

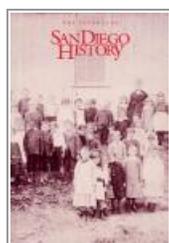
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## SERVING THE CITY'S CHILDREN

### San Diego City Schools, The First Fifty Years

by [Rudolph T. Shappee](#)[Images from this article](#)

Maude Watkins may well have had cause to worry. On a day in June of 1892, she would take the San Diego Teacher's Examination. She was unsure that she would do well. She had been attending normal school classes conducted in the home of Mrs. Woods at the corner of Second and Birch streets for some time, but her conversations with other young women who had aspired to a county certificate and failed reminded her that the San Diego examination was one of the most difficult in the state.<sup>1</sup>

Maude was twenty-one years old, too old to postpone the decision about becoming a teacher for much longer. She knew there were younger teachers in the district who had passed the examination, and drew comfort from that fact. If they could do it so could she. Her major concern was that she held only a high school graduation certificate. True, Mrs. Woods' classes had been a big help, but nothing could better prepare her for the exam than a formal, normal school education.<sup>2</sup>

She had spent most of the past two weeks reviewing the subject areas covered in the examination: English grammar, school law, geography, arithmetic, bookkeeping, vocal music, practical entomology, teaching methods, United States history, physiology, civil government, reading, composition, advanced drawing, literature, botany, and zoology.<sup>3</sup> With so much to remember, Maude may well have reached the point where she was more frightened of the upcoming test than the thought of facing a room filled with unruly students who were probably more interested in recess than the beauty of "Evangeline," or the characteristics of Insectivore or Pachyderms.

Maude successfully passed her examinations. Hired by the expanding San Diego City School District, she taught the primary grades in North Chollas School from 1892 to 1894. While there, she conducted classes in a room which was 27 feet wide and 35 feet long, with a 14-foot ceiling. Twenty seats were bolted to the floor of the classroom, and in these seats sat from fifteen to seventeen students enrolled in the three primary grades. Maude had seventy-five volumes in her classroom library and two functioning water closets nearby. She taught for an eight-month school term and was paid \$60 a month, \$12 less than male teachers received for performing the same duties.<sup>4</sup>

Although much smaller than today's modern school system, the school district in which Maude Watkins was employed was as vigorous as our modern-day system and solved comparable problems just as successfully. A leading educational journal of the day described San Diego's school district as being "cosmopolitan," and its buildings as "commanding in their sites, fit tokens of the enterprise, intelligence and liberality of its citizens."<sup>5</sup> But, of course, this had not always been the case.

There is little information available concerning San Diego's educational system during the Spanish and Mexican periods, but it may well have reflected those patterns experienced by comparable frontier colonies controlled by those countries. Few children had access to any kind of formal education. Instead, family members taught them at home, using the few books available along the poorly-supplied frontier. Occasional mention is made of schools being conducted by retired military personnel or padres at the missions, but these efforts proved to be short-lived. In the Catholic-dominated territories of the Spanish and Mexican frontiers, the books most used in the education of the young were prayer books and the Bible. As children were taught to read, moral lessons were readily available in the text. On occasion, an itinerant teacher might stop long enough to teach the rudiments of arithmetic, but for most frontier children, education was restricted to that of a moral nature.<sup>6</sup> It was only after the

frontier had stabilized and business and trading interests had become established that the community began to look to the practical education of its young as a potentially viable prospect.<sup>7</sup>

California's schools were established by a constitutional convention held in Monterey in 1849. In 1851, a school law was established by the state legislature which provided for the survey and sale of some of the 500 thousand acres set aside in 1849 so that the state's school system might be funded. State legislators decided that proceeds from the sales would be distributed to both religious and sectarian schools in the same manner as for public schools in the system.

In 1861, the state constitution was amended to establish a system of schools that were to be in session for a minimum of three months of the year in order to be eligible to receive state funds. A County Superintendent was to be elected for a period of two years. This official was to report annually to the State Superintendent of Schools concerning the state of the schools under his charge. Every district in the state was to appoint an official enumerator to take the census of all children in the district between the ages of five and fifteen. This census was to provide the basis upon which each district was to be funded. It is important to note that the funding was based on the number of school-age children in the district and not the number in actual attendance.<sup>8</sup>

San Diego had a number of temporary schools during this frontier period. Between 1847 and 1865, classes were conducted in ten different locations in Old Town. Locations ranged from the town hall to rented rooms in private homes before the community acquired its first publicly-owned structure. By this time California had been a state for fifteen years, and although it was not yet overflowing with eager new settlers, it was beginning to reflect the more modern ideals of the rest of the nation by taking an active role in developing a system to educate and socialize its population.<sup>9</sup>

San Diego's first public school building constructed as such was the Mason Street School built in 1865 at the corner of Congress and Mason streets in Old Town. The school had a single teacher and thirty-two students in 1867. An additional twenty-two students attended private and parochial schools at this time.<sup>10</sup>

By 1870, San Diego was a city undergoing the turmoil of almost explosive growth. The energies of a small group of men had been focused upon the only natural harbor between the Golden Gate and Acapulco. Because of their foresight and courage, a new city was established to the south of Old Town in close proximity to the bay.<sup>11</sup>

As the city grew, its school system adjusted to the needs of the new arrivals. During the period of New Town's initial development, the city school district was expanded from the one school in Old Town with about thirty students enrolled to a four school district which served over 270 students. Schools were established in the old Government Barracks (built in what was now New Town by the U.S. Army in 1852), a three-building complex at the corner of Sixth and B streets (variously known as the B Street School or the Pink School), and the new East San Diego School at Twenty-first and N streets (later known as Sherman School).<sup>12</sup>

In addition to new schools, another important change had occurred in the district. In 1867, the state educational system had changed from a rate-bill system, in which children were charged a fee for the number of days they attended classes during each term, to an American free-school system supported by state and county taxes. Also noteworthy during this period was the change in the city's curriculum as more rote memorization was added to the moral lessons taught in student readers. Other changes in the curriculum included the dropping of the traditional studies of Greek and Latin in favor of the more practical study of grammar, composition and literature. These subjects were augmented with vocationally-oriented courses in mathematics, bookkeeping, and penmanship. The changes reflect the changing needs of a community which was experiencing the transition from sleepy frontier town to modern commercial center.<sup>13</sup>

*Teacher's Reports* submitted to the superintendent's office on an annual basis prove to be a valuable source of information concerning the city's school system. Every instructor teaching in the district was required to fill out one of these reports and submit it to either the principal or the Superintendent of Schools at the end of the school year. The reports were referred to as "October Reports" because the amended school law of 1852 required that the minimum school term of three months end in October. These reports indicate that in 1870, San Diego's Mason Street School seldom had more than thirty students enrolled during any single month, while B Street School in New Town had an average enrollment of 105 students, reflecting the shift in growth as the city changed its locus.<sup>14</sup>

In 1870, the city's schools employed one principal (at the B Street School), six full-time teachers, and two part-time teachers. Although reports sent to the state superintendent reported that teacher's salaries were \$75 per month for males and \$65 for females, actual salaries paid according to pay vouchers were \$100 per month for males and \$70 per month for females. Extant *Teacher's Reports* indicated that the school year was of seven months duration during this year.

Annual reports indicate that San Diego's schools were graded according to the needs of the students at each site. Mason Street reported that it was "of mixed grades" with the second and third grades of the primary level being taught. New San Diego's B Street School was much more complex in its organization. Responding to the needs of a much broader spectrum of students, this school offered the first and third grades in its primary school as well as an "intermediate grade." Teacher's comments in the reports of that year indicate that there were eleven classes within this intermediate grade and twelve classes in the other two grades for the first three months, decreasing to nine classes for the balance of the school year. Considering the fact that there were only five employees in the school that year, the administrative workload must have been staggering.<sup>15</sup>

What was taught in the classrooms of the city's schools in 1870 can only be guessed at because there are no records of curricula for that year. There are, however, lists of texts which had been adopted by the California educational system between 1863 and 1870. There were a number of reading primers, pictorial primers, first, second, and third readers, all of which were used in the teaching of reading. (The famous McGuffey Reader series had also been adopted during this year). For mathematics instruction texts were available on mental and intellectual arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and a subject called National Arithmetic. There were a number of geographies available for acquainting the students with their world, in addition to various texts on such subjects as philosophy, penmanship, history, and foreign language.<sup>16</sup>

Although teachers were expected to give their pupils a practical education steeped in the "Three R's," their duties also included moral training as outlined in the 1871 *Annual Report to the Commissioner of Education*:

To endeavor to impress upon the minds of their pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, and patriotism; to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity and falsehood; to instruct them in the principles of free government, and to train them up to the true comprehension of the rights, duties and dignity of American Citizenship.

Classroom conditions in 1870 were harsh compared with those in today's schools. Multi-graded classes predominated, and it was not unusual for a teacher to have over fifty students in a number of different grade levels within a single classroom.

As for equipment to assist the teacher in his or her daily instruction, the 1870's San Diego classroom was indeed ill-equipped to carry out its task. According to the annual *Teacher's Reports* for that year, the only library available was located at the Mason Street School. It consisted of some fifty volumes, valued at \$25. This school also held the only set of *Comp's Geographic Charts* to assist in the teaching of geography in the district. The only equipment noted on the B Street School inventory was an ample supply of good drinking water and two water closets in good working condition.<sup>17</sup>

In 1870, there were a total of 675 children between the ages of four and nineteen in the city (including both Old and New Towns).<sup>18</sup> Of that number, 279 responded positively to the census taker's question concerning school attendance for the year. This is well below the average for the state which was reported to be near 75 percent for that year.<sup>19</sup> Attendance was still controlled by the needs of the individual family and attendance on a day-to-day basis was highly variable. The subsequent problems inherent with high rates of absenteeism may thus be presumed to have been a consideration for the teacher of the day.

San Diego did not have the transportation network available that Eastern cities boasted in the 1870s. Children who lived beyond walking distance from the schools may not have attended until they were older and more capable of making the journey in the varying weather conditions throughout the year. There were many families entered in the census files who lived well inside the city and sent all of their children to school while families who lived on the fringe of the city and in farming areas where the homes were more dispersed sent only the older children to school and kept those in the five to seven age group at home. As the enumerator reached the outer edges of the city, it is noted that in almost every case there were no children attending school.<sup>20</sup>

As San Diego's schools entered the decade of the 1880s, they suffered from the same stagnation which affected much of the rest of the city during this period. The transcontinental railroad had bypassed San Diego in spite of the best efforts of the city's leading citizens' to wrest its southern terminus from Los Angeles. It appeared that Alonzo Horton's dream might not be realized as his fledgling city languished at the southern corner of the state with only irregularly operating communications links connecting it with the rest of the nation. The census report for that year indicates that the municipality's population was only slightly over 2,600, having increased by only three hundred since the census of 1870.<sup>21</sup>

A relatively clear picture of classroom conditions in the city's schools emerges from the *Teacher's Reports* filed between 1879 and 1882. A summary of twenty-three of these reports reveals the following.

The average classroom was 30 feet long, 29 feet wide, and 17 feet high with a single door. Windows that opened at the top and bottom provided the major source of ventilation. A female teacher, paid \$70 a month for her services, taught some forty-one students in from one to five grades. Each grade may have been split into two divisions, as it was now the policy of the district to make advancements during mid-term as well as at the end of the year. As the average daily attendance in the schools during this period was usually between 80 and 83 percent of those enrolled, daily attendance averaged thirty-three to thirty-four students.

School terms ranged from a minimum of 4.5 months to a maximum of ten months, with a majority of the schools holding a seven-month year. Holidays included Election Day, the first day of the county fair, Thanksgiving, Christmas, a five-day Teacher's Institute, and Washington's birthday.

Teaching aids were still virtually nonexistent. Teachers were unanimous in replying negatively to the question, "Do you have supplementary materials in your classroom?" Reports indicate that only Russ School and the schools in Old Town had map sets to help in the teaching of geography.

As for sanitary facilities in the schools, every classroom report noted the availability of two water closets in good to acceptable repair. Drinking water was usually brought in from a local well. Numerous reports noted that students had to go to a neighboring home to request water and that there were sometimes problems concerning the amount of water left in the bucket by the time it was returned to the classroom. The water was usually consumed from a communal dipper supplied by the school district.

There were also complaints concerning classroom ventilation in the reports. These ranged from the oppressive heat of summer to the wind which blew through the numerous knotholes and cracks in the walls and floor during winter. One teacher noted that some of her students could pass their hands and arms through the holes.<sup>22</sup>

Considering the number of students enrolled in New San Diego's schools in 1882, the size of the library collections appears adequate. Two reports noted libraries with 387 and 500 volumes each at a time when only seventy-three students were enrolled.<sup>23</sup>

Although the city's population was slowly expanding, the school system faced some problems in 1880 and 1881. A general decline in enrollment necessitated the closing of Sherman School in May 1880, and on 3 March 1881, all of the schools were closed for three days because funds were inadequate to meet the teachers' payroll. But, the system survived these temporary setbacks and by 1882 the school population had again increased to the point where further expansion was required. Russ School was built at the corner of Twelfth and Russ streets, and all of the schools were once again in full operation.<sup>24</sup>

A milestone for education in San Diego was the land boom of the mid-1880s. Created by the anticipation of the establishment of a rail line connection with the East in 1885, the boom was sustained by a later rate war between the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific railroads. San Diego's population doubled almost overnight, and then doubled again within a single year. New arrivals poured into the city at the rate of two to three thousand per month. The rate increased to more than five thousand per month at the height of the boom between July and September, 1887.<sup>25</sup>

With the increase in population came the need for new schools and more teachers. The census marshal's reports indicate that the school-age population in New San Diego had increased from 95 in 1885 to 3,431 in 1888! This growth heavily impacted the three-school system. New construction was immediately undertaken and schools sprang up in Sherman Heights, Mission Valley, Pacific Beach, Roseville, Sorrento, and Coronado. The Smith and Middletown schools were constructed within the city to relieve pressure on the existing schools which were turning away students because of a shortage of desks. Including the school in Old Town, San Diego schools numbered thirteen at the end of the land boom.<sup>26</sup>

These schools did little, however, to alleviate the pressure on the district, which was reeling from the effects of the city's population explosion. The new schools within the city served only a total of 256 students. The remaining eight hundred had to be absorbed into the other already overcrowded classrooms. *Teacher's Reports* filed in 1889 indicate that average classroom counts ranged between 46 and 56 students in a multi-graded teaching environment.<sup>27</sup> The city's resources, including the schools, were stretched well beyond their normal capacities, and this may well have been reflected in many of the city's youth not enrolling in school because of a lack of desks in the classrooms.

Although there may have been more than three thousand students of school age in San Diego in 1885, records indicate that only approximately 34 percent of those children attended school on any given day. It was normal for children to attend school on a part-time basis during this era in American education. The needs of the home and farm were still placed above those of the child in many instances, and thus, educational experiences were often of short duration. As in 1870, boys were often absent during periods of planting and harvesting, and such factors as weather and distance from school still played important roles in daily attendance. Attendance rules were not yet enforced, and many children went to school for years without passing beyond the primary grades.

*Principal and Superintendent Reports* note that high school courses were added to the curriculum during this period. High schools had been in operation in the state since San Francisco High School and Lady's Seminary had opened in 1853. These schools were designed to prepare the student for entry into the state university system. As state funding had not yet been authorized for this level of instruction, the preparation of the state's future university students was left to the numerous private academies, seminaries, and institutes. The first classes to be conducted in San Diego were offered at Russ School under the principalship of Professor J. K. Davis and a staff of four certificated teachers. Students were required to pay their own tuition. In this manner, a selection process was created so only the more financially-able families could obtain educations for their children. This process restricted access to higher education, and aided in the maintaining the status quo within the community.<sup>28</sup>

Russ School offered a special course of study in the classics, including the works of Julius Caesar, Cicero, Virgil, and Plutarch. (Remember that this course of study had been eliminated from the public curriculum in 1870.) By 1891, this "literary" course was augmented by two others: an English and scientific course stressing more mathematics, and a modern language program that allowed students to receive instruction in French, German, or Spanish. In 1894, a business course was added, which may reflect the influence of the emerging business community.<sup>29</sup>

*Teacher's Reports* continue the historical narrative of the city's schools during the 1890's. Reports indicate that by the opening of the decade, the land boom had subsided and there was some relief for the district's much-overworked staff. Class sizes shrank back to their pre-boom norms of from thirty to forty students each. One report notes that high school enrollment at Russ School had dropped from 91 students in 1889 to 30 students in 1890. These reports reflect the impact of the economic crash which was precipitated by the end of the land boom. City population figures dropped from a high of 35,000 to approximately 16,000 in six months.<sup>30</sup>

Although population growth slowed during the last decade of the nineteenth century, by 1890 it had increased to 17,700 as people continued to step off the train to enjoy the mild climate and long beaches. The Hotel del Coronado had opened in 1888 and a tent city had grown around it to house the tourists who flocked there during the summer months. A number of short-line railroads, which had been in operation since the early days of the boom, offered easy transportation throughout the numerous additions and subdivisions that survived the crash of 1888-89. Military installations were developed around the bay--at Ballast Point, Point Loma, and Coronado--as a result of the Spanish- American War. Soon a navy ship would be assigned to the harbor, heralding the arrival of future fleets that would call the harbor home.<sup>31</sup> This period was one of quiet maturing for the city's school system. The flood of new students receded, and now teachers and administrators could focus on their new charges and develop programs that would bring the local district into alignment with programs offered throughout the rest of the nation. Prior to this time, *Teacher's Reports* indicate that individual schools within the district had different school terms, curricula, and daily programs.<sup>32</sup> Now standardization became the rule of the day as the district attempted to bring individual schools into alignment with school board directives as well as national norms.

To serve its children, the district now employed seventy teachers, of whom only two were men. As evidenced by their applications for employment, their ages ranged from the late teens to the mid-twenties, with a few being in their thirties. They were employed for only a single year, there being no tenure rights at the time. This necessitated a new application and certification each year. This system of employment was thought to be of advantage to the district because each teacher could be considered for reemployment on the basis of her or his performance during the previous term of employment.<sup>33</sup>

School reports reflect the attitudes of the day concerning the social status of males and females. Salary schedules of the 1870s and 1880s were strongly biased in favor of male teachers. In the 1870s female teachers received monthly salaries of \$30 to \$40 less than male instructors for teaching the same grade levels. In the 1880s female teachers' salaries became tiered, those teachers in the higher grades receiving higher salaries. Female teachers were paid \$70 per month for teaching in the primary grades and \$72.50 for teaching in the grammar grades. Males received \$77.50 per month regardless of what grade they taught. During the 1890s a movement was afoot throughout the state for equal pay for teachers. Articles advocating equity appeared in trade journals of the day and school reports in San Diego indicate that teachers within the district did begin to receive equal pay for equal work as early as 1895. By 1899, high school teachers were paid \$90 per month while grammar and

primary teachers received \$72.50 per month. Kindergarten teachers were receiving \$70 per month, the same rate that female teachers had been paid in the district twenty years before.<sup>34</sup>

Prospective employees of the school system had a wide variety of educational backgrounds according to their applications for employment. Some candidates held only grammar school certificates, the minimum qualifications for employment at the time.<sup>35</sup> Other applicants had educational experiences well beyond grammar school. These extended from experience acting as teachers' helpers in grammar and high schools to the holding of advanced degrees from universities throughout the nation. Of the 67 teachers employed by the district in 1893, five were graduates of colleges or universities while fifteen had been graduated from one of California's two normal schools, an additional eighteen from normal schools in other states. But graduates from normal schools and colleges and universities still made up only 53 percent of the district's teaching staff. Forty-seven percent of the teachers employed by the district held either high school or grammar school certificates.<sup>36</sup>

Teachers were required to hold valid teaching certificates before they were hired. According to the state law of 1859, county superintendents were empowered to establish county boards of examiners which would grant one-year certificates to prospective teachers. These certificates of competency were issued after a candidate passed an extensive written examination developed by the Board of Examiners of the district involved.<sup>37</sup>

Teaching had become woman's work during the nineteenth century. As in the cities along the eastern seaboard, when San Diego changed from a frontier town to a young city, the male teachers in Old Town and the Government Barracks were at first augmented by and then replaced by young women eager to enter the work force. By the middle of the century, women made up a majority of the teaching staff in both public and private schools. Job applications, pay vouchers, and *Teacher's Reports* all bear the names of young women, most of them single, who left their homes to come to teach in the city's classrooms. However, although they were in a majority in the district, most of the positions of leadership were still held by men, as is evidenced by signatures on the *Principals' Reports* and *Superintendents' Reports*.<sup>38</sup>

Financial reports, annual reports and teachers' pay vouchers provide the researcher with only a superficial view of the educational system. A better understanding of the classroom environment may be gained by a closer inspection of what happened inside the classroom during a normal school day. Harr Wagner, the superintendent of the city's schools in 1895, submitted the accompanying daily schedule as part of his "Model School Program." This may give the reader a better understanding of the management skills necessary of a single teacher in one of the smaller multi-graded schools in the San Diego district.<sup>39</sup>

#### MODEL DAILY CLASSROOM SCHEDULE

##### Time Activity

9:00 - 9:10 Opening exercises: Music  
 9:10 - 10:20 Mathematics: Number work, Arithmetic  
 Algebra, Drawing, Geometry, Bookkeeping  
 10:20 - 10:40 Recess  
 10:40 - 12:00 Language: Reading, Writing, Spelling, English  
 12:00 - 1:00 Noon  
 1:00 - 2:20 Science: Botany, Zoology, Physical Culture,  
 Geography  
 2:20 - 2:40 Recess  
 2:40 - 3:50 History: Morals and Manners, Civil Government  
 3:50 - 4:00 Closing exercises: Music

An educational movement that was popular in the East soon arrived in New San Diego. The kindergarten movement was based upon the belief that children under the age of six needed a special environment in which to learn. Until this new educational theory was accepted, it was not unusual to find children of four or five years of age sharing classrooms with students of eight or twelve. Little could be offered to these youngsters except free babysitting services, which many mothers were quick to exploit, as is evident from attendance and census data.

San Diego's first kindergarten was a privately-operated school conducted by Bryant Howard in 1890. The local Board of Education decided that the care of these infants should not be left to Howard's unrestrained tutelage, and by common decree by 1892, kindergarten classes were conducted in five schools in the district with an enrollment of 431 students.<sup>40</sup>

The major method of instruction was still rote memorization and recitation. Although a number of advocates in the vanguard of the educational movement questioned the efficacy of these methods, they remained in use until John Dewey's child experience methods were popularly adopted in the twentieth century. The teacher was expected to commit each lesson to memory and then impart it to the classroom by recitation and demonstration. Student mastery of the subject matter was confirmed by a subsequent recitation of the material. The following school closing exercise demonstrates the presence of these instructional methods in 1887:

First Grade: Readings, Recitations, Essays and a Debate.

Fourth Grade: Readings, Concert Recitations, Dialogues and Songs.

Fifth Grade: Songs, Declamations, Duets and Stories.

Sixth Grade: Recitations and Songs.

Seventh Grade: Recitations and Songs.<sup>41</sup>

San Diego's schools adopted the departmental instruction method in 1891. In this system, teachers at the larger schools were assigned a group of related studies which they taught in two-period segments - one period of fifty minutes, the other of twenty. The grouping of students was as follows: geography, history, and drawing; language, reading, and spelling; elementary science, writing, and physical culture; and mathematics and music. Each teacher passed from room to room teaching the special subjects at the appropriate grade levels. By the end of the day, each teacher was expected to pass through all of the grade levels taught in the school. This method was thought to have two major advantages: the teachers were allowed to specialize in subjects in which they were more comfortable, and teacher-student relationships were maintained as the teacher was allowed to teach the student for a four-year cycle instead of one.<sup>42</sup>

Manual training was introduced into the school system in 1891. The program was based upon the belief that education should concentrate more on meeting industry's needs. It should thus become more practical and develop more than just the mental faculties. From grades one through four, both boys and girls were trained in cutting and sewing skills in order to improve their hand-eye coordination. They performed such activities as cutting squares of cloth to different sizes, basting, overhand and overcast stitching, and hemming cloth. After grade four, the girls continued to improve their stitchery under the tutelage of their classroom teachers while boys attended shops in the basements of the larger buildings for instruction in carpentry from a teacher who traveled from school to school. Manual training was provided for one-half hour per week in the primary grades and three-quarters of an hour in the grammar grades.<sup>43</sup>

Until 1891, student promotions were based on annual examinations. The County Board of Education prepared tests and the teachers administered and graded them. All answers were written in ink, with the exception of map drawing, which was done in pencil. The student was allowed to write only the answer when given problems in mental arithmetic. The minimum passing grade was 75 percent on each subject. Upon receipt of examination results from the teachers, principals then promoted or graduated the students.<sup>44</sup>

In 1891, annual examinations were discontinued, the teacher being authorized to administer topical examinations as necessary when completing a particular area of study. Students who maintained a general average of 75 percent were then promoted at the end of the year. Students who maintained an 85 percent average in scholarship, a 90 percent in deportment, and had no unexcused absences or tardies were honorably promoted or graduated and excused from school attendance during the final week of the term.<sup>45</sup>

As San Diego's school system prepared to enter the twentieth century, it had evolved from a male-dominated, multi-graded system focused on the teaching of moral tracts, to a highly sophisticated system that responded to both the needs of the community and its children. Concentrating in its early days upon the amount of knowledge students could assimilate during their educational experience, the system responded to educational innovations that advocated special treatment for younger children, vocational training, and advanced training for those going on to the nation's colleges and universities. As the new century dawned, the city's educational system had evolved into a dynamic institution ready to meet the changing needs of the community it served.

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**NOTES**

1. San Diego County Board of Education, Examination Questions Used by the County Board of Education, June, 1898 for Primary Certificate (1891), School District Records, R2.68, Box 20, File 21, San Diego History Center Research Archives, San Diego, California.
2. Maude Watkins, Job Application (1892), School District Records, Box 20, File 1.
3. Board of Education, Examination Questions.
4. San Diego County Superintendent of Schools, Teacher's Report of the Public School in New San Diego District, County of San Diego (1892-93, 1893-94), School District Records, Box 21, File 9, San Diego History Center Research Archives, San Diego, California.
5. "San Diego City Schools," *The Pacific Educational Journal* 9 (September 1893): 445.
6. Occasionally, Anglo residents of California provided local education. In Monterey, the Boston merchant William Hartnell operated a school for boys in the 1830s. See Susanna Bryant Dakin, *A Scotch Paisano* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939), 58; Stuart G. Noble, *A History of American Education* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1938), 77; John Swett, *Public Education in California* (New York: American Book Co., 1911), 17; Harlan Wilson, "A History of San Diego Schools from 1592 to 1942 with Emphasis on Curriculum" (M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1942), 42-44.
7. Noble, *History of American Education*, 79.
8. Swett, *Public Education in California*, 21.
9. Ben F. Dixon, "San Diego's First Schools and Teachers," Curator's Memo (1954), School District Records, Box 20, File 15; "Restudying Those Early School Days in San Diego," *San Diego Union*, 11 September 1983, sec. G, p. 2.
10. J.M. Guinn, *Historical Biographical Record of Southern California*, vol.1 (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1902), 284; "Restudying Those Early California Days," *San Diego Union* 11 September 1983, sec. G, p. 2.
11. James R. Mills, *San Diego, Where California Began* (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1976), 47; Elizabeth C. McPhail, *The Story of New San Diego and Its Founder Alonzo E. Horton* (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1979), 42.
12. Winifred Davidson, "Notes Concerning San Diego's Schools" (1949), 165, School District Records, Box 21, File 12.
13. See Noble, *History of American Education*, 80-94, for information concerning changes in curriculum within the public school movement along the Atlantic seaboard; see also for information concerning the kindergarten movement.

14. Teacher's Reports, (1870).
15. Teacher's Reports, (August 1869 to June 1870, July 1870 to December 1870).
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