

The Modern School

Postwar School Architecture in Rapid City

In March 1958, the *Rapid City Journal* proclaimed that “Schools Are Rapid City’s Biggest Business.” This was not hyperbole. The schools “have the biggest payroll, the largest capital outlay, purchase thousands of dollars worth of supplies annually and take the biggest share of Rapid City’s tax dollars.” To educate the over 8,000 students in the community, the schools had an operating budget of \$2.5 million, and taxpayers had committed \$7.6 million for new school construction over the previous decade. “The end isn’t in sight” when it came to construction, the paper declared, “so long as the ‘baby boom’ continues.”³¹²

The postwar population boom affected the United States in myriad ways. Since the late 19th century, the birthrate in the United States had been on a slow decline.³¹³ It spiked unexpectedly after World War II, and some 72 million American “Baby Boomers” were born between 1946 and 1964.³¹⁴ Many Americans, no doubt, viewed the boom as a positive development. Weary from nearly two long decades of depression and war, millions of Americans experienced the joys of parenthood in a rapidly expanding, consumer-driven economy. Many viewed the nuclear family as a valuable social and cultural asset in the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.³¹⁵

But the boom was also a “birth quake,” as the economist Diane Macunovich has written.³¹⁶ It was a sudden, transformative event that rattled American life that continues to shape our politics, society, and economy today. Among the many immediate aftershocks was a sudden, surging demand for new infrastructure in communities where the most intense growth was concentrated.

Rapid City felt the quake. Fueled by the baby boom, the establishment and expansion of Ellsworth Air Force Base, and migration from the rural hinterland to the urban center, the city’s population nearly doubled between 1940 (13,844) and 1950 (25,179). It continued a steep rise to about 42,000 by 1960. The boom subsided in the mid-1960s, and Rapid City’s population would continue a slow increase for about 20 years.³¹⁷

³¹² “Schools Are Rapid City’s Biggest Business,” *Rapid City Journal*, March 11, 1958.

³¹³ Jan Van Bevel and David S. Reher, “The Baby Boom and Its Causes: What We Know and What We Need to Know,” *Population and Development Review* 39, no. 2 (June 2013): 257.

³¹⁴ Sandra L. Colby and Jennifer M. Ortman, “The Baby Boom Cohort in the United States: 2012 to 2060,” US Census Bureau, May 2014, 2.

³¹⁵ See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer’s Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage, 2003).

³¹⁶ See Diane J. Macunovich, *Birth Quake: The Baby Boom and Its Aftershocks* (University of Chicago Press, 2002).

³¹⁷ Bureau of the Census, “[1950 Census of Population: Preliminary Counts: Population of South Dakota, By Counties](#),” Series PC-2, no. 18, August 21, 1950. Ellsworth Air for Base was originally named the Rapid City Air Base.

Across the United States, civic leaders and education advocates were clear-eyed about the challenges that lay ahead. In the spring of 1950, the *Washington Post* reported on the growing need for a nationwide school construction program. Quoting the US Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, the story noted that as many as a quarter of American schoolchildren were attending classes in “obsolete, unsafe, or inadequate buildings,” and that the nation would need to build around 450,000 new classrooms to accommodate its projected growth by 1960.³¹⁸ The next year, the *New York Times* described a report by a citizen advisory organization that urged the Eisenhower administration to push a 10-year, \$14 billion plan to build a half million schools.³¹⁹ Yet another piece exclaimed that about half of all college graduates would need to go directly into teaching to meet the pressing demand for teachers.³²⁰ And, in 1955, a report in the *Architectural Forum* complained that “every 15 minutes enough babies are born to fill another classroom and we are already 250,000 classrooms behind.”³²¹

Despite these calls, politicians and policymakers remained apprehensive about the federal government’s role in education, which had, to that point, generally been considered a state and local issue. It was not until 1958—a year after the Soviet Union launched its Sputnik satellites, sparking fears that the Americans were losing the technology and innovation race—that Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). Although much smaller than the \$14 million called for in the *Times* several years earlier, the NDEA was a historic federal education bill that framed the need for quality schools and education as a Cold War imperative. It appropriated \$1 billion over several years to education in the United States, with an emphasis on science and mathematics at colleges and universities. Meanwhile, the number of enrolled students in US public schools continued to balloon from about 25 million in 1949 to 46 million in 1971. The NDEA helped, but local school taxpayers would ultimately cover the bulk of the costs for new or expanded schools.³²²

In Rapid City, the squeeze on educational facilities was already underway. In March 1949, Superintendent E.B. Bergquist informed the school board that the community could expect an increase of 224 students by the fall. A new elementary school called Canyon Lake Elementary, one of the first schools built in Rapid City since the 1930s, would absorb 175 of them.³²³ Overcrowding at the Rapid City High School was also beginning to cause problems by 1950, and the school was working on a plan to update the cafeteria to accommodate

³¹⁸ Mary Spargo, “School Construction Bill Raises Varied Problems,” *Washington Post*, March 20, 1950.

³¹⁹ “Eisenhower’s Aid on Schools Urged,” *New York Times*, July 22, 1954.

³²⁰ “Thinking Ahead on Schools,” *The New Republic*, July 9, 1956, 5.

³²¹ *Architectural Forum*, quoted in Amy F. Ogata, “Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, no. 4 (Dec. 2008): 582.

³²² Ogata, “Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools,” 580.

³²³ “School Survey Indicates Local Elementary Enrollment will increase by 224 pupils,” *Rapid City Journal*, March 15, 1949.

almost twice as many students by the next academic year.³²⁴ For the moment, growth in the district seemed significant but manageable.

Excepting Canyon Lake Elementary and General Beadle Elementary, which were established in 1949, the educational facilities in Rapid City at that time included several small elementary schools spread across town. The earliest schools in the area were single-room, and often rural, structures reminiscent of the “Little Red Schoolhouse” of popular memory. In the early 20th century, South Dakota followed national trends in curriculum development and school design. Known as the “Standardized School”—or simply, “standardization”—movement, legislatures across the United States passed laws that prescribed detailed plans that aimed to enhance learning. In this era, schools remained relatively small and dispersed. Many rural schools were converted via state financial incentive plans, while new construction followed updated rules that standardized the number of windows and doors; detailed the placement of recently-developed electric lighting; prescribed the dimensions of egresses; and established the number and positions of fire escapes, chimneys, and more. Rapid City had at least seven elementary schools in this early era: Four were named after US Presidents Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Jefferson; James A. Garfield Elementary School; and two small A-frame-house schools named South Park (or “Old Mattoon”) and Upper Rapid School.³²⁵

Completed in 1929 and 1936, respectively, the Rapid City High School complex and Wilson Elementary School were the capstones of the local school district. Each epitomized the “consolidated school” movement of the early 20th century, which built upon the new approach created during the standardization era and popularized large, centralized facilities that “tended to feature stately neoclassical facades and standardized, utilitarian classrooms with multiple rows of desks.” At schools like Rapid City High School, many students could socialize, learn from different teachers, and utilize amenities like auditoriums and gymnasiums inside massive buildings.³²⁶ The imposing, four-story structure included a manicured campus on Columbus Street that had famously hosted President Calvin Coolidge during the summer of 1927. On the south side, up a short incline on the hillside, sat Washington Elementary School. Another building that had been used by the 30th president during his visit housed Coolidge Junior High.³²⁷

Within a few short years, the trickle of students Superintendent Bergquist had described in 1949 soon became a flood. In late 1951, Rapid City’s public schools enrolled a total of 4,955 students. A report anticipated that some 2,000 more students would arrive

³²⁴ “School Board Awards Cafeteria Contracts,” *Rapid City Journal*, April 15, 1950.

³²⁵ Mark Elliott and Melissa Dirr, “Schools in South Dakota: An Educational Development” (Pierre: South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, 1998), 12–14; “School Survey Indicates Local Elementary Enrollment will Increase by 224 Pupils,” *Rapid City Journal*, March 15, 1949; Pechan and Groethe, *Remembering Rapid City*, 63

³²⁶ Bryn Nelson, “[School Design Through the Decades](#),” *Mosaic Science*, November 14, 2014, accessed February 24, 2021; Elliott and Dirr, “Schools in South Dakota: An Educational Development,” 17–22.

³²⁷ “Timeline: How Rapid City High School became Dakota Middle School,” *Rapid City Journal*, July 3, 2010.

within five years.³²⁸ That estimate, it turned out, was woefully conservative. By 1952, the school board had updated its projections, noting that at least 3,000 students would arrive by 1954—and that number merely accounted for the “normal growth” of families already living in Rapid City. The school district had no way of knowing how many families would move to Rapid City, much less where they would settle.³²⁹ By 1960, total enrollment in Rapid City’s public schools reached 10,585 students.³³⁰

Communities across South Dakota were also facing increased enrollments. As Michelle Dennis writes, across the state, “dozens of new education-related buildings were constructed between 1945 and 1960.” These included expansions to public school facilities as well as additions to the campuses of colleges and universities. Many added student housing, libraries, laboratories, and other research facilities. Federal laws like the NDEA and the GI Bill, which made affordable college education available to veterans, inspired the spike in college enrollments. Many of these veteran students lived in on-campus family housing units that had been built to accommodate them.³³¹

To keep up with this growth, Rapid City undertook an aggressive construction and school expansion program, building over a dozen new schools between 1949 and 1969. First were Canyon Lake and General Beadle in 1949. Next, in 1950, came Annie Tallent Elementary (renamed South Park Elementary in the 1990s) and Lincoln Elementary. In 1952, E.B. Bergquist Elementary—named for the longtime superintendent—Horace Mann Elementary, and South Canyon Elementary were all founded, followed by Robbinsdale Elementary in 1953 and West Middle School in 1955. Later that year, voters passed a \$3.1 million bond issue. It included funds to make additions to many of the schools built just a few years earlier, which were already nearing capacity. The bond also helped spur new school construction over the next several years: Meadowbrook Elementary opened in 1957, followed by Pinedale Elementary in 1958, and South Middle School and North Middle School in 1959. In 1961 and 1963 came Grandview Elementary and Knollwood Heights Elementary, respectively. The last of Rapid City’s postwar schools, Stevens High School, was built in 1969.

Meanwhile, by the late 1950s and early 1960s, new or expanded schools sponsored by faith communities popped up in Rapid City, as did public school facilities in suburbs like Rapid Valley. The Catholic Diocese, for example, planned a 1,000-student school to be built adjacent to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, which was completed in 1962. Congregations of Seventh Day Adventists and a Lutheran denomination also had small

³²⁸ Bob Lee, “School Building Programs Pushed,” *Rapid City Journal*, November 18, 1951.

³²⁹ “School Board Confronted with Expansion Problems,” *Rapid City Journal*, November 12, 1952.

³³⁰ “First Week Enrollment is 10,585,” *Rapid City Journal*, September 10, 1960. According to the US Census, the city’s population in 1960 was 42,399. Nearly three quarters of these residents lived east of the hogback that divided the city, including 12,043 under the age of 18. On the west side of town, there were 9,246 residents, including 4,554 under the age of 18. “High School Location is Questioned,” *Rapid City Journal*, December 19, 1961, 13.

³³¹ Dennis, “Post-World War II Architecture in South Dakota”(2007), 34–35.

elementary schools in Rapid City.³³² Meanwhile, an addition to the Rapid Valley School was completed in 1960, and Valley schools would become part of the Rapid City school district in 1969.³³³

Many of Rapid City's postwar schools became the centerpieces of new, postwar neighborhoods that were sprawling outward from the downtown core. As crews broke ground on Robbinsdale Elementary in 1952, for example, real estate developer Private Homes, Inc. was finishing work on 170 mostly ranch-style homes on the new streets that surrounded the school. The company was also planning a shopping center and drugstore just blocks from the school to serve the hundreds of new families moving into the area.³³⁴ (See essay on Postwar Residential Growth.)

The schools were anchors for daily life and commerce. They also shaped the development of the character of Rapid City's new neighborhoods. Families played on the school swing sets on the weekends and in the summer. Little league, softball, and junior football teams practiced on the athletic fields. Boys Scout and Girl Scout troops held meetings and events in school buildings. Grandparents and parents attended holiday programs and band and orchestra concerts in school gyms and auditoriums. Adults voted and attended PTA meetings in school facilities. In these ways, neighborhood schools were a cornerstone for civic and social life.

The schools had been designed with these multiple, flexible uses in mind. According to author Bryn Nelson, postwar schools marked a departure from their large, costly predecessors. They "featured more standardized and cost-conscious designs" due to budget constraints and surging enrollment.³³⁵ Architects also accounted for pedagogical innovations. As another pair of scholars observed in 1962, "Americans are aware that the curriculum content and the process of teaching and learning are in the throes of vigorous investigation and exploration." Early schoolhouses, they wrote, had "followed a prosaic pattern" with a "single-minded purpose... to shelter the students from the elements." A school could live in basically any "good sturdy structure that provided space for a few desks and some blackboard area." But changing modes of thinking required a new spatial approach, and "the box-like school structure, comprised of a series of rectangles, row on row and layer on layer" they wrote, "is becoming a thing of the past."³³⁶

Cutting edge research at Stanford University's School Construction Systems Development Project had outlined four key principles to guide school designers in the postwar era. First, schools should be flexible, with interior spaces utilizing movable walls and multiple configurations. Second, different-sized spaces should be included and adaptable for

³³² "Schools Are Rapid City's Biggest Business;" McCarty, "Schools Planning to Meet Challenge in New Year," *Rapid City Journal*, December 27, 1959.

³³³ Andrea J. Cook, "School to Celebrate Move," *Rapid City Journal*, May 27, 2015.

³³⁴ School Board Confronted with Expansion Problems," *Rapid City Journal*, November 12, 1952.

³³⁵ Nelson, "School Design Through the Decades."

³³⁶ James D. MacConnell and Harold Faulk, "Architecture for Education," *American Behavioral Scientist* 6, no. 3 (Nov. 1962): 70.

different sizes of student groups. Third, schools should be able to accommodate emerging technologies like televisions and overhead projectors. Finally, permanent spaces like auditoriums should be able to be reconfigured to meet a variety of uses.³³⁷

An American Institute of Architects demonstration in 1958 showcased some of these plans. The cutting-edge schools in the exhibit, wrote the *Washington Post*, were “characterized by an open planning of component units, central courts and student assembly places surrounded by classrooms, overhead lighting and an improved use of landscaping to make the adjoining paces esthetically pleasing.” Tile and playground sculptures of animals, meanwhile “add[ed] a new dimension to formerly severe surroundings” while “imaginative use of new building materials has also added a sense of lightness and warmth to the architecture itself.”³³⁸

These elements were practical as well as cultural. Concerns about the state of the world shaped the vision for what schools could be. In a study of postwar school design in England, which mirrored many of the new trends in the United States, one architectural historian argued that “the postwar school stands out as a monument for a time when the prospects of imagining a more humane future were channeled into children and their education.”³³⁹ Another scholar points out that the “modern American elementary school, as a cultural and architectural form, emerged from a complex interaction of technical concerns, educational theory, and the larger historical forces of postwar expansion and Cold War anxiety.”³⁴⁰

New schools being implemented in California provided a popular model for postwar schools all over the country. There, many architects adhered to the “modern, one-story, flat-roof design aesthetic” of the era.³⁴¹ Large windows helped illuminate classrooms with natural light. Many California schools were designed to take advantage of the state’s sunny days and temperate climate, and classrooms were often connected by covered walkways to provide easy access to the outdoors. This integration of interior and exterior spaces became a signature element of postwar residential architecture, exemplified by the popularity of ranch house designs. But it was also an important cultural component of the postwar era as Americans adjusted to more urban or suburban patterns of life after generations of living in more rural communities.

An indoor, adapted version of the California plan was utilized in northern states like South Dakota.³⁴² A *Christian Science Monitor* article from the period described a model school in Barrington, Illinois, which had been developed as part of the Stanford project. “The building,” it reads, “consists of four wings of classroom space which shoot off from a

³³⁷ MacConnell and Faulk, “Architecture for Education,” 70.

³³⁸ “AIA Displaying School Architecture,” *Washington Post*, July 6, 1958.

³³⁹ Roy Kozlovsky, “The Architecture of *Educare*: Motion and Emotion in Postwar Educational Spaces,” *History of Education* 39, no. 6 (November 2010): 712.

³⁴⁰ Ogata, “Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools,” 552.

³⁴¹ Nelson, “School Design Through the Decades.”

³⁴² Nelson, “School Design Through the Decades.”

central core. In the middle is a 7,000-square foot informal ‘learning center,’ complete with film strips, tape recordings, and newspapers, as well as books, and another huge room which doubles as a study hall and cafeteria.”³⁴³

Rapid City’s postwar schools incorporated many of these trends. Michelle Dennis notes that a Belle Fourche school designed by the architect Harold Spitznagel in 1949 was a model utilized by school districts across the state.³⁴⁴ Spitznagel’s work was influenced by the broader evolution underway in the design and architecture world and informed the design of Rapid City’s schools.

During the postwar era, Rapid City engaged a variety of design and construction firms to complete new construction and additions to existing facilities. But its initial building program was overseen by Ewing & Forette, a local business affiliated with the Chicago-based firm Perkins & Will.³⁴⁵ Their work helps explain the general uniformity of schools like Lincoln, South Park, Robbinsdale, and Canyon Lake, all of which conformed to a modern vernacular that featured low, horizontal lines and brick facades with an occasional slight peak like the one at Pinedale. Built two years apart, Grandview and Knollwood Heights deviated slightly from this look. Each, for example, features a taller, glassy peak above its main entrance. The schools resemble one another because the school board had utilized another Rapid City firm, Auckerman & Mazourek, to draw Grandview. Their design was well-liked and the school board asked the firm to adapt that plan for the new, north side school at Knollwood Heights.³⁴⁶

Descriptions of Rapid City’s postwar schools illuminated a sense of civic pride in the new facilities. Each of the new schools, read one account, was “an attractive brick building” situated on five acres of land so children would have plenty of room to play and exercise during recess.³⁴⁷ Lincoln Elementary was “ultra-modernistic in design,” while Pinedale was divided into “seven levels and units, consisting of two classrooms each,” which were “‘staggered’ up and down a gentle slope” in the hill. A news reporter marveled at how “an auditorium-office at [the] apex of the angle” joined the “the two classroom wings” at Pinedale. Like the other new Rapid City schools, “it feature[d] ample expanses of glass.”³⁴⁸

When North Middle School and South Middle School opened in 1959, these larger schools incorporated even more of the open-air concepts of the time. North could hold 700 students, while South had capacity for 1,000. Each was comprised of “four connecting wings enclosing an open court.” Long hallways separated these main wings from the gymnasium and arts and vocational wings in order to enhance the classroom learning environment by isolating noise and bustle.³⁴⁹

³⁴³ Lucla Mount, “New Twist in School Architecture,” *Christian Science Monitor*, July 23, 1966.

³⁴⁴ Dennis, “Post-War Architecture in South Dakota,” 35.

³⁴⁵ “Plans for Two Elementary School Additions Approved,” *Rapid City Journal*, January 19, 1956.

³⁴⁶ “School Board Hears Proposals on Salaries, Hires Architects,” *Rapid City Journal*, January 23, 1962.

³⁴⁷ “Schools Are Rapid City’s Biggest Business.”

³⁴⁸ Bob Lee, “School Building Programs Pushed;” “Schools Are Rapid City’s Biggest Business.”

³⁴⁹ “Open House at Junior Highs First Event in Education Week Here,” *Rapid City Journal*, November 8, 1959.

Rapid City's schools followed national trends and also helped set them. In 1963, Perkins & Will teamed up with Auckerman & Mazourek to integrate a new, state-of-the-art learning center at Grandview Elementary. Roughly the size of two classrooms, it was a 1,600 square-foot space that could accommodate 120 students in a classroom configuration or 200 when set up like an auditorium. The space could be used for "lecture-demonstration, film projection, panel and discussion groups, radio tape recording, educational television, live music and drama." The design was so innovative that it earned a two-page spread in the February 1963 issue of the *American School Board Journal*.³⁵⁰

As Rapid City sought to integrate these amenities into its postwar schools, it also faced financial and infrastructural challenges characteristic of the era. In the mid-1950s, the Museum of Modern Art in New York published a pictorial review of midcentury architectural trends. Describing the nationwide boom in school construction, the work's editor reminded readers that "booms are not always conducive to good building." Recalling a smaller, troublesome wave of construction from the 1920s, he pushed readers to cast a "wary eye [on] such construction as it was prepared and executed under conditions of manic haste and rising costs."³⁵¹

His warnings were prescient. In 1954, for example, the *Rapid City Journal* reported on the deteriorating educational facilities across town. Although many of the worst maintenance issues were occurring at the old, pre-war schools, several of the brand-new facilities like Horace Mann, Canyon Lake, and South Canyon were already cracking and chipping due to the expansion of steel framing beams.³⁵² Just months after Pinedale Elementary opened, parents complained about heating issues and poor acoustics that were making it difficult for their children to learn.³⁵³

Problems like these, along with cost overruns and change orders, pushed the *Journal* to criticize the school board in 1958. After doing some math, the *Journal* calculated that Rapid City should have been able to afford an entire, additional elementary school from the 1955 bond initiative. The paper argued that "it could have been done, too, if the [school] board had done one thing: stayed within the financial bounds approved by Rapid City voters three years ago."³⁵⁴

By the time the baby boom subsided, taxpayers had grown tired of bonds, rising construction costs, and other issues. In 1971, Educational Facilities Laboratories reported that "half of all school bond issues" in the country were "going down to thumping defeat." In this climate, many school districts across the United States would look for cost savings in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s. Rather than building new schools, many would opt for lower-cost annexes built from prefabricated materials over full renovations or additions to

³⁵⁰ Grandview School Layout Written Up in Magazine," *Rapid City Journal*, February 6, 1963.

³⁵¹ Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler, *Built in the US: Post-War Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1952), 10.

³⁵² Schools Still Inadequate, Need Repair, Board Finds," *Rapid City Journal*, April 14, 1954.

³⁵³ Ed Niciejewski, "Savings Could Mean and Additional School," *Rapid City Journal*, December 28, 1958.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

compensate for growing enrollment.³⁵⁵ This trend is evident across Rapid City, where many of the public schools have two-classroom annexes situated near the main school buildings.³⁵⁶

Rapid City's population had leveled off by the mid-1960s. In 1970, projections suggested that the city's population would begin to decline by the end of the decade. A pair of evaluators from the University of Minnesota recommended phasing out several of Rapid City's schools, planning to build a new, 1,700-student high school on the east side of town, and preparing for new construction in the southwest and north sides of town, where the neighborhoods continued to grow.³⁵⁷ Although the city's population did not decline, growth slowed from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s.^{358 359}

More than 70 years have passed since Canyon Lake and General Beadle Elementary—the community's first postwar schools—opened. Many of the postwar schools are aging and face high costs for maintenance and expansion. Those factors, combined with low enrollments, have already led to the closure of the prewar Cleghorn Elementary School in 1993, as well as the closure of Lincoln Elementary and the demolition of E.B. Bergquist Elementary in the early 2000s. General Beadle Elementary, meanwhile, was rebuilt with new amenities and higher student capacity in 2007. Since the early 2000s, the school district has discussed plans to decommission or rebuild several other postwar neighborhood schools. As these decisions are made, the school board, the city, and the Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission will need to think about how these structures contribute to neighborhood identity and how and whether they can or should be adapted for reuse in ways that will support a sense of continuity and history in the community.

³⁵⁵ "Cheaper Ways to Build Schools," Educational Facilities Laboratories, Inc., 1971, 1; Nelson, "School Design Through the Decades."

³⁵⁶ "Cheaper Ways to Build Schools," 2.

³⁵⁷ Bob Fell, "Extensive School Improvements Suggested in Special Survey," *Rapid City Journal*, August 11, 1970.

³⁵⁸ "Officials Scrambling to Find Room for More Students," *Rapid City Journal*, August 3, 1986.

³⁵⁹ The only new Rapid City schools built after 1972 were Central High School, which was built just off Rapid Creek in the years after the 1972 flood, and Kibben Kuster Elementary, which was located on the Canyon Lake campus and served elementary and special needs students at different times over several decades. New schools in Black Hawk and Rapid Valley—which although outside city limits are part of the Rapid City school district—were built in 1984 and 1987. Rapid City, meanwhile, added Southwest Middle School and Corral Drive Elementary in 1994. Andrea J. Cook, "School to Celebrate Move," *Rapid City Journal*, May 27, 2015.

Documentation

Table: Rapid City's Postwar Schools (1945 to 1972)

Name	Founded	Location
E.B. Bergquist Elementary School	1952 *Demolished 2006	725 E. Philadelphia
Canyon Lake Elementary School	1949	1500 Evergreen Drive
General Beadle Elementary School	1949 *Renovated/rebuilt 2007	10 Van Buren Street
Grandview Elementary School	1961	3301 Grandview Drive
Horace Mann Elementary School	1952	902 Anamosa Street
Knollwood Elementary School	1963	1701 Downing Street
Lincoln Elementary School	1951	1325 Quincy Street
Meadowbrook Elementary School	1957	3125 W. Flormann
Pinedale Elementary School	1958	4901 W. Chicago Street
Robbinsdale Elementary School	1953	424 E. Indiana Street
South Canyon Elementary School	1952	219 Nordbye Lane
South Park Elementary School *Previously Annie Tallent Elementary	1951	207 Flormann Street
North Middle School	1959	1501 North Maple Street
South Middle School	1959	2 Indiana Street
West Middle School	1955	1003 Sioux San Drive
Stevens High School	1969	4215 Raider Road

Community Health Center now at former site of E.B. Bergquist Elementary
25 E. Philadelphia



Canyon Lake Elementary





General Beadle Elementary
*Remodeled 2008



Grandview Elementary



Horace Mann Elementary





Kibben Kuster Elementary School



Knollwood Heights Elementary School



Lincoln Elementary School





Meadowbrook Elementary School



North Middle School



Pinedale Elementary School





Robbinsdale Elementary School





South Middle School





South Canyon Elementary School



South Park Elementary School



Stevens High School





West Middle School





“Looking east on St. Joe at 9th, Old Lincoln School on Right”
Minnilusa Historical Association



“First Rapid City High School, cost \$12,000, south side of Columbus between 6th and 7th”
Minnilusa Historical Association



“Rapid City High School where President Coolidge had Offices,”
Minnilusa Historical Association



Students in front of Coolidge High School
Minnilusa Historical Association



Washington Grade School in foreground
Minnilusa Historical Association



“Halley Airport, present site of North Middle School”
Minnilusa Historical Association



Expansion of Rapid City schools
Rapid City Journal, November 18, 1951



Rapid City Journal, November 1952



Rapid City Journal, April 14, 1954



Dedication of West Middle School
Rapid City Journal, November 7, 1955



A LARGE CROWD was in attendance Sunday at the formal dedication of West Junior High School. Principal Norman Nordby said 600 persons attended the ceremonies in the gymnasium while about 1,600 toured the building in the open house period between 3 and 5 p.m. Attorney Joe Bottom gave the dedicatory address and short talks were given by Mrs. Virginia Simpson, president of the school board; M. A. Garland, contractor for the building; E. R. Bergquist, former Rapid City superintendent of schools; James Ewing, architect, and Nordby, Assistant Superintendent of Schools. C. E. Hawkins introduced the guests and the West Junior High School band played two numbers. Nordby called separate junior high schools a boon to education in Rapid City and noted truancy has become a thing of the past at West Junior High. (Journal Photo)

Rapid City Journal, December 27, 1956



THE NEW MEADOWBROOK SCHOOL, located north of the municipal golf course, will be ready for occupancy by grade school students at the beginning of the second semester Jan. 28 if plans go according to schedule. Between 275 and 300 children now in classes at Canyon Lake and Wilson Schools are to attend. The 12-classroom building is shown above as seen from the northeast.

**Meadowbrook School
 Construction Rushed**



Rapid City Journal, March 11, 1958

GARLAND CONSTRUCTION—
 Western South Dakota's Oldest General Contractor . . .

"ON THE MARCH" WITH RAPID CITY!
 Some of the Major Projects "BUILT BY GARLAND"



Some of the Major Projects "BUILT BY GARLAND"

DESIGN SCHOOLS

West Side Junior High
 West Side Senior High
 West Side Junior High
 West Side Senior High
 West Side Junior High
 West Side Senior High

CITY OF SIOUX FALLS

St. Francis St. Anselm Church
 and Rectory on Grand
 State Theater - Remodeled, Wm.
 Hall, Wm. Fuchsman - Main
 Park

NEWSPAPER CONSTRUCTION

IN RAPID CITY

South Junior High School
 South Side Junior High School

M. A. GARLAND CONSTRUCTION
 "Smart Enough To Know You - Big Enough To Serve You."

1887 South Eighth Rapid City 31 8.1718

Open house at North and South Junior High
 Rapid City Journal, November 8, 1959



Lead Students Prepare For Busy Week

Open House At Junior Highs First Event In Education Week Here

NEW STUDENTS, BEING INTRODUCED to Rapid City and its schools for the first time, were the main attraction at the open house at the North and South Junior High schools, which was held at the schools on Monday, Nov. 8, 1959. The event was the first of a series of activities planned for Education Week, which will run through Friday, Nov. 13.

The open house was held at the North Junior High school, which is located on North 10th street, and at the South Junior High school, which is located on South 10th street. The schools are both modern buildings with many windows and a flat roof.

The open house was a success, and many new students and their parents were able to see the schools and meet the teachers. The event was well attended, and it was a good opportunity for the schools to show off their new buildings and facilities.

**First Week
Enrollment
Is 10,585**

Enrollment figures for the Rapid City Public Schools were announced Friday by Paul C. Skerian, superintendent.

These figures are the highest ever, Skerian emphasized, and he said that the school system is now on a record high.

As of Thursday at 4 p.m., 10,585 students had enrolled. This figure was the total of the 1959-60 school year.

Below are the enrollment figures for the year and the year preceding to school.

1959-60	10,585
1958-59	10,374
1957-58	10,125
1956-57	9,875
1955-56	9,625
1954-55	9,375
1953-54	9,125
1952-53	8,875
1951-52	8,625
1950-51	8,375
1949-50	8,125
1948-49	7,875
1947-48	7,625
1946-47	7,375
1945-46	7,125
1944-45	6,875
1943-44	6,625
1942-43	6,375
1941-42	6,125
1940-41	5,875
1939-40	5,625
1938-39	5,375
1937-38	5,125
1936-37	4,875
1935-36	4,625
1934-35	4,375
1933-34	4,125
1932-33	3,875
1931-32	3,625
1930-31	3,375
1929-30	3,125
1928-29	2,875
1927-28	2,625
1926-27	2,375
1925-26	2,125
1924-25	1,875
1923-24	1,625
1922-23	1,375
1921-22	1,125
1920-21	900

Area Navy Recruits

“Cleghorn School in 1996, before it was town down”
 Minnilusa Historical Association



Drawings and poems about Cleghorn School closure
Rapid City Journal, April 18, 1993

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 SUNDAY
 April 18, 1993
 Rapid City Journal

Fun Factory

Cleghorn School
 The building was once
 used by the city of
 Rapid City as a
 school for the
 deaf and blind.
 It was built in
 1911 and was
 used until 1993.
 The building was
 torn down in
 1993 and the
 site is now a
 parking lot.

Cleghorn
 Cleghorn was a
 school for the
 deaf and blind.
 It was built in
 1911 and was
 used until 1993.
 The building was
 torn down in
 1993 and the
 site is now a
 parking lot.

My Dream
 I dream of a school
 where all children
 can learn and
 grow together.
 I dream of a school
 where all children
 can learn and
 grow together.

Memories of Cleghorn
 I remember the
 days when I
 went to school
 at Cleghorn.
 I remember the
 days when I
 went to school
 at Cleghorn.

Cleghorn School
 Cleghorn School
 was a school for
 the deaf and
 blind. It was
 built in 1911
 and was used
 until 1993.

Cleghorn School
 Cleghorn School
 was a school for
 the deaf and
 blind. It was
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Cleghorn
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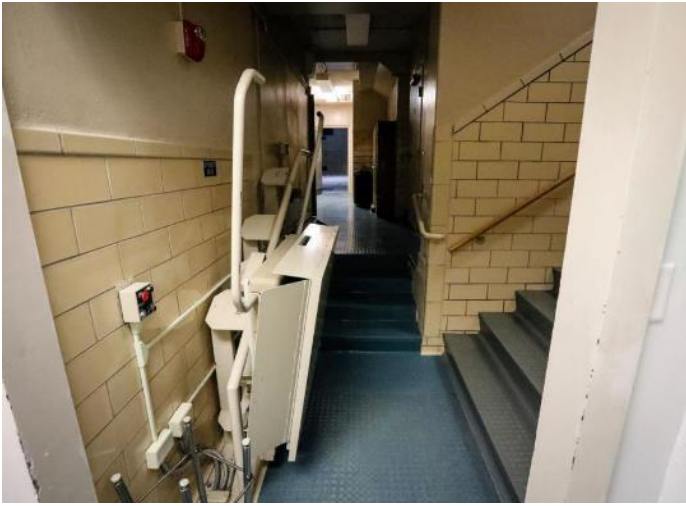
Cleghorn
 Cleghorn was a
 school for the
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 It was built in
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 The building was
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 site is now a
 parking lot.

Bergquist Demolition
Rapid City Journal, June 14, 2006



West Middle School Aging
Rapid City Journal, May 30, 2019







Canyon Lake
Rapid City Journal, September 4, 2019





Expansion of postwar neighborhoods
Rapid City Journal, November 9, 1960



School construction business booming
Rapid City Journal, March 11, 1958

