

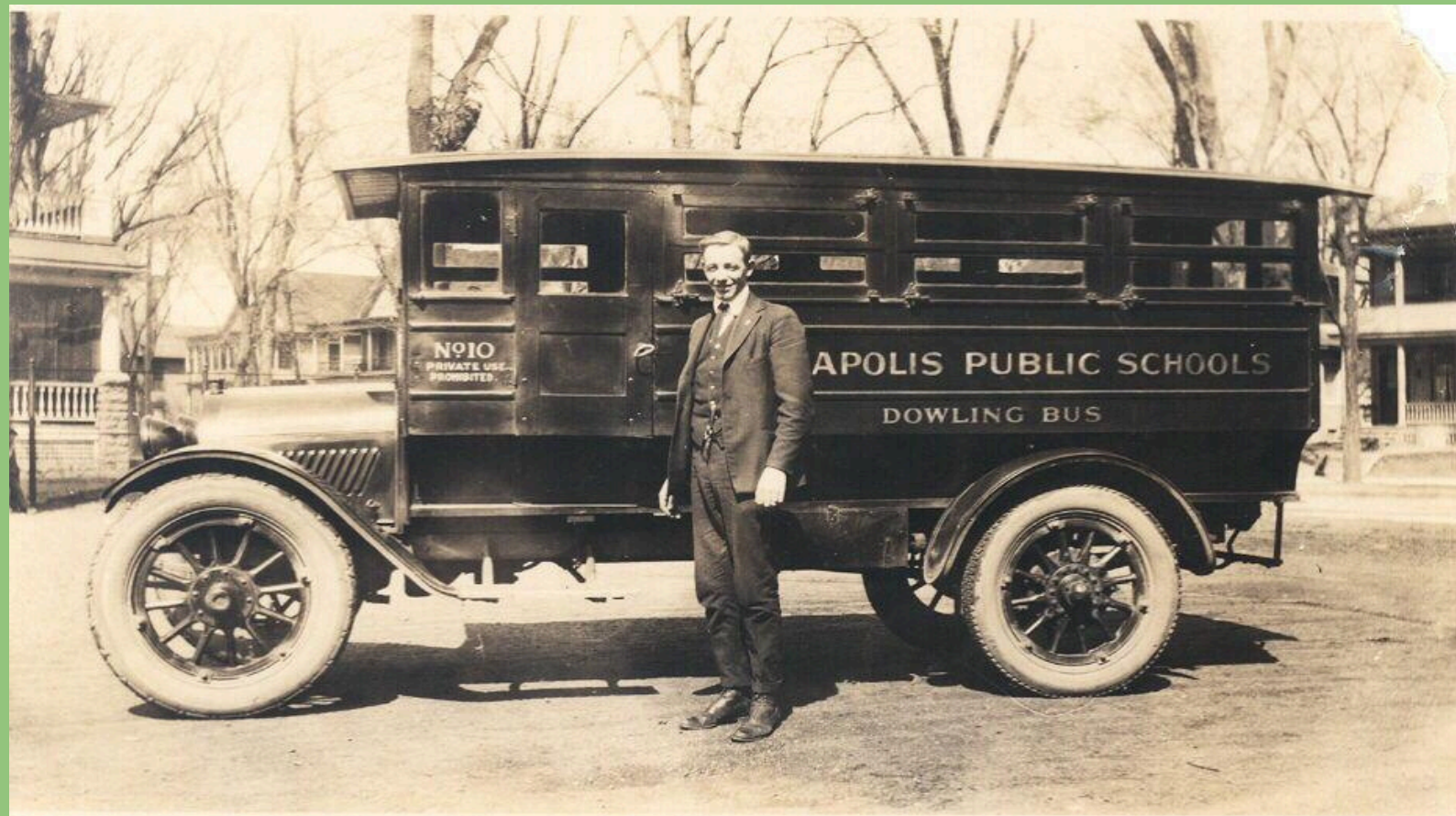


# Dowling HiStory Walk



# 1920 - Dowling School Established

Dowling School was established by the Minneapolis Board of Education and located in a church at 1805 North Dupont Avenue. There were 17 students when it opened. Previous to this time, children with disabilities were not allowed to attend public schools.





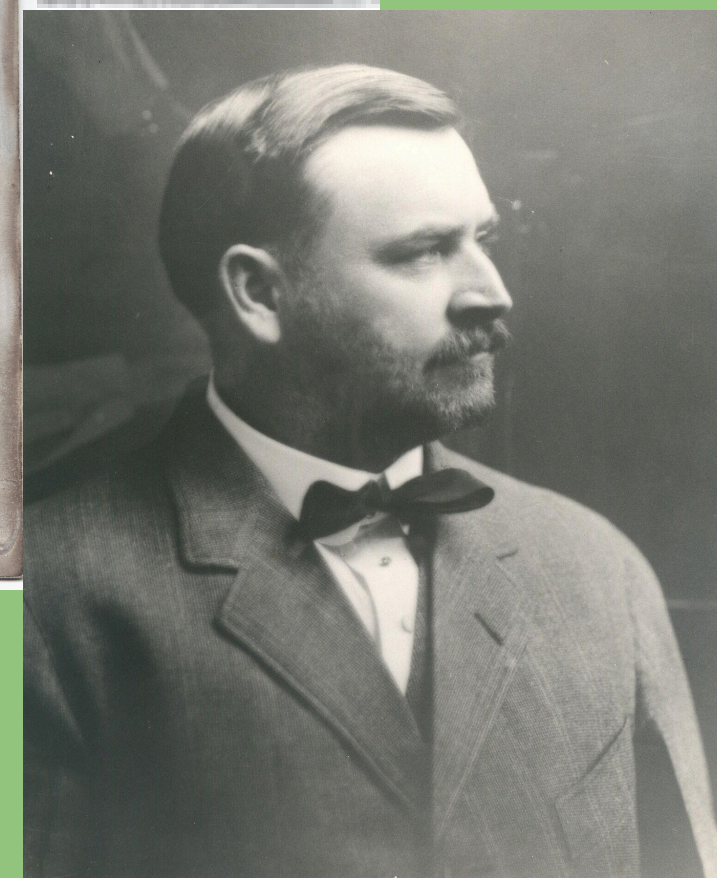
# Michael J. Dowling

The school was named in honor of Michael Dowling (1866-1921) who was a prominent Minnesotan in spite of his disabilities.

As a teenager, Michael lost most of his extremities after experiencing frostbite in a blizzard. Due to his disability, he was no longer allowed to attend public school.

After petitioning the county, Michael was able to go to Carlton College.

Michael Dowling later became a teacher, school principal, Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives (1901-1902), and mayor of Olivia from 1912-1914.



# 1921 Minnesota State Law for Crippled Children\*

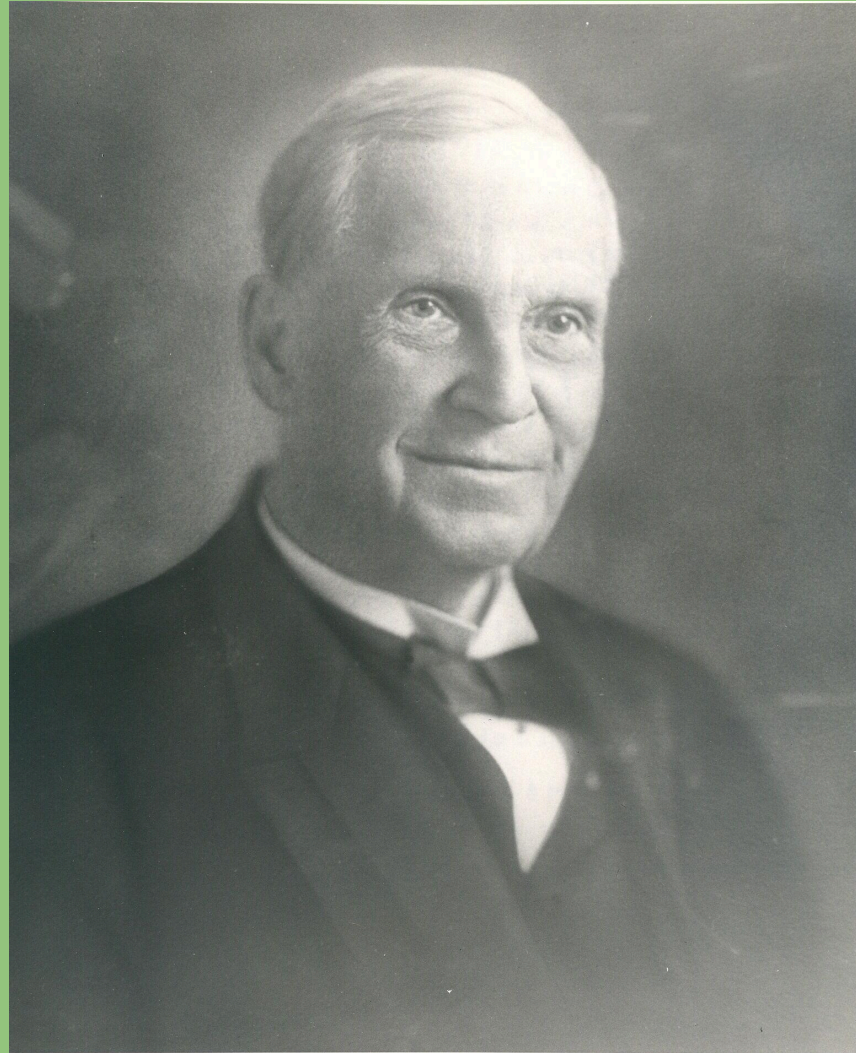
Michael Dowling believed in the importance of equal access to education for all people. He led the first legislative effort to provide state aid to children with disabilities. The Minnesota State Law for “Crippled Children” \* was passed by the Minnesota State Legislature and became a model for legislation in other states.

\* “Children with Disabilities” in 2024





# 1923 - William Henry Eustis

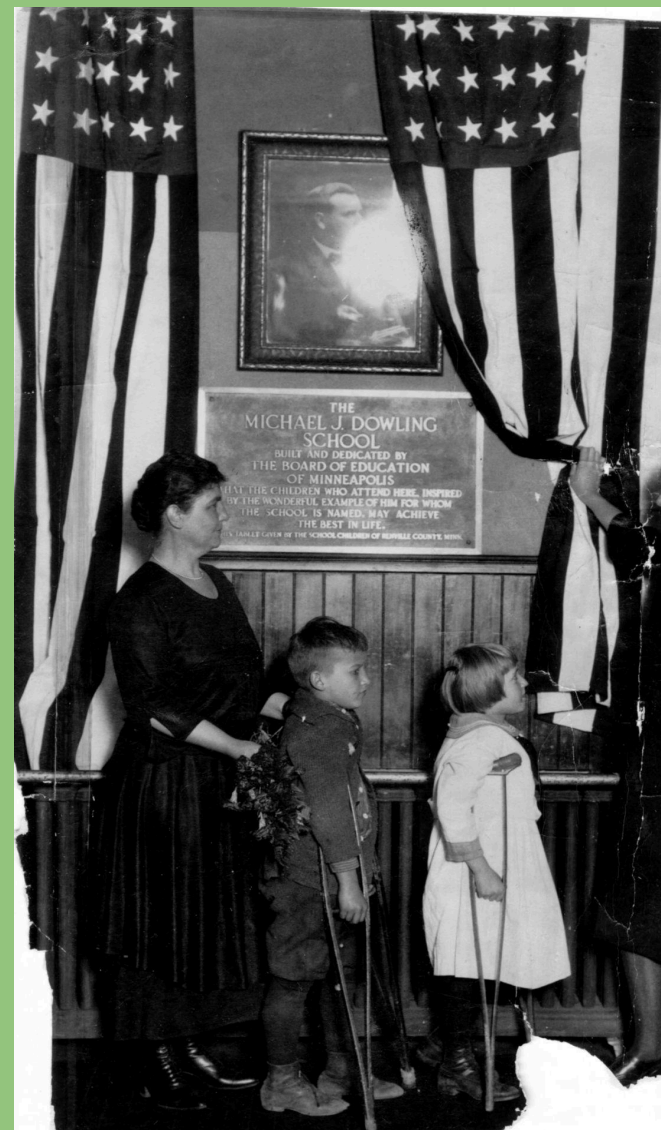


In 1923, a twenty-one acre site was given to the city of Minneapolis by William Henry Eustis (1845-1928) to be used as a school for children with disabilities. Mr. Eustis was a philanthropist, lawyer, and a person with disabilities. He was elected mayor of Minneapolis in 1892.



# 1924 - Dowling School Opening

The new Dowling School opened at 3900 W. River Parkway. There were 124 students.





# Medical Care at Dowling

Children who first came to Dowling School had a variety of physical issues – such as cerebral palsy, heart defects, and disabilities due to polio.

Medical providers came to the school to provide care directly to the students (casting, orthotics, prosthetics fittings, etc.).

Students were also able to experience ‘sun therapy’ during the school day (one of these original beds is still used daily by students in the Dowling Health Office!)









# Daily Activities



Students enjoyed their time at Dowling School. Students could be found golfing, sewing, playing instruments, weaving, and playing games.





# 1936 – Celebration of Additional Space and the Therapeutic Pool

A new wing was built to provide space for the Physical Therapy department and to add a swimming pool. It was a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project. The pool was dedicated by President and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt on October 9, 1936.





# 1940's

The Dowling Community Garden was established, and is one of only a few WWII Victory Gardens still being used today. The Dowling students were very involved in the war effort as they sold and bought war stamps, participated in Junior Red Cross, and worked in the Victory Gardens.





# Additional Opportunities for Students: 1960's and 70's

1961-62 - Two new wings were constructed during these years. Nine classrooms were added on the south end of the building. On the north end of the school, a bus loading zone and an auditorium were built, as well as an activity room with a kitchen.

1971 - Blacktop pathways were put in the developing Outdoor Learning Center along with a small pond and picnic area.

1978 - An enclosed accessible playground was built. It had state of the art adaptive therapy areas, such as water and sand tables.

An accessible agribusiness center including a greenhouse and an orchard was added on the west end of the property.





# Dowling Staff – Forward Thinkers

1980 – The Mainstream Programs began with Howe, Hiawatha, and Andersen Schools. This also included a Reverse Mainstreaming Program with options at Dowling such as swimming, practical arts, wheelchair activities, art, woodshop, and computer use. This occurred before the American Disabilities Act was signed in 1990.



1987–1988 School year – The beginning of the Dowling Urban Environmental Learning Center with grades K–4. Grade 5 was added in 1988. Grade 6 in 1989.





# 1990–Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed and signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990.





# Dowling Today

15





# Jennie Dowling

## (Mrs. Michael Dowling)

As the saying goes, “Behind every great man, there’s a great woman.” As shown here, Jennie Dowling was able to visit Dowling School.

After her husband passed away, Jennie raised their three daughters, was a welfare worker for the State of Minnesota, a director of a camp for disabled children in Hinckley, and executive secretary of the International Assoc. for Crippled Children and Adults. She also worked with Gillette Hospital in St. Paul, which her husband helped establish.





# Sources

Many of the photographs and facts for this timeline were gathered by Micky Pearson. Micky was a Dowling staff member for 28 years and has been our unfailing Dowling Archivist and main source of information. She is the superhero who brought 100's of photos, artifacts, and news clippings to the Minnesota History Center. As a result, students, staff, and parents, can continue to learn about the rich history of our amazing school.





# Remembering Michael Dowling and His Determination

While speaking to a group of disabled soldiers after World War I, Michael Dowling said:

“Don’t spend your time thinking about the things that are gone and can’t be brought back. Think of what you have. Keep your mind working and you can accomplish wonders.”

