



# Historic Middleton City Schools

## Elementary Education Came First, in 1847 ...

According to local history, Middleton area schools got their start around 1847. The first, in what is now the City of Middleton, was built in the Pheasant Branch area on Branch Street by D. W. Sanford. Constructed of hewed logs, the school was aimed at elementary students. Soon, another school was also built on Branch Street near St. Bernard's Cemetery

In 1861, a new school was built on what is now Century Avenue, not far from the Stamm House. Known for years as Pheasant Branch School, the original building was replaced in 1896 on the same site, with additions made in 1912 and 1945. Used as a school until 1950, the building is now home to the VFW.



Pheasant Branch School



1885 Graded School

Around 1872 (or perhaps 1865<sup>1</sup>), a one-story stone schoolhouse was built along Terrace Avenue, with a brick-constructed second story added later. In 1884, this facility burned down (or perhaps was torn down<sup>1</sup>) and was replaced in 1885 by a two-story frame building which served as Middleton's Graded School until 1911-12, when it was sold to the Masonic Lodge. Around 1919 the Graded School became Middleton's Village Hall after it was moved to Hubbard Ave.

## The First High School, 1879 ...

When the ballots were counted at the annual town meeting on April 2, 1878, 60% of Middleton voters favored a "free" high school for the village. Work began quickly and a school building was constructed that summer at the corner of Terrace Avenue and N. High Point Road. The newly created School District #12 had voted \$1,000 for erecting the brick structure which still stands and is currently home to Little Red Pre-School.



First High School



Second High School

## A Second High School, 1903 ...

By 1903, a new high school was proposed and approved at the annual board meeting. The Board was authorized to borrow \$5,000 from the state to buy a site and build a new high school for the Town and Village of Middleton. The 2-story, red brick building, at the corner of Middleton and Franklin Streets, was completed late that year and offered the first four-year course of study.

## First Elm Lawn School, 1913 ...

A five-room, two-story brick school, built in 1911-12, opened for classes in January, 1913. Located between South and Hubbard Avenues, and known as Elm Lawn School because of the numerous elm trees, the \$12,000 building housed grades one through eight. A second four-room building was built in 1937. An addition in 1951



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helped to accommodate Middleton's growing population. However, the rapid growth necessitated a major change ... an entirely new elementary facility, known as Sauk Trail School, built on Branch Street in 1953.



### High School ... 1918 -- Now ...

In 1918, work began on the third Middleton High School, which was built for \$32,400 on a 3-acre North Avenue tract costing \$1,500. Designed for 150 students, the building was formally dedicated on Feb. 4, 1919. The High School (on Bristol St.) that Middleton and Cross Plains students attend today is the result of several additions to the

1918 building during the mid to late 1940s and a building constructed in 1949 still serves as part of the current school. More additions and renovations occurred in the mid to late 1960s and a major addition in 1980 not only expanded the facility but also marked the demolition of the 1918 structure. After two failed referendums to build a second high school, the Middleton Fire Company agreed to give a portion of the adjoining Firemen's park, so the high school could expand, and the District would remain with one high school. During 2001-2003, additional high school expansion occurred, leading to room for 2,000 students.

### Population Growth – More School Expansion ...

New school construction and additions to existing buildings have attempted to keep pace with growth in Middleton, Cross Plains and the surrounding neighborhoods. Sauk Trail Elementary School received a major addition in 1955 followed by other changes over the past 60 years. Kromrey Middle School, originally called Parkside Heights, was built in 1962 on Donna Drive. In 1967, the School Board changed the name to honor Edward G. Kromrey, who served the District for 27 years as teacher, principal and superintendent. The school received several additions over the next 30 years; however, the entire structure was demolished in 2015 when the replacement school, accommodating grades 5-8, was completed.

Northside School, built in 1976 on High Road, was soon part of the growing north end of the district, and it has received several additions/renovations. In 1987 (following a successful 1985 referendum), a third Elm Lawn School opened its doors on Woodgate Rd. The second Elm Lawn School on South Ave. was soon renovated to serve as the District Administrative Center and the original Elm Lawn facility torn down. In 2001, Middleton Alternative Senior High building was constructed and it was later renamed to Clark Street Community School.

### Consolidation of the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District ...

Consolidation or integration of Township Schools into a single District was a contested issue during the 1960s, however, a favorable vote in 1965 led to its implementation in 1968. The school district now includes the City and Town of Middleton, Village and Town of Cross Plains and portions of Madison, Town of Berry and the Town of Springfield.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniels, Eileen & Tom. *Centennial Souvenir*, Published by Middleton Times-Tribune, Middleton, WI, August 27, 1948, p. 76-85.

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