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History of Austin Junior High

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HISTORY OF AUSTIN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

- Sallie Phillips

El Paso, Texas
January, 1952

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HISTORY OF AUSTIN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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I.

INTRODUCTION

Early History of the Junior High School in El Paso

In 1915, many new homes were being built in a new addition in the northeastern part of the city of El Paso. This addition was known as Manhattan Heights. It soon became apparent that there was a definite need for an elementary school in this district. The School Board took steps to provide this section with the needed educational facilities, as shown by the following excerpt from the Minutes of the Board.

Be it moved: That the School Board buy a block of land in the Manhattan Addition with the understanding that the School Board will pay down at least \$3,200.00 for eight lots in said block, and that owners of said block enter into a written agreement to hold the balance of said block for a period of one year, at the same price.¹

¹

School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, March 31, 1916.

At a special meeting of the Board on May 1, 1916, a motion was made and carried unanimously to purchase block 12, Manhattan Heights Addition.²

²

Ibid., May 1, 1916.

Although the land was obtained in May, 1916, it was not until December, 1919, that the School Board voted unanimously to designate Messrs. Beutell and Hardie the architects for the new building.³

³ School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, December 16, 1919

A few months later at a regular meeting of the Board the following business was transacted:

Moved and carried that, if the Finance Committee, after investigation believe the funds of the Board sufficient, the contracts for Manhattan Heights School be awarded as follows:

General Contract	R. E. McKee	\$105,950.00
Plumbing	James Brennan	8,830.00
Heating	Elliott Eng. Co.	11,592.00
Wiring	Independent Electric Co.	3,580.00

Each contractor required to furnish a satisfactory bond.⁴

⁴ Ibid., March 16, 1920.

The Manhattan Heights School opened its doors on November 29, 1920. The following item appeared in the El Paso Herald:

The new Manhattan Heights School opened with an enrollment of 360 pupils and a teaching staff of 8 instructors. Classes in kindergarten and first six grades are being conducted in the finished rooms of the school and as soon as the second floor of the building is completed, additional classes will be started.⁵

⁵ El Paso Herald, December 1, 1920, p.1 -c.2.

When school opened in September, 1921, the Manhattan Heights School was called a Junior High School. At a Board meeting on March 21, 1922, a motion was made and carried to build additional classrooms and an auditorium.⁶

⁶
School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, March 21, 1922.

In reply to the question as to who would attend the Junior High School in Manhattan, Mr. Hughey, Superintendent of El Paso Schools, stated that his plan would be to send all first year high school students who lived beyond the Lamar District and who had not theretofore been in attendance at the High School. He explained the difficulties in attempting to make the Junior High a success but stressed the wisdom and the opportunities of the Junior High form of organization. He added that we should be fully prepared by September, 1922, to put such an organization into effect.⁷

⁷
Ibid., August 12, 1921.

This section of El Paso continued building so rapidly that the School Board realized that another school soon would be needed. Because they thought it advisable to purchase property in this part of the city, they bought 9.15 acres of ground north of Grant Avenue and connecting with the Highland Park School site. This land was bought

for a new school and recreation park near Five Points.⁸

⁸

El Paso Herald, March 1, 1921, p.11 - c.2.

In January, 1922, the Board agreed to inspect sites offered by A. P. Cole and Brothers, and also the Alamo Heights site for the purpose of getting a frontage on Grant Avenue.

Following the discussion of Superintendent Hughey's proposals regarding the bond issue, they made the following decisions:

A complete fireproof building with an auditorium to be erected upon the Alamo Heights site. Mr. Hughey instructed to issue to architects a letter calling for competitive plans for the building. The author of the most satisfactory sketch to be chosen architect. The building to provide approximately 24 rooms and an auditorium. The cost not to exceed \$175,000.⁹

⁹School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, January 3, 1922.

On January 17, ten competitive sketches for the new building were opened and considered until 11:45 P.M. The Board then decided to make a further study of the sketches the next day. At the same time the Board voted to buy an additional 350 feet for a frontage on Grant Avenue. This was bought from Leavell and Sherman.¹⁰

¹⁰

Ibid., January 17, 1922.

After reviewing the conditions laid down for the architects, the following motion was made and carried unanimously by the Board:

Messrs. Trost and Trost are appointed architects for the school building to be erected on the Alamo Heights site. In making the appointment, the Board expressly stipulates that if the bids and the architect's fees for the building do not come within the sum of \$170,000.00 plus 5%, the appointment of architect passes automatically from Trost and Trost to the winner of second place in the contest (G.C. Burnett) and so on until a contract can be let within the limits set within the first call.¹¹

¹¹

Ibid., January 18, 1922.

A special meeting was called on March 2 for the purpose of opening bids for the erection of a school building on Alamo Heights according to the plans and specifications of Trost and Trost, architects. After reading some 14 bids, the Board unanimously voted to award the contract to V.E. Ware for the sum of \$121,989.00.¹²

¹²

Ibid., March 2, 1922.

Accordingly in 1922, a brown brick school building was erected on the corner of Grant Avenue and Elm Street. There was still much left to be decided, though. What type of school should the building be used for - junior high or elementary?

Manhattan was urged as the best place for a junior high, but the following report seemed to be a deciding factor. This report was written by Miss Katherine Gray,

Chief Supervisor, High School Division, State Department of Education and read to the Board by Mr. Hughey:

The building and equipping in all departments are adequate beyond our minimum standards, and in most ways such as to deserve high commendation. The program is efficiently arranged so that sections are of less than 25 students and so that the building is used to good advantage all through the day. But the enrollment of students is increasing so rapidly that even this magnificent building (Manhattan Heights) is proving too small. It will be necessary to organize the first year high school students with the highest intermediate grade in a new building, as a Junior High School for next year. This can be made a distinct advantage to the students thus organized by providing studies and activities especially suited to this group of students.¹³

¹³

School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, May 8, 1922.

Therefore the new building on the corner of Grant Avenue and Elm Street became the home of the new Junior High School. The following resolution proposed by Judge Isaacks and passed by the Board was responsible for the name Austin Junior High School.

Resolved that the new schools under construction and to be constructed, as well as the schools already built that are named for some El Pasoan or Texan or for some place cherished in the memory of Texas people, be named for some Texas hero, statesman or jurist.....

That the new school at the corner of Elm Street and Grant Avenue be named Austin School, to commemorate the life of Stephen F. Austin, the founder of the Republic of Texas, the first Secretary of State, and for whom our capital is named.¹⁴

¹⁴

Ibid., May 8, 1922.

II.

AUSTIN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL: 1922 - 1930

Building and Grounds

The opening of the Austin Junior High School in September, 1922, relieved the crowded condition of the elementary schools in East El Paso. The building of brown brick fronting on Grant Avenue and overlooking the Five Points District consisted of twenty-four rooms which were used for classrooms, a library, and a cafeteria. In addition to these, there were a double office, an auditorium, and a teacher's lounge. Pictures and special equipment were added to the school through the efforts of the teachers, students, and parents.

The grounds were strictly in the "rough". Trees were planted across the front near the building. The first tree to be planted was won by a student who wrote an essay on "Live Christmas Trees". By the end of May, 1923, both the building and the grounds had been greatly improved. The following excerpt testifies to that fact:

The terrace in front of the Austin School is being sodded in grass. Our trees are beginning to grow. We are beautifying grounds, building and, best of all, minds.¹⁶

16

Tri-Hi Stampede, El Paso, Texas, May, 1923.

The grounds to the west of the building were cleared and used as a playground.

The School Paper

Three issues of the Tri-Hi Stampede, the official publication of the Junior High Schools of El Paso, were published each semester. Morehead, San Jacinto and Austin Junior Highs were sponsors of the paper. The following excerpt gives a very pleasing explanation of the purposes of the paper:

" How often have we heard the story of the three little stone churches at the crossroads? It was a warm summer's Sabbath and stained windows were ajar. The Methodist Church opened services by singing ' Will there Be Any Stars in My Crown?' The Episcopal Church quickly responded ' No Not One' and the Presbyterian Church, not to be outdone, began singing, 'Oh, That Will Be Glory For Me'.

" Now we laugh at the churches of older days who could not be rivals without being enemies. The Tri-Hi Stampede is our chief means of preventing a feeling of enmity when only a friendly spirit of rivalry should exist; therefore it cultivates friendship among the three Junior Highs. In the end we all expect to be in the Senior High School together; so if we learn to pull together now, we shall

be able to make the El Paso High School more of a success than it has ever been before. Is there any one of us without enough school spirit to help forward anything as helpful as the Tri-Hi Stampede?"

"If you hear of any new jokes or any bits of snappy news, please give it to one of our reporters. The teachers are helping us but the paper is ours. Here is to the Tri-Hi-Stampede for friendly feelings. Read it and know what your school and its co-workers, the other Junior Highs, are doing." ¹⁷

¹⁷

Tri-Hi Stampede, El Paso, Texas, March, 1924, p.1.

Curriculum

Quotes taken from the Tri-Hi Stampede give an idea of courses taught besides the basal subjects.

The Music Department of Austin has bright plans for this term, according to Mrs. Lawrence. Among other things there is a chorus of forty voices, which is doing splendid work. There is also an orchestra ¹⁸ which will be able to furnish music for our assemblies.

¹⁸

Ibid., March 1923, p.1.

The art room looks very attractive dressed in its new brown and blue burlap curtains and its blackboards covered with cloth, ready to hang exhibits upon. Miss Strain has arranged an art table devoted to art

magazines and a bulletin board of art events.

19

19

Ibid., March, 1923, p.2.

The 7A's and 7B's are working for improvement and final certificates in Penmanship. Some are working for Palmer certificates of superior ability.

20

Ibid., March, 1923, p.4.

The Public Speaking Department, under the supervision of Mrs. Lottie Ellerd, gave a banquet for the newspaper reporters who visited the school Tuesday. The banquet was given in the Domestic Art room and was prepared by the girls of Miss Van Vleck's cook-class. A two-course dinner was served.

21

Ibid., March, 1925, p.1.

Since the beginning of the new term every student is required to take physical education. The boys are under the instruction of Mr. Edgar Chew and the girls under Miss Maybelle Long.

The girls of the San Jacinto Trade School made gym bloomers for Miss Long's classes. Every day except Friday the girls are expected to report to class in bloomers, middies, ties, and tennis shoes (all of which may be purchased for \$2.75).

On Monday the classes devote their time to outdoor games, basketball and baseball. Tuesdays and Wednesdays all classes receive instructions and drill indoors; Thursday classes are taught folk dancing; and on Friday all classes are given lectures on posture, diet, regulations, and first aid. These lectures are given by the students.

22

Ibid., March, 1925, p. 4.

This week the girls are designing their first dresses and are indulging in a riot of gay colors and clever designs worked up in attractive cretonne and English prints.²³

23

Tri-Hi Stampede, El Paso, Texas, December, 1923, p.1.

In addition to the above-mentioned courses, shop and mechanical drawing were taught.

Extra-Curricula Activities

Austin Junior High took part in many extra-curricula activities such as football, basketball, track and band. The football and basketball teams were none too good, because the school was just endeavoring to get a start. The following poems written by Bill Crosby, a student, and published in the Tri-Hi Stampede give an idea of the school spirit.

An Argument

An argument was held in the Rio Grande Park
 The argument lasted until almost dark,
 We argued them once, we argued again,
 The argument was held between twenty-two men.
 Two sides of the argument each fighting to win,
 Each fighting the other to lead in the end.

We are a small school, but we sure did try
 To beat our opponents of the larger HIGH,
 They threw a good pass, and it sure was a blessing
 For until the last quarter we had them a guessing.
 You should have seen the great holes that we tore
 and ninety yards we traveled for our only score.

To lose a good game is certainly no crime
 But it sure is a nice thing to win all the time

We met a better team, we went down to defeat
But we will have better luck the next time we meet.
Basketball, baseball, whatever is the pace
We will come out in the lead with our next little race.

School Spirit

Out on the side of a mountain
Out on the edge of the town
The prettiest place in El Paso
A brand new school has been found.
The school of which I have spoken
I mean just Austin Junior High
And winning was just a habit
And to win we had to try.

There is but one way to do a thing
And that is to do it right;
To fight to win every game
For every game is a fight.
The school spirit you must have,
And if you don't it can't be done;
Makes no difference how great you are
Or how fast your men can run.

We had the school spirit,
We won the school fame,
And it took the school spirit
To make Austin game
More honors were taken
By Austin Junior High
And these honors that were taken
No money could buy.

Not only in athletics
Does Austin exceed,
Austin possesses something
Every school has a need
Don't get me wrong
For I am not a preacher,
The thing that I have spoken
Is spoken for our great teachers.

Austin's first football players were presented their
letters by Judge S. J. Isaacks on December 19, 1922. These

letters were in block design, shaded in the brown and gold. The following thirteen players qualified for this honor and received their letters:

Bill Gaulden, Ted Dickson, Carroll Rainey, Alfred Fraser, Lester Cole, Dennis Meadows, Bill Crosby, Omar McDaniel, Burnes Sackett, James Wafer, Merritt Jackson, Arthur Bothe, and Howell Beakeley.

This team won all the games of the season except the two played with Sam Houston High School freshmen.²⁴

²⁴
Tri-Hi Stampede, El Paso, Texas, January 27, 1923,
p.4.

The track teams were much more successful than either the football or the basketball. In the track meet of 1923, Austin Junior High came out with flying colors. The outstanding stars were Arthur Bothe in Class A, Roland Heath and Horace Henry in Class B, and Roland Strasser in Class C. The team, consisting of forty members, brought home 63 points for Austin's credit.²⁵

²⁵
Ibid., May, 1923, p.1.

In the years 1926, 1927, and 1928, the Austin Junior High won trophies in the annual track meet. These trophies presented by the El Paso Herald Post and the El Paso Evening Post may be seen at the present time in the trophy case in the hall of Houston School.

The Austin Band was organized in the Fall of 1928 at Austin Junior High (now Houston School) to provide activity for the musical talent of the school and to develop musical appreciation among its members. The original members were Roy Chapman - saxophone, Harry Parsons - snare drum, Joe Hornbeck - cornet, Marion Clifton - snare drum, and James Faust - saxophone. Roy Chapman was selected as drum major. The band was built to sixty pieces (twenty girls) during the first year and played at all games. In the Spring of 1929, the band played a concert.

26

Kirchner, L. A., History of Austin Band, Austin Files.

One of the busiest places in Austin School is the library. Each pupil has one library period every week. The library has about one hundred new books, among which the histories and reference books are more in demand than the new fiction. As the Junior High School plan becomes better developed here, it is hoped that the library may become more the laboratory of the school and that the students will be enabled to go directly to reference books for their material rather than to the text books. 27

27

Tri-Hi Stampede, El Paso, Texas, March, 1925, p.4.

Clubs

Clubs soon came to be an important factor in the school life of Austin Junior High School. Many did not reach beyond the experimental stage, but an effort was made to include as many students as possible.

Two clubs, the Boys' Booster Club and the Girls' Booster Club, were organized for the purpose of working together for the good of Austin, encouraging a proper school spirit and helping to make the school one that the outsiders would be glad to "boost". Miss Lola Bess Smith was sponsor for the girls, and C. J. W. Smith, for the boys. By the end of the year, the membership had reached one hundred and twenty-five.

28

Tri-Hi Stampede, El Paso, Texas, March, 1923, p.4.

The issue of the Tri-Hi Stampede of December, 1924, gave a short account of several clubs. The Puzzle Club, under the sponsorship of Miss Bess Barnes, consisted of twenty-three members. They held checker and cross-word puzzle contests.

The public-speaking classes of Mrs. Ellerd organized a large Dramatic Club and presented many plays for the student body. Mrs. Harlacher had charge of the Art Scrap-Book Club, which collected pictures.

There were sixteen members in the Latin Club, of which Miss Schmid was sponsor.

The Press Club had charge of editing Austin's part of the Tri-Hi Stampede.

School Colors and Emblem

In 1928 a faculty-student committee was appointed

to choose official colors for the school, which now included sophomores and juniors of high school classification. After much debate and discussion, gold and brown were decided upon. These are still the colors of the present Austin High School.

²⁹

Austin Handbook and Directory, 1949-1950, p. 8.

The name Panthers was adopted by the student body of Austin Junior High during the school year 1928-1929. The name was suggested by Ed Dale and a group of his fellow students. An election was held, and after a vigorous campaign, all other proposed names were defeated, and the Golden Panther was born.

³⁰

Ibid.

In September, 1930, the freshmen, sophomores, and juniors were transferred to the new high school building on the corner of Memphis and Byron Streets. They carried with them the name of Austin High School, and the original Austin Junior High became an elementary school bearing the name Houston School.

Conclusion

"Farewell Old Austin" and "Hello New Austin!"

Folks of the old Panther Student Body and illustrious folks of the new Panther School, it is hard to say good-bye to our friends, but this time it isn't friends to say good-bye to -- it's just old Austin Hi.

It will seem strange in the new building, but the thing for us to do is to fight our battles together in strange places. After the strangeness of the new high school has been dissipated, and it really seems like home, then folks, we can have sweet memories of "Dear Old Austin High" and we can compare the two Panther Schools and have the privilege of drawing our own conclusions.

But after all, there is not really any difference in the two, just think of:

The loyal, clean and sports-like student body of
Old Austin: and

the loyal, clean and sports-like body of New Austin.³¹

³¹
Austin Star, School Paper, May 19, 1930, p.4.

III.

AUSTIN JUNIOR HIGH: September 1943 - May 1951

Building

As early as 1935, the El Paso School Board became greatly disturbed over the crowded conditions in Austin High and began considering means of relieving such conditions. They finally decided that the most likely plan was to change the boundary line of the El Paso-Austin Districts so as to send more students to the more roomy El Paso High School.

A perfect storm of protest came from the parents of Austin High School. They defied the School Board to transfer their children to El Paso High. The plan was dropped.³²

³²

El Paso Herald Post, May 15, 1935, p.3.

Superintendent A.H. Hughey urged spectators at the commencement exercises for Austin High School Seniors to consider themselves members of the School Board and help solve the problem of overcrowding, which existed in the schools. He said that Austin had at least four hundred more students than it should reasonably accommodate. Mr. Fort, the principal, said classes were being held in the storage room and in other places where ventilation was poor.³³

³³

El Paso Times, May 23, 1935, p.1.

Several years elapsed before anything definite was accomplished. In the early part of 1941, Mr. Hughey made a trip to Austin, Texas. Upon his return, he was very optimistic. He said that he believed that El Paso would get Federal aid and State aid for the expansion of city schools. This aid would come under the National Defense Program. In Austin, he presented a request for \$245,000.00 which was to include \$180,000.00 for a wing of Austin High School. He was instructed to get in touch with Representative Thomason at once.³⁴

³⁴

El Paso Herald Post, January 3, 1941, p.1.

Later in the same year, 1941, at a regular Board meeting, Dr. Cummins, president of the School Board, suggested that before any further building program be made the Board should decide if they are still of the same opinion as a year or two ago. At that time they went on record as approving the 6-3-3 plan. (Six grades in the elementary school, 3 grades in the junior high, and 3 in the high school) All present at the meeting agreed that this plan was the best way to organize schools from the standpoint of administration and the welfare of the child. The Board believed that the only drawback to such a plan would be the additional cost for rooms in a junior high building. After discussion, a motion carried stating that the Board would again go on record as favoring the

6-3-3 junior high set-up. This question was brought up at this time in order to avoid any delay if approval was received from the government for the Austin High School project.³⁵

³⁵

School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, August 19, 1941.

It was further agreed at this same meeting by all present that the Austin High project should be in the form of an addition to the present building so that the whole plant would be housed in one building.

A finance committee was empowered to proceed with plans for the purchase of two half-blocks south of Austin High as the first unit of expansion and to negotiate, through the service of real estate men to be selected, for land comprised in the second unit of expansion. An Austin High School Building Committee was also appointed.³⁶

³⁶

Ibid.

The following item from a daily newspaper again brought the urgent need for a new building to the attention of the public:

Crowded building puts Austin students on "Night Shift". Students and teachers go to classes in two groups daily. Classes are held from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. and 8 A.M. to 3 P.M.³⁷

³⁷

El Paso Herald Post, October 15, 1941, P.3-c2.

\$342,000.00 Expansion -- Austin High Given Funds for
60 Rooms

Grants totaling \$342,000.00 for construction of a 30-room addition to Austin High and a 30-room junior high school were announced Monday by the Defense Public Works Agency in Washington. According to a telegram sent the El Paso Times by United States Representative R.E. Thomason:

The federal agency will contribute \$181,700.00 for the \$205,700.00 Austin High addition. The balance will be paid by the city schools.

A grant of \$160,000.00 will be made for the Junior High, total cost of which will be \$181,500.00. The difference here, too, will be paid by the schools. The new Junior High will include a gymnasium, auditorium, and service rooms. It will be housed in a new wing of the present building. ³⁸

³⁸

El Paso Times, November 3, 1941, p.1-c.3.

At a joint meeting of the School Board and Building Committee on November 7, 1941, sketches of general plans for the proposed additions were studied. The Board went on record as favoring the buildings be flexible enough to permit the use of certain facilities in common between the two groups. ³⁹

³⁹

School Board Meeting, El Paso, Texas, November 7, 1941.

The School Board appointed as architects and engineers for the two projects, Austin High School Addition and the new Junior High School, Frazier and Benner and Percy McGee. ⁴⁰

⁴⁰

El Paso Times, November 19, 1941, p.1-c.4.

R. E. McKee, El Paso contractor, was low bidder on the two projects. His bid on the Austin High addition was \$147,000.00 and on the Junior High addition \$180,000.00. The School Board approved the bids, subject to final approval by the Defense Public Works at Austin, Texas. Construction will begin about February 1.⁴¹

⁴¹

Ibid., January 16, 1942, p.1-c.1

Students of Austin School took part in the ground-breaking ceremonies for the new addition of the school. Ground was broken by Dr. E. J. Cummins, president of the School Board; Halbert Bloodworth, president of the Austin High Student Body; A.H. Hughey, superintendent of the El Paso Schools; and Martha Ann Espy and Barbara Mullens, co-editors of the Pioneer, the school paper of Austin.⁴²

⁴²

Ibid., April 18, 1942, p.2-c.2.

The School Board passed a resolution on July 10, 1943, accepting the Junior High building and authorized payment of contractor in full after the approval of the

F.W.A. authority at Fort Worth. ⁴³

⁴³ School Board Minutes, El Paso, Texas, July 10, 1943.

Student Body

On May 18, 1943, the School Board met and decided that the eighth grade students in the Austin High District would enter Austin Junior High in September 1943. These students would come from Crockett, Houston, Alta Vista, Rusk, and Coldwell. The Junior High should include eighth and ninth grade students. ⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Ibid., May 18, 1943.

Opening of New Building

The following recommendations for officially opening the Austin High School building were made by Mr. Wimberly, principal of Austin High School, and accepted by Superintendent Hughey and the School Board:

A preview to be given for Eighth Grade patrons on the evening of August 3 for the purpose of officially introducing the new Junior High addition to Eighth Grade parents living in the Houston, Crockett, Alta Vista, Coldwell, and Rusk districts. Invitations to be printed and mailed to each parent. An assembly given in the new Junior High gymnasium for the purpose of discussing the new Junior High plan with the patrons. Fifteen or twenty faculty guides will conduct the patrons throughout the building and

show them the facilities for the education of Eighth Grade students.

A formal Open House program to be held on the evening of September 10th. At this time the entire building will be on display, tours will be made throughout the entire plant, faculty members will be in their rooms and Senior students will act as guides. ⁴⁵

45

Letter from Mr. Wimberly to Mr. Hughey. Austin High School Files, July 13, 1943.

The new Austin Junior High opened in September with 375 students in attendance and with the following faculty:

Miss Eunice Nelson -- Reading
 Mrs. Louise Black -- Reading
 Mrs. Edith Pridgen -- History
 Miss Louise Schuck -- History
 Mrs. Margaret Patterson -- English
 Miss Hilda Light -- English
 Miss Sallie Phillips -- Geography
 Mrs. Leona Finalle -- Geography
 Mrs. Jayne Allen -- Arithmetic
 Mrs. Edna Lapsley -- Arithmetic
 York Willbern -- Boys' Physical Education
 Miss Helen Cook -- Girls' Physical Education
 Miss Mary Jane Cason -- Conversational Spanish
 Mrs. Naomi Jameson -- Junior High Counselor
 Herbert Hacking -- Attendance Clerk ⁴⁶

46

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, September 24, 1943.

The following statement made by Mrs. Patterson, the director of Junior High activities, typifies the prevailing spirit throughout the entire school.

The pupils and teachers of the Junior High wish to express their appreciation for the cordial welcome received from the students and teachers of the Senior High. We are thrilled and happy in our new

home as a part of Austin High School.⁴⁷

⁴⁷
Ibid.

Curriculum

The same basal subjects, which were taught in the eighth grade of the elementary schools, continued to be taught in the Junior High. In addition to these basal subjects, speech, band, typing, clothing, foods, shop, chorus, and general science were offered.

Later, a special music class made up of eight students was organized. It was called solo and ensemble. The students did solo, trio, and quartet work and were allowed to sing popular, sacred, and classical songs.⁴⁸

⁴⁸
Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, January 24, 1947.

War Activities

The Junior High took a very active part in the War Activities of the school. They showed their enthusiasm by leading the school in the first Austin War Bond and Stamp Sale. Their purchase amounted to \$3810.45.⁴⁹

⁴⁹
Ibid., October 1, 1943.

A weekly war stamp drive was held every Tuesday. In order to stimulate rivalry and patriotism, a poster

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EL PASO, TEXAS

was designed with the picture of a jeep in the center and nineteen black squares around the edges. The class which bought a stated quota of stamps each week was permitted to paste a picture of a part of the jeep over a blank space. This continued until all spaces were filled.

The students pledged themselves to buy a jeep for Uncle Sam's Christmas present. They bought enough stamps and bonds in one month's time to pay for two jeeps at \$1165.00 each and have \$55.00 left over.⁵⁰

⁵⁰
Ibid., November 26, 1943.

The Austin Junior High Red Cross Drive was very successful according to Mrs. Londaline Bales of the Homemaking Department, who was in charge. The entire Junior High contributed \$35.76. Mrs. Jayne Allen's home-room led with a contribution of \$6.86.

The Junior High students are planning to buy seventy Christmas trees which they will give to the Station Hospital for Christmas.⁵¹

⁵¹
Ibid., December 10, 1943.

In a War Bond and Stamp Sale held last week the Junior High students bought \$267.30 of shares in their

government. "Honor Room of the Week" was Mrs. Fridgen's homeroom; they bought \$156.00 worth.

52

Ibid., April 21, 1944.

Students of Junior High bought \$186.20 in war stamps Tuesday. There were four honor rooms: homerooms of Mrs. Guthrie, Miss Light, Mrs. Black, and Mrs. Lapsley.

53

Ibid., November 3, 1944.

The Austin Junior High is buying equipment for the soldiers and sailors overseas. Each homeroom in Junior High has a chart with pictures and prices of equipment. These supplies are bought with Defense Stamp money. The total for last week was \$ 101.10.

54

Ibid., March 2, 1945.

Organization

The Student Body of Austin Junior High was organized in the Fall of 1943. A constitution was drawn up on December 2 and referred to the students. All students took part in the voting. The preamble of the Constitution clearly states the purposes of the organization. They are

as follows:

In order to have a more perfect organization and plan of cooperation between students and teachers; in order to place more responsibility upon individual students, as well as the entire Junior High Student body; in order to develop student initiative and to create more interest in our own school activities; we ordain and establish this constitution for the Austin Junior High School.

The constitution provides for:

A Student Council of the Austin Junior High School which shall consist of the President of the Junior High student body, together with an Advisory Board composed of two students from each half-year classification of students represented in the Junior High student body. Before the close of the third week of each semester, an election shall be held, in which each half-year classification is 55 allowed to elect two members for the Advisory Board.

55

"Constitution for Austin Junior High School," El Paso, Texas, Austin Files.

Austin High School
February 24, 1944

Miss June Schwarz
Business Agent
Austin High School
El Paso, Texas

Dear Miss Schwarz:

This is your authority to write a check in the amount of five dollars (\$5.00) to Paul E. Elicker, Secretary of National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. This amount is to be charged to the Junior High School. It is payment of their charter fee for a chapter of the National Junior Honor Society.

Yours very truly, 56
W.W. Wimberly, Principal.

56

Letter by Mr. Wimberly, Austin Files, 1944.

The Junior National Honor Society was organized in the spring of 1944 and named the Bob Mings Chapter in honor of an Austin High graduate who lost his life while in the service of his country.

The Bob Mings Chapter of the Junior National Honor Society received its charter members in an assembly held April 5, 1944, in the Junior High Gymnasium. The Stephen F. Austin Chapter of the National Honor Society assisted in the initiation of the new members.

Bobbie Bickley, president of the Senior High Chapter, presided over the assembly and introduced the speakers. "The History of the Junior National Honor Society" was given by Marilyn Williss. Bobbie Bickley told about the formation of the Bob Mings Chapter in Austin. The five cardinal objectives were then given: Scholarship by Betty Jo Oberkamp; Character by Louise Brady; Service by Bob Cummings; Leadership by Shirley Wilson; and Citizenship by Jimmy Heid. The roll was called by Richard Davis, while Eleanor Henry played the Processional. Principal W. W. Wimberly presented a trophy to the charter members and challenged them to uphold the traditions of the Junior National Honor Society.

Charter members:

Betty Butler	Janie Miser
Michael Clendenin	Beverly Morgan
Evelyn Davenport	James North
Berry Edwards	Betty Patton
Stanley Faviel	Ruth Ann Redman

Thomas Frost	George Rehin
Joanne Gowen	Bill Roche
Dorothy Hausleithner	Helen Safford
Eleanor Miller	Walter Stowe
Jo Anne Miller	Ignacio Tinoco
Robert Wilbourn 57	

57

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, April 14, 1944.

The following teachers have been sponsors of the club: Miss Eunice Nelson, Mrs. Leona Finalle, Miss Bernice Rebord, and Mrs. Maude Maddox. The first three left the El Paso School System. Mrs. Maddox is the present sponsor.

The club is open to students of the high eighth and freshmen grades who rank in the upper per cent of their classes scholastically and are outstanding in character, service, leadership, and citizenship. All new members are chosen by the faculty. Each member pays an initiation fee of fifty cents, but no dues. The social activities include a reunion banquet in the fall and a reunion picnic in the spring.

58

58

Austin Handbook and Directory, 1949-1950, p. 35.

In order to finance their projects, the club has one or two cake sales each semester, sponsors the sale of colors on Color Day, and sells rosebuds on Fathers' Night.

The Junior National Honor Society works in close cooperation with the Senior National Honor Society in conducting drives, such as the Community Chest Drive, and serving as hosts at any time the Austin High Building is open to the public.

59

"Minutes of the Junior National Honor Society",
Austin Files.

When the Junior National Honor Society was organized, the names of the charter members were engraved upon the trophy presented by Mr. Wimberly. This trophy is kept in the display case near the Junior High entrance. It was planned to have the names of each term's members engraved on copper plaques, but during the war it was impossible to buy the copper plates. This week the engraved plaques through Spring 1947 have been put in the display case. The other three plaques will soon be engraved so as to bring the membership up to date. The buying and engraving of these plaques is one of the annual projects of the club.

60

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, November 12, 1948.

The Penquite Club, the Junior High literary club, was organized in 1946. It is open to eighth grade students only. To qualify for membership, a student must have a grade of A or B in English and all deportment grades must be A. The aims and purposes of the club are to foster literary talent, supply original material for the Pioneer, and to further self-expression. A fall party and a spring picnic are the main

social events of the year. Dues are ten cents per month, but no initiation fee is charged.⁶¹ Mrs. Margaret Roslyn is the faculty sponsor.

61

Austin Handbook and Directory, 1949-1950, p. 37.

The first regular meeting of the Penquite Club was held on Thursday, April 4, 1946, in the homeroom of Mrs. Roslyn, sponsor of the club. Winner of the contest, which was held to select a name for the club, was announced by Mrs. Roslyn. The winner was Charlisa Guynes who selected the name "Penquite". Her prize was a box of candy. Officers elected were Norma Dickson, President; Susan Wright, Vice-President; and Romaine Roche, Secretary-Treasurer.⁶²

62

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, April 19, 1946.

The following story is an example of original material written for the Pioneer. This was considered the prize winner and was written by Hugh Chapelle, one of the members of the club.

It was only two days until Christmas and Santa Claus was having trouble with his elves. The answer is simple. They were on a strike. They refused to make Christmas presents for such human beings as John L. Lewis. Santa was worried. He decided to stroll down through the factory. As he came to the far end of it, he noticed all his fairy workmen in a huddle. He watched them closely. As he looked on, he saw happy faces, sad faces, sweet faces, sour faces, and just about every kind of face - all mingled together in a vast map of puzzlement. It seemed strange because never before had there been dissension among the elves of old St. Nick. He was bothered.

He talked to the elves many times before they decided not to make boys and girls suffer for something a fat, selfish man had done. As it happened everyone got his Christmas gifts as usual. That is, all but one lonely, solitary man. Can you guess who he was? ⁶³

63

Ibid., December 20, 1946.

The Click Click Camera Club is open to eighth grade and freshmen students. It is under the sponsorship of Miss Hilda Light. To qualify for membership, a student must show a genuine interest in photography, own a camera, have passing grades in all subjects and all department grades must be A. The purpose of the club is to learn more about photography and at the same time develop school spirit and good citizenship. Dues are fifty cents per semester, but no initiation fee is collected. Interest and rivalry are increased by contests. Prizes are given for best pictures of children, pets, scenes, etc. ⁶⁴

64

Austin Handbook and Directory, 1949-1950, p.38.

Austin High's future camera friends did very well for themselves in a photography contest held for the members of the Click Click Camera Club.

In the animal division Helen O'Shaughnessy won first, second and third places. For the best pictures in the scenery division John Leonard took first place and Herbert Lucke took second. In the developing and enlarging group Jack Clark and Davis Tucker won first and second places, respectively. Betty Hall was first in the class for pictures of people and Bobby Kibby was second. Mrs. Frances Beeman's Photography I and II classes did the judging. ⁶⁵

65

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, May 7, 1948.

The Junior High Garden Club was organized in February, 1947. In order to become a member, a student was required to bring a pot plant, a bulb, or a pressed flower collection of at least five specimen to Mrs. Louise Black, sponsor. A flower show was held in April, and the winners were eligible to enter the City Flower Show. By that time one hundred and twenty students had applied for membership in the club.

At a meeting held in March a committee was appointed to write a constitution for the club. The president of the club was Larry Francis, the vice-president was Donna Faye Culver and the secretary was Myrna Loy Thompson.⁶⁶

⁶⁶

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, April 22, 1947.

Austin High's newly ratified constitution was amended so as to include two elected commissioners from the Junior High. These commissioners have the same voting privileges as those already in the governing body.

This action came about when the Junior High students turned back the constitution on the grounds that it gave them no representation of any kind in the Austin High Student Council. The Junior High also has the right to vote for the commissioners-at-large.⁶⁷

⁶⁷

Ibid., October 18, 1946.

Johnny Fidel and Nancy Kerr represented the High Eighth and Low Eighth respectively on the Student Council. This was the first time that Junior High had been allowed to have representatives in the Council.⁶⁸ This came about when the constitution was changed.

⁶⁸
Ibid., February 14, 1947.

Sports

The Junior High has organized several volley ball teams which will play each afternoon after school. In a game Tuesday afternoon the Thunderbolts won two out of three games from the Hellcats.⁶⁹

⁶⁹
Ibid., January 14, 1944.

The Junior High Physical Education Department will hold a track meet on May 5, at 3 P.M., on Austin's cinder-path. Coach York Wilbern will be in charge of this meet. Awards will be given to first, second, and third places in the individual events and the four members of the relay team that places first. The meet will be the Junior High's first.⁷⁰

⁷⁰
Ibid., May 5, 1944.

Junior High Class B tracksters walked away with all in their section of the City Junior meet. Roy Faulkner won the fifty yard dash with the good time of 6.6 seconds. He also tied for first place in the high jump. Austin was first in the Class A broad jump.⁷¹

⁷¹
Ibid., May 12, 1944.

Austin Junior High track team took a decisive victory from the hands of the "B" teams of El Paso and Bowie. The Junior Austinites registered 39 points to El Paso's 22½ points, while Bowie ran a close third. Robert Shaeffer, Austin's "up and coming" athlete, led the high scoring with 14½ points. He was closely followed by Buddy Oppenheim, who took two first places and helped win the 440 relay, to score 11½ points.⁷²

⁷²
Ibid., April 13, 1945.

Plans are being made to clean out the vacant lot on the south side of the Austin building so that a playground for athletic activities can be installed. This announcement was made by Mr. Wimberly. Baseball, horse-shoe pitching and other athletic activities are to be established for the benefit of students who wish to remain after school for sports. Those facilities will be available from the time school is dismissed until 4:30 P.M. or 5 P.M.⁷³

⁷³
Ibid., November 23, 1945.

Austin Junior High basketball squad, mentored by Coach Ben Smith, dropped the championship tourney by one game in their recent double round-robin classic. All went well for the Junior Cubs in the first period and through the initial game of the second period. Then they met the baby Bruins and were downed by a score of 9-19. Other competitors in the Junior Interscholastic League Conference included the eighth graders of El Paso and Burleson schools.

Game captains were Gary Sides and Billy Word; managers were Bobby Sanders and Harry Arrington.⁷⁴

⁷⁴
Ibid., March 21, 1947.

The annual Junior High Basketball Tournament, which included the teams of El Paso, Bowie and Austin, commenced February 24 in the Austin High gymnasium under the direction of Coach Terrell Yarbrough. Mr. Irby Hammond, who coached last year's Panther nightshift, mentored the Austin delegation. All games were played on individual days starting at 4 P.M. The tournament ran until March 5.⁷⁵

⁷⁵
Ibid., February 13, 1948.

A faster, more versatile Austin Junior High track squad won in all three classes of competition as the

little Panthers downed both Bowie and El Paso in the meet held on April 16 in the El Paso High stadium. In the AA class the Austin first places were Tommy Cole, broad jump; and Elias Cervantes, high jump. Jackie Campbell won the high jump, and a team composed of Johnny McGoldrich, Max Payne, Eugene Bitticks and Arthur Blanco won the relay in the A class division. In class B, Quincy Farley was the only winner. He upheld Austin's winning form on the high jump.

76

Ibid., April 30, 1948.

Library

The Sears-Roebuck Company presented to Austin High a Britannica Set, consisting of twelve volumes. The set was placed in the Junior High. Mr. Wimberly said he would like to purchase enough sets for all the social studies classes.

77

Ibid., September 24, 1943.

The Junior High student body started a book drive by donating books to its library. Twenty books were brought the first day of the drive.

During "Book Week", the classes were very active in the program outlined for buying books. The students enjoyed the book display in the library and were glad to

have a chance to help add books to Austin's library. Each class bought several books, and individual students bought books amounting to thirty-five dollars.

⁷⁸

Ibid., November 26, 1943.

R. E. McKee, general contractor and constructive engineer of El Paso, presented Austin High School with a check for two hundred and fifty dollars with which to buy books for the Junior High. Out of the two hundred and fifty dollars about fifty dollars was used to buy books for reading. Twenty dollars was spent for arithmetic books and equipment for the mathematics department. The remaining one hundred and eighty dollars was used to buy three sets of Junior Britannica, which were placed in the English, Geography, and History Departments.

⁷⁹

Ibid., December 10, 1943.

This was the beginning of the splendid library now found in the Austin Junior High.

Special Interests

A mass song festival was sponsored by the Austin Junior High for each of the five grade schools in the vicinity of Austin High School. This demonstration, under the direction of Miss Edna Marie Jones, was held May 8 on the south cement steps of the school gymnasium.

About one thousand seventh graders from Crockett, Rusk, Coldwell, Houston, and Alta Vista Schools participated in this music program composed chiefly of folk songs.
 Miss Jones planned to make this an annual event.⁸⁰

⁸⁰

Ibid., May 5, 1944.

The Junior High bought enough pictures from the Colonial Arts Exhibit for each room to have at least one. Budding Blossoms, Aurora, Evening in June, Springtime and Poppies are a few of those bought.⁸¹

⁸¹

Ibid., December 7, 1945.

Each year the members of the Junior High Advisory Board have decorated a Christmas tree and placed it in the hall near the Junior High attendance office. Clothing and canned goods given by the children were arranged around the tree. These represented their Christmas offering to the poor.⁸²

⁸²

Ibid., December 13, 1946.

First Graduating Class

The January Class of 1945, the first to be graduated from the Austin Junior High, presented a shrub as a fare-

well gift to the Junior High. This shrub has been planted on the campus.

The guest speaker of the evening at the graduating exercises was H. T. Etheridge Jr., the first student to be graduated from the Austin Senior High School. The sponsor of this graduating class was Mrs. Margaret Patterson.⁸³

⁸³

Ibid., February 2, 1945.

This practice of having graduation for Junior High classes was observed for several years but has been discontinued. Such a practice made a break between the eighth grade and the ninth grade. This seemed unadvisable, because both grades were in the Junior High.

First Graduating Class - Austin Junior High School

January 18, 1945

Enrique Acevedo	William Robert Messic
Neil Baker	Parker Miller
Leon Baldwin	Janie Miser
Charles Bigelow	Beverly Morgan
Caroline Bradshaw	Patty Murphy
Bettie Marie Brockmoller	Jean Musgrave
Earl Chambers	Jackie Osborne
Rosalia Chiello	Betty Patton
Michael Clendenin	Kenneth Penn
Grace Cummings	Elodia Perea
Zaida Daniel	Ruth Ann Redman
Mary Elizabeth Darr	John Robinson
Evelyn Davenport	Helen Safford
Lucien Dockray	Alicia Salazar
Ellen Durham	Edward Salguero
Ray Nell Earle	Thomas Schattenberg
Rosie Edwards	Robert Schaeffer
Shirley Farnsworth	Lloyd Shryock
Stanley Faviell	Clifford Smith
Tommie Jean Fox	Helen Smith
Marilyn Fulkerson	Roy Stewart
Norma Garrison	Walter Stowe
Alfred T. Grout	Guin Stowell
Clyde Hagee	Betty Stroup
Gladys Hill	James Stroup
Jack Hooker	Harold Talmadge
Frances Jones	Marion Taylor
Bill Jones	Betty Thompson
Patsy Ann Lee	Ignacio Tinoco
Mary Long	Helen Walser
Martha Lowenberg	Tommie Wardlaw
Edward May	Grace Whitehead
Ralph McCuan	Ella Frances Wilson
Eleanor Mellen	Bobbie Jean Yager

Gabriel Yapor

Helen Safford - President
 Mrs. Margaret Patterson - Faculty Sponsor
 W.W.Wimberly - Principal

Person Opinions

Junior High Great Success by Mrs. Naomi Jameson

As the four wheels of a wagon turn together to carry the load for which it is responsible, active factors constantly move to make Austin Junior High a grand success.

From a counselor's point of view, the cooperation of the faculty with the student body is one of the principal factors. The competent activity of the business office is another factor. But the factor which contributes probably more than any other to the much-heralded popularity and success of the new Junior High School is the rousing school spirit shown by each student.

84

Austin Pioneer, El Paso, Texas, October 29, 1943.

Junior High Tells Likes and Dislikes of Austin

Now that the initial confusion has worn off, the students in Junior High are beginning to realize some of the advantages that come with the step-up into the Eighth Grade, but some of the difficulties are beginning to register, too.

The features which have made the greatest impression are the freedom of movement between classes and the fact

that each person has an individual locker. The large gymnasium and the abundance of athletic equipment have brought many favorable comments.

However, the long walks to class, the flights and flights of stairs to climb and the large number of cards to fill out have been drawbacks.

Despite the troubles and problems, though, the Junior High Students have found that Austin is a very pleasant place in which to get an education.

⁸⁵
Ibid., September 24, 1949.

Thus we leave an enthusiastic and happy student body, consisting of 620 students and a faithful faculty, that is continuing the splendid work which was started in the first Austin Junior High School.

APPENDIX

FACULTIES OF AUSTIN JUNIOR HIGH

First Faculty - 1922

Mrs. Rena Rule	Miss Nell Smith
Mrs. Mary Cavender	Mr. Asa Elliott
Mrs. Tennie Robinson	Miss Lola Bess Smith
Miss Gertrude Belmar	Maj. W. H. Henderson
Miss Elizabeth Barnes	Miss Gladys Gregory
Miss Martha Chandler	Miss Emma Wingren
Miss Elizabeth Harris	Miss Mildred Bishop
Miss Lillian Phillips	Mrs. Nancy Johnson
Miss Emily Stanton	Miss Ruth Lovelace
Mrs. Nora Ward	Miss Eula Strain
Mrs. Leona Elliott	Miss Mable Keeney
Mrs. Jewel Pierson	Mr. C.J.W. Smith
Miss Louise Schmid	Miss Lillian Lawrence
Mrs. Iris Gibbs	Mrs. L. Hubbard
Mrs. Lottie Ellerd	Mr. John Harlacher

Mr. Asa Griggs - Principal

Faculty of 1929

Mrs. Lillian Reid	Miss Jessie Gilstrap
Mrs. Elaine Morrel	Mrs. Martha Bartholomew
Miss Lena Cole	Miss Willie Hamilton Herbert
Mrs. Elizabeth Nealon	Mrs. Bernice Burnett
Mrs. Lena McBee	Miss Minnie Blackmon
Miss Kate Mulcahy	Miss Frances Arozena
Miss Jacqueline Bailey	Mr. C.J.W. Smith
Miss Mary Laws	Mr. D. E. Houghton
Miss Emily Stanton	Miss Mildred West
Miss Beatrice Markgraff	Miss Gladys Morris
Mrs. Jewel Pierson	Mrs. Hester Means
Miss Beulah Bates	Mr. Luther Coblentz
Miss Okla Markham	Mr. B.R. Taylor
Miss Gertrude Benjamin	Miss Elizabeth Terrell
Mrs. Rena Rule	Miss Gladys Medley
Mrs. Virginia Link	Mrs. Sallie Smith
Miss Clyde Duncan	Miss Margaret Kenedy
Mr. W.H. Emert	Miss Louis Hendricks
Mr. L. A. Kirchner	Mrs. De Fee
Miss Ermen Markgraff	Miss Frances Culligan
Mrs. Grace Hooten	Mrs. A. A. Reynaud

Mr. C. R. Shiffler - Principal

Faculty of 1943

Miss Eunice Nelson
Mrs. Louise Black
Mrs. Edith Pridgen
Miss Louise Schuck
Mrs. Margaret Patterson
Miss Hilda Light
Miss Sallie Phillips
Mrs. Leona Finalle
Mrs. Jayne Allen
Mrs. Edna Lapsley
Mr. York Willbern
Miss Helen Cook
Miss Mary Jane Cason
Mrs. Naomi Jameson
Mr. Herbert Hacking

W.W.Wimberly - Principal
A.O.Wynn - Assistant Principal

Faculty of 1951

Mrs. Louise Black	Mrs. Maude Maddox
Miss Mable Burson	Mrs. Emmie Mahon
Mrs. Doris Busalacchi	Mr. H.K.Mortensen
Mrs. Betty Carson	Mrs. Margaret Patterson
Mrs. Blanche Crawford	Mrs. Elizabeth Redic
Mrs. Ruth Davis	Mrs. Margaret Roslyn
Miss Jeanelle Estes	Mr. Leslie E. Rutledge
Mr. J. A. Frances	Mrs. Marjorie Shaver
Mrs. Billye Freeland	Miss Ruby Lee Smith
Mrs. Leila Grothe	Mrs. Martha Watson
Miss Iris Guider	Mr. George H. Webber
Mr. Chas. H. Harris	Mrs. Alice White
Mrs. Edna Lapsley	Mrs. Inez Wood
Miss Hilda Light	Mrs. Fannie Worman

Keith Appleby - Principal
Ray Kelso - Assistant Principal

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