



Onward Central:

The First 150 Years of St. Paul Central High School

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Bluestem Heritage Group

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Preface

Anyone walking the halls of Saint Paul Central High School has opportunities to learn bits and pieces the school's history—portraits of honored alumni line the front hall, the office displays early photographs of the school and vintage class pictures, the trophy cases are crowded with awards from every era. But Central's history and its place in the history of Saint Paul is not readily apparent to those who only see the exterior of the building. *Transforming Central* was founded by dedicated volunteers proposing renovations to the school's urban landscaping in anticipation of the school's 150th anniversary in the fall of 2016. Sharing the historic nature of Minnesota's oldest high school quickly became a key goal of the project and with realization that the legends, anecdotes and school pride may not reflect the whole story, the need for a historic narrative became apparent. A Legacy Grant from the Minnesota Historical Society funded the hiring of Bluestem Heritage Group to research and write a brief and honest narrative of the school. Finding an abundance of historical documents and sources, the work grew to become this insightful and well-documented text.

The accomplishments of Central alumni are most certainly inspiring and impressive—leaders and innovators in civil service, science and technology, business, sports, arts and entertainment. While we expected to uncover stories of such alumni, the research revealed an equally inspiring story of an enduring educational institution that adapted to the changing expectations and needs of the students and society with each new era. Other schools may have similar stories to tell, but no other high school in the state of Minnesota has the comprehensive, documented, and successful 150-year history of Saint Paul Central High School. This history is a point of pride for the Central students, staff and alumni, our city and our state as we enter the next era of educating and preparing our young people for their future.

Deb Ahlquist

Transforming Central Leadership Team

Introduction: Early St. Paul Education

“On a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi river, with nothing to obstruct the vision, on a point which is now the corner of St. Peter and Third streets, stood a log hovel with a bark roof and mud chinkings, in size 10 by 12 feet.”

That is how Harriet Bishop later described her 1847 schoolhouse – the first public school in St. Paul, and the first in Minnesota.²³ That modest school, erected before Minnesota was even a territory, let alone a state, was the seed that germinated into a broader St. Paul public school system that now teaches over 37,000 students.⁴ Other early St. Paul schools include the Baldwin School, established by Reverend Edward Duffield Neill where the Landmark Center now stands; St. Joseph’s Academy at Marshall and Western Avenues; and Assumption School on Exchange Street.⁵ Spurred by the pioneering work of these early educators, and in the hopes that “good schools would attract good settlers,” St. Paul voters passed an act in 1856 to establish a school district and create a Board of Education.⁶⁷

By 1845, about 30 families lived in St. Paul, and when it became a territory in 1849, the city had around 900 residents.⁸ In 1849, the Minnesota legislature established public funding for schools, and St. Paul’s first school board election took place in 1850. The school board was elected directly by the voters, and was fiscally independent from the city.⁹ Nonetheless, until 1866, there were no high schools in St. Paul—older, teenage students were taught alongside their younger peers in shared classrooms or shared buildings.¹⁰ Though public high schools had developed on the East Coast as early as 1820, there was little demand for

secondary education on the “frontier.”¹¹ After the Civil War, the country experienced an industrial boom, and the corresponding demand for skilled workers led to greater demands for secondary schools. In response to the requests of a handful of students, the city of St. Paul established its first high school, known simply as the “St. Paul High School,” in 1866.¹²

Chapter 1: St. Paul High School – The Downtown Years

The St. Paul High School program was originally housed in the Franklin School on the corner of Broadway and 10th Streets.¹³ At that time, most of St. Paul's 10,000 residents lived in or near the downtown area.¹⁴ Classrooms occupied two rooms on the third floor.



1865 FRANKLIN BUILDING, MNHS

The school hosted a dozen students and one lone teacher: Mrs. Harriet Haynes, who had come from Maine to take her position. The 1866-67 school year began on the first Monday in September and consisted of thirty-eight weeks, divided into three terms. Classes were held from eight-thirty in the morning until one o'clock in the afternoon each day. For the

first three years, the high school had a new principal each year. The fourth principal, B. F. Wright, lasted longer, serving from 1869-1879. Wright had been a major in the Union Army during the Civil War and students frequently encouraged him to tell war stories during school hours.¹⁵ He saw the school graduate its first two students, – Fannie Haynes (daughter of the teacher) and A. P. Warren in 1870.

Those early students pursued a classical course of study. Textbooks in 1866 included Brown's English Grammar, Robinson's Higher Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry, Wells' Natural Philosophy and Chemistry, Hitchcock's Physiology, Lommis' Astronomy, Weber's Universal History, Warren's Physical Geography, and Latin and Geology.¹⁶ The school's first library contained two books: Webster's Unabridged Dictionary and Anthon's Classical Dictionary of Antiquities.¹⁷ Central's first school newspaper started in this original building, edited by two junior girls and read aloud before the entire student body.¹⁸

The student population grew at a steady rate. In 1872, the school outgrew its Franklin space and moved to the Lindeke building on the corner of 7th and Jackson Streets, where it occupied the entire second floor. Conditions there were less than ideal, however. The presence of a dry goods store and fish market on the street level produced some curious smells, particularly on hot days, and the building was infested with rats.¹⁹ Nonetheless, students continued to enroll, and its importance to the community was evident, though there were critics. An 1878 article in *The Daily Globe* covered the graduation exercises of the high school, and referenced some of the mixed opinions on the school:

“At about 7 o'clock last evening a large concourse of people commenced to assemble in front of the Opera House, and soon blocked the thoroughfare up as far as Fourth Street, and it was

evident that if the High school is not a popular institution, as some assert, at least there was a great popular desire to witness the graduating exercises.”²⁰

In their annual report in 1879, the St. Paul school board declared that, although the school was pleasing on the exterior, the inside atmosphere was “morally, socially, and physically unhealthy.” Urged by this report, the city council proposed issuing a \$50,000 bond for a new school. Voters soundly rejected the proposal. In 1879, only five percent of the student population of St. Paul attended high school, and the proposed investment struck many as a needless expense.²¹

Central Gets Its Own Building

But the high school students and advocates didn’t give up. In 1881, the proposal was raised again. At that point, nearly 200 students attended the high school. On the day before the election, the entire Junior and Senior classes skipped school to help campaign for the bill.²² The measure passed, and the funds were raised. The school board chose a new site for a new high school – the block bounded by 10th, 11th, Minnesota, and Robert Streets, which was previously partially occupied by the Adams School. That school was razed to clear space.²³

The winner of a competition to design the new school was Gurdon P. Randall of Chicago.²⁴ Construction of the three-story brick structure began in 1882 and was completed the next year. That fall, 223 pupils moved into the new 27-room schoolhouse, and the school was re-named “The St. Paul Central High.” Just six years later, in 1888, a 14-room annex was built to house laboratory space. The newly formed Debating Society staged plays to raise money for the purchase of an astronomical

observatory, which made the school the only high school in the state with a fixed telescope. A Manual Training school for boys, established in 1887, was housed in the basement.²⁵

While St. Paul voters were investing in Central at this time, voices calling for streamlining the management of the broader public school system were also growing. In 1888, the mayor was given authority to appoint school board members directly, rather than having them elected by voters. A few years later, in 1891, the schools were officially merged into the city government, and began to compete with other departments for funding.²⁶ This decision would have long lasting effects.



1886 SCHOOL, MNHS

Early Organizations

Early on, Central students organized social and athletic groups. One of the first of these was *The World*, a school literary magazine whose first issue was published in 1876. Students formed a debate club in 1883, started a yearbook in 1890, assembled an orchestra in 1900, and organized a dramatic club in 1905. Under the guidance of faculty member Mary Newson, students created the Central Historical Society in 1907 to keep tabs on alumni.²⁷ Their “constitution” reads as follows:

“We, the undersigned, in order to preserve articles and records of interest to the members of the St. Paul Central High School, and to collect and preserve information regarding its members and graduates, do ordain and establish this constitution for the organization to be known as the Historical Society of the St. Paul Central High School.”²⁸

The student group remained active through the 1940s, and many of their archives are still in existence in the school and at the Minnesota Historical Society.²⁹



1899 FOOTBALL, MNHS

Population Growth

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, St. Paul grew rapidly. As the population increased, residential neighborhoods began to expand up the hills and away from the increasingly industrial downtown. During this time, not only was St. Paul Central overflowing with students, it was becoming more and more inconvenient for those students to reach it. To serve the city's growing student population, the Board of Education began to establish additional high schools. The Manual Training School was renamed the Mechanic Arts High School and moved out of Central's basement and into its own building in 1893.³⁰ In 1894, Grover Cleveland High School opened in what is now the Payne-Phalen neighborhood. (It was renamed Johnson Senior High School when it relocated to a new

building and site in 1911.) Humboldt opened in 1889 as the first high school on the West Side, and moved to a new school building there in 1909.

Despite these shifts, by 1909 Central – with 1,300 students – was bursting at the seams.³¹ Something had to be done.



1900 DRAWING ROOM, MNHS

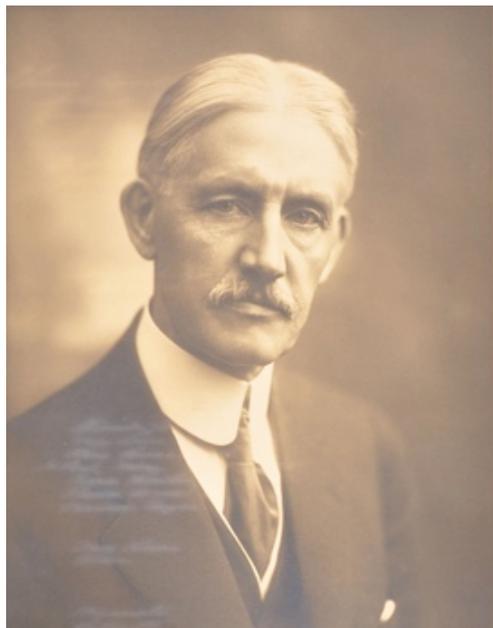
Chapter 2: Central Moves West

The St. Paul Board of Education's school space crunch was not unique, nor was it temporary. Schools were overflowing across the nation, and it wasn't just because of population growth; it was because of demand. Between 1910 and 1940, the country experienced a dramatic increase in the number of students attending high school. This "High School Movement" (as defined by educational historians) was due in large part to shifting attitudes and expectations about education. In 1910, only 19 percent of 15-18 year olds were enrolled in high school, and of those, fewer than 10 percent graduated. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, students who wished to enroll in high school were required to take an entrance exam. Nationally, these difficult tests restricted high school admission to fewer than five percent of the eligible student population. In Saint Paul, exams were conducted in the 1890s, but appear to have been eliminated by 1900.³² By 1940, 73 percent of 15-18 year olds were enrolled and half graduated; by 1955, the national graduation rate was 80 percent. As historian Claudia Goldin has argued, the supply of educated Americans increased due to grass-roots movements, rather than top-down federally mandated programs.³³ In contrast to the period prior to 1910, most of the students who attended high school during the 1910 to 1940 period "sought an education that would lead directly to employment, not college."³⁴

In his farewell address to Central's graduating class of 1907, departing principal Dr. E. V. Robinson stressed the need for a new high school building, which he felt should be built in the Seventh ward (the area now encompassing the Summit-University and Summit Hill neighborhoods). This is the neighborhood in which many Central students lived and was

much a more “central” location than downtown. C. W. Gordon, president of the Board of School Inspectors, echoed this conclusion in 1910 when he speculated that “the growth of the high school population will be in the growing districts of the East Side, West Side, and the western part of the city.”³⁵

The school district agreed to build a new school, and selected the corner of Lexington and Marshall Avenues as the site. The city purchased the land in 1909 and secured renowned architect Clarence H. Johnston to design the new building.³⁶ Johnston, a Minnesota native and Central alumni, had studied architecture in St. Paul, at MIT, and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He designed homes for many wealthy families in St. Paul and Minneapolis, as well as a number of buildings on the campus of the University of Minnesota and Macalester College.³⁷ As his career advanced, Johnston “was drawn more and more into institutional design, becoming adept at producing attractive, functional buildings adapted to the constraints of a client's budget.”³⁸ He served as the Minnesota State Architect from 1901 until 1931 while continuing to maintain his private practice.



1919 CLARENCE JOHNSTON, MNHS

Construction of the new high school commenced on May 31, 1910, and the cornerstone was laid on September 16 of that year.³⁹ St. Paul school board members initially proposed naming the new school “Lexington” in recognition of its new location, but one week before the cornerstone was laid, alumni prevailed on the board to retain the name “Central.” In recognition of the Lexington location, the school chose as its mascot the “Minutemen” – the soldiers who fought at the Battle of Lexington and Concord in the American Revolution.



1928 CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, MNHS

Designed in the “Collegiate Gothic” style popular at the time, the new high school building had three stories, a basement, and a sub-basement. It cost \$419,154 to build and was designed to accommodate 1,500 students.⁴⁰ In 1912, class president Henry Allen Moe described the new school as “sturdy in architecture, beautiful in construction, commanding in position, adequate, complete – all that refers to our new high school and does not yet begin to do it justice.”⁴¹ In his 1912 history of St. Paul, Henry Castle also described the new building in glowing terms:

“Great advances are being made in school construction; and the new high schools have embodied the latest ideas in this type of building. Clarence H. Johnston, the architect of the fine new Central High School, made a careful study of the best educational buildings in many other cities, and this school, now completed and occupied, besides being an exceptionally handsome structure, is sanitary, fireproof, light and convenient. In addition to the twenty-six recitation rooms, and ample lecture rooms and laboratories, it has an auditorium with a balcony, and with a stage 22 by 57 feet. It has dressing, scenery and property rooms; a large gymnasium with shower and dressing rooms; a students’ lunch room with kitchen and pantry, and all manner of rooms for domestic and manual training, including kitchen and dining rooms, sewing room, machine shop, forge room and foundry. It . . . is a building of which not the school board alone, but the entire city may well be proud.”⁴²

The first commencement ceremony in the new building occurred on June 13, 1912. Class president Moe arranged for three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan to give the commencement address. The topic of the address was “The Value of an Ideal,” with the ideal being “the measure of difference between success and failure.”⁴³ Bryan’s speech was followed by a performance by four students of the grave-digging scene from Hamlet.⁴⁴

When the new school was being constructed in 1910, fewer than one in four students who entered Central as freshmen stayed on to graduate. But between 1910 and 1920 the course offerings were diversified with a new focus on “manual training” classes.

The manual training movement was first introduced in the United States in the 1870s to train engineers. It spread rapidly to the education of the general public. By 1900, 100 cities provided it in high schools. Manual training “emphasized the intellectual and social development associated with the practical training of the hand and the eye” rather than the

classically strict focus on theoretical, intellectual development. The idea was that this type of education “improved perception, observation, practical judgment, visual accuracy, manual dexterity and taught students the power of doing things instead of merely thinking about them, talking about them, and writing about them.”⁴⁵ In theory, it was not intended to teach a specific trade, but to serve as an enhancement – rather than a replacement – to traditional curriculum. John Dewey was an early proponent of manual training, which he saw as a foundation for educational objectives.⁴⁶ In 1910, St. Paul Superintendent of Schools S. L. Heeter emphasized the need for manual training in the high schools stating, “In my opinion there is no part of our curriculum that will produce as effective results as the industrial branches. I regard manual training as the most important part of our schoolwork. It is worth all it costs and more.”⁴⁷ Classes like domestic science, woodwork, metal work, drawing and typing directly prepared students for occupations, and the graduation rate skyrocketed as a result. By 1925, Central’s graduation rate was nearly 60 percent.⁴⁸



1919 CANDY MAKING, MNHS

In addition to improved classroom facilities, Central's new building provided students for the first time with a dedicated lunchroom. Central's principal, V. K. Froula, praised the addition of a school lunchroom to Central:

"The physical welfare of the adolescent cannot be overestimated. Most high school students in the larger cities leave home in the early morning after partaking of a light and hurried breakfast. They rush on to school, allowing only enough time to avoid tardiness. They hurry from class to class, up and down many flights of stairs, using up their physical vigor and mental energy at a most rapid rate. Under such conditions what can be more important during the long session than a brief respite from their tasks and an opportunity to get, at a very small cost, a lunch of plain and wholesome food to supply new life and energy to their growing and developing bodies."⁴⁹

In an article published in the school's literary magazine *The World* in the spring of 1912, student Alice Short outlined the history of the lunch program at Central, which began in the 1890s with some students bringing extra soup to school to sell. In the new lunch room "on its hungriest day, 30 dozen bun sandwiches, 30 dozen loaves of bread made into sandwiches, 30 dozen cup cakes, beside apples, sweet chocolate, doughnuts, ice cream cones and other things in proportion disappeared before the hungry crowd in 10 minutes."⁵⁰

Over the course of the design and construction phase of the 1912 building, three different principals served Central High. In the spring of 1916, principal Harvey Axford Schofield left Central to become president of the new Eau Claire Normal School. That fall James E. Marshall took the position. He would remain for nearly three decades as the longest-serving principal in Central's history.⁵¹

Chapter 3: World War I and the 1920s



1915 LIBRARY, MNHS

Less than a year after Marshall assumed his role as principal of Central, the United States entered the Great War. Although the war ended only nineteen months later, it had lasting effects on the American educational system. The war economy increased the demand for skilled workers. Many educators and government officials perceived the manual training movement's theoretical promotion of broader cognitive development to be unnecessary, as "factories producing war goods required only skilled hands, with little need for cultured minds."⁵² The Smith-Hughes Act (passed on February 23, 1917, just as America was preparing to declare war) provided federal funds for vocational education in agriculture, trades and industry, and home economics, as well as for teacher training in these fields. This shift away from manual training's more liberal education "through the hand" towards one with the direct benefits of occupational skills began to have greater appeal in the American high school.⁵³ By the

late 1920s, most manual training schools had either closed or become vocational and technical schools.⁵⁴

Another major impact the war had on American students was the spread of nationalism and patriotism. In November 1918, Central students participated in The Victory Boys' and Girls' Drive. In one week they raised nearly one thousand dollars for the war effort. Praise for the effort appeared in the Official Bulletin of the Department of Education of the City of St. Paul the following month: "Again the St. Paul schools went on record with the same spirit of patriotism which has characterized all of their war activities and have maintained the high standard which has been set by St. Paul with all of its War work."⁵⁵

An unfortunate accompaniment to nationalism was anti-German sentiment. In St. Paul, where a significant percentage of residents could list at least some German heritage, this had a strong impact.⁵⁶ The Minnesota state legislature established the Commission of Public Safety in the spring of 1917 as a watchdog group to ensure public safety in wartime. Its broad powers expanded into the public schools through its effort to create "One Country, One Flag, One People and One Speech." The study of the German language and culture were discouraged and certain textbooks were banned. Furthermore, in April 1918 the Commission ordered "that no person who is not a citizen of the United States shall be qualified to serve as a teacher in any public, private, or parochial school, or in any normal school in which teachers for these schools are trained."⁵⁷

The war's most emotional impact, however, was its toll on the student body. "In 1917, when the clarion call for men echoed through the land, the boys from Central were not reluctant to answer."⁵⁸ Hundreds of Central

students enlisted in the war, and at least twenty-seven were wounded or killed.

Continued Population Growth

After the war, as St. Paul's population continued to grow, Central felt the squeeze. Due to inadequate gym space, physical education classes were held in the cafeteria and the balcony was used as a running track.⁵⁹ A 1924 addition to the west side of the building added a new gymnasium and provided more classroom space at a cost of \$122,595.⁶⁰

To further ease pressure on the other city high schools, Harding High School opened in 1926 on the East Side, at the corner of 3rd and Earl Streets, where it remained until construction of a new building in 1961.

Curriculum Changes and Academic Excellence

After the war, school officials increased their efforts to encourage all students to attend high school. In a letter printed in the January 1920 Official Bulletin of the Department of Education, the director of the Board of School Inspectors, S. O. Hartwell, addressed the eighth grade class:

“To the Pupils of the Eighth Grade: Many of you will soon receive statements showing completion of the work of eighth grades in the city schools. Each one may rightly value this certificate as a statement of good work accomplished but we hope you will see and act upon the true meaning of this certificate; for they are really certificates of promotion to the upper division of our public school system, the high school, and it will be a fortunate day for the City and the State when every pupil shall have the interest and foresight to avail himself of the opportunities for further training offered in the high schools.”⁶¹

The bulletin highlighted a handful of the courses of study available to high school students in 1920, including English, Manual Arts (woodwork, metal work, drawing), Home Economics, Music and Art. A table breaking down courses of study by semester and year shows that English was a constant. Languages offered in 1920 were Spanish, Latin, Swedish, and French. Students progressed from Algebra to “High Algebra” and were offered biology, physics, and chemistry in the sciences. History and economics were also in the curriculum. Vocational courses included stenography and typing, shop, cooking, sewing, and business courses.⁶²



1925 SHOP CLASS, MNHS

Central students took their education seriously. One of the first Rhodes Scholarships (in 1902) went to a Central student, Henry Hinds. Created by the will of Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902) and awarded yearly by Oxford University to educate students interested in public service, the Rhodes Scholarship provides for a three-year course of study plus expenses. Between 1902 and 1955, Central produced more Rhodes Scholars than any other public high school in the United States, graduating eleven.⁶³

Athletic and Cultural Organizations

The 1920s was an important decade for athletics at Central. More students were encouraged to participate in sports through the introduction of “inter-class” – or intramural – games. As one observer noted in 1925, “One of the objections that the athletics of the day present is that only a small proportion of the boys enrolled in school are chosen to participate. During the last three years decided efforts have been made in our school to overcome this failing by the encouragement of inter-class games.” The commentator also recognized the positive influence faculty coaches had on student athletes: “It is to be hoped that the management and coaching of our athletic teams will always be in the hands of members of the faculty, as it has been conclusively shown that the best results have been obtained under those conditions.”⁶⁴

In addition to athletics, social and cultural groups were also popular in the 1920s. Organizations listed in a 1920 issue of *The World* include Girls’ Glee Club; Boys’ Glee Club; Orchestra; Fine Arts Society; Spanish Club; Drama Club; Stage Force; a photography club; the Historical Society; Constitution Club; and four literary publications.⁶⁵



1928 CENTRAL BAND, MNHS

Chapter 4: Central in Depression and War (1929-1945)

Costs related to the school construction and expansions of the 1910s and 1920s put the St. Paul School District in a precarious situation. When the stock market crashed and the Depression began in 1929, the district was already cash-poor. Though a 1929 salary ordinance was created to calibrate teacher pay to experience, very quickly the district could not meet those promises. Cuts to teacher salaries and layoffs were wide-spread. In the mid-1930s, teacher salaries were only 90 percent of 1929 guidelines. By 1940, they would climb back to 97 percent.⁶⁶ Teacher layoffs, combined with increased student attendance in the face of a dismal job market, made for a high student-teacher ratio. In 1934, Central's enrollment was 2,600 students and it employed 87 teachers. Its student-teacher ratio was 33 to 1.⁶⁷ The national average at this time was 24.9 to 1.⁶⁸

While teachers made significant financial sacrifices during the Depression, one political trade-off of reduced salaries was increased teacher control in the schools. In addition, enrollment in associations such as the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) increased.⁶⁹ After World War II, these unions would prove critical instruments to organize and promote teachers' efforts.



1933 THANKSGIVING ASSEMBLY, MNHS

Counseling Services

To assist Central students during the Depression, and to prevent students from dropping out before graduation, the school inaugurated a counseling service during the 1935-36 school year. The school counseling profession began in the early twentieth century as an outgrowth of the social reform movement. In the 1920s and 1930s, more and more American schools created guidance programs as part of a rise of progressive education. Although the Depression restricted funds for such programs, they became even more necessary. The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) was founded in 1937. St. Paul public welfare agencies estimated in the mid-1930s that 3,000-6,000 unemployed youth of high school age were not attending high school⁷⁰ The Student Personnel Program, as Central's new counseling service was called, provided a centralized agency to:

“keep in contact with the individual student in a large school unit; to aid the students, as individuals, to work toward an achievable scholastic and vocational goal in the light of unique strengths and weaknesses; to discover distributional and emotional problems and aid in the adjustment of the student; to act as a coordinative agency

for the many guidance activities functioning in the school; to act as a repository for pertinent information concerning individual students; and to carry on research which would be of value to the faculty and student body.⁷¹

The dropout rate was a concern for school officials during the Depression, but enrollment continued to grow and in 1931 Central was changed to a three-year senior high school. It remained that way until 1944 when it was made a four-year high school again.⁷² During these thirteen years, ninth graders attended area junior highs, including Monroe, Ramsey and Murray. But due to the increasing enrollment (an average of 75 new students per semester in 1934), Central's lack of space persisted.⁷³ The class of 1939 had nearly 900 students.⁷⁴

Central High and Rondo

The new high school was located on the edge of the Rondo neighborhood, which by 1900 had become the main center of Saint Paul's black residential life. Rondo was loosely divided into two sections whose boundary was Dale Street. The section west of Dale Street (upper Rondo) was referred to as "Oatmeal Hill" and east of Dale (lower Rondo) was called "Cornmeal Valley."⁷⁵ Oatmeal Hill residents generally were financially better off than the people who lived in Cornmeal Valley. The movement of blacks out of the downtown district accelerated after World War I. Unlike other northern cities such as Detroit and Cleveland, where employment opportunities for blacks were greater, the St. Paul black population did not grow rapidly. In 1910, there were 3,144 blacks in St. Paul. By 1930, the number had grown to just 3,981.⁷⁶ As many former Rondo residents have noted, the small population meant that everyone knew everyone else. Though African-American students attended Central,

most black students living in Rondo attended Marshall School during this period, and continued to do so until Marshall changed to a junior high in 1953.⁷⁷

Rondo residents were among the hardest hit by the Depression. Some high school students were forced to leave school to help support their families, but discrimination in employment made opportunities for African Americans especially limited. Some black students, like Gordon Parks, stepped in and out of school as jobs came and went.

Those who stayed in school at Central were well aware of their status as a minority, and the extra attention and pressures that brought. African-American James Stafford Griffin recalls, “When I went to Central High School in the fall of 1932 there were, oh, I’d say about 2,400 kids there. We were the boom kids from World War I. The largest number of Black students that was ever at Central in my four years I was there was thirty. . . . Out of the eight Black kids that graduated in my class, five of them were on the honor roll.”⁷⁸



1944 CROWD, CEHISEAN

Athletics

In these difficult years, many Central students turned to sport as an outlet.

As a 1931 history of the school asserted:

“It is naturally true that the real object of the high school is to give each student a wide knowledge, but in order to face the hard knocks of life’s rough road, it is necessary to acquire certain qualities and experience. The athletic field is the source of foundation of many of these qualities in the American youth today.”⁷⁹

One extremely successful athletic program during the 1930s was Central’s tennis team. Central produced state champions in tennis five times between 1930 and 1941. Other popular sports for boys were football, basketball, skiing, bowling, fencing, riflmg, volleyball, gymnastics, and “Stunt Tournament.” Several Central girls formed a Girls Athletic Association in the 1930s, which oversaw intramural programs such as

fieldball, basketball, tumbling, volleyball, kittenball, and tennis. Central girls also participated in bowling, fencing, and swimming during these years.⁸⁰

Student Clubs

Despite financial challenges, Central maintained several student organizations during the Depression. In the mid-1930s, Central had more than two-dozen clubs including Spanish, French, and German language clubs; a Radio Club; and a Rifle Club.⁸¹ The Rifle Club was a very popular activity. Students practiced in the school's own shooting range in the basement. Central students continued to produce several publications in the 1930s including the *World*; the CEHISEAN (the yearbook's name coming from *Central High Secondary Annual*); and the *Times*.

The United States entry into the Second World War in December 1941 would help pull the country out of the Depression. It also would create a lasting impact on education.

World War II

“We must not permit this war to become a children’s crusade.”⁸²

Even more so than during World War I, the United States’ involvement in World War II impacted its high schools. To prepare students – many of whom would be called upon to serve their country during or immediately following high school – schools amended both their curriculum and their mission.

St. Paul’s Superintendent of Schools, Paul Amidon, summed up the change in 1940:

“American democracy is predicated upon the thesis that all people should have a voice in the conduct of the affairs of the state – a privilege given to them by the laws and government established by our Constitution and statutes. This type of government more than any other type requires a disciplined trained people who function in their own interests as well as in the interests of the group. . . The schools together with the home and the church cannot avoid the responsibility for training for this kind of citizenship.”⁸³

The 1940 high school curriculum included two required courses (English and social science) and three electives to be chosen from mathematics, language, junior business training, household arts, shop, art, and music.⁸⁴ In their Junior and Senior years, select students were encouraged to take a typing course if they were interested in a career that would require it.

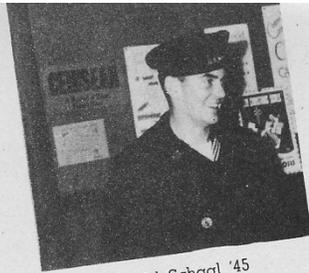
As it had during World War I, this war led to a renewed emphasis on practical education. Superintendent Amidon made the wartime connection between practical education and the importance of democracy in his 1940 report:

“The high schools of America have slowly shifted their emphasis during the past two or three decades from that of providing a groundwork for those who intend to go on into professions to that of providing all children the knowledges [sic] and skill, attitudes and ideals, insights and meanings that will be of value to them in their everyday life in a democracy.”⁸⁵

The percentage of students taking physics and mathematics nearly doubled during the war years and enrollment in Spanish classes increased by 400 percent.⁸⁶



Pete Spindler '44



Gerald Schaal '45



George Rardin '44



Bob Seiberlich '43



Dick Polister '43



Jack Colter '43



Asa Graham '44 Rita Powell '44
Dick Howard '44 Mary Lou Knox '44



Ted Rosen '43

SERVIC



Gene Saxon '43

1945 SERVICE MEN, CEHISEAN

By 1943, as more and more American teenagers were being called to action, the Superintendent argued for a greater emphasis on physical education in the schools. “With the advent of war-time conditions, the importance of the physical well-being of our children has become evident as never before.”⁸⁷ Physical education classes were made compulsory for all boys in the 12th grade, and strongly encouraged for younger boys.⁸⁸

Philosophically, Central’s education began to emphasize ideals of democracy, patriotism, teamwork, and cooperation, perseverance, and morality. “Never in the history of mankind have co-operation, team play, and unified efforts been so necessary, nor have they had to operate over so large a space of time and global area. Every successful project carried out on the home front evinces the same necessity.... If the black market is smashed, if rationing is a success, if inflation is staved off, it will be due largely to the co-operative effort of right thinking, patriotic citizens,” wrote Principal J. E. Marshall in 1944. A year later, new Principal A. G. Meier struck similar notes, “Today all peoples of the world are driven in sheer desperation to seek and, if possible, to find the inspiration in new horizon which will save humanity from utter barbarism. This is by far the greatest task which humanity has encountered during its long history and the greatest challenge especially to the youth of today.”⁸⁹

Just as in World War I, many Central students served and were wounded or killed in this war — at least nineteen young men and two women served, and at least fifteen alumni from the classes of '42-'46 died.⁹⁰ Central students who remained in school also heeded the call for action. In December 1944 the student body raised over \$20,000 in war bonds.⁹¹ District-wide enrollment declined by four percent between 1940 and 1942

as some students enlisted and others took advantage of increased wartime employment opportunities.⁹²

Student Activities in the 1940s

Beyond the war, many aspects of student life remained the same. As in the past, social, musical, and athletic organizations provided a forum in which Central students could express themselves outside of the classroom. Language clubs continued to be popular in the 1940s.⁹³ Service-related clubs like Tri-Sigma, the Girls League, and the Girls Reserves were other popular wartime organizations at Central.

According to one alumnus, football games were a popular activity for the students in the '40's – but not for the skills of the athletes. “Lousy football – great band at half-time,” recalled Robert Geist, class of 1946. The band won the St. Paul High School Band Marching Contents two years in a row: 1944 and 1945. Among the players was “one particularly good clarinet player who made more money playing in night clubs than the teachers did.”⁹⁴ In addition to band, there was a choir, string ensemble, and junior band.



1947 MAJORETTES, CEHISEAN

In Central's basement today are the remains of a bowling alley and a shooting range. Both of these activities were extremely popular at one time, as the copious 1940s-era graffiti attests. Though the boy's gym team was temporarily discontinued during the war, other new sports were formed.⁹⁵ In 1944, 49 girls joined the newly formed girls' bowling team.⁹⁶ Other popular sports at Central in the 1940s were football, basketball, tennis, track, hockey, golf, and baseball for boys; and fieldball, basketball, swimming, kittenball, tumbling, volleyball, and bowling for girls.⁹⁷

One of the most famous Central alumni athletes was tennis champion Jeanne Arth, who attended Central from 1948 to 1952. However, Arth did not play tennis at Central, as there was no girls tennis team at that time. In 2002 Arth recalled that:

“the [Central] tennis coach looked into whether my sister and I could play on the boys' team. At that time it was not allowed. If we had had the opportunity to do so, it would have been fun, but as I

look back on it now, I think it would have been a bad idea. I do not see any point to girls playing on boys' teams."⁹⁸

Arth, with partner Darlene Hard, would go on to win the women's doubles title at the 1958 and 1959 U.S. Opens and 1959 Wimbledon.

Increased participation in high school sports in the 1920s and 1930s inspired the construction of a WPA-built stadium. Initially called Central Stadium, the stadium was renamed Griffin Stadium in 1988 in honor of 1930s alumni and athlete James "Jimmy" Griffin who would go on to become St. Paul's first African American police chief.⁹⁹ The stadium was the training ground for the 1954, 1979, and 1989 boys state track champions; and the 1977, 1978, and 1994 girls state track champions. The stadium was also home to Concordia University's football and women's soccer teams until 2008, and football teams from Como and Johnson High Schools also practice and play their games there. From 2004 to 2008, the Minnesota Thunder soccer team (now called Minnesota United) played on Central's field as well.

Jimmy Griffin was one of many black students who found a home on the playing field. Life in the classrooms and hallways was not always so welcoming. Through the 1940s, Central's black student population remained very small. Oftentimes, due to racism, this led to a feeling of isolation from the larger student body. Constance Jones Price, who was born in 1930, recounts how she and a friend begged to be transferred to nearby Marshall High where there were more black students.¹⁰⁰ The school administrator told them people were "dying to get in" to Central to which Price replied, "We're dying to get out." As she says: "We were desperate. We wanted a social life as well as a good environment to be in where there wasn't all this racism, because the kids didn't talk to us. The White

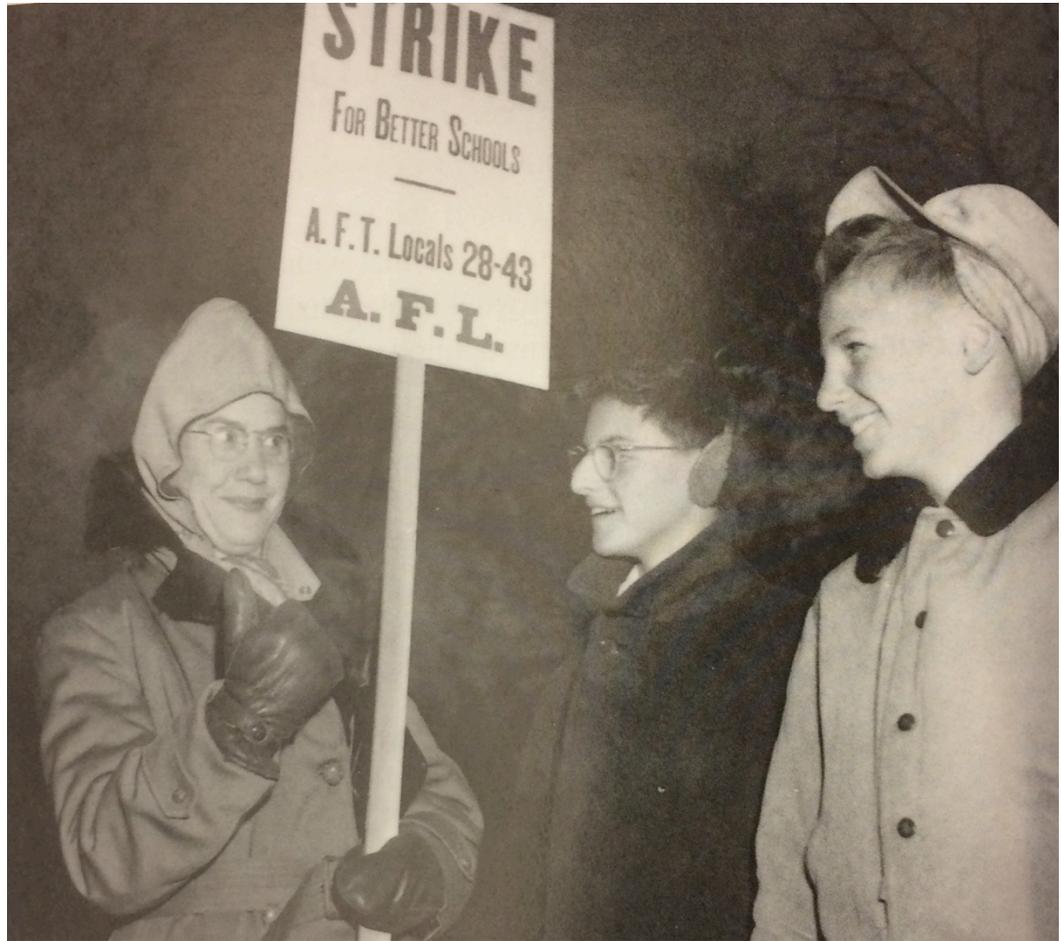
girls had all their little sororities and little groups, and naturally the guys weren't going to pay any attention to us, which was okay. So we were very lonely."¹⁰¹

The years following World War II would bring tremendous changes for African Americans throughout the United States. Desegregation, population growth, and immigration would all contribute to making Central a very different place for minority students than what it was its first 100 years.

Chapter 5: Post-War Changes (1945-1970)

The end of the war brought peace, but it also led to demands for reforms to the Public Schools. Decades of inadequate funding, poor leadership, and even corruption had left the schools in shambles. By this point, school finances were extremely thin. Saint Paul's per pupil spending was around \$132.83 — less than any other city of a comparable size. Buildings were in poor repair— and many schools had no soap, no towels, and no toilet paper. Classrooms were crowded —with sometimes as many as 50 students per classroom. Students had to pay for their own textbooks, and St. Paul teacher salaries were among the lowest in the country.¹⁰² Central social science teacher, Mrs. Manila Topdahl, joked to her students that “the Romans conquered the Greeks, and teachers have been slaves ever since.”¹⁰³

By November 1946, following a series of failed efforts to demand change through lobbying the city council, the mayor, and the legislature, and after an unsuccessful effort to change the city charter, the teachers had had enough. Topdahl, along with Mary McGough, principal at Jefferson Elementary, led the St. Paul Federation of Women Teachers as they began their plans to call a strike. On November 19th, during a tense meeting between the teachers union and the city council, the Superintendent James E. Marshall threatened teachers that if they attempted to strike, “they would never work again.”¹⁰⁴ Topdahl and her fellow teachers silently stood up and left the room.



1946 STRIKE, RAMSEY CO. HISTORY

On the morning of November 25th, as temperatures hovered around 3 degrees, Saint Paul teachers walked off the job in the first organized teachers' strike in U.S. history. Many parents and students joined the picket lines, including Central students Harvey Mackay and Ben Brattner. Mackay later recalled that nearly everyone was sympathetic to the teachers and cheered them on. But many others in the city were shocked. Former Governor Elmer L. Anderson later described the public's reaction; "Teachers just didn't do that— it would be like a priest picketing a church or a cathedral. It was just absolutely unheard of. Everybody was in a state of turmoil over the strike."¹⁰⁵

After five weeks of striking and numerous meetings, on December 27 an agreement was finally brokered. Teachers won an increase in per pupil spending and higher wages as well.¹⁰⁶ More significantly, the protesters were able to successfully argue for the re-establishment of an independent school board – separate from the management and budget of the city. Though it took some time, St. Paul's Independent School District #625 was created in 1965.¹⁰⁷ Topdahl's efforts deeply impressed the students, who dedicated that year's CEHISEAN yearbook to her, noting the value of her challenge to rise to Daniel Webster's challenge: "Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests and see whether we also in our day and generation may not perform *something worthy to be remembered*."

An ever-increasing St. Paul population following the war created space shortages in the schools yet again. As early as 1948, there was talk of building a new high school in the Highland Park area of St. Paul to relieve space pressures on Summit-University high schools Central, Mechanic Arts, and Marshall.¹⁰⁸ That year, an enrollment report on the Saint Paul Public Schools suggested that "present building surpluses in this area will be increased should a new high school be constructed in the Highland Park area."¹⁰⁹

Shifting ninth graders from senior to junior highs was one way the school board helped alleviate space shortages. Highland Park Junior High took ninth graders in 1958. Building new schools and improving existing ones were other solutions. In 1959, St. Paul voters passed a \$23.5 million bond to build four new high schools, improve the existing ones, and expand elementary schools throughout the city. The opening of other area high schools – including Highland Park Senior High in 1964 – helped ease

space pressures within Central, but by the early 1970s school officials and the community agreed on the need for a new, larger facility.



1958 SNO QUEEN, CEHISEAN

Central High certainly needed improved facilities in the 1940s and 1950s, but an equally — if not more pressing — need was addressing segregation and unequal educational opportunities. African American students who attended Central in the 1950s did not always receive the same attention as their white cohorts. As Bill White recalled in 1975;

“There are blacks in St. Paul over age 40 who still complain about the poor counseling they received as students in Central [where] they were literally told by the staff people that certain jobs, particularly in the professions, were closed to them. Consequently, they were not encouraged to pursue, what we normally describe as academic courses: those designed to qualify one for entrance into college or the university.”¹¹⁰

Central needed to change on many fronts.

Integration

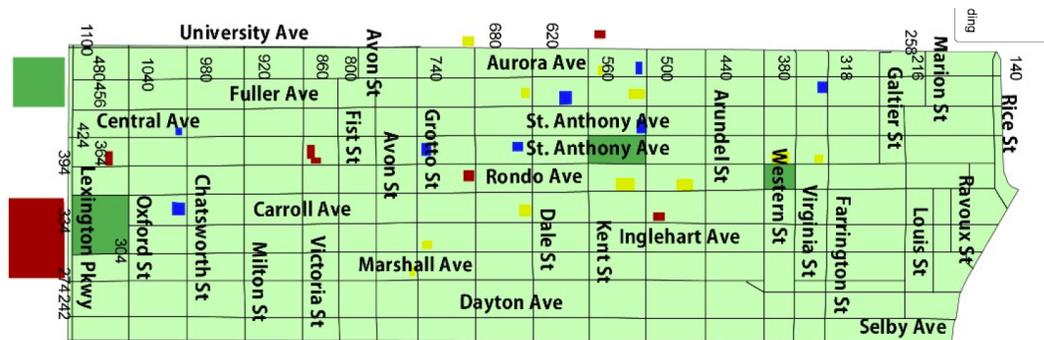
The process of integration took decades. The 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* required schools throughout the country to reevaluate racial imbalance. The court concluded that “in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.”¹¹¹ The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was “the most important remedy for implementing *Brown*.¹¹² In the summer of 1964, the St. Paul Board of Education established a committee of citizens representing a broad spectrum of the community to study racial imbalance in the St. Paul schools. The committee adopted a working definition of racial imbalance as existing in any school whose non-white ratio varied significantly from the same ratio in the district as a whole, and they developed a set of resolutions that ensured students would have equal education access.¹¹³ That year, of a total enrollment of 2,476 Central students, 219 were “Negro,” (9%) four “Indian,” four “Mexican,” and seven “Other Minority Group.” With the exception of Mechanic Arts High School, with 126 African American students out of 987, (13%) most St. Paul high schools were almost entirely white.¹¹⁴ Solutions proposed by the committee included open enrollment, busing, redistricting, and the construction of new schools. Busing was not adopted at that time.

In 1967, the St. Paul Board of Education passed a resolution pledging itself to the goal of integrated education.¹¹⁵ And in 1968, the Board passed a regulation stating that all bused-in children in the elementary schools would be free to attend the junior and senior high schools where the children in the elementary school would normally go.¹¹⁶ Such early

“freedom of choice” efforts to desegregate American schools proved inadequate, and by the late 1960s schools across the country were implementing “forced” integration. One of these new methods was busing. This was also the period of “white flight” as many white families moved to the suburbs.

Central’s total minority population in 1964 was around 9 percent. African American students made up the majority of these.¹¹⁷ By 1968, its black population had risen to around 25 percent.¹¹⁸ St. Paul’s black population nearly doubled between 1950 and 1970 (from 5,575 to 10,930), during the last two decades of the “Great Migration,” a demographic change that would have an impact on Central’s student body.¹¹⁹

African American Student Life in the 1960s



RONDO NEIGHBORHOOD, TRUE NORTH

Before the construction of Interstate 94 destroyed it, the majority of St. Paul African-Americans lived in the Rondo neighborhood. In 1950, over 85 percent lived within its borders, which was roughly bounded by Lexington Avenue, Rice Street, University Avenue, and Marshall Avenue. According to former Rondo resident Scott Price, if you lived in Rondo in the late

1950s you “had two choices of high schools: you went to Central or you went to Mechanic Arts. You didn’t have any other choices – those were your two community schools.”¹²⁰



TRACK TEAM, 1950-1969, MNHS

According to African American Melvin Thomas Henderson, who sang, played football and ran track, “athletics kept us out of trouble because you had to work out and you had to do certain things and stay in shape. The athletics and the singing kept us kinda on the straight and narrow for the most part.” Henderson was Central’s Homecoming King in 1961, and although he recalls that “there was attitude about interracial dating” he and his friends – all good athletes – “we dated who we wanted to date. . . Our parents were not exactly fine with it. They just felt that society wasn’t ready for that at the time, back in the 1950s and 60s.”¹²¹

Scott Price, who attended Central in the late 1960s and early 1970s painted a very different picture:

“It was a pretty tough transition for a lot of people, a lot of fights and things. A lot of racial tension back and forth during that time because it was the first time these guys had ventured out. The first time they’re invited into these other people’s community school. They didn’t want them there. The kids didn’t want them there. I think the parents and administration figured it was time, but kids weren’t really accepting of that. So it was a tough, tough transition time for a lot of people.”¹²²

Within Central’s walls, race-based assumptions continued to linger. Though some students, parents, and administrators adapted to integration easily, others did not.

Compounding the challenges of integration was the fact that much of the African American community had been dislocated and fragmented by the construction of Interstate 94 in the 1950s. Although statistically small, the neighborhood had been culturally cohesive and its destruction had an enormous impact.

By the late 1960s, frustrations about broader injustices and racism were boiling in nearly every major city. In April 1968, after Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, riots broke out in Minneapolis, as well as in other cities. Over the summer, tensions continued to simmer. On August 30, 1968, a major riot involving hundreds of youth broke out on Selby Avenue, resulting in the shootings of four policemen, teargasing, multiple fires, injuries, and arrests.¹²³ When school began a few days later, many students brought their heightened awareness into Central. That fall, an incident between a white parent and a black student triggered a year-long effort to combat inequality at the school, echoing the spirit of activism from a generation earlier.

Throughout the fall, many parents had been assigned as “parent observers” to the classrooms, an effort intended to calm racial tensions. On November 28th, “between 50 and 75 black students walked out of Central High School Wednesday following a name-calling incident between a white parent observer and a black female student.”¹²⁴ Very quickly, sympathetic students, teachers, and parents began to organize. Senior Larry Clark became the spokesperson for the group, which also included students Marshall Martin, Darrel Gundy and Junald Braddock.¹²⁵ Clark presented a list of grievances including issues such as inadequate science supplies, racist teachers, unfair expelling practices, lack of black teachers, and ineffective instruction. Leaders within Saint Paul’s black community added their voices. Mrs. James Taylor, program director at the Hallie Q. Brown Community House warned that “we have a very serious situation at Central, far more serious than many realize. And communications are terrible. Central requires immediate action.”



1968 SIT IN PROTESTERS, ST. PAUL DISPATCH

In the first weeks of December, students staged additional protests. On December 12, about 300 students walked out. The following day, the group swelled to around 400 students, about a third of the school population. The group did not report for their home room classes, instead arriving around 8:45 and staging a sit-in in the school's first floor hallways. "Some students were chanting folk songs to guitar accompaniment, and clapping along, while others sat quietly or chatted in the corridor."¹²⁶ Though many of these students were suspended, their efforts succeeded in gaining the District's attention. By January, Reno Rossini had been hired as a new principal. Rossini quickly met with the student leaders and agreed to many of their demands. A full-time social worker was assigned to the school (a first for the district). A special effort to recruit black teachers was begun (just 2 of the 70 teachers had been black). In February, Charles Rogers, a black social studies teacher from Murray High School was hired as assistant principal. Many of the suspended student activists were readmitted.¹²⁷

While student activists appreciated these developments, they continued to keep pressure on the administration and raise awareness of racism and inequality. On April 3, 1969, under threat of suspension, around 130 white and black students staged a peaceful walk-out to join a march lead by University of Minnesota students. By April 15, barely half of these students had been readmitted.¹²⁸ Though the costs of protesting was high, Central students continued to follow their conscience.

Central student's activism helped bring attention to the broader issues of inequity and segregation in the schools. In 1970, the state of Minnesota set a 1976 deadline for desegregation of Central High School, Mechanic Arts Junior-Senior High and Roosevelt Junior High. This included a reduction of the minority population of any school to no more than 30 percent; redrawing boundaries; and the elimination of all six-year secondary schools. As the [report] stated,

“It is the function of the school to take the children as it finds them with all their diversity of race, religion, intelligence, and other background, and to provide them with a planned series of experiences which over a period of years will result in their development into intelligent, good, cultured, and efficient citizens. In fulfilling this purpose, the school through its curriculum will attempt to develop each individual according to his interests, needs, ability and talents, not only for his own personal happiness and self realization, but also for the improvement of society through his own cooperative activity in the interest of all.”¹²⁹

The report further defined the cost to bring the city high schools up to standard. They recommended closing the Mechanic Arts High School, maintaining that “the original building was built in 1910 and has had one addition since that time (1930). A great deal of money would have to be expended to bring it to the level of our new senior high schools.”¹³⁰ The report also proposed closing Marshall Junior High and converting Monroe from a Junior-Senior High to a High School. In the end, the Board

determined that “a policy of open enrollment, development of magnet schools, and voluntary busing should be encouraged by the school administration in order to accommodate the wide range of desires and opinion which exist in our community.”¹³¹

	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	White	Total	Percent Minority
1964 (grades 9-12)	219	9*	4	4	2231	2467	9%
1975 (grades 10-12)	331	2	22	4	771	1,130	32%
1985 (grades 9-12)	498	104	31	30	991	1,654	40%
1995 (grades 9-12)	515	273	49	22	1,138	1,997	43%
2005 (grades 9-12)	638	541	108	24	759	2,070	63%
2015 (grades 9-12)	615	446	89	23	689	1862	63%

¹³²

To draw white families back to inner-city schools, many school districts designated particular schools as “magnets.” Magnet schools offered specialized programs and curriculum designed to appeal to white students and attract them to schools needing to be better integrated.

At the same time St. Paul's public schools were addressing the existing diversity issue, immigrants from Southeast Asia were beginning to arrive in the city, further changing the ethnic landscape. Beginning in the 1950s, new immigration laws had opened up immigration from China, the Philippines, Korea, and Japan, and the number of Asian-born residents of Ramsey County increased from 348 in 1950 to 2,130 in 1970.¹³³ The fall of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos to Communist forces in the mid-to-late 1970s would force the escape of hundreds of thousands of people from this part of the world. Many of them would find their way to St. Paul.

Chapter 6: A New High School Is Built (1970-1980)

Despite the fact that, based on a 1965 recommendation, the ninth grade had been moved out of Central in 1966, it was still overcrowded. By 1970, the first of the post-war “Baby Boomers” were starting high school. Enrollment surged across the country and St. Paul was no exception. Central High School was overcrowded and many of its facilities were outdated. A March 1970 editorial in the school newspaper disparaged the school library, which the author said “does not measure up to accepted standards for high school libraries. It is understaffed, too small, does not have enough books, enough audio-visual equipment or enough money to correct the faults of the library facilities.” One example of the library’s shortcomings was its dearth of books. Standards set by the American Library Association and the National Education Association listed 20 volumes per student as the minimum requirement. In 1970, Central had nine.¹³⁴ That year, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of their schools as learning institutions, a team of five teachers from St. Paul’s Central High School and five teachers from Minneapolis North High School surveyed each other’s facilities.¹³⁵



1972 HOMECOMING, CEHISEAN

Central celebrated the 100th anniversary of its first graduating class on April 29, 1970. A committee consisting of faculty, students, and alumni planned the program.¹³⁶ The School Board study conducted that year had found that the “improvement of secondary educational facilities has been substantially accomplished everywhere in the city with the exception of the Summit-University area.” Although its facilities were in dire need of updating, positive changes in curriculum were happening within Central’s walls.

The Quest Program

In 1973, Central High School began to offer the Quest Program. This “school within a school for motivated and responsible students” was the first gifted and talented program approved by the Saint Paul Public

Schools. As an early brochure about the program asserted, “Fine efforts have been made to provide additional help to those students who have difficulty succeeding in school. It seems, however, that less has been done to provide the creative and responsible student with a kind of program which will challenge him and meet his needs.”¹³⁷

Quest operated as a department of Central but more independently than the others. Admission to the program was selective: students submitted a plan of study and two letters of reference, and committee of students and teachers made the final decisions. As an early application stated, “The Quest committee believes that learning can best take place in an atmosphere that is free from coercion. For education to be meaningful it must be desired by the individual, oriented to his needs, and, to a large extent, self-initiated.”¹³⁸

Many Central students embraced the new program. In 1974, student Mark Rosen, one of the first Quest students, expressed his frustration with the school prior to the Quest program: “I felt like I was kind of being [cheated]. . . With the exception of a few special teachers who could really make you work, all the classes were geared to the lowest level of students. The discipline problems got most of the attention.”¹³⁹

Plans for a New School Cause Conflicts

At the same time the Quest program was being established, Central was for the first time in a half-century making plans to build a new school. Where this new school should be located created tensions early on. In 1973, the St Paul School Board and the Housing and Redevelopment Association (HRA) sparred over where to build. School Board members

initially preferred a site east of what was then the Oxford Playground, across the street from the existing location. The HRA championed a site six blocks away, at the corner of Selby Avenue and St. Albans Street. In arguing against the School Board proposal, HRA Director Edward Helfeld said, “Why take 50 sound homes when we can get a larger site by clearing dilapidated homes?” At the time, however, it was thought that white families would prefer to send their children to the more “neutral territory” of the Oxford location as opposed to the Selby site, which was in the more traditionally black Rondo neighborhood.¹⁴⁰ School board member (and future St. Paul mayor) George Latimer championed a location on “neutral turf” to allay parental fears and encourage voluntary desegregation. “If we can choose what is perceived as neutral turf, then we make it more likely for integration to occur on a voluntary basis. (Some) people feel Dale-Selby is alien territory.”¹⁴¹



1980 SKYDIVING CLUB, CEHISEAN

Another proposed site (there were fourteen in all) was just west of the St. Paul Technical-Vocational Institute in the Cathedral Hill neighborhood. In a

November 1973 letter, the State of Minnesota Department of Education outlined its rationale for supporting the option of staying at the current location rather than moving elsewhere. The potential for expanding the Central campus to the east, across Lexington Avenue, appealed to them. “The expanded Central site including Dunning Field and the area to the east of Lexington affords the best flexibility with regard to transportation, site development, and expansion. It also provides the best possibility for economical use as future development takes place.” One negative factor – the discontinuity of the site at Lexington – could, they argued, be mitigated by a tunnel or bridge. “In terms of state standards and criteria developed by your school district, none of the sites is completely adequate, but the expanded Central site is the most desirable and would, therefore, be the only site we *might* approve of, pending of course, further information concerning the possibility of bridging or tunneling under Lexington and the development of the site itself.”¹⁴²

There were three options if Central was to remain on the corner of Lexington and Marshall. The first would be to tear down the Clarence Johnston building and rebuild on-site. Estimates for constructing a completely new building were between \$12.5 and \$13.5 million.¹⁴³ The second option – which Superintendent George Young favored – was to build around the existing structure. That option was estimated to cost between \$11 and \$12 million. A third option was to remodel the old building and construct two new buildings on the site.

Several community leaders championed a completely new building. “We will not accept anything but a new school,” asserted Reverend William Young, President of the St. Paul Urban League. Reverend Amos Brown, President of the St. Paul chapter of the NAACP, argued, “We were promised a new school and that’s it.”

While Central was making plans for its future, Mechanic Arts High School was ending its era. Mechanic Arts graduated its last class in 1976. Its building was later razed to make way for government buildings.

The city hired the architectural firm of Ellerbe Architects to design the new building. Founded in St. Paul in 1909 by a graduate of Mechanic Arts High School, this well-known and respected architectural firm's projects included many buildings on the Mayo Clinic campus in Rochester and the 15-story administrative building at the 3M Center in Maplewood. Ellerbe Architects developed ideas and a committee consisting of parents and teachers chose the final plan.

To save money, Ellerbe Architects recommended gutting the Clarence Johnston building, leaving intact what original blueprints showed as a steel frame. This approach was chosen. However, in February 1975 school officials learned that the frame was actually concrete – a cost-saving measure taken back in 1910. In the end, the concrete frame fortunately was determined strong enough and construction proceeded.¹⁴⁴

The question of where to put students during construction created its own tension in the spring of 1975. School administrators favored a plan to relocate students to the new Bethel College campus in Arden Hills. This proposal was “met with a cool response” at a school board meeting in March. The most outspoken opposition came from board member James Griffin who argued that a temporary relocation to Bethel would result in “the disruption of 1,200 students . . . and many other problems that we can't see now.” He proposed building a new building on the site of the stadium. The cost of the Bethel relocation was pegged at \$800,000 while phased construction would be between \$750,000 and \$1.4 million.

Another important factor in the decision to stay put through the remodel was the desire to retain its status as the oldest continuously running high school in Minnesota. And so, in the end, students took classes in the morning, construction occurred in the afternoon, and Central's claim stood.

Construction work began on September 23, 1977 and was initially concentrated in four areas: the northeast corner, the northwest corner, the southeast corner, and the western part. The plan was for students to move into the additions for the 1978-79 school year while the inside of the building was being remodeled.¹⁴⁵ However, a fire on the fourth floor stopped construction for a time and portable classrooms and split scheduling temporarily were used to accommodate students.



1978 – ARCHITECT’S PERSPECTIVE, CENTRAL OFFICE

While the new building's modern amenities fulfilled the needs of the student body, its detractors were many. After the new school opened in 1979, local architecture critic Larry Millet described the building as “the nadir of modern school architecture in St. Paul, a building so resolutely grim and uninviting that it suggests that education can only be viewed as a form of incarceration.”¹⁴⁶ Comparisons to a prison persist to this day.

Desegregation, Racial Tensions, and a Swimming Pool

As part of the plans to improve Central, and to strengthen its appeal as a magnet schools, a new swimming pool was considered. In 1975, Superintendent George Young commented on the role of the magnet school in desegregation in his statement regarding the construction of a swimming pool in the new building:

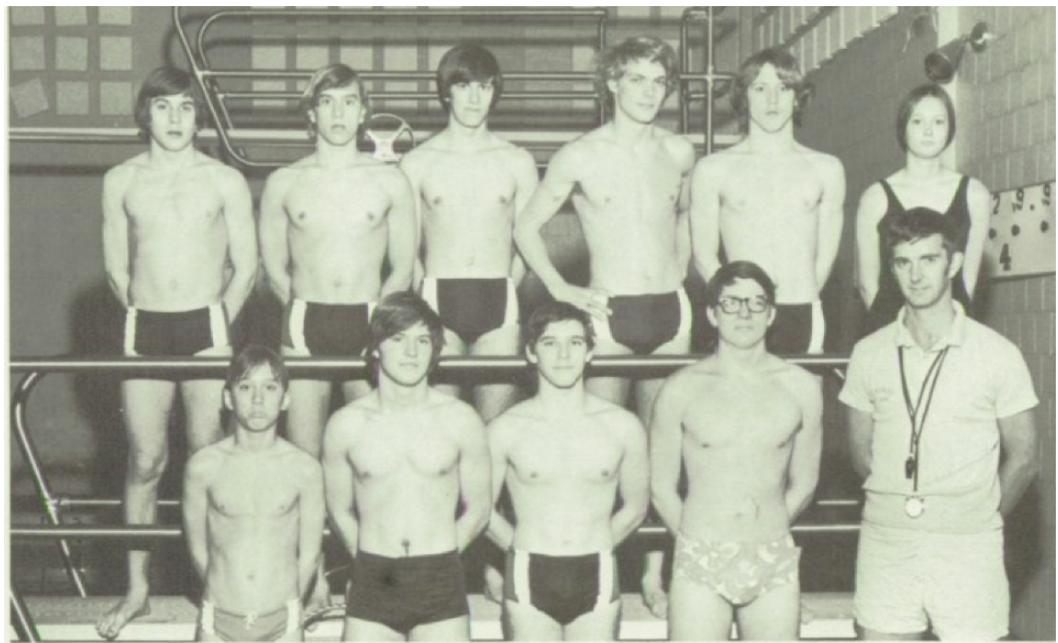
“A swimming pool is an essential part of any adequate high school educational program. The new high school at the Central site is meant to be much more than just adequate. It is intended to be a magnet school, attracting students from the entire city, and its success depends upon voluntary enrollment from throughout the city. A pool is essential to the success of its program.”¹⁴⁷

At the same time Central was constructing a new high school building, the city was following through with plans to build a community pool across Lexington Avenue, to be called Oxford Pool. The issue of the proposed swimming pools became a major controversy in 1975 as community members and school officials faced off over whether there should be two pools or one, and if so, where it should be located.

On May 28, 1975 an incident on a Metropolitan Transit Commission bus in which a white St. Paul resident was harassed and beaten by several young black riders was used by Superintendent George Young as “proof that violent racial tensions exist in St. Paul and not too far beneath the surface.”¹⁴⁸ Young feared that the use of the public Oxford Pool by Central students could contribute to more racial tension should a similar incident as the one on the bus happen there. School board members discussed the possibility of building an enclosed, heated overpass over Lexington

Avenue to carry high school students safely between the school and pool. The cost for the walkway was estimated to be \$400,000 whereas the cost of a new pool in the high school building was \$500,000. Despite protests by some, including Debbie Montgomery, vice chairman of the Model Neighborhood Planning Council, who called the pool “an irresponsible use of taxpayers’ money” and St. Paul Mayor Lawrence Cohen, who said the pool was “a stupid idea,” the plans to construct a separate pool for the school proceeded.¹⁴⁹

Title IX and Its Impact on Girls Athletics at Central



1972 1st CO-ED SWIM TEAM, CEHISEAN

Central’s girls’ swim team would be among the earliest beneficiaries of the new school swimming pool. In 1977, Central girls got their own team instead of being part of a co-ed team as in past seasons. They had Title IX to thank for that development. Passed in 1972, Title IX had a major and lasting impact on girls and women’s organized athletics. The law states

that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The first girls’ swim team had ten members, including one eighth-grader from Ramsey Junior High. They practiced at the Technical Vocational Institute pool until the new pool was finished.¹⁵⁰ The girls swim team would grow to become one of the most popular and successful of Central’s sports.

Other teams that were previously co-ed but split in the 1970s were golf, wrestling, gymnastics, and tennis. It took time and effort to build these new programs. In 1978, the yearbook described Central’s girls’ tennis team as “very young and inexperienced.”¹⁵¹ Other teams had a more rapid adjustment. The girls track team, formed in 1974, won the city title four years in a row in its first four years.¹⁵² Girls have had their own basketball team at Central since 1902 and they, too, were very successful in the 1970s. They won the state championship in 1976, beating Benilde-St. Margaret’s in the final seconds.

These were years of tremendous change for girls’ sports at Central and across the country. While Central’s female athletes were getting their first opportunity to compete on their own sports teams, their school was itself being transformed.



1980 TENNIS, CEHISEAN

Chapter 7: A School for the Modern Era (1980-2016)

On the evening of December 8, 1981, Central officially opened its doors for a dedication open house that offered “displays, demonstrations, and a ‘taste’ of foreign countries.” Every floor of Minnesota’s only five-story high school had its own theme. On the fifth floor, the World Languages Department cooked for visitors. On the fourth floor the English department “offered stories and poems written by students.” A Trinidad Drums group performed and science classes offered demonstrations on the third floor, and athletic organizations put on demonstrations on the second floor. The Central community had waited a long time and had endured considerable disruptions over four years while its new building was constructed. The open house demonstrated that it was worth the wait.

With the new building came a new identity for Central. As student Chris Lidstad stated in 1982,

“Three years ago, Central was a school without identity; there was a lack of pride, unity, and interaction to produce positive things. . . . Now, at the conclusion of the third year since that lifeless picture . . . our school is no longer thought of as that ‘violent school’ that we all heard it was as freshmen and sophomores. Central presents an image of stability, progress, and productivity to the city of St. Paul and the surrounding community.”¹⁵³

Dr. Wayne Jennings, Central’s principal stated that same year that:

“Central offered [him] a challenge. There were changes being made in the building, in classes, and in enrollment boundaries. Central wanted to attract students, not only to participate in the new programs, but also to learn in a healthy environment, with an exceptional teaching staff that cares about teenagers. The idea of a

magnet school at the secondary level fulfilled that need. . . . There is a new era in education blossoming in this building.”¹⁵⁴

The Central community had many reasons to be proud of their new school. The redesigned building was a thoroughly modern facility and was a magnet for the arts, including theater, broadcasting, music, and graphic arts.



2014 CHOIR, NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Central’s performing arts offerings had been popular and highly regarded for decades, but the new state-of-the-art “Black Box” theater helped inspire a new era of creativity and success. This is where the Touring Theater rehearsed, under the direction of Jan Mandell, who was the faculty advisor for the group more than two decades. As a 1990 *Times* article stated, “The Traveling Theater is a multi-cultural group of students and artists dedicated to creating original works that address the needs of special audiences in the community. Their works include such topics as racism, chemical abuse, sexuality, the changing family, and global

issues.”¹⁵⁵ The Touring Theater was a highly respected program, and was widely recognized throughout the Midwest. In October 1989, the group received the William W. Griffin Performing Arts Award and also received the Mayor’s Public Art Award.¹⁵⁶

In addition to the new theater, another draw in the new building was a state-of-the-art recording studio. Central’s recording and broadcasting program was fairly unique in the 1980s, with only two other Twin Cities schools equipped with the same facilities. Students taking the T.V. and Radio Production class put on a weekly variety show and a daily news show, where they worked closely with the Student Council and other groups to keep the school informed of activities.¹⁵⁷

Under the direction of George Scott, Central’s graphic arts department attracted students who, in the mid-1980s, could take Introduction to Graphics, Beginning Screen Printing, and Advanced Screen Printing. Interest in this subject remains; an introductory Graphic Arts course is offered at Central today.¹⁵⁸

For decades, Central had been known for its strong music program. The numerous bands, orchestras, and choirs served many students. In addition to the more traditional music ensembles, in the mid-1980s, Central students had the special opportunity to play in one of several Trinidad steel drums bands taught by faculty member Cliff Alexis, a native of Trinidad.¹⁵⁹ Since the building re-opened, music students have played challenging repertoire and traveled. In the more recent years, Central ensembles have traveled to New York, New Orleans, San Diego, San Francisco, Chicago, and Nashville. They have a tradition of first place

awards and superior ratings at local, state, and national competitions and festivals.¹⁶⁰

Over the past 25 years, the recording studio and the music instruction program have inspired in a variety of musicians and entertainers. DJ Skee (Scott Keeney, class of 2002) described the impact of his time at Central, “Without question, St. Paul Central helped make me. I uncovered my passion for the music business through the recording program at the school. Without it, I would have never become a DJ or learned the technical and theoretical elements of music I have used throughout my career. Central set a crucial foundation for where I am today.”¹⁶¹

Academic Programs

Though an outstanding performing arts program has been a hallmark of Central, the school is even better known for creative and innovative instructional programs and academic excellence. Since the creation of the Quest program in 1973, faculty and staff have continued to develop new academic options for students.



1982 QUEST PROGRAM, CEHISEAN

In the 1970s, the program called School Within a School (SWS) provided a novel opportunity for struggling Central students to stay in school and improve their basic skills. As one student demonstrated in 1974, SWS was also a social, supportive, and encouraging format for many students: “We haven’t got time to let a shade of black or white or red or yellow stand in the way of friendship. We work together down here. We don’t have to! We *want* to get together!”¹⁶² Later, SWS moved across the street to the Oxford Community Center, but many of its students continued to take classes at Central.¹⁶³

In the mid 1990s, the Quest program produced plays which were popular with student.¹⁶⁴ Today's Quest program for humanities honors students remains popular. The program offers a series of rotating courses on a variety of humanities topics such as Ancient Civilizations, Shakespeare Tragedy, the Harlem Renaissance, and Environmental Science. Classes combine students grades 9-12, and emphasize skills through writing essays, research papers, critical papers, and objective and subjective examinations. Enrollment is open to any student, but the challenging coursework appeals to gifted, talented, and highly motivated students who intend to take college achievement tests such as the PSAT, SAT, or ACT.

Central offers the largest International Baccalaureate program (IB) program of only 21 high schools in Minnesota.¹⁶⁵ Based on the curriculum developed in Switzerland in the 1960s, Central's IB program launched in 1988, and emphasizes an international approach to learning: focusing on understanding ideas as global citizens, and through multiple perspectives and a variety of cultures. Areas of study have always included six subject areas. In 1989 these were: American and English literature; foreign language; American and World History; geometry, algebra II/trigonometry; biology, chemistry; and electives such as art and Latin.¹⁶⁶ The current IB program is similar.¹⁶⁷ Today, nearly one-third of Central students participate in the IB program and between ten and twenty seniors earn the full IB diploma each year.¹⁶⁸ The requirements for earning the IB diploma include taking exams in all six IB subject groups, a Theory of Knowledge class, writing a lengthy research paper under the guidance of a faculty advisor, and fulfilling service hours.

In 1994, Central added began offering Advanced Placement (AP). Students who take the AP college-level courses have the opportunity to take an exam in that area at the end of the year and, if their scores are high enough, they are awarded college credit at many colleges and universities. AP classes are currently offered in art history, the sciences, economics, English, computer science, and Russian.

In the 1990s, summer “Connections” classes were offered at area locations including William Mitchell College of Law and St. Paul Technical College. These courses in such varied subjects as Auto Mechanics, Emergency 911, Bricklaying, Cosmetology, Law, Chinese, and American Sign Language gave Central students the opportunity to learn about subjects not offered in the traditional school setting.¹⁶⁹ This connection between Central and post-secondary education soon led to additional programs.

In 1994, the school also began offering the College in the Schools Program (CIS) in partnership with the University of Minnesota. Through this program, advanced seniors have an opportunity to take introductory-level college courses and earn University of Minnesota credits. A similar program, Career Pathway Academy (CPA), offers students the ability to attend classes and earn college credits at Saint Paul College. Students can complete courses in Business, Certified Nursing and Computer Technology.

Another program that allows high school students to earn college credit is the Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO). Most PSEO courses are offered on the campus of a local college or university, though some courses are online. This option is available to 10th, 11th, and 12th graders.



1985 BASKETBALL, MNHS

Auto-mechanics have been another popular subject for Central students for years. In the 1980s, the school purchased a garage at Selby Avenue and Dunlap Street from the Skelly Gas Station to use for auto classes. Today, the program is a part of the Saint Paul Automotive Center program. Beginning students in Auto Tech 1 learn about different pieces of a car, while students in Auto Tech 2 and 3 learn hands-on skills at the garage.¹⁷⁰ Ed Roth taught these classes for many years. Matt Lijewski currently oversees the Central Automotive Tuning Club.

Today, Central students can also participate in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, a class that provides instruction centered around reading, writing, team work and much more. Students participate in group tutoring, career exploration opportunities and college campus visits. AVID students consistently demonstrate increases in

school attendance and enrollment in advanced classes, higher graduation rates, and acceptance to and enrollment in post-secondary opportunities.

Perhaps because Central students have such diverse academic options, they are more likely to stay in school. Central's graduation rate for decades has been among the highest in the nation, over 90 percent. Every year, Central students receive National Merit Scholarships or Commendations. In 1989, fifteen Central students were named as Commended National Merit Scholars, and nine as Semi-Finalists, and four African American students received National Merit recognition for being in the upper six percent of African American students who took test.¹⁷¹ Three Central students were named National Merit semifinalists in 2016. About 77 percent of Central students attend some form of post-secondary education.¹⁷²

Health and Social Services

Central also has a number of important non-academic services that assist the student body. One program that helped many Central students stay in school was the child care center. Organized as part of the Omnibus School Aids Bill in 1985, the center had 17 children enrolled in the 1995-96 school year. In addition to having a safe place to leave their children during the school day, students could also take courses in child care in the program. Central does not currently have a child care program but pregnant students have the option to attend the AGAPE school on University Avenue.¹⁷³

Since 1976, Central has had an on-site health clinic, staffed by local health personnel.¹⁷⁴ Currently, the Central Health Clinic operates in partnership with West Side Community Health Services.¹⁷⁵ Central's counseling services are also highly praised. In 1990, Central counselor Renee Ransom was named Minnesota School Counselor of the Year.¹⁷⁶



HMONG CULTURE GROUP, NEWSPAPER OFFICE

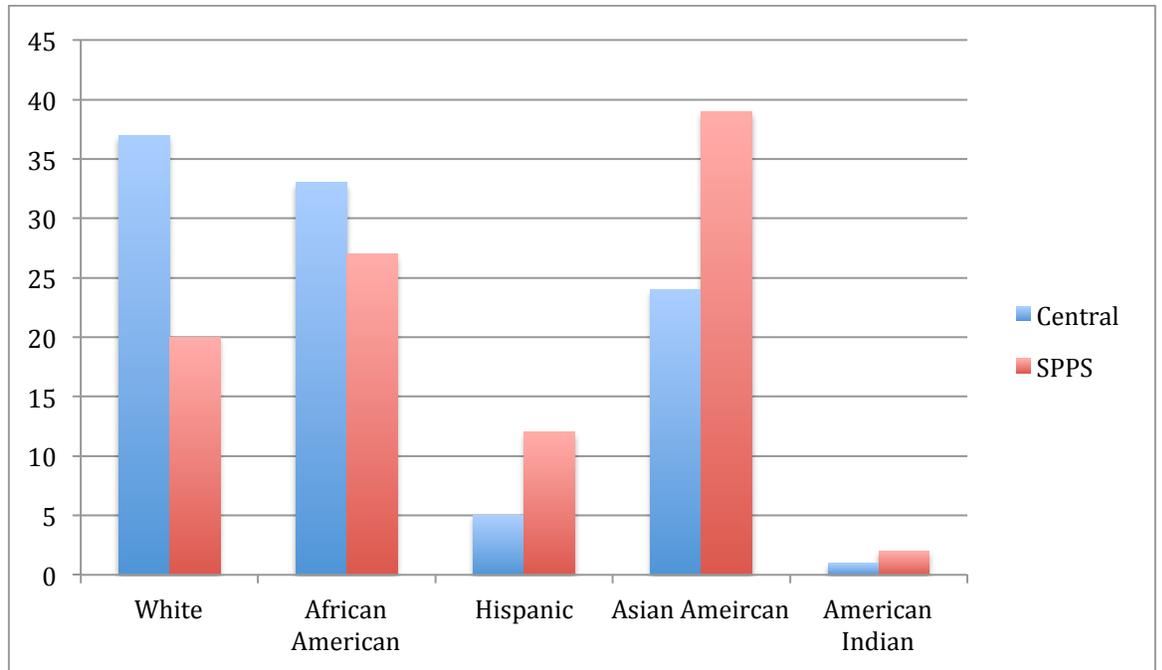
Changing Demographics

Just as Central's academic program is incredibly diverse, so is its student body. While white students were in the majority for most of Central's first 120 years, that picture has transformed dramatically in the past three decades. In the 1980s, the influx of immigrants from Southeast Asia began to alter the demographics of Central's student body dramatically. With this rapid change came an adjustment period. The first Hmong families arrived in St. Paul in 1976, joining Vietnamese refugees who had fled their country after the fall of Saigon in 1975.¹⁷⁷ In one attempt to smooth interactions between Asian students and the rest of the student body, 1983 Central students formed an Intercultural Discussion group. As one member asserted, "The students involved realized that a lack of understanding of

our Southeast Asian (SEA) students was a major source of tension at school.”¹⁷⁸ A two-page photo spread in the 1982 CEHISEAN proudly claimed that “Central Students Represent the Entire Spectrum of St. Paul’s Diverse Population.”¹⁷⁹ Founded during the 1989-90 school year, the Central Asian Culture Club (CACC) had fifteen original members. By 1993, 41 students were members and in 2015 [over 100 students] participated in the popular organization.

Throughout the 1990s, Central’s demographics continued to shift. Along with a broader array of racial and ethnic diversity came an expanding awareness of and sensitivity toward differences between students. Kerstin Beyer, 1995, recalled proudly the moment in the fall of 1994 when all the members of the Homecoming Royal Court stood in solidarity with a fellow king candidate. Wearing a skirt instead of pants, he was informed he could not enter the hall with the rest of the court. Instead, the entire group of student candidates refused to enter the hall until he was allowed to join them. The coordinators agreed, and the group entered together.¹⁸⁰

Today, Central’s student body reflects the picture of the St. Paul schools as a whole. In 2015, the figures were Native American: one percent Central, two percent district; Hispanic: five percent Central, 12 percent district; Asian: 24 percent Central, 39 percent district; African American: 33 percent Central, 27 percent district; and white: 37 percent Central, 20 percent district.¹⁸¹



Many student organizations have formed at Central in recent years that celebrate the different minority populations within the school. One of the largest ethnic groups at Central is Hmong. More Hmong live in St. Paul than in any other city in the United States.¹⁸²

In recent years, immigrants from Africa have settled in St. Paul. The majority of these immigrants (60 percent) come from East African nations such as Somalia and Ethiopia. Twenty-five percent are from West African countries like Liberia and Nigeria. Minnesota is now home to the ninth-largest African community in the country.¹⁸³ The Central Minority Education Program (CMEP), was formed in the early 1990s, and had quickly grown to approximately 150 members 1993.¹⁸⁴ To assist the growing African student population, the Summit-University Tutorial Program for African American students at Central met twice weekly in the early 1990s.¹⁸⁵ In the mid to late 1990s, fleeing war and famine in their homeland, African immigrants began to settle in the Twin Cities. They came from Somalia,

Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Cameroon, Senegal, Chad and the Sudan. In 2000, St. Paul's Somali population was just over one thousand. Today population estimates range from 40,000 to 100,000. A new Pan-African Student Union formed in 2016, celebrating and honoring the many diverse African backgrounds represented at Central. Many of the new African immigrants are Muslim and these students formed the Muslim Students Association (MSA).

In addition to assisting a diverse ethnic population, Central has since the early 1990s provided a supportive environment for students with nontraditional sexual orientations. In 1991, students formed a Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual group that the school health clinic sponsored.¹⁸⁶ They changed their name to GiBLLeTS (Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender) in 1993. A Gay-Straight Alliance was formed in 1997.

Athletics



2014 BADMINTON CHAMPS, CEHISEAN

Hundreds of students participate each year on one of Central's athletic teams. In the 2015-16 school year, Central students could participate in football, soccer, tennis, swimming, basketball, track, gymnastics, hockey, wrestling, Nordic skiing, downhill skiing, badminton, softball, golf, baseball, and lacrosse. Central also has three adapted sports teams – soccer, floor hockey, and bowling – for physically challenged athletes.

Central's athletic program has produced several Olympians in the past two decades. John Roethlisberger, a three-time Olympic gymnast, graduated from Central in 1988. Three-time state cross-country ski champion and 1995 graduate Barb Jones participated in the 2002 winter Olympics in Salt Lake.¹⁸⁷ Micah Boyd, who began rowing while at Central in the late 1990s was on the eight shell team that won the bronze medal at the 2008 Olympics. And 2008 graduate Susie Scanlan won the bronze medal in fencing at the 2012 summer Olympic Games. She trained at the St. Paul-based Twin City Fencing Club while a student at Central (as the once-popular program had been discontinued).

Central High *Times*

Another popular organization has been the school newspaper. The Central *Times* has given students an opportunity to learn about and report on their community. Published monthly during the school year, the *Times* has informed the Central community since 1921.¹⁸⁸ One of the most popular issues in recent years has been the April Fools' issue. The 1997 issue "informed" students that graduation would be delayed due to the keynote speaker's major surgery, and that the prom location had been changed to the gym. In 2004, an article reported that faculty advisor Jack Schlukieber

was to start a Ribbon Dancing Club at Central, fulfilling a life-long dream of his. The National Honor Society was revealed as a cult, and the Central “Cow Tippers” team went to nationals.

The hundreds of issues of the Central High *Times* and its antecedent over the past century and a half have documented the rich history of Minnesota’s oldest high school. Student academic and athletic achievements, the diversity of the student body, the challenges the institution has faced and the strength with which it met these challenges – all of these things have shaped St. Paul Central High School and will continue to do so for generations of students to come.

Conclusion

Early alumni Fannie Haynes and A. P. Warren undoubtedly would be in awe of their alma mater in 2016. Today, over 1850 students attend Saint Paul Central and participate in a huge variety of academic and social activities. The 2016 CEHISEAN includes dozens of organizations available to students, from the Robotics club to the Science Olympiad to Table Tennis.

Central's long tradition of academic excellence, dating back to its early and numerous Rhodes Scholars, remains a source of pride as well. Central's graduation rate is extremely high, (91% in 2014) and higher than the national rate (82%).¹⁸⁹ The International Baccalaureate program continues to appeal to students from across the city, and almost half of Central students take advantage of the numerous Advanced Placement classes offered each year.

Central's diversity is another important part of its identity. For the past decade, Central's minority population has remained at around two-thirds.¹⁹⁰ Thirty-nine languages are spoken in the homes of Central students today, and many students are first and second generation immigrants.

In addition to racial and ethnic diversity, Central students represent every range of the economic spectrum. In 2016, 49 percent of Central students received free lunch. And in 2011, the high school began offering a free breakfast to all students. Called Breakfast To Go (B2G) the program "allows students to select a school breakfast to eat in the classroom while teachers take attendance, collect homework, read, or complete administrative tasks."¹⁹¹ This pragmatic solution echoes the same spirit of

the initial lunch offerings of 1912, when Principal V. K. Froula described how students “rush on to school, allowing only enough time to avoid tardiness.”

A spirit of activism remains strong, too, echoing the efforts of the 1881 students who campaigned door-to-door for a new school, and the 1969 students who held a sit-in to demand expanded class offerings. Today’s students continue to advocate both for broad social issues such as equity and school-related issues such as the role of police liaison officers in schools.¹⁹²

Guiding the growth of Central High School since 1993, principal Mary Mackbee has worked in the Saint Paul Public Schools since 1967. A native of New Orleans, Mackbee received a B.A. from Xavier University and an M.A. in educational administration from the University of Minnesota.¹⁹³ As a recent article featuring her asserts, “To teachers, Mackbee is a champion, the boss who is willing to fight those higher up the chain of command to preserve their programs. To parents, she is accessible and approachable and willing to listen to their concerns. To students she is simply Ms. Mackbee, as ready and willing to sell popcorn and hot dogs at football games as she is to host parent-teacher conferences.”¹⁹⁴

The efforts at inclusion pay off. As student Booth McGowan says, “To be a student at Central High School is to be a part of something terrific. Something that is composed of friendship, love, community and a fair share of the 'real world.' There is so much talent, knowledge and life experience in the student body. It's incredible.”

For one hundred and fifty years, Central students have stepped from the classrooms into the broader community, bringing the spirit, ideas, and passions that were nurtured at the school. Today, Central alumni are found across all fields of human endeavor: from performing arts to rocket science.

As a list of notable alumni shows, Central alumni are particularly well-represented in the areas community service and education. These two areas of interest were combined in 1986, when the Central High School Foundation was incorporated. Formed by a group of alumni, the Foundation's mission is to support the school, to stimulate innovative programming at the school, to encourage community involvement in the school, and to provide scholarships to graduating students attending post-secondary institutions. Since its formation, the Foundation has donated over \$100,000 to these efforts.

A similar effort was created by the Class of 1963. Inspired by their experience coming-of-age during the civil rights era, this group of alumni established a scholarship foundation in 1993. Unlike most typical scholarships that are awarded for high grades or test scores, the Class of 1963 scholarships are offered to students who exhibit a spirit of idealism and persistence in the face of challenges. Many of these students come from the bottom third of the class. In the Spring of 1994, the Class of 1963 gave out two scholarships worth \$4000 each. Since then, they have donated over \$500,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors. In addition to the funding, the scholarship leaders offer non-tuition support and advice, often boosting students through the challenges of life post high-school.



2015 PERFORMERS AT THE BENEFIT CONCERT, TRANSFORMING CENTRAL

Additional groups and individuals have supported the School and its students and graduates. The music group Heiruspecs supports a graduate pursuing the arts. The Devin Smith Scholarship foundation and the Richard M. Schulze Foundation both generously support additional graduates. Today, *Transforming Central* is an active group of alumni, parents, and community members that formed in 2011 to address the physical appearance and environmental impact of the campus. Concerned that Central's outward appearance did not reflect its stellar program, the Transforming Central team has raised over a half-million dollars through grants and individual donations.¹⁹⁵ In the summer of 2016, a major construction project was begun to dramatically alter the entrance and landscaping of the school. The final results will include a new outdoor classroom space, attractive plantings, and improved storm water treatment.



2016 GRADUATES AND TEACHER. PHOTO USED WITH PERMISSION FROM BRIAN REINHARDT.

On June 8th, 2016, the graduating seniors of Central High School gathered at Roy Wilkins Auditorium to celebrate their accomplishments and receive their diplomas. For many, the knowledge they gained extends far beyond the classroom. “Central shaped me into the person I will be from here on out,” said graduate Vilde King. “Central taught me not only what it means to be a student, but how to be a part of a community that is bigger than me; to be strong, to be compassionate, and to find common ground with anyone that crosses my path.”

One hundred and fifty years ago, Central’s great history began with one lone teacher and a dozen students. In the past one and a half centuries,

the school has grown, moved, and changed. As the school has developed, the faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and students have continuously strived together to stretch for academic excellence, to build a strong spirit of community, and to inspire a culture of innovation. The next 150 years are sure to bring more changes, and the community continues to look forward with energy and hope. “Onward Central!”

Appendices

Athletics at Central

- 1880: Baseball becomes first organized sport at Central
- 1886: Football begins
- 1891: Tennis program established; team wins city championship 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928
- 1896: Girls' Athletic Association formed
- 1900: Hockey team assembled ("Hockey, since it was first instituted in 1900, has had a bitter struggle for its existence."¹⁹⁶; Twin City League (Central, Mechanic Arts, Minneapolis East, Central, and West HS); 1914 Central, Mechanic Arts, Humboldt, Johnson form St. Paul City League; state champions nine times between 1909 and 1930); 1929 city title.
- 1901: Track program begins
- 1901: Girls basketball begins (Wins city title that year; state champs 1976, 1979, 2007, 2008)
- 1902: Boys Basketball begins; won state 1965
- 1911: "C" club formed
- 1915: Athletic board formed
- 1919: Boys swimming begins, practicing at the St. Paul Athletic Club. (Wins St. Paul Championship 1958, 1959)
- 1923: Golf team formed; wins city championship in 1926
- 1924: Fencing abolished
- 1927: Girls' C Club established
- 1954: (Boys) state track champions
- 1975: Girls Volleyball begins
- 1976: Girls Basketball wins state title
- 1979: Girls Basketball wins state title
- 1980: Badminton team formed
- 2007: Girls Basketball team undefeated; won AAAA state championship
- 2008: Girls Basketball wins state title
- 2016: 32 sports listed by Minnesota State High School League

Fight Song: "Onward Central"

We'll have the greatest high school
This country ever knew.
It's St. Paul Central High School
To which we must be true.
We'll give the best that's in us
And work hard as a whole
We need the help of everyone
To push on to our goal.

(Chorus)

Onward Central, Onward Central,
Crash right through the top!
We the students have the spirit
That will never let you drop.
Onward Central, Onward Central,
We're so proud of you!
C'mon and fight Central,
Fight! Fight! Fight!
And we will see you through!

For Red and Black we'll conquer
We'll make these colors fly.
And keep our colors waving
We'll raise them to the sky.
Then everyone will see them
And know what we have done.
And that it's Central for whom
Our worthy course is won.

School Song

"Dear old school, your colors blended,
Their beauty o'er us shed.
And by Central's band defended,
They are loosened overhead.

Chorus:

For in storm or fair weather,
We'll always stand together,
Holding high our loved banner,

The Central black and red.

Give a chorus for our school, then
Our happy student years,
We'll be loyal to thy rule, then,
In sunshine and in tears.

Chorus:
For in storm or fair weather,
We'll always stand together,
While our hearts beat an echo
To the ringing of our cheers.”
- Enza Alton Zeller

School colors: red and black

Mascot: Minuteman

Clubs, Organizations, and Sports

3M STEP

Admission Possible

Afro American

All City

Alpine Ski Team

Anime Club

Adaptive Bowling Team

Adaptive Soccer CI and PI Team

Adaptive CI/PI Floor Hockey
Team

Art Club

Attendance Office

Audio Visual

Automobile Tuning Club

Badminton Team

Band

Senior Band

Baseball Team

Bird Club

Bookstore

Bowling Club

Boys Basketball Team

Boys Glee Club

Boys Hockey Team

Boys Soccer Team

Boys Swim and Dive Team

Boys Tennis Team

Boys Wrestling

Broadcast Journalism

“C” Club

Central Asian Culture Club

Camera Club

CEHISEAN

Central Asian Culture Club

Central High *Times*

Central Minority Education
Program

Cheerleading

Chemistry Club

Chess Club

Choir

Chinese Club

Close Up

College Possible

Comedy Sportz

Constitution Club

Cross Country Team

Debate Club

Dramatic Club

Driver’s Education

Empowering Central Nkauj

Hmoob

Ensemble

Fieldball

Fine Arts Society

Flag Twirlers

Folksinging Club

Football Team

French Club

French Foreign Students

Fresh Force

Future Business Leaders

Future Teachers of America

GAA

Gay-Straight Alliance

Gamers Choice

German Club

German Foreign Students

GiBLLeTS

Girl Scouts of America

Girls Basketball Team

Girls Glee Club

Girls Gymnastics Team

Girls Hockey Team	Orchestra
Girls League Council	Paint and Patches
Girls Soccer Team	Pens Not Swords
Girls Swim and Dive Team	Pep Club
Girls Tennis Team	Photography Club
Golf Team	Pom-Pom Girls
Guidance Office	Projection Force
Gym Team	Prom
High School Bowl	Quill and Scroll
Hispanic Culture Club	Radio Club / Radio Workshop
Historical Society	Recycling
International Relations Club	Robotics Club
Jazz Band	Roots and Shoots
Kittenball	Rifle Club
Korean Club	Red Cross / Junior Red Cross
Lacrosse Team	Referees
Latin Club	Robotics Club
Library Club	Russian Club
Lingua Latina	Saint Paul Rugby
Literary Club	School Affairs
Lunch Room Force	School Curriculum
M-team	Science Club
Math Club	Science Olympiad
Math League	Senior Class Council
Main Office	SHE (Women Empowerment)
Mesibah (Jewish Culture)	Singers
Mock Trial	Softball Team
Model United Nations	Spanish Club
Morning News Crew	Speech Team
Minnesingers	Sports Information
Minute Maids	Ski Club
Multicultural Diversity Fair	Skydiving Club
Multicultural Excellence Program	Stamp and Coin Club
Music Listening Contest	Stage Force
NAACP	String Ensemble
National Honor Society	Student Council
Ninth Grade Retreat	Student Council Court
Nordic Ski Team	Swimming Team
Nurses Office	Table Tennis Club

Touring Theater
Track and Field Team
Traffic Squad
Tri Hi-Y
Mid Tri Hi-Y
Central Hi-Y
Delta Hi-Y
Tri Sigma
The *World*
Junior Y-Teens
Senior Y-Teens
Usherettes
Upper Connections
Upward Bound
Verbal Promiscuity Literary
Magazine
Vocation Industrial Training Clubs
Volleyball
Wrestling
YMCA
Young Democrats
Young Republican

Notable Alumni

Arts and Entertainment

Roger Awsumb (1946) longtime children's TV host on WTCN (now KARE), portrayed railroad engineer Casey Jones on "Lunch with Casey" from 1954 to 1972.

Samuel Baldwin (1878) organist; founding member of American Guild of Organists.

Yolande Bruce (1976) singer and actor, member of the award-winning ensemble Moore by Four. With MB4 she has performed nationally and internationally, opening for such legendary artists as Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan, and BB King. A featured vocalist at many churches both locally and abroad, Yolande was a Minnesota Music Awards nominee for Best Female Jazz Artist in 1993.

Colton Dunn (1995): comedian, actor, writer, and producer.

Heiruspecs, underground hip-hop group (started 1997 while students at Central).

Patricia Benton Johnson (1952); Award-winning singer and composer and artist. Philanthropist and music educator.

Clarence H. Johnston (1872): architect of many buildings on the University of Minnesota campus, as well the Glensheen residence in Duluth and many others on Summit Avenue.

Leigh Kamman (1940); radio host and prominent promoter of jazz music.

Scott Keeney "DJ Skee" (2002): artist, producer, television host, radio personality, executive, philanthropist, and entrepreneur. Described as the "Oprah of Music" for his ability to identify and promote music talent.

Meridel LeSueur, dropped out 1916; writer; while at Central she was told by her English teacher: "You certainly have no ability to write, but you aren't bad looking. You should take some home economics courses and try to get married."¹⁹⁷

Harvey Mackay (1950); Chairman of Mackay Envelope Company, syndicated columnist and New York Times Best Selling Author

Mint Condition, R&B/Funk band, known for the hit “Breaking My Heart (Pretty Brown Eyes)”; formed at Central in mid-1980s.

Gordon Parks (attended in 1929, 1930-1931): author, photographer, director, and composer.

Charles Schultz (1940); cartoonist. He was the youngest boy in his class (had been moved up two grades in elementary school) and a very shy student. His drawings were rejected by the yearbook staff when he submitted them for publication his senior year.¹⁹⁸

Danez Smith (2007): is an American poet. He is the author of the poetry collection *[insert] Boy*.

Nicholas Roger “Nick” Swardson (1994): An actor, comedian, screenwriter and producer.

Anthony Walker (1978): Contemporary jazz pianist and composer who has played with Stevie Wonder and other artists, spent five months on Broadway, played at the White House at the request of First Lady Michelle Obama, and has made multiple television appearances. In 2000-2001 the Smithsonian Institution invited him to be part of its exhibit of historic pianos.

Athletics

Jeanne Arth (1952); U.S Open Doubles champion and Wimbledon Doubles champion.

Micah Boyd (2000): 2008 Summer Olympics bronze medal crew rower. Men’s Varsity crew coach at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Art Downey (1950); successful swimming coach, founder and president of the Minnesota Swimming Coaches Association.

Spiro Paul Pina (1991): Olympic competitor in luge for Greece in 1994 and 1998. He earned nine varsity letters in tennis, Nordic skiing and running while a student at Central, and spoke six languages.

Stacy Robinson (1980) National Football League wide receiver with the New York Giants who had two Super Bowl championships.

John Roethlisberger (1988) three-time Olympic gymnast. He is also a four-time U.S. Nationals all-around champion and four-time U.S. Nationals pommel horse champion. He also won back-to-back American Cup titles in 1995 and 1996.

David Mark Winfield (1969); Major League Baseball All-Star; played for San Diego Padres, New York Yankees, California Angels, Toronto Blue Jays, Minnesota Twins, and Cleveland Indians.

Community Service, Business, and Philanthropy

W. Andrew Boss (1950); President and CEO of St. Anthony Park State Bank, trustee for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system; he helped found the Northern Clay Center; and he played important roles with the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library and in the rehab of the St. Anthony Park Branch Library.

Charles DeVet (1957); Wells Fargo executive, and co-founder of Crossroads Adoption Services and Humanitarian Services for Children of Vietnam.

Howard M. Guthmann (1940); accountant and local leader in a wide range of civic, business, education, governmental, youth, and health organizations.

Margaret Ponder Lovejoy (1961); Executive Director of The Family Place, an organization founded in 2001 that helps homeless families in Ramsey County.

Bruce Olsson (1959); Christian missionary and advocate for the Motilones tribe of Venezuela and Colombia.

T. Denny Sanford (1954), banker and venture capitalist. Purchased and started a variety of businesses. Generous philanthropist.

Richard Schulze (1958); founder and chairman of Best Buy, a Fortune 100 company. Board member of many foundations, and founder of the Richard M. Schulze Foundation.

Janabelle Taylor (1939); community activist and social work advocate. Program director of the Hallie Q. Brown Center, scholastic chair of the

University Women's Athletic Association, and first black president of the St. Paul Council of Churches.

Olive Foerster Tiller (1936): Teacher and church worker. Executive assistant to general secretary National Council Churches of Christ in United States of America, 1981-1987. Deputy general secretary for cooperative Christianity American Baptist Churches of United States of America, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 1987-1988.

Stanley Gordon West (1950); foster home and adoption advocate, author of historic fiction books based on Central in the 1940s.

Kabo Yang (1998): Executive Director of the Women's Consortium.

Education

Gary Ales (1958); teacher, councilor and coach at Johnson and Humboldt high schools, co-founder of the Friendship Club, a youth service organization. "It is not what you have that counts, it's what you share that matters."

Neal R. Amundson (1953); influential chemist and head of the Chemical Engineering at the University of Minnesota, made significant contributions to the field.

Mary K. Murray Boyd (1960); educator, civil rights advocate, and community builder. Served 30 years in St. Paul Public Schools, beginning as a Home School Liason and ending as a district Area Superintendent. President and CEO of MKB & Associates, Inc., an education and human services consulting business.

Rosilyn M. Carrol (1967); educator, civil rights and education advocate. First black woman to be elected to Saint Paul School Board, Bishop of the African American Catholic Church.

Minnie Farr (1881); first black graduate of Saint Paul Public schools, and first black teacher. She taught at the Lincoln Elementary School for nineteen years.

Jean O'Connell (1970): member of the Saint Paul Board of Education.

Vanne Owens Hayes (1961): Dean of Students at the University of Minnesota Law School and Director of the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights, strong advocate for women and minorities.

Linda Mack Schloff (1956); immigration historian and developer of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest.

Law and Politics

Lawrence D. Cohen (1951); two-term mayor of Saint Paul (1968-1976) and former judge.

William Finney (1966): St. Paul Police Chief and City Council member.

Bernard Friel (1948); lawyer and founder of the National Bond Lawyers Association.

James S. Griffin (1936); St. Paul police chief, author, spokesperson, community activist, and School Board member. Established the Vianne Griffin Scholarship in honor of his daughter to assist Central graduates with post-secondary education.

David Heleniak (1963); as an attorney, represented China in its first major economic transaction with a Western company beginning in 1982; served as Executive Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of the United States Treasury, 1977-1979; active in numerous philanthropic organizations.

Geri M. Joseph (1940); award-winning journalist for the Minneapolis Tribune, editor and columnist. State DFL chairwoman and national committeewoman, U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, active leader and board member in many policy, mental health, and educational institutions.

Samuel L. Kaplan (1954); prominent business lawyer and United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco.

Debbie Gilbreath Montgomery (1964); civil rights advocate, police officer, and community activist. At age 17, she was youngest member ever elected to national board of NAACP. First woman to train with the St. Paul Police Department Office Candidates, and first African American woman elected to the St. Paul City Council, served as Minnesota State Public Safety Assistant Commissioner.

Richard A. Moore (1932); lawyer and local leader who served on Chamber of Commerce, St. Paul YWCA, Capitol Community Services, St. Paul United Fund, St. Paul Ramsey Hospital and St. Paul Family Service.

Judge Diana Kuske Murphy (1950); lawyer, Minnesota's first female U.S. District Court Judge (1980), and first woman appointed to the U.S. Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals (1994).

Colonel Robert Olds (1892): Counselor of American Red Cross commission in France; on Reparation Committee under Treaty of Versailles; 1925 assistant Secretary of State.

Raymond A. Reister (1948); nationally recognized trust and estate lawyer. Board member of many humanities, historic, and arts organizations.

Judge James M. Rosenbaum (1962); civil rights lawyer, Minnesota's United States Attorney, and Eighth Circuit District Court Judge, Chief Judge of Minnesota's federal court.

Media

Donald F. Wright (1952); leader in journalism. Held executive positions at the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Newsday, and Los Angeles Times. Board member of the University of Minnesota Foundation and other organizations.

Otto Silha (1936); rose from copy editor to publisher and then president of Minneapolis Star and Tribune, vice president of the University of Minnesota Foundation, and organizer of the St. Paul Central High School Foundation.

Medicine

Russell V. Lucas (1946); head of the Pediatric Cardiology training program at the University of Minnesota, and internationally recognized in the diagnosis and treatment of congenital cardiovascular disease.

Judy Mahle Lutter (1957); pioneer researcher in the field of women's health, founder of the Melpomene Institute for Women's Health Research.

Science, Industry and Innovation

Richard Clarke (1948); mechanical engineer and inventor. Manager at Control Data Systems and MTS Systems Corporation. Invented a stabilization device installed at the John Hancock building and other skyscrapers to minimize swaying.

Amelia Earhart (attended 1913-1914); pioneering aviator.

Robert D. Gehrz (1963); astrophysicist, key developer of NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope. Chair of the University of Minnesota Astronomy Department, and Founding Director of the Minnesota Institute for Astrophysics.

Lee W. Johnson (1952); mechanical engineer and founder of Reell Precision Manufacturing Corporation.

Jawed Karim (1997); entrepreneur and co-founder of YouTube.

Stephen H. Mahle (1963); scientist who began his career at NASA, inventor and manager at Medtronic, eventually becoming executive Vice President of Healthcare Policy and Regulations. Active board member and philanthropist.

Russell J. McNaughton (1952); electrical engineer at 3M. He was later promoted to Laboratory Manager and then Technical Director of the Electro Products Division and continued his progress with 3M until he retired in 1993 as Group Vice President, Electro Products Group.

Robert Mikulak (1960); chief scientist with the U.S. State Department, influential negotiator of chemical and biological arms treaties.

Lawrence Perlman (1956); Credited with the turn-around of the Control Data Corporation and a leader in Minnesota's high-tech community. Served as co-chair of the University of Minnesota's 2000 Economic Summit, founder of the Lawrence and Linda Perlman Family Foundation.

Wayne E. Potratz (1960); nationally and internationally recognized master of metal casting techniques whose work has been exhibited in major galleries and museums around the world.

Central Principals

Eugene Foster 1866–1867
J. M. Knight 1867–1868
M. H. Gates 1868–1869
B. F. Wright 1869–1879
Cassius S. Campbell 1879–1883
C. B. Gilbert 1883–1889
C. N. Carmon 1889–1893
A. J. Smith 1893–1898
J. C. Bryant 1898–1899
E. V. Robinson 1899–1907
V. K. Froula 1907–1910
T. B. Cole 1910–1811
Harvey A. Schofield 1911–1916
James E. Marshall 1916–1944
Albert Meier 1944–1949
Elmer Lenander 1949–1953
William Scanlan 1953–1957
John Lackner 1957–1960
Richard Hallen 1960–1962
Ralph Engebretson 1962–1966
Malcolm Smiley 1966–1969
Reno Rossini 1969–1972
Don Sonsalla 1972–1976
William Sagert 1977–1980 (“Remember me as ‘The Construction King’”¹⁹⁹)
Wayne Jennings 1980–1982
John McManus 1982–1984
Donald Ausemus 1984–1987
Bill Dunn 1988
Nadya Parker 1989–1993
Mary Mackbee 1993–

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End Notes

¹ Warner and Foote, eds., *History of Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul*, 362.

² One source, Henry Castle's 1912 "History of St. Paul and Vicinity" provides evidence of an earlier school, begun by Mrs. Matilda Rumsey in 1845.

³ Born on January 1, 1817 in Vermont, Bishop received her teacher training at the New York State Normal School under the instruction of Catherine Beecher. Lured by the prospect of educating those in need on the frontier, she moved to St. Paul in 1847 under the auspices of the Board of National Popular Education. St. Paul's Harriet Island is named for her.

⁴ 37,605 students were enrolled in St. Paul schools in October 2015. "Saint Paul Public Schools Preliminary District Enrollment Data, October 1, 2015," http://datacenter.spps.org/sites/2259653e-fb3-45ba-8fd6-04a024ecf7a4/uploads/districttrace15_16_2.pdf accessed 15 May 2015.

⁵ Kunz, *Saint Paul: the First 150 Years*, 29.

⁶ Saint Paul Public Schools, "A Brief History of Saint Paul Public Schools," http://www.spps.org/spps_history.

⁷ The Board was comprised of nine elective and two ex-officio members. Edward Duffield Neill of the third ward was elected as the first secretary and later became the school district's first superintendent. Saint Paul Public Schools, "Miscellaneous School Materials, 1865-1996," State Board of Education, Box 131.D.19.8F, MNHS.

⁸ Lindley, *Celebrate St. Paul: 150 Years of History*, 11.

⁹ Cheryl Carlson, "Strike for Better Schools, the St. Paul Public School's Teacher's Strike of 1946." *Ramsey County History*, Summer 2008, p. 3.

¹⁰ In 1852 the school board established a high school whose principal was G. H. Spencer. However, due to funding difficulties and lack of interest, this early school did not survive. As Henry Foote states, prior to 1866 "no regular course of study had been adopted." Warner and Foote, eds., *History of Ramsey County*, 363.

¹¹ 1880 there were 800 high schools in the United States and by 1890 there were 2,500. Bethany Collins, "The Rise of the High School," <https://www3.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/riseofhs.html>.

¹² Warner and Foote, eds., *History of Ramsey County*, 363.

¹³ The Franklin School had been erected in 1865 to house the primary grades.

¹⁴ St. Paul's population in 1860 was 10,331 whites and 70 "Free Colored" persons. 1860 U.S. Census.

¹⁵ "The Centennial of Central High School," 1.

¹⁶ "Annual Report of the Public School System of the City of Saint Paul," 1866, p. 8.

¹⁷ "The Story of Central," (1925), 2.

¹⁸ "Central Counts 100 Years of Graduates," *St Paul Pioneer Press* 5 April 1970, 4.

¹⁹ “A History of St. Paul Central High School,” <http://central.spps.org/history> also “The Centennial of Central High School,” MNHS.

²⁰ “The High School,” *The Daily Globe*, 20 June 1878.

²¹ St Paul Public Schools Administrative History (State Archives, Ramsey County, Vol. 6), p. 2.

²² 1901 Central High *Senior Annual*, p. 4

²³ The Adams School, the second oldest public school in the city, had been built in 1858. Millet, *Lost Twin Cities*, 100.

²⁴ Millet, *Lost Twin Cities*, 100.

²⁵ “A History of the Central High School,” (1934), 11.

²⁶ Cheryl Carlson, “Strike for Better Schools, the St. Paul Public School’s Teacher’s Strike of 1946.” *Ramsey County History*, Summer 2008, p. 3.

²⁷ Letter, Mary Newson to Dr. Robinson, 23 May 1907.

²⁸ Letter, Mary Newson to Dr. Robinson, 23 May 1907.

²⁹ CEHISEAN, 1947.

³⁰ John Larson, “*The Best School in the City*,” 5.

³¹ Millet, *Lost Twin Cities*, 101.

³² One newspaper notice of a high school exam was found in the Saint Paul Daily Globe on Friday, January 25, 1895.

³³ Goldin, *The Race Between Education and Technology*, 195.

³⁴ Goldin, “America’s Graduation from High School,” 352.

³⁵ “Fifty-First and Fifty-Second Annual Reports of the Board of School Inspectors of the City St. Paul for the School Years Ending June 9, 1909 and June 10, 1910 and Manual of the Courses of Study and Rules and Regulations for the School Year 1910-1911,” 8, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

³⁶ The cost for land purchased in 1909 and 1938 totaled \$40,000. <http://central.spps.org/history>.

³⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, <http://www.mnopedia.org/person/johnston-clarence-h-1859-1936>.

See also: Larson, *Minnesota Architect, the Life and Work of Clarence H. Johnston*.

³⁸ http://www.placeography.org/index.php/Clarence_Johnston

³⁹ “Protests Heeded: ‘Central’ Wins Out,” *St. Paul Dispatch* 16 September 1910.

⁴⁰ “A Century of Service,” p. 14, \$415,164.69 1912; 1925 addition \$109,879.86

⁴¹ Henry Moe, “Our New School,” *The World Senior Annual*, May 1912, 9.

⁴² Castle, *History of St. Paul and Vicinity*, 458.

⁴³ “The Centennial of Central High School,” (1970), 2.

⁴⁴ “Central Looks Back 100 Years,” St. Paul Pioneer Press, April 5, 1970.

⁴⁵ Westerink, Diane, “Manual Training Movement,”

<https://www3.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/manualtr.html>.

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- ⁴⁶ Misner, "The History and Influence of the Industrial Arts Movement," <http://www.oswego.edu/~waite/502techhistory.html>.
- ⁴⁷ "Fifty-First and Fifty-Second Annual Reports of the Board of School Inspectors of the City St. Paul for the School Years Ending June 9, 1909 and June 10, 1910 and Manual of the Courses of Study and Rules and Regulations for the School Year 1910-1911," p. 8
- ⁴⁸ "Historical Introduction."
- ⁴⁹ "Fifty-First and Fifty-Second Annual Reports of the Board of School Inspectors of the City St. Paul for the School Years Ending June 9, 1909 and June 10, 1910 and Manual of the Courses of Study and Rules and Regulations for the School Year 1910-1911," p. 125-126.
- ⁵⁰ "Central's Lunch Rooms," *The World* May 1912, 53.
- ⁵¹ Marshall left Central in 1944 to become Superintendent of the Saint Paul Public Schools, a position he held until 1947.
- ⁵² Floyd, "The Cultured Mind, the Skillful Hand," 50.
- ⁵³ Westerink, "The Manual Training Movement," (<https://www3.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/manualtr.html>)
- ⁵⁴ St. Paul Technical College was founded in 1910 as a boys' vocational high school. In 1946 Girls Vocational Senior High School was established. "A Handbook for Students," MNHS 115.E.3.10 (F).
- ⁵⁵ "Official Bulletin of the Department of Education of the City of Saint Paul," January 1919, p. 8.
- ⁵⁶ In 1910, nearly 25 percent of Minnesotans were German-born. United States, Census, 1910, Population, 919. [Germans St. Paul: 12,935 FB 1900; 15,868 FB/38,815 FM 1905; 7,478 FB/30,160 FM 1930 p. 159 TCM]
- ⁵⁷ Rippley, "Conflict in the Classroom," 176.
- ⁵⁸ 1934 history, 7.
- ⁵⁹ "A Woman's History of Central,," MNHS, Box 116.A.6.3, Folder, "History of Central."
- ⁶⁰ "Public School Building Construction Dates, Costs, Room Space, Utilization, Capacity and Enrollment," 1941, 260.
- ⁶¹ "Course of Study St. Paul High Schools," *Official Bulletin of the Department of Education of the City of Saint Paul*, January 1920, p. 1.
- ⁶² "Course of Study St. Paul High Schools," *Official Bulletin of the Department of Education of the City of Saint Paul*, January 1920, p. 8.
- ⁶³ The earliest of these recipients were: Henry Hinds (1902), L.A. Frye (1903), Raymond W. Andersen (1911), Henry Moe (1912), John Davies (1914), John F. Fulton and Ford Hall (1917), Austin Faricy (1928). <http://central.spps.org/history>.
- ⁶⁴ "Changes I Have Seen" (1925), Box 131.D.19.10F, Folder, "St. Paul Central H.S. Historical Committee Record Book, 1907-1925," MNHS.

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- ⁶⁵ *The World Senior Annual* 1920.
- ⁶⁶ “Superintendent’s Report of the St. Paul Public Schools, 1940,” p. 51.
- ⁶⁷ CEHISEAN 1934, 18.
- ⁶⁸ Baughman et al, “The Depression and Education.”
- ⁶⁹ Baughman et al, “The Depression and Education.”
- ⁷⁰ “Historical Introduction,”
- ⁷¹ “St. Paul School Survey,” 1938, MHS.
- ⁷² “A Century of Service: Saint Paul Public Schools 1856-1956.”
- ⁷³ “Central Has 1,400 More Pupils than Built For,” 30 September 1934, Scrapbook, Central High School Archives.
- ⁷⁴ “Graduates of Central High School,” 1939 enrollment, scrapbook, Central High School collection.
- ⁷⁵ Holmquist, ed, *They Chose Minnesota*, p. 81.
- ⁷⁶ By contrast, Minneapolis’ African American population increased by over 50 percent between 1910 and 1920, from 2,592 to 3,927. <http://blackdemographics.com/states/minnesota/>
- ⁷⁷ Interview, Robert Geist, class of 1946, May 8, 2016 with Nancy O’Brien Wagner.
- ⁷⁸ Cavett, *Children of Rondo*, 65.
- ⁷⁹ 1934 history, p. 27
- ⁸⁰ CEHISEAN 1936, 44.
- ⁸¹ 1936 CEHISEAN
- ⁸² Kandel, *The Impact of the War Upon American Education*, 86.
- ⁸³ “Superintendent’s Report of the St. Paul Public Schools, 1940,” 2.
- ⁸⁴ “Superintendent’s Report of the St. Paul Public Schools, 1940,” 96.
- ⁸⁵ “Superintendent’s Report of the St. Paul Public Schools, 1940,” 132.
- ⁸⁶ “St Paul Schools in War Time,” 26.
- ⁸⁷ “St Paul Schools in War Time,” 26.
- ⁸⁸ “St Paul Schools in War Time,” 26.
- ⁸⁹ Principal’s messages, CEHISEAN, 1944 and 1945.
- ⁹⁰ Central boys killed in WWII were: Francis Gellerman, ’43; Richard Guthman, ’42; Arthur Kaufman, ’42; Roger Kemp, ’42; John Knighton, ’42; Eugene Payne, ’43; Lewis Phillips, ’44; James Sandberg ’42; Robert Sinclair, ’43; Robert Swanson, ’43; Howard Taylor, ’42; Robert Trussell, ’43; Bill Traynor, ’46; Clyde Wallace, ’43; and Irving Ward, ’44. CEHISEAN 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946.
- ⁹¹ *Times*, 8 December 1944.
- ⁹² “St Paul Schools in War Time,” 26.

⁹³ While the 1943 yearbook highlighted the German Club as “One of the oldest clubs in school . . . organized in 1915 . . . purpose is to get better acquainted with the German people, customs, and language,” this club was not among those listed in the 1945 yearbook. 1943 CEHISEAN, 64; 1945 CEHISEAN.

⁹⁴ Robert Geist, ‘46 interview with Nancy O’Brien Wagner, May 8, 2016. CEHISEAN, 1946.

⁹⁵ CEHISEAN 1946.

⁹⁶ *Times*, 8 December 1944.

⁹⁷ 1945 CEHISEAN

⁹⁸ “Interview with Jeanne Arth,” (4 August 2002, 9 November 2002, 15 December 2002) by Sharon VanOteghen and Allys Swanson,

http://sophia.stkate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&context=exsci_fac

⁹⁹ Grow, “High School Honors the Man Who Walked a Tough Beat All His Life,” Central High School archives. Griffin, who graduated in 1935, played football and basketball while at Central.

¹⁰⁰ Marshall School was built in 1925. It was a junior high from 1926-1937. A grade was added each year beginning in 1937 and from 1940-1953 it was a full high school. It returned to a junior high in 1954.

¹⁰¹ Cavett, *Voices of Rondo*, 141.

¹⁰² Cheryl Carlson, “Strike for Better Schools, the St. Paul Public School’s Teacher’s Strike of 1946.” *Ramsey County History*, Summer 2008, p. 4-7. “Strike for better schools' - The St. Paul public school teachers' strike of 1946” *Workday Minnesota*, April 11, 2007.

(<http://www.workdayminnesota.org/articles/strike-better-schools-st-paul-public-school-teachers-strike-1946>).

¹⁰³ Nancy Jean Walsh, interview with Nancy O’Brien Wagner, May 6, 2016. Walsh was a Central student from 1945-1947.

¹⁰⁴ Cheryl Carlson, “Strike for Better Schools, the St. Paul Public School’s Teacher’s Strike of 1946.” *Ramsey County History*, Summer 2008, p. 8. Nancy Jean Walsh, interview with Nancy O’Brien Wagner, May 6, 2016.

¹⁰⁵ Cheryl Carlson, “Strike for Better Schools, the St. Paul Public School’s Teacher’s Strike of 1946.” *Ramsey County History*, Summer 2008, p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ St Paul Public Schools Administrative History (State Archives, Ramsey County, Vol. 6), 6

¹⁰⁷ “Strike for better schools' - The St. Paul public school teachers' strike of 1946” *Workday Minnesota*, April 11, 2007. (<http://www.workdayminnesota.org/articles/strike-better-schools-st-paul-public-school-teachers-strike-1946>)

¹⁰⁸ In 1925, the Ford Motor plant had opened in Highland Park and area farm land was subdivided to create housing for workers and a bridge was built across the Mississippi in 1927, connecting

Highland Park to Minneapolis. Following WWII, Highland Park became St. Paul's primary Jewish neighborhood as Jews moved there from Summit Hill.

¹⁰⁹ St. Paul Public Schools, Box 115.E.3.6(F), Folder: "Basic Data on Birth Rates and Enrollment in the St. Paul Public Schools, 1948," MNHS.

¹¹⁰ White, "School Controversy Examined," *St Paul Dispatch* 30 April 1975, PAGE (editorial by president of the St. Paul Urban Coalition)

¹¹¹ *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483.

¹¹² Frank Brown, "The First Serious Implementation of *Brown*," 182.

¹¹³ "Report of the Committee on Racial Imbalance in the St. Paul Public Schools," 1964.

¹¹⁴ "Report of the Committee on Racial Imbalance in the St. Paul Public Schools," 1964. It should be noted, however, that the African American population of St. Paul was less than five percent at this time.

¹¹⁵ Saint Paul Public Schools Report on School Desegregation, September 1970, MNHS.

¹¹⁶ Division of Special Services Health Service Report 1970-71, MNHS.

¹¹⁷ "Report of the Committee on Racial Imbalance in the St. Paul Public Schools," 1964.

¹¹⁸ "Classes Dismissed After Central Sit-in," *St. Paul Dispatch* December 13, 1968, 23.

¹¹⁹ <http://blackdemographics.com/states/minnesota/> Census of the Population, Vol. II: Characteristics of the Population Part 23 Minnesota.

¹²⁰ Zielinski, *Children of Rondo*, 106.

¹²¹ Cavett, *Voices of Rondo*, 255.

¹²² Cavett, *Voices of Rondo*, p. 106.

¹²³ Shefchik, Rick (February 28, 1993). "*Bittersweet Memories//In August 1968, Riots Engulfed St. Paul's Selby-Dale Neighborhood. To This Day, The Repercussions Linger.*"

¹²⁴ "Central Blacks Protest Incident," *St. Paul Pioneer Press* November 28, 1968, 2.

¹²⁵ "Central High Sit-In Planned," *St. Paul Pioneer Press* December 10, 1968. "Central High Gives Answers to Black Student Demands," *St Paul Dispatch* January 6, 1969, 17.

¹²⁶ "Classes Dismissed After Central Sit-in," *St. Paul Dispatch* December 13, 1968, 23.

¹²⁷ "Central High Gives Answers to Black Student Demands," *St Paul Dispatch* January 6, 1969, 17. "55 Suspended Students Back At Central High," *St. Paul Pioneer Press* April 15, 1969, 31.

"Rogers to Fill Central Post," *St. Paul Pioneer Press* February 12, 1969, 15.

¹²⁸ "Central Students Stage Walkout," *St. Paul Pioneer Press* April 4, 1969, 17.

¹²⁹ "Report on School Desegregation," 1 September 1970, MNHS.

¹³⁰ "Report on School Desegregation," 1 September 1970, MNHS.

¹³¹ "Report on School Desegregation," 1 September 1970, MNHS.

¹³² *9 students were marked at "other," and were likely Asian. "Report of the Committee on Racial Imbalance in the St. Paul Public Schools," 1964. "Racial/Ethnic Count by School or Program, St.

Paul Public Schools,” 1975, 1985, and 1995, Office of Administrative Research, December 1975.

“Central Sr Enrollment by Ethnicity 2002-2015” online data, SPPS Data Center.

¹³³ Lindley, *Celebrate St. Paul*, 74.

¹³⁴ *Times* March 18, 1970, 2.

¹³⁵ *Times* March 18, 1970, 1.

¹³⁶ Roedler, “Central Counts 100 Years,” 5.

¹³⁷ “Fact Sheet: St. Paul’s Central High School Quest,” Folder, “Quest Program,” MNHS.

¹³⁸ Quest application.

¹³⁹ “Quest Opens New Vistas for Some Central Students,” 14.

¹⁴⁰ “HRA Endorses Selby School Site,” 17.

¹⁴¹ “‘Neutral’ Site Urged for New S-U School.”

¹⁴² Letter 26 November 1973, p. 1.

¹⁴³ “Central High Revamp Assailed,” 28.

¹⁴⁴ “Consolidation – Construction Plans, 1973-1977.”

¹⁴⁵ *Times* November 11, 1977, 3.

¹⁴⁶ Millet, *AIA Guide to the Twin Cities*, 554.

¹⁴⁷ Superintendent’s Statement regarding a Pool for the New High School at Central (June 17, 1975).

¹⁴⁸ 12 June 1975 memo from Superintendent George Young to Members of the Board of Education.

¹⁴⁹ “**St. Paul Divided Over Pool,**” *Minneapolis Tribune* 19 June 1975, **1B**.

¹⁵⁰ *Times* November 11, 1977, 6. The TVI is now called Saint Paul College.

¹⁵¹ CEHISEAN 1978, 89.

¹⁵² 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977.

¹⁵³ *Times* June 1982, 2.

¹⁵⁴ *Times* June 1982, 3.

¹⁵⁵ *Times* June 1990, 6.

¹⁵⁶ *Times* October 1989, 4; “St Paul Central High School 2015-2016 Profile.”

¹⁵⁷ CEHISEAN 1985.

¹⁵⁸ “St. Paul Central High School Registration Guide, 2015-2016,” 46.

¹⁵⁹ CEHISEAN 1985.

¹⁶⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Paul_Central_High_School

¹⁶¹ Correspondance between Scott Keeney and Nancy O’Brien Wagner, June 29, 2016.

¹⁶² Excerpt from SWS newspaper, fall 1974 as quoted in 1975 CEHISEAN, 32.

¹⁶³ CEHISEAN 1979. Today, the Gateway to College (GtC) program provides similar support to students who have dropped out of high school or need additional credits to graduate. Students enrolled in the program can receive both their high school diploma and college credits. With

classes held at the Saint Paul College campus, students benefit from individualized attention and support in a college atmosphere. <http://occr.spps.org/gatewaytocollege>

¹⁶⁴ Private correspondence between Kerstin Beyer and Nancy O'Brien Wagner, August 10, 2016.

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=1069>

¹⁶⁶ *Times* October 1989.

¹⁶⁷ Group 1: Language A1 (English); Group 2: Second Language (Chinese, French, German, Latin, Russian, or Spanish); Group 3: Individuals and Societies: Economics, History, Philosophy; Group 4: Experimental Sciences: Biology, Chemistry, Physics; Group 5: Mathematics: Math Studies, Math Methods, Math Higher Level, Computer Science; Group 6: The Arts and Electives: Art/Design, Music, second language, second science, second group three subject.

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/minnesota/districts/st-paul-public-school-district/central-senior-high-147176>

¹⁶⁹ *Times* May-June, 1997, 3.

¹⁷⁰ *Times* May 2008, 2.

¹⁷¹ *Times* October 1989, 1.

¹⁷² "Central Senior High School: 2013 Graduates Post-Secondary Enrollment" SPPS Department of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, January 24, 2014.

¹⁷³ Adolescent Girls and Parenting Education, located on University Avenue at Oxford Street

¹⁷⁴ *Times* October 1989, 3.

¹⁷⁵ http://www.spps.org/cms/lib010/MN01910242/Centricity/Domain/2967/website_information-central_sbc.pdf.

¹⁷⁶ *Times* June 1990, 1.

¹⁷⁷ Kunz, 104.

¹⁷⁸ *Times* June 1983, 1.

¹⁷⁹ 1982 CEHISEAN.

¹⁸⁰ Private correspondence between Kerstin Beyer and Nancy O'Brien Wagner, August 10, 2016.

¹⁸¹ http://datacenter.spps.org/Student_Enrollment.html

¹⁸² Lindley, *Celebrate Saint Paul*, 80.

¹⁸³ Melo, "For African Immigrants, St. Paul Starting to Feel Like Home."

¹⁸⁴ A current informational brochure for CMEP says: "The Central Minority Education Program is designed to improve the educational and career opportunities for minority students at Central High School. The program is designed to enhance and enrich learning through special skills programs, mentoring, career exploration, and job shadowing. Students in the program are also exposed to multi-cultural artistic events throughout the year."

¹⁸⁵ *Times*, September-October, 1990, 2.

¹⁸⁶ *Times* January 1991, 1.

¹⁸⁷ http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/200201/07_newsroom_olympics/

¹⁸⁸ A previous version existed as early as the 1880s.

¹⁸⁹ St. Paul Public Schools Department of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, March 20, 2015, and NPR “U.S. High School Graduation Rate Hits Record High,” December 15, 2015

¹⁹⁰ In the 2014-2015 school year, out of a total enrollment of 1,884, 64 percent of Central students were non-white. The breakdown is: 1% Native American, 5% Hispanic, 26% Asian, 32% African American, 36% white. “October 1, 2014 Enrollment by Ethnicity at Central Sr,” SPPS Data Center.

¹⁹¹ *Times* May 2011, 13; http://ns.spps.org/Breakfast_to_Go

¹⁹² Students : BLM fall 2015 and “No Cuts to Kids.” Spring 2016. <http://kstp.com/news/st-paul-central-chris-coleman-student-arrest-walkout/4156275/>

¹⁹³ *Times* May-June 2001.

¹⁹⁴ Walsh, “Mackbee a Steady Hand at the Wheel for St. Paul Central High.”

¹⁹⁵ *Times* November 6, 2015, 1.; <http://central.spps.org/transformingcentral>

¹⁹⁶ 1920 Senior Bulletin

¹⁹⁷ “Ahead of Her Time: A Woman’s History of Central,”

¹⁹⁸ History of Men at Central (?), PAGE.

¹⁹⁹ CEHISEAN 1980, 50.