



City of Manchester Archives
One City Hall Plaza
Manchester, NH 03101
603.624.6455 – mintranuovo@manchesternh.gov
www.manchesternh.gov/archives

Collection Summary

Repository: Manchester City Archives. Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.

Creator: School Committee, Board of. City of Manchester, NH.

Title: School Committee Records

Collection Number: 0607.001

Accession Number: 2004.17

Dates: 1824-1877

Volume: 12 bound volumes

Languages: Collection materials are in English.

Access: Access to collection is open to the public. Please contact the archives for an appointment to view materials. Cite the collection number when making an appointment

Conservation Notes: All volumes were restored by a 2007-2008 New Hampshire State Library Mooseplate Grant, with the exception of the Payroll of Teachers ledger.

Finding Aid Prepared by: Mike Intranuovo, 2015; 2016.

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Historical Note

The City of Manchester's first School Committee meeting was on September 08, 1846. There were seven members, each representing the seven wards that the City was comprised of at that time. The committee oversaw and administered the public schools and all related educational issues for the City of Manchester.

Collection Description

This collection consists of early records of the Board of School Committee, including records before Manchester became a City in 1846. It is organized into three record series: meeting minutes, school records, and payroll records.

The collection has a wealth of information regarding public education in Manchester's early history. Records, especially those in record series 2, describe the physical location of school districts in terms of its proximity to individual landholdings, natural boundaries (i.e. Merrimack River), and to other towns. School district configurations would change as Manchester grew.

The collection is evidence that the early residents of Manchester considered education to be extremely important. For example, in the 1820s the population of Manchester was under 1,000; but by that time the inhabitants of School District 3 had an elected Prudential Committee who, in turn, hired a schoolmaster. Education was also considered important for both genders. The records of School District 2 indicate that a new brick schoolhouse was built in 1842. The school was used for advanced pupils of both sexes.

The collection also documents the beginning of political careers of some of Manchester's and New Hampshire's prominent politicians of the time. One example is Frederick Smyth, who served as the Chairman of the committee for School District 2, and later went on to become the City Mayor and the Governor of New Hampshire.

The Amoskeag Company, Manchester's largest landowner, has always had a major role in the establishment of schools. In the 1840s, the Amoskeag Company was a relatively new enterprise so there are entries in many volumes which indicate land being sold and land being donated to the Town and City of Manchester.

Series Descriptions and Inventory

Series 1: Meeting Minutes, 1846-1876

Official handwritten meeting minutes of the School Committee. The volume titles do not necessarily list the record series. Arranged chronologically.

Volume Title
1846-1860
1861-1876

Series 2: School Records, 1824-1868

Handwritten documents in bound volumes that include information regarding elections (such as warrants and election results), meetings (such as minutes and other narrative based texts), financial documentation, and other related documentation of a school district's activities. Each school district had its own committee, which was elected by the male residents living in the district. Arranged numerically by school district, then chronologically within each volume.

Volume Title
District 2, 1842-1867
District 2, 1868
District 3 & 5, 1824-1868
District 4, 1841-1868
District 6, 1847-1868
District 8, 1842-1868
District 10, 1854-1868
District 11, 1854-1868
District 14 (Town of Bedford/City of Manchester), 1848-1854 Item Note: District 14 was in the Town of Bedford until 1853, when Manchester acquired an area of the town known as the Piscataquog Village.

Series 3: Payroll Records, 1859-1877

This series consists of one bound ledger listing teachers' names and salaries. The ledger was created by the Treasurer of the School Committee.

Volume Title
Payroll of Teachers, 1859-1877