economic to societal. After the survey, initiatives to incorporate the needs of children with varying levels of ability manifested. The education of women and other minorities became a concern, although, the level of education received did not match the opportunities of white males until decades later.

IV: The 1928 Survey of Pittsburgh Public Schools

Into the 1920s, Pittsburgh continued to forge itself into an industrial mecca. The intense focus on industrial gains relegated the public school to a factory that actively and subtly trained children to work in the mills and mines of the region. Pittsburgh promoted vocational education to an extraordinary level. The focus had been on either traditional coursework or vocational training for primarily men. Parallel too much of the nation, Pittsburgh follow traditional curriculum through the 1800s.

These early lessons of traditional curriculum were illustrated beautifully through a collection of textbooks removed from the cornerstone of Pittsburgh's Central High School in 1916. Lucius Osgood's Primers series, Marcius Willson's School and Family readers, Huyot's Geographical Series, and Philotus Dean's Intellectual Arithmetic formed the basis of a young child's education. When Central High school moved in 1916 and the books were recovered, it must have given pause to see how different the curriculum had shifted in only a generation. Industry reigned supreme, and the curriculum reflected this desire. Truly, the economic agenda of the city was paramount to Pittsburgh's curriculum.

Whole courses are devoted to understanding the process of steel, coal, and glass fabrication, as well as how certain major manufacturing processes work. Naturally, they are presented as case studies of the local industries.

A course offered in 1926 in automobile mechanics at Pittsburgh Vocational Schools demonstrated the educational motives of the city. The course description “The Course – The Boy – The Trade,” not only provides a systematic explanation of the course details but also the gender roles that are expected from the school.¹⁰⁵ Not until the 1930s did courses in home economics and beauty culture even mention women. The home economics movement gained its momentum with the passing of the Morrill Act of 1862, which introduced home economics courses to agricultural and mechanical colleges, nearly seventy years prior.¹⁰⁶ However, absence of women in vocational schools was not unique and standard practice for most schools during the era.

A Pittsburgh course catalog described an elementary course in science at a public school in 1921. While it does not bar women directly, there is a subtle rejection of women in the classroom. The lesson plans states that boys and girls receive lessons that promoted, “sound physical, cultural, social, and vocational ideals.”¹⁰⁷ However, the lesson also eluded that many students became boy scouts, then career scientists. Possible futures of women remained absent. This early course in science also revealed another trend in Pittsburgh’s educational philosophy. The chief concern was to promote ideas of

¹⁰⁵ Pittsburgh Vocational Schools, *Course in Automobile Mechanics* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Vocational Schools, 1926). Series I, Box 17, Folder: Automobile Mechanics, 1921, Pittsburgh Public School Records, University of Pittsburgh Archives, 1-5.

¹⁰⁶ Emma Seifrit Weigley, “It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement,” *American Quarterly*, 26, no. 1 (1974): 80.

¹⁰⁷ Board of Public Education-Pittsburgh, *Pittsburgh Public Schools: Outline of Nature-Study and Elementary Science* (Pittsburgh: Board of Public Education, 1921). Series I, Box 17, Folder: Elementary School, 6th Grade, 1921, Pittsburgh Public School Records, University of Pittsburgh Archives, 36.

community involvement and self-reliance. The outline for the sixth year was first devoted to gardening, because it “saves transportation and reliance on other services, are less expensive to produce, and provide a variety of diet.”¹⁰⁸

End-of-the-semester lessons focused on natural resources. Naturally, this section predominantly focused on coal, and the influence of the coal industry of Pittsburgh. The scientific lesson plan began with a history of the coal industry around Pittsburgh and explained the natural abundance of the ore-rich hills that surround the region. The lesson ended with the Bessemer process and the manufactured products of the city and their uses around the country.¹⁰⁹ The Pittsburgh Public School system supported local boosterism and encouraged, either directly or subtly, its students for work in the mills.

The lag in educational development ended in 1928 with “A Study of the Educational Department of the Pittsburgh Public Schools,” at the request of the superintendent of schools and through a special commission appointed by the Board of Public Education. Commissioned in September of 1926, the report took two years and thousands of participants from various administrative and teaching positions to complete.¹¹⁰ Pittsburgh’s educational philosophy at this time reflected the growing concerns of Progressive curriculum researchers around the country two decades prior. The public schools now took on a philosophy where learning is a lifelong experience, a shared responsibility of the community, and should promote democratic ideals. Although this is the intended belief, the report alludes to discrepancies that hindered the

¹⁰⁸ Board of Public Education-Pittsburgh, *Pittsburgh Public Schools: Outline of Nature-Study and Elementary Science* (Pittsburgh: Board of Public Education, 1921). Series I, Box 17, Folder: Elementary School, 6th Grade, 1921, Pittsburgh Public School Records, University of Pittsburgh Archives, 97-100.

¹⁰⁹ Board of Public Education-Pittsburgh, *Pittsburgh Public Schools: Outline of Nature-Study and Elementary Science* (Pittsburgh: Board of Public Education, 1921). Series I, Box 17, Folder: Elementary School, 6th Grade, 1921, Pittsburgh Public School Records, University of Pittsburgh Archives, 103-104.

¹¹⁰ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 1-15.

development of the Pittsburgh school system and its relation to the great economic and communal needs of the city.¹¹¹ The report is just short of scathing in its opinions of the board since 1911, pushing for quicker turnover of members since “mediocre minds imitate rather than think” and resulted in stagnation of policies, or misunderstood implementations.¹¹² These accusations give credence to why Pittsburgh school systems lagged behind the progressive education reform movement whose strongest decade was prior to this study. The schools in Chicago, New York City, and even neighboring Cleveland and Philadelphia had been incorporating these educational theories since the early 1910s or 1920s. Though touted as “one of the best school systems in the country and world,”¹¹³ this was not the case for a major percent of the population. Immigrants often remained marginalized in the school system prior to and continuing after 1911.

In 1928, the demographic breakdown of Pittsburgh’s public school system represented a wide range of nationalities. The largest immigrant populations reported in the study, were Italians, Russians, Jews, and Poles, in that order, making up roughly thirty-three percent of Pittsburgh’s student body.¹¹⁴ Of the 106 schools that reported to the survey, an average of fifty percent of the students had foreign parentage, where at least one of the pupil’s parents were foreign born. This reflected the national average of 57.8% from the United States Immigration Commission massive study in two decades prior in 1909. While some cities like New York and Boston reported 71.5% and 67.3%, respectively.¹¹⁵ More important than absolute percentage was the amount of schools that

¹¹¹ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 221.

¹¹² Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 230.

¹¹³ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 34.

¹¹⁴ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 214.

¹¹⁵ Cremin, *Transformation of the School*, 72.

reported over 75% or higher percentage in their schools, while others remained closer to zero. The occupational distribution for pupil's parents was included in the 1928 Study of Pittsburgh's Public School system as well. Although some schools reported whole families and not just fathers, the summary of occupational distribution was representative of the general situation in Pittsburgh. Nearly seventy percent of student's parents worked in "Industrial" occupations, with roughly twelve percent in either "Clerical" or "Business" employments, and only four percent identified as "Professionals."¹¹⁶ Since children typically followed in the occupational footsteps of their fathers, especially in ethnic families where securing a job typically happened through familial ties, the local steel mills secured plenty of future workers.

The 1928 report divided the school system into seven units; the first was the elementary school, which included kindergarten to grade six. Classicist curriculum persisted accordingly, focused on reading, writing, and arithmetic. Physical education encouraged young children to "appreciate the meaning of life and nature." Health in Pittsburgh's public school curriculum ran parallel to the more progressive school system in the nation. Indeed, hygiene and exercise became foundational elements of progressive educational reform. For centuries, Puritan philosophy influenced the belief that exercise was merely "fooling away" time and the arts of leisure were "ways of the devil." Beginning in the early 1900s, intense industrialization and urbanization awakened community consciousness. Cities grew outward and upward, and the desire for areas of recreation for children amplified.¹¹⁷ After 1928, the Board of Public Education conducted

¹¹⁶ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 215.

¹¹⁷ "Physical Education in the Secondary School," (New York: Progressive Education Association, 1938), 6-10, copy obtained from General Education Board, Series 1.2, RG 632, Box 279, Folder 2910, Rockefeller Archive Center.

surveys to repair, construct, and increase the capacity of playgrounds on schools.¹¹⁸ Whereas in Philadelphia, an entire commission for the improvement of the cities playground occurred a decade prior. Students not only learned how become healthier, lessons in child growth and development increased across the country.¹¹⁹ Following the Elementary School Unit was the Secondary School, which consisted of grades seven to twelve. Not much attention on the secondary school's curriculum, instead, the most pressing need faced by secondary schools was the need for more facilities, such as libraries, workshops, labs, and home economic rooms. The third unit described by the 1928 report centered on teacher training. The largest teacher training institution in Pittsburgh during this time was the Frick Training School for Teachers. Vocational Trade designated as the fourth unit, a naturally important aspect to Pittsburgh's education. The schools system's shops and activities were "chosen on a sound basis for their general educational values and the peculiar vocational needs of the City of Pittsburgh."¹²⁰ The fifth unit was the aforementioned Continuation School, a mandatory school program for children who left school before completing their compulsory age. Although a state law, the local community had discretion in the selection of the type of shops and other facilities. One again, the omnipresence of industry, through its pervasiveness in the community, continued to influence curriculum. Adults beyond compulsory age had the opportunity for adult education, the sixth unit. Mostly through evening schools, by 1928, the report boasted, "Pittsburgh had built in accordance with the best recognized theory

¹¹⁸ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 208-209.

¹¹⁹ "Survey on Education in America, 1931-1932," (New York: General Education Board, 1932), 1-10, copy obtained from General Education Board, Series 919, Reel 1, Boxes 363-364, Folders 3739-3743, Rockefeller Archive Center.

¹²⁰ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 19.

and practice of the country.”¹²¹ Due to the audience of fellow administrators and employees of Pittsburgh’s public schools system, the credibility of this claim is questionable due to the abject failure of many night schools around the country. The seventh and final component of the Pittsburgh public school system in 1928 was for special education. Chapter nine of the report is wholly dedicated to this subject.

The author of the 1928 report was unabashedly appalled at the lack of assistance provided for special needs students. According to their comparative data, “Pittsburgh is not adequately meeting special education needs.” This included students with mental disabilities, as well as physical, from tuberculosis to deaf and blind children. The report presented several propositions to remedy the failing system. First, the admission of a faulty system and inspection of why and how the public school system has failed special needs children. One reason is class size to teacher ratio, another concern of the school system in general. Once a child identified as requiring special needs assistance, they are removed from the classroom and “given the special treatment which they require.” Respectfully, the board recognized that although a child may not have certain abilities, they “by no means do not have some special ability that can be developed.”¹²² For Pittsburgh, this development naturally meant vocational training.

Furthermore, schools instilled a belief in the pupil to “realize his share in the social, civic, and industrial order of our democracy.”¹²³ Teaching democracy and civic mindedness had been a constant objective during the Progressive Era due to Americanization. Even before the first printed report of George J. Luckey, superintendent

¹²¹ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 19-20.

¹²² Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 186-193.

¹²³ Finnegan et al., *A Study of the Educational Department*, 16-17.

of schools in Pittsburgh in 1869 demonstrated his efforts to encourage “our republican system of government,” However, most teachers did not support the introduction of civic textbooks into the classroom.¹²⁴ Not until the sixty years later, in the 1930s, did the Pittsburgh’s Board of Public Education set out to foster lessons of democracy by appropriating funds to supply substitute teachers, while instructors trained in these lessons.¹²⁵

After the survey of 1928, the curriculum of the public school system in Pittsburgh reflected more of the societal desires, rather than the economic agenda of the city. Naturally, vocational courses remained a popular, but it was no longer the only option. Through school curriculum, the city now showed its sincerity in fostering a community-oriented mentality and providing an education on par with the rest of the nation. Immigrants continued to influence the school system with increasing populations, and the public schools attempted to meet those challenges with night schools, continuation schools, and other means to allow immigrants and native born workers alike a chance to receive some education. The administrative progressives, like in Philadelphia, succeeded in reorganizing the public school system. A consolidated school board was created after the passage of the 1911 Pennsylvania School Code, but would not be entirely in power. Educational reformers expressed their disapproval of the school agency in their 1928 survey and vowed to tirelessly work toward an entirely renewed public school system thereafter. While pedagogical progressives thought did influence Pittsburgh’s curriculum, with the shift from traditional subject matter, it became corrupted with the ubiquity of industrial arts in nearly all lessons.

¹²⁴ Annual Report of the Superintendent, (Pittsburgh: The Board of Public Education, 1933-1934), 72-73.

¹²⁵ Annual Report of the Superintendent, (Pittsburgh: The Board of Public Education, 1930), 55.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Pennsylvania experienced educational reform at varying rates across the state. Cosmopolitan, agricultural, and industrial cities with fluctuating degrees of population size and demographic variety contributed to this momentum and stagnation. Naturally, the higher the population, the more schools, and teachers are required to provide and assure a consistent educational experience for all students. Administrative progressives heeded this call and successfully restructured public schools in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and the rest of the nation. The task for educating becomes increasingly more complicated when the student body has varying levels of ability, particularly English speaking skills. The ability to communicate effectively proved to be crucial for not only classrooms, but for assimilation of ethnicities through into American culture and to increase efficiency between workers on the job.

Laws soon enacted mandatory education for young children during the nineteenth century. America was not yet a century old, a young child itself in the eyes of its European counterparts. Although nearly all towns by the turn of the eighteenth century had established a “little brick schoolhouse,” attendance rates remained dismal. Children either worked or received traditional education. This pedagogy influenced the early stages of America’s curriculum development and was supported by the few institutions of higher education in the nation and by policy makers. Moreover, the development of curriculum nearly paralleled the perceived desires of America’s society, economy, and politics.

First, curriculum resembled the cultural divide between the classicist ideologies that where mostly the wealthy are educated, and they are educated in elitist fashion with emphasis on Greek, Latin, rhetoric, and literature. America attempted to negate this pervasive curriculum with the founding of the Academy of Philadelphia and the incorporation of utilitarian values into the curriculum. The Academy also focused on English, which maintained its position on the nation's curriculum particularly as the country began to enter its industrial revolution and a massive influx of skilled and unskilled workers arrived in unprecedented numbers seeking opportunity and fortune.

The era of monopolies and unregulated corporations of the 1900s influenced nearly every aspect of life. In the call for greater efficiency, workers and student's worth rested upon their social utility. Curriculum mirrored the city's economic agenda and the many public schools became factories for creating workers. However, this was not unilateral. In opposition, many sought to end corrupt business and political practice that had gone unregulated. This age of merciless profits was also the age of moral reform. This process manifested itself in the political reform policies of the Progressive Era and the influence of administrative progressives. As municipalities consolidated, so did the public school system. In Philadelphia, the impact of the reorganization of city schools and the efforts of various groups translated itself to greater influence in state and national politics. Standardization influenced areas at varying levels and at different rates.

Ultimately, the educational reforms of the Keystone State provide an analysis of change over time. The momentum and stagnation of administrative policies and curriculum development ebbed and flowed with the rapidly evolving society it associated with. Many have said, "Education is liberation." This should beg the question, liberation

for whom? It is generally believed that it is liberation for all and in many ways, it provides an equalizing factor for society.

Throughout history, education has proven to be an illuminating dynamic, able to awaken and stir a population toward reform and revolution. However, without caution, detrimental agendas can wield education as a tool to bolster policies and maintain a status quo. It is then crucial that regulation, constant vigilance, and revision of who benefitted from education, what methods were utilized to disseminate knowledge, who determined the content, and what content was stressed maintained a position on the forefront of society's conscious.

Bibliography

- Altadonna, Leigh J. "The School, Curriculum, and Community: A Case Study of the Institutionalizing of Industrial Education in the Public Schools of Philadelphia, 1876-1918." PhD diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1983.
- Bobbitt, John Franklin. *The Curriculum*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918.
- Bodnar, John, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber. *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982.
- Centennial Exhibition Digital Collection, Timeline, accessed April 4, 2015.
<http://libwww.library.phila.gov/CenCol/exh-timeline.htm>
- Ciampa, V.A. "Martin Grove Brumbaugh, Pioneering Superintendent of the Philadelphia Public Schools." *Pennsylvania History* 7, no. 1 (1940): 31-41.
- Cremin, Lawrence A. *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964.
- Daniels, John. *America Via the Neighborhood*. New York & London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920.
- Dierks, Konstantine. *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.
- Edmunds, Franklin Davenport. *Public School Building of the City of Philadelphia from 1853 to 1867*. Philadelphia: F.D. Edmunds, 1917.
- Eggertsen, Claude, ed. *Studies in the History of American Education*. Michigan: University of Michigan School of Education, 1947.

Finnegan, Thomas E, Herbert S. Weet, and John W. Withers. *A Study of the Educational Department of the Pittsburgh Public Schools, 1866-1932*. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Board of Public Education, 1928.

Franklin, Benjamin. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*. Packard Humanities Institute. Sponsored by the The American Philosophical Society and Yale University. 2006. www.franklinpapers.org.

General Education Board Records, 1902-1969. FA058. Rockefeller Archive Center.

Harley, Lewis Reifsneider. *A History of the Public Education Association of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: Public Education Association, 1896.

Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. New York: Antheneum, 1963.

Hofstadter, Richard. *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. New York: Vintage Books, 1962, 1963.

Issel, William H. "Modernization in Philadelphia School Reform, 1882-1905." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 94, no. 3 (July 1970): 358-383.

Issel, William H. "Schools for the Modern Age: Educational Reform in Pennsylvania in the Progressive Era." PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1969.

Jones, Samuel. *Pittsburgh in the Year 1826*. Pittsburgh: Johnston & Stockton, 1826.

Klein, Philip. *A Social Study of Pittsburgh: Community Problems and Social Services of Allegheny County*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938.

Kliebard, Herbert M. *The Struggle for the American Curriculum*. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2004.

- Legislature of Pennsylvania. "The Bullitt Bill as Adopted by the Legislature of Pennsylvania." Philadelphia: Dunlap Printing Company, 1902.
- Lopata, Helana Znaniecka. *Polish Americans*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers Inc., 1994.
- Lorant, Stefan, Henry Steel Commager, J. Cutler Andrews, John Morton Blum, Gerald W. Johnson, Oscar Handlin, Sylvester K. Stevens, Henry David, David Lawrence, *Pittsburgh: The Story of an American City*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1964.
- Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de. "On the Education of Children." In *A World of Ideas: Essential Readings for College Writers 7th edition*, edited by Lee A. Jacobus. St. Martins: Bedford Books, 2006.
- Morris, Charles. *American Catholic: The Saint and Sinner Who Built America's Most Powerful Church*. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.
- Parker, Francis W. *Talks on Pedagogics: An Outline of the Theory of Concentration*. New York and Chicago: E.L. Kellogg & Co., 1894.
- "Pattison's Position." *Pittsburgh Dispatch*. July 7, 1892.
- Pennsylvania Constitution, Article VII, Section 1-3, 1790.
- Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich. "An Experiment in Education." In *The Teacher and the Taught*, edited by Ronald Gross. New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., 1963.
- Pinar, William F., William M. Reynolds, Patrick Slattery, and Peter M. Taubman. *Understanding Curriculum*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc. 2002.
- Pittsburgh School District Records, 1836-1937. AIS.1969.18. Archives Service Center. University of Pittsburgh.

- “President Steel Retires.” *Philadelphia Times*. December 22, 1888.
- Reports on the Course of Instruction in Yale College*. New Haven: Hazekiah Howe, 1828.
- Shappee, Nathan Daniel. “A History of Johnstown and the Great Flood of 1889: A Study of Disaster and Rehabilitation.” PhD Diss. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940.
- Thorndike, Edward Lee. *Educational Psychology Volume III*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1914.
- Tyack, David B. *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974.
- Weibe, Robert H. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1967.
- Weigley, Emma Seifrit. “It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement.” *American Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (1974): 79-96.
- Weiler, Conrad. *Philadelphia: Neighborhood, Authority, and the Urban Crisis*. New York: Prager Publishers, 1974.
- William Penn, Esq. “The Charter of Privileges Granted by William Penn Esq; to the Inhabitants of Pensilvania and Territories. Philadelphia: B. Franklin, M DXX XLI.
- Zemer, Lior. *The Idea of Authorship in Copyright*. Cornwall: MPG Books Ltd., 2007.
- Zimmerman, Jonathan, “Ethnics against Ethnicity: European Immigrants and Foreign-Language Instruction, 1890-1940.” *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (2002): 1383- 1404.