

Schools an integral part of Arthur since its beginning

Schools, like churches, were some of the first things citizens wanted for their new communities. The first school was held in the upstairs of Joel Miller's hardware store on the southwest corner of Vine and Railroad (now Progress) streets. It was a subscription school started in 1873. Mrs. Banta was the teacher.

Union District No. 7 was formed in 1876, and the directors built Arthur's first school building in 1877 on the southeast corner of Vine and Park Streets. It was a two-room structure with one room built above the other.

The school had two teachers, Mr. Charley N. Righter and Miss Della Birchfield. The following year the school had the same two teachers except that they were now Mr. & Mrs. Charley N. Righter.

The new school directors were highly criticized for building the school so far out of town where there were no sidewalks connecting it to the rest of the town. So, most of the year, schoolchildren had to wade through mud, slush, or snow to get to school. One fall, some of the fathers hauled slab lumber from the local saw mill to make a wooden, single track sidewalk to the school.

In 1888, a two-room addition was made to the original schoolhouse and a three-year high school curriculum was added. There were now four teachers. The first high school graduating class received their diplomas on May 13, 1892.

In 1900, a new two-story brick schoolhouse was built east of the old school. This building had six rooms, a library, five halls, and a janitor's room. On Dec. 10, 1901, both the new school and the old school burned down. Arson was suspected.

A new brick schoolhouse was built in 1902 with the same floor plan as the former building. Schoolchildren, however, had to attend classes in local churches for over half a year while the school was under construction. In 1902, the high school curriculum was extended to a full four years.

In 1914, the formation of a township high school was accomplished and by 1916 the cornerstone for a new high school building was laid in a field at the south edge of town. The first class graduated from this new high school in 1918. At this time there were 86 students and five teachers at the high school, and 225 students and nine teachers at the grade school.

In 1948, Arthur Community District 305 was organized, greatly expanding its territory, which required the operation of school buses to transport outlying students to and from school. This also necessitated the need to build an addition to the downtown grade school in 1952.

In 1960, the original grade school was torn down and replaced with a more modern facility. A large addition to the high school was also completed in 1960 to include science



GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM with students writing on blackboard circa 1905.

rooms, an all-purpose room, cafeteria, band and chorus rooms, and a six-classroom junior high school wing.

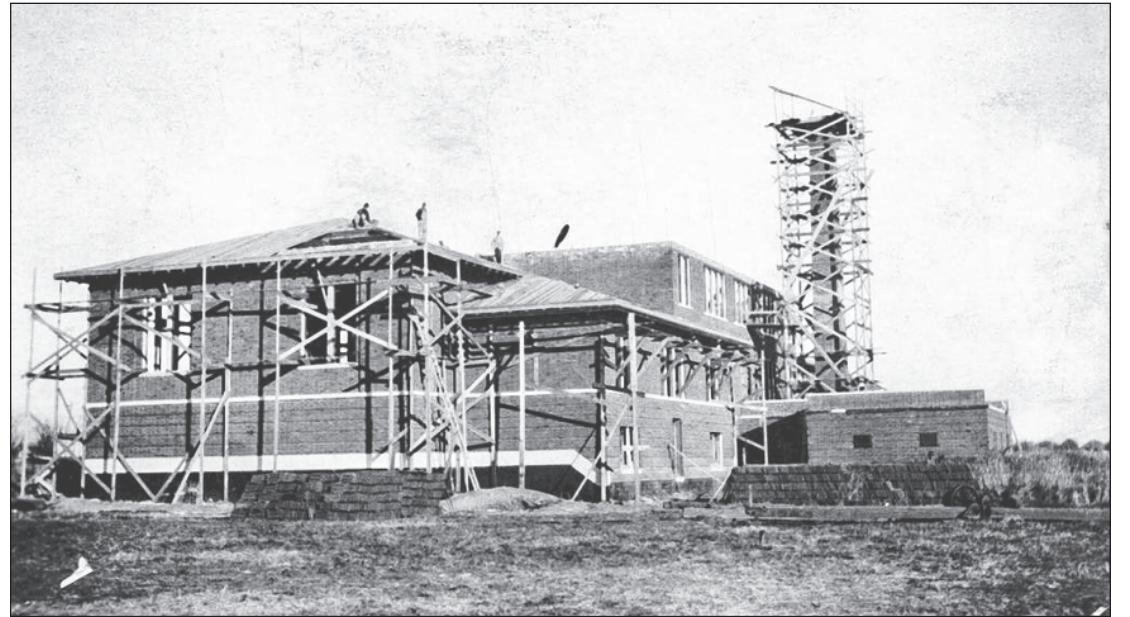
Since this time, the schools of the District have undergone many facelifts, facility improvements, and expansions

that have been critical in maintaining the quality education students have received over the years. Just as they were in

the year of Arthur's founding in 1873, schools remain an important part in the life of this community.



STUDENTS STANDING in front of Arthur's first public school.



THE NEW ARTHUR TOWNSHIP High School under construction in 1916.



THE COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL in 1917. The first classes held in the new building were in the fall of that year. In 1937, a new gymnasium was added.



ARTHUR'S FIRST HIGH SCHOOL graduating class of 1892: Horatio Dildine, Hugh M. Rigney, Fannie McIntyre and Lena Kelly with Prof. S. C. McIntyre. Hugh Rigney was class valedictorian and Fannie McIntyre's father was the school's principal.



ARTHUR GRADE SCHOOL and High School building in 1902 in the 100 block of East Park Street.



HIGH SCHOOL ROOMS addition to the original school building under construction in 1910.

CONGRATULATIONS VILLAGE OF ARTHUR

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

1873-2023

Arthur CUSD #305
Go Knights!

