A History of Beal School, El Paso, TX

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By

Edna Snowden Foley
This is a picture of the first Beall School Building, and this picture was taken in 1910. Some of the children in the foreground of the picture are standing in Raynor Street.

-picture from Mrs. Belle Teel's collection.
Mrs. Myra Prater Clark

Principal of Beall School
1907-1945

(Reproduction of the photograph
at Beall School auditorium.)
A HISTORY OF BEALL SCHOOL

Beall School is one of the early schools of the El Paso Public Schools in El Paso. Beall School was the important school for the east El Paso district before Zavala and Burleson schools were built just as Aoy was the school for the south side.¹

Before the construction of Beall School in 1907, the El Paso Public Schools had experienced a tremendous growth. El Paso became an independent school district by popular election in 1882, and a school board was appointed to serve temporarily. A school tax of one-half per cent was levied to maintain the school. In 1883 the first popularly elected school board was put into office. The first school building in El Paso was opened in 1883 with fifty-two pupils.² In that same year, the first school census was taken, and the total number of children between the ages of six and eighteen years, inclusive, was 334.³

¹ A.H. Hughey, personal interview, July 1, 1950.
³ Lone Star [El Paso, Texas], August 18, 1883, 3:1.
Bassett School served as the school for east El Paso before Beall School was built. The site of this school was on Bassett Street a few blocks from where the present Beall School is located. Sophia Gilchrist and A. Heap were the first listed principals of this building from 1903 to 1905. Mrs. Empress Arrington was principal of Bassett School from 1905 to 1907. Her assistants were Miss Tura Compton and Miss Jessie Darroch.

Miss Myra Prater was principal of Bassett school from September 1907 to January 1908 at which time the new Beall School building was opened. Her teachers were Miss Kate Adams (Mrs. John Brown), Miss Winnie Roe, Miss Jessie Darroch, and Miss Tura Compton (Mrs. P. A. Cressey).

Mrs. Myra Prater Clark states that they taught in a little two-room adobe known as Bassett school, and in a two-room brick building some ten blocks farther out.

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4 Records Department, "Lists of Principals", El Paso Public Schools.
6 Mrs. Myra P. Clark, personal interview "Beall School", June 23, 1950.
G. W. Putnam was Superintendent of the El Paso Public Schools from 1894 to 1908 when he was succeeded by F. M. Martin.\textsuperscript{7}

The school board minutes for the year 1907-1908 show that T. H. Logan was paid forty dollars for rents of Bassett School for May, 1907. He was paid sixty dollars for rents of Bassett School for the months of June, July, and August. Grace V. Logan was paid forty dollars a month for September and October of 1907, but the rent paid for the months of December and January was one hundred and twenty dollars.\textsuperscript{8}

These records indicate that the so called Bassett School building was not the property of the El Paso Public Schools.

Beall School

Beall School was constructed in the summer of 1907.\textsuperscript{9} The first indication of an intention to construct a new school building in east El Paso

\textsuperscript{7}Records Department, "Superintendents", El Paso Public Schools.
\textsuperscript{8}Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, May 1907-January 1908.
\textsuperscript{9}Myra F. Clark, \textit{op. cit.}
was on December 6, 1907. A school site in east El Paso was sold to the school board by Mrs. L. W. Hawkins, sister-in-law of the school superintendent G. W. Putnam. There was opposition to the choice of this school site because it was "not located in the center of the suburb." 10

Evidently these lots were not satisfactory, because on June 17, 1907 the school board directed the External Committee to purchase the twelve lots in block number one of East El Paso offered by Mr. Watts at the price of $350.00 per lot to be used as a site for the new Bassett School (namely lots 5 to 16 inclusive of said block number one). 11

On August 10, 1907, William Rheinheimer secured a building permit at the city hall to erect a school house on Rivera Street in the East El Paso addition. The "structure is to be 126 x 56 x 30 and will cost $24,100." 12

The president of the school board appointed a competent builder to inspect and report on the

11 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, June 17, 1907.
12 El Paso Herald, El Paso, Texas, August 10, 1907, 12:3.
Beall School building before it was received from the contractor. 13 The school board accepted the building and ordered the last warrant drawn. The Beall School structure was considered one of the best in the city in 1908. 14

Beall School was opened in January of 1908 with only nine rooms finished. The first day the nine rooms were filled to overflowing. 15 The attendance on January 23, 1908 was 347. 16 In September, seven more rooms were ready. All of the sixteen rooms were filled, and a small auditorium was converted into two more classrooms. 17

There has always been an abundance of pupils at Beall School. The attendance on January 23, 1908 averaged about thirty eight pupils per room, and this situation still prevails.

13 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, January 6, 1908.
15 Myra P. Clark, op. cit.
17 Myra P. Clark, op. cit.
There were nine teachers listed as Beall teachers for the school year 1907-1908: Wilmoth Hudson, Henrietta Shirley, Fanny E. Blakesley, Belle Chaplin, Kate L. Adams, Tura Compton, Iduma Hughes, Jessie M. Darroch, and Winifred Roe. 18

Mrs. Belle Teel (nee Chaplin) has taught at Beall School almost continuously since 1908. She still remembers the "spic and span newness" of the school on the first day when she was formally introduced to its teachers. 19

During the first school year of Beall School there was an increase in the enrollment in the public schools. The census taken in 1908 revealed that there were 6,903 children within the municipal limits of the city of El Paso. This was an increase of about 5% over the enrollment of the preceding year. There were 5,242 children enrolled in the public schools during the year 1908-1909. 20

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18 South Side School Register, El Paso Public Schools, 1907-1908.
19 Mrs. Belle Teel, personal interview on Beall School, June 21, 1950.
The superintendent's report for 1908-1909 gives the description of Beall School as a fifteen room building on twelve lots valued at $5,000. The building was valued at $30,000. This report lists the number of teachers as twelve female teachers. There were 311 boys and 263 girls in school. 21

There were two bond issues for 1907 and 1908 of $100,000 each to be retired in forty years. These bonds were issued for Highland Park, Beall, and Vilas Schools. 22

In a report to the board of trustees by superintendent Martin said "the year September 1908 to May 1909 in the El Paso Schools has been one of remarkable progress . . . . I have never seen more rapid advancement made in one year. . . . Due to the fact that a large majority of our children leave the public schools before entering the high school, it seems necessary to put as much as possible of the practical education into the grades where it is within the reach of the majority of the children." 23

22 Records Department, "Value of Schools", El Paso Public Schools.
Superintendent Martin did not indicate where the rapid advancement was made, and as far as Beall School was concerned the enrollment was rapidly increasing. The following year it was necessary for the school board to rent a room near the school to house the overflow of students at the school. The rented building, which originally was a store, was supposed to be large enough to accommodate the overflow. 24 The net enrollment for September 1909 was 539. 25 The enrollment by February 1913 was 658. 26

A new sand roof was put on Beall School at a cost of $429 in 1911. 27

Superintendent N. R. Crozier stated that there was considerable congestion in the lower grades, and that Beall School needed an annex." 28

27 El Paso Herald, El Paso, Texas, November 9, 1911, 12:3.
28 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, October 14, 1912.
The superintendent's plea for an annex was not met, but the school board agreed to have sidewalks constructed at the school. 29

In the early years of Beall School, a large percentage of the students were Anglo-Americans, but as the select residential area shifted still farther north, and with the construction of Alta Vista School, the percentage of Latin-American students was increased. In January 1914 there were 308 "Mexican" students and 158 "American" students in Beall School. 30

Superintendent R. J. Tighe said there was a need for more school rooms for elementary pupils, and a need for an attendance law. "The task set El Paso is without doubt one of the greatest in the United States, situated as it is on the border of a country in the throes of a revolution." According to the census returns of January 15, 1913 there were at that time 3,024 children (31%) of scholastic age out of school. It was stated that

29 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, December 9, 1912.
15% of the American students were not attending school, and 42% of the "Mexican" children were not attending school. 31

There existed an acute shortage of school rooms for those students who came to Beall, and a compulsory attendance law, if enforced, would have caused calamity. A motion before the school board "unanimously prevailed" that a committee see if they could rent additional space for school purposes in the vicinity of Beall School. It was suggested that they rent, if possible, at a reasonable price some store rooms on Durango Street or if they could not be procured that the committee should secure tents. 32

Meanwhile, some of the classes were held under the trees on the grounds at Beall School. It was stated that there were 2,000 more children in school than there had been the preceding year, and that more room was imperative in many schools. The open air school had been adopted as temporary relief. 33

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32 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, September 6, 1915.
Beall School Annex

A six-room brick structure was built in the back of the school. The contract for the addition was awarded to R. E. McKee for $13,076.99 (the lowest bid received). As soon as this building was opened, it was filled to overflowing.

By January 1916, superintendent R. J. Tighe recommended that the school proceed on part time on the basis of three hours per day for classes, and the suggestion was adopted by the school board. Miss Myra Prater petitioned the board for a four and one-half hour day for part time classes in place of a three hour day with the same teaching force. Miss Prater was interested in securing the best education possible for the students in Beall School.

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35 Myra Prater Clark, personal interview on Beall School, June 23, 1950.
Half of a block of ground adjoining Beall School was purchased by the school board for playgrounds and for the purpose of enlarging the school facilities. The land which was bought from several different people cost the board $17,000. There were several houses on the property which were used for temporary school rooms for the overflow of students. 38

Mrs. Teel remembers teaching in these old adobe houses on south Piedras street. There were three class rooms there and often two teachers used the same room on alternate schedules. Mrs. Teel, Frances Turrentine, Jennie Lee Rue, Myrtie McCarthy, and Alma Jones taught classes there. 39

The board of education authorized a committee to take the necessary steps to close the street Rivera running through the Beall School playground,40 and the necessary legal papers were reported to be completed on May 6, 1920. 41

39 Mrs. Belle Teel, personal interview on Beall School, June 21, 1950.
The Beall School Extension

The enrollment at Beall School in 1919 was 1379. 42

In October, the board of education decided that an extension to Beall School should be built. The extension would contain fourteen class-rooms, and an auditorium seating approximately seven hundred. 43

R. E. McKee was the low bidder, and he was awarded the contract for the excavation and masonry for $4395. 44

Stanley Bevan was awarded the contract for the addition to Beall School for $29,959. 45

The total cost of fourteen rooms and an auditorium was $45,537.59. 46

The building was inadequate for the large enrollment at the school. It was immediately packed to overflowing. 47

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43 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, October 27, 1919.
47 Myra Prater Clark, interview on Beall School, June 23, 1950.
In 1921 the board of education agreed to ask the city council for a bond election to the amount of $740,000. One of the items agreed upon as essential at this time for the proper care of the school children was a school in the Alta Vista-Beall district at a cost of $100,000. 48

Mrs. Brown, a member of the board, said that it was the duty of the board to provide the maximum accommodations possible for the money for the large number of Mexican school children, and that no essentials to health, comfort, instruction and administration should be sacrificed. 49

In November 1922, Mr. A. H. Hughey pointed out the increased enrollment for the year in the schools. There were a number of classes on half-time. Beall School had twenty-two classes on half-time. Mr. Hughey said that he hoped that half time classes at Beall and Lincoln Park would be largely eliminated when Burleson was opened. 50

48 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, June 24, 1921.
49 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, January 18, 1922.
50 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, November 21, 1922.
The adobe buildings used as temporary class rooms were torn down. Dr. W. M. Branch had protested to the school board against wrecking the adobes as ordered by the City Board of Health, because he believed that the buildings were neither unsafe nor unsanitary and that wrecking these rooms would place a great many classes on half-time.  

Mr. Hughey says that there was some opposition to building new school buildings in this area. Some people didn't want to spend money on the construction of a new building. These people had their own ideas about school buildings and thought that a group of adobe buildings built around an open yard was adequate for these pupils as they were not accustomed to anything better.

Mr. Hughey believes in making the school a place for building ideals. The school should be the example of good living; it should show the pupils what a home should be. It should instill in the pupils a desire to have a higher level of living, and a desire to prepare themselves for earning better wages. The school building should be

51 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, January 18, 1923.
a building with the best facilities that can be afforded. 52

On November 20, 1923, Mr. Hughey stated at a board meeting that "the section of the city south of the tracks and east of San Jacinto needs relief. At present, Beall School is about the center here ... No economical investment in a school plant can be made for less than $100,000."

On December 18, 1923, an election was called for the issuance of school bonds for Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars of which One Hundred Thousand Dollars was for relieving the Beall District. Zavala School was built later, and the situation at Beall School was relieved somewhat.

Beall School was filled to capacity in 1927. Mrs. Clark said there were twenty classes on half-time and three classes in the auditorium. She said "Our crying need is rooms, rooms, more rooms! We have the teachers, the books, and the pupils. We need the rooms. If some educational enthusiast who has money as well as enthusiasm would only remember us in his will, and specify the building of fifteen more class

52 Mr. A. H. Hughey, personal interview on Beall School, July 1, 1950.
rooms, we would be in clover." 53

Today, Beall School is a two story brick building with a composition roof, and has an annex building of one story brick with a composition roof. The book values of these two buildings in 1949 was $69,037.50 as compared with the book values for the same date of Crockett School at $179,377.92, Mesita School at $406,815.97 and Zavala School at $217,066.91. 54 All of these buildings have been constructed since Beall School, but the comparison is made to show the relative importance of the Beall School buildings in relation to the newer elementary school buildings.

A visitor at Beall School is often surprised at the size of the buildings and the playgrounds. A visit to the school during the noon-hour would give the same visitor an idea of the large student body and the size of the facilities provided.

A building the size of Beall School is expensive to operate. The total operating costs of Beall School in 1948-49 was $8,928 (including janitors' wages,

A picture of the faculty of Beall School in 1910. From left to right: Lilly Howard (former principal of Lincoln Park), Carrie Seddon (retired 1950), Fannie Lou Yeager, Ethel Rowe (Mrs. Walter Christie), back to camera- Miss Ida Lockhart, Kate Robinette, Helen Newell (Mrs. Roy Davis), Lucille Pierce (Lucille Miller - teacher at Burleson), Myra Prater (Mrs. Leigh Clark), and Miss Tura Compton (Mrs. Aimes Cressey).

--Picture from Mrs. Belle Teel's collection.
fuel, water, and light). The grand totals of operating
costs for all the public schools of El Paso was
$188,052.64. 55

The Early Faculty

Teachers in 1908 were required to meet definite
specifications. They were qualified as teachers if
they held a diploma from a college or university of
the first class or passed the qualifications required
for a certificate. Teachers were awarded Primary and
Intermediate certificates on examination in Arithmetic,
English Grammar, Texas History, United States History,
Civil Government, Reading, Writing, Spelling, English
Composition, Physiology and School Management and
methods especially adopted to Primary or Intermediate
work. A teacher was required to be a person of good
moral character. 56

Experienced first grade teachers were paid
ninety dollars per month, "experienced expert teachers"
of the second, third, fourth and fifth grades were
paid eighty-five dollars per month and "teachers
strong in discipline and especially well prepared"

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55 Douglass, Douglas, Oliver and Hughes, op.cit.,p.19.
56 Report of the Public Schools of El Paso, Texas,
September 8, 1908 to May 28, 1909, p.102.
of the sixth, seventh and eighth grades were paid ninety dollars per month. Principals of sixteen room buildings or more were paid one hundred and fifty dollars a month. 57

The teachers in the public schools during the session 1908-1909 were required to subscribe for at least one standard educational journal and to read carefully these books:

Bagsley’s Class Room Magazine
Horwe’s Psychological Principles of Education
Spencer’s Essays on Education
McMurray’s Method of The Recitation

These measures were adopted by the school board and the superintendent was instructed to adopt the proper methods of seeing that the reading was carefully done. 58

At Beall School, every teacher was expected to keep strict discipline. Miss Myra Frater would not have "lazy" teachers at her school. The teachers were required to have "planned and directed teaching." 59

57 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, Salary Schedule 1908-1909, p. 89.
59 Myra Frater Clark, personal interview on Beall School, June 23, 1950.
In 1920, married teachers were either dropped from the pay rolls at once or given notice that their employment would terminate at the end of the school year. 60

Mrs. Myra Prater Clark

Mrs. Clark was the principal of Beall School from 1907 to 1945. She was an important person to the east El Paso community and the wielding influence at Beall School.

Mr. A. H. Hughey says that Mrs. Clark was almost an assistant mayor of east El Paso. Next to Joe Dunn, she was the leading political figure in that part of town. The people in that vicinity respected her, and she had a "world of good influence." The people looked to her for advice. She made many of them send their children to school, but they respected her. 61

Mrs. Clark believed in the importance of planned and supervised teaching. She devoted a great deal of her time to supervising the instruction

61 Mr. A. H. Hughey, personal interview on Beall School, July 1, 1950.
at Beall School. Mrs. Clark had a wonderful memory. She could observe a class one week and would know what page the class should be on the next time she visited during the following week. 62 The work was planned and the children knew where their next lesson would be in the book. Mrs. Clark recalls several instances when a substitute teacher could not be secured and a third grade class carried on their work by themselves. 63

Many of the older teachers at Beall School still remember the days when Mrs. Clark was principal. Mrs. Clark always insisted that every child be sitting up straight and busy working when she came in. Only one child should be at the pencil sharpener at a time. Whenever Mrs. Clark started on her rounds of the building, the teachers would send a child to the next teacher with some yellow chalk or some other prearranged signal, and that teacher would do likewise. When Mrs. Clark visited the class-rooms, the children were studying extra hard.

62 Martha Traylor, personal interview on Beall School, June 29, 1950.
63 Myra Prater Clark, personal interview on Beall School, June 23, 1950.
Mrs. Myra Prater Clark believed that the students at Beall should learn all the foundations of living, working, and getting along with people. She thought that they should learn to read and speak both English and Spanish. Special emphasis was put on American history and American government. She believed that more time should be spent on the fundamentals of education such as reading, learning to speak and write English, arithmetic, and spelling. She said that lack of time limited instruction, and there wasn't enough time for music and art instruction at school for those children who had such a language handicap. However, the older students were encouraged to attend good musical programs. There was always a large number of students from Beall School who attended the Symphony Concerts sponsored by the Junior League of El Paso.

Instruction in the manual arts was given to every child in the elementary schools of El Paso during the year 1908-1909. Manual arts instruction in the El Paso Public Schools was begun at Beall School.

64 Myra Prater Clark, op. cit.
65 Martha Traylor, op. cit.
The equipment at Beall School included four machines, shelves for sewing boxes, and tools for cardboard construction. Miss Ruth Coleman was one of the early instructors in manual education at Beall School. The course for girls included instruction in the care and construction of clothing, washing and ironing, and the cooking of foods. 66

Gardening was part of the curriculum in 1919. Some of the boys at the school planted vegetable gardens on the school grounds. 67

The Teachers at Beall School

There have been many excellent teachers during the history of Beall School. The number of teachers is too numerous to mention all of them; just to list the faculties every year would take nearly forty-three pages. I have listed the faculties at Beall School every five years in the Appendix.

Mrs. Belle Teel was a member of the faculty when the school opened in 1908, and has just retired this year. Miss Henrietta Shirley (Mrs. Marston) was a member of the first faculty and taught at Beall School over thirty years. Lucille Miller, who now teaches at Burleson School, was a teacher at Beall School for

67 Minutes of the Board of Education, El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas, April 15, 1919.
Some of the teachers at Beall School today have taught there for twenty-five years or more. These teachers include: Mrs. Mary Boland, Mrs. Martha Traylor, Mrs. Fannie Burnham, Mrs. Janie Miles, Mrs. Belle Foret, Mrs. Mary Gibbons, Mrs. Myrtle Wafer, Mrs. Elizabeth Worthington, and Mrs. May Barton have taught at Beall School for a number of years and are still employed there.

Mrs. Susannah Hare, who retired in 1949, was a teacher at Beall School for over twenty-five years. Mrs. Clifford Payne was a teacher there for over fifteen years.

In a school the size of Beall School, there are many interesting personal histories. Clara Seffel (Now Mrs. Lord) and Dorothy Jackson (now Mrs. Habberstad) were students at Beall School and were later teachers at the school. Misses Elvira and Consuelo Flores were students at Beall School and were teaching there this last session (1949-1950).

Several of the playground teachers married teachers at the school: Miss Clara Seffel and Mr. Warren Lord, Miss Annie Lou Cole and Mr. Perry Stigler.

Mrs. Niland, Mrs. Lucille Miller, and Mrs. Belle Teel op.cit.
Belle Teel had children who were later teachers at the high schools in El Paso.

The Philosophy of Beall Teachers

The best that can be said about any group of teachers is expressed in the philosophy of the teachers at Beall School. This philosophy is the work of all the teachers and principals of the Jefferson High School area — not the work of just one teacher or one principal.

"We believe that our philosophy of education should be based on the all-inclusive, democratic tradition, a tradition which is growing, not static; which is a heritage, not an heirloom; which is worthy of being cherished and treasured as it lives and grows. We must take into account: (1) The preparation of the individual as a participant in his family group, as a prospective citizen, and as a cooperating member of society. (2) The preparation of the individual as a prospective worker and producer. (3) The preparation of the individual for those activities which involve individual action, utilization of leisure time, and development of personality.

We should develop the best potentialities of the individual, a sound mind, a good physical body, emotional stability, and social growth.

We need to teach an awareness and appreciation of God. We must seek to free our students' minds from superstition.

We believe that through practical counseling and guidance, based on a sound testing program, we shall be able to direct children along the lines of their individual abilities. This scientific approach shall

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59 Mrs. Belle Teel, op. cit.
enable us to provide a curriculum which will meet the needs of all boys and girls and give them the preparation necessary for taking their rightful places in the society in which they live.

We should help students to develop traits of character, codes of ethics, moral standards and habits which will make them worthy members of society.

They need to develop the ability to think and express themselves clearly, with emphasis on the speaking of the English language; to listen; to follow instructions; to concentrate. More time should be given in all classes to oral work, stressing enunciation and pronunciation.

Our students need to develop a desire to do a job well and to learn a sense of responsibility in school, at home, and in the community. They must learn to respect the rights and the property of others.

In order to accomplish these aims, there needs to be close cooperation between school and home.  

Beall School Students

There have been many students at Beall School. At a faculty meeting in the Spring of 1950, Mr. H. E. Charles stated that Beall School was the largest elementary school in the city of El Paso, the second largest elementary school in the state, and was one of the largest bi-lingual schools in the nation.

The average daily attendance during the session 1948-1949 was 1308. This figure does not include those students who enrolled at the school, but were absent during the day.

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71 Douglass, Douglas, Oliver and Hughes, op.cit.,p.37.
Any list of a student body this size is a tremendous task. A large number of people always includes the good and the bad, the successful and the failures, and the meek and the bold. Most of the students have uneventful lives, and those that are notorious are usually the individuals that the public associate with a school.

There is a partial list of the students who attended the school during the first year in the appendix of this paper.

Among the students that Mrs. Teel remembers as her students were: Minnie Beel Taylor (Gutsch), Gentry Hudnell, Wilbur Brucklacker, Dorothy Jackson (Haberstad), Clara Seffel (Lord), the Attiguiles family, Elia Vasquez, Marguerite Anderson, Donald Guinn, Raymond Patterson, Abraham Chavez, and Haime Delgado. 72

Mr. A. H. Hughey remembers a former Beall student who was an orphan refugee in Mexico and later came to El Paso. After graduation from Beall, the boy was an honor student in El Paso High School and graduated as valedictorian. The student graduated from Texas

72 Mrs. Belle Teel, op. cit.
College of Mines as a mining engineer. He told Mr. Hughey that he owed a great deal to the Beall teachers who had helped to keep him clothed and fed as well as encouraging him in his school work. 73

This is one example of many where the teachers who believe in the democratic tradition have helped their students to become worthy members of society.

There have been many honors won by the student body of Beall School. About the year 1918, Beall School won national recognition in Palmer Penmanship. The El Paso Public Schools was the first school system in penmanship in the nation, and Beall School was recognized as the outstanding school in penmanship in El Paso. 74 Dr. Palmer made a visit to Beall School in recognition of the outstanding work being done there. He was heartily greeted by the student body at a special assembly. 75

Mrs. Myra Prater Clark insisted that the instruction of arithmetic at Beall be better than the instruction

73 Mr. A. H. Hughey, op. cit.
74 Loc. cit.
75 Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, op. cit.
in arithmetic at any other school in the city. Graduates of Beall School were the best prepared children in arithmetic sent to the high schools. 76

Beall School has won state honors in English composition and sports and has won many local honors in spelling. 77

Beall School Parent-Teachers' Association

The P. T. A. is a new organization at Beall School. This organization was reorganized while Mr. Paul Prichard was principal of the school. 78 Mrs. Clark had had very little patience with the organization and it did not function for many years. There was a P. T. A. organization at Beall School about 1927 and Mrs. George E. Fletcher was president. This organization did not remain in existence for more than one or two years. Mrs. Clark found that the parents did not have the qualifications for leadership and she felt that such an organization was not worth the time. 79

76 Mr. A. H. Hughey, op. cit.
77 Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, op. cit.
78 Mrs. Martha Traylor, op. cit.
79 Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, op. cit.
The P. T. A. has made remarkable progress in the last two years. Mr. Charles has felt that the school can accomplish its aims only when there is close cooperation between the school and the home. Under the leadership of Mrs. Alvidres and Mrs. V. M. Moreno, the parents of children attending Beall School have become acquainted with the school program. Miss Estella Romo has helped these Spanish speaking parents to overcome their natural shyness. There have been many benefit programs sponsored by this group, and thus they have been able to buy new stage curtains and furnish the faculty lounge, and equip a nurse's room.

The El Paso Public Schools have made some attempt to have adult education in El Paso. There are citizenship classes held at the Technical Institute regularly, and the homemaking department has a sewing room on a bus that visits the Beall School regularly. A night school was maintained at Beall School around 1925 for any adults in the community who felt the need for training, but this school is no longer in existence. While this school was open, between two and three hundred patrons attended the school regularly. 80

80 Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, op. cit.
Mrs. Clark did not have a cafeteria at Beall School while she was principal. She felt that a public school function should be for the majority of students, and she felt that the students as a whole could not afford a lunch at school and those who could probably had a good lunch served at their homes. She said that the cafeteria would have served the "classes" and not the "masses". Mrs. Clark maintained her stand on a cafeteria at the school, although there was strenuous opposition to her views. 81

A class-room was converted into a small cafeteria during Mr. Prichard's principalship. While Mr. Charles was principal of the school, breakfast was served for ten cents every morning to those children who wanted breakfast, hot chocolate was served during the first hour at school for two cents per child and nearly fifty per cent bought the chocolate milk every morning, and many free lunches were served children who could not afford to buy their lunch and were not being properly fed at home because of inadequate income. Great care was taken to feed only those students whose parents were worthy of charity.

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81 Mrs. Myra Frater Clark, op. cit.
Physical Education

When Mrs. Clark was principal, the students were provided with a place to take shower baths. A total of 2503 baths were taken during the school year 1915-1916. 82

Health education is part of the curriculum in all the public schools of El Paso today. This program of education includes instruction in hygiene, physical education and home visits by the school nurse. The city of El Paso maintains several clinics throughout the city for patients who can not afford the medical attention of a private physician.

The physical education program is well planned, but there are limitations at Beall School. The playground is very large in comparison to the other schools, but the student body at Beall School is so large that the playground is almost inadequate. A recent study in evaluating the school has shown this fact to be true.

Beall School was the first school in the city to have a playground festival. 82 The program was held in May 1914 and was composed of folk dances, physical culture drills, games and volley ball.

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82 Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, op. cit.
Captain T. J. Beall, for whom the school was named, gave a short talk in appreciation of the progress made by the school. 83

A high cyclone fence has been built around Beall School recently. Before the fence was erected the playgrounds at the school were the loafing grounds of the community. Criminals, peddlers of marijuana and vandals met on these playgrounds. A murder was committed on the grounds after school hours in February of 1923. The fence helps to keep vandalism at a minimum and sets the school away from the public. The fence has caused an increased respect on the part of the school neighbors. 84

The P. T. A. has petitioned the city council to have the Beall School playgrounds established as a recreation center and lights put there. The city council has been petitioned to pave the streets around the grounds, but these are projects under consideration now.

83 El Paso Herald, El Paso, Texas, June 1, 1914.
84 Mr. A. H. Hughey, op. cit.
Fixed Properties and Equipment

Beall School
1915

Real Estate ------------------------------- $5,400.00
Buildings -------------------------------- $37,000.00
Machinery Fixtures and Equipment ------------------ $3,277.06
Total ------------------------------------- $45,677.06

The total of all the schools------------------- $902,754.47

Expenses of Instruction
Aug. 1, 1914 to April 30, 1915

Beall School

Supervisors of Grades and Subjects -------- $472.57
Salary of Principal ---------------------- $1,213.28
Salaries of teachers ---------------------- $11,504.30
Text books -------------------------------- $65.12
Stationery and supplies-------------------- $65.12
Total ----------------------------------- $13,274.54

The average cost of instruction per pupil
monthly --------------------------------------- $2.53

Average cost of instruction per pupil for
eight months ---------------------------------- $20.17

The total expenses of instruction at all
the schools --------------------------------- $157,071.71

The totals in the above were made for these schools:
Alamo, Alta Vista, Aoy, Bailey, Beall, Douglass,
Franklin, High, Highland Park, Lamar, San Jacinto,
Sunset, Vilas.

------------------------

Thurston Audit Company, Auditor's Report of 1915
Expenses of Instruction
Aug. 1, 1914 to April 30, 1915
(Continued )

Beall School
Average cost of instruction
per pupil for eight months ---------- $ 20.17

Average cost of instruction
per pupil for eight months at
Highland Park School (highest) ------ 25.16

Beall School
Average cost of instruction per
pupil monthly------------------------ 2.53

Highland Park
Average cost of instruction
per pupil monthly--------------------- 3.14

Thurston Audit Company, Auditor's Report of 1915
BEALL SCHOOL BUILDING

Appraised Values as at August 31, 1948 and additions at cost

Description of Beall School
Two story and basement brick building with composition roof

Description of Beall Annex
One story brick building with composition roof

Total Values of Beall School and Annex -- $108,825.66
Total Depreciation --------------- 39,788.16
Book values--------------------- 69,037.50

The Book values of:

Crockett School ------------------ 179,377.92
Mesita----------------------------- 406,815.97
Zavala-------------------------- 217,066.91

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Total of Elementary Schools

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The average daily attendance of Beall School for the year 1948-49 was 1,308. The next largest average daily attendance was that of Zavala School for the year 1948-49 which was 1,255.

---

BEALL SCHOOL
1950
BEALL SCHOOL
1950

The original building of 1907

Extension of the building built in 1919.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
Bibliography

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El Paso Herald, El Paso, Texas, August 10, 1907.


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Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, personal interview, June 23, 1950.

Mr. A. H. Hughey, personal interview, July 1, 1950.

Mrs. Belle Teel, personal interview, June 21, 1950.

Mrs. Martha Traylor, personal interview, June 29, 1950.

Blackmon, Minnie, A Historical Study of Education As a Potent Factor in the Development of El Paso County, (Master of Arts Thesis, University of Texas, Austin.)
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Financial Reports


Biographical and Historical Sketch Book of the Pioneer's Association of El Paso County, Texas, "Captain Thomas J. Beall."
Captain T.J. Beall
President of the
School Board of the
El Paso Public Schools
1904-1907

(Reproduction of a
photograph at Beall School)
BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS J. BEALL

Thomas Jefferson Beall was born at Thomaston, Georgia on May 12, 1836. The family originally came from Virginia. Captain Beall's parents were Dr. Jerre Beall and Susan B. (Neal) Beall. Both parents were natives of Georgia.

In 1850, Dr. Jerre Beall brought his family to Texas, where he conducted a successful practice in medicine at Marshall. All of the children were given excellent educational privileges. His son Dr. E. J. Beall was one of the best known physicians in Fort Worth, and Thomas J. Beall was a prominent attorney in El Paso.

Thomas Jefferson Beall studied at Tulane University in New Orleans, and received his degree in law in 1858 at Cumberland University, Lebanon, Tennessee. In 1858, he began the practice of law in Marshall, Texas. He was admitted to the Supreme Court of Texas one year later. The law firm of Davis and Beall which was established at Bryan, Texas after the Civil War, and continued as Beall and Kemp at El Paso, was one of the oldest law firms in the state of Texas.
During the Civil War, Thomas J. Beall took a leading part at Marshall, Texas in the organization of a company for the Confederate service of which he was elected captain. He resigned from the company and joined the Marshall Guards as a private of Company A, Second Texas Infantry, at Hopkinsville, Kentucky under the command of Colonel John Gregg. Thomas J. Beall was on duty in Kentucky in the winter of 1861-62. He was one of the force that joined the Confederate army at Fort Donelson against the advance of the forces under General Grant.

In a battle at Fort Donelson in February 1862, Captain Beall was wounded in the charge upon Schwartz-Battery which was supported by General John A. Logan. Following the surrender of the fort, Captain Beall was held prisoner of war on Johnson's Island for seven months. After his exchange, he joined his regiment at Jackson, Mississippi; Thomas J. Beall was appointed to Brigadier General Gregg's staff with the rank of captain.

Captain Beall took part in the defeat of Sherman at Chickasaw Bayou in front of Vicksburg. He was under fire at Fort Hudson, Louisiana when
General Farragut's fleet passed the batteries and Dewey's boat, the Mississippi, was sunk. He participated in the gallant fight made by Gregg's brigade against General McPherson's Corps at Raymond, Mississippi. The Confederate troops were under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston. After the close of that campaign, General Gregg's brigade joined the army of the Tennessee and participated in the battle of Chickamauga, and was latter assigned to Longstreet's Corps under General Robert E. Lee. Captain Beall was in the famous charge of the Texas brigade at the Battle of the Wilderness. He was staff officer at the battles of Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, and was in numerous engagements in the fall of 1864 until General Gregg was killed.

Except for his military experience, Captain Beall gave undivided attention to the practice of law where he achieved success and distinction. He was three times endorsed as a candidate for Congress, once in the campaign which resulted in the election of Roger I. Mills, but on each occasion
he declined the nomination. Soon after the war he took up the practice of law at Bryan, Texas. He organized the law firm of Davis and Beall. His partner was Major B. H. Davis, a brother of Captain Charles Davis of El Paso. Judge Wyndam Kemp was later admitted to this firm at Calvert. Judge Kemp represented the firm in the branch office at Calvert.

Captain Beall came to El Paso in 1881. The law firm of Davis, Beall and Kemp was the same as at Bryan and Calvert until the death of Major Davis when the style of Beall and Kemp was used.

Captain Beall represented the legal interests in El Paso of the Southern Pacific Railway, the New York Life Insurance Company, and the State National Bank. He maintained temporary professional interests at Fort Worth from 1884 to 1887 as the attorney for the Santa Fe Railway and the Gould railroads at Fort Worth.

He was married twice. He first married Miss Laura Wilson, a daughter of Colonel Wilson, a prominent Brazos river planter, and by that marriage there was one daughter Mary B. Beall. After loosing
his first wife, Captain Beall married Miss Margaret Ragsdale of Aberdeen, Mississippi. Their children were: Susan- Mrs. E. E. Neff, the wife of an El Paso merchant; Nancy- Mrs. Joseph E. Williams, the wife of a former official of the First National Bank of El Paso; Florence - Mrs. John A. Corode whose husband was president of Kent County National Bank of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Thomas D. Beall, a son, was the rancher of the Riverside Ranch. 1

Captain Beall was president of the board of trustees of the El Paso Public Schools until September 2, 1907. 2 He was a staunch Democrat and was presidential elector from the fourth Congressional district of Texas in 1868. He was a mason, and filled the office of grand commander of the Knights Templar of Texas. He

1 "Captain Thomas J. Beall", Biographical and Historical Sketch Book of the Pioneer's Association of El Paso County, Texas.
2 School Board Minutes, September 2, 1907.
He was elected president of the Texas Bar Association.  

Captain Beall died in a Fort Worth hospital on July 29, 1921.  

---

1 "Captain Thomas J. Beall," Biographical and Historical Sketch Book of the Pioneer's Association of El Paso County, Texas.  

2 El Paso Times, July 30, 1921, 2:7.
Superintendents of the El Paso Public Schools

Calvin Esterly 1885 - 1890
W. H. Savage 1890 - 1894
G. W. Putnam 1894 - 1908
F. M. Martin 1908 - 1909
N. R. Crozier 1909 - 1914
R. J. Tighe 1914 - 1919
A. H. Hughey 1919

Records Department, El Paso Public Schools.
Principals of Beall School *

Bassett School
(Predecessor of Beall)

Sophia Gilchrist and A. Heap 1903 to 1905
Mrs. Empress Arrington 1905 to 1907

Beall School

Mrs. Myra Prater Clark 1907 to 1945
Mr. Paul Prichard 1945 to 1948
Mr. H. E. Charles 1948 to 1950

*Records Department, El Paso Public Schools.
The Faculty*
-1908-

Miss Myra Prater - Principal

Teachers

Wilmoth Hudson
Henrietta Shirley
Fanny E. Blakesley
Belle Chaplin
Kate L. Adams
Tura Compton
Iduma Hughes
Jessie M. Darroch
Winifred Roe

*South Side School Register, El Paso Public Schools, 1907-1908.
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*List compiled from South Side School Register 1907-1908*
McKinney, Della
McVey, Elema
McVey, Elsie
Mosley, Beulah
Mitcheltree, Bertha
Parrott, Bennie
Richey, Addie
Richey, Lena
Thompson, Joy
Thorne, Miretta
Tyra, Stella
Warren, Vera Louise
Wright, Pearle
Collings, Violet
Braulia, Cruz
Jackson, Nell
Jensen, Kathleen
Kelley, Lena
Miller, Grace
Young, May
Bandle, Henry
Carberry, Richard
Colbert, Will
Hill, Jerome
Jackson, Bland
Loya, Juan
Read, Will
Rains, Will
Bull, Clara
Warren, Josephine
Boone, Dollie
Miller, Lena May
Atkinson, Wilfred
Hill, Eugene
Irving, Robert
Collings, Lettece
Hull, Henrietta
Oldman, Mamie
Philips, Isa
Raines, Emma
Young, Mary
Duchene, Aaron
Carbury, Ralph
Combs, Bonnie
The Faculty *
1915

Miss Maude Isaacks
Miss Iduma Hughes
Miss Grace Fleck
Miss Frances Turrentine
Miss Mary Messimer
Miss Nell Taylor
Miss Annie Sullivan
Miss Gertrude Benjamin
Miss Lucy Hoard
Miss Elizabeth Binns
Miss Mae Buckaloo
Mrs. Gertrude Aiello
Miss Janet Rumsey
Miss Buena Gilder
Mrs. Clemmie Matkin
Miss Aline Rather
Miss Sarah Barclay
Miss Eula Brown
Miss Zella Prater
Mr. Robert C. Jackson

(*Payroll for month ending May 30, 1915)
Beall School Faculty*

(1919-1920)

Myra Prater, Principal

Mary Andrew
Elizabeth Bacon
Mary Bartholomew
Jessie Blanton
Mattie Clark
Abbie Clibourne
Allie Clibourne
Eula Cook
Edna Davis
Chessie Elder
Paul Evert
Sadie Garret
Lily Gilbert
Lucy Hoard
McKie James
Loraine Lacy
Pearl Lancaster
Blanche Lefkovitz
Mary Messimer
Lucille Miller
Myra Moore
Ruby Porter
Zella Prater
Beulah Ragsdale
Agnes Sackett
Ena Steger
Annie Sullivan
Frances Turrentine
Anna Windberg
Emma Wingren

Beall School Faculty *
-1925-

Mrs. Myra Clark, Principal

Ella Ash  Florence Lefkowitz
Rosa Bishop  Helen Lemstra
Minnie Blackmon  Sally McCall
Macie Boyd  Janie Miles
Mary Boland  Lucille Miller
Dorothy Brubaker  Ada Niland
Mary Buchanan  Mary Oliver
Fannie Burnam  Mildred Park
Helen Cobble  Kathalee Powers
Tura Cressey  Juanita Ragsdale
Pearl Crockett  Elizabeth Redic
Kathryn Dugan  Jennie Rue
Dana Dunagan  Alice Rupert
Pauline Evans  Annie Schwankhaus
Belle Foret  Nell Scott
Ida Gorham  Belle Teel
Nannie Greene  Martha Traylor
Susannah Hare  Margaret Weaver
Alma Jones  Jessie Webb
Genevieve Lafargue  Euphro Wisda
Edna Lapsley  Mattie Woodrome
Alice Leeman  Audrey Zavisch

---------------------------
*Pay Roll, El Paso Public Schools, October 27, 1925.
Beall School Faculty
-1930-

Mrs. Myra Clark, Principal

Margaret Aronstein
Rosa Bishop
Mary Boland
Ruth Boyt
Fannie Burnham
Eula Cain
Clede Chapman
Edythe Cobbe
Mona Cordell
Margaret Cowherd
Emma Dene Duffy
Belle Foret
Frances Forrest
Mary Gibbons
Ethel Goldoft
Susannah Hare
Ida Haydon
Permelia Henderson
Winifred Houser
Dorothy Jackson
Irene Jave
Alma Jones
Anne Keffer
Nora Krauskopf
Genevieve Lafargue
Lucretia Lantz
Edna Lapsley
Florence Lefkovitz
Catherine Smith

Agnes Leighton
Clara Lord
Eugenia Maddox
Henrietta Marston
Vera Michael
Janie Miles
Lucille Miller
Mary Miller
Dorothy Morris
Hazel Murray
Mildred Park
Buray Perazzo
Norman Peyton
Frances Quarles
Juanita Ragsdale
Alice Rupert
Jessie Seay
Addie Jo Sharp
Leila Sicles
Pauline Smith
Belle Teel
Martha Traylor
Myrtle Wafer
Roxie Ward
Jessie Webb
Sarah White
Mattie Woodrome
L. C. Wright
Marguerite Wright

Pay Roll, El Paso Public Schools, October 1930.
Beall School Faculty

-1930-

Mrs. Myra Clark, Principal

Margaret Aronstein
Rosa Bishop
Mary Boland
Ruth Boyt
Fannie Burnham
Eula Cain
Clede Chapman
Edythe Cobbe
Mona Cordell
Margaret Cowherd
Emma Dene Duffy
Belle Foret
Frances Forrest
Mary Gibbons
Ethel Goldof.t
Susannah Hare
Ida Haydon
Permelia Henderson
Winifred Houser
Dorothy Houser
Irene Jave
Alma Jones
Anne Keffer
Nora Krauskopf
Genevieve Lafargue
Lucretia Lantz
Edna Lapsley
Florence Lefkovitz
Catherine Smith

Agnes Leighton
Clara Lord
Eugenia Maddox
Henrietta Marston
Vera Michael
Janie Miles
Lucille Miller
Mary Miller
Dorothy Morris
Hazel Murray
Mildred Park
Buray Perazzo
Norman Peyton
Frances Quarles
Juanita Ragsdale
Alice Rupert
Jessie Seay
Addie Jo Sharp
Leila Sicles
Pauline Smith
Belle Teel
Martha Traylor
Myrtle Wafer
Roxie Ward
Jessie Webb
Sarah White
Mattie Woodrome
L. C. Wright
Marguerite Wright

Pay Roll, El Paso Public Schools, October 1930.
Beall School Faculty*
-1935-

Mrs. Myra Clark, Principal

Lucille Baldrige
May Barton
Mary Boland
Fannie Burnam
Margaret Davis
Maude Ely
Belle Foret
Frances Forrest
Eula Gatlin
Mary Gibbons
Susannah Ha
eRose Haughton
Ida Haydon
Winifred Houser
Emma Jean Howell
Dorothy Jackson
Alma Jones
Anne Keffer
Zena Knight
Nora Krauskopf
Genevieve Lafargue
Edna Lapsley
Florence Lefkovitz

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Mary Miller
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Clifford Payne
Virginia Pearson
Buray Perazzo
Lucille Ponsford
Alice Rupert
Lila Sickles
Pauline Smith
Belle Teel
Martha Traylor
Tommy Webb
Bertha West
Sarah White
Grace Wilson
Mattie Woodrome
Elizabeth Worthington
Marguerite Wright

*Pay Roll, El Paso Public Schools, March 1935.
Beall School Faculty*  
-1940-  

Mrs. Myra Prater Clark, Principal

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*Pay Roll, El Paso Public Schools, December 1940.
Beall School Faculty
1945-1946

Mr. Paul Prichard, Principal

Lorenza Acosta
Agnes Adams
May Barton
Agnes Berner
Mary Boland
Katherine Boszormenyi
Fannie Burnam
Erma Connell
Frances Cook
Dona Cox
Belle Foret
Eula Gatlin
Mary Gibbons
Sibyl Graves
Dorothy Habberstad
Susannah Hare
Rose Haughton
Mary Holmes
Roberta Humphris
Margaret Knight

Hattie Lamb
James Little
Marguerite Lundy
Janie Miles
Beulah Mowrey
Margaret Norwood
Clifford Payne
Alma Plemmons
Flora Lee Ritchie
Maude Rogers
Alice Rupert
Hazel Sackett
Lupe Sanchez
Belle Teel
Mabry Thomson
Martha Traylor
Myrtle Wafer
Bertha West
Ruth Woodruff
Elizabeth Worthington

Beall School Faculty
1949-1950

Mr. H. E. Charles - Principal
Mrs. Doris Crow - Clerk

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