

Education

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The history of Marshall Schools in Clark County, Illinois includes a variety of schools throughout the community. The first schools were one-room schoolhouses. Later the South Side School and the old North School came about. After some time had passed, the new North School was built. For higher education, the Marshall Township High School and the Junior High were constructed. Marshall's school system also consisted of a college, administration offices and new additions.

The history of Clark County schools dates back to the early 1820's in the first old school house. There were only about twenty students at that time. Children of all grades would attend in one schoolhouse. Sometimes two or three generations attended school together. The first teachers were paid in various animal skins instead of money. Teachers were later paid in money but they had to do their own janitor work and build fires. At this time most schoolhouses were simple log cabins. For nearly forty years schoolbooks, teachers, houses, and lessons remained primitive. Eventually, some of the bigger and newer schoolhouses had their own cloak rooms, entry halls, and furnace rooms.

An act of legislation on February 15, 1831, provided that any five members of a school district could get a loan of no more than \$200.00 to erect a schoolhouse. After another legislation in 1837 that allowed school boards to levy taxes, districts popped up statewide.

Some of the first schools in Clark County were Auburn School, Avonisch School, Little Brick School, Block School, Choctaw School, and Fishback School. The first school house actually located in Marshall was the Little Brick Schoolhouse. The school was planned in 1859. It was located at 8th Street and Maple Street just behind Ed Booth's Lumberyard. The Mott family then used the building for a garage. Most schools were also used for churches or became churches after closing. In 1948-49 there were thirty-eight one-room schoolhouses in Clark County. The demand for one central school eventually closed Little Brick.

The public decided to consolidate and bring the rural schools unit system into town. From 1948-49 to 1955-56 all thirty-eight one-room schoolhouses were closed and the students were transported into the city.

Since 1948, Marshall Community Unit School District C-2 has provided elementary and secondary education for children of Eastern Clark County. The district covers around two hundred and fifteen square miles.



The South Side School was built in 1887 with four rooms and in 1908 four more classrooms were added to the backside of the school. The South Side School is located on the 600 block of South 6th Street. The South Side School was built for children who

lived on the South side of town. Children were required to go to the South Side School unless they found a child to switch with so they could go to the North Side School. The school was large enough to hold two hundred students.

The Old North School was built in 1875. It was located on the third block north of Archer Avenue between Seventh and Eighth Streets. The Old North School was built to hold 250 students. In the fall of 1895 the Old North School was remodeled. The Old North School was a wooden building and deteriorated with age. With the school in such poor condition, there was a demand to close the school because it was a fire hazard. The school board attempted to have the State Fire Marshall condemn the school, which he wouldn't do. Then, they tried to pass a referendum for money to replace the Old North School, but the referendum failed miserably. So, Dr. George Mitchell got on the telephone and asked Charlie Bush if the school board had the power to close the Old North School and Mr. Bush said yes. So, Dr. Mitchell brought it up at the next school board meeting. Dr. George Mitchell then convinced the school board that the risk that we were taking everyday our children went to school was great. A new referendum passed overwhelmingly. The school board then voted to close the school and the Old North School was tom down in 1965.



The new North School was built in April of 1966. This school was built to accommodate the ever-increasing number of children attending school.

The school's grand opening was on Sunday, September 24, 1967. There was an open house for every one in the community. The Superintendent of Schools, Charles Bush, presided over the ceremony. The bell from the Old North School was dedicated to the new North School during the ceremony.

The new North School contained fifteen general classrooms, and several special purpose rooms including a cafeteria, gymnasium, kitchen, library, audiovisual center, speech correction room, health room for the school nurse and offices. A bond issue approved in 1965 financed the school.

The Marshall Township High School was located at the site of the current High School on North 6th Street. The Marshall Township High School was built in 1904. The old gym and a wing were added in 1923. The reason it was called the Marshall Township High School was because Marshall and Auburn Counties both attended the school.



Marshall Township High School was hit by a tornado in April of 1947 on Good Friday. The tornado left the brick and roof damaged. Portions of the building were repaired and used for seventh grade classrooms, music department, and girls' shower and locker facilities. The new Marshall High School was built in front of the old building in

1947-48, and occupied by students in 1949. Marshall Township High School then changed its name to Marshall High School. This building is still in use today.



On April 11, 1957 the John Snedeker Construction Company finished Phase 3 of the building program which was to build a Band Room, Choral Room, and Practice Rooms for both the Junior and Senior High School student body. In conjunction with the Music Department, cafeteria facilities were expanded to include much-needed, additional storage space. A walk-in refrigerator and a janitor storage area with a loading and unloading dock were added. The old Physical Education Building was remodeled and used as an auditorium and by the girls for physical education activities. New lockers, shower and toilet facilities were installed in the basement of this building.

A new Junior High School building was erected at approximately \$180,000.00 with ten classrooms for seventh and eighth grades. The core area of the building contains a library center for the Junior High School. The building was equipped with new furnishings. It was located in relation to the High School so that seventh and eighth graders could take advantage of the facilities of the High School for typing, music, physical education, home economics, industrial arts, and a welding and machine shop.

The Ohio Building is presently the main administrative office of Marshall Schools. After the Ohio Oil Company left Marshall to move to Terre Haute, Indiana, the school district had the opportunity to buy the building in 1952 from the oil company for \$12,000.00, which was a very good deal. Twelve of Marshall's residents loaned \$1,000.00 each to the school district to purchase the building. The building was converted into five classrooms for kindergarten, first, and second grades. The first year the building was used was 1952-53 and there were one hundred and nine students enrolled. After the North and South schools were finished, the students attended there. The administrative offices for Marshall Schools were located in the High School until 1966. Then they were moved to 704 South Sixth Street across from the South School. Dr. George Mitchell's mother willed the two-story, white-framed house to the school. After a while the administration offices were moved again to the Ohio Building, which was empty because of the construction of the North School. The administration is located at the Ohio Building today.

In the 1800's there was a need for colleges and universities throughout Illinois. In 1839, the Marshall College was erected at the former site of the North Side School. The school was presided over by Reverend Dean Andrews. Andrews was a graduate of Bowdoin College and he came into town in the later part of 1838.

In 1839 Thomas Handy, who lived at Union Prairie, taught at the college. About 1856, the building and grounds were given to the Methodist denomination, which conducted the school for many years. On February 22, 1867-68 the property was sold into private hands. Then in 1872, the building was sold back to the public school trustees of Marshall for grade school purposes.

There have been many additions to the Marshall C-2 district schools over time. At the South Elementary School there has been two additions over the years. The first was a one-story structure, which joined the old building with a connecting corridor and included eight self-contained classrooms for first, and second grade children. There were also five regular classrooms for third and fourth grade students, a library center, cafeteria, and an all-purpose

room. The administrative quarters include offices for the elementary Principal and Secretary, a Health Center for the school nurse, and a teachers lounge and workroom. New toilet facilities were provided in this new structure for the fifth and sixth grade children, which was located in the adjoining old building. Then in 1996, the most recent addition of the South School was added. They remodeled adding a whole new wing that created more classrooms and more space for the students and the staff.

In conclusion, the history of Marshall Schools has changed throughout the years. These changes have been made, as they were needed in order to provide a good education for all the students in Marshall and the surrounding area. The school system is an ongoing process and is still changing today.