Rooted in Excellence
160 Years of Omaha Public Schools

Omaha Public Schools began in 1859 with the goal of inspiring excellence as the first public school system in Douglas County. Its goal is to prepare students for life in a world where understanding and appreciating diversity are essential.

Throughout the past 160 years, Omaha Public Schools has remained dedicated to its mission of preparing all students to excel in college, career and life. The district has grown to consist of 62 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, seven high schools, one virtual school, and 13 alternative programs. The school district is set to open five new schools (two elementary schools, one middle school and two high schools) between 2022 and 2023.

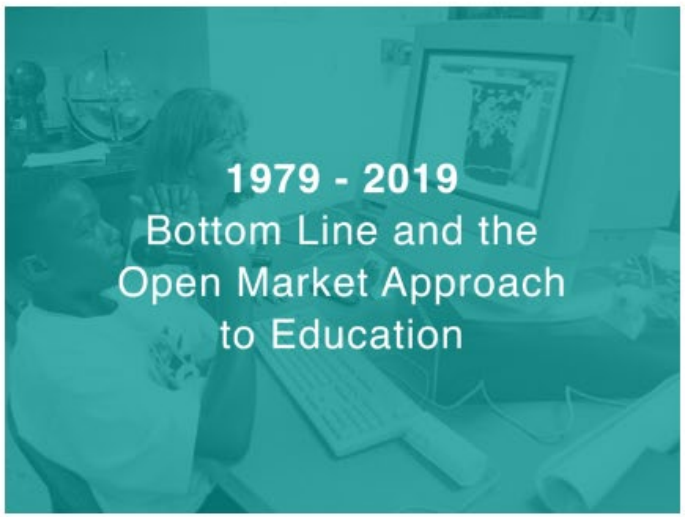
What makes our history?

Brainstorm: What might be included in an OPS timeline? What would we want to know to understand our history?

1859 - 1899
Common Schools and
Universal Education

1899-1939
Progressive Reform

1939 - 1979
Equality and Equal
Rights Movement


1979 - 2019
Bottom Line and the
Open Market Approach
to Education

OPS History Game

Materials:

- Timeline Cards
- Education Eras Mats
- Fact Checker

Directions:

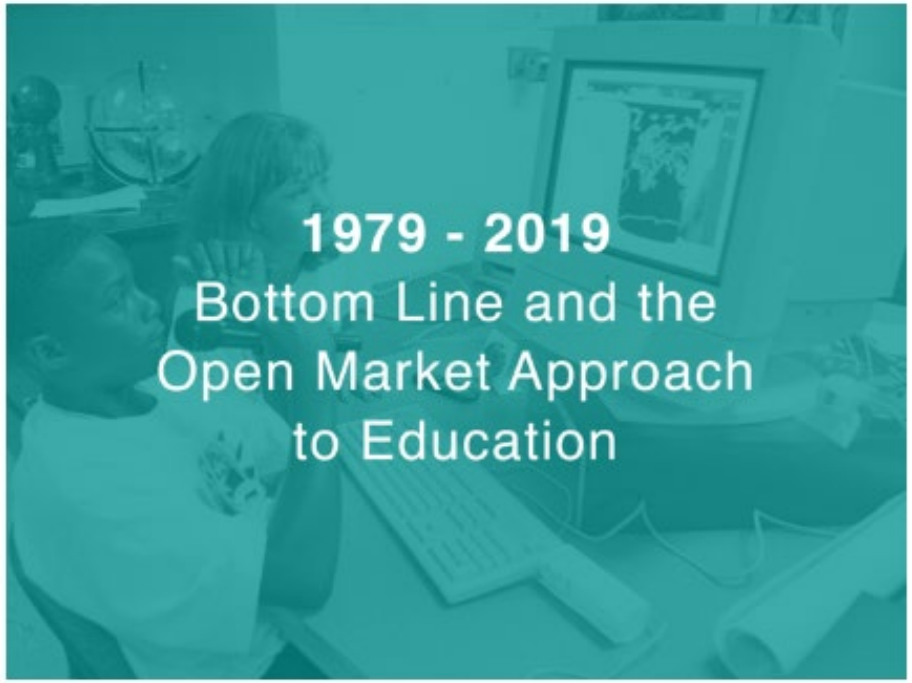
1) When time begins, open your Timeline Cards envelope
2) Review and sort the event cards to the correct Era Mat
3) Keep your answers hidden/secret as best as possible…it is a game with prizes!
4) When time is called, place any unsorted cards back in the envelope

Let’s Check!

1862	**Union Pacific Railroad established**
1879	**Lake School Opens**
1895 & 1896	**Gamble and Overall**
1896	**Sight and Hearing Tests**
1896	**Plessy vs. Ferguson**

1900	**Night School**
1911	**First Female High School Principals**
1919	**OPS Allows Female Teachers to Marry**
1921	**OPS National Firsts: Safety Patrol & National Honor Society**
1937	**Alfonzo Davis – First Black Military Aviator from Omaha**

1941-43	**Kindergarten in all OPS Schools**
1943	**OPS Victory Gardens**
1947	**First African American Principal**
1954	**Brown vs. Board of Education**
1962	**Libraries in Every OPS School**



1980	**Arts Education in OPS**
1990s	**Native Indigenous-Centered Education**
1994	**Block Scheduling in OPS**
1999	**Return to Neighborhood Schools**
2010	**Making Invisible Histories Visible Begins**

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