

Resource Collection

SCHOOLS

Description

School is a subject that all students are familiar with. Throughout Nobles County's history, many of the towns hosted public and parochial schools to teach the county's children. These town schools were joined by rural schools across the county. There were a total of 115 rural schools operating in Nobles County in its early history until about 1964. Many of these original school buildings are no longer in existence. One surviving schoolhouse was built in 1899 and designated as District #46, or the Gilomen School. It functioned as a rural school until 1944. Nobles County Historical Society purchased this school in 1956 and placed it on the fairgrounds. In 1968, it was moved to its current location as the first building in Pioneer Village, where it can be visited today.

This resource collection highlights several school-related photos and objects in the Nobles County Historical Society Collection. The collection also contains related NCHS objects and related lesson materials, videos, and other resources to enrich student learning.



Featured NCHS Objects

- [1965.034.0001.PC](#) - Round metal dinner pail most children carried to their rural school for their dinner. Ed Kepka carried this dinner pail to school, c 1920 - 1930.
- [1990.010.0139.PC](#) - School children and horse drawn buses, c. 1910
- [2009.023.0047-1.PC](#) - Rural school picnic, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0047-5.PC](#) - Rural schoolhouse, c. 1925
- [2011.015.0250.PC](#) - Square homemade banner with black letters stitched on that read "Who Are We For? WORTHINGTON HIGH 1909," c. 1909
- [2015.035.0001.PC](#) - Photograph: Rural School District No 6. Class Photo, c. 1941-1942
- [2016.010.0116.ED](#) - Reading school house with horse drawn school buses, c. 1900
- [2016.010.0248.PC](#) - Color snapshot of children playing with a ball outside, c. 1970
- [2016.069.0027.PC](#) - Doris DeGroot's Sixth Grade report card, c. 1948-1949
- [2018.011.0003.PC](#) - Brown megaphone with SAH (St. Adrian High) written on the outside, c. 1940-1950
- [2020.001.5950.PC](#) - Photograph of four Worthington Trojan football players, c. 1939
- [2022.001.1850.PC](#) - Photograph of a teacher reading to students sitting on the floor at Central Elementary School, c. 1952



Additional NCHS Objects



- [1983.005.0001.PC](#) - Class portrait, Reading, Minnesota, c. 1920
- [2009.023.0037.PC](#) - Schoolhouse, Rushmore, Minnesota, c. 1900
- [2009.023.0038.PC](#) - School building, Adrian, Minnesota, c. 1880
- [2009.023.0047-2.PC](#) - Photograph: Rural School Picnic, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0047-3.PC](#) - Photograph: Rural School Picnic, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0047-4.PC](#) - Rural schoolhouse, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0047-6.PC](#) - Rural schoolhouse, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0047-7.PC](#) - Rural schoolhouse, Nobles County, Minnesota, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0062.PC](#) - High School string group, Worthington, Minnesota, c. 1910
- [2009.023.0068.PC](#) - Photograph of school bus used in district Number 7, Reading Minnesota, c. 1925
- [2009.023.0116.PC](#) - Schoolhouse, Dundee, Minnesota, c. 1910
- [2009.026.0106.PC](#) - Postcard of "Assembly High School Worthington, Minn," photo of students at their desks, c. 1915
- [2009.037.0005.PC](#) - Postcard of Wilson Public School in Brewster, c. 1908
- [2011.015.0097.PC](#) - Photograph of Kinbrae School, c. 1930
- [2012.024.0030.PC](#) - Bob Artley Drawing, c. 1992
- [2014.001.0333.PC](#) - Maroon wool Adrian High School letter cardigan sweater with a gold felt "A" on the front, c. 1930-1940s
- [2014.024.0004.PC](#) - Postcard of "Parochial School Ellsworth, Minn," c. 1909
- [2014.024.0022.PC](#) - Postcard of the Public School, Brewster, Minn, c. 1908
- [2014.028.0389.PC](#) - Photograph of Rural School Class Photo, District 48, c. 1907
- [2014.055.0001.PC](#) - Adrian Football Pin, c. 1950-1980
- [2014.070.0001.PC](#) - Earla Johnson's 12th Grade report card, c. 1931-1932
- [2015.005.0001.PC](#) - Postcard of the Round Lake School, c. 1913
- [2015.005.0106.PC](#) - Postcard of Dundee High School, c. 1908
- [2015.033.0004.PC](#) - Photograph: District 109 Class Photo, c. 1932-1933
- [2015.034.0007.PC](#) - Ethel Siemer's 12th Grade report card, c. 1931-1932
- [2015.045.0276.PC](#) - Photograph of the Homecoming King and Queen at the Worthington Crippled Children's School (which was later named the Lakeview School), c. 1967
- [2016.069.0004.PC](#) - Postcard of Ellsworth High School, c. 1910-1915
- [2016.069.0029.PC](#) - Report Card: Doris DeGroot's Ninth Grade report card, c. 1951-1952
- [2017.057.0001.PC](#) - Trojan Band Helmet, c. 1970-1980
- [2019.011.0001.PC](#) - Postcard of Grade School in Worthington, c. 1920
- [2019.060.0014.PC](#) - Brewster Bulldogs Homecoming Pin, c. 1975
- [2019.082.0020.PC](#) - Bigelow Basketball Uniform Warm-up Jacket, c. 1950-1960
- [2020.001.2867.PC](#) - Photograph of a school dance in Memorial Auditorium at the high school, c. 1944
- [2021.001.6150.PC](#) - Photograph of Junior and Senior class presidents and their dates entering the high school Junior-Senior Prom, c. 1951
- [2021.001.7356.PC](#) - Photograph of Worthington High School basketball players at the high school gym, c. 1951
- [2022.005.0007.PC](#) - Color postcard featuring a rendering of the Public Schoolhouse in Adrian, Minnesota, c. 1910
- [2022.005.0029.PC](#) - Photograph of the Public School in Ellsworth Minnesota set in a souvenir postcard with "Rah! Rah!! Rah!!!" and a blue and yellow pendant with E.H.S. on it, c. 1908

Looking for additional photos or objects related to a particular school? Please contact Nobles County Historical Society!

Analysis Tools

Project Zero: Harvard Graduate School of Education

- [See, Think, Wonder](#)
- [Unveiling Stories](#)
- [See Think Me We](#)
- [Creative Questions](#) (with [Creative Question Starts](#))
- [Step Inside](#)
- [Projecting Across Time](#)
- [Step in - Step out - Step back](#)
- [Same and Different](#)
- [I Used to Think... Now I Think...](#)

National Archives and Records Administration

- Analyze an Object or Artifact ([Novice](#) and [Intermediate](#))
- Analyze a Photograph ([Novice](#) and [Intermediate](#))



K-12 VIDEOS

[Teaching In A Remote, Modern, One-Room Schoolhouse: 70 Miles From Nowhere - NBC News](#)

This 5-minute video from *NBC News* describes a one-room schoolhouse in Duckwater, Nevada. As the nearest gas station and grocery store are around 70 miles away, this K-8 schoolhouse provides the children in the community of 250 with the opportunity to learn.

[History of the McGuffey Reader | The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation - The Henry Ford](#)

This 4-minute video from *The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation* recounts the history of the McGuffey Reader. William Holmes McGuffey created a series of books beginning in 1836 to teach students how to read and instill morals and virtues in learners.

[History of Children's Books | The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation](#)

In this 3-minute video, *The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation* describes the history of children's books. In the 18th century, John Newbery created the genre of books that became children's literature. By the late 19th century, more and more authors wrote books for children's entertainment. Examples of children's literature within *The Henry Ford's* collection can be found [here](#).

[History of the School Bus | The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation](#)

Today, many students arrive at school via bus. This 3.5-minute video from *The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation* tells how busses spread in the early twentieth century as students traveled further to attend school in town with the closure of rural schools. *The Henry Ford's* collection includes the 1927 Blue Bird No. 1, the oldest surviving school bus in the United States.

[The Origin of Public Education in America | The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation](#)

In the 1600s, Massachusetts voted to publicly fund schools, fostering the system of education that survives today. This 3-minute video from *The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation* describes how schools evolved over time, especially thanks to the work of Horace Mann in the 1800s.

GRADES K-5



Lesson Plans

[Kids in School \(1862-1973\) – Minnesota Historical Society](#)

This lesson plan from Minnesota Historical Society asks students to consider how school has changed over time. Students will analyze a primary source set to investigate different schools throughout history. Short (20-30 minutes) and long (1-2 hours) versions of this elementary aged lesson plan are available.

Lesson Activities

[Back to School Word Search - Scholastic](#)

This word search from Scholastic challenges students to locate school-themed words.

Picturing Schools Throughout Time

Select a photo of a historic school building from the NCHS collection and have students compare it to the school they attend today. What has changed? Have students draw a design for what they think future school buildings might look like.

GRADES 6-12

Lesson Activities

School History Research Project

Have students research the history of their school building. When was it built? Did it have other uses? How does it compare to other school buildings from the town's history? From other schools in the county?

Articles

[Beyond The Pail: NPR Unpacks The History Of The Lunch Box - NPR](#)

This *NPR* article describes the evolution of the lunch box from the pails that rural schoolchildren carried to the branded lunch boxes that students carry today. In 1950, Aladdin Industries added an image of a popular fictional cowboy to their lunch boxes, and sold 600,000 that year. Other manufacturers quickly followed suit. Eventually, boxes further evolved to plastic boxes instead of metal, but even the increasingly popular soft lunchboxes still find branding opportunities.

[Learning in the Land of Lakes: Minnesota's Education History - MNOPEdia, Minnesota Historical Society](#)

This article recounts the history of education in the state of Minnesota. Ordinances concerning public education were written into the 1849 Minnesota Territorial School Code and the 1857 state constitution. In addition to state funding, different federal acts have provided additional resources for education, such as the 1887 Hatch Act (agricultural education) and the 1914 Smith-Lever Act (home economics). The article describes the history of public and private schools, teacher unions, educational reforms, and students. It also includes a wide variety of additional resources, such as images, primary and secondary sources, and related articles.



Other Primary Sources

[Minnesota Department of Education's School library list: Part II: Senior High School. Compiled by Harriet A. Wood, Supervisor of School Libraries. St. Paul: Published by Authority State of Minnesota The Capitol, St. Paul, 1930.](#)

This library list from 1930 features a wide range of subjects, including Zoology, Ethics, and Beekeeping, in addition to more traditional subjects such as American literature, Music, and Mathematics. Teachers may select a few pages of this book for students to analyze and compare to books they find in their library today.

[Minnesota school library list. Books for elementary and rural schools 1915-1916. Compiled by Martha Wilson, supervisor of school libraries, Dept. of Education. Approved by the State High School Board](#)

This library list from 1915-1916 features a wide range of subjects, including Fairy Tales, Folk Dances, and Astronomy. Teachers may select a few pages of this book for students to analyze and compare to books they find in their library today.

Other Museum Resources

[William Holmes McGuffey and His Popular Readers - The Henry Ford](#)

William Holmes McGuffey created a series of books beginning in 1836 to teach students how to read and instill morals and virtues in learners. This page from The Henry Ford compiles information and photos about McGuffey and his readers.

[School Photos, Library of Congress](#)

The Library of Congress hosts an extensive collection of photos of rural schools. This photo shows two students eating lunch outside of their one-room schoolhouse in Grundy County, Iowa, in the fall of 1939.



NOBLES COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY