

ON THE FOREFRONT: The Junior No. 1 Stories

Junior High School Movement

January 7, 2021 at 7pm

The Junior High School Movement and the
building of Trenton's other junior high school

Presented by David Bosted, Pat Allen & Karl Flesch



ON THE FOREFRONT: The Junior No. 1 Stories

January 21

Herman C. Mueller,
School Board
President and
owner of the
Mueller Mosaic Tile
Company

February 4

The Segregation/
Desegregation of
Trenton Schools:
Hedgepeth-Williams
vs the Trenton Board
of Education

February 18

Photographing the
Decaying Junior No. 1
by J. Carlos Vargas
(exterior) and Robert
J. Sammons (interior)

February 25

William A Poland,
Architect of
Junior No. 1 and
over 2,000 other
buildings

March 4

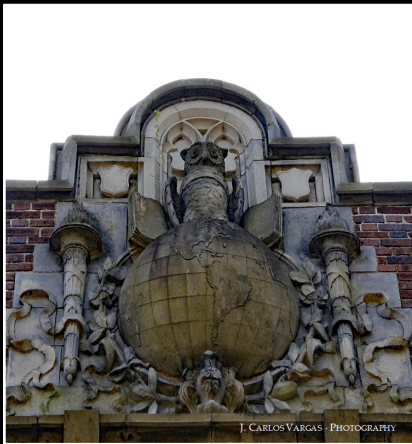
Junior No. 1
School Days – a
talk with former
Principal Albert
Williams and
teachers

March 18

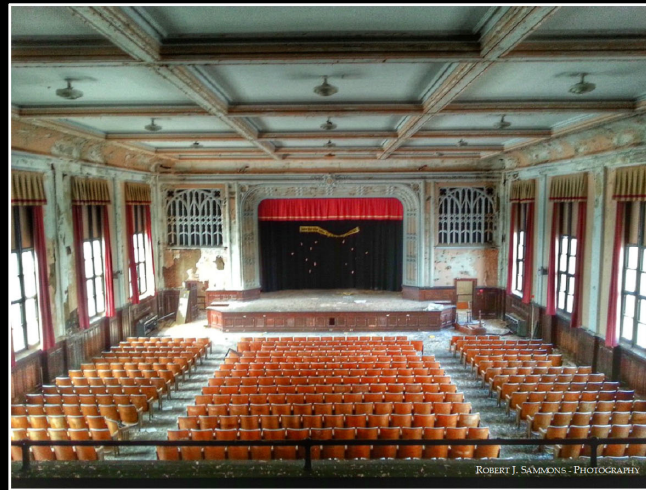
The 1916 Polio
Epidemic and the
Building of
Trenton's
Municipal Colony

ON THE FOREFRONT: Trenton's Junior No. 1, 1916

September 26, 2020 – April 25, 2021



The Owl—the school's mascot



1909



Indianola Junior High School, was the first junior high school built in the mid-west in 1909, in Columbus, Ohio.

1910



January, 1910: Berkeley's first junior high school opens under Charles L. Biedenbach, principal.

Comprising the upper grades 7-9 of McKinley Elementary School, it is called **McKinley Introductory High School** and is the forerunner to Willard. (Long considered the first junior high in the United States, it actually opened a few months after the first school in Ohio.)

1916



McKinley's upper grade students move into a new Mission Revival-style school building, named **Frances Willard Intermediate High School** in honor of suffragist Frances Willard. Wellyn B. Clark is principal.

1952

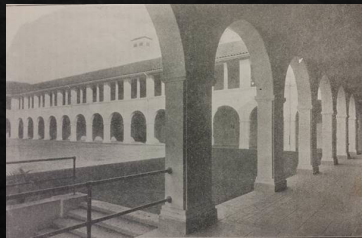


The I (Industrial Arts) building and the boys' gymnasium are constructed.

1966

Willard becomes a two-year junior high school, comprising only the 7th and 8th grades. (West Campus will serve until 1983 as a school for 9th graders only.)

1977



The original school building is deemed unsound and slated for demolition. Willard closes for three years while a new building is constructed.

1980



Willard Junior High reopens in a new building designed by Collin, Byrens, Gerson and Overstreet Architects. Principal is Anthony "Jeff" Tudisco.

1994



Willard becomes a 3-year middle school, comprised of 6th through 8th grades.

1995



Willard parents and teachers convert the school's abandoned metal shop into the Metal Shop Theater.

1999



The Willard Cooking and Gardening program is launched under the direction of Matt Tsang and Susanne Jensen.

2016

Willard celebrates 100 years!

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL vs MIDDLE SCHOOLS vs OTHER ALTERNATIVES

- Junior High Schools are for students in grades seven through nine (ages 13-15)
- Middle Schools are for students in grades six through eight (ages 12-14)

FORMAT & CONTENT:

- Junior High Schools are more subject-oriented. Students at junior high schools typically attend six to eight different subject-specific classes per day.
- Middle Schools have block classes that last two or more hours each and cover a blended mix of subjects. Middle schools claim to be more student-focused.

Although the junior high had been developed in the period 1910 -1915 to respond to the **special needs of the preadolescent student**, the original child-centered **focus was lost**, and junior high schools tended to resemble the high school in curriculum and organization of staff. The focus was on the content, rather the child.

Junior high schools are designed to be **miniature high schools**, training students to keep up with the books, assignments and requirements of individual classes and teachers.

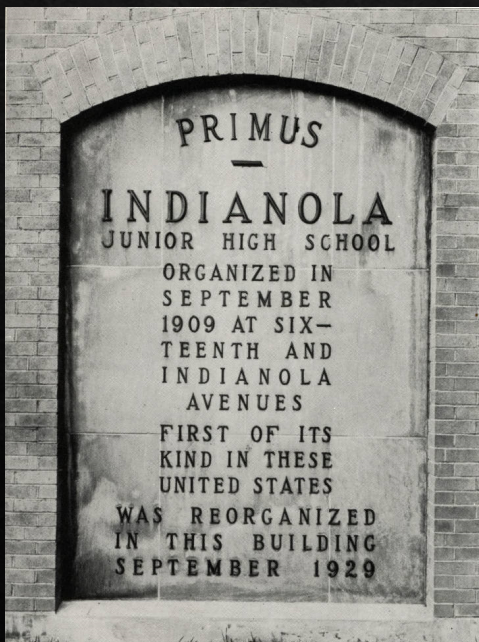
WARNING SIGN, overlooked: The first three Junior High Schools gave **Three Different Reasons for their key advantage:**

- OHIO: To INCREASE the # of students in HS
- WILLARD in BERKELEY California: Social benefits for adolescent 15 year olds
- TRENTON: To REDUCE the # of students in HS

The real reason for all this re-shuffling, with a century of hindsight, is often to **Shake up that system. The equivalent of a “Hail Mary” pass.** Often, the remixes of grade levels were forced by enrollment gains and space constraints. Other times, the rationale was based on academics.

THE SITUATION: There are school systems that are in rather desperate straits in terms of student achievement, and they've finally hired people who are willing to **"shake up that system,"**

"That new superintendent comes into that environment and looks at the fact that the school system is not performing in the existing grades 6-8 structure and is not getting good results. It's not unusual to think that person would say, 'There must be a better way,' and they see the certain advantages to shifting back to the K-8 school model, if the existing facilities allow it.



ANOTHER CONTENDER, for First JHS: RICHMOND, INDIANA

Richmond, Indiana, 1895, new 7th and 8th grade school. By 1922, Richmond IN (on the Indiana - Ohio border) was recognized as a possible national model for JHS design, by having a separate school INTERMEDIATE between elementary and HS.

But Indianola Junior High School of Columbus, Ohio, opened in September of 1909, was the first school to be **specifically called a junior high school**. Willard School in Berkeley CA was second, by a few months. Trenton's Jr. No. 1 was third, but 1st on the East Coast.



RAPID DECLINE of the JHS DURING THE 1960s and 1970s

- According to the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, the number of middle schools rose 462 percent from 1970 to 2000 -- 11,700 middle schools in 2000 versus 2,100 in 1970.
- During the same period, pre-1980s, the number of junior high schools declined by 57 percent from 7,800 to 3,300. MS Growth greatest 1963 to 1979.

HISTORY OF THE SUCCESS OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MOVEMENT

- **1963–1979**

identified as the beginning of the Middle School Movement and its search for an identity.

- **1980–1989**

time of advancement and progress, and the movement became identified with specific best practices, such as team teaching, interdisciplinary curriculum, and advisory.

- **1990–1999**

pressure on the movement advancing from national policies, but the movement persisted with a sense of hope.

- **2000–2009**

an era of research on middle school practices emerged to combat challenges to the middle school movement's core beliefs and practices.

- **2010–2020**

research continued with a focus on international perspective and efforts to identify and describe a “signature” middle school pedagogy.



William A. Alexander known as the “Father of the MS Movement.” U of Florida (Gainesville)

By 1969: “The reorg is reaching almost bandwagon proportions”

The Middle School concept has been widely adopted in school districts in every state since William Alexander, considered the father of the modern middle school, talked about “the bridge institution between elementary school and high school” in the early 1960s,

- Middle school students don't have every subject every day, have block schedules, and often have extra time to explore elective classes, such as art, theater, music and physical education.
- “The middle school curriculums are more exploratory in nature than the elementary school and less specialized than the high school.” “The organization of the middle school provides for the transition from the self-contained classroom of the elementary school to the departmentalization of the high school.”

BUT RESEARCH FINDINGS are CLEAR: K-8 is BEST

Benefits of K-8. 2012. New research finds that keeping students in K–8 schools has major benefits. FL study: In sum, students who left elementary schools for middle schools in grades six or seven "lose ground in both reading and math compared to their peers who attend K–8 schools."

Benefits of K-8, 2010 NYC: research found that students entering grades six through eight or seven to eight schools experience a "sharp drop" in achievement versus those attending K–8 schools.

"Students do worse academically when they attend middle schools than when they attend K–8 schools — and that this is true in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

The superiority of K-8 for students suggests that it may be harder to create an effective middle school than an effective K–8 school. Part of the challenge is simply that middle school grade configurations require an additional school transition.

Goal in all this re-reorganization:

- level the academic and socioeconomic field
- not to foster excellence
- not to teach to the average student
- not to practice actual life skills

THREE RECENT CONTENDERS to FOSTER BETTER RESULTS

- **Smaller Schools, or small class sizes**

Roger says: “Small schools, with less than 400 kids, can make a difference. A small student population equals There’s such a sense of belonging.”

- **Stand-alone 9th Grade Academy**

An early example in Up-state NY, never knew that the concept would one day become a favorite approach for some high school reformers.

- **Charter Schools**

Showing good results in urban areas especially. They do more with less. But teacher unions hate them, and dislike the over-arching concept of parent-student school choice.

Questions?

TRENTON'S JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Junior No. 1

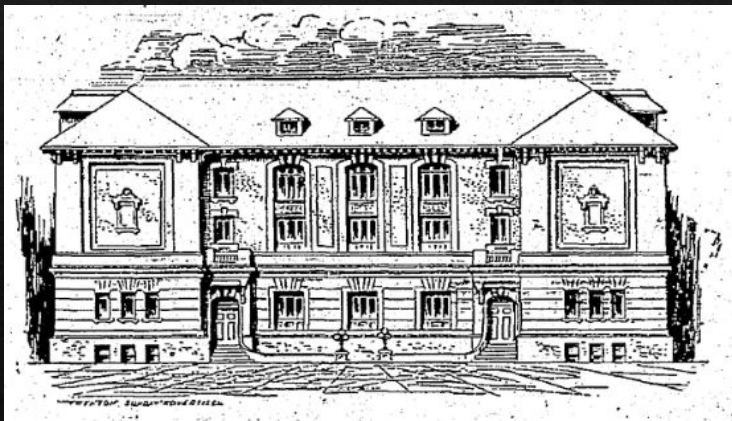
800 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
(Princeton Avenue)



- Designed by Architect William A. Poland, the school is of **Gothic design**.
- Opened in 1916 and built for 1,200 junior high students.
- The school admitted African-American students until the New Lincoln School for African-Americans opened in 1924.
- Addition designed by Samuel Mountford added in 1965, including a swimming pool and new cafeteria
- Renamed as Dr. Marn Luther King, Jr. Middle School in 1990.
- Closed at the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

Junior No. 2

Carroll Robbins School
283 Tyler Street



- Designed by Architect Harry A. Hill.
- Opened in 1908 and built for 1,120 students, it was larger than the nearby high school and it was the first school building in Trenton to contain a gymnasium for the students.
- The building was built as an the annex for the nearby Trenton High School accommodating the 9th grade class.
- The building also housed the administration of the Trenton School Board, storage for the school board and the Carroll Robbins Training School for Teachers to which training was transferred from the Hewitt Training School.
- Trenton's training school was abolished in 1917.
- The building was used as Junior No. 2 from 1917-1925.
- In 1926 the former Junior No. 2 students are sent to the newly opened Junior No. 4.
- In 1926 the building is used for Hamilton School's elementary students and the overflow classes from the nearby high school.
- Today the building continues as Carroll Robbins elementary school.

New Junior No. 2

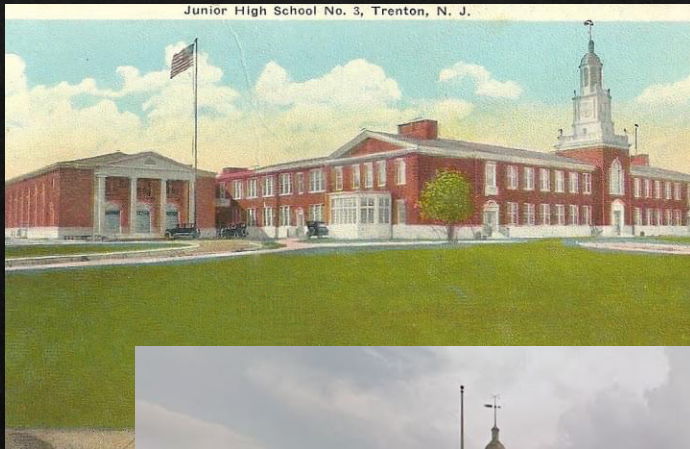
301 Gladstone Avenue



- Designed by Architects P. L. Fowler Co and Louis S. Kaplan, the school is of **Art Deco design**.
- Opened in 1940 and contained both junior high and elementary school students.
- Hedgepeth and Williams v. Board of Education Case - a decision in the 1944 NJ Supreme Court brought by two mothers who sued the school board over racial discrimination when their children could not attend the neighborhood all white Junior No. 2 school, and won.
- The elementary school section was renamed as Paul Robeson Elementary School in 1977.
- The school was named Hedgepeth-Williams Middle School in 1991.

Junior No. 3

1001 West State Street



- Designed by Architect Ernest K. Sibley and Associate Architect J. Osborne Hunt, the school is of **Colonial design**.
- Opened in December, 1924 and built for 1,800 students (1,400 junior high students and 400 elementary students).
- Note that from September 1, 1924 to December 9, 1924 its 1,665 junior high school students attended morning sessions at Junior No. 1, while 1,145 Junior No. 1 students attended afternoon sessions. During that time, its 150 elementary students attended Cadwalader School.
- Renamed as Arthur Holland Middle School in 1990, Trenton High School West, Trenton 9th Grade Academy.
- The 9th Grade Academy has been relocated to 500 Perry Street, the former building of the Trenton Times.
- Currently the building is not used as a school .

Junior No. 4

401 Dayton Street



- Designed by Architect Ernest K. Sibley and Associate Architect William A. Klemman, the school was of **English Tudor** design.
- William A. Poland is the Supervising Architect during the school's construction.
- Opened in 1926 and built for 2,000 junior high students, the largest of the city's junior schools.
- 1977 the school was renamed Grace A. Dunn Junior High School.
- 1990 the school was renamed Grace A. Dunn Middle School for seventh and eighth graders.

Junior No. 5

400 North Montgomery Street



- Designed by Consulting Architect Ernest Sibley and Associate Architects William Slack and Son, the school was of **Italian Renaissance** design.
- Opened in 1924 and built for 1,200 students, it contained both junior high and elementary students.
- The school was the second of Trenton's new junior high schools to be built.
- When it was built the school was named the New Lincoln School and the school was used exclusively for Trenton's colored students
- The school was renamed Junior No. 5 in 1945 when Trenton's schools were desegregated and opens in 1946 with both white and colored students.
- The elementary school was renamed the Louis Munoz Rivera Elementary School in 1977, and today the building is known as the Luis Munoz Rivera Community Middle School.

Junior No. 6?

Rider Tract North Clinton Avenue (Grant Miller Area)

- Projected over crowding of the Junior High Schools in 1965
- Proposed 60 room school costing \$4.8 million
- School could also be for all ninth graders
- Unknown why plans do not progress

Trenton Schools Today

Trenton Central High School (grades 10-12)

Ninth Grade Academy (grade 9)

Grace A. Dunn Middle School (grades 6-8)

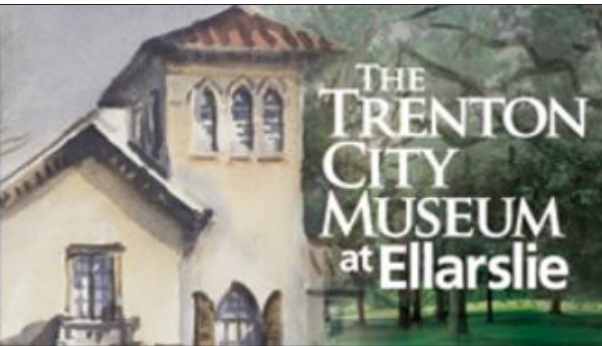
Hedgepeth Williams Middle School (grades 6-8)

Joyce Kilmer Middle School (grades 6-8 + elementary)

Louis Munoz Rivera Community Middle School (grades 6-8)

Elementary Schools (k-5)

Questions?



ON THE FOREFRONT: The Junior No. 1 Stories

Herman C. Mueller,
School Board President
and owner of the
Mueller Mosaic Tile
Company

