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EDUCATION IN TRANSITION: CHURCH AND STATE  
RELATIONSHIPS IN UTAH EDUCATION, 1888-1933

by  
Scott C. Esplin

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations  
Brigham Young University

April 2006

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a dissertation submitted by

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This dissertation has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the dissertation of Scott C. Esplin in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative material including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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## ABSTRACT

### EDUCATION IN TRANSITION: CHURCH AND STATE RELATIONSHIPS IN UTAH EDUCATION, 1888-1933

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Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

Doctor of Philosophy

Utah's current educational systems were largely shaped by a transitional era that occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A time when the region itself moved from territorial to state status, the dominant religion in the area, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), likewise changed in its role in Utah society. Previously dominating most aspects of life, the Church was forced to reevaluate its place in society due to greatly increased secular power and context.

Educational changes, as harbingers of larger societal shifts, are illustrative of such paradigm changes. During the four decade period stretching from 1888 to 1933, the LDS Church experimented with several private educational endeavors, seeking to maintain its place in the changing Utah society. Originally opposed to public education, these experimental private schools eventually became part of the public system itself as the Church restructured its paradigm.

St. George, Utah, like many of the LDS-dominated intermountain communities, experimented with these educational changes during this era. Key to this experimentation was the St. George Stake Academy, founded in 1888 as a religious alternative for the region's youth. Though challenged initially, the privately sponsored Church school grew as did its public counterparts during the early twentieth century. Eventually, this growth included expansion into post-secondary education, as the school became Dixie Normal College, Dixie Junior College, Dixie College, and ultimately Dixie State College.

Such growing, however, brought increased financial need. Faced with rising costs and budgetary restraints caused by periods of economic depression, the LDS Church rethought its educational policy. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the Church restructured its educational system, turning over to the state many programs originally intended as religious alternatives to public schools.

This study traces the changing nature of education in Utah from 1888 to 1933, illuminating the process of paradigm change within religious organizations. Using St. George as the model, it tracks the roles the state and the LDS Church played in shaping the current educational structure, as both parties sought to understand their place in society.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child,” may likewise be said of this dissertation. Many thanks go out to the small village of mentors and friends who gave life to this project. First, I acknowledge the tireless efforts of my dissertation chair, Dr. E. Vance Randall, who provided both the original idea for the study and the supervising support necessary to see it through. He is truly a disciple scholar, an ideal example for a Church-sponsored institution. Fellow faculty and committee members have also kindly read and commented, providing personal expertise to make the work better. Dr. Thomas G. Alexander opened the door for research in this field by publishing his excellent *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930*, including in it the invitation for “further research and study on the history of the Church during the early twentieth century” (Alexander, 1986, p. ix). Though retiring from the university while I pursued my study, Dr. Alexander continued to serve, offering his vast knowledge of the era. Dr. Paul H. Peterson, a first-rate historian but even more importantly a true Christian and friend, guided me to sources, helping me appreciate those overlooked in LDS Church history, while strengthening my writing, teaching me to use my own voice. Finally, Dr. Cliff Mayes and Dr. A. LeGrand Richards completed the committee, mentoring me in their classes and lending their expertise in educational history, challenging my assumptions and conclusions. Most of all, Drs. Mayes and



Richards helped me see beyond the classroom to the great good education must be for a society with such great need.

In addition to the assistance provided by the faculty at Brigham Young University, heartfelt gratitude also goes to various institutions, including the Church Educational System, who provided the time and means necessary to pursue this study, and the staffs at the LDS Church Archives, Brigham Young University Special Collections, and Dixie State College Archives, who opened their collections and, more importantly, their minds. Guiding me to unknown sources, they provided the material necessary for this one of many stories that needs to be told.

Beyond the academic realm, I especially want to thank my family. A son of parents employed by the LDS Church Educational System, I grew up loving its programs and education generally, a love instilled by good parents. Strickland W. Gillilan wrote, “You may have tangible wealth untold; Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold. Richer than I you can never be – I had a mother who read to me.” I had that mother. To her love of learning my father added a love of teaching, something I hope to do half as well as him someday.

Finally, I express my gratitude to my wife Janice, who came into my life half-way through this process, marrying what, at times, must have seemed more like an educational history project than a husband. I appreciate her constant support, her expert editing, and most importantly her patience and love. Finding her in this process is of much greater value eternally than any degree, though gratefully accepted, the world could bestow.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

Since no paradigm ever solves all the problems it defines and since no two paradigms leave all the same problems unsolved, paradigm debates always involve the question: Which problems is it more significant to have solved? (Kuhn, 1996, p. 110)

Social groups in Utah experienced a paradigm debate at the end of the nineteenth century. Voices of dissent, both local and national, increasingly clashed with the predominant Latter-day Saint religious establishment, calling for change. Historian Thomas Alexander (1986) described the situation in the region:

Conditions during the period of the 1890s constituted for the Latter-day Saints a challenge to the paradigm under which they had operated at least since 1847. The previous paradigm necessitated the integration of religion, politics, society, and the economy into a single non-pluralistic community. . . . This was simply unacceptable to Victorian America, so in the 1890s the Mormons began groping for a new paradigm that would save essential characteristics of their religious tradition, provide sufficient political stability to preserve the interests of the church, and allow them to live in peace with other Americans. (p. 14)

From 1890 to 1930, members and leaders of the faith, faced with new societal problems, reexamined their organization and its practices. “By 1930 that transition had largely been completed” (p. 3). The period from 1890 to 1930 “marked the end of one phase of Mormon history and ushered in the transition to a second” (p. 3).

During this era, Utah bent to the pressures of a national society, leaving its isolationist, communitarian position to join the mainstream fabric of individualistic America. This shift impacted all aspects of society, including education. Historian Frederick Buchanan (1996) commented on the nature of education as follower of change, “Public schools mirror the societies that maintain them, however much we would wish otherwise. Although reformers have over the years tried to make schools shape the ‘good society,’ their efforts have been frustrated by the inescapable fact that schools tend to

follow, rather than precede, social and cultural change” (p. 286). As American and Utah societies changed at the start of the twentieth century, education followed. Those changes in paradigm and worldview, and the decisions following there-from, continue to impact education in Utah a century later.

### *Overview of American Educational History*

Education in the Utah territory had its basis in the nineteenth century American society from which it emerged. Educational historian Ellwood P. Cubberley argued that the Puritan educational laws of 1642 and 1647 are “the very foundation-stones upon which our American public school systems have been founded” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 1). Others disagree, attributing the educational efforts of the Puritans to more of “an anxious attempt to conserve old traditions amid the threat of new conditions than as a new and daring venture which led to our present public educational system” (Tyack, 1967, p. 1-2). However educational evolution is viewed, it seems evident that education in America has its roots in the original colonists’ efforts to preserve a piece of the old world. The divide between continents, however, eventually divided their educational practices. By the eighteenth century, one new world educator argued that “the Genius of our People, their Way of Life, their Circumstances in Point of Fortune, the Customs & Manners & Humors of the Country, difference us in so many important Respects from Europeans, that a Plan of Education, however judiciously adapted to these last, would no more fit us, than an Almanac, calculated for the Latitude of London, would that of Williamsburg” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 41).

The search for an educational system that would match the unique American experience coincided with the founding of the country as citizens sought to form a

national character. In 1749, Benjamin Franklin proposed that the “great Aim and End of all Learning” should include “an Inclination join’d with an Ability to serve Mankind, one’s Country, Friends and Family” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 77). Forty years later, Noah Webster argued that the system should be uniquely American. Believing that “it is dishonorable to waste life in mimicking the follies of other nations and basking in the sunshine of foreign glory,” Webster proposed a system where “every child in America should be acquainted with his own country. He should read books that furnish him with ideas that will be useful to him in life and practice. As soon as he opens his lips, he should rehearse the history of his own country; he should lisp the praise of liberty, and of those illustrious heroes and statesmen, who have wrought a revolution in her favor” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 97). These ideas led to educational innovation in the early 1800s. “The founding of public education as it is known today would stem from a new world view and new trials in the nineteenth century” (Tyack, 1967, p. 5).

The nineteenth century worldview was a belief in a uniquely superior American experience. Education for all, the American common school, became the tool to transmit this perspective. Historians David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot (1982) observed, “The architects of public schooling took literally the motto on the Great Seal of the United States, *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, believing that their crusade for common schools was part of a providential design to make America a new order for the ages. . . . The common-school crusaders regarded themselves as God’s chosen agents” (p. 3). Polish revolutionary Count Adam De Gurowski commented in 1857 on the American faith in their schools, “On the common schools, more than any other basis, depends and is fixed the future, the weal and the woe of American society, and they are the noblest and most

luminous manifestations of the spirit, the will, and the temper of the genuine American communities and people” (cited in Cremin, 1962, p. 13-14).

While nineteenth century America hoped for a new order, it also faced serious challenges. “Most Americans at the time believed in progress, in a benevolent God, in equality of opportunity, in the mission of the United States to serve as a model of republican virtue to the world. Yet social evils – intemperance, crime, slums, ignorance – were all the more visible and ominous because of the rapid growth of the cities” (Tyack, 1967, p. 124). Education, and specifically the common school movement, became the solution to the Republic’s problems. “The chief contribution of the common school reformers was to articulate and focus the generalized American belief in education and to make it relevant to the aspirations and anxieties of the age” (p. 124).

One of the anxieties and aspirations of the age was the socialization of immigrants. Their constant influx, first from the British Isles and later from southern Europe, concerned nineteenth century American society. Calvin Stowe, clergyman, educator, and husband of author Harriet Beecher Stowe, declared in 1836, “Unless we educate our immigrants, they will be our ruin” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 149). Dr. Daniel Drake agreed, offering the common school as the solution, “The school-house is that crucible, and the schoolmaster is the only alchemist who can bring fine gold out of the crude and discordant materials. It is only, sir, on the children and youth of our emigrant population, that we can act with effect” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 150-151). J. R. Preston, Mississippi State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1891, summarized, “To make a citizenship whose intelligence, moral rectitude, and steadfast virtues will counteract these



disintegrating forces and social disorders is the function and the mission of our public schools” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 258).

The resulting common school crusade marked a radical shift in American educational policy (Randall, 1994, p. 35). Prior to this time, “state involvement in the educational affairs of the American colonies was limited primarily to the granting of charters or acts of incorporation, setting governing boards, and approving teachers” (p. 17). The common school, on the other hand, brought uniformity and standardization to the educational process. Though localized in its control, allowing for individual adaptation in the thousands of various districts, its operation was also to be directly tied to the state. This provided accessibility to education for all (excepting blacks and Native Americans) and emphasized “educational objectives such as instilling a public morality, patriotism, and the subjugation of individual desires and interests in behalf of the public welfare” (p. 26). In short, “the purpose of the common school was to bring cultural harmony, economic prosperity, and social justice to the American nation” (p. 28).

The common school movement impacted private schools in a number of ways (Randall, 1994, p. 33). Some closed their doors, as parents were unable to pay both taxes and tuition. Others, including some sponsored by Protestant denominations like the Calvinists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Quakers, “strengthened or established their own school systems in response to the diluted Protestantism and the perceived ‘godlessness’ in the state school” (p. 33-34). Catholics in particular, many of whom were recent immigrants from Ireland and Germany, viewed common schools with skepticism. Perceiving them as “anti-Catholic, generic Protestant schools that had an innate bias

against everything that was not Protestant and Anglo-American” (p. 34), they responded by forming their own schools.

Like Catholics in the eastern United States, a system with the stated goal of socializing dissidents and outsiders into mainstream American society also clashed in Utah, where Mormon society fought to preserve its own unique traditions. Conflict between a national or regional worldview emerged. This battle for supremacy is the story of Utah educational history from 1888 to 1933.

### *Overview of Utah Educational History*

Educational thought in Utah, while linked to these early colonial and common school beginnings, is also inexorably tied to the history and educational thought of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The territory of Utah, and later the State, was founded in 1847 by religious outcasts from the eastern United States and Europe. Driven by mobs and buoyed by faith, wagonloads of these pioneers crossed the prairies with a vision to build their “Zion,” an ideal society where they could be free to live and worship as they pleased. Settling in the valleys of the Wasatch Mountains, they helped the territory struggle and grow from outpost and outcast to become the crossroads of an ever-expanding America.

The Utah dream of an ideal society had its roots in the statements and practices of Joseph Smith, founder of the Church. The “Mormon” or “LDS” movement, as it became known, had grand objectives, both spiritual and social. Smith stated, “The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and

joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day” (Joseph Fielding Smith, 1938, p. 231). Continuing, he outlined the Church’s role in building this longed-awaited Zion utopia, “We are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory” (p. 231).

Smith’s Zion contemplated change in every aspect of society. His revelations and teachings outlining its establishment include spiritual, social, economic, and educational goals. Of the educational foundations, the revelations declared, “Concerning the school in Zion, I, the Lord, am well pleased that there should be a school in Zion” (Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) 97:3). They continued, “The glory of God is intelligence” (D&C 93:26), and, “It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance” (D&C 131:6). LDS educational philosophy included the mandate to “teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom, . . . of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms” (D&C 88:77, 79). It offered the promised reward, “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (D&C 130:18-19).

Functionally, Smith and his followers translated these philosophies into practice, forming elementary, secondary, and even adult schools in Mormon communities across the Midwest. Unique among them was the University of Nauvoo, authorized by the

Illinois legislature in 1840 and founded in the LDS capital of Nauvoo, Illinois in 1841. The first municipal university in America, the school represented a departure from the New England traditions which Mormon institutions traditionally followed, creating instead a highly centralized board that controlled all levels of education in the city (M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 33).

Smith's dream, "a work that [was] destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family" (Joseph Fielding Smith, 1938, p. 232), did not sit well with some. After being mobbed and driven from state to state, he was killed in Illinois in June 1844, leaving his followers with the unfinished work of building their Zion. Moving west to avoid continued persecution, Brigham Young, John Taylor, and others of his successors attempted to establish this ideal society, including its educational components.

Settling in Utah, formal education quickly became a part of LDS society. The first school opened three months after their arrival in the Salt Lake valley. The University of Deseret was established in 1850, patterned after the centralized system envisioned in the earlier University of Nauvoo. Designed as a parent school, the University of Deseret was to act as a supervisory institution in charge of all public schools in the territory (M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 80). The first school law was passed a year later, providing for schools supported by public taxation (L. E. Young, 1913, p. 879). While public in name, however, the schools were effectively Mormon. Organized at the parish level ("ward" in LDS terminology), elected trustees were responsible for collecting taxes to provide school facilities (often the same building used for Church

meetings), but the local ecclesiastical officer (“bishop”) employed the teacher. Taxes were usually supplemented with tuition.

Conflict soon arose over the religious control of these “public” schools. In 1863, silver was discovered in the area, attracting immigrants to the territory. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in Utah in 1869 expedited the process, bringing a greater non-Mormon or “Gentile” influence to the region. By the 1880 census, 20% of the territory’s population was non-Mormon. In Salt Lake City, as many as one in four belonged to other faiths (Buchanan, 1996, p. 11). Greater numbers demanded a greater voice in local government. Attacks against the political and economic control the LDS Church exerted on personal and community life in Utah increased. Nationally, the federal government stepped up its attacks on the marital practices of the Church. These conflicting religious and social opinions ultimately played themselves out across society, including in the schools.

In 1888, Church president Wilford Woodruff responded in part to these attacks on LDS way of life by proposing educational reform, declaring, “We feel that the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people” (Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 166). Subsequently, the Church formally expanded its academy system from the 2 then operating to 22 formal institutions, spanning the intermountain west from Canada to Mexico, providing secular and spiritual education for Mormon youth. Numerous others informally sprang up, operating at least in name. Leaders touted the program as “one of the most important factors in establishing the kingdom of God on the earth” (Minutes of the General Board of Education, April 9, 1889, cited in Monnett, 1999, p. 120). Several of these schools operated in Utah until as

late as 1933, competing with the local public school system. Their remnants remain in the form of three members of the state's higher education system, as well as Church operated schools like Brigham Young University, LDS Business College, and the global Church Educational System.

With the LDS Church moving towards its own separate school system much like the Catholic private school system, free public school advocates seized the chance to finally establish their cause. LDS leaders in Utah had long opposed free schools for numerous reasons, condemning the system because they believed it encouraged idleness, destroyed local control, eliminated religious instruction, and gave public funds to "the hands of a set of robbers" (B. Young, 1867, p. 374; 1874, p. 18-19; 1877, p. 357). However, in 1890, with an increased non-LDS population in the territory, disenfranchisement of many Mormons because of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, and the Church advocating its own separate school system, proponents succeeded in passing the first free school law in Utah. Six years later, the Utah State Constitution made the system permanent, requiring that the legislature "provide for the establishment and maintenance of the State's education system . . . free from sectarian control" (White, 1998, p. 125). The state constitution further prohibited religious tests for teachers in schools as well as any state aid for church schools (p. 132).

These actions by the LDS Church and the state of Utah set the scene for competing systems during the early decades of the twentieth century. On the one hand, religiously motivated individuals attempted to transmit values and beliefs to their children separate from the control of the state. On the other, the state attempted to inculcate national values and patterns through the control of government sponsored

public schools. In the end, due both to environmental factors and changing perceptions and worldviews of the parties involved, the systems came together. The resulting compromise forms the basis of education, both religious and secular, in the state of Utah today.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Histories of Utah education generally, and LDS education specifically, have existed for decades. But even generally accepted historical conclusions need to be reexamined over time. Philosopher Karl Popper (1966) argued, “Since each generation has its own troubles and problems, and therefore its own interests and its own point of view, it follows that each generation has a right to look upon and re-interpret history in its own way” (p. 267-268). Responding to those who denounce this personal reapplication of history, Popper continued, “We study history because we are interested in it, and perhaps because we wish to learn something about our own problems. . . . We should not think that our point of view, if consciously and critically applied to the problem, will be inferior to that of a writer who naively believes that he does not interpret, and that he has reached a level of objectivity permitting him to present ‘the events of the past as they actually did happen’” (p. 267-268).

Although historical studies of public and private education in Utah exist, a thorough review of education in the state from 1890 to 1930 needs to be written for a number of reasons. First, the foundational studies in Utah educational history are generally broad, covering the entire history of education in the region. Frederick S. Buchanan’s *Culture, Clash, and Accommodation: Public Schooling in Salt Lake City, 1890-1994* typifies the problem. Though limiting itself to education in Salt Lake City,

Buchanan's history still ranges over an entire century. While helpful for general understanding, his and other studies offer little specific detail on the transitional era from 1890 to 1930. This proposed study limits the research parameters significantly. By narrowing the focus to four decades, greater detail and analysis can be discussed.

A second reason for further study in Utah educational history involves changing perceptions, interpretations, and sources. Frederick Jackson Turner, historian and father of the "frontier thesis," highlighted the need for the review of history:

Each age writes the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time. . . . The aim of history, then, is to know the elements of the present by understanding what came into the present from the past. For the present is simply the developing past, the past the undeveloped present. . . . The antiquarian strives to bring back the past for the sake of the past; the historian strives to show the present to itself by revealing its origin from the past. The goal of the antiquarian is the dead past; the goal of the historian is the living present. (Edwards, 1938, p. 52-53)

Present conditions change our understanding of history. Perspectives and sources change as material previously unavailable comes to light. Two key studies in the field, James R. Clark's *Church and State Relationships in Education in Utah* and Ray L. DeBoer's *A Historical Study of Mormon Education and the Influences of its Philosophy on Public Education in Utah*, were both written in the 1950s. A half-century later, the influences of the dynamic between the LDS Church and the State of Utah in education need to be reexamined in light of current conditions and available sources.

A third, related reason for a reexamination of historical interpretations and conclusions involves the notion of time. Time not only changes perceptions, it also erodes memory. The Greek historian Thucydides observed, "Most of the events of the past, through lapse of time, have fought their way, past credence, into the country of myth" (Greene, 1987, p. 1). Studying and preserving the details of the Utah's educational



past fights the erosive effects of time on history. This is particularly true of the early decades of the twentieth century, many of whose participants are quickly passing away.

### *Statement of Purpose*

The purpose of this study is to recreate and reanalyze the decisions, events, and actions of Utah's educational past, focusing specifically on the foundational era from 1888 to 1933. During this period, public education beyond the control of the LDS Church was established. As part of a national trend, primary schools, and later secondary schools, flourished rapidly throughout the state. Meanwhile, the LDS Church sponsored its own separate educational system, attempting to preserve important parts of its unique culture. Eventually, competing systems merged. Unable financially and philosophically to maintain a separate educational system, the Church abandoned the separate educational model, establishing instead early morning and release-time religion classes adjacent to public schools, a program that, at present, educates over 350,000 students worldwide. The study will highlight the main issues that faced the two competing systems, emphasizing the changing perceptions and actions of those involved as society as a whole in Utah, including education, transitioned to the national model. The study concludes with possible implications of these changes on public and private education in Utah today.

### *Key Research Questions*

This historical study focuses on three important questions:

1. How did educational thought, and ultimately practice, change in Utah, both in the public realm and in private LDS education, from the last decade of the nineteenth century to the middle portion of the twentieth century?

2. Why did the LDS Church initially resist the American public education model, only to later embrace and even champion it in the state of Utah?
3. How do the decisions and results of Utah's foundational era in education continue to impact the system today?

### *Delimitations*

This study is limited to elementary and secondary education in Utah from 1888 to 1933. These dates range from the expansion of the LDS academy system through its ultimate closure and subsequent decisions by Church leaders charting instead the seminary and institute system. Although analysis includes all public and private schools in the state, the emphasis is on the state-sponsored public school system and the corresponding LDS private school system.

Furthermore, the study focuses on the competing public and private educational programs in St. George, Utah, as typifying those of other area communities. This deliberate narrowing is done because of the number of competing schools across the state during the era and the impossibility of studying, in depth, all records from all locations. St. George was selected because it is one of the five communities state-wide (the others being Logan, Ogden, Provo, and Ephraim) that maintained the competing LDS and public school programs throughout the entire four-decade time frame. Of these five communities, St. George was selected because of the richness of its archival collections, many of which have not been as thoroughly studied as those of Brigham Young University in Provo or Weber State University in Ogden. Also, like the other communities, it experienced a period of initial failure, followed by the reestablishment of a high school, a shift to junior college status, and ultimately the transfer to state control.

### *Theoretical Rationale*

This study applies historical research of archival data as the primary methodology. German historian Leopold von Ranke (1973) described this practice, “History is distinguished from all other sciences in that it is also an art. History is a science in collecting, finding, penetrating; it is an art because it recreates and portrays that which it has found and recognized. Other sciences are satisfied simply with recording what has been found; history requires the ability to recreate” (p. 33). True to the definition, this study will collect, find, and penetrate the sources, while at the same time recreating and portraying the educational past in light of current practice.

*Primary and secondary sources.* Historical documents will come from a variety of sources. When possible, primary source documents will be used throughout the study. Several major collections of primary documents relative to the educational history of Utah, and specifically St. George, exist. For public schools during both the territorial and state eras of Utah history, the Utah State Archives contains the records of the State Office of Education, including annual statistical and financial reports and school enrollment data. Public school primary documents from the state archives will be supplemented by materials from the archives and library at Dixie State College and other public archives at local colleges and universities. Primary source documents for LDS schools during the era will come from the LDS Church Archives and Church Educational System historical records, supplemented by materials from the L. Tom Perry Special Collections of the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University. Major records within these collections include board of education meeting minutes, statistical and enrollment reports, personal and public correspondence, and private journals and diaries.

Secondary sources will be used to support and, where necessary, provide missing information from primary sources. Some of the collections, both at the LDS Church Archives and in the special collections at Brigham Young University, are restricted from public access. Permission will be sought to access and publish portions of these records, including confidential meeting minutes, correspondence, and journals. While some materials from these collections have recently been made available for research, others have recently been restricted. Secondary sources that previously had access to some items will be used when the primary documents are no longer available.

*Potential sources of bias.* Historians Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob (1994) caution, “No longer able to ignore the subjectivity of the author, scholars must construct standards of objectivity that recognize at the outset that all histories start with the curiosity of a particular individual and take shape under the guidance of her or his personal and cultural attributes” (p. 254). History, which was once viewed, like science, as impartial and objective, has now “lost its innocence. Rather than being perceived as value-free, it is seen as encoded with values” (Appleby et al., 1994, p. 15-16). Jenkins (1995) likewise observed,

For today we know of no such things as neutral/objective ‘interpretation’, as ‘innocent’ surveys, as ‘unpositioned positions’. Rather, we should all know by now that the best we can do is to alert and keep on alerting ‘readers’ to the position we are interpreting from, rather than imagining that interpretations not only might spring from nowhere, but that some interpretations are not interpretive at all but ‘the truth.’ (p. 13)

Prescriptively, MacCannell (1992) suggests the author’s open acknowledgment of perspective as the solution bias:

Interestingly, the one path that still leads in the direction of scholarly objectivity, detachment, and neutrality is exactly the one originally thought to lead away from these classic virtues: that is, an openly autobiographical style in which the

subjective position of the author, especially on political matters, is presented in a clear and straightforward fashion. (p. 9-10)

Philosopher Karl Popper (1957) further recommends, “The way out of this dilemma, of course, is to be clear about the necessity of adopting a point of view; to state this point of view plainly, and always to remain conscious that it is one among many” (p. 152).

As noted, one initial source of potential bias is the historian’s personal interpretation. Inevitable as this bias may be, it will at least be helpful to account for this potential problem in this introductory chapter. I am a religious educator by profession, employed by the Church Educational System of the LDS Church. This study is being conducted under the auspices of the Church’s largest educational institution, Brigham Young University, where I am currently assigned as an instructor. Furthermore, I am a product of the same system, the son of a lifelong religious educator for the organization, graduate of its seminary and institute programs, and a member and believer of its faith. I am also a product of the Utah public school system, having attended and graduated both from one of its high schools and, later, a public university in the state. These experiences shape not only who I am but how I interpret historical events.

*Data collection and analysis.* The primary and secondary sources will be collected from personal research in various archives and through reading, copying, and selecting relevant material. Tuchman (1994) states, “Locating documents is not the end of the process. A social scientist wants to infer patterns. That process resembles how one makes inferences from any qualitative data. Detecting a pattern requires being open to the material and having some imagination. By *historical imagination*, I mean some grasp of how a document would have been interpreted in its time” (p. 321). Gifted historians and educators with this “historical imagination” will be consulted throughout

this study for help with interpretation and insight. After reviewing the sources, meaningful historical material will be organized to form arguments, assessments, conclusions, and questions for future research.

### *Limitations*

Two types of limitations exist for this study: those of historical research as a methodology and those of the source material itself.

*Historical research.* A major limitation of any historical research is objectivity. Cheyney observed, “Everything comes to the reader as interpreted by the historian. Everything is seen through the medium of his personality. The facts of history when they are used to teach a moral lesson do not reach us in their entirety, nor grouped and generalized according to their internal relations, but selected and arranged according to the overmastering ideal in the mind of the historian. The reader is at the historian’s mercy. . . . Thus history sells its birthright of truth for a mess of the pottage of partisanship” (cited in Novick, 1988, p. 46).

Separating fact from personal interpretation is further complicated by the passage of time. Turner (1911) cautioned the assembled American Historical Association conference about the effects of time:

Those who insist that history is simply the effort to tell the thing exactly as it was, to state the facts, are confronted with the difficulty that the fact which they would represent is not planted on the solid ground of fixed conditions; it is in the midst and is itself a part of the changing currents, the complex and interacting influences of the time, deriving its significance as a fact from its relations to the deeper-seated movements of the age, movements so gradual that often only the passing years can reveal the truth about the fact and its right to a place on the historian’s page” (p. 231).

Over one hundred years have passed since the inception of free public schools in Utah. Interpretations of the events of a century ago may have shifted due to changing currents and complex interactions of time.

*Source limitations.* Two major limitations exist with the sources themselves. The first is access to material. As mentioned, many of the LDS educational sources are housed in the Church's private archives. Governing scripture for the Church instructs its first historian to "continue in writing and making a history of all the important things which he shall observe and know concerning my church" (D&C 69:3). Later, Church founder Joseph Smith instructed on "the propriety of all saints gathering up a knowledge of all facts" and publishing them to the world (D&C 123:1, 6). Such record keeping and public disclosure is tempered, however, by the need to protect personal, sacred, or confidential material. Accordingly, the LDS Church preserves vast collections of records, but sometimes limits access. Gaining confidence, and ultimately access to confidential material could prove to be a serious limitation to the research.

Another potential limitation is bias in the sources themselves. As Gabriel observed, bias is not limited to interpretation but can also be introduced by those who preserve the original sources:

'History' is that image of the past which filters through the mind of the historian, as light through a window. Sometimes the glass is dirty; too often it is distressingly opaque. The long and sometimes unfortunate experience of mankind with history has taught the historian that the biases, prejudices, concepts, assumptions, hopes, and ambitions which have contributed to the opaqueness of the minds of his predecessors are a part of the past with which he must deal. If he be a conscientious craftsman, he explores his own mind to discover those distorting bubbles which play such pranks on light rays. But at the outset he is sadly aware that, although he may discover a few of the more obvious imperfections, his task is hopeless. (cited in Novick, 1988, p. 267-268)

Some biases, assumptions, hopes, and ambitions may have crept into the original sources themselves, particularly in those of private, Church-sponsored records of education. Educators and administrators, following counsel from an organization they view as prophetically guided, will interpret experiences through a particular lens. Intent and bias of the original author must be considered in this study.

### *Outline of the Study*

Chapter One is an introduction to the study. It includes a brief discussion of the Utah's transitional period from 1890 to 1930 and highlights an overview of both American and Utah educational history. Based on these foundations, the chapter offers statements on the problem and purpose of this study, as well as its three key research questions. A theoretical rationale for the proposed methodology is analyzed, including a discussion of primary and secondary sources, bias, data collection, and data analysis. The chapter concludes with an outline of the study and a summary of its significance.

Chapter Two details the development of education in America and the Utah Territory from 1847 to 1890. Beginning with the colonial era, it discusses the rise of the common school movement nationally during the first half of the nineteenth century. It continues, examining the rise of the progressive era and its counterpart in education. Utah territorial education is also analyzed, including the development of LDS educational philosophy and its implementation in the form of pioneer schools, ward schools, and ultimately academies. Finally, the rising tension between LDS education in Utah and the encroaching national model during the latter part of the nineteenth century is explored.

Chapter Three focuses on the separating phase in Utah educational history from 1888 through the 1890s. The major societal pressures facing Utah in 1890 are discussed,



including analysis of the changing political and social makeup of the state. The impact of these pressures on Church decisions, the free school movement, and ultimately statehood are highlighted. These general overviews lead to an analysis of the similar time period and the public and private school systems in St. George, Utah. Using St. George as an example for other areas in the state, it marks how public, state-sponsored education took one track and private, LDS-sponsored education followed another. This era of competing schools systems highlights the changing control over Utah's public institutions and the emergence of high schools in the state, matching national trends involving the decline of academies. At the same time, corresponding efforts were made by the LDS Church attempting to keep pace, in the face of significant financial constraints.

Chapter Four tracks the first two decades of the twentieth century, an era of recommencement when the LDS Church tried to revamp its failing academy system as well as expand into other educational endeavors. During this era, the organization redoubled its efforts to establish and grow private academies after their initial failures a decade earlier. The Church also established a religion class system, providing after-school religious instruction for elementary school students. At the same time, public high schools rapidly emerged as a viable educational option for members and nonmembers alike. In response, Church leaders formed a seminary system, aimed at supplementing public schools with outside private religious instruction. During this phase, the seminary system became as a cost-effective alternative to the academy format.

Chapter Five brings the systems back together, as the competing private and public systems in the state worked out their differences from 1920 to 1933. It includes emphasis on the further growth of public schools, while the LDS Church divested itself

of its schools, transferring those in St. George and other locations to state control. A shift in educational philosophy within the Church is analyzed, including its emphasis on teacher training, the development of a release-time religious education system, and the support of public schools. The fallout of these changes is also discussed, as it essentially establishes the forms for public and LDS education in the state to the present day.

Chapter Six summarizes the findings and conclusions of the study. The chapter contains a discussion of the LDS educational model that emerged during the 1930s and how it differed from the model presented in the 1890s. Particular emphasis is made on the different paradigms evident during the two eras, as shown by the changes in educational structure. Analysis of these changes is presented, including implications from Utah's educational past and how they possibly relate to its present. The current Church and state relationship is discussed as it developed during this era. Included are recommendations for further study.

#### *Summary – Significance of the Study*

This study highlights the background for Utah's educational past, providing links between that past and its present and future. Current practice in education, like many fields, stands on the shoulders of the past. This study analyzes Utah's unique historical blend of church and state and how the values, events, and decisions made by its educational pioneers impact the system today. An informed understanding of the past helps guide policy makers as issues stemming from that past resurface. The study also models how changing worldviews impact a society. Using the LDS Church during its transitional era as a model, it demonstrates how a national worldview of compromise can

overpower a regional one of separation and self-determination. Furthermore, it highlights how modified versions of a discarded worldview can persist to impact society.

## Chapter Two

### Historical Overview of American and Utah Education (1847-1890)

The first challenge in describing education is defining it. Cremin (1970) observed that many “agencies, formal and informal, have shaped American thought, character, and sensibility over the years” (p. xi). These numberless educative agencies include schools, churches, families, newspapers, libraries, and museums. For the purpose of this study, some narrowing must occur. This study uses Cremin’s limiting definition of education as “the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit or evoke knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and sensibilities, a process that is more limited than what the anthropologist would term enculturation or the sociologist socialization, though obviously inclusive of some of the same elements” (p. xiii). Further limitation requires a focus on the formal institutions called schools that play a role in this transmission and evoking of knowledge. This limitation has its drawbacks, as there are numerous ways outside of formal schooling in which individuals are educated. While one cannot deny that the traditional narrative of American has been “narrowly institutional,” one must also acknowledge “the central role of public schooling in the American experience during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries” (p. x).

From this narrowed focus on formal, institutional education, further clarification of the American educational experiment is necessary. Often, the past is interpreted as “simply the present writ small” (Bailyn, 1960, p. 9), assuming it has led “inexorably to some foreordained present” (Cremin, 1980, p. x). Written this way, traditional, celebrationist history depicts the educational story as ascendancy:

The colonists come from Europe bearing a variety of attitudes toward education; in general, backwardness reigns supreme, except in New England, where schools

are early erected to confound that old deluder Satan. And these New England schools are destined to be the foundation upon which the American public educational system is later erected. At the end of the eighteenth century, it becomes evident that European ways are not working and that the new nation will need a different kind of schooling to nurture and perpetuate its distinctive way of life. There follows diverse efforts to popularize learning, such as Sunday schools, infant schools, and Lancasterian schools, but none of these proves adequate to the needs of the emerging society. And so Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, John Pierce, and others launch a great crusade for public education, in which the forces of progress vie with the forces of reaction for more than a generation. By 1860, the conflict is won, except in the South, that is, where victory must await the regeneration led by northern philanthropists at the end of the nineteenth century. Thereafter, the story is that of the refinement, improvement, and extension of public schooling in response to the conditions of the democratic-industrial civilization. And the moral is always the same: the rise of the public school has been inextricably tied to the progress of the United States; the cause of the one is invariably the cause of the other; hence, it is the duty of both teachers and lay citizens to promote public education, thereby enabling the United States to fulfill its destiny. (Cremin, 1970, p. x)

While some truth undoubtedly exists in the narrative, the story, both in the United States and in Utah, is much more complex. Cremin (1988) argues that “what happened in the past century of American educational history was neither inexorable nor foreordained; it was the outcome of the particular combinations of people, politics, and chance that mark all of human history” (p. xi). The LDS teleological perspective would temper that statement, believing the historical outcome to be the combination of people, politics, and chance, influenced by an overruling, guiding hand of Providence. This study is the story of that combination, as it occurred in the territory and state of Utah from 1888 to 1933.

#### *Development of Education in the United States*

This section gives the reader a broad understanding of the development of education in the United States until 1890. It is divided into three parts: the colonial era, the common school crusade, and the progressive era.

*Colonial era.* “The settlement of America . . . had its origins in the unsettlement of Europe. . . . That unsettlement holds the key to much that happened on both sides of the Atlantic” (Cremin, 1970, p. 109). During the colonization of America, society in Europe was undergoing great change, “the last phase of the general transition from a feudal to a capitalist economy” (Hobsbawm, 1965, p. 5). Colonists carried these changes to the new world. “The transit of civilization was a transit of institutions in motion and under stress. As these were tried and tested in the colonial situation, some proved viable and took root, some were quickly transformed, some withered and died” (Cremin, 1970, p. 112). Edward Eggleston observed, “the institutions of late Renaissance England were the stuff of which colonial society was made: they formed the paradigms with which the colonists began, however imperfect their clarity and however irrelevant their goals” (cited in Cremin, 1970, p. 112).

The household, both in Europe and America, was the original educator. “The primary agency used by the colonists to preserve and transmit their civilization – knowledge, skills, culture, and values – was the family” (Randall, 1994, p. 15). Formal educational institutions, be they churches or schools, grew out of it, but the family formed the original educational setting. Reasons why families played the significant role in colonial education include the traditional, religious, and legal heritage colonists brought from England, the geographic isolation present in America, and the lack of supporting social institutions like schools, colleges, universities, and churches to fill their place (Randall, 1994). Understanding the early colonial family, therefore, is critical to understanding early colonial education.

Familial differences, and therefore educational differences, must have been as varied in colonial America as they are today. However, some generalities about the immigrants may prove helpful in describing generalities about education. Although predominantly Englishmen populated the American colonies, this was not a truly representative cross-section of English society (Cremin, 1970, p. 123). The nobility and elite gentry generally sponsored the endeavor, but “by far the greatest number of migrants were ‘middling people’ – yeomen, husbandmen, artisans, and tradesmen – who acquired their own farms and shops either immediately or after a brief period of indentured servitude. . . . Colonial society, then, . . . had a comparative preponderance of middling people and a comparative paucity of the well-born and the absolutely unskilled” (p. 123). This demographical makeup produced a higher percentage of middle-class, nuclear families, in colonial America (p. 123).

A challenge in generalizing about colonial life lies not only in the difference between families but also the difference between colonies. Life in one region may have differed greatly from life in another. For example, compare the differences between Massachusetts and Virginia. In 1650, Massachusetts boasted a population of 14,037, comprised of 2,339 households (Cremin, 1970, p. 238). The same year, estimates for Virginia reflect a slightly larger population of 18,731, composed of 3,122 households (p. 241). Major differences exist between the two colonies institutionally, however. In 1650, Massachusetts had 43 churches, 11 schools, 1 college, and 1 printing press. Virginia, with its larger population, only had 27 churches, 1 school, and no colleges or printing presses. “Under these conditions, households [in Virginia] found themselves shouldering educational responsibilities that in Old and New England were normally

discharged by churches and schools” (p. 239). Similar differences based on settlement patterns and local needs exist between the colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. In short, there was little uniformity in the Americas during the early colonial period. In fact, there may have been a greater link between London and Boston, London and New York, and London and Virginia, than there was between Boston, New York, and Virginia (p. 232).

Educationally, the colonists differed from their European counterparts. In 1765, a young John Adams argued, “Those who first came to British North America . . . were men of intelligence and learning, determined to avoid both the canon and the feudal systems. They brought libraries bearing the wisdom of the ancients; they planted vigorous institutions of learning; and they took every precaution to propagate and perpetuate knowledge, making the education of all ranks of people a central concern of the public” (Cremin, 1970, p. 416). While much of Adams’ argument was probably Revolutionary rhetoric, the statement may contain some fact. New England alone reported at least 130 university trained men in the colonies before 1646, a large number for a colonial population (p. 207). Furthermore, “there is ample indication of widespread possession of books by the colonists, though small libraries were the rule; and the evidence in letters, diaries, wills, and inventories suggests that their books were both valued and read” (p. 29).

Using the literary sources available, the home became the first colonial school, a notion prevalent in the Renaissance tradition which stressed the household as “the primary agency of human association and education” (Cremin, 1970, p. 124). This role was heightened by “the threat of barbarism implicit in the wilderness” and more limited



“access than their metropolitan contemporaries to churches, schools, colleges, and other institutions that might share the task” (p. 124). These influences created “an increased familial responsibility for education, both imposed from without and assumed from within” (p. 124). Educational laws in the colonies responded to this perceived need, requiring that parents provide education for their children. Bailyn (1960) notes that these laws “expressed more than a traditional concern for schooling, and more even than a Puritan need for literacy. [They] flowed from the fear of the imminent loss of cultural standards” (p. 27).

Beyond the household, the church was the “largest and most important body of teachers . . . and probably the most influential agency of systematic education in the realm” (Cremin, 1970, p. 148). Like other world religions, Christianity had always been an educational system (p. 138). Colonial churches, therefore, played a significant educational role in early America.

An important distinction must be made when discussing religious, and specifically public and private education, in colonial America. Randall (1994) observed, “We currently use the term *public* to describe something that is supported and/or controlled by the government. This somewhat narrow meaning, however, did not exist until the middle of the nineteenth century” (p. 14). Before then, public meant “anything that benefited the community as a whole, and in reference to educational institutions, only to designate the lack of legal barriers to entrance” (Bailyn, 1963, p. 133). By serving the community, churches, as educational institutions, filled a public role.

Although seventeenth century America was as much a “babel of religion as it was of social class and ethnicity,” the church, in whatever form, became an educational

institution (Cremin, 1970, p. 148). “Children learned to read in church while learning to repeat the catechism, and adults sharpened their political opinions while debating issues of Scripture” (p. 494). The catechizing of youth, in fact, was required by law in Virginia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut (p. 155-156). A process of memorization and repetition, “many a youngster must have found himself, willy-nilly, learning to read, much as he learned to read at home, by matching print to an incessantly reiterated oral liturgy” (p. 156). For ministers conducting the catechism, “it was but a short step from catechizing to more general education” (p. 156).

The transition from family and church to formal school may have been a gradual one, developed as neighborhoods formed. “For youngsters growing up in homes in which no one was equipped to teach reading, there was frequently a neighboring household where they might acquire the skill” (Cremin, 1970, p. 128-129). A housewife who taught on a regular basis from her home, charging a modest fee, was known as a “dame school.” A servant or tutor doing the same thing was a “petty school.” “Such enterprises were schools, to be sure, but they were also household activities, and the easy shading of one into the other is a significant educational fact of the seventeenth century” (p. 129).

Schools as formal institutions took shape from these household and church organizations. Private schoolmasters, “more or less versed in some art or skill and willing to teach it to all comers for a fee” developed during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Cremin, 1970, p. 400-401). While these dame, petty, and private schools broke the household’s grip on education, political leaders urged education’s release from church control. Charity schools in Pennsylvania, encouraged by Benjamin

Franklin, were established to teach children of German immigrants in a deliberate attempt at Anglicization (p. 260-261). Later, Franklin led the way for utilitarian education as he advocated the learning of things useful (p. 376). At the same time, Thomas Jefferson pushed for a “secular piety,” advocating the general diffusion of knowledge (p. 302). While both men remained religious, Christianity was no longer “the chief end of education” (p. 302). In their models, social institutions in addition to the church stepped in as educators of the people.

“By the middle of the eighteenth century, the educational institutions of provincial America constituted a fascinating kaleidoscope of endless diversity and change” (Cremin, 1970, p. 479). The system was controlled by the market rather than the church or the legislature. “The opening up of educational alternatives in the eighteenth century produced an independence and scattering of authority unparalleled in the colonial period” (Randall, 1994, p. 18). This “phenomenal variation in types and modes of instruction” makes it difficult to define exactly what constituted a school (Cremin, 1970, p. 499). Due to labor shortages in the colonies, licensing requirements were lax. “Anyone who could command a clientele could conduct classes. . . . Virtually anyone could teach and virtually anyone could learn, at least among whites” (p. 558-559).

Although “various types of schools were not sharply etched in the provincial era,” eventually, three types of schools emerged (Cremin, 1970, p. 500). Removing household, church-based, and private entrepreneurial forms as informal institutions, the three remaining types are the English (or petty or common) school; the Latin grammar school; and the academy. The English school stressed reading, writing, and arithmetic. To this curriculum, the Latin grammar school added classical languages and literature. The

academy, newer and less well defined than the other two, covered any and all subjects from the English and grammar schools as well as college curriculum (p. 500).

These three types formed the basis of the American educational experience at the end of colonial era. Although the Revolutionary war would interrupt it, the basic system was in place. “Popularization . . . with respect to access, substance, and control, became early and decisively the single most characteristic commitment of American education” (Cremin, 1970, p. 561).

*Common school crusade.* Like the colonial period before it, social factors drove the common school era as well. Education in nineteenth century America was influenced by “the growing significance of schools, newspapers, and voluntary associations” (Cremin, 1980, p. ix). Academies, colleges, and seminaries increased rapidly throughout Jacksonian America (p. 67). Revolutionary luminaries like George Washington left office pleading for support of educational institutions as “an object of primary importance for the general diffusion of knowledge” (Fitzpatrick, 1931-1944, p. 229-230). In his native Virginia, Jefferson pushed his Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge. After its failure, he challenged a friend, “Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance; establish and improve the law for educating the common people. Let our countrymen know . . . that the tax which will be paid for this purpose is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid to kings, priests and nobles who will rise up among us if we leave the people in ignorance” (Boyd, 1950, p. 245). These encouragements established the philosophy that “the success – nay, the salvation – of the Republic lay in education; that education consisted of the diffusion of knowledge, the nurturance of virtue (including patriotic civility), and the cultivation of learning; that the best means of

providing education of the massive scale required were schools and colleges” (Cremin, 1980, p. 124-125).

The issue of government sponsored education quickly became a point of debate centering on the role of the national government. Some argued for a national university, others for a nationwide system of education, and still others for complete local control. Several prominent individuals led the charge for a national system. Normally an advocate for market forces in an economy, Adam Smith even championed a centralized educational system. His *The Wealth of Nations* became a powerful voice favoring the education of the masses, “if for no other reason than to prevent them from slipping into the torpor and stupidity that so often attended simple and routinized labor” (Cremin, 1980, p. 129).

These arguments resonated with a group of leaders concerned with the socialization of a changing American population. While the several states debated the merits of the federal Constitution, Noah Webster encouraged education:

Our constitutions of civil government are not yet firmly established; our national character is not yet formed; and it is an object of vast magnitude that systems of education should be adopted and pursued which may not only diffuse a knowledge of the sciences but may implant in the minds of the American youth the principles of virtue and liberty and inspire them with just and liberal ideas of government and with an inviolable attachment to their own country. (Rudolph, 1965, p. 44-45)

Webster was joined by numerous others of his era, including Washington, Jefferson, and Rush, in proposing educational reform. “Two of the most pressing problems facing the nascent nation were survival and identity” (Randall, 1994, p. 23). Rush proposed education as the solution to the young nation’s woes, declaring, “Our schools of learning, by producing one general, and uniform system of education, will

render of the mass of the people more homogenous, and thereby fit them more easily for uniform and peaceable government” (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 103).

Though much discussion regarding education ensued, little developed by way of practice. “Despite the rhetorical outpouring of plans and formulations for various types of educational systems, the astonishing aspect is not in what was said but that for the first 50 or 60 years of America’s history, none of these grandiose schemes were implemented in full or in part” (Randall, 1994, p. 26). Cremin (1980) observed, “The Revolutionary generation was direct and explicit about the need to create a new American education, cleansed of the corruption of European monarchial forms and rooted in the purified immediacies of American life, literature, and culture. . . . None of the plans succeeded” (p. 369).

A generation later, concern over immigrants who didn’t share the common American heritage fueled further calls for general public education. This time, the system succeeded. “Americans of the 1830s and the 1840s inherited from the revolutionary generation an anxious sense of the fragility of republican government” (Kaestle, 1983, p. 79). However, “the America of the 1830s and 1840s was quite different from the America of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, and Noah Webster” (Randall, 1994, p. 27). Unrest in Germany and potato famines in Ireland brought waves of settlers during the 1830s and 1840s, making Americans nervous (Tyack, 1967, p. 123).

Historian David Tyack (1967) summarized the movement:

Beginning in the 1820s a number of Americans began to wonder if American schools were good enough or systematic enough to carry the burden placed on them. . . . The crusade began in the settled older regions of the East, where new social conditions – urbanization, industrialism, immigration, and the democratization of politics – were most visible and painful. These new forces unleashed social, political, and economic conflicts, and educational historians

have traditionally seen the common school crusade as itself a series of 'battles.' It is true that many citizens did oppose the common school: taxpayers – urban landlords and dirt farmers alike – who could see no reason to educate the children of others; sectarian groups who attacked public schools as godless or covertly Protestant; patrons and proprietors of private schools; laborers who opposed education beyond the three R's as a subsidy of the wealthy; and patricians who clung to an elitism which was going out of style in Jacksonian America. But the remarkable characteristic of the common school crusade was its universality. All types of people – merchant and union organizer, Whig and Democrat, Calvinist and Unitarian, easterner and westerner – joined the cause, often with quite different motives. (p. 120-121)

In the end, a common school crusade emerged. “The chief contribution of the common school reformers was to articulate and focus the generalized American belief in education and to make it relevant to the aspirations and anxieties of the age. In so doing, gradually, partly consciously, partly unintentionally, they gave form and content and purpose to the public school” (p. 124).

One of the primary purposes for the common school movement was socialization. “From its earliest years the public school was viewed as an instrument par excellence for inducting newcomers into the ‘responsibilities of citizenship’” (Cremin, 1962, p. 66). Randall (1994) summarized, “The principal population targeted to receive this state-sponsored moral education were those who, in the minds of the reformers, had demonstrated the most serious character defects and thus posed the greatest social threat – the children of the working poor” (p. 28).

Though socialization was one key to the common school crusade, other factors were involved. Spring (1986) summarized the movement's breadth:

No single interpretation provides an adequate explanation. Rather, the common school appears to have been a result of a complicated set of often conflicting social and economic factors that included a humanitarian impulse to create the good society; a desire by the working class to enhance its political and economic position in society; a desire by manufacturers to have a disciplined and well-

trained work force; a desire of the upper class to protect their economic and social privileges; and a desire to maintain an American Protestant culture. (p. 80)

Massachusetts Secretary of Education Horace Mann, leading advocate for the common school crusade, became its chief spokesman. Articulating its goals, he envisioned a common system, not common because it was for common people but rather a school common to all people (Cremin, 1980, p. 138). Philosophically, Mann argued, “In a government like ours, each individual must think of the welfare of the state as well as of the welfare of his own family; and therefore, of the children of others as well as of his own” (cited in Cremin, 1980, p. 140-141). Operationally, “it would be open to all and supported by tax funds. It would be for rich and poor alike, the equal of any private institution. And, by receiving children of all creeds . . . it would kindle a spirit of amity and mutual respect that the conflicts of adult life could never destroy” (Cremin, 1980, p. 138). Systemically, his system would employ local control. Mann wrote, “*Upon the people* will rest the great and inspiring duty of prescribing to the next generation what their fortunes shall be, by determining in what manner they shall be educated” (Mann, 1845, p. 13).

Progress in forming this system was slow, but deliberate. The idea of local control, though it may have slowed reform, was key to the common school philosophy (Randall, 1994). In reality, “the formal legal movement toward systems of public schooling was at best uneven and fluctuant. Constitutions would proclaim principles, which legislatures would then interpret or ignore (Cremin, 1980, p. 171-172). Considerable variation from one community to another emerged, compounded by an infinite mixing of private, quasi-private, and public forms of support and control (p. 171-172). “Variegation . . . was the rule, and with it improvisation, imitation, trial and error –



whatever historical development there was ended up anything but uniform and linear. Yet, by the 1850s and 1860s, visitors from abroad could clearly discern an American public school system as an autochthonous institutional creation” (p. 149).

Because of these local adaptations, various types of schools existed during the early nineteenth century. The three basic types of schools from the colonial era (English grammar, Latin grammar, and academy) persisted in the early common era (Cremin, 1980, p. 388-389). Three new types emerged from the common school movement. Infant schools, designed for children ages two to seven, became the precursor for later kindergarten schools. High schools, an alternative to the Latin grammar school, emerged as an option for those who wanted to continue studies without the emphasis on ancient languages. Finally, “‘supplementary schools,’ or schools that supplied ‘deficiencies’ in the education of individuals” developed, aimed at helping “special groups of students having special educational needs,” including handicapped students or “black and Indian youngsters deemed unacceptable in regular classrooms” (p. 388-390).

The physical facilities available for schools differed across the nation. In newly settled areas, the church, in addition to serving as meetinghouse, courthouse, and post office, also filled the function of schoolhouse (Cremin, 1980, p. 382). “The one-room district school that placed a single teacher in daily contact with between forty and sixty boys and girls of varying ages over a two- or three-month period during the winter or during the summer remained the rule in most parts of the United States” (p. 395).

Curriculum varied throughout the schools of the young nation. At the more advanced levels, Latin and Greek grammar and literature persisted, but other course offerings gradually emerged. “A host of other subjects appeared in the school curricula:

sewing and French for girls, bookkeeping and science for boys, and elocution, physiology, drawing, and music for both sexes. But spelling, reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, and history were the staples that by the 1840s and 1850s had become readily available in most settled areas” (Cremin, 1980, p. 394). In addition, the teaching of virtue and good behavior was “universally mandated, either explicitly or implicitly” (p. 394).

The era also saw significant changes in the teaching personnel. There was “a definite feminization of the teaching force, particularly in the primary and intermediate grades, where the enrollment gains were the greatest” (Cremin, 1980, p. 398). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, most teachers, with the exception of those who conducted neighborhood dame schools or private lessons in female accomplishments, were male. By the end of the century, nearly 70% were female (Kaestle, 1983, p. 125).

“Along with feminization, there was a decided move to professionalize teaching, to make of it a sacred calling second only to the ministry in its importance to the society” (Cremin, 1980, p. 398). This professionalization divided the sexes, placing males in administrative roles and females in the classrooms. Ultimately, it “served to create an almost exclusively male elite and thereby assured continuing male control of an increasingly female occupation” (p. 398).

Common schools and their proponents were not without their critics. Catholic groups, immigrants, private school advocates, and individuals opposed to general taxation merged to block the movement. “In no region was there overwhelming consensus on state intervention in common schooling” (Kaestle, 1983, p. 217). Give-and-take between the groups ultimately made the process possible. While Mann and his

associates are often viewed as heroic today, in reality, “it is difficult to disentangle the unique contributions of [common school ]leaders from general trends in pedagogy and educational systematization that would have prevailed anyway” (p. 114). Individual complexity and differing results, “shaped by social structures, politics, demography, and resources,” complicate attributing success to those involved (p. 114).

The common school crusade had several lasting effects on American education and society. First, literacy increased dramatically in the country. Evidence suggests that “the American population was quantitatively the most literate in the world during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century” (Cremin, 1980, p. 492). Second, the educative role of the family changed significantly. “The American family increasingly limited its authority by limiting the force, purview, and extent of its education. . . . It shared more and more of the education of the young with churches, schools, and colleges” (p. 494-495). Finally, “popular education proffered a sense of comity, community, and common aspiration to a people who were increasing in number, diversifying in origin, and insistently mobile” (p. 498). By socializing the diverse American population, Mann and his colleagues achieved the common school goal where “all would meet as ‘children’ of a ‘common mother,’ namely, the commonwealth, irrespective of differences in social, religious, ethnic, and class background” (p. 495).

*Progressive era.* While the common school crusade produced beneficial outcomes for American education, it also had its weaknesses. Tyack (1967) summarizes the negative effects resulting from the movement:

To unify the people public education must itself be unified and efficient. Hence most reformers wished to standardize textbooks and curriculum, to grade classes, to train teachers in approved methods, and to improve regulation and supervision of the schools. To a large degree the schoolmen succeeded in standardizing

public education during the latter half of the nineteenth century. . . . Their success became an affliction. . . . What was originally a means to an end – a healthy regularity to aid the common school in training upright citizens – became an end in itself. An original hope that the school could be a centripetal force in a centrifugal society degenerated into a program to fill children’s minds with certified thoughts and to enforce stereotyped behavior. The large city schools became increasingly mechanized and structures like the large bureaucracies of industry, commerce, and the military that were arising in this age of consolidation. (p. 314)

Cremin (1962) paints a similar picture for rural schools as the nineteenth century drew to a close:

Whatever the high-minded philosophies that justified them, the schools of the 1890s were a depressing study in contrast. Everywhere, mundane problems of students, teachers, classrooms, and dollars had become overwhelming. Rural schools, built during the educational renaissance of the forties and fifties, had been allowed to fall into disrepair and disrepute. Cut off from the pedagogical mainstream and frequently beset by problems of rural decline, they remained ungraded and poorly taught. Recitations averaged ten minutes per subject per class, and untrained teachers continued to concentrate on “the same old drill in the same old readers.” McGuffey had been good enough for mother and dad; he would certainly do for the youngsters. (p. 20)

The situation in the urban educational systems wasn’t any better. Cremin (1962) describes teaching conditions in the cities:

In the cities problems of skyrocketing enrollments were compounded by a host of other issues. In school buildings badly lighted, poorly heated, frequently unsanitary, and bursting at the seams, young immigrants from a dozen different countries swelled the tide of newly arriving farm children. Superintendents spoke hopefully of reducing class size to sixty per teacher, but the hope was most often a pious one. Little wonder that rote efficiency reigned supreme. (p. 20-21)

Dr. Joseph Rice, an educational critic of the era, cynically described the state of American education after the common school crusade:

The spirit of the school is, ‘Do what you like with the child, immobilize him, automatize him, dehumanize him, but save, save, the minutes.’ In many ways the minutes are saved. By giving the child ready-made thoughts, the minutes required in thinking are saved. By giving the child ready-made definitions, the minutes required in formulating them are saved. Everything is prohibited that is of no measurable advantage to the child, such as the movement of the head or a limb,

when there is no logical reason why it should be moved at the time. I asked the principal whether the children were allowed to move their heads. She answers, 'Why should they look behind when the teacher is in front of them?' (cited in Tyack, 1967, p. 328-329)

It seems that the push for common schools led to the industrialization of education in America, bringing with it a host of negative effects. Tyack (1974) summarized the result, "In retrospect one may claim that urban education in the nineteenth century did more to industrialize humanity than to humanize industry" (p. 72).

Progressive education, "a many-sided effort to use the schools to improve the lives of individuals" (Cremin, 1962, p. viii), responded to these effects. An outgrowth of the larger Progressive movement throughout the country, it "began as part of a vast humanitarian effort to apply the promise of American life – the ideal of government by, of, and for the people – to the puzzling new urban-industrial civilization that came into being during the latter half of the nineteenth century" (p. viii). Because it meant different things to different people, a central definition of progressive education is problematic (p. x). However, the movement was typified by several things, including expanding concern for health and vocation, applying pedagogical principles derived from psychology and the social sciences, tailoring instruction to different kinds of children, and increasing interest in the arts (p. viii-ix).

Historically, progressivism dominated American life, including education, through the last part of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. "Seen in large, the movement constitutes a crucial chapter in the recent history of American civilization; to ignore it is to miss one whole facet of America's response to industrialism" (Cremin, 1962, p. x). Beginning in the decades immediately after the Civil War, it had widespread appeal among intellectuals at the turn of the century, support by politicians in the decade

before World War I, and encouragement by educators for the first couple of decades of the twentieth century (p. ix). Ultimately, it fragmented during the 1920s and 1930s and collapsed after World War II under the weight of calls for greater academic rigor.

Progressive educational philosophy emphasized greater roles for students and teachers in the process of learning. Pedagogically, greater emphasis was given to student interest and participation in the learning process. According to progressive educational philosophy, the teacher played a prominent part in student learning. “From the beginning, progressivism cast the teacher in an almost impossible role: he was to be an artist of consummate skill, properly knowledgeable in his field, meticulously trained in the science of pedagogy, and thoroughly imbued with a burning zeal for social improvement” (Cremin, 1962, p. 168). John Dewey, champion of the progressive movement and arguably its most famous advocate, outlined this role, “I believe . . . that the teacher is engaged, not simply in the training of individuals, but in the formation of the proper social life. . . . In this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God” (Dewey, 1897, p. 80).

Progressive education’s high water mark came in the years immediately before World War II. Growing dissatisfaction emerged, however, especially among the college educated, who called for a return to education’s historic role as moral and intellectual teacher (Cremin, 1962, p. 340). Critics correctly prophesied, “If [progressive education] persists in a one-sided absorption in the individual pupil, it will be circumnavigated and left behind” (Boyd H. Bode, cited in Cremin, 1962, p. 327). These concerns were heightened by a post-war need, perceived or real, for students with an academically rigorous training in the sciences. The progressive educator became characterized as a

“radical pedagogue using the school to subvert the American way of life” (Cremin, 1962, p. 233). In reality, they were a group that “spent the best of its energies seeking to preserve that way of life amidst the chaos of the depression” (p. 233-234). Though misunderstood, “the transformation they had wrought in the schools was in many ways as irreversible as the larger industrial transformation of which it had been part” (p. 353). In Utah, these transformations impacted education during the transition era.

#### *Development of Education in the Utah Territory*

This section analyzes, in a broad context, the development of education in the Utah territory until 1890. Like the preceding section, it is divided into historical parts: the pioneer era (1847-1869) and the post-railroad era (1869-1888).

*Pioneer era (1847-1869).* As described in the first chapter, LDS educational philosophy stems from the revelations and teachings of Church founder, Joseph Smith, and his emphasis on the development of an ideal society in preparation for life after death, where the fruits of education would continue. Settling the Utah territory, his successor continued and expanded that vision. In his final official message to the territorial legislature as governor, Brigham Young described education:

Our schools, to those unacquainted with the facts and circumstances connected therewith, may seem not to have received the attention which their importance demands. . . . Academies, colleges and universities will arise at the summoning wand of increasing wealth and leisure for learned acquirements until, ere long, we shall as far outstrip the world in every branch of true science as we now do in that knowledge which savoreth of eternal lives” (cited in Clark, 1958, p. 182).

John Taylor, former Territorial Superintendent of Schools and third president of the Church, similarly declared, “You will see the day that Zion will be as far ahead of the outside world in everything pertaining to learning of every kind as we are today in regard

to religious matters. You mark my words, and write them down, and see if they do not come to pass” (Taylor, 1881, p. 100).

The efforts to establish the system that would “outstrip” and “be far ahead of the outside world” began before the westward trail, back in Kirtland, Ohio, and Nauvoo, Illinois. Continuing their educational emphasis, Church leaders issued a general epistle, counseling departing saints preparing to move to Utah in December 1847:

It is very desirable that all the saints should improve every opportunity of securing at least a copy of every valuable treatise on education—every book, map, chart, or diagram that may contain interesting, useful and attractive matter, to gain the attention of children and cause them to love to learn to read; and also every historical, mathematical, philosophical, geographical, geological, astronomical, scientific, practical, and all other variety of useful and interesting writings, maps, etc., to present to the general church recorder, when they shall arrive at their destination, from which important and interesting matter may be gleaned to compile the most valuable works on every science and subject, for the benefit of the rising generations. We have a printing press, and any one who can take good printing or writing paper to the valley will be blessing themselves and the Church. We also want all kinds of mathematical instruments, together with all rare specimens of natural curiosities and works of art that can be gathered. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 1, p. 331)

Specific textbooks brought west by the people included the Bible, the *Lindley-Murray Readers*, Noah Webster’s *Spelling Book*, and *A New and Complete Arithmetic Composed for Citizens of the United States* (M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 39; Cameron, 1939, p. 203).

One historian observed, “During this period of isolation and severe trial, they did not forget the education of their children, which they considered almost equally essential to their physical existence” (cited in M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 38).

Upon arriving in Salt Lake, the first schools were organized almost as quickly as the ground was broken. Just three months after the first pioneers arrived in the valley, a school was opened in October 1847. Seventeen year old Mary Jane Dilworth, who had been set apart to teach school by Brigham Young, was the first teacher (L. E. Young,



1913, p. 883). The school was housed in “an old military tent shaped like an ordinary Indian wigwam. . . . Rough logs were used for seats, and the teacher’s desk was an old camp stool, which had been brought across the plains” (p. 881-882). The teacher’s sister, Maria Dilworth Nebeker, described the first school day:

I attended the first school in Utah taught by my sister, Mary Jane, in a small round tent seated with logs. The school opened just three weeks after our arrival in the valley. The first morning we gathered before the door of the tent, and in the midst of our play, my sister called us and said, ‘Come children, come; we will begin now.’ There were just a few of us, I think only nine or ten. One of the brethren came in, and opened the school with prayer. I remember one thing he said. It was to the effect that ‘we be good children and he asked God that the school would be so blessed that we all should have his holy light to guide us into all truth.’ The first day, Mary Jane taught us the twenty-third Psalm, and we sang much, and played more. (cited in L. E. Young, 1913, p. 882)

Within a short time, other makeshift schools sprang up across the valley (Cameron, 1939, p. 202).

Administratively, territorial leaders quickly established hierarchical control over the school system. Patterned after their educational system in Nauvoo, Illinois, the University of Deseret was founded by legislative act in 1850. This school had a two-fold purpose, acting both as an institution of learning and as the administrative body for education in the territory (Moffitt, 1946, p. 41). The Superintendent of Common Schools was appointed by regents from the University of Deseret, to whom he reported. As the “parent school,” it was designed to direct the training and qualifying of teachers for service in the district or ward schools throughout the territory (p. 44). Though legislatively organized after this pattern, practice dictated otherwise when the University of Deseret was closed as an educational institution from 1852 to 1869 (p. 158-162). By the time it reemerged, school laws had changed, requiring that the Territorial Superintendent of Common Schools be elected by the legislature. In 1876, the school

law was again amended, opening the office to the vote of the people by general election (p. 75).

Conditions in the early schools were primitive. “Writing materials were varied and unique. Some of the pupils had slates and pencils, and others had pens and paper, but those who had neither took charcoal and wrote on smooth logs or dried the bark of the white mountain birch. When nothing better was available for the midday meal, the children went out and dug sego roots” (Spencer, 1940, p. 130). In time, the original tent was replaced with a log schoolroom inside the old fort, measuring 30 feet by 50 feet (Cameron, 1939, p. 202). The local newspaper, the *Deseret Evening News*, preserved the reminiscence of Oliver B. Huntington, an early teacher in this school:

The first schoolroom in this territory . . . was located in the north string, in the northwest corner of the “Old Fort” in the site of Salt Lake City. The houses were all built as a part of the fort wall, with portholes for defense in case of an attack by Indians, and generally with a six-light window opening to the inside of the fort. The roofs consisted of poles or split logs laid close together and covered with cedarbark or rushes that grew about the marshes. Such was the general makeup of “the first schoolroom,” with an immense quantity of dirt piled on the flat roof as a probable protection from the rain. For a floor we had a similar, but more solid material than that of the roof-hardened clay. The one window was just large enough for six panes of 8x10 glass; but we lacked the glass; it was not to be had for there was not a store in all this Territory.

And while I think of that matter we did not need any glass, for we had no sash and there was no saw mill to be found anywhere west of the Missouri river. So we were wont to take some thin cotton cloth and oiling it, or rather greasing it, we would then tack it to what primitive window frames we had. Where the cloth or grease came from I can’t remember. But our main dependence for light was on fair weather when we could have the door open.

For writing tables some man’s wagon box was torn to pieces and laid on trestles. Seats or benches were made in the same way. Our stove was a fireplace, a real spacious, liberal fireplace, in which we burned cedar or sage brush. But we were so healthy and warm blooded then that we needed but little outside fire to keep us warm.

Books then as now were the main objects of interest in the fitting out of a schoolroom. Could students in the B.Y. Academy see our stock of supply of books in that first school, it would afford them unlimited amusement. School books were about as useless then as one could imagine, when preparing to leave

the civilized world and plunge from persecution into the unexplored regions of the Rocky Mountains, there to find a stopping place where we could be at peace. Then, instead of books, the first great problem to be solved was: "Can we obtain a living from the products of the ground?" The first interest was to prepare themselves with materials for the solution first of that problem, in providing a necessary outfit to move from Illinois to the Rocky Mountains.

So the Book of Mormon, Bible, Doctrine and Covenants, Voice of Warning, Towne's Reader and Speller, Cobb's Speller, The English Reader, Ruger's and three other kinds of arithmetics, Kirkham's and Murray's grammars and in fact any kind of book that escaped the fire to keep from overloading the teams, or the perils of that long journey were used. The room I was to teach in, in size about 30x40, was furnished, and fitted up by my brother Dimick, and in the agreement was mentioned the allowance of his board for the privilege of sending his children, together with the benefit he might prove to others. I commenced the school in November, 1848, closed in Feb. 1849; and had between 30 and 40 scholars.

Judge W. W. Phelps commenced a school in the North Fort in Dec. 1848. In my school room Curtis E. Bolton taught of evenings the French language and for the use of my room I had the liberty of the school and the benefits of his instruction. (Huntington, 1888, p. 3)

By 1850, school conditions were improving, at least in the heart of the territory.

The *Deseret News* reported the progress on November 27, 1850:

Common schools were beginning in all parts of the city for the winter; and plans for the construction of school houses in every ward were being made, with a view for a general system of school houses throughout the city. One plan had already been submitted, which comprised three large rooms, a large hall for lecturing, a private study, reading room and library. A Parent or High School began on the 11th of November: terms, thirty shillings per quarter, under the direction of Chancellor Spencer [of the University of Deseret]. It is expected that teachers generally will have access to this school, and through them a system of uniformity will be established for conducting schools throughout the valleys. Elder Woodruff has arrived with nearly two tons of school books. Donations from the states are already arriving in the shape of scientific instruments, and other apparatus for the benefit of the University; also valuable books for the library. (cited in L. E. Young, 1913, p. 879)

Conditions varied throughout the territory, as school "was held wherever a place could be found" (Arrington, 1977, p. 11). George Albert Smith described one such school in the southern Utah community of Parowan:

My wicky-up is a very important establishment, composed of brush, a few slabs and three wagons. A fire in the center and a lot of milking stools, benches and logs placed around, two of which are fashioned with buffalo robes. . . . To see my school some of the cold nights in February, scholars standing round my huge camp fire, the wind broken off by the brush and the whole canopy of heaven for covering. Thermometer standing at 7 degrees. . . . I would stand with my grammar book, the only one in school, would give out a sentence at a time and pass it around. (cited in Arrington, 1977, p. 11)

Schooling gradually improved as funding increased. Early territory schools were generally privately funded. The first public school law was passed in 1851, requiring that every town provide support for schools by public taxation (L. E. Young, 1913, p. 879). For the first 20 years, however, these public schools were effectively Mormon. Schools were organized on a ward level, with elected trustees responsible for collecting taxes to provide school facilities.

A noticeable omission from the first school law was the payment of teacher salaries. The local newspaper, *The Deseret News*, editorialized on the situation, “No one who has read the school laws can doubt the power of the Trustees to assess and collect a tax to build a school house in their ward or district, and to keep the same in repair. But to impose a tax upon the citizens to pay the Teacher is unauthorized by law” (cited in DeBoer, 1951, p. 63). Financial support for the teacher was up to students’ families in the form of tuition payments. The law was amended in 1866 to allow tax receipts to also “pay teachers and furnish fuel, books, maps and other suitable articles for school purposes” (Ivins, 1954, p. 329).

In spite of the option to support schools through taxation, the people often chose not to tax themselves. Thus “free schools emerged slowly in Utah” (DeBoer, 1951, p. 70). In 1864, the territorial superintendent of schools summarized community attitudes:

The Superintendent consulting public opinion, does not favor education by taxation, because while the sentiments of the people are so favorable to education, they are equally unfavorable to taxation. . . . Many who, under present regulations, tax themselves from one to four percent, and pay it willingly to the school teacher would feel very differently were the Territory to assume the assessment and collecting of such a heavy tax. (cited in Ivins, 1954, p. 330)

Statements made by early LDS leaders against state-supported funding for education must be read in light of this view of taxation. In 1873, Brigham Young took a stand against tax-supported schools:

There are many of our people who believe that the whole Territory ought to be taxed for our schools. When we have means, that come in the proper way, we can make a fund to help the poor to school their children, and I would say amen to it. But where are our poor? Where is the man or the woman in this community who has children and wishes to send them to school, that cannot do it? There is not one. When the poor complain and say, 'My children ought to be schooled and clothed and fed,' I say, no sir, not so, you ought to yield your time and talents to the kind providence of our Father in the heavens according to the dictation of his servants, and he will tell each and every one of you what to do to earn your bread, meat, clothing, schooling, and how to be self-sustaining in the fullest sense of the word. To give to the idler is as wicked as anything else. Never give anything to the idler. (B. Young, 1874, p. 18-19)

Four years later, Young further clarified his position:

Many of you have heard what certain journalists have had to say about Brigham Young being opposed to free schools. I am opposed to free education as much as I am opposed to taking away property from one man and giving it to another who knows not how to take care of it. But when you come to the fact, I will venture to say that I school ten children to every one that those do who complain so much of me. I now pay the school fees of a number of children who are either orphans or sons and daughters of poor people. But in aiding and blessing the poor I do not believe in allowing my charities to go through the hands of a set of robbers who pocket nine-tenths themselves, and give one-tenth to the poor. . . . Would I encourage free schools by taxation? No! That is not in keeping with the nature of our work. (B. Young, 1877, p. 357)

Church leaders, as seen in the statements by Brigham Young, seemed opposed to government sponsored schools for various reasons. One reason was a desire for members to be self-sustaining. Another was the abuse and waste of public funds by "the hands of a

set or robbers.” This concept may have specific reference to Church frustration with their federally appointed territorial overseers. A third reason for opposition is the lack of localized control such a system fosters. In 1867 Brigham Young quipped, “I suppose it will not be long before they will want to dictate in some other places and say how much shall be raised for schools and so forth; and I suppose it will be but a little while before some of those officious characters will determine the number of beans that . . . I shall have in [my] porridge” (B. Young, 1867, p. 374). A final, important reason was voiced by *Deseret Evening News* editor Charles W. Penrose (1884), “The principle of supporting schools by taxation has been opposed by [Church] leaders, because institutions supported by general taxes cannot be conducted on a religious basis” (p. 2).

In reality, President Young greatly favored education, challenging those unwilling to pay tuition to educate their children to change:

Some say they are not able to send their children to school. In such a case, I think I would rise in the morning, wash myself, take a little composition, and try, if possible, to muster strength enough to send my children to school and pay their tuition, like a man. When you have done this if you are still unable, apply to some of your neighbors to assist you. Men able to ride in their carriages and not able or unwilling to pay their children’s tuition, ought, I think, to have a little composition, or catnip tea; and then perhaps, they will be able to send their children to school. I know such persons are weak and feeble, but the disease is in the brain and heart – not in the bones, flesh and blood. Send your children to school. (B. Young, 1861, p. 39-40)

The tuition President Young advocated during the pioneer period was often paid in produce rather than cash. Historian Stanley Ivins (1954) described the arrangement:

The average tuition fee was about \$3.00 for a term of approximately three months. Thus a teacher with 25 children in his school might collect as much as \$25.00 a month, if all tuitions were paid. Henry M. Thatcher, who had a school at Willard in 1852, did better than this. He had 20 pupils at \$3.00 a month, paid largely in produce. And Lyman Wood, teaching at Holladay in 1849, collected about \$35.00 a month. But William A. Bills of West Jordan, in 1853, had only 8 pupils, who paid from \$.50 to \$.75 a month” (p. 326).

Even when a salary system arrived, compensation was meager. Salt Lake County teachers were paid an average of \$267 for the 1861 school year. By 1867, some improvement had occurred. Teachers in Salt Lake received \$320.82 for eight and one-half months teaching. These salaries differed greatly throughout the territory. In 1867, those in Washington County received \$108.85 for eight months of teaching, those in Davis County received \$363.95 for five months, and those in Box Elder County received \$132.24 for six months. “Average pay throughout the territory was \$202.09 for a six months’ school year” (Ivins, 1954, p. 326-327). At these levels, teacher salaries remained relatively unchanged for the next couple decades. In 1873 the average pay was \$233.51, but in 1877 it was only \$163.95. Between 1867 and 1881 the average teacher salary was \$204.73 (p. 327).

Average salaries also differed significantly between male and female teachers. In 1882 the average monthly salary for male teachers was \$46.85 while the average for females was \$26.03 (Ivins, 1954, p. 327). These rates “did not compare too favorably with those paid in neighboring states and territories” (p. 327). In the 1880’s, average monthly male and female teachers’ salaries for neighboring states and territories were as follows: Nevada, \$99.69 and \$78.37; Arizona, \$88.89 and \$78.95; California, \$81.67 and \$64.65; Wyoming, \$80.00 and \$60.00; Montana, \$72.33 and \$59.52; Idaho, \$65.00 and \$50.00; Colorado, \$53.82 and \$54.16; Washington, \$46.27 and \$42.31; Oregon, \$44.86 and \$36.00, and New Mexico, \$30.67 and \$30.67. Utah lagged behind, paying male teachers \$41.10 a month and female teachers \$23.87 (p. 327-328). “It should be noted, however, that most territorial teachers’ salaries were uncommonly high to induce teachers

to come west; but still, Utah's wages were a strong deterrent to would be teachers” (Monnett, 1999, p. 53-54).

The funding challenges were most often felt by the educators. George Brimhall, former president of Brigham Young University, reminisced about the early Utah teacher, “Often he has taught school because he loved the work and those for whom he worked, while he has been forced to make most of his ‘living’ on the side. . . . The evolution of his pay has gone on, beginning with what he could collect with sack on his arm, or pushing a wheelbarrow, or with some borrowed team” (Brimhall, 1913, p. 900-901). Because of these challenges, the career of teaching developed slowly. “Apparently only a few of those who taught schools looked upon teaching as a profession. The superintendent of schools reported that there were 342 teachers in Utah in 1869, and 368 in 1871. But a search of the United States Census for 1870 reveals only 80 persons [in the territory] who gave school teaching as their occupation” (Ivins, 1954, p. 329).

Leaders in Utah tried to rectify the situation by appealing to the federal government for aid. Several attempts were made, through memorials to congress, asking for financial aid or assistance by selling land grants. In 1865, George A. Smith summarized the results of these appeals:

We have never had one dollar from any source to aid in the cause of education. We have built our school houses, hired our school teachers, paid the school bills for our poor – have done everything that has been done in education, without one dollar of encouragement from the parent Government. I have been astonished at this. I suppose it is the policy of the Government to extend the facilities of education, but it has not been done here; not one solitary dime has been received by Utah, while millions upon millions have gone into the treasuries of other states and Territories for school purposes from the Federal Government. (G. A. Smith, 1867, p. 182)



This perception may explain Church skepticism of taxes and free schools. Seven years later, Smith issued another scathing rebuke of federal support:

It appears to be a portion of the policy of the national government never to do anything for schools in a Territory. . . . Suffice it to say, . . . that so far as legislation for education is concerned, or any encouragement or assistance extended from the United States to the people of the Territories, their children must be raised in absolute ignorance. The result is, that whatever progress is made or improvement attained in these directions in the Territories is due entirely to the energy, enterprise and enlightenment of the inhabitants – the hardy pioneers who break the ground, make the roads, fight the Indians and create the State. (G. A. Smith, 1872, p. 372)

*Post-railroad era (1869-1888).* Life would get more difficult for these Zion builders, educationally, before it got easier. The year 1869 marked the driving of the golden spike, symbolizing the completion of the trans-continental railroad and the linking of east and west. It also brought an increasing non-Mormon population to the territory. The 1873 discovery of silver attracted additional numbers of non-Mormons. By 1880, 20% percent of the population of the territory was non-Mormon, with an even higher percentage in large cities like Salt Lake and Ogden (Buchanan, 1996, p. 11). This created conflicting opinions, religiously and socially, ultimately resulting in competing school systems. Many of the conflicts over the next 20 years were fought in the school house battleground.

One educational battle of the period was fought by Protestant missionary groups who attempted to “convert” the Mormon people. The conflict was based on the belief that if the “Mormon problem” could not be solved physically or legally, it would be solved intellectually and spiritually. The children would be converted away from the faith of their parents through religiously based schools. In 1869, U.S. Secretary of State William H. Seward predicted, “The church and the schools undertaken by the Episcopal

Church in Salt Lake City would do more to solve the Mormon problem than the army and Congress of the United States combined” (cited in Hough, 1960, p. 113). The federal government itself went so far as to aid in the effort. While denying aid requests for Utah schools by Mormon leadership, the United States Congress did approve over \$90,000 for missionary efforts in Utah between 1886 and 1891 (see M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 61-62).

The first of the protestant missionary schools established during this era was the St. Mark’s school, opened in Salt Lake City in 1867 by the Episcopal Church. The Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Daniel S. Tuttle, noted of that time, “Everything was intensely and defiantly Mormon. Composing the entire population of the territory and the city – except perhaps four or five hundred Gentiles and apostate Mormons in Salt Lake – the Mormons controlled absolutely everything” (cited in Hough, 1960, p. 118). He continued, “A day-school would be a most efficient instrumentality in doing good missionary work. . . . In Utah, especially, schools were the backbone of our . . . work. Adults were fanatics, and so beyond the reach of our influence; or else were apostates, and so, grossly deceived once, were unwilling to listen again to any claims of the supernatural” (cited in Hough, 1960, p. 119).

Missionary schools in the Utah territory quickly grew, as did their enrollments. This was partly due to the increasing Gentile population brought by the railroad, but also by the educational level offered by these schools. In 1885, Territorial Governor Eli Murray commented on these schools, “Many children of Mormon parentage are being taught in the [mission schools] . . . because the teachers are better qualified and the schools . . . are better” (cited in Hough, 1960, p. 122). The phrase “many” may be misleading. In 1885, the common schools, largely controlled by the LDS Church,

enrolled 31,583 students. The same year, Protestant mission schools reported a total enrollment of 3,170, a mere 10% of the public school figure (Hough, 1960, p. 122).

Though potentially biased, Governor Murray's assessment that these schools were "better" does underscore a problem within the region. Trained and able teachers may have been difficult to find in the growing territory. Territorial Superintendent of Common Schools Robert L. Campbell noted that the "greatest lack . . . is that of qualified teachers" (Buchanan, 1996, p. 13). Utah historian Charles Peterson observed, "There was a dearth of qualified teachers in the early Utah years; and many who were educated either could not afford to teach or were diverted from it by pioneering, concern with salvation, or the conviction that the great teachers, after all, were life's experiences and the Holy Ghost" (Peterson, 1980, p. 295).

The missionary schools attempted to use these public school challenges to their advantage. To attract the best teachers, they greatly increased salaries, offering an average annual salary of \$564 in 1875, a figure significantly higher than the average district school salary of \$209. To attract students, school was held an average of 10 months during the year, compared to the 7 months in the competing district schools (Monnett, 1999, p. 57).

An 1884 message to Congress by President Chester A. Arthur highlighted the efforts and motives of the Protestant school movement in Utah:

Honorable mention is due to the many Christian Denominations that have established colleges, schools and churches in Salt Lake City and many other parts of the Territory. Among these are churches and schools maintained by the Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Catholics and perhaps others, all or nearly all of which has been accomplished within the last fifteen years. Some one or more of these churches and schools may be found in nearly all the principal cities and towns of the Territory and are chiefly supported by the benevolence of the people and churches of the states. These are

in addition to those common schools established by the Mormons by legislative authority. The denominational schools now number 79 with an average daily attendance of nearly 6,000 pupils, many of whom are the children of Mormon parents. These schools are distributed as follows: Episcopalian, 5; Methodist, 10; Congregational, 26; Presbyterian, 35; Baptist, 2; Catholic, 1.

The noble and self-sacrificing men and women of these various denominations, who, as ministers and teachers have consecrated themselves to this good work, are deserving of the thanks and gratitude of every Christian and Philanthropist, and it may be that their labors, under Divine Providence, may accomplish more than the wisdom of law givers. (cited in M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 138-140)

Ultimately, 90 non-Mormon denominational schools operated in Utah from 1869 to 1890 (Arrington, 1977; Buchanan, 1986; Hough, 1960). At their peak, they employed over 200 teachers and enrolled 7,000 students (Arrington, 1977, p. 13). Concerned with the education of their children in the public schools, over half of those enrolled came from LDS homes (p. 13). One missionary boasted, “The Mormon people will send their children to our day schools, and Brigham and his bishops can’t prevent it” (cited in Szasz, 1988, p. 165).

The excuse of supporting Protestant schools because of inadequate public schooling did not sit well with Brigham Young. He and other LDS leaders responded to this challenge to their faith in various ways. Originally, President Young questioned the “charitable” motives of the Protestant churches:

We have heard considerable from some parties in this city about what they call free schools, which they say they have established here. I say, now, come out, and be as liberal as you say you are, and teach our children for nothing. If they knew the “Mormons” were willing to accept of their charity and send their children to these so-called free schools, their charity would not weigh much. Their charity is to decoy away the innocent. Send your children to their schools and see how far their charity would extend. (B. Young, 1874, p. 19)

The objection seems rooted in concern over the influence teachers of other faiths would have on minds and hearts of Mormon youth. Countering the Protestant schools,

LDS leaders strongly encouraged members to support local schools taught by men of faith. Shortly after his election as Territorial Superintendent of Schools, John Taylor declared his position on teacher hiring:

I feel a good deal of interest in the welfare of Common Schools, and also in all of our institutions of learning, where good education can be had, for I feel interested in our youth, and I take this opportunity to speak to the whole country in relation to this matter. I can perceive quite an interest in educational matters, manifesting itself in our brethren who preside here; and I am much gratified in it. I hope that this whole county will go at this matter in all good faith, and where you lack good school-houses put them up; and when you have already the school-house, but lack the furniture, get it and try to make the school-house comfortable for the children; and then good teachers who are good Latter-day Saints. Shall we have them, or shall we employ teachers that will turn the infant minds of our children away from the principles of the Gospel, and perhaps lead them to darkness and death? Some say, "You ought to be very generous, quite as liberal and generous as others." I think so. But if some of these liberal people, who talk so much about liberality, would show a little more of it, we would appreciate it a little better. I would like to know if a Methodist would send his children to a Roman Catholic School, or vice versa? I think not. Do either send their children to "Mormon" schools, or employ "Mormon" teachers? I think not. Do we object to it? No, we do not; we accord to all classes their rights, and we claim rights equal with them. (Taylor, 1878, p. 248-249)

Taylor's concern over teaching hiring continued to grow. Later, as President of the Church, he further expressed his views:

Your school teachers should be the best you can get. They should be men of faith in God; men who believe in and have a knowledge of the Gospel; men capable of imparting true and correct ideas with regard to God and His works, and the laws that govern them, as well as being able to impart a regular scholastic education.... Whatever you do, be choice in your selection of teachers. We do not want infidels to mould the minds of our children. They are a precious charge bestowed upon us by the Lord, and we cannot be too careful in rearing and training them. I would rather have my children taught the simple rudiments of a common education by men of God, and have them under their influence, than have them taught in the most abstruse sciences by men who have not the fear of God in their hearts. . . . We need to pay more attention to educational matters, and do all we can to procure the services of competent teachers. Some people say, we cannot afford to pay them. You cannot afford not to pay them; you cannot afford not to employ them. (Taylor, 1884, p. 168-169)

The problem was exacerbated by local LDS leaders who, hiring teachers for these district schools, chose non-LDS applicants. Brigham Young and other leaders publicly challenged the hiring and supporting of these “Gentile” teachers. In the Church’s 1867 general conference he criticized the hiring of teachers:

The foolishness of the people here has waxed so strong that unless they get something that is bought in New York it is not good for anything. It makes me think of our brethren, the school teachers. We have brethren here who understand the languages of the nations of the earth, and the various branches of education taught in the world, as well as any man or men out of the Church. But if the man possessing the best talent we have among us were to go to some of our Bishops and say, “Can I keep your school?” the answer would be, “Yes, if you will work for nothing, feed yourself, and pay the children for going.” But bring a poor, miserable, rotten-hearted, cursed gentile, and they will lick the dust off his shoes to have him keep school, when he does not know half as much as the Elders in Israel know. This would not apply to every case, but it does to a great many. (B. Young, 1867, p. 352-353)

President Young’s criticism of LDS leaders who hired the wrong school teachers continued six years later:

If men have learning, and they have the faculty of imparting it to others, and can teach children to read and write, and grammar and arithmetic, and all the ordinary branches of a common school education, what better are they than the man that plows, hoes, shoves the plane, handles the trowel and the axe, and hews the stone? Are they any better? I do not know that they are. What better is the man that can dress himself nicely and labor in a school house six hours a day, than the man who works ten or twelve hours a day hewing rock? Is he any better? No, he is not. Are you going to pay him for his good looks? That is what some of our bishops want to do. If they can get a man, no matter what his moral qualities may be, whose shirt front is well starched and ironed, they will say – “Bless me, you are a delightful little man! What a smooth shirt you have got, and you have a ring on your finger. You are going to teach our school for us.” And along comes a stalwart man, axe in hand, going to chop wood, and, if he asks, “Do you want a teacher?” though he may know five times more than the dandy, he is told, “No, no we have one engaged.” I want to cuff you bishops back and forth until you get your brains turned right side up. (B. Young, 1874, p. 19)

John Taylor, Young’s successor, expressed similar feelings. Referring to non-Mormon teachers, he declared, “Shall we allow our children to be taught by them? No

never. . . . Do not let us give them over to the powers of darkness to be taught by the enemies of God and His people” (Taylor, 1880, p. 134). George Q. Cannon, member of the Church’s governing First Presidency, summarized the LDS philosophy of education, “Of what value is learning if it be acquired at the expense of faith?” (Cannon, 1890, p. 244).

Ultimately, the Latter-day Saint efforts seem to have counteracted the effect of the Protestant mission schools. In 1893, a Methodist investigating committee reported, “So far as converting the Mormons is concerned money has been largely wasted. If 200 real Mormons have been changed into real evangelical Christians during the time, we have been unable to discover them” (cited in Poll, 1978). Another critic summarized the lackluster effects of proselytizing Mormon children through schools:

Although the Protestants made a few prominent converts, their numbers were never large. The Gentile percentage of the population of Utah showed little increase over the years. The 1870 census, for example, noted 730 Protestants out of 100,000; 1884 accounted for 1,848 out of 169,000; 1890, 4645 of 208,000; 1906, 7423 of 335,000; and 1914, 8,767 of 404,000. . . . An 1895 circular estimated that it cost the Baptists 177 dollars for each Utah convert, Methodists 500 dollars, Congregationalists 880 dollars, and Presbyterians 1,028 dollars. (cited in Szasz, 1988, p. 171)

In fact, “Methodist Superintendent Thomas Iliff called Utah the most difficult mission field on the entire globe” (Szasz, 1988, p. 172).

The statements by Brigham Young and other LDS leaders underscore another problem, outside the Protestant school attack, faced by Church leadership during the post-railroad period. Not only were they critical of attacks by schools of other faiths, the leadership had strong words for members of their own faith who allowed Mormon controlled public schools to be infiltrated. The LDS Church was involved in a struggle

for control of the local “public” schools. This battle of funding, facilities, teacher hiring, and curriculum continued for decades.

Prior to the arrival of the railroad, the LDS Church dominated all aspects of public education. “The school boundaries were coterminous with the boundaries of ecclesiastical wards, and the Mormon ward bishop was made legally responsible for organizing elections of school trustees and general supervision of the school. These ward schools were in a sense public schools used to reinforce community values which in those early years were quite literally the values of the Mormon church” (Buchanan, 1996, p. 439-440). In most cases, Church facilities served the dual function of places for worship on Sunday and schools on weekdays (Buchanan, 1982, p. 439). These relationships explain Young’s critical statements of bishops and the hiring of teachers.

In the 1860s, organization and direction of these “ward” or “public” schools shifted to the cities and counties, with superintendent elections at the city, county, and ultimately territory level. Communities could tax to support the schools, but most still functioned on a tuition basis (Buchanan, 1982, p. 440). With the arrival of a larger non-LDS population in the 1870s, these “public” schools, with their strong ties to Mormon control of curriculum, hiring, and facilities, came under attack.

The LDS Church gradually lost control of the schools. An early battle centered on the use of Church buildings for public schools. “Courts finally directed that Mormon school trustees could not collect . . . taxes while the buildings stood on record as church property. Accordingly, many of the ward meetinghouses were transferred to school trustees” (Cameron, 1939, p. 200). Likewise, curriculum control was also placed in the hands of elected officials. An 1866 act of the territorial legislature provided that the



territorial and county superintendents “shall decide what text books shall be adopted in the schools” (cited in Clark, 1958, p. 190).

LDS leaders countered the shift of school control to elected officials by encouraging membership to become involved politically. Erastus Snow counseled saints to choose school officials by both secular and spiritual traits:

Our Trustees should be chosen from our most energetic men – men who will fill the office, who will give it their most earnest consideration, who will seek to make everything comfortable around the schoolroom, men who will take an interest in the welfare of the children . . . and who will see that good and suitable books are provided, especially the Bible and Book of Mormon. Now do not be afraid to see the good books which God has given unto us in the hands of your school children; do not be afraid of the teacher who will open school by prayers, and who will encourage faith in God, and morality, and everything that makes people good citizens. And I beseech the people generally to encourage the combined efforts of the County Superintendent and the trustees and school-teachers in establishing good schools in your midst. (E. Snow, 1880, p. 119-120)

The counsel to become involved politically was taken seriously. John Taylor himself, to the dismay of the non-Mormon population and occasionally the confusion of the Church membership, served as the Territory Superintendent of Schools from 1877 to 1881 while also leading the Church as president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and later Church president (see Monnett, 1999, p. 45-46).

During this time period, Church leaders spoke strongly against attacks on Mormon curriculum. In 1874, George A. Smith counseled members, “See that [the Bible] is on every table, in every household, in every pulpit, and that it is the school book of every family throughout the territory” (G. A. Smith, 1875, p. 259). Brigham Young stated, “I do hope, and pray you, my brethren and sisters, to be careful to . . . [introduce] into our schools the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Standard

works of the Church, and all the works pertaining to our faith, that our children may become acquainted with its principles” (B. Young, 1869, p. 31-32).

National concern with the use of the Bible as a school text may not have been with the Bible itself but with an LDS interpretation of holy writ. During the nineteenth century, common school reformers advocated the use of Bible reading in public classrooms, but generally a “pan-Protestant policy of a generalized Christianity” rather than one particular reading or version (Kaestle, 1983, p. 98-99). Bible wars during the era were not over the use of the book in the classroom but over interpretation. This was particularly true between Protestant and Catholic versions and interpretations (p. 192). Similar conflict may explain opposition to Mormon use of the Bible in public classrooms. Schools nationwide used the Bible, but generally in a generic, pan-Protestant way.

The conflict intensified when the federal government stepped up efforts to crush Mormon control of Utah. In 1880, President Rutherford B. Hayes declared, “The Territory is certainly under the theocratic government of the Mormon Church. . . . To destroy the temporal power of the Mormon Church is the end in view. . . . Laws must be enacted which will take from the Mormon Church its temporal power. Mormonism as a sectarian idea is nothing, but as a system of government it is our duty to deal with it as an enemy to our institutions, and its supporters and leaders as criminals” (Williams, 1922, p. 583-584).

In 1882 the federal government made good on Hayes’ intentions, establishing the five member Utah Commission, placing territorial control in the hands of federally appointed governors and commissioners (Arrington, 1977, p. 14). The formation of the Utah Commission was followed by the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887, a “direct bid to

destroy the temporal power of the Mormon Church.’ The Mormon Church as a corporation was dissolved [including the confiscation of all church property over \$50,000], the people disenfranchised, and the money derived from the sale of church property was to be applied ‘to the use and benefit of the common schools of the Territory’” (Buchanan, 1982, p. 441, see also Arrington, 1977, p. 15). The act went so far as to abolish the office of Territorial Superintendent of District Schools, replacing it with an appointed commissioner empowered to “prohibit the use in any district school of any book of a sectarian character or otherwise unsuitable” (Buchanan, 1982, p. 441). Leaders went into hiding to avoid prosecution for polygamy and the Church lost control of public schools.

Church leadership countered with a plan of its own. In the mid 1880s, the First Presidency challenged local leaders to establish schools of their own, patterned after the earlier Brigham Young Academy and Brigham Young College:

It is pleasing to notice the increased feeling of anxiety on the part of the Saints to have their children educated in schools where the doctrines of the Gospel and the precious records which God has given us can be taught and read. Our children should be indoctrinated in the principles of the Gospel from their earliest childhood. They should be made familiar with the contents of the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. These should be their chief text books, and everything should be done to establish and promote in their hearts genuine faith in God, in His Gospel and its ordinances, and in His works. But under our common school system this is not possible. In Salt Lake City, we understand, an effort is now being made to establish a school of this character, and, we are informed, the prospect for its success is very encouraging. The Brigham Young Academy, at Provo, and the Brigham Young College, at Logan, are both doing excellent work in this direction and should be patronized and sustained by the Latter-day Saints. In no direction can we invest the means God has given us to better advantage than in the training of our children in the principles of righteousness and in laying the foundation in their hearts of that pure faith which is restored to the earth. We would like to see schools of this character, independent of the District School system, started in all places where it is possible. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 86-87)

Two years later, Church president Wilford Woodruff reiterated John Taylor's statement, declaring the purpose for these schools:

We feel that the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people. Religious training is practically excluded from the District Schools. The perusal of books that we value as divine records is forbidden. Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal. The desire is universally expressed by all thinking people in the Church that we should have schools where the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants can be used as text books, and where the principles of our religion may form a part of the teaching of the schools. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 168)

Thus, the Church academy system, to be discussed in the next chapter, was born.

While the philosophical debates over curriculum and hiring raged, schools in the territory, particularly those in rural areas of the state, ran much like they had in the early pioneer era. Most schools remained small, one-teacher institutions. In 1863 there were 132 district schools in Utah with 162 teachers. In 1883, 411 schools employed 491 teachers and 73 assistants (Ivins, 1954, p. 326). Average daily attendance throughout the territory ranged from 31% of the school-age children in 1862 to a high 44% in 1876. The figured dropped back to 36% in 1889, partly due to the establishment of the mission schools and the academies. The attendance varied widely by county, with 33% of Salt Lake City children attending public schools in 1889 and 62% attending in Kane County (p. 325). "There was no grading of students in most of the early schools, and all pupils, ranging in age from 5 to 18 years, usually met in one small room" (p. 325).

The 1886 trustees report for the Hebron School, located in a small southern Utah town, typifies rural schools of the era:

We are thankful that we yet live, & that all is so well with us as it is, tho we are few and far between – being scattered at the different Ranches – Springs – farms & Summer homes.

We have not been able to keep up School but four “4” months the past year – paid Nora Terry 20.00 pr. mo. Hebron District recd. 56.00 public Money for past year which we pd to Teacher.

Our school property probably is worth 500.00, tho it cost about three times that, but now, Money is scarce, times dull & prices low.

We have never assessed any Tax to pay expenses, Trustees donate services, We make a Spree to get fire wood for Schools & Meetings, appoint a day & give every man the privilege to help, & we get a nice pile of wood in half a day or So & then have a dance, or some Amusement.

Our School population numbers 28 this year 16 Males & 12 females.  
(cited in Ivins, 1954, p. 339)

Similarly, Gunlock school, also in rural southern Utah, opened the 1877 school year with 27 pupils. Facing challenges like those described in the Hebron report, Gunlock school was forced to close after only four weeks when Dudley Leavitt withdrew his 18 children, being unable to pay their tuition fees (Ivins, 1954, p. 338).

### *Summary*

It may not have been evident in the southern Utah towns of Gunlock or Hebron, but educational reform was on the horizon. The period of education as the social battleground was about to change with the arrival free public schools to Utah. Territorial educational history prior to this change was not without its accomplishments, however. While plowing fields and founding cities, LDS pioneers also managed to establish the beginnings of an educational system. Though basic, it accomplished the goal of educating Mormon youth in both secular and spiritual matters.

The religious component of that education was attacked by the non-Mormon population brought by the railroad in 1869. The diversity in population brought diversity in thought, impacting education. Protestant schools emerged, on one hand to serve the religious minority, on the other to reclaim the Mormon majority. The LDS community

weathered the attack on the faith of their children. In response, they established their own private educational system, aimed at providing a place where the faith with which they fled to Utah could be maintained. By so doing, they also demonstrated the value of education to the Mormon people. Horace Cummings, general superintendent of LDS Church schools, later observed, “Surely a people who willingly taxed themselves to maintain a double system of schools could not be said to be indifferent to matters of education” (Cummings, 1913, p. 934).

## Chapter Three

### Separate Tracks / Competing Systems (1888-1890s)

The battle for control of life in the Utah territory came to a head in the final two decades of the nineteenth century. As the nation ultimately triumphed over the dominance of the LDS Church in the territory, emphasis shifted to the enculturation of the young. If Church leaders could no longer control political, economic, and social life, they would at least try to influence the training of the mind. Cremin (1962) commented on the similar increased influence of education that occurred nationally during this era, “To look back on the nineties is to sense an awakening of social conscience, a growing belief that this incredible suffering was neither the fault nor the inevitable lot of the sufferers, that it could certainly be alleviated, and that the road to alleviation was neither charity nor revolution, but in the last analysis, education” (p. 59). Both sides of Utah’s ideological divide recognized education’s role during the era.

Seeking to analyze the growth of education, this chapter traces the initiation of competing educational systems in Utah during the 1890s. It begins analyzing the societal changes in the territory as it moved towards statehood, including the impact on education. These changes include the passage of the first free school law in 1890, the achievement of statehood in 1896, and the impetus these events provided for the growth of both public and private schools. In response to the loss of control over education, the LDS Church increasingly pressed for its own educational programs, emphasizing an after-school religion class program for elementary students and an academy system for secondary students, the latter a place where all aspects of learning could be protected by Church influence. Though financially difficult, the Church moved forward with this competing

system, while the public school movement, particularly in the secondary schools, gained momentum. Using education in St. George as an example, this chapter tracks the competing public and private endeavors in the state during the 1890s.

*Societal and Political Changes in Utah in the 1890s*

The last decade of the nineteenth century brought significant changes to American society, as communities and individuals remade their relationships and the way they interpreted life. At the beginning of the era, the values of the village, including conventional nineteenth century beliefs in individualism, laissez-faire, progress, and a divinely ordained social system, still controlled the lives of most Americans (Wiebe, 1967). The spread of science and technology, industrialism, urbanization and immigration, and economic depression during the last decades of the century eroded this worldview (Wiebe, 1967). “These years witnessed a fundamental shift in American values, from those of the small town in the 1880s to those of a new, bureaucratic-minded middle class by 1920” (p. vii).

Before these changes, small town life, where the country as a whole was really “a nation of loosely connected islands” (Wiebe, 1967, p. 4), was the norm. Utah shared some elements of this model. Alder and Brooks (1996) described the Mormon adaptation of the village lifestyle:

The Mormon formula of cooperative labor to build those canals and erect mills for communal use would enable settlers to wrest a bare living from small, privately owned, irrigated plots of from five to thirty acres. The plan called for the faithful to live in villages wherever possible. Such villages would provide protection . . . as well as help to make a real community. In the villages, women and children worked gardens, promoted schooling, manufactured home goods, kept house, and raised large families while men worked the fields clustered close to the community – all part of a self sustaining economy. (p. 15)



According to this mentality, “the Mormons intended to impose their village lifestyle on the landscape instead of adapting to the terrain; their muscle and sinew would take on the desert and attempt to bend it to their way. Community was paramount; togetherness was essential” (Alder & Brooks, 1996, p. 15).

These relationships changed as the nineteenth century closed. Wiebe (1967) argues that, “The great casualty of America’s turmoil late in the century was the island community” (p. 44). In Utah, individual communities and the territory as a whole were casualties of the end of these island communities. Though hierarchical control by Church leaders continued to influence communities, central control from Salt Lake City on social life seemed to wane as the century drew to a close. Likewise, the influence of local Church authorities on their communities seemed to diminish.

Politically, the years leading up to 1890 were difficult ones for Utah and the LDS Church. “America in the late nineteenth century was a nation of intense partisanship and massive political indifference. . . . No one expected great men in politics; saints entered the ministry, geniuses made fortunes in business” (Wiebe, 1967, p. 27-28). The influence of these political minions and partisan bickering was felt significantly in Utah, where decades of fighting over national or local control came to a head in the anti-polygamy crusade of the 1870s and 1880s.

Having eliminated slavery from the scene, national organizations, political machines, and the American press used Mormonism’s marriage practices as a rallying cry to eliminate the remaining “relic of barbarism.” While convenient for generating public support, the battle involved political and economic control as well as cohabitation. Territorial chief justice Elliot F. Sanford summarized concerns with Mormon lifestyle:

We care nothing for your polygamy. It's a good war-cry and serves our purpose by enlisting sympathy for our cause; but it's a mere bagatelle compared with other issues in the irrepressible conflict between our parties. What we most object to is your unity; your political and commercial solidarity; the obedience you render to your spiritual leaders in temporal affairs. We want you to throw off the yoke of the Priesthood, to do as we do, and be Americans in deed as well as name. (cited in Arrington & Bitton, 1992, p. 182-183)

Though polygamy was the rally-cry, power was an underlying issue. The United States Supreme Court likewise recognized the power of the LDS Church, as stated in its decision to uphold the Edmunds-Tucker Act:

Looking at the case as the finding of the facts presents it, we have before us – Congress had before it – a contumacious organization, wielding by its resources an immense power in the Territory of Utah, and employing those resources and that power in constantly attempting to oppose, thwart and subvert the legislation of Congress and the will of the government of the United States. Under these circumstances we have no doubt of the power of Congress to do as it did. (cited in Arrington & Bitton, 1992, p. 183)

This ruling was the final nail in a coffin the federal government had been building for the LDS Church practice of polygamy since the 1860s. The Republican Party made opposition to Utah's polygamy a part of their platform as early as 1856, calling it and slavery the twin relics of barbarism. After gaining control of the federal government, they pushed through the first anti-polygamy legislation, the Morrill Act, in 1862, which made bigamy in a territory a crime punishable by a fine and five years in prison (Davis, 1992, p. 52).

This legislation was largely un-enforced because of the difficulty in obtaining witness testimony, legal records, and the obvious distraction posed by the Civil War. Choosing to focus on slavery instead, President Abraham Lincoln reportedly outlined the national policy towards the LDS Church:

When I was a boy on the farm in Illinois there was a great deal of timber on the farm which we had to clear away. Occasionally we would come to a log which

had fallen down. It was too hard to split, too wet to burn, and too heavy to move, so we plowed around it. You go back and tell Brigham Young that if he will let me alone I will let him alone. (cited in Arrington & Bitton, 1992, p. 170)

After the war, however, pressure increased to enforce the statute. The Church responded by appealing the law to the highest court in the land. The Supreme Court upheld its constitutionality, declaring, "Laws are made for the government of actions and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief and opinions, they may with practices" ("Reynolds v. United States," 1878, 98 U.S. 145). Responding to Church arguments that plural marriage constituted a protected practice of religion, the jurists continued, "Congress was deprived of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order" ("Reynolds v. United States," p. 164).

Strengthened by the ruling, the federal government stepped up its pressure. More invasive legislation was proposed and passed, including the 1882 Edmunds Act and later the 1887 Edmunds-Tucker Act. These bills barred members living in polygamy from jury service, public office, and voting and disincorporated the Church, authorizing the seizure of real estate not directly used for religious purposes (Davis, 1992).

The Church dug in its heels. Leaders like John Taylor responded with contempt:

We have no fault with our government, we deem it the best in the world, but we have reason to deplore its maladministration. . . . We shall abide all constitutional law, as we have always done; but while we are God-fearing and law-abiding and respect all honorable men and officers, we are no craven serfs, and have not learned to lick the feet of oppressors, nor to bow in base submission to unreasoning clamor. We will contend inch by inch, legally and constitutionally, for our rights as American citizens and plant ourselves firmly on the sacred guarantees of the constitution. (Taylor, 1883, p. 65-67)

Ultimately, to avoid the consequences of the legislation, leaders including Church president John Taylor went into hiding. Those caught spent time in jail for their “crimes.”

This anti-polygamy legislation and education in Utah are linked for several reasons. First, portions of the legislation remade the educational administration of Utah’s territorial schools. The Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 made the position of territorial superintendent of school appointive rather than elective, effectively removing control of the office from the Mormon electorate and placing it instead in the hands of federally-appointed overseers. Second, anti-polygamy legislation itself created funding for Utah public schools. The financial punishments for violating federal mandates, including Church property escheated by the Edmunds-Tucker Act, was required to be used for territorial public schools. Finally, the LDS Church responded to these encroachments by creating its own educational system.

*Free School Act of 1890.* The year 1890 is as pivotal in both LDS Church and educational history in Utah. It marked the official end to Church-sanctioned plural marriage in the territory, a battle whose implications affected all aspects of life. It also signaled the beginning of significant educational reform with passage of the first free public school law. The decisions of this year, with the political and social fallout they entailed, changed the course of all involved. The collectivist approach to problem solving that had dominated LDS thought for its first 60 years was bending to the increasingly individualistic approach of the rest of the country. This paradigm shift would affect education. Utah was moving towards mainstream America, preparing for statehood, and changing its educational institutions to match.

The change was slow in coming. Talk of free public schools goes back as far as the days of Brigham Young. As noted earlier, Young opposed tax-supported public schools ideologically because of the dependence he believed they would foster and practically because of the inability to control curriculum and pedagogy. He was not without his opponents, however. In the 1873 general conference of the Church, Young spoke out strongly against free schools:

I understand that the other night there was a school meeting in one of the wards of this city, and a part there – a poor miserable apostate – said, “We want a free school, and we want to have the name of establishing the first free school in Utah.” To call a person a poor miserable apostate may seem like a harsh word; but what shall we call a man who talks about free schools and who would have all the people taxed to support them, and yet would take his rifle and threaten to shoot the man who had the collection of the ordinary light taxes levied in this Territory – taxes which are lighter than any levied in any other portion of the country? We have no other schools but free schools here – our schools are all free. Our meetings are free, our teachings are free. (B. Young, 1874, p. 19-20).

After the meeting, an open letter from John Chislett criticizing President Young appeared in the local newspaper:

Now about the Free School. Of course I did not expect a man like you who cannot write a correct sentence in his mother tongue, and hardly spell half-a-dozen consecutive words correctly to approve the proposition. . . . In conclusion, allow me to inform you that the day is past when you can get on the rostrum and abuse your betters. I for one will not stand it. (cited in Ivins, 1954, p. 336)

In spite of the opposition, President Young successfully slowed the arrival of tax-supported schools. Utah lagged far behind other states and territories in providing tax-supported education, even though territorial law allowed for it. “In 1867, 8 of Utah’s 18 functioning counties appropriated some tax moneys for school purposes. But in 1871 only 7 counties made such appropriations, and the amount appropriated was less than half of what it had been in 1867. Salt Lake County’s 1871 appropriation, for the benefit of its 5,385 school-age children, was \$40. And in 1873, the same county reported no school

appropriation” (Ivins, 1954, p. 332). By 1873, 10.2% of all school revenue in Utah came from taxes, compared to 94.5% in Montana, 84.1% in Arizona, 70.6% in Wyoming, 60.9% in Idaho, 55.8% in California, and 30.8% in Oregon (p. 332). These discrepancies caused the Utah Territorial Commissioner of Schools to lament in 1887, “So far as I have been able to learn, there is not a State or Territory in the Union, except only Utah, but what has introduced [a free] system of education” (cited in DeBoer, 1951, p. 70).

Politics in Utah were changing, however. A free school law had been defeated in the legislature as recently as 1888, but due to the combined effects of the growth in the Gentile population and the disenfranchisement of Mormons because of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, 1890 became the prime year for another attempt at passing the law. The impact of these events was reflected in the makeup of the territorial legislature. The lower House of Representatives was composed of 16 Mormons in the People’s Party and six non-Mormons in the Liberal Party, while the upper Council was formed by all Mormons. The controversial free public school bill was introduced by C.E. Allen, a non-Mormon in the House of Representatives (Buchanan, 1996, p. 22).

On the Mormon side of the issue, opinions were changing. Showing the political power wielded by the LDS Church during the era, Apostle John Henry Smith recorded in his journal a meeting of LDS general authorities four days after the introduction of the bill, at which, “It was agreed to seek . . . to get a good general school law passed and to have free public schools” (cited in Buchanan, 1996, p. 22). Fellow Apostle Abraham H. Cannon likewise recorded his views of the new law:

In view of the present perplexing school laws which were enacted contrary to the advice of President Young and other[s], and which are anything but good, it was thought best to go a little further and prepare the very best school law possible and then submit it to this Council. The establishment of free schools by our

people it is thought will have a good effect among the people of this nation in proving that we are the friends of education. Free schools will therefore be established. (cited in Buchanan, 1996, p. 22)

The school bill passed the lower House of Representatives unanimously.

The battle was not over, however. The bill still needed to pass the all-Mormon upper Council. Here it languished, appearing to die out, until word was received of attempts on the part of U.S. Senator George F. Edmunds to introduce congressional legislation granting federal control over Utah's public school system (Buchanan, 1996, p. 22). Wanting to maintain local control of education, the Council quickly passed the bill unanimously. The Utah territory now had a free public school law.

Section 88 of the new law required, "Every district school shall be open for admission, free of charge, of all children over six and under eighteen years of age, living in the district. Adults may be admitted to any district school, in the discretion of the board of trustees, at such rate of tuition as the trustees may prescribe" (cited in Ivins, 1954, p. 341). The law also had an attendance provision, stated in Section 130: "Every parent, guardian or other person having control of any child between ten and fourteen years of age, shall be required to send such child to a public, district or private school in the district, in which he resides, at least sixteen weeks in each school year" (cited in Ivins, 1954, p. 341).

*Statehood.* Six years later, the state constitution, under direct orders of the federal government, solidified the place of free public schools in Utah. After ending polygamy in 1890 and joining national political parties a year later, the territory again tried, for the seventh time, for statehood. On July 16, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed the Enabling Act, providing for a constitutional convention in Utah to draft a proposed

document for federal ratification. The constitution came with certain strings attached, however, especially in areas where religion met public life. Education was one of the restricted areas.

The Federal Enabling Act for Utah statehood outlined four specific requirements of the new constitution. Two of the four had bearing on education. The first irrevocably decreed that “perfect toleration of religious sentiment shall be secured, and that no inhabitant of said State shall ever be molested in person or property on account of his or her mode of religious worship” (Enabling Act, Section 3, cited in R. W. Young, Smith, & Lee, 1897). The fourth provision of the “irrevocable” ordinance stated, “Provision shall be made for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools, which shall be open to all the children of said State and free from sectarian control” (Enabling Action, Section 3, cited in R. W. Young et al., 1897). In fact, of the 20 sections in the Enabling Act, 5 dealt specifically with education in the State, including provisions that they be free from sectarian control, an allocation of a land grant for common schools, land grants to universities, guidelines for the sale of public lands for schools, and a prohibition against the use of state revenues for denominational schools.

The constitutional convention convened on March 4, 1895 to draft the proposed document. The 107 delegates, 59 Republicans and 48 Democrats, represented various aspects of life in Utah. Religiously, the 28 non-Mormon delegates were in the minority. The Mormon Church was represented by two Apostles (John Henry Smith and Moses Thatcher), the Presiding Bishop (William B. Person), and one of the Presidents of the Seventy (Brigham H. Roberts), as well as several local Church leaders, including members of stake presidencies and bishoprics. Professionally, 28 farmers and ranchers



made up the majority, followed by 15 lawyers, 13 merchants, and 8 mining men. Education was represented by six men, including Karl G. Maeser from Brigham Young Academy, W. J. Kerr from Brigham Young College, and T. B. Lewis, Territorial Commissioner of Education (Ivins, 1957, p. 100). In the actual functioning of the convention, the lawyers dominated the proceedings, in proportion to their numbers, doing “twice as much talking as the ministers and newspaper men, three times as much as the educators and mining men, nearly six times as much as the farmers, and ten times as much as the merchants” (p. 114).

Not wanting to risk a seventh denial for statehood, the state constitutional convention precisely followed the provisions of the Enabling Act.. In fact, the only two educational sticking points in the record of the convention were over the funding of public high schools and the possible consolidation of the Utah State Agricultural College in Logan with the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. The constituents decided to allow free high schools in the largest cities (called first and second class cities) provided that any extra expenditure above the allotment come from local taxation rather than state coffers. The debate over moving either of the universities to consolidate schools was never resolved (see Ivins, 1957, p. 108-109).

The final document, true to the charge of the Enabling Act, opened with an ordinance, “irrevocable without the consent of the United States and the people of this State,” that outlined church and state relations:

Religious toleration – Polygamy forbidden. First: -- Perfect toleration of religious sentiment is guaranteed. No inhabitant of this State shall ever be molested in person or property on account of his or her mode of religious worship; but polygamous or plural marriages are forever prohibited. . . . Free nonsectarian schools. Fourth: -- The Legislature shall make laws for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools, which shall be open to all the children

of the State and be free from sectarian control. (Utah State Constitution, Article III, cited in R. W. Young et al., 1897)

The actual education portion of the Constitution (Article X) included three parts relevant to religion and education. Section 1 dictated, “The legislature shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of the State’s education systems . . . [which] shall be free from sectarian control” (White, 1998, p. 125, 132). Section 12 (renumbered as Section 8 in 1986) outlawed religious or partisan tests for teachers in schools, and Section 13 (renumbered as Section 9 in 1986) prohibited any public aid to church schools (p. 125, 132).

Like the manifesto of 1890, the Free School Act of the same year and subsequent provisions in the constitution affected life significantly in the state. Ivins (1954) described the impact of the legislation:

There were some noticeable results of the free school law. School receipts jumped from \$348,126.54 for the year ending June 30, 1890, to \$1,409,068.17 for 1892. Receipts from tuition fees and other non-tax sources dropped from \$83,243.00 to \$31,876.33. District school attendance increased from 36.4% of the school population in 1889, to 59% in 1891. The average number of students per school went from 55 in 1889 to 75 in 1892, and the number of students per teacher from 32 to 61. As compensation for the added student burden, teachers’ salaries were increased from \$259.00 to \$457.00 per year (p. 341-342)

The change made by the new law on the professional teaching staff varied by location. In 1888, 94% of the teachers in the district schools (546 out of 581) were LDS. Four years later, outside of heavily concentrated non-Mormon areas, 86% of the teachers were still Mormon (Monnett, 1999, p. 108). While rural areas were not impacted, the effect on districts whose boards were under non-Mormon control was greater. For example, Salt Lake City employed 101 teachers in 1891, only 12 of whom were LDS. That year, 37% of the student population in Salt Lake City was non-Mormon, but 92% of

the teachers were not LDS. Likewise, Ogden, where 33% of the students were non-Mormon, employed 83% non-Mormon teachers (p. 110-111). One teacher, Charles F. Wilcox, summarized in his journal the impact of the law, “At the election for School Trustees held in July, the People’s Party was outvoted, the Liberal element gaining control of the district. They immediately employed gentile teachers and thus my career as a school teacher closed for the time being” (cited in Monnett, 1999, p. 108-109).

The school law of 1890 and subsequent statehood also spelled the end of the Protestant mission schools. Enrollment “fell from two-thirds of the total enrollment in 1890 to less than one-fifth in 1895” (Arrington, 1977, p. 16). Gradually, most of the Protestant mission schools closed their doors, supporting instead public education (Szasz, 1988, p. 166-167). The effect was also societal, as “after 1890 one of the major points of friction between the Mormon and gentile elements of Utah’s society was missing” (Hough, 1960, p. 128).

#### *LDS Church Response – Stake Academies*

While the Protestant churches responded to changes in public policy by diminishing their influence on education in Utah, the LDS Church chose instead to increase its influence. Wiebe (1967) describes this typical nineteenth century response to societal change:

In a manner that eludes precise explanation, countless citizens in towns and cities across the land sensed that something fundamental was happening to their lives, something they had not willed and did not want, and they responded by striking out at whatever enemies their view of the world allowed them to see. They fought, in other words, to preserve their society that had given their lives meaning. But it had already slipped beyond their grasp. (p. 44)

This reaction typifies that of Church authorities to the educational changes they experienced. Fletcher Harper Swift observed, “Like the Israelites of old, the leaders and

prophets of this new theocracy recognized from the beginning that the realization of their goals must be attained through the establishment, not only of a unique ecclesiastical, but a unique economical and educational system” (M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. iii). As the public school laws came to fruition, LDS leaders gave increased impetus to this unique educational system.

The Church’s initial response to the changing public education landscape in Utah centered on secondary education. In the mid 1870s, the Church had founded two academies to compete academically with the mission schools and provide a forum where their faith could be taught. The first, Brigham Young Academy, was located in Provo, the second, Brigham Young College, was in Logan. In 1888, Church leaders decided to formally expand the system significantly. At the April general conference of the Church, membership sustained the first General Church Board of Education. Church President Wilford Woodruff sat as Board president, assisted by fellow ecclesiastical and educational leaders Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, Karl G. Maeser, Horace S. Eldredge, Willard Young, George W. Thatcher, Anthon H. Lund, Amos Howe, James Sharp, and George Reynolds.

On June 8, 1888, Wilford Woodruff wrote each of the 32 stakes in the Church, outlining the intentions of the new Board:

Dear Brethren:

A meeting of the General Board of Education was held today, and the subject of the educational interests of the Latter-day Saints was taken into consideration and discussed at some length. It was decided that a Board of Education, consisting of not less than five and not to exceed eight in number, should be selected in each Stake to take charge of and promote the interests of education in the Stake. This communication is addressed to you to inform you of this action, and have you select energetic men who are friends of education, who understand the needs of the people and who have influence with the Saints, to carry out any suggestions in this direction that may be deemed proper. In the

decision which was made by our Board it was made the duty of these Boards to take into consideration the formation of Church schools and the best method of accomplishing this, and after arriving at proper conclusions, to report them to the General Board. Communications of this character may be addressed to Elder George Reynolds, who is the secretary of the Board. It was felt by the Board that, to begin with, there should be one Stake Academy established in each Stake as soon as practicable.

We felt that the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people. Religious training is practically excluded from our schools. The perusal of books that we value as divine records is forbidden. Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal. The desire is universally expressed by all thinking people in the Church that we should have schools where the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants can be used as text-books; and where the principles of our religion may form a part of the teaching of the schools. To effect this it will be necessary that funds be collected. The Church will doubtless do its share; but it cannot carry the entire burden. The Saints must be appealed to. There are hundreds of liberal-minded people among us who will be willing to contribute to this worthy object when they find the subject is receiving proper attention, and that definite and permanent arrangements are being made to establish academies of this character.

The brethren whom you select to form this Board should be men of character and integrity among the people, who will be able to use an influence in the collection of funds, so that academies may be established, good facilities be employed and education be made so cheap that it will be within the reach of the humblest in the land. After you have made a proper selection for this Board, the names of the brethren composing it should be presented regularly at your Stake Conference as other authorities are, so that the people can vote for them. (Wilford Woodruff, cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 167-168)

The call for local Church academies, as President Woodruff called them, may have been an outgrowth of his own educational experience, having attended the private Farmington Academy as a youth in Connecticut. Like the schools Woodruff envisioned, the Farmington Academy was “an institution supported by a private endowment and tuition,” linked to the local Congregationalist Church of its day (Alexander, 1991, p. 13). By attending the institution until the age of eighteen, Woodruff was, in fact, “one of the best educated of nineteenth-century Mormon leaders and better educated than any

nineteenth-century LDS church president except Lorenzo Snow, who had attended Oberlin College” (p. 14). With this background, Woodruff devised a system of Church academies patterned after those of his youth, structures aimed at providing Church controlled secondary education in the region.

The emergence of academies in Utah seems to be a delayed repetition of similar movements nationally during the nineteenth century. Reaching the height of their development nationally during the early and mid parts of the century, private academies functioned as catchall schools, offering the “opportunity for secondary education to children of families with modest means” (Cremin, 1980, p. 389; Kaestle, 1983, p. 118). Though they existed throughout the nation, they were particularly numerous in the Northeast, where they received greater financial support. The later common school movement replaced these private and semi-public academies with public high schools, though the change was largely symbolic, since only a small minority of students attended secondary school during the nineteenth century (Kaestle, 1983, p. 121). Woodruff’s 1888 establishment of academies was a late attempt by Church elements in Utah to borrow an earlier national trend.

The impact of the letter, and the societal and political changes in Utah during the latter part of the nineteenth century were felt as far away as St. George, 300 miles south of Salt Lake City, and in other Mormon-dominated rural communities throughout the intermountain region. Local response was swift. Within fourteen months, 20 of the 21 stakes in Utah complied. By the end of 1889, all but two of the stakes in the Church had appointed academy principals (Monnett, 1984, p. 121).

The response in southern Utah was typical of that across the region. On June 28th, the Church Association of St. George Stake obeyed the Woodruff circular, organizing the St. George Stake board of education. James G. Bleak was appointed as chairman, with David H. Cannon, William A. Bringhurst, Milton L. Lee, Thomas Judd, Horatio Pickett, and William Gardner as members. Bringhurst represented citizens of Toquerville, Gardner came from Pine Valley, and Lee served from Panaca, Nevada. The other committee members were citizens of the city of St. George itself. With its representatives from the several communities, board membership attempted to represent the diverse needs of the St. George Stake, an organization which, by 1892, included 35 separate wards, the second largest such body in the Church (*Directory of presiding officers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, together with a catalogue of church publications*, 1892). Board members were charged with soliciting funding, employing teachers, and making regulations for the anticipated academy (*Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889*, 1888, p. 4-5).

Two weeks later, the board met again to discuss the establishment of a school. With questions concerning its organization and administration, Bleak wrote President Woodruff of the General Board:

Last evening at a meeting of the St. George Stake Board of Education, your letter of 8 June to the Presidency of this Stake was read, relative to the establishment of Church Schools.

The Board, together with the Presidency of the Stake, enter most cordially into the spirit of the good work outlined by you in that letter, and hail the advent of such a means of educational opportunity with unalloyed satisfaction.

There are a number of reasons why we expect success in the carrying out of your views; among the reasons are:

Our Faith is as sound as any in the Territory;

Our Works are before the Lord and our brethren who preside over us;

There is no better Autumn, Winter and Spring climate in the Territory, for successfully pursuing an educational course, than we have in St. George.

We all feel the need of better educational facilities that we have been able to establish in this Stake during the temporal struggles of upwards of twenty five years; in addition to which because of limited means, very few of our young people have been able to reap the advantages of the Provo Academy and similar Institutions of the North.

Now, the kind of society in St. George, the climatic advantages and the general desire here for improved opportunities of education, cause the Board to feel that they will have the active support of the Stake in the establishment of Church Schools, beginning with a Stake Academy in St. George.

At the meeting last evening it was decided by the Board to commence a Stake Academy this Autumn. . . .

It is the intention of the Presidency of the Stake and of the Board, to personally visit each of the settlements of the Stake, in the interests of the Academy, and to canvass for means to obtain the necessary school furniture and apparatus with which to commence instruction.

In doing this among the people we expect one of the first questions to be: "Who is to be the Principal in the Academy?"

Now, dear Sir, we as a Board, ask the aid of the Church Board of Education in this very important matter. We ask: 1<sup>st</sup> That you appoint some suitable person to fill the position as Principal. 2<sup>nd</sup> If this is not practicable, to refer us to such persons as you approve for such position, that we may correspond with them.

In this connection permit us to state, (what you yourself, already know,) that there are none in this Stake rich in this world's goods; and that cash, especially, is exceedingly scarce, when this Stake is compared with Salt Lake, Utah, Cache, Weber, Davis or San Pete Stakes. But, we are sanguine that, of such property as the people of this Stake have, they will contribute according to their ability. (personal communication, July 17, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

Responding to his request, Woodruff directed Karl G. Maeser, General

Superintendent of Church Schools to suggest a principal for St. George. Superintendent Maeser recommended one of his own pupils from the Brigham Young Academy:

From among the suitable young teachers for the position as Principal of the St. George Stake Academy that I am acquainted with, I can suggest the name of Br. Nephi Savage, of Payson, who graduated here as the second among ten last Spring. This young man is a fervent Latter-day Saint, and has had some practical experience in teaching. He would be just the man to enter upon the work in St. George in a true missionary spirit. (G. Reynolds, personal communication, July 31, 1888, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1)



Maeser also wrote Savage, informing him of the Church's request for his service (G. Reynolds, personal communication, July 31, 1888, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1).

Concerned with the appointment of an outsider, Bleak likewise wrote the young candidate, restating his previous assessment of the region's poverty, "There are none in this Stake rich in this world's goods, and, cash especially is exceedingly scarce, when this Stake is compared with Salt Lake, Utah, Cache, Weber, Davis or San Pete Stakes. But we are sanguine that, of such property as the people of this Stake have they will contribute according to their ability" (personal communication, August 17, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). After expressing these financial concerns, Bleak offered Savage the position of principal, soliciting his help in setting both the terms for the contract as well as the structure for the school. In addition, he offered the aid of St. George residents Edward H. Snow, graduate of the Brigham Young Academy, or John T. Woodbury, graduate of the Deseret University, as teaching assistants (J. G. Bleak, personal communication, August 17, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

Not hearing from Savage, the board became anxious both about his qualifications, and his suitability for life in the financially strapped community of St. George. Soliciting help, Bleak again wrote Maeser, recommending instead that Edward H. Snow serve as principal. Believing him to be the academic equal of Savage, Bleak emphasized Snow's familiarity with the challenges of St. George, observing, "We feel it would be better for us to engage the one who already lives here, and understands the temporal circumstances of the people of this Stake, rather than to bring a brother from the North who might have better prospects before him, than this part of the country can afford" (personal communication, August 25, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Passing the

concern to the General Church Board, President Woodruff again reiterated his confidence in Savage over Snow (W. Woodruff, personal communication, August 31, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

Accordingly, the St. George board went ahead with appointing Nephi Savage as the first principal. Savage accepted the appointment in the spirit of a mission call:

I will accept of the position and try, by the aid of the Spirit of God, to give satisfaction. You say cash is scarce, that is the case in many other parts, but I am willing to take such pay that can be readily disposed of. . . .

If you accept of my services, I will labor to the best of my ability to discharge my duties and magnify my priesthood and calling. I have the welfare of the Kingdom of God, and the youth of Zion at heart, and look forward to the day when the Principles of the “Everlasting Gospel” shall be taught in all our schools, because man is of three fold nature, viz; physical, spiritual and intellectual. Modern educators are neglecting to develop the child’s spiritual being, hence, a great tendency to infidelity is rapidly increasing, which is highly demoralizing to any nation or community. There should be a happy medium all being developed alike, then will the youth be strong, physically and intellectually, and have due reverence for the great God who created him. . . .

Hoping this will prove satisfactory, is the desire of your Brother in the Gospel Covenant. (personal communication, August 25, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

After working out the financial details of his appointment, Savage wrote his formal acceptance, again in the terms of missionary labor:

Now Dear Brethren, when my mind is relieved from the responsibility of said indebtedness I will feel satisfied, and will be satisfied to take such compensation as the Saints can furnish, and, as you write me, “live as you do.” Had I accepted your offer solely from a view to get rich in this world’s goods, I would have done better probably by accepting an opening at a place nearer my home which was refused on account of a letter being received from the President’s Office requesting me not to engage as my name had been presented to one of the Stake Boards of Education in view of my suitability to act as Principal of a Stake Academy. I feel like placing my services at the disposal of the servants of God. If they say, “Go to the islands of the sea to preach the Gospel” I am ready to go at their call; but, as it is their desire for me to engage in the education of the youth of Zion, which I consider a more praiseworthy calling than the former, your young Brother in the Gospel Covenant is willing to come and live with you and devote his time, his talents, his all, for the welfare of the same, as no labor do I consider too great to perform, that will tend to forward the Cause of God and bring about

the “Reign of Peace and Righteousness” destined to fill the earth. As I am unmarried it will make no particular difference where I settle for life provided it be where the most good can be accomplished by my influence and labors. (personal communication, September 7, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

Having resolved the appointment of a principal, the second issue facing the fledgling academy was a school building. In the original letter to President Woodruff requesting his aid in appointing a principal, Chairman Bleak noted, “We have no suitable building in St. George for this purpose, but the Presidency of the Stake have courteously tendered us the use of the basement of the St. George Tabernacle in which to commence operations, and this has been thankfully accepted by the Board” (personal communication, July 17, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Viewing the arrangement as temporary, Bleak continued, “A committee (David H. Cannon and James G. Bleak) has been appointed . . . to apply to the City Council of St. George, and negotiate for a piece of land upon which to establish a Seminary and grounds for educational purposes. The piece of land desired is one fourth of the Public Square adjoining, on the West, the Tabernacle quarter” (personal communication, July 17, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). A month later, Bleak wrote the new principal concerning the results of this endeavor, reporting that they had secured the lot and hoped to build and occupy a new academy building on it the next year. Building plans envisioned a structure housing 250 students, built on a black rock foundation, with a red rock superstructure to match the neighboring St. George Tabernacle (Saint George Stake Board of Education Minutes, September 16, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39).

With arrangements made for both faculty and facilities, Principal Savage and the committee turned their sights towards the particulars of operating a new school. During

the negations concerning his salary, Savage wrote the board with suggestions on the operation of the academy:

The length of a school term is now generally considered ten weeks, so if we commence school about the first of October, there would be time for about three terms before the hot weather arrives. In order to secure the most satisfactory results, it is necessary that the Academy be systematically graded as far as practicable. It would be well to have such furniture needed, on hand, so not to cause delay.

Imported desks are the best, and, I presume, the cheapest, still, it might be well to have them manufactured at home. If you are intending to have primary pupils in the Academy, you will need a set of primary reading charts, a numeral frame, etc.

For the higher grades a globe, and a set of wall maps will be indispensable, also a physiology chart will be needed in teaching, "Physiology and Hygiene." It will not be necessary to enumerate all the school furniture and utensils needed as you will know about what will be needed. It will be necessary however to procure a small library, as soon as convenient, consisting of an unabridged dictionary, an encyclopedia and other good books, including the standard church works.

If you propose teaching, or having taught rather, any of the scientific branches, such apparatus needed will in time suggest itself.

The main thing to be considered is "Theology," which should be made the focus round which all other things in the academy revolve.

I think it would be well to adopt the rules and regulations laid down in the circular of the B.Y. Academy, or most of them, because if they are carried out, success is sure to be the result.

I will call on Bro. Karl G. Maeser, as soon as possible, and receive from him such instruction as he may deem wise to render me. (personal communication, August 25, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

To facilitate these plans, the board arranged for the funding of the school. The General Church Board provided \$500 as an annual appropriation, payable both in cash and kind through the local tithing office. The local board sought to augment this allocation, soliciting donations from local wards and charging tuition of students. Typical of letters sent to other wards in the area, Bleak appealed to the local Overton Ward for help:

Pursuant to plan of the Church Board of Education, we expect to commence a Church Academy (after the plan of the B.Y. Academy of Provo) in

this city next October. We are now in communication with Pres. Woodruff and others to engage a suitable Principal. We commence the term in St. George Tabernacle, but expect as soon as possible to get an Academy Building ready for use on the N.W. quarter of St. George Public Square. To aid us in this educational movement, President Woodruff states the Church will assist us with means, but wishes the people of the Stake to do what they reasonably can towards erecting and suitably furnishing a Stake Academy. . . .

Subscription books are now open and the Board desire to know what your ward will subscribe in cash and products towards furniture and apparatus for the Academy, and further, what in cash, products and labor towards building the Academy.

For these subscriptions we enclose two headings: one for furniture and apparatus; the other for building purposes. In each case we wish the name of each subscriber.

When we receive these lists from you, we shall furnish the information to Pres. Woodruff and the Church Board of Education and ask the Church to assist in this educational work.

We cannot at present definitely name our Principal, but we will state, that we expect to engage one suggested by Professor Karl G. Maeser and approved by the General Church Board of Education.

In relation to rates of tuition, it has been suggested by the Church Board “that education be made so cheap, that it will be within the reach of the humblest in the land,” and we, as the Board of the Stake, fully intend to act upon this suggestion. The exact rate of charges, however, we can only decide when we learn upon what terms we can engage a Principal and Assistants; and know about what patronage the Academy may receive. Please furnish us with a statement of the number of students we may expect from your ward of 4<sup>th</sup> Reader grade and upwards.

For those who wish to engage Board and Lodging in private families in St. George, we expect to make satisfactory arrangements, as to terms, the Stake Board will not patronize any family by sending boarders to them unless the moral and religious influence of such family is commendable (personal communication, August 27, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

Local wards responded generously to the call, pledging \$3,489.50 towards the new building and \$253.45 towards furnishings by December 1888 (Saint George Stake Board of Education Minutes, December 18, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39). These totals reflect contributions of cash, produce, and labor. Due to the financial conditions of the times, the largest portion of the pledges was in labor. Bishops John G. Hafen’s offering from the Santa Clara ward is typical of the effort, “Our subscription for

the Stake Academy building amounts to two hundred and thirty-eight dollars and fifty cents in produce and labor, in cash three dollars. Total \$241.50” (personal communication, March 16, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Chairman Bleak’s 1888 letter to fellow board member Thomas Judd characterizes the overall subscription effort, “In addition to what you already have on your subscription for Academy list, please report: Pinto Ward, \$1.75 cash, \$20.00 produce, \$195.00 labor, total \$216.75; Price Ward, \$0 cash, \$10.00 produce, \$50.00 labor, total \$60.00; 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward St. George, \$11.00 cash, \$53.00 produce, \$352.00 labor, total \$416.00” (personal communication, October 2, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

Though pledging what they could, times were difficult for starting a school. The Rockville Ward report represented some of the challenges:

The subject of Stake Academy should of course meet with general favor. And we very much regret that our circumstances compel us to say it is not in our power at present to afford so laudable an enterprise any substantial aid. Our fruit crop was light and small equally so our taxes are unpaid and we have nothing that will command the money, having still faith however that times will improve thus rendering us able to respond to the various calls that are made upon us and which will afford us much pleasure in being able to do. (personal communication, December 4, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

Bishop Funk of the Washington Ward further summarized the difficult times, “Some of the brethren have gone north and cannot be seen at present. Some are at the Reef [a mine in northern Washington county], others are in the Pen [arrested due to the anti-polygamy crusade], and others still worse are in Exile with their homes broken up and quite a number of widows from whom we cannot expect anything” (personal communication, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

In addition to these local contributions, tuition was set at \$7.50 per term for intermediate students and \$5.00 per term for preparatory students. Due to local concern

over the expense, rates were reduced to \$5.00 and \$3.50 early in the first term. Tuition terms were in cash, though the original circular declared, “In necessary cases, merchandise and produce will be accepted at cash rates” (*Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889*, 1888, p. 7). In the humble circumstances of late nineteenth century St. George, academy receipt books reflect that most academy participants actually utilized this “necessary case.”

With characteristic zeal, the citizens of Washington County also responded to the endeavor by sending their children. School opened in the basement of the St. George Tabernacle on October 15, 1888, with 47 pupils in attendance the first week. Ten weeks later, the term ended on December 21, 1888, with a total enrollment of 89. Two departments existed, an upper intermediate level, taught by Principal Savage, and a lower preparatory level, taught by his assistant, John T. Woodbury (*Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889*, 1888, p. 3). The intermediate department had 51 students, 21 males and 30 females, while the preparatory department had 38 students, 19 males and 19 females. Of the 89 students, 75 were residents of St. George itself. Five students came from Santa Clara, three from Washington, two from Price City, and one each from Pine Valley, Salt Lake City, Panaca, Nevada, and Bunkerville, Nevada. Two of the students were also reportedly non-LDS (N. Savage, personal communication, December 28, 1888). Boarding for these out of town students was available throughout the community, with families the leaders deemed morally and religiously commendable (*Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889*, 1888, p. 7).

A second ten-week term began on January 7, 1889 with 120 students enrolled. When the term ended on March 15, the school boasted an enrollment of 131. A third term was projected for the spring, but closed after five weeks due to decreased enrollment brought on by the warm weather (N. Savage, personal communication, April 19, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Problems with spring enrollment hounded the Academy throughout its existence. Annual reports like Savage's first year summary contain similar statements to his initial assessment, "As spring began to open and brought with it its press of work, a number of the students were obliged to discontinue" (personal communication, March 15, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). In spite of this challenge, the first year proved to be a statistical success, with a total enrollment of 147 students, 77 in the intermediate department, and 70 in the preparatory department. The Academy's circular outlined how students were assigned to each department:

The Academy will be open for the admission of students of both sexes who are prepared to enter at least the Fourth Reader Grade, and offers facilities in the departments of the so called common English education. Applicants will be welcome at any time, but it is very strongly urged that students enter at the beginning of an Academic year if possible, or at least at the beginning of a term. Students are advised not to purchase their text-books until they ascertain the grade for which they are qualified. (*Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889*, 1888, p. 7)

Academically, the academy offered a wide range of classes. Supervising the intermediate department, Principal Savage taught theology, reading, grammar, composition, arithmetic, book keeping, physiology, hygiene, penmanship, standard geography, orthography, U.S. history, and algebra. His assistant, John T. Woodbury, taught the preparatory department classes of theology, reading, grammar, composition, arithmetic, hygiene, penmanship, elementary geography, orthography, U.S. history, and incidentals. Half-way through the term, courses of study were added in physical



geography, elocution, and civil government. A “General Theological Class Meeting” and theological repetition quorums were also organized and held weekly (N. Savage, personal communication, December 19, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

Academic materials for the courses generally represented commonly accepted textbooks of the day. In fact, some central coordination must have existed, as the course offerings and required texts are nearly identical to those used the same year in Ephraim’s Sanpete Stake Academy (Snow College Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 8559).

The preparatory department required commonly accepted texts for its courses:

Theology: Bible, Book of Mormon  
 Reading: “Bancroft’s Fourth Reader,” alternating with Sight and Manuscript reading.  
 Grammar: “Barnes’ Short Studies.”  
 Composition: Taught in connection with Grammar.  
 Orthography: “Harrington’s Graded Spelling Book.”  
 Arithmetic: “Harper’s Second Book.”  
 Geography: “Appleton’s Standard Higher Geography.”  
 Penmanship: “Spencerian Copy Books.”  
 Hygiene: “Pathfinder Series, No. 2.”  
 Drawing, Singing, etc.  
*(Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889, 1888, p. 8)*

The intermediate department likewise had requirements outlined in the academy circular:

Theology: Compendium, Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants  
 Reading: Bancroft’s Fifth Reader, alternating with Manuscript and Newspaper Reading  
 Grammar and Composition: Reed and Kellogg’s “Higher Lessons in English.”  
 Orthography: Harrington’s “Graded Spelling Book,” with Dictation and Promiscuous Exercises.  
 Arithmetic: “Harper’s Second Book.”  
 Geography: “Appleton’s Physical Geography.”  
 Penmanship: “Michael’s System of Rapid Writing.”  
 United States History: “Anderson’s New U.S. History.”  
 Physiology and Hygiene: “Steele’s Hygiene Physiology.”  
 Drawing, Phonetics and Calisthenics.  
*(Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889, 1888, p. 8-9)*

Additional offerings in “special studies,” together with assigned textbooks, were offered for those qualified to receive instruction:

Elocution: “Hamill’s Science of Education.”  
 Rhetoric: “Kellogg’s Text Book on Rhetoric.”  
 Commercial Arithmetic: “Packard’s Commercial Arithmetic.”  
 Civil Government: “Young’s Government Class Book.”  
 Book-keeping: “Bryant’s New Standard Commercial Book-keeping.”  
 Algebra: “Olney’s First Principles of Algebra.”  
 Geometry: “Olney’s Elements of Geometry and Trigonometry.”  
*(Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889, 1888, p. 9)*

These initial course offerings and required texts changed year to year, depending on the needs of the program and the expertise of the teachers.

From the wide variety of course listings, it is evident that the St. George Stake Academy was much more than merely a weekday theological school. The Church did direct its operation however, especially at the general Church level. Though a stake board of education existed, the general officers, and especially Church Superintendent of Schools Karl G. Maeser, played a significant role. Principals submitted quarterly reports, including statistical and financial data, daily programs, and annual plans, to the General Board (K. G. Maeser, personal communication, January 30, 1889, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2). A central board of examination was established to certify teachers for employment. Specific policies, including details for discipline and expulsion, originated from Salt Lake City (K. G. Maeser, personal communication, January 30, 1889, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2).

Daily routine in the academy was also a blend of the spiritual and the secular. Opening and closing exercises, consisting of singing and prayer, were conducted, as were weekly theological exercises and priesthood meetings (*Circular of the St. George Stake*

*Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889, 1888, p. 9).*

Pedagogy largely involved recitation, the prevailing technique of the era. Savage's 1890 report noted that he conducted twelve recitation sessions daily while fellow teacher John T. Woodbury conducted eleven (personal communication, November 15, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). As the academy grew during its initial years, gifted students and others from the community were enlisted to lead other recitation sessions and study groups. Additional courses were also added, including studies in civil government and the theory of teaching (N. Savage, personal communication, December 19, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Community members, including adult members like Anthony W. Ivins, even attended some of these additional courses.

Principal Savage described the pedagogy of one such addition, borrowed from the Brigham Young Academy, in a first term letter to the board:

Of late a class, known as the "Theological Repetition," has been started. The whole school (i.e. each Dept. to itself) is divided into quorums of about five or six in a class. Over each of these, is placed a competent repetitor, chosen from among the students who are most able and conversant with the lectures and instructions given in the daily theological class exercises. On Friday morning of each week, questions on what has been discussed the past week are propounded by the instructors of each Department. The questions are taken down and studied by the pupils and repetitors from their notes on the lectures given, etc. When the quorums assemble on the following Monday evening, the repetitors propound as the questions to their classes, two others, in a low tone of voice, twelve or fifteen pupils i.e. in both Depts. can be answering the questions at once and the same time, thus saving much time and giving thorough drill on the most important points. If a student fails in any of the questions to answer less than five out of the ten questions given, his name is handed in for special repetition and he will be made to answer again until satisfaction is obtained. This system is in vogue in the B.Y. Academy, and has proved a success. As we are just starting, we can not say what the fruits of our labors shall be yet. I trust through the blessings of God that they will yield, in the future, a bountiful harvest. The repetitors for the preparatory Dept. are mostly chosen from the more advanced of the higher. The teachers hold themselves in readiness to answer any question which the repetitors can not do satisfactorily. (personal communication, December 3, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

Savage likewise described a “general class meeting” centering on theological study, held weekly for an hour under his direction:

The programme consists of an opening lecture by one of the teachers or larger students and essays, songs, select readings, recitations, etc. On each day a [number] of students are called to hand in questions of interest on the principles of the Gospel, and others are called to answer them; both are allowed until the next meeting to prepare themselves, and thus the questions handed in one week will be answered the next. The students called upon thus far have responded cheerfully, and a very enjoyable and entertaining time is spent once in each week. (personal communication, December 3, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

In addition to his teaching duties, Savage held ecclesiastical and community roles as principal. During the third academic year, he reported attending neighboring Leeds on a “home mission,” as well as preparing a presentation for a teacher’s conference (N. Savage, personal communication, January 17, 1891, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). The annual Church school convention that same year summarized some of these expanded duties of academy principals, “Each teacher must have a living testimony of which he may be enabled to represent to others. The work of the Principals must not be confined to the class room. Their mission is to the Stake to impress upon the minds of the people therein the necessity of fostering our church school” (N. Savage, personal communication, June 3, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

Discipline in the academy also reflected the religious nature of the Academy. Like the courses and texts, some centralized control over rules must have existed, as the rules for the St. George Academy are nearly identical to those printed in the Sanpete Stake Academy circular (Snow College Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 8559).

The original St. George circular outlined the school’s policies:

Students are subject to the regulations of the institution in and out of school while they are members of the Academy.

Profanity or obscenity in any form is strictly forbidden, and may be punished by expulsion.

The use of tobacco or strong drink is not allowed.

Students should not attend public or private parties without a written permit from the Principal. The authorities of the Academy will be in no way responsible for the progress of students who do not observe this injunction.

Students cannot honorably discontinue attendance before reporting their intended withdrawal, and the cause thereof, to the acceptance of the Principal.

In case of repeated reprimands, the parents of refractory or negligent pupils will be communicated with.

Parents and guardians are earnestly requested to sustain the authorities of the Academy in the maintenance of these regulations. (*Circular of the St. George Stake Academy, St. George City, Utah, for the first academic year, 1888-1889*, 1888, p. 10)

Though religiously oriented rules existed, enforcement remained an issue.

Principal Savage's reports contain frequent reference to the complaint of "too much theology." An 1890 letter to the board noted, "A number of the students were paying no regard to the restrictions relating to smoking, but, by request, [Brother] D. H. Cannon paid us a visit, and without a dissenting voice, the students voted to sustain the Rules and Regulations. Whether they will all remain true to their Word of Honor remains to be proven" (N. Savage, personal communication, November 15, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). At the close of the fifth academic year, Savage continued, "While we have been as strict as deemed necessary in our Domestic regulations, I am convinced that we must use still greater caution, as things have come to light (when too late to remedy the evils) of some little crookedness on the part of a few students" (personal communication, April 14, 1893, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

The religious element of the school was also reflected in faculty hiring. Teachers had to be approved by the General Board, subject both to professional qualification and ecclesiastical approval. For example, before renewing Principal Savage's contract for the second year, the central board of examination, established by the General Church Board

of Education, required an annual statement of worthiness from his bishop as well as a statement of approval from the local board (N. Savage, personal communication, May 14, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). In addition, special examinations were offered system-wide to qualify teachers for employment. Aspiring teachers faced similar requirements. Board chairman James Bleak, responding to one inquiry about possible teaching vacancies at the school, declared, “In our Schools we expect to engage no Instructor but such as belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Now you may be a member in that Church, but, I am not aware of it and there is nothing in your letter to indicate that such is the case” (personal communication, May 4, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

With these guidelines in place, the faculty did expand slightly as enrollment increased. The second academic year reported an enrollment of 120 for the first term, which grew to 191 by the end of the second. Roseinia Jarvis joined Savage and Woodbury on the faculty to accommodate the growth, much of which occurred at the intermediate level, necessitating the splitting of that department (N. Savage, personal communication, March 17, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Horatio Pickett, a member of the stake board of education, was also employed as the music teacher.

With enrollment and faculty growing, board members moved forward with permanent building plans. Throughout the first and second academic years, discussions continued with leaders in Salt Lake regarding the building project. Plans and property were discussed, including negotiations with the city officials for property on the public square adjacent to the Tabernacle. Though the city agreed with the plan, Church attorney Franklin S. Richards expressed some concern, worried about the commingling of church

and state (F. S. Richards, personal communication, October 22, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). In spite of his concern, the board proceeded with their plan, including quarrying rock for the anticipated building. By the end of the second academic year, the future progress of the Academy, with its growing faculty, increasing enrollment, and improving building prospects, seemed bright.

#### *Religious Education for Elementary Students*

Having resolved concerns with secondary education by establishing academies, the Church next set its sights on the elementary schools. The public school law, however, affected elementary and secondary LDS private education differently. Implementing a separate program similar to stake academies for elementary school students was problematic. The new stake academies filled needs previously unmet by the lack of secondary education in many areas. Elementary schools, on the other hand, had existed for years throughout the state. Furthermore, in many places like St. George, they were essentially Church controlled, as the LDS population dominated life in the region during the 1890s.

Elementary education in southern Utah, influenced by the LDS Church, began with the earliest settlers of St. George. Arriving in the valley in latter part of November 1861, Erastus Snow, President of the Southern Utah Mission, organized the first school, appointing Jabez Woodward as the teacher (Moss, 1961, p. 13). Though flooding in the area caused leaders to reclaim the use of the school's "big tent" just two weeks later, education in the region was born.

The early years were marked by private and Church dominated attempts to educate children. Primitive schools, taught in tents and homes, existed throughout the

city. Early pioneer student and later St. George educator Josephine Miles (1923) remembers, “The first school that was really taught in St. George City, was by Sister Orpha Everett. She first taught in a tent on her lot. Afterwards, she taught in a willow school house. . . . In the center of this willow school house was a flat rock which supported a post in the middle of the room. This rock was used for a desk when pupils wished to write, or rather when they had writing materials” (p. 1).

Conditions in these early schools were primitive. Miles (1923) further records, “Dezzie Fawcett, Dezzie Perkins, Emma and Martha Truman had been to school in Salt Lake City and had pen and ink, and were therefore, considered aristocrats” (p. 1). In reality, “textbooks and school equipment were conspicuous by their absence” (p. 2). These conditions persisted for the first several years. Ten years after settling the area, Miles described the state of education, “There were no conveniences of any kind – a four legged, long stool furnished seats. There were no desks, blackboards, charts or maps. We had few books, but were just past the stage of having an old Book of Mormon, or other Church book for a reader. . . . When our supply of slate pencils became exhausted, a hike to the foot hills north followed, where by expert selecting, the soft pieces of slate rock, suitable, were secured” (p. 4).

Pedagogy was likewise rudimentary. In Miles’ school, it was rumored their teacher, Orpha Everett, had studied Algebra. While the students didn’t know what that meant, “it cast a halo about her dear old head” (Miles, 1923, p. 5). Another private school, run by Sister Margaret Snell, was described as quiet and orderly. Miles humorously described the pedagogy:

Her students were taught to be truthful and honest and the school was closed with singing and prayer. I never attended her school, but judging from observation,



from the other side of her fence, the methods in force were similar to those described by Dickens in 'Nicholas Nickleby.' The English master required practical knowledge of his pupils; they spelled 'win'der' and were sent to clean the windows, etc. So, at Sister Snell's they must have spelled c-o-w, and were sent to water her; 'w-e-e-d-s' and were sent to pull them; for all of her outside work seemed to be done by the students. (p. 5)

Schools improved as quickly as life did in the southern Utah wilderness. In 1863, the city was divided into four school districts, coterminous with the four different ward boundaries (Moss, 1961, p. 15). Each district was organized with three trustees and charged with constructing a school. Administratively, George A. Burgon, teacher in the First Ward School, supervised all education in the area after his 1864 election as Washington County Superintendent of Schools (p. 16). Three of the four ward buildings that emerged over the next several years were used conjointly by the Church, the lone exception being the two-story Fourth Ward building, which was used exclusively for school purposes (p. 16). As class size grew, some schools moved to the basement of the St. George Tabernacle or to the County Court House to accommodate growth (Miles, 1923, p. 6). These four schools served as the public educational opportunities in St. George throughout the first several decades.

Qualified teachers remained sparse, in spite of the population growth. This was largely due to the remoteness of the location and the limited availability for teacher training in the territory. In his 1883 annual report, Washington County Superintendent of District Schools Joseph Orton wrote, "A few of our teacher are graduates of the University and the Academy; the majority, however, although the best at hand (and we are thankful for them) are not as proficient as we could wish they were, but we earnestly hope that such will cultivate themselves in those branches they are most incapacitated to teach, that the Board of Examiners next year will feel justified to issue more Certificates

of a higher percentage of qualification” (personal communication, December 10, 1883, LDS Church Archives, MS 2926).

Maintaining the schools on a regular basis also proved a challenge, especially in the rural areas of southern Utah. Superintendent Orton summarized this problem in his 1885 annual report, “Endeavors are being made to hold during this year at least three legal terms of school in each district. That, at present, some fall far below this may not be attributable to the lack of energy on the part of trustees, but to the sparsely settled districts making it a comparative hardship to maintain schools” (personal communication, November 14, 1885, LDS Church Archives, MS 2926).

Before the Free School Act of 1890, tuition remained the major source of funding for these district schools. Territorial coffers helped some, but in general, then, as now, teaching was not a lucrative profession. The 1886 Biennial Report of Territorial Schools noted that the average monthly teacher salary for males was \$46.43. Female teachers earned slightly more than half, averaging \$26.03 (Utah Territory Superintendent of District Schools Records, LDS Church Archives, MS 2926). Miles (1923) remembers, “Methods and equipment improved gradually, and about 1888, there was an appropriation from the State of 50 cents per student per term of twelve weeks. This gave a little cash to go along with our pickles, brooms, wood, molasses, etc., for we still had to collect our own pay from the parents, furnish our own wood, clock, brooms, etc., and hire our own janitors” (p. 7).

Elementary schools improved significantly in St. George with the 1890 legislation. Miles (1923) further records, “In 1890, the free school system was established, and this state paid the teachers. The schools were graded. This was more

than a step forward – it was a bound. Prior to this, all grades were in one room, under one teacher, in each ward. This new system enabled the teachers to do better work with less exhaustion” (p. 7).

Though district schools in name after the Free School Act, the elementary schools in St. George continued to be essentially ward schools, taught and administered by LDS teachers and trustees. The Church sought to take advantage of this, within the restrictions provided by the new law. Realizing it could not afford to support a dual system requiring taxes for public schools and tithing for private Church ones, the LDS Church relinquished the education of elementary school children to the state, devising instead a supplementary, after-school religion program.

In an 1890 circular letter lamenting the lack of religious training provided by the district schools, President Wilford Woodruff proposed an elementary school alternative:

To lessen this great evil, and counteract the tendencies that grow out of a Godless education, the Church schools of the Saints have been established. But while these accomplish great good, the sphere of their usefulness does not cover the entire field. There are many places where Church schools cannot, at present, be established; and also many Saints in those places where such schools exist who, for various reasons, cannot send their children thereto. For these causes we have deemed it prudent to suggest to the various local authorities other measures which, while not occupying the place of the Church schools, will work on the same lines, and aid in the same work in which the Church educational institutions are engaged. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 196-197)

The solution, born of President Woodruff’s call for “other measures,” was a weekly, after school Religion Class for elementary students.

The LDS Religion Classes hold a unique spot in the history of American education. It was “America’s first experiment in providing separate weekday religious training for public school children. . . . Not until 1906 did other religious groups experiment with such a program” (Quinn, 1975, p. 379, 387). The movement, proposed

by Apostle Anthon H. Lund, quickly expanded Church-wide, growing from an early participation of 19 stakes, 706 officers and teachers, and 14,538 pupils in 1897-98 to its peak of 89 stakes, 4,581 officers and teachers, and 61,131 pupils in 1926-27 (p. 385).

The First Presidency circular gave detailed instructions for the implementation of the program:

We suggest that in every ward where a Church school is not established, that some brother or sister or brethren and sisters well adapted for such a responsible position by their intelligence and devotion, as well as their love for the young, be called, as on a mission, by the Bishop, after consultation with the President of the Stake, to take charge of a school wherein the first principles of the Gospel, Church history and kindred subjects shall be taught. This school to meet for a short time each afternoon after the close of the district school, or for a longer time on the Saturday only, as may in each ward be deemed most consistent with the situation of the people and most likely to secure a good attendance of the children. In some cases it will be found that the children are too wearied after their usual daily studies to take interest in a class of this kind; in others Saturday may prove to be an unsuitable day.

Where arrangements can be made it will, as a general thing, be well to secure the district school room for this purpose, so that when they take place in the afternoon, these exercises can commence immediately after the regular sessions and before the children scatter; but where this is done care must be taken to keep the two entirely separate, so that the law may not be infringed upon. Where the regular school room cannot be obtained, some building conveniently situated and as near as possible, should be secured in its stead; the object being to secure the attendance, as far as possible, of the children of all the Latter-day Saints; a strenuous effort should likewise be made to gain the hearty co-operation of the parents, as without their aid the school will measurably fail in the object of its creation.

We deem it desirable that every school thus established should be under the guidance and direction of the General Board of Education; and those brethren and sisters who accept this call will receive a license from that board to act in this capacity. Suggestions with regard to the studies, etc., will also be issued by the general board, and other means be adopted to place these classes in harmony with the method of the Church school system, of which, in fact, they will form an important part. Where it is found necessary to pay the teacher a small stipend for his services, the General Board of Education should be consulted through the Stake Board; but it is thought that the incidental expenses for fuel, etc., may, without inconvenience, be met by the ward, or by the people whose children are benefited. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 196-198)

In practice, classes were typically held in public school buildings, either before or after school hours, as outlined. Students ranged from grades one to nine and most of the teachers were public school instructors (Arrington, 1977, p. 16; Quinn, 1975, p. 388). Church officers encouraged this close interaction. The General Superintendency of Religion Classes wrote the local stakes regarding teacher selection, “As a rule district school teachers are familiar with the best methods of training, and their qualifications naturally fit them best to conduct the work in the wards where they may be engaged in the public school service” (personal communication, September 6, 1901, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2). General officers also wrote concerning physical facilities:

In most places Religion Classes are held immediately after the dismissal of the public schools. In view of the fact that the houses are already warmed, bishops, as a matter of economy and convenience, have often rented the public school building for a half-hour or so once or twice a week. This practice is in the interests of economy because of the inconvenience and often discomforts that are felt in the meeting houses, which are more difficult to warm and are more imperfectly heated. (General Superintendency of Religion Classes, personal communication, September 6, 1901, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

Because of this close interaction between Church and state, attendance was relatively high, even among non-Mormon students.

The overlap with Church and state worked well in heavily LDS communities like St. George, where Religion Classes became an extension of the public school day for elementary students. In other areas, non-members opposed this overlap. In such situations, the General Board suggested, “There may be some places where a large number of non-Mormons reside and where they feel determined to regard the use of a public building as an encroachment on their religious rights. In such cases we do not recommend unnecessary contention” (General Superintendency of Religion Classes, personal communication, September 6, 1901, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2). On the

other hand, they also recognized that such opposition may come from a vocal minority, in which case they counseled against yielding “too much to an opposition . . . that is neither strong, reasonable, nor well defined,” leaving the decision as to location and staffing in the hands of the local bishop (General Superintendency of Religion Classes, personal communication, September 6, 1901, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2).

Though minor decisions like these were deferred to local authorities, the Religion Classes, like the Stake Academies, were run by general Church leadership during the 1890s. Quarterly conferences were required, as were the keeping of minutes, records, and reports, all of which were submitted to Salt Lake City. Licenses to teach in the system were likewise granted from the General Board (K. G. Maeser, personal communication, September 12, 1893, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2).

St. George struggled to implement the Religion Class program as outlined during the 1890s. As academy principal, Nephi Savage also oversaw the Religion Classes. He reported their limited efforts in 1896, noting that only three classes operated in two of the stake’s wards, enrolling 170 students with an average attendance of 95 (Moss, 1961, p. 133). This lack of support may be attributed to the fact that the control of the elementary schools themselves hadn’t changed much in the area after the Free School Act.

### *Challenges to the Schools*

Though the frameworks of elementary and secondary education were established, the residents of St. George were not without their challenges. Adapting a centrally designed program to the deserts of southern Utah was challenging. Building problems, competition from rival public schools, and financial challenges ultimately did many of the programs in.

Life on the outskirts of the Utah territory was still influenced by the vagaries of pioneer life. During the second year of operation, Principal Savage noted two of the major challenges in his annual report to the board:

Although the students were deeply interested in their studies, toward the close of the second term two unlooked for circumstances occurred to the detriment of the institution. The first was that the severe losses on dams and ditches, caused by the sudden freshets, compelled the young men to leave their studies to engage in repairing the damages as soon as they could get at the work. The other was a sudden wave of sickness which attacked the whole school, the teachers not excepted. (personal communication, March 17, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

Unable to do much about enrollment loss caused by Mother Nature, Principal Savage tried instead to tackle the loss due to illness, something he believed was human-caused. His report tied the sickness to the school's conditions:

This sickness was caused, without doubt, more or less by the decided unhealthful condition of the basement in which the Academy meets. With all due courtesy to the Stake authorities who have so kindly furnished us the use of the basement, when we could do no better, permit me to say that it never was intended, nor is it fit, for such purposes; as many of the Saints are confident that it has been more than once the starting place of disease. On account of the low ceiling and the impossibility of properly ventilating the rooms, together with the fact that the floor is below the level of the ground it is bound to undermine the health of both teachers and pupils. I, therefore, as principal, earnestly recommend that you immediately, or as soon as you possibly can, provide better quarters for the youth who come to receive that secular and spiritual training which every faithful Latter-day Saint desires the youth of Israel to receive. (N. Savage, personal communication, March 17, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

As long as the Academy remained in the basement of the Tabernacle, these problems continued to hound the school, particularly in the winter. The next year, Savage again wrote the board about the conditions:

One or two of the students leaving claim that their reason for discontinuing was on account of the unhealthful condition of the basement. The stove in the large room is a very poor excuse. Every time a fire is kindled, it smokes fearfully. To quote the words of the Hon. Judge Daggett, while in the Fourth Ward Sunday School, 'They use this basement for entirely the wrong purpose. If they would

hang their bacon up in it for 24 hours, it would be well smoked.’ The unhealthy condition of the building is, no doubt, the cause of much of the late sickness, as, with but one exception, the afflicted students are from the outside settlements, indicating that those not used to the room are the ones to get sick. (personal communication, February 8, 1891, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

The board was hampered from acting on the principal’s request by the financial constraints facing the school. While local members pledged their financial support and many contributed their means, making ends meet was a constant concern during the era. Local donations depended on the financial prospects of the season. Pledging money was one thing, collecting it was another. As early as 1890, the financial situation became difficult, with the board appealing to local members for additional help (J. Bleak, personal communication, September 2, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24).

The Academy board found themselves frequently soliciting the General Church Board of Education for help augmenting local donations and tuition. The first year, the General Board allocated each stake, including St. George, \$500. Before the start of the next school year, Bleak wrote President Woodruff, “The receipt of your generous aid of \$500.00 for the past school year was, and is, very much appreciated, but we find ourselves, after making a balance sheet of our school business, indebted \$239.74. Our current expenses amount to \$1,132.46. We paid for school furniture \$539.92, total \$1,672.38. Received from all sources \$1,432.64, net solvency \$239.74” (personal communication, August 7, 1889, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). In spite of the request, the General Board again allocated \$500 to St. George, one of 21 schools that divided a total of \$12,550 in 1889. The next year they again received \$500, one of 25 schools splitting \$14,370. Finally, their allotment was modestly increased to \$750 in 1891 and again in 1892.



Though the Church offered limited operating support to augment local donations and tuition, receiving aid for construction was even more difficult. General Board secretary George Reynolds summarized, “In no case has the Board yet taken the responsibility of supplying plans, specifications, etc., for schoolhouses, but has confined itself to assisting in the payment of teachers and of other expenses incurred in running the schools” (personal communication, February 8, 1890, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1). Supporters of the St. George Stake Academy were forced to face building shortfalls on their own. President Woodruff described the Church’s inability to help with building projects in a letter to the similarly situated Tooele Stake board of education:

You doubtless are aware that the Church has found it necessary to surrender a large amount of property to the Receiver, in order to put an end to the unpleasant proceedings that were in progress to secure this property. This leaves us cramped for means, especially as we have very many calls made upon us that are connected with the present attack upon us, and which call for the defensive operations by us. The same causes of which you speak – the loss of stock by the severity of last winter, and the prospect of light crops through the drought of the present summer – which bear so hard upon the Saints in your Stake, operate in the same manner upon us and our income. The Church feels the stringency of the times, and we do not receive anything like sufficient in the shape of tithing to enable us to meet our current expenses. The Council of the Apostles found it necessary some time since to stop making appropriations for our meeting-houses, placing the applications on file, to come up in their order when our circumstances will be more favorable to consider and grant them. We found ourselves compelled to take this position, because of the lack of funds to meet further appropriations. At the same time there is a feeling of liberality in the breasts of the brethren concerning schools. The cause of education, as is now proposed under the direction of these Boards, is one that lays very near to the hearts of the brethren, and they feel willing to strain a point to render aid, as soon as we can see our way clear to do so.

It may be that you will find public-spirited citizens among yourselves who may be willing to advance funds, upon proper security, to complete your building. If you could do so, it would be much better than to depend upon the Church in the present condition of the Church finances. (personal communication, August 20, 1888, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1)

Ultimately, both general and local Church sources of financial aid dried up. Faced with the financial downturns of the early 1890s, Church members found it difficult to send their children to tuition-supported private schools. The 1890 school year in St. George began with only 16 students enrolled. While the number increased to 72 by the end of the term, this was a marked decline from the 89 who attended the first term a year previous. The next year, only 10 students began the year, with 40 attending by December of 1891. Principal Savage summarized what he considered the problem, “The reason for this decrease in attendance is, without doubt, due to the ‘Free School Movement,’ and the failure of crops, owing to the floods last season” (personal communication, December 19, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). When enrollment improved in 1892, he wrote, “The interest manifested in the Academy heretofore, seemed to be abating, and it appeared as though the doors would have to be closed, the lack of means and free school system having almost depleted our ranks” (N. Savage, personal communication, December 23, 1892, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). Monnett (1984) summarized the challenge St. George and many Stake Academies faced, “More than any other influence, free schools and heightened state educational aid marked the decline of LDS schools” (p. 136).

Public support for Church schools was waning. After passage of the Free School Act, Levi Savage recorded the lack of community support for the St. George Academy:

They sayed President Woodruff told them make a preaching turn throug the Stake, and take a vote of the people of the several wards, and thus ascertain whether the people wished to sustain the academy or not. At the close of the meeting Pres Cannon said we would take a vote of the people if some one would make a motion. There was a hesitancy; Seeing the authorities of the Ward nor any one else was inclined to make the motion, I (Levi Savage) motioned, that the Academy of St. George Stake be sustained. It seemed as tho the vote was megar, not spirited, but there were no opposing votes. . . . I was sorry to see the

indifference shown to the Academy. (*Diary*, September 8, 1891, BYU Special Collections, MSS 417).

The problem was exacerbated by the fact that the rival district schools may not have differed much from the stake academy. Unlike Salt Lake City, where non-LDS community members influenced local schools, residents of St. George didn't feel the influence of the "godless education" President Woodruff warned existed. Monnett (1984) observed, "If church schools enjoyed a sense of 'destiny' and popularity among LDS officials, it was apparent that the general membership of the Mormon Church was not of a similar mind" (p. 180). This seems true of St. George. In 1891, Stake President Daniel D. McArthur wrote President Woodruff, describing the local schools, "Our district school system being controlled by our brethren and sisters and being more evenly graded and better supplied with suitable teachers than ever before detracted greatly the past season from the patronage heretofore given the Academy. And we see no reason of present to expect any material change in this respect" (personal communication, August 3, 1891, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39).

Board member David H. Cannon was charged with soliciting First Presidency opinion regarding the support of these district schools. Board minutes of August 2, 1892, record, "Chairman [Cannon] reported [a] conversation he had with First Presidency while in Salt Lake. They recommended [that] while our district schools were in [the] hands of our people they might afford themselves of [the] privileges of those schools but not to let [the] Academy die out but at least to keep up with an academic course" (Saint George Stake Board of Education Minutes, August 2, 1892, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39).

Keeping the academy alive was ultimately a losing effort. When the local funds failed, leaders turned to the general Church fund, but this Board, dependent on revenue

from tithing donations, likewise felt the financial pinch of the era. The economic depression caused by the Panic of 1893 compounded the situation, forcing Board secretary George Reynolds to write one academy, “I am directed to say that, at present, the General Board is entirely out of funds, having overdrawn its appropriation from the Church several thousand dollars, and the church is not in a condition, just now, to make further appropriations” (personal communication, June 1, 1893, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1).

Seeing the writing on the wall, the board arranged for an end to the St. George Stake Academy. Writing President Woodruff, board member David H. Cannon stated, “We now hear it rumored that there will be no appropriation by your honorable board this year for our Academy. If this be true, we respectfully submit that we shall be utterly unable to continue our school, and that being the case we feel it would be eminently just to release our principal, Elder Nephi Savage, so that he may be at liberty to engage in the District School, or at least till he is wanted for Stake Academy service” (personal communication, August 2, 1893, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39). General Board secretary George Reynolds responded, “I was instructed by the Board that after fully considering the matter they were reluctantly compelled to decide that no aid can be afforded by the General Board to Stake institutions of learning for the coming school year” (personal communication, August 12, 1893, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39). Upon receipt of the letter, the board closed the St. George Stake Academy in August 1893, just five short years after its ambitious beginning.

Looking back on the initial endeavor, it is evident that relations between the Church and the district schools were not as strained as officials in Salt Lake City made

them seem. Even before closing the academy, Principal Savage reported attending bi-weekly teacher meetings with the district faculty as well as annual teacher training for public school teachers (N. Savage, personal communication, December 19, 1890, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24). When the academy did close, not only did board member David H. Cannon ask the First Presidency's permission to release Nephi Savage to allow him to work in the district school, fellow board members Edward H. Snow and Horatio Pickett, representing the local school district, made application for the use of the academy property. Board minutes record that "on motion it was decided they might use it free of charge with the understanding that all such property obtained should be properly listed and its condition and filed with the Secretary and when returned to in like good condition" (Saint George Stake Board of Education Minutes, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39). Furthermore, Church board members approached local district officers about changing the starting time of the district schools to allow increased Religion Class attendance as a replacement for the failed academy (Saint George Stake Board of Education Minutes, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 39).

The closing of the St. George Stake Academy in 1893 was emblematic of the other academies attempted in this era. Some limped along for a few more years, hoping for better times. In 1898, Karl Maeser wrote the Oneida, Bear Lake, Bannock, Cassia, Summit, Uintah, Sanpete, Parowan, and Emery Stake Academy boards, "In consequence of the comparatively small amount placed at the disposal of the General Board of Education for distribution among our church schools, the General Board has found it impossible to make any appropriations for any Stake Academies during the present calendar year. You will please notify your Board of this decision, so that its plans for the

ensuing academic year can be shaped accordingly” (personal communication, April 5, 1898, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1). A year later, Board secretary George Reynolds wrote the struggling Weber Stake Academy, “I am sorry I can send you no encouraging word. Nearly all the church schools tell me they will have to close at the end of the present school year if they do not receive more help. I presume it is certain that the college in this city will close with the present semester, and the institutions in Provo and Logan both talk the same way, if help from some quarter is not obtained” (personal communication, March 3, 1899, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1). His prediction proved true. Of the nearly 30 academies begun Church wide between 1888 and 1895, less than half survived the decade (Berrett & Burton, 1958, p. 337).

Ultimately, only the largest, most established, or most determined of President Woodruff’s 1888 academy attempts survived. George Reynolds wrote the stake president in Thatcher, Arizona, summarizing the state of the program:

The appropriation to the General Church Board of Education by the Church for the present calendar year (1899) has already been divided up. I fear it will be a number of years before anything will reach you from that source. So small are the amounts divided that the Colleges at Logan and Salt Lake City both talk of closing, and at the Brigham Young Academy many of the teachers are arranging to work on a missionary basis. (personal communication, March 7, 1899, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1)

Continuing the theme, he wrote leaders in Rexburg, Idaho about the financial constraints:

At a meeting of the General Church Board of Education held today it was decided that by reason of the present condition of the finances of the church no pecuniary assistance could be rendered the Academy of your Stake during the present calendar year (ending Dec. 31, 1899) and I am free to confess that personally I see very little hope for any financial assistance coming from the general funds of the church for some years to come. Whatever you do educationally for the present will have to be done without any hope of the church being able to relieve you of any financial responsibilities you may incur. (G. Reynolds, personal communication, February 10, 1899, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 1)

*Conclusion*

Responding to the loss of educational control in the territory, LDS Church leaders during the 1880s and 1890s attempted to implement a region-wide program of private education. Obedient to their leaders' charge, academies for secondary education and Religion Classes for elementary sprang up across the Utah territory. Because they were part-time programs, dependent on significantly less financial resources, the Religion Classes largely succeeded during the era. They also met a significant need, attached, as they were, to existing and successful public elementary schools.

The academies, on the other hand, struggled to survive, plagued by financial constraint on both the local membership and the general Church leadership. The difficulties were compounded by an improper fit in many rural communities like St. George. Designed for implementation Church-wide, the academies seemed better tailored to larger communities like Salt Lake, Provo, Ogden, and Logan. In these areas, public high schools were beginning to emerge, providing competition, and ultimately need, for religiously based instruction at the secondary level. These larger cities also had larger non-LDS populations, heightening the perceived need to indoctrinate the children with religious truths. Finally, their larger LDS populations were also more able financially to support a separate school system.

In the many rural areas where they were instituted, the academies, though beneficial, provided continuing secondary education for people who may have not fully appreciated it. Not sensing an outside threat, nor seeing the rise of public secondary education in their areas, these schools were viewed as nice, but not necessary. When economic conditions worsened, "frivolous" expenses like a Church-sponsored education

were difficult to justify in remote areas. Schools in rural communities like St. George were scaled back, waiting for another need and better financial times.



## Chapter Four

### Revamping the System (1900-1920)

Stifled by financial difficulty, the Church satisfied itself with the public school system in places like St. George during the early years of the twentieth century. Because of its isolation, the area was largely LDS dominated anyway, eliminating President Woodruff's fear of godless public education and with it the initial need for an academy. Few of his academies, in fact, survived this period. Of the more than 30 institutions operated during the Woodruff administration, only 6 received general Church financial appropriations in 1899 during the administration of his successor, Lorenzo Snow. A handful of others struggled along, relying only on local support. During the presidency of Joseph F. Smith (1840-1918), however, other elements combined to rekindle an interest in Church-sponsored academies. In places like St. George, these educational options reemerged.

#### *Growth of Public High Schools in Utah*

Though public high schools in the state emerged at nearly the same time as the Church academies, their initial growth was more reserved. Legislative enactment in 1892 allowed school districts with a population of over 1,500 to authorize, by majority vote, the formation of a high school. It also allowed smaller districts the option of consolidating for similar purposes (Moffitt, 1946, p. 180).

The realization of public high schools in Utah, though permissible by state law, was slow. State Superintendent of Schools John R. Park lamented the voluntary nature of the statute, commenting in his 1896 report, "There are so many little matters to be adjusted, so many local jealousies that can not be suppressed, so many suspicions that can

not be allayed, that nearly every attempt at consolidation for the purpose of carrying on a high school has proved futile.” (cited in Moffitt, 1946, p. 181). By the turn of the century, only six high schools existed in the entire state (Salt Lake, Ogden, Park City, Brigham City, Nephi, and Richfield), the latter three of which only offered 9th and 10th grades in conjunction with grammar grades. Of the six schools, only the two in Salt Lake City and Ogden boasted student populations of more than 65 (McVicker, 1898/1900, p. 25-26).

Opposing academies in many communities may have contributed to the retardation of the public secondary system. Public high schools naturally succeeded in the state’s largest two cities, Salt Lake City and Ogden, possibly because of the religiously diverse population from which they drew. Of the remaining four turn-of-the-century high schools, Park City did not have a stake academy and competing academies in Brigham City, Nephi, and Richfield all failed prior to 1900.

The closure of the stake academies in these and other locations opened the door for public high school growth during the 1900s. By 1902, the State Superintendent’s report counted 19 public high schools in Utah (Nelson, 1900/1902, p. 22). Only three years later, there were 33 (Berrett & Burton, 1958, p. 338). The state legislature facilitated this growth, forming county school districts in rural areas and providing funding for high school use. Compulsory attendance laws helped increase student enrollment. By 1914, Superintendent A. C. Matheson boasted in his annual school report, “In a little more than a decade the number of high schools has increased from four to forty and the enrollment of students from one thousand to eight thousand” (cited in Moffitt, 1946, p. 190).

The boom in high school enrollment in Utah matched national trends. “If the 19th century was the age of the common (or primary) schools,” observed Rury (2005), “the opening decades of the 20th were the era of the high school” (p. 162). Begun as publicly sponsored academic alternatives to private academies, high school curriculum was gradually expanded to include progressive influence, including the addition of vocational training and courses in business, citizenship, and hygiene (p. 163-164). Similar patterns developed, both in Utah’s high schools and the Church’s academies during the early decades of the twentieth century.

#### *Woodward School in St. George*

The closure of the stake academy in 1893 created a need for secondary education in St. George. Though closing the academy represented an official retreat by the Church from education in the region, the closure was by no means a loss of Church influence. The same individuals instrumental in keeping the academy alive kept the district schools operative as well. Stake Academy board members Edward H. Snow and Horatio Pickett served as public school district trustees. Academy teachers Nephi Savage and Charles Miles were hired by the district and even continued teaching classes in the basement of the Church’s Tabernacle. Church individuals still ran the schools, but as public officials.

Closing the academy impacted public school enrollment, overcrowding the four ward or district schools. In response, the town restructured the system, replacing geographically organized schools with graded ones. Rose Jarvis and Edith Ivins taught first and second grades at the fourth ward school, Annie Cottam taught third and fourth grades in the third ward school, Martha Snow taught fifth and sixth grades in the court house, and Nephi Savage and Charles Miles taught seventh and eighth grades in the

basement of the Tabernacle (Moss, 1961, p. 132). One later teacher, Josephine Miles, described the conditions, “In 1894-5 I taught the Central School – Court House – the fifth and sixth grades and class of leftovers. There were 119 enrolled. I had no assistant. There was no playground, nothing attractive nor convenient, but many inconveniences” (Miles, 1923, p. 8).

The academy’s closure also meant the loss of some programs. High school grades, previously offered in the stake academy, were temporarily abandoned in 1893, forcing those desiring further education to look elsewhere. Education-minded citizens scrambled to fill the void. In 1897, Edward H. Snow, chairman of the school board, lobbied to remedy the situation, proposing construction of a central school.

Financing the endeavor proved to be a particular challenge. Though supportive of education, rural areas like Washington County suffered greatly due to the financial arrangements for supporting schools at the turn of the century. With no railroads and little corporate property, local tax revenue was forced to rely on property taxes assessed on farms, homes, and livestock (Nelson, 1900/1902, p. 262). In Washington County’s case, commissioners levied the highest rate allowed by the law, 4 mills, to supplement funds received from the state. In spite of these efforts, County Superintendent John T. Woodbury observed, “Notwithstanding this high levy the revenue derived is sufficient to run the schools for only two terms in most of the districts, and not to exceed three terms in the most populous districts” (p. 262).

Faced with the inability to even operate schools for an entire year, school advocates had to resort to creative measures to get a new school built. A special school tax was passed, allowing construction to begin on a central, community-run school. Each

of the eighteen districts in the county contributed, with assessed values ranging from a low of 1 mill in Pine Valley to a high of 15 mills in St. George (Nelson, 1900/1902, p. 262). These special assessments continued for four years, when finally the district bonded for the remaining \$6,000 of the total \$33,000 building cost (p. 264). In September 1901, the school opened its doors, “the first time the scattered children of St. George were brought together into one school building” (Moss, 1961, p. 139).

Community leaders chose to name the school after George Woodward, longtime advocate and contributor to schools in the area. Woodward was, in fact, the major benefactor for the building, having contributed nearly \$4,000 towards it, including financing a portion of the construction, providing the heating plant, and furnishing a piano (Nelson, 1900/1902, p. 264). Church Apostle Abraham O. Woodruff wrote school board member and Stake President Edward H. Snow concerning the name choice, “[I] am delighted with your success in securing the support of the people in giving your splendid school building the name of Woodward. Our dear old Brother Woodward has been so faithful and being unfortunate in not having a son to perpetuate his name I feel that giving his name to your splendid school building is a fitting tribute to him” (personal communication, July 12, 1901, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 30).

In many ways, the Woodward School was a continuation of the stake academy dream. Building materials included stone quarried but never used for the earlier academy building. John T. Woodbury, former assistant at the academy, taught eighth and ninth grades. Like the academy before it, Church leaders played prominent roles in forwarding the school’s organization. Stake President Edward H. Snow selected the first principal, A. B. Christensen, involving the Church’s First Presidency in getting him to leave studies

in Chicago to accept the appointment (E. H. Snow, 1939, p. 8). Echoing the same sentiments of his predecessors, President Snow said of the building upon its completion, “There now appears no good reason why our children should be sent away in order to be educated” (cited in Moss, 1961, p. 140).

Local Church leaders strongly encouraged members to support the new public school. At the end of the first academic year, President Snow wrote each bishopric, “The Woodward School at St. George will next year include the 9th and 10th grades. A corps of able instructors under Prof. Christensen will constitute the faculty and where your people intend sending their children away to school we hope you will send them here for the people of St. George at great sacrifice and risk have decided to take this step” (personal communication, April 26, 1902, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 30).

When completed, the two-story red sandstone structure housed 12 classrooms, offices, and a hall. Blackboards, radiators, and note books replaced the pot-bellied stoves and heavy breakable slates of the nineteenth century schools (Bradshaw, 1950, p. 301). Eventually, students from 1st through 10th grades throughout St. George met in the school. Those desiring to attend from outside the community could do so upon payment of tuition (Moss, 1961, p. 140).

Building the school was one thing, operating it was another. Teacher staffing had to be resolved. The year the school opened, Superintendent Woodbury observed of teacher hiring, “The trustees employ the best teachers that are available under the conditions prevailing in the county. The shortness of the school term, and the low salary which some districts can pay, make it impossible to hold here the best teachers or induce them to come here from other counties” (Nelson, 1900/1902, p. 263). A few of the

teachers were graduates of normal schools or colleges, but the majority only had a partial high school education (p. 263).

Grades one through nine were represented in the Woodward School the first year. In addition to principal A. B. Christensen, the following served as teachers: John T. Woodbury (eighth and ninth grades), Charles H. Miles (seventh), Angus O. Woodbury (sixth), Maude R. Snow (fifth), May Keats (fourth), Lena Nelson (third), Artie Snow Jensen (second), Annie M. Isom (first), and Jamie MacFarlane (first) (Moss, 1961, p. 140). The salary scale was based on the perceived level of difficulty of the grade, with John T. Woodbury making a high of \$60 a month for the most advanced grades while Jamie MacFarlane earned \$25 a month for the most elementary one (p. 140).

Though small, the Woodward School was an important addition to educational opportunities in St. George, especially with its high school offerings. In addition to the elementary and junior high options, the 1910 school year began with thirty-four 9th grade students and nineteen 10th grade students. These grades continued to be the only high school options available in St. George through the early part of the 1910s.

Life at the Woodward School reflects typical twentieth century education. Newspaper accounts record details of recitals, forensics debates, programs, dances, sporting events, commencement exercises, and even Christmas visits by Old Saint Nick. However, they also reflect the influence of the LDS Church on public schooling in rural southern Utah. For example, the school's musical program in December 1908 included a solo by visiting Apostle Heber J. Grant. Arbor Day festivities in March 1909 opened with a benedictory prayer by the local LDS bishop and a speech by Stake President Edward H. Snow.

*St. George Stake Academy*

In spite of the secondary school options presented by the Woodward School, Church leaders still felt the need for a direct hand in education. In addition, community leaders sought to expand beyond the 10th grade option provided by the school. In 1907, President Snow, who had been serving as deputy superintendent of county schools, challenged fellow leaders to consider reestablishing the stake academy to keep local youth from attending far away schools in the absence of one of their own (Moss, 1961, p. 169). Together with the board of education, he circulated a letter to stake members:

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

The Stake Board of Education, for some time past, has had under consideration the advisability of establishing at St. George a St. George Stake Academy, or Church High School, where the high school course can be given in connection with theology. We are unanimously of the opinion that the time is opportune now for us to build and maintain such an institution.

Aside from the moral and spiritual benefit to be derived from such a school, it will be a saving to the people of this Stake of many thousands of dollars annually. This year, 1907, there are perhaps seventy-five students from the St. George Stake attending high school studies in different parts of the State. There are 43 students attending the B. Y. University at Provo alone, 14 at the Beaver Branch, and a number attending school at Salt Lake City, Logan and Cedar. If we shall estimate the cost for each pupil at the low figure of \$250.00, we have over \$18,000.00 as an expenditure for 1907; almost, if not quite, enough to build us a suitable building for a Stake Academy.

When we take into consideration not only the money spent by those who somehow manage to send their children away, but also the opportunities for an education which would be offered to those who never can get the necessary money to go away, we begin to realize what a blessing a church high school would be to us in this stake.

It will keep our hard earned money at home. It will bring some money into our stake. It will open the way for a high school education to many who will never get it any other way. It will avoid the necessity of sending the children of the stake so far away, at a tender age, to get what they can get at or nearer home. It will give our children the privilege of studying the principles of the Gospel, under the most favorable conditions, at a time when they are preparing themselves for the battle of life.

To build an Academy will require a first cost sacrifice on our part. Think over the sacrifice; think over the permanent benefits. A member of the Board will call on you later, and discuss the matter further with you. May we hope to enlist



your hearty sympathy and liberal aid in this very laudable undertaking. (E. H. Snow, personal communication, November 8, 1907, LDS Church History Library)

Following up on the letter, visiting General Authority Francis Lyman expressed surprise that the community didn't have a stake academy. This sparked the movement, and approval was given by the Church's First Presidency in 1908 for the stake to reconvene the academy (Moss, 1961, p. 170).

Unlike the earlier academy, which opened just three months after it was first announced, this second academy involved more planning and preparation. Leaders decided not to open until a suitable building was constructed, a problem that dogged the earlier attempt. During the initial academy thrust of the 1890s, building responsibilities rested on the local stakes, an expense nearly impossible for them to bear. In 1902, the General Church Board of Education decided to take a more active role, requiring stakes to submit plans for their approval before building. This translated into greater cooperation on building projects. In St. George's case, local Church leaders agreed to pay two-thirds of the building cost, aided by a one-third initial contribution of \$20,000 from general Church funds. Ultimately, the St. George Stake contributed \$35,000 towards construction, making for a total building cost of \$55,000. Like its predecessor, a building site was again chosen on the public square, this time on the corner of Main Street and 100 South.

Work on the structure began in 1909, with board of education and stake presidency member Thomas P. Cottam overseeing construction. Like the Woodward School before it, local citizens sacrificed to meet their portion of the building cost. In spite of the challenges, the building progressed relatively quickly, with the physical

structure being completed in the summer of 1911. Generous donors contributed heavily to furnish specific departments, with a donation list reading “like a Who’s Who of 1911 Dixie” (Alder & Brooks, 1996, p. 245). Endowed departments included the Andrus Woodwork Department, the C.F. Foster Science Laboratory, the Woodbury Chemistry Laboratory, the Snow Physics Laboratory, the Seegmiller Agricultural Laboratory, and domestic science and art laboratories (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, 1915, p. 12). Though the sound of hammers and the smell of paint signaled unfinished interior of portions of the building, the school opened its doors to students on September 25, 1911 (*The Dixie*, 1913).

The opening of the academy impacted work at the neighboring Woodward School. Not needing two secondary education facilities in the town, district officials decided to transfer the 9th and 10th grades from Woodward to the new academy, which added an 11th grade the first year and a 12th grade the next (Moss, 1961, p. 174). The Woodward School continued to serve elementary and junior high students in the community. Hugh M. Woodward acted as the first principal of the new academy, heading up a faculty of seven other teachers including Maude R. Snow, Arthur K. Hafen, W. C. Cox, Emily T. Woodward, Joseph McAllister, William Staheli, and Lillian Higbee (p. 174). The second year the faculty was expanded to include David Gourley, Joseph K. Nicholes, Mayme Jones, John T. Woodbury, Ann Snow, and Ida Miles (p. 175). Enrollment also quickly expanded, outpacing the earlier academy attempt. A total of 135 students registered the first year, each paying \$10.00 tuition (p. 174-175). By 1914, enrollment had doubled to 273 students (p. 176).

The curriculum was similar to other high schools of the time, with the exception of theology, which was required of every student. Course offerings included English, Ancient and Modern History, Algebra, Geometry, Physiography, Physics, Prepared Science, and Economics (Moss, 1961, p. 176). Fees beyond general tuition were assessed for many courses. For example, the 1916-1917 financial records list, in addition to the tuition of \$15 for high school and \$21 for college work, individual course fees:

Domestic Art	\$.75	Band	\$1.50
Dress Making	\$.75	Orchestra	\$1.50
Domestic Science	\$5.00	Drawing	\$.75
Woodwork	\$5.00	Biology	\$2.00
Chemistry	\$5.00	Bacteriology	\$2.50
Physics	\$3.00	Psychology (college)	\$1.00
Gym	\$1.00	Physiology	\$1.00

(Dixie College Records, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Later, as extracurricular activities at the academy increased, an amusement fee was added for attendance at dances and athletic events (Dixie College Records, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

Though similar to public schools, the curriculum was also closely monitored by Church authorities. The General Church Board of Education decided in 1902 that no program of study at a Church school could be offered without the approval of the Board (General Church Board of Education Minutes, January 28, 1902, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643). In spite of these regulations, Church Board of Education minutes a decade later record “alarms of many stake presidents and others concerning false doctrines being taught by a few of the teachers, especially three at BYU” (General Church Board of Education Minutes, February 3, 1911, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643). The Board responded to the concerns, releasing the three teachers at BYU and warning all Church schools about curriculum:

It [is] the sense of the Board that any Church school teacher who persists in the teaching of ideas contrary to the teachings of the Presidency and Apostles of the Church, be not re-engaged to teach in the Church schools, and that at the time of the engagement of teachers for Church school service, it is definitely understood that the teaching of doctrine opposed to the preaching of the Presidency and Apostles shall be considered sufficient cause for dismissal without recourse. (A. Winter, personal communication, April 10, 1911, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

The Church was determined to maintain control over the large and expensive enterprise.

A blending of the academic and the spiritual existed for the students as well.

Academy circulars proclaim the multi-fold purpose, “to make the school a real community institution, the educator of the patrons as well as the students in all lines that will make for their spiritual, industrial and social happiness and success” (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, 1915, p. 9). Delineating the academic and industrial side of this goal, the academy proposed “to supply the students with sufficient information to make of them moving, active forces for civic and social righteousness. The boys and girls must receive technical information in the lines of their daily occupations. Science, literature, history, music and art must be developed along with the industrial and social subjects” (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, p. 9). To this end, faculty members taught a wide range of subjects, including sociology, economics, physical science, English, German, mathematics, history, commercial work, woodwork, domestic science, physical education, band, orchestra, and music (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, p. 5-6).

The spiritual side included daily devotional exercises and rules reflecting the religious tenets of the LDS faith. Principal Woodward, an advocate of student

participation in the government process, went so far as to implement a system of student government to enforce these standards. The 1915-1916 circular states, “The student body organization is effected by the students for the purpose of considering and acting upon questions pertaining to student life. The students act as a legislative body in aiding to raise the intellectual and moral standard of the school. In brief, the aim is to give them experience in governing themselves. The Student Body has a system of courts with which they handle all questions of discipline” (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, 1915, p. 11). Dixie College records include the minutes of this unique system of student courts, complete with student judges, a police force, court clerks, prosecuting attorneys, and a jury. Court proceedings include fines for playing pool, communicating orally in the study room, lingering about the streets, using tobacco, and slandering character (Dixie College Papers, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547). One account even describes a girl’s love turning to “hate” after her romantic interest and “most loved friend” fulfilled his duties as judge in prosecuting her for loitering (*The Dixie*, 1913).

The academy seemed to excel in this blending of the secular with the spiritual. Four years after its opening, enrollment had more than doubled to over 300 high school students (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, 1915, p. 9). To achieve such growth, academy leaders recruited in surrounding communities. Proclaimed as offering “thoroughly modern” facilities, the city was touted as “an ideal location for a high school,” with an enviable climate and skies that “rival the far-famed skies of Italy, and from February to December the sun shines, and flowers bloom” (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for*

*the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, p. 12). Proudly representing their interests, the annual announcement described outdoor life in the city:

There is no school in the entire west that is so favorably situated, athletically, as is the Dixie Academy. The delightful climate makes the out-door games possible practically all the year. There are very few days during the so-called winter months when baseball, tennis, and out-door sports in general cannot be carried on. The customary Christmas pastime is baseball played under a cloudless sky, and when shirt sleeves are very much in evidence. It is an every day occurrence to see the tennis courts occupied during the winter months, students preferring the out-door exercises to indoor gymnastics. (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, p. 11)

The academy soon added organized extracurricular activities to its schedule, increasing the options for students. Concerts, plays, and musical recitals joined school-sponsored basketball, track, and debate teams early in the academy's existence (E. S. Romney, personal communication, May 9, 1919, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Though available, some of these activities took time to develop. Of the basketball team, the 1913 school yearbook ironically quipped, "Of course we wished to commence athletic work, and, as we had no coach, it remained for Mr. Woodward to teach the boys all that the rule-books said about basketball; but this was where we made a mistake, for the rule-books didn't say that the other schools should beat us eighty to fifteen" (*The Dixie*, 1913). Hoping to also attract those with more academic interests, the academy also advertised the adjacent public library, with its 500 volumes, as well as the school's endowed woodworking, chemistry, physics, science, agriculture, and domestic science laboratories (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, 1915, p. 12).

Easing possible parental fears about such an idyllic setting, the school described its amusements:

The social life for students in St. George is ideal. The town is free from the objectionable element – saloons, dives, etc. – found in many places. The Academy is the social center for the young people. The dances are held under the best management and elevating environment. A consideration of this, together with the fact that most of our students from the outside board in private homes, removes a great deal of that concern which parents feel in sending their children away to school. (*St. George Stake Academy: Circular and announcements for the fifth academic year, 1915-1916*, 1915, p. 12)

### *Teacher Training and the Dixie Normal College*

With the high school curriculum firmly established during the first few years of the Academy's existence, leaders looked to expand the program. This coincided with similar growth and expansion throughout the Church's educational system. A major need during the first decade of the twentieth century, and indeed of nearly every era in Utah's educational history, was qualified teachers. Moffitt observed (1946), "An examination of the school reports indicates that only during short periods of time in Utah's history has there been a sufficient number of well-trained teachers to fill all teaching positions" (p. 283). The rise of Church academies, together with the booming high school enrollment during the early twentieth century, only complicated this teacher shortage.

To fill the need, a shift occurred in Church school curriculum. Before 1900, most Church academies operated as modified elementary schools, with limited secondary and normal school options. "From 1900 to 1910 the academies offered more diversified secondary courses leading to terminal diplomas in preparation for vocations and missionary service" (Laycock, 1992, p. 11). This led to enlarged academic departments and offerings including drama, music, debate, and sports. Finally, after 1910, four-year high school curriculum at the academies emerged, with several offering post-secondary work, particularly in teacher training (p. 11). The addition of teacher training matched a trend set by earlier academies nationwide (Kaestle, 1983, p. 130).

The increase in teacher training at Church schools was a response to this state-wide shortage. In addition to offering the training, Church leaders petitioned state administrators to recognize its normal school graduates as qualified to teach in the public schools. In 1911, Church President Joseph F. Smith appealed to the State Board of Education for their approval:

The General Board of Education of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints respectfully requests your recognition of the normal work in our Church schools, so that the graduates from our normal courses may be regarded in the same class as State normal graduates, and be granted certificates to teach in the public schools without examination.

And in order that you may intelligently act upon this request, we cordially invite you, or a representative committee, to visit and inspect any of our schools, critically examine the courses offered, and satisfy yourselves as to the character of the work done there.

Feeling that graduates from our schools are entitled to the same recognition and opportunity to teach as the graduates of other schools when they exhibit equal preparation and ability, we confidently make this appeal to you, and trust that the request will receive your favorable consideration. (personal communication, May 5, 1911, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643)

The St. George Stake Academy followed this shift towards increased secondary and post-secondary work. Seeing the need, particularly in the southern portion of the state, for qualified teachers able and willing to teach in the region, the St. George Stake board of education applied to the General Church Board to become a Church normal college. In February 1916, they received authorization to proceed, together with an additional \$2,000 from the General Board to operate the school. Granting the approval, the Church set standards for the normal school candidates, requiring four years of high school for entrance, sixty hours of college work, training in educational subjects, and practice in teaching common school subjects. Of the Academy they required teachers with standard college training, a library of over 5,000 volumes, and a suitable laboratory (Saint George Stake Board of Education minutes, March 15, 1916, Dixie College



Archives). Local leaders responded to these requirements, increasing the faculty size and planning an expansion of the physical plant, including the construction of a gymnasium and swimming pool. Miles (1923) observed, “The people of St. George were again called upon for donations, and they responded as they always have done for the education of their children (p. 10).

Ultimately, a mixture of secondary and post-secondary schooling emerged, with the academy offering the last two years of high school and the first two years of college, a plan gaining popularity in the United States at the time (Alder & Brooks, 1996, p. 245). This necessitated a working relationship between the local ecclesiastical leaders and Washington County School District, which paid the Church for the high school portion of a student’s training. It also necessitated a name change, with the St. George Stake Academy becoming Dixie Normal College in 1916.

The expansion into college work facilitated the school’s growth. Seven faculty members were assigned teaching loads to handle the anticipated normal school enrollment. Enrollment jumped from 338 in 1915-16 to 403 the next year. By 1918, the school had 54 college students, with 28 completing degrees in teaching (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). Tuition was restructured to reflect the various academic tracks. During the 1916-17 academic year, high school students paid \$15 for their work while college students paid \$25. The overall growth of both the high school and college departments reflects similar growth in Church schools system-wide during the first two decades of the twentieth century, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Church School Enrollment, 1902-1920*

Year	Number of Schools	High School Enrollment	College Enrollment
1902-03	18	2,033	87
1903-04	18	2,438	127
1904-05	16	2,527	156
1905-06		Data Unavailable	
1906-07	18	3,111	74
1907-08	18	3,874	100
1908-09	17	3,813	162
1909-10	18	3,781	100
1910-11	21	4,173	113
1911-12	22	4,466	168
1912-13	21	4,432	212
1913-14	20	4,737	283
1914-15	21	5,237	386
1915-16	22	4,817	455
1916-17	22	5,064	486
1917-18	23	4,861	450
1918-19	21	4,184	328
1919-20	21	5,984	438

Note. Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235

As is evident from the statistics, growth occurred in both the high school and college enrollments during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Though the statistical increase in the number of schools was modest, increasing only by three, high school enrollment nearly tripled. College enrollment showed a five-fold increase. In reality, seven of the Church academies or colleges bore the bulk of this increase, especially in the college enrollment, transforming themselves into state approved teacher training centers. These schools included Brigham Young University (Provo), Brigham Young College (Logan), Weber Normal College (Ogden), Snow Normal College (Ephraim), Dixie Normal College (St. George), Ricks Normal College (Rexburg, ID), and Gila Normal College (Thatcher, AZ) (General Church Board of Education Minutes, March 8, 1920, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643).

Fortunately for these schools, the shift in structure from high school to collegiate work occurred during the mid 1910s. Established as important teacher training options, they survived the financial challenges that plagued the other academies later in the decade. Ultimately, as will be seen in the following chapter, it may have been this move that preserved Dixie, as well as the other normal schools, from a similar fate.

In spite of these expanding normal school options, teacher training continued to challenge the state of Utah. In 1919, high school inspector Mosiah Hall wrote the State Board of Education about the teacher shortage:

Permit me to call attention to the serious lack of qualified teachers in our state at the present time, particularly in the elementary schools. . . .

During the school year 1917-1918 five hundred and fifty new teachers were employed in the schools. Of this number four hundred and sixty-one were either uncertified or were granted emergency certificates at the urgent request of superintendents, largely in the rural districts.

The normal schools have now in preparation only one hundred ninety-six first and second year normal graduates to fill vacancies for the coming year.

There will be, however, fully six hundred positions to fill. How are the additional teachers to be supplied?

Within about a half dozen years the number of male teachers in the schools has been reduced forty-five per cent, the result is that it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure male teachers for principals and supervisors and to fill suitable positions in the junior and senior high schools. While this feminizing of the schools is serious enough in itself, it is further aggravated by the fact that a vast majority of the teachers drafted into the service on emergency permits are female. (personal communication, May 10, 1919, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

To remedy the situation, Hall recommended a significant increase in both public and private teacher training programs.

Inspector Hall's plea for improved teacher training came at a difficult time for education in the state. Tensions abroad, in the form of World War I, and a local health crisis caused by the worldwide flu epidemic taxed educational systems. These pressures were felt throughout the Church educational system. The 1918-19 school year was particularly difficult for Dixie Normal College. Administrative changes occurred when the founding president, Hugh M. Woodward, left to pursue graduate studies at the University of California (Moss, 1961, p. 177-178). His successor, Erastus S. Romney, summarized in his annual report the challenges faced by the fledgling college:

As a result of the extremely unsettled condition of the country at the beginning of the present school year, due primarily to the fact that the nation was at war, and secondarily to the misunderstanding concerning the nature and purpose of the Student's Army Training Movement, we found it very difficult to arouse either parents or students to the necessity of supporting our educational institutions. You will readily understand that this attitude on the part of both parents and students, together with the further fact that many of our young men had been called into the service of their country, would of necessity decrease the enrollment. The enrollment this year has been about one-third below normal.

This work of the institution has been somewhat interfered with because of the influenza epidemic that has been raging the past winter. We, however, have suffered less than any other college in the State, being as I understand it, the only one that can close on scheduled time and give a full year's credit to its students.

We were closed but seven weeks because of the epidemic and during these weeks, correspondence work was carried on with our students. This together with

the two weeks made up on Saturdays enabled us to hold the thirty four weeks which meets the state requirements.

Although the conditions generally have not been favorable for the carrying on of Educational Work we feel that when all things are taken into consideration, the school year has been as successful as could reasonably have been expected.

The splendid spirit of Loyalty and Patriotism that has been exhibited by both teachers and students has helped to take the place of numbers. The unfavorable condition about us, instead of creating a spirit of discouragement has tended rather to unite us together and we feel as a body of teachers and students that in closing the school year we are going forth with a renewed determination that our beloved Alma mater shall not decline in influence and power, but rather that it shall continue to develop along the lines intended by its founders. (personal communication, May 9, 1919, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Ironically, though positive about their challenges, including the limited impact of the influenza epidemic, Romney died from the flu less than a year later, necessitating further administrative change. In 1920, science professor Joseph K. Nicholes was appointed president in his stead.

Romney's assessment, though realistic about the challenges and uncertainties faced by the institution, speaks optimistically about the future. Normal school training at Dixie and the other Church schools, doing the best it could at the end of a difficult decade, positioned itself for what appeared to be a brighter future as the 1920s approached. However, the success of other Church programs, coupled with environmental and financial constraints, would challenge that position a decade later.

#### *Rise of the LDS Seminary System*

While academies reemerged in places like St. George in the early 1900s, other LDS communities experimented with a vastly different religious education model. In 1912, a year after reopening the St. George Stake Academy, experimentation began in Salt Lake on a second Church educational pattern. Growing state sponsored high schools in Utah were attended, in large part, by students from LDS families who found it more

economical to send their children to schools where the state gradually paid more and more of the expenses, including tuition, textbooks, and transportation (Berrett, 1988, p. 27; Moffitt, 1946, p. 140-141). Furthermore, as a general rule, these schools were staffed by LDS teachers and administered by LDS board members (Berrett, 1988, p. 27). Students in these schools, limited either financially or geographically from attending one of the Church academies, created a need for religious education in the public schools.

The response to that need came from the local level. In south Salt Lake, Granite High School had been created in 1905 to serve the secondary school needs of families in the area, many of whom were LDS. In 1911, University of Utah professor Joseph F. Merrill was called as counselor to Frank Y. Taylor, President of the Granite Stake, and given the charge to support the educational needs of the members (Berrett, 1988, p. 28). Impressed by the religious training his wife provided their children in the home, Merrill learned she credited the expertise to her experience in the theology classes of Dr. James E. Talmage at the old Salt Lake Academy. This sparked the idea of offering a similar, supplementary program for public high school students in the stake (J. F. Merrill, 1938). Approved by the Church Board of Education, State Board of Education, Granite School District superintendent B. W. Ashton, and Granite High School principal James E. Moss, the high school seminary program was born (Berrett, 1988, p. 28-30).

Because of state constitutional provisions, the program needed to separate religious instruction from the state-sponsored curriculum. The stake agreed to construct a facility adjacent to the campus where students, released from a one period study hall during their six-class day, could attend. Borrowing \$2,500, the stake began construction on the building, anticipating offering the first classes in the fall of 1912.

With a building in place, finding the proper teacher became the next hurdle. In April 1912, President Merrill wrote Church Board of Education Superintendent Horace H. Cummings, outlining a teacher's desired qualifications:

May I say that it is the desire of the Presidency of the Stake to have a strong young man who is properly qualified to do the work in a most satisfactory manner. By young we do not necessarily mean a teacher young in years, but a man who is young in his feelings, who loves young people, who delights in their company, who can sympathize strongly with them and who can command their respect and admiration and exercise a great influence over them. We want a man who can enjoy student sports and activities as well as one who is a good teacher. We want a man who is a thorough student, one who will not teach in a perfunctory way, but who will enliven his instructions with a strong, winning personality and give evidence of thorough understanding of and scholarship in the things he teaches.

It is desired that this school be thoroughly successful and a teacher is wanted who is a leader and who will be universally regarded as the inferior to no teacher in the High School. (personal communication, April 23, 1912, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 301)

Thomas J. Yates, a young engineer with a degree from Cornell, fit this description and was contracted as the first teacher, earning \$100 a month. The schedule was arranged for Yates to teach in the afternoon, allowing him to do his engineering work for Murray City in the mornings and on Saturdays (Historical Resource File, 1891-1989, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 301). Offerings included courses in the Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Church history and doctrine (Berrett, 1988, p. 30).

Conducted on an experimental basis during the 1912-13 school year, the release-time seminary program quickly expanded. The initial enrollment of 70 blossomed to 80 the second year and 90 the next. In 1914, a second seminary was built in Brigham City, increasing total program enrollment to 337. The next year, a third seminary in Mt. Pleasant was opened, pushing Church-wide enrollment to 703. Other stakes quickly caught on, and the program boomed. Seminary enrollment for the remainder of the

decade is shown in Table 2. Expansion of the program continued. By the end of the next decade, enrollment reached nearly 26,000 (Historical Resource File, 1891-1989, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 301).

Table 2

*LDS Seminary Enrollment, 1912-1920*

Year	Number of Seminaries	Enrollment
1912-13	1	70
1913-14	1	80
1914-15	1	90
1915-16	2	337
1916-17	3	703
1917-18	5	1,030
1918-19	13	1,528
1919-20	20	3,272

Note. Historical Resource File, 1891-1989, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 301

Seminary founder Joseph Merrill observed of this growth, “Its promoters had no thought or desire that [seminary] should have any influence in closing LDS academies. But if it were successful at Granite they did hope that sooner or later LDS students in other public high schools might have the privilege of attending a seminary” (J. F. Merrill, 1938, p. 56). Accordingly, while growing throughout the Church, seminary programs were conspicuously absent from places like St. George and other communities supporting



Church academies. Provo, home to the Church's largest school, Brigham Young University, did not start seminary until 1921. Ephraim and Ogden, homes to Snow College and Weber College respectively, didn't add the program until 1923. Logan, site of Brigham Young College, added seminary in 1924. St. George trailed them all, opening its first seminary in 1936. In these communities with arguably some of the highest percentages of LDS families in the state, the competing stake academy and the absence of a public high school stunted the seminary growth.

### *Religion Class Changes*

While secondary school opportunities increased for the youth of southern Utah, the LDS Church continued its hand in elementary education as well. As discussed previously, Church officials made a conscious decision in the 1890s to fund separate secondary facilities, in the form of the academies, while supporting the public schools for elementary grades. To keep a hand in the education of their youngest members, they implemented the after-school Religion Class program for these schools.

Possibly due to lower operational costs, the Religion Class movement weathered the financial storm of the late 1890s better than the academy system. By the early 1900s, it emerged as a major educational program of the Church, part and parcel of the public school system itself. Unfortunately, enrollment statistics do not remain for the early years of the Religion Class movement. However, in the 1913-14 academic year, enrollment figures show 33,467 students participating, supported by 3,288 officers and teachers (Historical Resource File, 1891-1989, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 301). This growth continued. By the 1924-25 school year, a little over a decade later, Church reports show 57,892 students enrolled, supported by 4,125 officers and teachers

(Statistical Report 1925, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 80). This included the 1,389 students enrolled that year in elementary level Religion Classes in St. George (Statistical Report 1925, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 80).

In reality, these classes became merely an after-school extension of the elementary school day. In the April 1916 general conference, First Presidency member Anthon H. Lund offering a lengthy description of the typical Religion Class experience:

The classes are opened by singing, led by the teacher or by one of the children, as he or she may direct. The singing is not accompanied with instrumental music. We like them to be independent of such help and able to strike the right pitch themselves. When our young men are called to go out into the missionary field, you know what a blessing it is to them to be able to sing. . . .

After the children have sung a hymn, their hearts are attuned for the second step, which is prayer. Here one of the boys or girls will volunteer to offer the prayer when the teacher calls on them to do so, and the boy or girl chosen to lead will utter a short sentence or a short phrase, which all repeat in concert, and then the next sentence will be given and repeated, and so on until the prayer is ended. Repeating the words spoken by the one offering the prayer secures attention, for all are alert to join in the prayers and to pronounce the words which the leader has spoken.

The third step is to learn a memory gem, or good thought. The teacher will lead out with a short part of the quotation and the children repeat it after her. When it is learned the next part of the quotation is given, and so to the end of it. By this method a great many precious thoughts are stored away in the minds of the children that will help them in time to come.

Then comes the fourth step, which is the real lesson, and takes the longest time. The lesson and the memory gem are generally so related that one explains the other. The lessons generally consist in narratives and concrete examples, which the children love to hear, and which will make such an impression upon their minds that they will remember them, and will try to carry out that which has been taught them.

The fifth step is testimony-bearing. We ask the children to bear testimony of what they have themselves experienced, what they know of the goodness of God, the goodness of their parents, and of others, what joy has come to their hearts in performing a good act, an unselfish act to others. All of this we consider good material for testimony bearing, and if you listen to these children bearing their testimony, it will often melt your heart, for you know they are innocent and honest in what they say, and we can see how the Spirit of the Lord is working upon their young hearts. They will tell of visiting a sick comrade and comforting them, perhaps bringing him flowers; they will tell of taking part in cutting the wood of a widow for winter use, and of so many other things that they have done.

The object of the Religion Class is to imbue their hearts with practical religion, that is, as James defines it, “to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world.”

The sixth step is singing and prayer, conducted as were the opening exercises. (Lund, 1916, p. 11)

After describing the typical Religion Class day, Lund challenged parents to support it, “You ought not to neglect sending your children to the Religion Classes, for they need the instruction given there. . . . I will plead with you, my brethren and sisters, to sustain the movement of our Religion Classes. The children will be built up and encouraged in well-doing, and the time they spend there does not interfere with their other studies” (Lund, 1916, p. 12).

Public pressure about the blending of Church and state increased as did these programs. In response, Church President Joseph F. Smith described the interaction:

In a number of settlements these classes have been held in public schoolhouses, especially where the population is largely Latter-day Saints, but there has been no intention to introduce religious teachings in the public schools, nor has it been so introduced. The use of the school buildings was merely for the sake of convenience, and to facilitate the assembling of the classes, many of whose numbers were students in the schools. . . . Our instructions to those in charge of the religion classes have always been to allow sufficient time to intervene between the dismissal of the schools and the opening of the classes, so as to avoid any infringement upon the regular school work, and give all a chance to withdraw who did not desire to attend the classes. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 4, p. 102)

Though Smith viewed the opposition as “groundless,” he encouraged leaders to withdraw from public school buildings, so as not to “imperil in the least the independence of the schools” or cause any “uneasiness” (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 4, p. 102).

Desiring to “be in harmony with the statutes of our state and nation,” he counseled leaders to find other options (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 4, p. 102). In spite of this request, Religion Classes continued in most public schools throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, where they also continued to grow (Quinn, 1975).

*Competing Systems Within and Without*

By 1920, educational opportunities for members of the LDS faith abounded in the state. For elementary students, public schools were firmly established, funded by the state but backed by the LDS Church. Ancillary religion classes provided an after-school spiritual component to the secular elementary curriculum. For secondary students, options included the burgeoning public high school movement, with its corresponding release-time seminary option. Those desiring a more comprehensive religious education experience could choose to attend one of a number of Church academies, offering a general high school curriculum, integrated with religious instruction. Those desiring to further their educational experience could attend one of five Church colleges or universities in the state, pursuing training in a variety to academic fields.

Operating such an expansive system had its costs, however, especially financially for an over-extended Church. General Church appropriations for each of these programs skyrocketed during the era. President Joseph F. Smith, summarizing Church expenditures for the 15 year period from 1901 to 1915, reported spending \$3,714,455 for schools, the largest expenditure in the entire Church budget for the time period (Joseph F. Smith, 1916, p. 7). By comparison, \$3,279,900 had been spent through all Church channels aiding the poor during the same era. Slightly over \$2,000,000 was spent building meeting houses and only \$1,169,499 was spent on maintenance and repair of temples (p. 7). Church schools were receiving the lion's share of the funds, and requesting more at an alarming rate. Available Church appropriations for the era, shown in Table 3, track this increase in educational spending.

Table 3

*General Church Appropriations for Schools, 1906-1920*


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Year	Total Appropriation
1906-07	\$218,533.34
1907-08	\$233,242.00
1908-09	\$287,220.00
1909-10	\$286,418.83
1910-11	\$312,006.46
1911-12	\$354,132.47
1912-13	\$312,985.60
1913-14	\$373,458.12
1914-15	\$357,327.42
1915-16	\$354,296.99
1916-17	\$363,414.34
1917-18	\$430,987.96
1918-19	\$763,336.96
1919-20	\$675,251.89

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Note. Annual Statistical and Financial Report of Church Schools, 1903-1923, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 63

These increases alarmed Church leaders. In 1909, the Church Board of Education wrote to the Brigham Young College in Logan, summarizing the plight, "Within less than a decade the annual appropriation for maintaining the Church schools has increased almost tenfold. This is altogether out of proportion to the increase of the revenues of the

Church; a ratio that cannot longer be maintained” (cited in Berrett & Burton, 1958, p. 343).

In spite of the restraint, costs skyrocketed. Especially alarming was the increase at the end of the 1910s, where expenditures doubled in a three year period. A similar trend existed for the Dixie Normal College. The first year in operation, the academy received \$4,000 as its regular Church appropriation. Nine years later, for the 1919-1920 school year, the allotment had multiplied five times, to \$22,215 (Annual Statistical and Financial Report of Church Schools, 1903-1923, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 63).

Competition among Church schools emerged for these limited funds. To accurately track expenditures, the Church began breaking down costs, reporting statistics for the various schools and programs. In 1915, for example, annual financial reports record that Church schools provided an average of 28% of their total expenditures on their own. General Church funds were forced to cover the remaining 72%. The St. George Stake Academy fared somewhat better, raising 31% of its total expenditures locally (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). This ratio, 70% from the Church and 30% from local funds, remained constant throughout the decade. Subsequent years reported average cost per pupil data. Again, St. George fared better than the average. In 1916, the average cost per pupil for all Church schools was \$68. St. George kept costs down, averaging only \$43 per pupil (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). This figure continued to rise, however. Just two years later, per pupil expenditures at Dixie had risen to \$62, an increase of 44% (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235).

*State Relationships with Church Schools*

Though the Church made financial commitments to keep its schools operating, opposition to the competing public school system diminished. The changing relationship between the state of Utah and the Church is evident by the relationship that existed between the two school systems during the early twentieth century. Gone was the rhetoric about protecting the youth from the evils of public schools. At the general level, the Church began reaching out to public education, even hosting the National Education Association convention in Salt Lake in 1913. In communities like St. George, Church and public school officials shared the educational burden, where educational enterprises often overlapped. In place of establishing a high school of its own in the town, the state of Utah paid St. George Stake Academy officials for teaching the high school students. Church academy teacher training programs also filled the need for trained teachers in the public schools.

In exchange for this interaction between the secular and the non-secular, Church schools submitted to state inspection to maintain their accredited status. For their part, the inspectors reported favorably on Church schools, including Dixie Normal College. In 1919, State School Inspectors E. J. Norton and Mosiah Hall visited the school in St. George, submitting a report to the Utah State Board of Education on the programs and facilities:

On May 2, 3, and 5, 1919, the undersigned committee, by special appointment of your chairman, inspected the Dixie Normal College at St. George, Utah, for the purpose of ascertaining the facilities of this institution for the training of teachers in accordance with the standards of your Board.

The Dixie Normal College gives four years of work of high school grade and two years of normal work above the high school. Students are now enrolled in all of these years. The enrollment for 1918-1919 shows 183 students in the high school department and 22 in the normal school department. War conditions

have seriously affected the total enrollment, as is evident from the fact that the records show for 1916-17 an enrollment of 302 in the high school and 53 in the normal school. There seems to be no reason why the attendance next year should not equal the former enrollment.

The president of the school holds an M.A. degree and is now on leave of absence working for his doctor's degree. The six other faculty members in charge of normal work are all college graduates, two of them with master's degrees. The remaining four are teachers of experience and have done graduate work towards their master's degree. The high school and training school teachers measure up well with the standards of the State Board. There are 23 teachers in all, constituting a faculty which impressed your committee as being competent and vigorous, and doing commendable team work.

The committee inspected class work in all of the departments and met with students and faculty in assembly and special meetings. The general spirit characterizing class work and the school as a whole was good. Class recitations were well conducted and journals of laboratory and other special work showed good preparation and satisfactory methods.

The normal course outlined by the school is based upon the requirements of the State Board of Education, and the ground covered in the various subjects was found to conform, for the most part, to the Boards' recommendations.

The buildings meet the present needs of the school. A good gymnasium has been recently erected on the campus. The equipment in the science and other departments was found adequate. In library facilities, however, the school is rather seriously deficient. To meet this need, the board of trustees plans to make substantial additions to new books each year, and has set aside \$1,000 for books to be purchased immediately. The public library is erected adjacent to the school grounds and the students and faculty have access to this library.

On the whole your committee was impressed with the attitude of the institution as manifested in its desire to maintain proper standards in its school work and to help meet the urgent need for more teachers in the elementary schools of southern Utah. Your committee recommends, therefore, that graduates of the one year and two year normal courses of the Dixie Normal College be rated as standard and granted certificates accordingly. (personal communication, May 15, 1919, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Norton and Hall's report summarizes the state of Dixie Normal College at the end of the 1910s. Secondary education was firmly established in the region, and college opportunities were increasing. A competent faculty, aided by a supportive community, indicated future prosperity for the fledgling school. In spite of some shortcomings, particularly in its library facilities, Dixie conformed to state academic standards. Moving into the 1920s, the school's future appeared bright.



*Conclusion*

The first two decades of the twentieth century saw explosive growth in both the public school system and the corresponding Church system. Enrollments skyrocketed as education became increasingly more important in American society. Church and state relationships improved in Utah, as officials cooperated to meet the growing educational needs of the region.

Challenges loomed on the horizon, however, especially for the overstretched Church school system. Trying to meet the needs of all its members, it attempted to run after school systems for public elementary students, during school release-time programs for public secondary students, full-time academies for those desiring a complete Church school experience, certified teacher training schools to staff overflowing public and private classrooms, and colleges and universities serving increased post-secondary enrollment. Still operating in the nineteenth century mindset where the Church maintained a hand in all aspects of public life, the Church was spending itself and its members dry.

## Chapter Five

### Private into Public – Scaling Back Church Education (1920-1933)

By the end of the 1910s, the LDS Church had extended itself into nearly every aspect of education in the state of Utah. Through the Religion Class organization, they had a finger in public elementary education. The released-time seminary program played a similar role for public secondary education. Academies took the Church's educational mission a step further, matching the public high schools in their offerings while adding religious instruction. Finally, teacher training and collegiate work expanded through the growing Church normal colleges and its university. Meanwhile, the public school structure in the state also expanded, increasing elementary and secondary enrollment, building high schools, and expanding the post-secondary offerings. Tax payers were expected to support this expansion. Church members bore a double burden, paying public taxes and private tithing to support a dual system. Though the educators were optimistic, financial realism dictated a change.

#### *Initial Wave of Academy Closures*

As they had begun during the previous decade, Church leaders continued to examine educational expenditures. In March 1920, Church Commissioners of Education David O. McKay, Stephen L. Richards, and Richard R. Lyman, together with Superintendent of Schools Adam S. Bennion, summarized the state of Church education for the Church Board of Education:

For several months past your Church School Commissioners and Superintendent have been making observations in the different stakes and giving careful study to the Church School system with a view of determining, if possible, upon a definite future policy. The problem of maintaining the present number of schools is a most difficult one, especially so in the light of the absolute necessity of increasing

the teachers' salaries in much greater proportion than either the Church or the State has hitherto done. (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 52)

Observation by these Church school administrators had uncovered the need for change:

It is manifestly impossible, under present conditions, to increase the number of academies, though not a few stakes are earnestly hoping that this be done. It is not an easy matter to satisfy these petitioners when they claim that other stakes more favorably situated as regards centers of learning than they, have the benefit of these educational courses. The limit of Church finances, however, has definitely limited the number of academies, but it does seem advisable that some plan should be devised that might have more general application than the present system. (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 52)

Developing a plan with a "more general application than the present system" involved systematic restructuring.

Initial efforts to scale back the overextended educational system of the Church occurred at the academy level. Adam S. Bennion, Superintendent of Church Schools from 1920 to 1928, described the decision, "The year 1919 marks largely the inauguration of a new educational policy in the church. Prior to that date much of the experience of the General Board of Education, as indicated, was centered in its academies" (A. S. Bennion, "A Brief Summary," February 1, 1928, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1, see Appendix C for full text). Dr. Joseph Merrill, Bennion's successor and driving force behind the creation of the first seminary, summarized the challenge presented by the extensive academy system, "The Church Board of Education and the Church's leading educators and thinkers in many fields had long realized that Church-operated academies were a financial burden and were performing a limited service, geographically at least" (J. F. Merrill, 1938, p. 12).

The reality that the academy system was financially and geographically limiting to a growing Church was compounded by the realization that the system also represented duplication. By the 1920s, public high schools were prevalent in most communities throughout the state, including those with competing Church-sponsored academies. In communities like St. George, where only an academy existed, public high schools were absent only because the towns were so heavily LDS that the local school board made arrangement for the academy to also act as the community high school.

Policy-wise, the Church decided its place was neither to duplicate the programs of the state nor fill their rightful place. This represented a drastic change from the earlier pioneer era. In 1928, Superintendent Bennion summarized the shift:

Prior to 1890 there were practically no public high schools in the state of Utah. In that year the Salt Lake City High School was organized with an enrollment of fewer than 50 pupils. . . . Other high schools in this state . . . followed gradually after 1900, until at present there are 153 public high schools within the state. Church academies had been established from 1875 on. It is evident that the Church pioneered the high school field in Utah. It became evident that when the public high school was established, the Church was in the field of competition. Such competition was costly and full of difficulties. (A. S. Bennion, "A Brief Summary," February 1, 1928, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1)

By the 1920s, competition with the public school system was not the intent of Church leaders. Bennion continued, "It became increasingly clearer that the Church could not and ought not compete against the public high school" (A. S. Bennion, "A Brief Summary," February 1, 1928, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1).

While stating that they were eliminating competition, Church leaders also acted realistically. If the two systems were in competition, the Church's program was clearly losing, at least from a statistical perspective. Berrett and Burton (1958) observed, "Over a period of years, the Church had experienced a shift in enrollment, from its Church

academies to these high schools. In 1890, the public high schools in Utah enrolled only 5 percent of the secondary students in the state. By 1911, the enrollment between the academies and the high schools was equal. By 1924, 90 percent of the high school students attended state schools” (p. 338).

Eliminating the duplication was only possible because Church leaders found an acceptable replacement in the seminary program. Superintendent Bennion continued, “It was evident that the Church could not operate academies which would serve all of the young people of the Church. It was also evident that all of the young people of the Church needed some kind of specialized religious training. By 1919, therefore, it became clear that the seminary should become the great agency of the Church for promoting religious education on the high school level” (A. S. Bennion, “A Brief Summary,” February 1, 1928, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1). Church Commissioners of Education likewise saw the seminary program as the future. In March 1920, they wrote, “The seminary, as now taught, is not a substitute for the academy. We believe, however, that it may be made more nearly so by the adoption of certain policies” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 53).

Skyrocketing operating costs contributed to the closure decision. Church president Heber J. Grant observed in a General Church Board of Education meeting, “I am free to confess that nothing has worried me more since I became President than the expansion of the appropriation for the Church school system” (General Church Board of Education Minutes, February 23, 1926, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643). The closure of academies seems more than just financial, however. Times were no more difficult during the 1920s than during the late 1880s, when the academy

system was started. In the 1880s, in spite of the financial difficulties caused by the anti-polygamy legislation, the Church and its leaders strongly advocated a separate system. By the 1920s, the Church was either more realistic about its financial endeavors or more comfortable with its place in the larger community. If the latter, the perceived need for a separate system to protect members from what President Woodruff called “the great evil” of “Godless education” (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 196) was gone. The Church’s perception of the world had changed, and with it the perceived need for a separate educational system.

The first shift was a closing of the outlying academies, announced by the General Church Board of Education in March 1920. Closure did not necessarily mean the elimination of education, however. Often, it included either transferring or restructuring. Board minutes for March 3, 1920, record the decision, “Eliminate the following academies, either by selling the buildings and grounds to the state to be used as high schools, or by using the property for other Church purposes: Emery Academy, Gila Academy, St. Johns Academy, Cassia Academy, Murdock Academy, Uintah Academy, Snowflake Academy, and possibly Oneida Academy” (cited in Berrett & Burton, 1958, p. 342).

The process took time. The first three schools to close, Idaho’s Cassia Academy, Arizona’s St. Johns Academy, and Alberta, Canada’s Knight Academy, converted to public high schools in 1921. Viewing the transfer as a success, Church leaders reported the effects in a meeting of the General Board on December 13, 1921:

The three academies converted into public high schools to date . . . are doing well. The Cassia school has the largest enrollment to date, and President W. T. Jack, who at one time was opposed to converting the school, is now highly pleased with the result. The same may be said with reference to the St. Johns.

The Commission now recommended the conversion of five more schools next year, and that these schools be advised at once of the proposed change which will effect a saving in the appropriation of nearly \$75,000. . . .

President Grant expressed his approval of the Commission's action in converting some of the Church Schools into public high schools and expressed the hope that they would consider the propriety of eliminating still more schools. (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 57-58)

As directed, the Oneida, Fielding, Emery, Millard, and Murdock academies followed suit, closing a year later. By 1924, twelve Church-supported academies throughout the intermountain west were either turned over to the respective states to operate or were closed (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). The only schools remaining, aside from the Juarez Academy in Mexico, were those who had expanded to include some form of college work (Berrett & Burton, 1958, p. 343). These included Brigham Young University, Brigham Young College, and Weber, Snow, Ricks and Dixie Normal Colleges.

Financially, the sale or transfer of the academies to the various intermountain states did not represent a significant monetary gain for the Church, aside from the savings accrued by reduced expenditures. Property was given or sold below cost and, in some cases, the Church provided financial aid to the public school to aid the transfer. The Annual Report of Church Schools for 1926-1927 indicates, "In each case, the disposal of the academy property was made in the interest of establishing a public school in place of the academy which had been operated. The price of the sale in each case was nominal and the Church made such appropriations as to get the public school under way that the transfer of the property involved really could not be considered a sale" (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). Estimated value of property transferred to the state, totaling \$377,000, is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

*Estimated Value of Church School Property Transferred to the State*

School	Last Year of Church Operation	Final Enrollment	Estimated Value of Property
Big Horn Academy	1923-24	160	\$50,000
Cassia Academy	1920-21	141	\$30,000
Emery Academy	1921-22	149	\$45,000
Fielding Academy	1921-22	160	\$50,000
Murdock Academy	1921-22	170	\$58,000
Millard Academy	1921-22	167	\$30,000
Oneida Academy	1921-22	333	Not available
San Luis Academy	1923-24	64	\$9,000
Snowflake Academy	1923-24	140	\$35,000
Summit Academy	1912-13	64	Not available
St. Johns Academy	1920-21	108	\$20,000
Uintah Academy	1921-22	272	\$50,000

Note. Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235

As it evident from the data, the schools were not closed because of low attendance. All but two reported enrollments of over 100 students during their final year under Church sponsorship. Academies seem to have been closed in these areas because of a conscious decision to turn secondary education over to the state.

While the Church retreated from the public school realm in academies that mirrored public high schools, they made a different decision, initially, regarding Church



colleges. The same decision of 1920 that closed the outlying academies likewise outlined Church college policy:

[Decided:] Establish a two year Normal College Course in centers supporting the following schools: Brigham Young University, Brigham Young College, Weber Normal College, Dixie Normal College, Ricks Normal College, Snow Normal College.

There should be one institution in the system at which a complete college course leading to a degree is offered and we recommend that this be the Brigham Young University at Provo. For this school, all the other normal colleges should be feeders.

We further suggest that four year high school studies be given in connection with each of the normal colleges, but that the course be limited to those studies leading directly to, and fitting the students for the two years' normal work. (cited in Berrett & Burton, 1958, p. 342-343)

This replacement of academies with public high schools served by seminaries, coupled with expansion of collegiate work and especially teacher training, became the Board policy for most of the decade.

#### *Religion Class Changes and Closures*

The 1920s brought changes to the Religion Class structure as well. Like the academies in the early part of the decade, the theme for the Religion Class program was the elimination of duplication. The first change, administrative restructuring, occurred in 1922, when its separate general Board was discontinued and the program came under the direct supervision of the General Church Board of Education (Berrett, 1988, p. 25). This was the first in a series of changes angling towards the program's ultimate closure by the end of the 1920s.

Though directed by a different board, Religion Classes continued to be encouraged initially. Church leaders optimistically proclaimed this program as a forerunner to similar systems nationwide. In 1922, Church Commissioner John A. Widtsoe wrote local leaders about these national trends:

We desire your full and hearty support of this great cause, and hope that you will effect and maintain the proper Religion Class organization in the division of the Church over which you preside. We believe that the subject of Religious Education, as a background to and complement of the work done in the public schools, is rapidly becoming the theme of the hour among educators throughout the country for its need is being realized more and more. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is leading in the solution of the problem through its Church School System. It is gratifying to note the splendid progress which the Religion Classes are making throughout the Church and we appreciate the work you have done in their behalf. (personal communication, November 29, 1922, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

Complying with Commissioner Widtsoe's request for "full and hearty support" was hampered by the difficulty, persisting throughout the entirety of the program, in obtaining facilities for the classes. Enrollments inevitably improved where public school classrooms were used for the after-school classes. In 1923, the program received a major boost in this regard when the Utah State Legislature passed a law, authorizing the use of public facilities by private entities. Writing local officials about the decision, Church leaders summarized the law:

All Boards of Education of School Districts are hereby authorized and empowered to permit public school houses, when not occupied for school purposes, to be used for any purpose that will not interfere with the seating or other furniture or property; and shall make such charges for the use of same as it may decide to be just, but for any such use or privilege the district shall not be at any expense for fuel or for service of any kind or nature; provided that public school houses shall not be used for commercial purposes. (F. S. Davis, personal communication, October 4, 1923, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

Church officials encouraged local leaders to take advantage of the development. Local units were informed, "We feel that this law is broad enough to authorize Boards of Education of school districts to permit the use of school houses for Religion Class purposes. The charges mentioned in the law, if any at all are made, will undoubtedly amount to but very little. Many of such buildings are now being used without charge. If the school houses of your stake are not being used for Religion Class purposes we

suggest that you tactfully take the matter up with the Board of Education” (F. S. Davis, personal communication, October 4, 1923, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2).

The use of public classrooms heightened the need for well-trained teachers. As the classes became ex officio extensions of public school buildings, teachers were expected to act accordingly (Quinn, 1975, p. 388). Church leaders emphasized this expectation of its teachers:

There is no organization in the Church which stresses, and must stress, the preparation of teachers as the Religion Class organization does, for the reason that the Religion Class teacher is thrown into direct comparison with the day school teacher and must compare favorably if he or she is to succeed. The day schools are manned by teachers who have received long and careful training for their profession. They have not only been instructed how to teach but have trained for teaching under expert supervision. They know the latest methods and are supposed to be masters of the matter which they are expected to teach. (H. R. Merrill, 1926)

By implication, Religion Class instructors were expected to be similar.

With public school facilities now legally available for Religion Class use, encouragement and influence from general Church leadership continued during the mid-1920s. Directions were given, instructing local units to organize ward and stake boards of education to oversee Religion Class efforts. The Church published readers for the various grades, expecting “that every endeavor will be made to place this reader in the hands of all Religion Class pupils” (J. A. Widtsoe, personal communication, September 14, 1923, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2). A monthly column appeared in the Church’s magazine, *The Juvenile Instructor*, informing local leaders about the program and summarizing its efforts. Annual Religion Class conventions were held in Salt Lake City, offering teachers and leaders a chance to collaborate and be instructed by Church officers.

These developments, marked by better facilities, trained faculty, and support from the general Church, caused as spike in Religion Class enrollment. Total pupils participating dramatically increased Church-wide during the 1920s, from a low of 41,713 enrolled in 1919-20 to a high of 61,131 in 1926-27, an increase of nearly 47%. Officers and teachers increased from 3,417 to 4,581 over the same time period (Quinn, 1975, p. 385). Though growth in elementary school enrollment also occurred during the era, its gains were more modest. For the same time period, kindergarten through eighth grade enrollment grew statewide from 103,276 to 111,583, an increase of only 8% (Jensen, 1928, p. 146-157; Muir, 1920, p. 3).

Those who resisted general Church encouragement for the program found rebuke from the leadership in Salt Lake City. In 1928, President Heber J. Grant went so far as to threaten that “bishops who cannot be converted to the importance of the work should be given their release” (H. R. Merrill, 1928). Quinn (1975) argues, in fact, that “without the persistent, though bureaucratic, devotion of the general officers, it is unlikely that the religion classes would have enjoyed the success they did” (p. 386).

In spite of Church support, the Religion Class organization faced some of the same challenges as the academy program during the decade. Like the seminary and academy struggle, competing Church programs ultimately caught up with the Religion Class movement by the end of the 1920s. From its inception, the program had been in competition with the Church’s Primary organization, which also met on weekday afternoons (Berrett, 1988, p. 22). Held on different days, the programs were administered by separate boards and staffed by different teachers but served the same pupils. Similar conflict existed with the weekend Sunday School program.

Conflict between these organizations was compounded by conflicting and, at times, confusing missions. Originally, designed to serve different purposes, the Primary organization was initially charged with teaching theology, while Religion Classes were to emphasize ethics and practical religion (Quinn, 1975, p. 382). In 1913 the roles were reversed, with the Primary Association assigned to focus on practical religion and ethics while Religion Classes stressed sacred scripture and theology, the same mission as the Sunday Schools. Giving to each organization the teaching role formerly reserved for the other increased competition (Quinn, 1975). Ultimately, it may have also disenchanted local leaders forced to deal with the friction (Quinn, 1975).

This overlap between the various organizations was evident in St. George, where all three programs received local support. Primary, Sunday School, and Religion Class options existed throughout the town, with as many as 1,389 students taking advantage of the latter during the 1924-1925 school year (Statistical Report 1925, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 80). Stake board meeting minutes from the St. George Primary hint at the interactions between programs:

Sister Thomas [of the General Primary Board] gave us as our new assignment: Every child in every ward enrolled in our Primary recreational activities which are to take care of their leisure time & help them to do something profitable. She said the Sunday School's specific duty was to give the religious training but the Primary should use stories of the Book of Mormon, Bible, etc. as illustrations to emphasize some truth taught. The 1st week in the month some spiritual truth should be taught, 2nd week illustrate the truth with stories, 3rd Handwork to emphasize the same, 4th play period to also emphasize the same truth. (Primary Association Minutes and Records, September 22, 1928, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 18)

Some leaders looked at these similarities, wondering if such overlap was really necessary.

In 1929, the Church Board of Education decided to end the duplication, merging the Religion Class system with the Primary, the latter becoming the week-day

educational administrator of religious education for elementary students. On May 29, 1929, the First Presidency informed local stakes about the change:

Please be advised that we have approved the recommendations of the General Church Board of Education that the Primary and Religion Classes of the Church for the children of the elementary grades of the public schools, kindergarten to the sixth grade inclusive, shall be consolidated and the work be carried on under the auspices of the Primary Association which, it has been decided, shall hereafter be known as the Primary-Religion Class of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This organization is given the responsibility of conducting week-day classes in religion for the children of these elementary grades, in general about ages five to twelve inclusive. (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 5, p. 267)

While giving the Primary administrative oversight for the elementary grades, the Board reserved junior high and high school religious instruction for the seminary system. The same First Presidency circular announcing the change continued, “The Department of Education is given the responsibility of conducting week-day religion class work for the children of the Church beginning with the seventh grade of our public schools, in general about ages twelve and up. These classes, it has been decided, shall be known as junior seminary classes” (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 5, p. 267).

Commissioner Joseph F. Merrill of the Department of Education wrote local leaders, clarifying the new arrangement:

Of course you will observe from a careful reading of the letter of the First Presidency that the Primary-Religion Class organization is given the responsibility of conducting effective week-day religion classes for the elementary grades. The junior seminaries will therefore begin religion class work where the other organization ends. And then for grades seven, eight, and nine, the junior seminary is the only institution in which week-day religion class work is to be conducted for the children of these grades. Thus in the future there will be no overlapping or competition between two organizations of the Church holding week-day classes. (personal communication, June 1, 1929, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

The change was presented as a restructuring. In September 1929, four months after the announced reorganization, Merrill again wrote stake presidents:

Please be advised that Religion Class work has not been abandoned for any grade. For the children of the elementary schools this work is incorporated in the week-day program of the Primary-Religion Class organization. For the upper grades – seven, eight, and nine – it goes forward under a new name, the name of Junior Seminary [Grades ten, eleven, and twelve made up the Senior Seminary]. For college students it goes forward under the name of Institute. The Church plan therefore provides for week-day religious instruction for all the children of the Church beginning with the kindergarten and going through the end of the university course. . . . Heretofore no religious week-day instruction has been provided for the ninth grades in our junior high schools; this has been a “tragic gap.” (personal communication, September 18, 1929, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

In spite of this interpretation, the announcement ultimately represented a termination of the Religion Class organization. In retrospect, the effort ended for several reasons. Internal pressures existed because of competition and overlap between the Religion Classes and the Primary and Sunday School organizations serving the same age group. The First Presidency letter announcing the termination of Religion Classes stated, “The purpose of these approved recommendations is to insure harmony and cooperation in providing week-day religious instruction for all our children by making only one organization at a time responsible for week-day religion class work” (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 5, p. 267). The economic depression of 1929 also had an effect. Finally, interaction between the Church and state, caused by the program’s use of public buildings, continued to spark conflict. Judge Harold M. Stephens, a respected Mormon jurist, voiced some concern about the nature of the relationship, an opinion that weighed heavily on Church leadership (Quinn, 1975, p. 388-389).

Though the Religion Class movement met the same fate as the high school academies of the earlier part of the decade, it was not without its accomplishments. Unlike the Sunday School program or the academy system, both borrowed from Protestant and Catholic counterparts, Religion Classes were a “truly innovative religious

development. . . . Separate weekday religious education for public school children was a distinct contribution in Utah and Mormon history” (Quinn, 1975, p. 387). Furthermore, the movement was both a “forerunner and founder of the present-day seminary and institute program of the LDS church” (p. 387), especially for its contribution to junior high school religious instruction.

*Weathering the Closures by Filling the Junior College Niche*

The lesson to be learned from the academy and Religion Class closures of the early 1920s was that, within the Church system, looking too much like another competing program could be costly. The surviving eight Church schools (Brigham Young University, LDS College, Snow College, Weber College, Dixie College, Ricks College, Gila College, and Juarez Academy) learned that competition with the public system by offering the same program led to closure. Not even the lone college to be shut down during this era was spared this harsh reality of 1920s Church economics. Brigham Young College, the second oldest academy in the Church, was closed in 1926, largely because its need had been replaced by Logan’s other growing institution, the Utah Agricultural College (later Utah State University).

Dixie Normal College survived the system-wide academy closures of the early 1920s because of its decision five years previous to offer teacher training. Like the others that survived, Dixie’s shift to junior college status differentiated itself from the growing public school system, eliminating the elements of competition and duplication.

Superintendent Bennion described the importance of teacher training and the trend away from duplication of public effort:

The schools that were not closed were gradually curtailed so as to eliminate in them wholly the idea of competition with public high schools. We now operate



eight schools, high school work being offered only in the LDS College, Dixie College, Gila College, and the Juarez Academy in Mexico. There are complications at the present attached to all of these institutions which have led us to hesitate in taking out completely the high school work offered. The other institutions, while they center their efforts in making Latter-day Saints and training them for carrying forward this great latter-day work, also specialize in the preparation of teachers who are to go out into public schools in this and adjoining states. (“A Brief Summary,” February 1, 1928, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1).

As is evident from Bennion’s observations, the schools that survived also filled a growing need for trained teachers, a need spurred by the expanding seminary system.

To encourage the differentiation from the public system, leaders like Superintendent Bennion emphasized the role of theology in Church school curriculum. In 1919, Bennion wrote a letter to all teachers, reminding them of the basic aims in teaching religion courses and its place in the academy curriculum (personal communication, December 30, 1919, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2). In 1927, he reminded Church school teachers that they, in their official positions, were “spokesmen for the Presidency of the Church” (A. S. Bennion, personal communication, January 3, 1927, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2). As such, he challenged them to consider questions regarding the spiritual aspects of their lives as Church teachers:

1. Do my teachings and my attitude positively promote an active faith in the divinity of this Latter Day work?
2. Do my teachings and my example prompt my students to a full measure of loyal service in the interest of their church?
3. Is my tithing record satisfactory?
4. Does my life exemplify my adherence to the teachings of the Word of Wisdom?
5. Do I systematically introduce students to the vital moral issues at stake in the tendencies in current life and do I give them needed enlightenment in fixing proper ideals which embody these moral standards? (A. S. Bennion, personal communication, January 3, 1927, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

Understanding its place as a religiously oriented school, annual reports highlight both the academic and spiritual sides of the Dixie Normal College. For example, after citing the enrollment in each of the 18 departments across campus, ranging from basics like English and mathematics to more progressive offerings in physical education and woodwork, President Nicholes' 1921 annual report also summarized the theological nature of the school. Noting the daily devotional exercises, conducted each week with an average attendance of 93%, he declared the schools spiritual aim:

Throughout all we most earnestly hope that it is evident in the lives of our teachers and students, that we have lived the aim of our Institution. We have often counseled together, prayed for each other. We have each disturbed the other with perplexing problems that have often dimmed the direction of our pathway. The year has seen many failures and blunders as well as successes, yet withal we have loved our work and one another. Our aim has been to follow the teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, May 1921, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547)

The religious nature of the school became an important aspect of its mission.

Dixie needed to be different from public schools, or it faced a similar fate as the academies and schools transferred to the state at the beginning of the decade.

Recognizing this reality, acting President Edgar M. Jensen explained its importance to the local board in his 1925 report:

Why does the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints maintain and lend its active support to a Church School System? This question has been seriously considered by many of our people and often times they conclude that it is only an expensive duplication of educational procedure and consequently does not merit the support of the Saints.

And let me acknowledge here, that there would be no excuse for the Church School System were it merely a duplication of the State System. If we cannot prove by our school products that we have certain great educational values not found in the State School System then we must acknowledge that our Church School System is a useless appendage which should be dispensed with as soon as possible.

My observation however, would lead me to believe that if there ever was a time when young men and young women needed spiritual guidance that time is

now. Temptations have multiplied out of all proportion to the stress placed on spiritual and moral training. The home has to a great extent unloaded its moral and religious responsibilities on the shoulders of auxiliary organizations which meet perhaps once a week. These alone cannot handle the tremendous problems confronting our young people and so we must find other means of engendering idealism and our Church philosophy into the hearts of our young people.

And no other agency in the social order is so vital to the Church as its School System. The Church Schools are the arteries through which circulate the very life blood that nourishes the mind and conscience of our people. Our Schools are the disseminators of our Church ideals and our philosophy of life and the efficiency and the goodness of our people will depend in an increasingly greater degree, as time goes on, on the efficiency and goodness of our schools. (personal communication, September 10, 1925, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547)

With this emphasis on what made the remaining Church schools unique, enrollment grew, especially in collegiate programs. Course offerings at this level expanded beyond the initial teacher training programs. The 1921 annual report for Dixie Normal College noted that the school taught not only four years of high school work and two years of college work leading to a Normal diploma but that the school had also become a junior college school of arts and sciences, satisfying the senior college entrance requirements (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, May 1921, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547). Due to these expansions beyond the normal school offerings, the school again changed names in 1923, officially becoming Dixie Junior College. It also sought national recognition, applying for and receiving membership in the American Association of Junior Colleges.

The growth experienced in St. George was similar to changes occurring in other Church schools. Those surviving the initial academy closure by offering collegiate work increasingly eliminated high school options. The transition from a high school to a college emphasis across the Church school system is evident in enrollment data found in Table 5.

Table 5

*Church School Enrollment, 1920-1926*

School	Academic Year					
	1920-21		1921-22		1922-23	
	H.S.	College	H.S.	College	H.S.	College
BYU	444	438	255	496	249	810
LDSU	1036	0	1060	0	1151	0
BYC	575	39	383	64	331	114
Ricks	460	29	466	59	494	84
Weber	620	37	546	45	560	164
Snow	190	38	217	50	237	85
Dixie	286	34	281	27	334	37
Gila	173	0	218	11	244	12
Juarez	94	0	111	0	131	0
Total	3878	615	3537	752	3731	1306

School	Academic Year					
	1923-24		1924-25		1925-26	
	H.S.	College	H.S.	College	H.S.	College
BYU	206	949	199	1123	200	1124
LDSU	1167	100	979	91	1260	105
BYC	248	158	150	234	0	260
Ricks	196	97	162	134	0	210
Weber	0	184	0	231	0	248
Snow	0	131	0	132	0	182
Dixie	206	96	159	89	310	90
Gila	137	44	126	38	78	67
Juarez	125	0	123	0	Not Available	
Total	2285	1759	1898	2072	1848	2286

Note. H.S. = High School

Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives

By the 1925-26 school year, high school work had been entirely omitted from four of the schools, with total high school enrollment declining system-wide by over 50% since the beginning of the decade. On the other hand, collegiate enrollment increased by more than 370% over the same time period. Dixie College remained somewhat of an anomaly because of the lack of a competing public high school in the region. As long as this was the case, high school enrollment at the school remained stable. The increase in college enrollment at Dixie matched system-wide trends, however.

This growth provided unique educational opportunities for an isolated town like St. George. Not only did Dixie Junior College fill the area's high school needs, as the only secondary school option available, it also met a growing post-secondary need. No longer must students leave St. George to continue their education, realizing Stake President Edward H. Snow's 1907 plea, "[Building a stake academy] will avoid the necessity of sending the children of the stake so far away, at a tender age, to get what they can get at or nearer home" (personal communication, November 8, 1907, LDS Church History Library). Fifteen years later, President Nicholes observed in his 1922 annual report, "We are prepared to give four years of high school work and two years of college work. A St. George boy or girl can obtain this training for less than one-fifth the cost outside of this county, and any other boy or girl south of the rim of the basin from Alton, Orderville, and Kanab to St. Thomas for less than one-half the cost at Provo, Salt Lake City, and Logan" (personal communication, 1922, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547).

To drive home his point, Nicholes analyzed the academic and spiritual dividends of his Church school. In the annual report of 1923, he noted that, to date, the school had

served 1,492 students, producing 375 high school graduates. A total of 283 students had pursued college courses at Dixie College since its inception, with an additional 139 of its students attending other higher institutions in state and 37 more enrolling out of the state. Continuing his list of academic achievements, Nicholes noted that the school had played a role in producing 30 A.B. degrees, 3 M.A. degrees, 2 Doctors of Dentistry, 1 Bachelors of Law, and 1 Ph.D. Professionally, he highlighted 142 students who had taught or were currently teaching school and 39 others working in commerce. Emphasizing the spiritual role of the school, Nicholes observed that 175 of the 375 high school graduates were married, with 70% of those marriages occurring within an LDS temple, the highest ideal for the faith. Additionally, he reported that 21 students had filled missions for the Church (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, May 10, 1923, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547).

As can be seen from Nicholes' statistical analysis, Dixie Normal College thrived in its split high school and junior college arrangement. To accommodate this increase in enrollment and collegiate offerings, the board expanded and improved its faculty. In 1922, President Nicholes reported, "Our faculty consists of 4 master degreed teachers, 8 with bachelors degrees or the equivalent, and 11 with special college and University training in Music, Domestic Art, Business Library and Woodwork. All teachers are fully qualified before the Utah State and Church Boards of Education" (personal communication, 1922, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547). These improvements in faculty qualifications continued throughout the 1920s. The college actively supported the continued education of its staff. Arrangements were made for numerous faculty members

to take leaves of absence to continue their education, including Nicholes himself, who worked on a graduate degree at Stanford University from 1923 to 1926.

Of necessity, the campus was expanded to accommodate the growth brought by increased enrollment and improved programs. By the mid 1920s, five buildings were in use, with several others planned. Nicholes expressed the school's growing needs:

Our physical plant is really exceptional for the work we are offering, yet the growing needs of [an] educational institution, caused by the increasing demands of the people, make complete satisfaction very difficult if not impossible. We feel the urgent need of more library facilities, still and motion picture equipment, a psychological laboratory, radio laboratory, and a small stock farm. We hope to satisfy the immediate demands for these important additions during the coming school year. (personal communication, 1922, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547)

Though Dixie Junior College expanded in enrollment, programs, and prestige, it was not without its challenges, particularly financially. Lamenting decreased appropriations received from the Church in 1923, President Nicholes summarized the school's financial challenges, "It has been impossible for us to carry on the work of a 26% increased enrollment, with an unfinished heating plant which had to be installed, and with a depleted library which had to be brought up to standard in order to save the institution before the State and University inspections" (personal communication, May 21, 1923, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547). To illustrate his point, Nicholes provided financial backing for his argument:

For the school year of 1920-21 we received from the Trustee-In-Trust for salaries of the teachers and custodian \$27,520. During the school year of 1921-22 we received \$28,000 for salaries and \$4,450 for improvements. While for the present school year of 1922-23 we received \$24,800 for salaries, a reduction over the past year of \$3,200, and \$1,200 for improvements, a total for this year of \$26,000, yet at the same time we had an increased registration this year over last of 75 students or more that 26%. (personal communication, May 21, 1923, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547)

In addition to appealing to the Church for additional help, local leaders did their best to cut costs and find alternative forms of funding. In 1922, President Nicholes implemented a hiring freeze and even considered reducing the number of faculty, teacher salaries being the largest portion of the annual budget (personal communication, March 14, 1922, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Leaders also appealed to the faculty, as well as the local St. George community, for assistance. Interim President Edgar Jenson noted in his 1926 annual report that a building fund had been created, supported by the faculty's donating 2% of their annual salary. To augment the fund, he proposed assessing students a small annual building fund fee, designed to help them "grow in appreciation for the College" (E. M. Jenson, personal communication, October 8, 1925, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). To aid students with their expenses, three small scholarship funds were developed by generous community members (E. M. Jenson, personal communication, 1926, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Finally, public moneys augmented private donations. Because there was no secondary school in St. George, the Washington County School District arranged with the college to provide 9th and 10th grade work for city students. In exchange, the school received rent, totaling \$3,235 for the 1923-24 school year (E. M. Jenson, personal communication, August 29, 1924, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

In spite of the financial challenges it faced, Dixie Junior College weathered the first half of the 1920s, surviving the closing scare that impacted so many of its sister schools. By expanding its junior college offerings, the school filled an educational need in extreme southern Utah. As Nicholes reported to the Church Commission of Education in 1923, "To our best ability we are striving to justify your confidence. The future of the



Dixie College is bright” (personal communication, May 21, 1923, LDS Church Archives, MS 8547).

*Competition from High School and College-Age Seminaries*

While Nicholes boasted of a bright future for Dixie College, similar optimistic horizons spread before the growing Church seminary system. Started in 1912 at Granite High School, the program quickly expanded to other schools and stakes seeking a cost-effective alternative to Church schools. By the 1921-22 school year, just a decade after its founding, 23 seminaries existed throughout the Church, enrolling 3,036 students. Five years later, the figures tripled, with 64 seminaries serving 10,835 students (System Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235).

Seeing such rapid growth at the high school level, Church leaders began to consider the possibility of similar release-time programs for older students. In 1926, they experimented with a college seminary, christened the institute of religion, at the University of Idaho. Though slower in their initial growth, these too gained a foothold. By 1930, college-age institute programs had expanded to Idaho State University and Utah State University (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). Enrollment growth for the seminary and institute programs during the 1920s and early 1930s is shown in Table 6.

In addition to providing religious instruction for youth attending state colleges, these programs, like their sister seminary system, represented a significant savings for the Church. By the mid 1920s, Church statistical reports began comparing the various costs between programs. In 1931, for example, the Church appropriated \$517,102 for its nine

Table 6

*LDS Seminary and Institute Enrollment, 1920-1935*


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Year	Seminary	Institute
1920-21	2,982	0
1921-22	3,036	0
1922-23	4,976	0
1923-24	6,401	0
1924-25	8,527	0
1925-26	10,376	0
1926-27	10,835	25
1927-28	11,991	57
1928-29	12,902	139
1929-30	25,993	363
1930-31	27,075	321
1931-32	29,427	509
1932-33	33,978	472
1933-34	34,337	450
1934-35	30,789	678

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Note. Historical Resource File, 1891-1989, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 301

Church schools, \$32,320 going to Dixie College. These amounts represented a system-wide average per student appropriation of \$159, with Dixie itself averaging \$144 per student in Church appropriation. By comparison, the three institutes were appropriated \$13,453 in Church funds, an average of \$47 per student. Institute students could be educated at a cost to the Church of one-third that which they expended for Church college students. The seminary savings was even more significant. Though they received \$205,540.49 as a Church appropriation in 1931, this amount served over 12,000 students, an average expenditure of \$17 per student (Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235). This ratio was one-tenth the per student cost to educate similar youth at Church schools.

With a cost effective religious education alternative for the Church's high school and college members in place, justification for operating the expensive Church school system became increasingly more difficult. By offering release-time religious instruction, the one thing that made Church schools unique from their state college counterparts was gone. Likewise, gone was the fear of sending youth away from home for an education without the protective influence of the Church. Parents could send their children to public high schools or colleges with the assurance that Church programs would be available for them. Furthermore, perceptions about society in general were changing. Spawned by a movement from villages to cities and spurred by interaction with other cultures during World War I, Mormon society became less isolationistic. Church leaders and members began to integrate the outside world. The movement of the Church towards mainstream American culture spread across institutions, including educational systems.

Evidence for the changing opinion on public education is apparent in statements by Church leaders. As early as 1922, Church Commissioner of Education John A. Widtsoe downplayed a separatist role for Church education. Writing local leaders, he stressed that religious education was to be “a background to and complement of the work done in public schools” (J. A. Widtsoe, personal communication, November 29, 1922, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2).

While Church leaders were becoming more open to public schools, Church schools like Dixie were becoming more like them. Diversity and growth marked this period of the school’s history. The president’s report of 1925-26 highlights the wide range of academic options available:

Dixie College has undertaken to unite in a single coordinated program of four years, the essential elements of a well proportioned education for modern life. This program includes physical and health education, business, a well balanced cultural college education, some technical and professional training, and the development of personal qualities and judgment by as much contact with real and practical life as possible. (E. M. Jenson, personal communication, 1926, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Movement into modern society and expansion beyond religious education is further evidenced by letters from the Dixie College letter book for this era. Included are applications to the Utah State Game Warden for permission to gather wildlife for a museum and letters to the United States Secretary of the Interior seeking permission to excavate Indian grounds (LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Like the other Church schools of the system, Dixie Junior College was coming of age, becoming more and more like similar junior colleges nationwide. Doing so had its drawbacks, however. Ultimately, it made the school susceptible to the same fate that befell earlier Church academies that mirrored public programs.

*Financial Distresses and Final Decisions Involving Church Schools*

As noted previously, Church leaders in the 1920s opposed competing with public high schools, choosing instead either to close or transfer to the state Church academies that duplicated public structures. With the success of institutes of religion at public colleges, the remaining Church schools found themselves in a similar competitive situation with public systems. Failing to differentiate from public high schools, like they had done during the first part of the 1920s, a second wave of financial challenges at the end of the decade doomed most of the Church schools.

Though growth occurred throughout the first part of 1920s, financial challenges taxed the system throughout most of the decade. This initial growth was possible due to the savings accrued by the phasing out of high school academies. But by 1922, Superintendent Bennion and others realized that the remaining schools would continue to drain Church resources. Writing Dixie Normal College administrators, he expressed his concern:

The Church now finds itself in the same position that the individual members of the Church have been in during the past two years. Matters financially are critical. When money is not available it simply cannot be spent. It therefore becomes our duty as well as our opportunity to do all we can do to assist the Church in getting out from under its financial burdens.

Eventually, of course, matters will adjust themselves but the ensuing year with our schools will be an emergency year and should be so regarded. Instead of having three quarters of a million dollars with which to operate we shall be fortunate if we have half a million. Our problem therefore is to cut down expenditures practically one third.

Facing this situation we have figured out possible methods of procedure. We have carefully avoided cutting salaries. We feel that teachers, so long wholly underpaid, should not now lose the ground gained in the last four years.

Nor do we want to limit registration. It is hard to admit the children of one family and turn away children from another family equally anxious to enjoy Church School benefits. (A. S. Bennion, personal communication, February 13, 1922, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

The Church had saved money by cutting schools, but it wasn't enough. As a temporary remedy, Bennion outlined further cutbacks:

We do recommend the following measures as helpful in solving our problems as emergency measures for at least this coming year.

1. The elimination and alternation of courses. While we want to guard against impoverishing our curriculum, it is clear that in building up a liberal course of study to provide the many electives called for in these days of free election, we have added some courses not absolutely essential to the proper training of the members of a democratic commonwealth. Then, too, certain courses can be alternated. Chemistry one year with physics the next. Biology alternating with Zoology or with Hygiene. The same is true of the history courses. There is merit in having a fine big enthusiastic course every two years as against a small class each year.

2. Increasing the size of classes. As an emergency measure may we not add to each class approximately one fourth of its present enrollment. If need be let cheap assistance be provided in checking up details. An abundance of blackboard work coupled with bulletin case standard samples of work will help promote efficiency even with larger groups. To handle these larger classes it will be imperative of course that we retain our strongest teachers. We should all prefer that our children be members of a class of fifty under a good strong teacher than members of a class of twenty-five under an indifferent teacher. We further recommend that no classes be given except for a substantial enrollment.

3. Adding to the teacher's load. It is our judgment that for a year a teacher would prefer to carry an additional class rather than suffer a reduction in salary. We appreciate of course that many of our teachers are now heavily loaded – care must be exercised not to overdo this recommendation.

4. Limiting the matter of equipment and repairs to imperative necessities.

5. Raising special funds locally. It is suggested that some communities might be glad to furnish the coal for a year, another the lights, another special new equipment. It is our judgment that a general campaign for general maintenance might not be fruitful of much assistance but that specific campaigns could be made helpful. (personal communication, February 13, 1922, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

By implementing the measures and reducing Church allocations, Dixie survived.

Such financial frugality, coupled with the savings from initial closures, helped the system temporarily, but expenditures continued to rise. By 1926, Church President Heber J. Grant voiced his concern to the Board of Education:

I am free to confess that nothing has worried me more since I became President than the expansion of the appropriation for the Church school system. With the

idea of cutting down of the expense, we appointed three of the Apostles as Commissioners; but instead of cutting down we have increased and increased, until we decided a year or two ago that there should be no further increase. We decided to limit the Brigham Young University to \$200,000. Last year that school got \$165,000 extra for a new building, and inside of two or three years they expect a regular appropriation of \$300,000, besides which they have plans laid out for new buildings involving an expenditure of over a million, if not a million and a half. Well, we can't do it, that's all. (General Church Board of Education Minutes, February 23, 1926, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643)

Similar trends occurred at Dixie, where appropriations also grew, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

*Church Appropriations for Dixie College, 1923-1930*

Year	Appropriation
1923	\$26,000
1924	\$29,000
1925	\$31,000
1926	\$33,850
1927	\$34,000
1928	\$43,700
1929	Unavailable
1930	\$41,200

Note. Unified Church School System Seminary and Institute Statistical Reports, 1919-1953, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 235

This \$15,200 increase in general operating appropriations over the eight year period represented a jump of 58%. Furthermore, these figures do not include special allotments. For example, in addition to its \$34,000 allotment in 1927, Dixie was also

allocated an additional \$8,000 for an Agriculture and Engineering Building (A. Winter, personal communication, July 9, 1927, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Similar special allocations were granted for building projects at many of the other Church schools.

Facing these rising costs, Church school leaders privately reopened discussions about the future of Church schools. In February 1926, Superintendent Bennion presented a paper to the General Church Board of Education entitled, “An Inquiry into Our Church School Policy” (see Appendix B for full text). The document turned an expansion request from two of the Church schools (Brigham Young College and Ricks College) into a policy debate regarding the future of the entire program. The debate centered on two questions: First, “Can the two-year junior college unit be made successful and can it be made an economic unit,” and Second, “Can the Church afford further to expand its educational program?” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 82). Answering these queries, Bennion observed, “It may be well to point out that the . . . schools in our system if they are to keep pace with similar institutions operated by the State will have to look forward to a considerable, continuing increase of outlay in the next ten years” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 83). Comparing the 9 operating Church schools to the 59 operative seminaries, Bennion observed that schools cost an average of \$204.97 per student, while seminaries operated at only \$23.73 per student, a ratio, he emphasized, of 8 to 1 (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 84).

Having laid out the comparison, Bennion offered three alternatives for the future of Church schools. First, the Church could scale back slightly on school expenditures, using the savings to fund the growing seminary system, an alternative he estimated would cost \$800,000 annually. Second, they could expand the schools, as requested by Brigham Young College and Ricks College, at an annual allotment of over \$1,000,000. Finally,



the Church could “withdraw from the field of academic instruction altogether and center [its] educational efforts in a promotion of a strictly religious education program,” at a cost “greatly under” the current expenditure (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 85).

With these three alternatives effectively outlined, Bennion concluded his analysis with a question for the Church Board of Education:

I call these problems to your attention now that we may think through fully our entire educational procedure. In the light of our available resources, in the light of all our needs social and otherwise, in the light of the historical evolution of our schools and the inevitable State expansion of schools with a consequent rivalry and competition in our junior college field, and in the light of our opportunity to render a distinctly unique contribution to the world – in the light of all of these considerations, what ought our field to be? (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 86)

The decision was not a light one. Bennion observed before Board members, “Any modification of our present practice of course involves serious considerations with references to (a) the plants now owned, (b) the teachers now in service, and (c) the attitude of our people who have come to regard our Church Schools as of very great value” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 86). Board minutes for February 3, 1926, include eight important considerations involved in a potential decision:

1. Does the Church receive benefit in returns from an 8 to 1 investment in Church Schools as against Seminaries?
2. Do these returns equal the returns possible in other fields from the same investment?
3. Does there lie ahead in the field of the Junior College the same competition with State institutions that has been encountered in the high school field?
4. Can the Church afford to operate a university which will be able creditably to carry on as against the great and richly endowed universities of our land?
5. Will collegiate seminaries be successful?
6. Can seminaries be operated successfully in communities where Latter-day Saints do not predominate?

7. May Seminaries be legislated out of successful operation?
8. Assuming that the Church should continue to operate Church Schools, can it launch a permanent campaign for funds which will adequately provide for all academic needs? (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 86-87)

With such important considerations to be made, the Board decided to retire, asking members to personally consider the options.

Upon reconvening a month later, First Presidency member Charles W. Nibley observed, “The whole question in a few words is: Shall the Church continue to compete with the State in education and duplicate the work being done by the State or shall it step out and attend strictly to religious education?” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 87). Discussion ensued for the entire month of March, as the Board met weekly and expressed concerns. Two major issues, the financial condition of the Church and competition with state schools, dominated the discussion. President Grant addressed the first concern, reporting, “The tithes of the Church had not increased during the past several years while the demands of the Church schools had more than doubled” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 88). Observing that there were many other needs for which the funds might be appropriated, he concluded, “We have now come to a point where we feel that we cannot supply the needs of the Church school system in its present form, and we have been discussing the question as to whether or not we should remodel our school system and perhaps confine ourselves almost exclusively to seminaries” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 88).

Superintendent Bennion highlighted both major concerns. After observing that “the operation of our present system of schools and seminaries involves an outlay out of proportion to the total revenues of the Church,” he also addressed the issue of duplication:

Our history to date records a transition in which we have withdrawn from the elementary and the secondary school fields as the state has made ample provision to meet the need in these fields. There is every indication to point to a repetition of that history in the field of the Junior College. The attempt to operate Junior Colleges will therefore involve us in competition with State schools and in the expenditure of capital which it will be difficult to realize upon. (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 88-89)

Based on these considerations, he recommended that the Church “withdraw from the field of the Junior Colleges as the State may make provision to take them over, or where conditions no longer warrant their maintenance, except in those cases in which in our judgment such conversion will be inimical to the welfare of our young men and women” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 89).

With the recommendation in place, Board members expressed themselves freely, some agreeing with Bennion, others disagreeing (Bell, 1969, p. 90). Finally, President Nibley concluded the discussion by recommending the First Presidency chart the Church’s educational course:

I think these meetings have been very profitable. I know that the heart of every one here is for the interest of this Church. There is no selfish interest involved, but we have accomplished very little, although the discussion that has been going on for several days has been good. We may continue our schools as they are or we may cut off the dog’s tail an inch at a time, but in so doing you do not get rid of the dog. I suggest therefore that this matter be submitted to the First Presidency and the Superintendent, for them to take the suggestions that have been made here and give consideration to them and to the amount of money the Church is likely to have, and see what can be done. It is easier to formulate some policy with three or four than with twenty. Let us form some definite policy and work to that end. If this is to go on and continue to compete with the State schools, why let us go ahead, but the main thing is to get some definite policy for the future. (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 90-91).

Taking President Nibley’s counsel, the First Presidency and Superintendent Bennion settled on a policy of withdrawal from secular education, “as fast as circumstances would

permit” (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 91). Bennion’s successor, Dr. Joseph F. Merrill, apparently took the policy to heart.

*The 1931 Attempt to Transfer Dixie College*

Though the withdrawal decision was not made public in 1926, circumstances expedited its implementation. Financial conditions facing the Church worsened at the end of the decade with the onset of the stock market crash of 1929, followed by a worldwide depression. School leaders tried to put a positive spin on the times, encouraging students and community leaders to avail themselves of the opportunity, during the economic distress, of supporting education. At the start of the 1930-31 school year, President Nicholes wrote college board members about the new year:

We respectfully call your attention to the fact that Dixie College will open its 20th Academic Year on Monday, September 15. Through the continued generosity of the Church we are able to offer our patrons a bigger and better program of study than ever before. Our buildings are being put in excellent condition. Several of our teachers have been away to school on leave of absence and are returning with added information and enthusiasm.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would lend your influence throughout your wards and amongst all your people to urge boys and girls to come to school. The financial pressure of hard times only impress upon us the more the need of educational opportunities. We are anxious to see Dixie College serve our people to the very best advantage, and we ask you to assist us, as we know you will. (personal communication, August 5, 1930, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Similarly, Nicholes wrote the incoming students, encouraging their attendance and reminding them of Church support for the institution. He noted, “Over a period of five years the Church has generously given Dixie College \$167.72 per student each year. This amount, plus the student fees, makes possible high standards of teaching” (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, August 28, 1930, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

With Church backing and an optimistic outlook, Nicholes and the Dixie College faculty looked to a promising 1930-31 school year.

That outlook changed dramatically, when, in December, 1930, the school found itself in a fight for its academic life. Like it had during the financial stresses of the original St. George Stake Academy, general Church funds dried up. Decreased revenues led to a decrease in tithing donations, forcing the Church to tighten its belt. Superfluous programs, especially those like education that were duplicated by state efforts, were reevaluated. At a Church Board of Education meeting on December 26, 1930, they decided to act, making public the 1926 decision to withdraw from secular education. The next day, Commissioner Merrill wrote Dixie College board of trustees President Edward H. Snow, informing him of the decision:

At a meeting of the General Church Board of Education, held December 26, it was decided, in giving answer to a question propounded by a group in Utah interested in beginning a junior college system under public auspices in this State, that all of our junior colleges – Ricks, Weber, Snow, Dixie, and Gila – shall cease to function as Church-supported institutions either in 1932 or 1933. In other words, June 1933 is the latest date at which any of these institutions shall exist as Church-supported schools. A closing of at least two of these schools will take place in the summer of 1932, whether the respective State Legislatures act or not. This is true particularly of the schools in Utah. The LDS College in Salt Lake City, the Board voted, will be closed in June 1931.

There was a feeling expressed by some members of the Board that these junior colleges should be closed in the summer of 1931 as Church-supported institutions. The principal reason for the closing, of course, is that the Church cannot longer afford to maintain the schools and the seminaries, and it is thought that between those two divisions of the work of the Department of Education, the Church money can be more economically spent in giving week-day religious instruction in the seminary than it can in the school. Applications are already in this office for the establishment of a score of new seminaries.

The Board hopes that there will be no closing of junior college opportunities in the communities where the above-named colleges exist, but this is a responsibility that is being passed on to the public. And in order that the public may have ample time to assume the responsibility, the dates of closing were extended to 1932 and 1933 respectively, as above stated.

We hope that you and those others concerned will support the decision of the General Board and that you will do whatever can be done to get the public to provide for a continuation of junior college facilities in your community. This office will be glad to do whatever we can to assist you.

The Board decided that publicity should be given immediately to this closing program. You will therefore likely see something concerning it in the newspapers. (personal communication, December 27, 1930, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Though anticipated for years, this was the first time closure decisions for the Church colleges was formally announced (M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 194).

As promised, word about the decision quickly spread. J. William Harrison, a member of the Dixie College faculty studying on leave at Iowa State University, questioned President Nicholes about it just two weeks later:

I see that Brother Merrill has passed sentence again, and it looks as though they mean business this time. I feel as though we should not criticize Church officials for their actions but I feel that the State should be criticized very severely if they do not take up the work where the Church leaves it off. The Church has pioneered the way and built up the system and can turn it over as a going concern. I feel that it would be a shame to allow all the sacrifices that have been made come to nothing. . . .

You know for some reason or other I can not feel that Dixie as a College is going out. It is too vigorous. The growth of the physical plant and the increased efficiency of the faculty in the past few years and many other things are not a bit like adjoining institutions. I always felt that the High School work would be cut and the College would continue with a curtailed faculty. I hope this will happen. (personal communication, January 10, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Attempting to ease Harrison's concerns, Nicholes responded with hope that the announcement didn't really apply to Dixie:

You have no doubt seen from the daily newspapers that the determined effort of the Church Board of Education is to close our Church Junior College on or before June 1933. This very definite action seems to have general necessity in order to get the present state legislature to believe that the Church meant business.

This definite action caused considerable consternation amongst us locally when the decision was first announced but during Leadership week we had advice to the effect that we might justly entertain hope for Dixie College.

What this hope may bring to us, I can not say. What our teachers should do under the circumstances, we do not know. It seems advisable to leave the

matter in the hands of each individual teacher. We would very much like to maintain ourselves and our present faculty and we believe that things will come out all right, but at the same time it seems only just that teachers should feel free to make their own decisions. . . . Do not worry. My faith is that time will take care of our just needs. (personal communication, January 12, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

What advice Nicholes received that gave him hope for Dixie College is unclear.

He may have had some assurance that the Church would support the school on a temporary basis, because in February 1931 he wrote Board of Trustees President Edward H. Snow, “I believe that if we can keep our schools going ten more years that by that time everything will be secure. It appeals to me that Dixie College should certainly be cared for on whatever Junior College bill that is passed. I think the Church would be willing to support us until such time as the state could take us over even if the time were lengthened out to as much as ten years” (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, February 14, 1931, Dixie College Archives). Whatever assurance Nicholes and Snow may have felt they had, it was apparent that Commissioner Merrill and the Church Board were serious, whatever the time frame, and St. George officials knew it.

Noting that the decision to close really involved an anticipated transfer of the Church schools to the state, Dixie and the other schools were forced to become involved politically in the process. Closing the schools was one thing, getting the state to assume the burden of financially supporting them during the economically trying times was another. Convincing the legislature to act became the new challenge. Keeping him advised on the situation, Nicholes again wrote Harrison in February 1931, “Our effort with the present Legislature is to have Dixie College taken over by the State School System within a definite number of years and to have the Church maintain the school in its present form until that definite time arrives. If we can succeed in this measure, we

shall be very happy” (personal communication, February 12, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

While Dixie’s friends lobbied on its behalf, others may have lobbied against it. Fighting for a limited piece of the budget pie sparked potential infighting. This was particularly true in southern Utah, where competing schools felt pressure to split limited regional resources amongst the small population. Fifty miles to the north, in equally rural Cedar City, the state sponsored the Branch Agricultural College (B.A.C.), a regional offshoot of the state school system. Always a geographical rival because of proximity, Dixie and the B.A.C. competed for years in enrollment and athletic arenas. Now, with the possibility of Dixie receiving state support, the schools faced the challenge of fighting for limited financial resources. As far away as Ames, Iowa, Harrison sensed the potential for competition. Writing Nicholes, he observed, “I fear if we go out our Cedar friends will kill the fatted calf. If we were not competing with them for students they could possibly make a school out of the B.A.C.” (J. W. Harrison, personal communication, January 10, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

Nicholes likewise sensed the threat. In February 1931, he wrote Dixie board president Edward H. Snow, expressing his fears, “I have been informed by hearsay method that the President of the Agricultural College, Dr. E. G. Peterson and the Director of the B. A. C., Mr. Henry Oberhansley are using their influence to create the impression that B.A.C. can adequately care for the educational needs of Southern Utah, and that the State would be benefited by the close of Dixie College” (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, February 14, 1931, Dixie College Archives).



Conflict between the two schools was complicated by the joint representation the area received in the legislature. During the 1930s, Iron and Washington Counties shared the same state senator, putting him in the awkward position of needing to support both Dixie and the B.A.C. Sensing this dilemma, with its possibility for split loyalties, Nicholes further wrote Snow about the area's representation:

I have also been told that certain influences, generated by these brethren from the North, are being brought to bear upon our Senator, Mr. Jefferson. It would appear that Jefferson is trying to be very fair with Dixie College. It would also appear that he was very much impressed with Dixie College when the State Legislature visited here some two weeks ago, and I understand that he said he would not do anything to injure Dixie College, and furthermore, he would be glad to aid her, but he thought that Dixie people should be interested in pressing him for this assistance. I take it that he meant that since he was Senator for both Iron County and Washington County, he would be much stronger in his efforts to assist Dixie if the Dixie people made a strong pull for their own institution. (personal communication, February 14, 1931, Dixie College Archives)

Knowing it couldn't argue for its persistence at the expense of the B.A.C., Dixie leaders argued instead that both schools should be kept. Continuing his letter to Snow, Nicholes wrote about the joint educational needs of the schools in southern Utah:

Personally, I feel certain that the future well-being of both Dixie College and B.A.C. is a mutual problem. I do not believe that we could well succeed without the B.A.C. Neither do I believe that the B.A.C. could grow without Dixie College. I believe we are too far removed from college educational centers to have an experience and a future growth without each other. Our college students must match wits with other college students in order that we have a college atmosphere.

If this thought appeals to you, I wish you would convey it to our Senator and press upon him the great need of maintaining both B.A.C. and Dixie College for the ultimate good of Southern Utah. I certainly have faith in the future of Southern Utah. (personal communication, February 14, 1931, Dixie College Archives)

With the goal of higher education opportunities in both Cedar City and St. George in mind, the political fight to save the school began.

Negotiations initially centered on getting a junior college bill passed, whereby the legislature would assume responsibility for Weber, Snow, and Dixie. Nicholes wrote local board of trustees members, as well as local ecclesiastical leaders, asking them to “use your influence with your State Representative at this time to the end that Dixie College will be recommended in whatever bill is passed for the maintenance of Junior Colleges in our State. A letter from you to your Senators and Representatives will do much to further this desired end” (personal communication, February 12, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). The College’s friends complied, pressuring the legislature for support. For example, Hurricane Stake President Claudius Hirschi responded, “I am today writing our two representatives urging that they support the proposition not only with their votes but by actively sponsoring the move. We, in this section, feel keenly the need of this institution and will gladly support any effort to hold it in this vicinity” (personal communication, February 20, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

Complicating the proposed junior college bill was the unlikelihood of receiving state support for three Church schools during the financially difficult times. Not only was Dixie fighting with the B.A.C. for limited regional resources, state-wide resources were also limited. The possibility existed for infighting between the three Church schools themselves. Weber, Snow, and Dixie could either choose to fend for themselves or unite, coming in as a group. General Church leaders feared the latter, worrying that asking too much might scare the legislature away from accepting responsibility for any of the schools. Influential members of the St. George community also sensed this fear. Edward H. Snow, former stake president in the area and president of the college board of trustees wrote President Nicholes, expressing his concern, “I am of the opinion that our

representatives will serve us better if they will help Snow and Weber get what they want and I wish you would adroitly write them that in all probability the holding out for a Junior College for us might jeopardize Snow and Weber, which you do not want to do” (personal communication, February 17, 1931, Dixie College Archives).

Doubting the reality of a junior college bill for all three schools passing and receiving assurances both from Snow and First Presidency member Anthony Ivins, leaders in St. George decided to change tactics. They backed off from Dixie’s inclusion in the proposed junior college bill, not wanting to sabotage the efforts of others and confident that the school would continue to receive Church support if Weber and Snow became state-sponsored institutions. Nicholes noted this change in attack, writing President Hirschi in Hurricane about the development:

Seemingly, the attitude of the Church officials has come to mean about as follows: They would be delighted to get rid of the financial responsibility of Snow College and Weber College and Ricks College at this time. If they can be relieved of these three institutions through the legislators in their present sessions, they will feel satisfied to carry Dixie College until a future legislature meets. During last week this attitude was carried to our representatives and senators in the legislature from the Church office. (personal communication, February 25, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Church influence came from Anthony Ivins, counselor in the First Presidency and former resident of St. George. An ardent supporter of the college, Ivins felt strongly about its survival, having attended the initial stake academy, taking adult continuing education classes during the 1890s.

With Church leaders negotiating behind the scenes, a bill passed the legislature in 1931, transferring Snow College to the state on July 1, 1932, and Weber College to the state on July 1, 1933 (M. L. Bennion, 1939, p. 195). Dixie continued to receive Church support, deciding to await another legislative session before seeking state aid. Though

warned by Commissioner Merrill that there would be no increase in budget in the coming years, the college accepted this proposition over the closure alternative (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, April 15, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Having saved the school, at least temporarily, President Nicholes was relieved, as were local legislators. Representative David Hirschi, accepting President Nicholes letter of gratitude, summarized the tone of the battle, "I have been in almost constant contact the past two years with the representatives of wealth whose hearts seem as cold as ice and as hard as stone, when considering questions of relief for the poor and the oppressed" (personal communication, March 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

Having escaped the transfer or chopping block scare of 1931, Dixie College was still forced to face the financial realities ahead. President Nicholes described a meeting with Commissioner Merrill where these realities were explained to him:

He said that the finances of the Church and of the State were very low. He said that even Salt Lake's Board of Education were having the most difficult problem in their history. That the Legislature refused to raise their tax rate even in the face of a thirty million dollar reduction in property evaluation and also in the face of the fact that the Church, through the closing of the LDS was delivering over to Salt Lake City Board of Education seven hundred high school students, which they had not had to school before. Dr. Merrill tried to impress us with the thought that tithing had been reduced more than two hundred thousand dollars in the first quarter of this year over the corresponding period for last year. Also Dr. Merrill tried to impress us with the thought that we could not expect anything but the bare necessities for the next school year. He said that President Grant had promised that salaries of our Church school teachers would not be reduced, if there were any possibilities of retaining them after this year. But even with this determination on the part of the President, Dr. Merrill felt that salaries were a little bit uncertain. (personal communication, April 15, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Still, Nicholes held out hope. Keeping faculty member J. William Harrison informed of these developments while studying in Iowa, he declared, "It has been noised about that the Church is not altogether satisfied with getting rid of its Church schools, its

junior colleges, so that by the time the clouds clear away, and we enter this new period of Church school work, the schools may be better founded than ever in their history. At any rate, I am still hopeful, especially for the BYU and for Dixie” (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, April 15, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

Knowing its place with the Church was tentative, Dixie leaders tried to find ways to reduce costs, thereby relieving some of the pressure. Board of trustees President Edward H. Snow advised, “You boys say your prayers and be as economical as you can. Pay your tithes and offerings” (personal communication, February 17, 1931, Dixie College Archives). Nicholes and his colleagues complied.

Several efforts were made by school leaders to be “as economical” as they could. Looking for alternative and additional forms of funding, leaders sought to cut costs, both for the school and its financially strapped patrons. At the beginning of the 1931-32 school year, President Nicholes wrote local bishops about his plans:

Our Board recognizes the fact that financial difficulties are upon us and, therefore, we are anxious to assist students to come to school to the best of our ability. We will purchase coal from the Zion Park coal mines and will be glad to have students haul this coal and also a limited amount of wood on their tuition. We are also making an effort to use some farm produce as much as we can. We recommend that you use your judgment in calling attention to this fact to the families who might need such help. (personal communication, August 1, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Student response to the alternative funding methods was overwhelming. Letters offering ways to cover educational costs flooded the college. Nicholes observed, “Every day the mail brings requests from students who want work or who wish to turn produce for their tuition” (personal communication, August 3, 1932, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). For example, Albert Bunker of Veyo, Utah, reported that his children, Clive and Leah “want to attend school and desire to bring down a load of wood in length you desire

and also 100 pounds of white beans well cleaned” (personal communication, August 17, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Lloyd Heaton from Alton, Utah, wrote, “We still plan on sending the boys to school. Money is scarce and hard to collect what we have coming to us. Would it be possible to take potatoes on their tuition?” (personal communication, August 26, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Webb Barber from Hurricane wrote, “Father was telling me yesterday that you people there at the college had made arrangements to handle produce from students and cash it for us. I have been working up at the saw mill and will have about three thousand feet of lumber to sell. I would also like to cash enough trees to pay tuition if it is possible” (personal communication, August 28, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). Fellow student Reid Heywood wrote, “I am figuring on going to school in St. George this winter, if possible, but I have had very little work so far this summer. The only work I have in view at present is hauling wood. Would you kindly inform me concerning the possibilities of hauling wood to pay my fees at school; also if I could haul for book-store credit?” (personal communication, August 3, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

President Nicholes did his best to respond to each request. He accepted Lloyd Heaton’s potatoes, in addition to offering him time in delivering them. To Webb Barber, he wrote, “We can take lumber at the going price on your tuition, but it would not be possible for us to handle trees” (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, September 1, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). To Reid Heywood, he accepted goods for tuition and offered hope:

We will be able to receive two loads of wood from you. Wood is selling in St. George for \$8.00, so it will probably be impossible to allow more than this price.

You received the John T. Woodbury Scholarship of \$25.00. This together with two loads of wood would probably pay your entrance and your bookstore bill.

We will be pleased to have you back to school. We anticipate a very remarkable year. The students are all poor but sometimes a lack of money makes us all happy and very diligent at our studies. Life is largely what we make it after all, so we shall set our standards high and enjoy all we can without the expenditure of money. (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, August 6, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

In the end, the school accepted lumber, coal, produce, and nearly everything else students offered in exchange for tuition. To one parent, Nicholes even offered to “take grain or hay, wood, fence posts, or potatoes for your boy’s tuition” (personal communication, September 20, 1932, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). School leaders also did their best to provide employment, noting that before the start of the 1932-33 school year they received over 200 requests for student jobs, for which they created all they could (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, September 20, 1932, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). To one student in this regard, President Nicholes optimistically hoped for a better future:

I have visited a number of places in town in an effort to locate you a job, but jobs are very scarce, and I have not been successful to date. However, I shall try again. At any rate, I should like to see you come back to school. I think jobs will be as plentiful here as they are in the north during this winter, and no doubt, more plentiful than they will be in the large cities. No matter how bad the winter may get we can find enough to eat in our home towns. It might be only mutton and beans, but mutton and beans may be sweeter than honey before spring.

I have been reading the life of Jack Dempsey recently, and the slogan which his manager had was, “Pull up your socks, Jack, and knock that big bum over.” I shall say the same thing to you, “Pull up your socks, Wes, and come home and we’ll knock that big bum over.” (personal communication, August 29, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

Throughout his interaction with parents and students, Nicholes tried to convey this message of hope. His response to Frank Barker about the difficult situation characterizes his efforts:

I think we all feel the strenuousness of the financial times in which we are living, but nevertheless, we can enjoy ourselves, and when it is all over, look back upon our experience with considerable satisfaction. It shall be the object of Dixie College this year to make the most out of our circumstances and thoroughly enjoy a most splendid year of educational training. I look forward to the year with this thought: that our lack of finance will increase our desire to study and our appreciation for learning. (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, September 4, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

The Dixie College faculty and the local community rallied in support of President Nicholes' efforts. The school and its teachers willingly accepted any kind of farm produce, as well as wood and coal, exchanging it for personal use. Of the community, Nicholes wrote, "Our local merchants are cooperating to the end that all shall be able to come who wish to" (personal communication, July 25, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). To W. H. Henderson in Panguitch, Utah, he explained the relationship, "If there is any way which we can devise to assist boys and girls to school, we shall be more than pleased to adopt it. We are willing to take coal, wood, wheat, barley, oats, beans, and potatoes as far as we can handle them. We are asking our teachers and the merchants of St. George to cooperate with us, and I am sure they will do what they can" (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, August 16, 1932, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

In addition to alternative tuition methods and job creation, teachers and faculty sought ways to be economical. Students shared texts or used versions from older brothers and sisters. From Iowa, Professor Harrison offered the following suggestion, "Instead of assigning a special text, let them obtain any good text that has been used by members of their family or friends, and make purely subject assignments. Then place all our important library books on the day shelf and give each student a chance. I have enough information myself, to tie up the different terms used synonymously by different



authors, and also to straighten out differences of opinion as expressed by various workers” (personal communication, August 2, 1931, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537).

These efforts saved Dixie during the 1931-32 and 1932-33 school years, as Church appropriations were limited and local cash scarce. Nicholes wrote Brigham Young University President Franklin S. Harris about the remarkable result:

We are allowing students to come to school and pay us produce for their tuition and fees. That is, those students who have no money but have produce such as hay, grain, potatoes, molasses, honey, fruits, etc. we are taking for tuition.

We have made a canvas of the needs of our teachers and are selling to them this produce. Also we have canvassed all the merchants in St. George and are getting them to take as much produce as they can from our students. We then sell this credit to our teachers for use or use the credit through our departments.

We are not contracting for any wood or coal for heat, but are allowing the students to bring it in on tuition. Last year we sold sixty cords of wood to townspeople other than teachers and other than the amount we used in our furnace.

I estimate that we are handing forty percent of our tuition and fees in produce this year. This only means extra work on the part of the office and the individual teachers, but we are happy to do it when we know that fully half of our students could not come to school if we demanded cash entirely. As it is, we have an increase in our enrollment this year of about 20% above the ten year average. (personal communication, September 29, 1932, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537)

While the local school did all it could to scale back, general Church leaders did the same system-wide. In March, 1932, the Church Board voted to cut salaries.

Announcing the decision, Commissioner Merrill explained the rationale:

Please be advised that at its meeting on March 2nd the General Board voted that the salaries of all officers and teachers in the Department of Education shall be cut next year 10 per cent. So far as food, clothing and other necessities are concerned, the other 90 per cent is likely to have a greater purchasing power than a hundred per cent did two years ago. The Board makes this cut with great regret. The income of the Church demands this action. We trust that you will recognize that in making the cut, the Board was really very generous when the dire situation is considered. Let us hope that conditions a year from now will warrant us in notifying you of salary increases. (personal communication, March 3, 1932, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

In a letter the following May included with the seminary teacher contracts, Merrill further explained the realities of Church finance:

You will be surprised, of course, and disappointed in the terms of the contract, but the General Board believes that the conditions make it necessary for it to play as safely as possible. What the conditions will be next spring no one seems to know. Let us hope that they are greatly improved over present conditions.

But in any case, the terms of your contract suggest that you be as thrifty as possible and spend your money as sparingly as possible. We recommend, therefore, that you avoid making any expenditure or entering upon any venture that can be postponed. . .

May I tell you frankly that the General Board imposes the new conditions in your contract with the greatest regret. We all know that your salary is small and we wish it were feasible to make it larger. And then to think that a part of even this small salary may not come to you makes us “blue” indeed. Let us hope and pray that the bottom of this depression has been reached and that improvements all along the line will now begin. In the meantime, we urge frugality, thriftiness, and caution. (personal communication, May 18, 1932, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2)

A year later, the situation was no better, and the Board was forced to scale ninth grade seminaries back from daily to weekly programs, closing small classes altogether (J. F. Merrill, personal communication, April 12, 1933, LDS Church Archives, CR 102 2).

#### *Final Transfer of Dixie Junior College to State Control*

By 1933, though Dixie College was personally struggling to survive, the Church saw the benefit of the 1931 junior college transfer decision and decided to push for similar resolution regarding the St. George institution. Again, Commissioner Merrill, now a member of the Church’s governing Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, led the charge. Like the 1931 battle, political negotiations, both with the legislature and the Church, dominated the process. The result highlights the transition that occurred within Church and state relationships.

The first indication that Dixie College was going to be discontinued came in a letter dated March 4, 1932, from Commissioner Merrill. Board minutes indicate that the letter “called attention to next year’s being the last year in which our school would function” (*Minutes of the St. George Stake Board of Education*, p. 71, Dixie College Archives). This surprised the Dixie College board, who noted, “Last year the papers announced that the Church schools would close in 1933 but no disposition of Dixie College, specifically, had ever been announced and all the notice we had had was the general announcement through the papers” (*Minutes of the St. George Stake Board of Education*, p. 72, Dixie College Archives). Apparently, Merrill planned on going ahead with what he outlined in his December 1930, letter to President Snow, namely that “June 1933 is the latest date at which any of these institutions shall exist as Church-supported schools” (personal communication, December 27, 1930, LDS Church Archives, MS 8537). This decision came, in spite of Dixie’s removing itself from the junior college transfer bill in exchange for an understanding that they would continue as a Church school.

Dixie College representatives initially sought Church input concerning the situation. In early January 1933, Nicholes met with Commissioner Merrill about the proposed closure. Merrill reiterated “his determination to see the Dixie College close,” noting that he had been “brought into his position as Commissioner of LDS Education for the express purpose of closing the LDS Junior colleges and of furthering the LDS Seminary work” (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). Nicholes countered, reminding Merrill that two years previous, Dixie College would have been written into the junior college bill with Snow and Weber, had not the First Presidency

intervened, asking Dixie to “cease to have herself included with Snow and Weber colleges” (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). In exchange, the Church agreed to “carry Dixie College under her own leadership” (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). Commissioner Merrill disagreed.

Not finding a sympathetic ear in Elder Merrill, Nicholes went above him to First Presidency member Anthony Ivins. He reported that Ivins “did not entertain the same interpretation as Dr. Merrill neither with respect to actions by the Church Board of Education nor did he sympathize with Dr. Merrill’s determination to close Dixie College” (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). Later the same day, Nicholes wrote Ivins a summary of his arguments, which were read at the next Church Board of Education meeting. The arguments included an emphasis on the importance of the Church schools for rural communities as well as a reminder about the perceived previous agreement. Nicholes wrote, “Two years ago, when Snow and Weber colleges were made State schools, Dixie College was agreeably left out of the bill only after our lobbying committee and President Snow had received assurance that Dixie College’s future would be cared for by the Church. This cooperation seemed necessary to the success of the bill, and was in harmony with advice from the First Presidency” (personal communication, January 3, 1933, Dixie College Archives).

In spite of their efforts, Church opposition to Dixie’s status persisted. Following the Board meeting where Ivins presented Dixie’s case, Commissioner Merrill wrote Nicholes again, reiterating his position that, “Dixie College will not be continued next year as a Church institution” (personal communication, January 6, 1933, Dixie College Archives). As an alternative, Merrill proposed turning the school into a “first-class union

high school,” offering \$5,000 for each of the next two years which, in addition to state-provided equalization funds, would more than adequately support the state high school lacking in the region. He also offered the entire physical plant to the local college board, which he proposed they rent to local school officials for \$1 a year (J. M. Merrill, personal communication, January 6, 1933, Dixie College Archives).

College leaders opposed the idea. Having experienced junior college status for over a decade, few were anxious to see the option removed. Appealing again to the First Presidency, President Ivins remarked this time that “it seemed impossible to put a ‘dent’ in Dr. Merrill’s ‘armor’” (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). He expressed little hope to save the school, but encouraged Nicholes and others to approach the state legislature, hoping they would accept Dixie as a state junior college (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives).

Nicholes noted that the meeting with Ivins gave him new hope, and he immediately turned to the political process, putting all the college’s efforts behind lobbying the legislature. Though initially optimistic, the process quickly became discouraging. By the end of January, Nicholes reported that members of the county board of education “made several contacts with legislators while at the State Capitol and have returned full of depression. . . . They believe that our efforts to retain the college are practically useless” (personal communication, January 31, 1933, Dixie College Archives).

Undaunted, Nicholes turned to community leaders. Trying to unite friendly members from neighboring communities in the cause, he solicited the Cedar City Chamber of Commerce, the Cedar City Rotary Club, and southern Utah chapters of the

American Legion, asking that they support the transfer (J. K. Nicholes, personal communication, January 31, 1933, Dixie College Archives). In addition, he polled friends on the State Board of Education, hoping to ascertain Dixie's chances for state-supported status. Friend and board member John C. Swenson wrote, "I think perhaps that some members of the State Board are not in favor of Junior Colleges at all, but certainly I have heard nothing against the Dixie College" (personal communication, February 13, 1933, Dixie College Archives).

Like the 1931 closure crisis, the proximity of the Branch Agricultural College in Cedar City worked against Dixie's hope for state support. Dr. M. J. Macfarlane, a physician in the neighboring town and apparent supporter of the Cedar City school, informed Nicholes that his efforts "would only do harm to your prospects as well as the future of this institution which, after all, is the institution to which Southern Utah will have to look for its college work in the future" (personal communication, February 6, 1933, Dixie College Archives). Though pessimistic about the possibility, declaring that he did not anticipate two junior colleges in the region, Macfarlane did express "hope that the State can come to the rescue in the form of a subsidy for your institution" (personal communication, February 6, 1933, Dixie College Archives).

Ultimately, opponents from Cedar City softened their stance, choosing to join other communities in southern Utah in supporting Dixie's bid for state-supported junior college status. Early in February, 39 members of the state legislature visited the Cedar City campus. Hosting the dignitaries, Branch Agricultural College leaders also invited the St. George Chamber of Commerce, the City Council, and Dixie College faculty to participate and make their case. The following day, residents of St. George escorted the

legislators south, where they inspected Dixie's physical plant and hosted them at public gatherings attended by a thousand people (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). At these meetings, the college was offered to the state, free of cost, with the promise that the Church would appropriate \$5,000 annually in financial support (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives).

In addition to garnering regional backing and attempting to influence the legislature, Dixie College representatives lobbied the other state junior colleges for support. Seeking to solidify the temporary status accorded them by the 1931 Legislature, Weber and Snow were negotiating in 1933 for permanent support. Dixie College approached their sister institutions with similar desires. Promising the support of southern Utah representatives, arrangements were made to include Dixie in any bill involving Weber and Snow. The senator from Washington County "made it plain . . . that any effort to leave Dixie College out of a State Junior College program would be considered unfriendly towards Dixie College interests and would meet with opposition both in the House and in the Senate" (personal notes of J. K. Nicholes, Dixie College Archives). Dixie was adamant about their inclusion because they feared that junior college legislation "would be closed for years" (*Minutes of the St. George Stake Board of Education*, p. 79, Dixie College Archives).

Though encouraged by President Ivins, the public and private posturing for state college status didn't sit well with Commissioner Merrill. Hearing of the plans to propose legislation making Dixie a state junior college, Merrill expressed concern to the St. George leaders:

We think . . . if this is done it may jeopardize favorable action on the proposition to continue Snow and Weber as State junior college[s]. We here do

not believe that the conditions are favorable for the establishment of a State junior college in St. George. Certainly before the State could do that it would have to have a junior college at Richfield, one at Price, and another at Vernal.

We hope, therefore, that the friends of Dixie College will desist from an effort to get the college at St. George continued under public auspices. We believe that the proposition already made to you by the Church is very favorable and therefore that the friends of Dixie should express their gratitude by limiting at the present time the efforts for State junior colleges to Snow and Weber. (personal communication, February 3, 1933, Dixie College Archives)

After meeting with St. George leaders about these concerns, Merrill was informed of Dixie's threat to undermine junior college legislation if not included. In the middle of February, he strongly warned the southern Utah contingency about their efforts:

We told you very frankly our fears were that while there was no chance of the State taking Dixie over, your application might have a detrimental effect on the efforts that were being made in behalf of Snow and Weber. . . .

Now . . . as you know, Washington County will get at the close of this school year about \$10,700 from the State equalization fund. It will get double that amount in '34 from this fund. In addition to this the First Presidency authorized me to say that the Church would give the free use, during the biennium, of the Dixie College plant to Washington County for a public high school, and in addition \$5,000 a year in cash. At the time the First Presidency made this generous offer none of us had any idea whatsoever that you would go to the Legislature and by your efforts to become a State college take any attitude in opposition to Weber and Snow being continued under State auspices as such colleges. . . .

Maybe this thing is getting out of your control. But may I say that the Church will not give a single cent during the next biennium to Snow or to Weber. If, through the efforts that are being made in behalf of Dixie that seem to be endangering the chances of Snow and Weber, failure results, I am not at all sure but that the Church will withdraw the generous offers it has already made in behalf of a school at St. George. Can you and your friends not see that the time is wholly inopportune for efforts in behalf of Dixie?

I pointed out to you that in the year 33-34, with the generous help of the Church, St. George would be getting for school purposes practically as much money for its school as it got last year when Dixie was supported by the Church. Is it too much to ask . . . that you and your friends will respond generously to the appeals that are being made for support for Snow and Weber, independent of whether the friends of these institutions promise you support or not? Let us look at this proposition from a state-wide point of view rather than a narrow local one. (J. F. Merrill, personal communication, February 9, 1933, Dixie College Archives)



In spite of Merrill's appeals, Dixie College leaders went ahead seeking state sponsorship. Opposing publicly stated Church interests, they went so far as to negotiate support from groups lobbying to end the national prohibition of alcohol (the Eighteenth Amendment), the major issue facing the state legislature in 1933. St. George representatives agreed to support delegates from around the state anxious to repeal the amendment in exchange for support of Dixie's inclusion in any junior college bill (Alder & Brooks, 1996, p. 249). By opposing the official Church position on the issue, transition, at least philosophically, from Church to state control seemed complete.

The actual transition went smoother than Commissioner Merrill had feared. Opposition in the legislature never materialized. The school successfully negotiated the transfer, offering the physical plant, coupled with two years of Church aid and promised community support. This amounted to \$55 per capita from Washington County school funds for every elementary and high school student taught at the school, an amount totaling nearly \$22,000. It was augmented by almost \$7,500 annually from the Church and \$700 from local citizens ("State Leases Dixie College to St. George," 1933, p. 5; "State to Acquire Two Colleges at Saturday Meeting," 1933, p. 1). In exchange, the state accepted Dixie together with Weber and Snow Colleges, on the condition they provide no financial support for the St. George school. In March 1933, the Miles Bill was passed, making Dixie College a state junior college under those conditions. Working out the legal intricacies of the transfer, the state accepted the deed on July 1, 1933, leasing it back to the community of St. George for two years so as not to incur costs ("State Takes Deeds to Normal Colleges," 1933, p. A10). (See Appendix D for transfer agreement)

Agreeing to provide future financial support, the state benefited greatly from the transfer. The value of the physical plant and real estate in 1933 was estimated at \$200,000 (“Dixie College Plant,” Dixie College Archives). Furthermore, it kept secondary and post-secondary schooling available in St. George, a program that, during its last year of Church support, served 222 junior high students (9th and 10th grades), 153 senior high students (11th and 12th grades), and 172 junior college students (“Dixie College Enrollment Budget for 1932-33,” Dixie College Archives).

*Exceptions to the Transfer Policy*

The decision to close or transfer Church schools to state control had general application across the system. However, as Dixie College did initially, some institutions sought exception to the policy. Unlike the St. George program, four schools successfully avoided closure or transfer in the 1930s. As important exceptions to the policy, they help clarify the motives and position of the Church in its policy decisions.

*Brigham Young University.* The most significant of the schools to retain its Church-supported status was the Church school flagship, Brigham Young University. Like Dixie, Weber, Snow, and the other Church academies that had preserved themselves in the early 1920s by becoming teacher training institutions, Brigham Young University likewise survived by emphasizing education. Though these schools were all subsequently transferred, BYU retained its Church support because of teacher training.

In 1920, discussion ensued within the Church Board of Education regarding the fate of Church schools. Opposing sentiments favoring the Church’s removal from secular education, Commissioner of Education David O. McKay observed that a shortage of trained public school teachers existed in the state of Utah. Sensing the opportunity this

challenge presented for the Church, he reasoned that “if the LDS Church normal schools were strengthened immediately, in five years these schools could turn out enough teachers to dominate the teacher supply situation in the state” (cited in Clark, 1958, p. 283). Indicative of changing Church and state relationships, McKay continued, “Now is the time to step right in and get teachers into these high schools and eliminate the spirit which dominates the schools now” (cited in Clark, 1958, p. 269). Church Board of Education minutes summarize the importance they placed on teacher training:

Now, if by cooperation, recommendation, and instruction sufficient number of capable young men and women of the Church can be induced to graduate from the normal colleges and the BYU, and accept positions as leaders in the various public schools and high schools throughout the state, there should be no reason why these schools should not be permeated by a truly wholesome and upbuilding atmosphere of true morality. (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 99-100)

In subsequent meetings, Commissioner McKay continued to emphasize the importance of teacher training for Church schools:

We are facing a crisis in our Church School System, as the nation is in the public school system. There is a dearth of teachers all over the United States. The strong men and women are leaving the profession and educators are becoming alarmed at the situation. 850 teachers will be needed this year in Utah. The State cannot supply more than 200. In our system not more than 200 are taking normal training. More than twenty-five percent of this number are not likely to adopt the profession of teaching, but even if all should, then there would only be half the required number; the rest must come from outside.

Now, the brethren feel that even in this crisis an opportunity presents itself, and they have recommended that the Church School System start out to make teachers, that our policy be normal training, and that we fill the normal colleges to the maximum. . . . In this way we propose to supply the State’s need for teachers, and create a better atmosphere in our public schools. . . . So the policy is, first, to establish teachers training schools in centers accessible to the greater part of the Church; second, to place in the state high schools our own trained teachers, as far as possible, and then supplement that by the spiritual training in the seminaries. (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 100-101)

Accordingly, high school academies were closed, schools offering college-level courses were expanded into normal and junior colleges, and courses leading to a four-year degree were concentrated at Brigham Young University (Cowan, 1985, p. 108).

By 1926, the first part of the plan, closing high school academies, had been so successful that the Church considered similarly closing Church colleges. Brigham Young University was apparently included in the initial discussion. Like he had done in the past, David O. McKay came to the aid of Church schools:

I think the intimation that we ought to abandon our present Church Schools and go into the seminary business exclusively is not only premature but dangerous. The seminary has not been tested yet but the Church schools have, and if we go back to the old Catholic Church you will find Church schools have been tested for hundreds of years and that church still holds to them. . . . Let us hold our seminaries but not do away with our Church schools. (cited in Wilkinson, 1975, p. 73)

Though unable to save most of the junior colleges, McKay's argument carried the day for the survival of Brigham Young University as a teacher training school.

By 1928, the educational policy of the Church, espoused by new Church Commissioner of Education Joseph F. Merrill, was "to eliminate Church schools as fast as circumstances would permit" (cited in Wilkinson, 1975, p. 85). Again, Brigham Young University came under attack. Early in 1929, Commissioner Merrill wrote Thomas N. Taylor, chairman of the executive committee of the BYU board of trustees, "At the Board meeting yesterday it was not definitely stated so, but it seemed to be the minds of most of those present that the BYU as a whole was included in the closing movement" (cited in Wilkinson, 1975, p. 87).

Like he did throughout the decade, Elder McKay again defended Church schools, including BYU. Initially, he expressed his opinion that the school closure decision had

never been finalized, declaring that meeting minutes did not include “any action by the Board establishing such a policy; that if the Presidency had acted, that was another matter, but the Board had not acted” (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 109). President Grant responded, “The policy covered all the schools and that eventually BYU would have to be considered as we are now about to consider the individual junior colleges” (General Church Board of Education Minutes, February 20, 1929, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643). Expressing the concern that he not “be considered as not sustaining the First Presidency,” Elder McKay nevertheless cast the lone dissenting vote against the elimination of junior colleges (General Church Board of Education Minutes, February 20, 1929, cited in Miller Collection, LDS Church Archives, MS 7643).

When finally considered on its own, Brigham Young University was successfully preserved by Elder McKay. He continued to center his argument on teacher training. In 1930, still fighting to save junior colleges, he explained to the Board of Education that he favored the “retaining of junior colleges at this time because by their elimination the Church would lose its hold on the training of its teachers” (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 111). Other influential members agreed. Fellow Apostle Richard R. Lyman told the assembled BYU student body and faculty on November 15, 1929, “The Brigham Young University will not be closed” (cited in Wilkinson, 1975, p. 208). In a private letter the following May, he wrote the school’s president, “I have always been as genuinely and thoroughly convinced that the Brigham Young University ought not to close as I have been convinced that some other [Church educational] institutions ought to be turned into public schools” (cited in Wilkinson, 1975, p. 208).

With the support of other Church officers, Elder McKay was able to convince Church leadership to preserve Brigham Young University. Explaining the school's survival, Commissioner Merrill tied it to teacher training:

The General Church Board of Education has announced the policy of withdrawal from the field of secular education, except that the BYU will be continued. . . . The key to the seminary system is a university where the teachers may be trained for the work. We employ no teachers who do not meet the requirements of respective state boards for high school teaching. In addition every teacher must receive the equivalent of a teaching major in the field of religious education. This means, of course, that the Church must maintain an institution where this training in the field of religion may be received. (cited in Millikin, 1930, p. 125-126)

BYU survived because of the support of Elder McKay and his recognized need for qualified teachers both within and without the Church's educational system.

Formally defending the decision to retain BYU, Commissioner Merrill ultimately settled on three reasons for the schools persistence:

1. The Church has established a great seminary system – the greatest one in America. A seminary system without a university to head it would be like a U.S. navy without Annapolis, without the naval academy. A navy must have officers, and officers must be trained. The Naval academy is therefore an indispensable unit in the navy. And just so is a university an essential unit in our seminary system. For our seminary teachers must be specially trained for their work. The Brigham Young University is our training school.
2. We are living in a “scientific age,” many are pleased to call it an age in which the methods of science have permeated to a greater or lesser extent into all the activities of the human mind. . . . And do we not need in the Church a group of scholars, learned in history, science and philosophy, scholars of standing and ability who can interpret for us and make plain to us the results of research and the reasoning of the human mind? To have a standing in the world is it not necessary to speak the language of the world? When men find that we are learned in their science and philosophy they have respect for us, one that ignorance could never command. How can we be assured a group of scholars, familiar and sympathetic with our doctrine and ideals, scholars able and ready to be our advocates and defenders and who can speak the language used in the learned congresses and conventions of the world, how, I ask, can we be assured of such a group of scholars, unless we have a university?

3. I offer as a third reason why we need a university the fact that Latter-day Saint ideals are in many respects different from and higher than those of the average non-Latter-day Saint. . . . Do we not need a university that shall hold up Latter-day Saint ideals so high in the educational world that all students in all schools of all grades may see the beauty thereof, and perhaps be influenced by them? At any rate the students we train will teach at least by example wherever they go. ("Brigham Young University, Past, Present, and Future," 1930, section 2, p. 3)

These three purposes, making Brigham Young University different from the other Church colleges, are important reasons for its exception to the closure policy.

*Ricks College.* The second significant exception to the transfer and closure policy was Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho. Unlike BYU, Ricks College was a junior college, much like the other Church schools that were closed or transferred, making analysis of its survival important. Why did the Church ultimately choose to keep this school and not Dixie, Weber, Snow, or Gila Colleges?

From the perspective of Church leaders, plans always anticipated the transfer of Ricks College, like its sister institutions, to state control. In July 1930, Commissioner Merrill outlined the Church's intentions:

Educational campaigns in Idaho, Utah, and Arizona are now going forward to create public sentiment sufficiently strong so that the legislature from each state will during the coming winter pass the necessary legislation to enable the public to assume the ownership and management of what are now Church junior colleges – Ricks, Weber, Snow, and Gila. (cited in Millikin, 1930, p. 125)

The actions of state legislatures in Utah, Idaho, and Arizona largely explain the varying transfer outcomes. In fact, Ricks College owes its existences as a Church school to the state of Idaho as much as the transferred schools of Weber, Snow, Dixie, and Gila Colleges owe their existences as state schools to Utah and Arizona respectively.

Important differences explain why one remained a Church school while the others became state institutions.

Unlike the Utah institutions, Ricks College was the lone Church school in Idaho by the mid 1920s, becoming, in fact, the Church college of Idaho in 1926 (Crowder, 1997, p. 90). Importantly, the state of Idaho certified Ricks teaching graduates for employment in the public schools, raising expectations for the school's permanency. But by 1929, rumors began circulating that the college might be closed (Crowder, 1997, p. 98). The feelings persisted when officials met with the Church's First Presidency in 1930 to justify the school's existence. They argued that Ricks College established good principles of character, filled an important part of Rexburg's community life, provided desirable background for seminary and other Church organizations, attracted positive public attention to the LDS people in the state, and provided qualified teachers for state schools (Roundy, 1976, p. 116-117). Similar arguments could have been made for the persistence of each Church school. Though sympathetic, Church leaders refused to promise permanent support.

By 1931, the Church's closure decisions were final. Bills had successfully passed the Utah and Arizona legislatures transferring Weber, Snow, and Gila Colleges to state control (Roundy, 1976, p. 131). Commissioner Merrill reported that "the matter of closing all junior colleges under Church auspices was definitely settled" (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 131). Appropriations for the school in Rexburg were cut, awaiting the inevitable transfer of the school to state control or closure.

Like its sister institutions in Utah and Arizona, Ricks College sought acceptance by the state of Idaho. In 1931, legislation was introduced, offering the physical plant, conservatively valued at \$250,000, to the state in exchange for an appropriation from public coffers of \$80,000 for operational expenses (Roundy, 1976, p. 123). Passing the



Idaho House of Representatives, the measure met stiff opposition in the Senate. Fearful of adding public expense during the financial depression, state senators balked at the offer, voting the bill down 23 to 20 (p. 126-127).

Financial concerns and anti-Mormon sentiments hampered transfer efforts for Ricks College throughout the 1930s. Following a failed second attempt, one local newspaper expressed its disdain of the reoccurring offer:

The state senate acted wisely in rejecting this offer, after again looking the gift horse in the mouth. When all the arguments are in there still are two good reasons for the refusal: (a) There is no convincing evidence that the church which established and operates Ricks College is no longer financially able to continue its support of the institution; (b) neither is there evidence the people of Idaho desire or can afford to make this expansion in the state educational system. (cited in Crowder, 1997, p. 140)

Opposition also came from Idaho's existing public schools, the University of Idaho at Moscow and its Southern Branch at Pocatello. Like Dixie College experienced with its neighboring schools, sister institutions acted territorially about their funding.

After failing with the legislature, the Church released authority for Ricks College to the local board, expecting that they support the school with minimal Church support (Roundy, 1976, p. 128). Ricks tightened its financial belt, much like Dixie College did during the same era, and awaited another legislative attempt to transfer to state control. Church leaders encouraged their efforts. In 1933, Commissioner Merrill wrote, "The cause of the College is just. Let the support of the people be so generous that the College shall never die" (cited in Crowder, 1997, p. 113).

The mood statewide hadn't changed, however. Lacking the votes, a bill transferring the school to the state was withdrawn in 1933. Similar bills failed to pass the 1935 and 1937 Idaho legislatures. One newspaper quipped, "The immortal bill to dump

Ricks College into the laps of Idaho taxpayers again makes its appearance in the Idaho legislature, and The Statesman believes it is appropriate to dig out and dust off its editorial on the subject” (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 143). “The school did not seem to belong to anyone, or to have a place in educational circles,” mused College president Hyrum Manwaring. “The Church did not want it, the State would not have it, and the district board did not know what to do with it” (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 142).

Though the attitude of the state of Idaho towards accepting Ricks never changed, opinions within the LDS Church did. New First Presidency member David O. McKay, formerly a principal at Weber Academy and longtime advocate of Church schools, became “the dominant educational advisor in the church” (Crowder, 1997, p. 142). Under his watch, Church appropriations for the school increased beginning in 1937. Church support gradually improved, largely due to President McKay. Three years later, McKay confidentially declared to college president Hyrum Manwaring, “Let us never offer Ricks College to anyone again. Let us keep it and run it ourselves. You go home and build a good church school” (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 155). Two years later, fellow First Presidency member J. Reuben Clark declared at the Ricks College commencement, “You good people of Idaho need Ricks College. You deserve it, and as far as I am concerned, you can always have it” (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 157).

Two factors, therefore, make Ricks College’s survival an important exception to the general Church education policy. First, unlike other locations, the state of Idaho repeatedly refused to accept the school. Local leaders failed in their attempts through four separate legislative sessions, while maintaining the school on limited Church funds and local support. Second, Church leadership changed, bringing with it individuals who

championed the schools existence. Like he did with Brigham Young University, David O. McKay kept Ricks College as a Church-supported exception to the closure policy.

Writing to President McKay two decades after the fact, Ricks College President Hyrum Manwaring summarized the important role he played in preserving the school:

When our counselors and we were doing everything in our power to save Ricks College for the saints of the great state of Idaho, it was your inspired mind and heart that spoke, and saved our wonderful school for the faithful people of this state. History, if it speaks the truth, must record that President David O. McKay did more than any other one man to save our great school. (cited in Crowder, 1997, p. 201-202).

*Juarez Academy and LDS Business College.* These two schools are combined because their exception to the closure policy is similar. A central tenet in closing or transferring Church schools to the state was the decision not to compete with public systems. Commissioner Merrill summarized the Church's motives, "The General Board has no desire whatsoever to maintain institutions in competition with the public school system. The Church believes in the public schools from the kindergarten to the university and wants to give its undivided support to them" (cited in Millikin, 1930, p. 125-126). The unique situations of the Juarez Academy and the LDS Business College make this desire not to compete with public structures an important reason for their retention.

Located in the Mormon colonies of northern Mexico, the Juarez Academy was an exception to general Church education policy for several reasons. Its location made it, together with the Knight Academy in Alberta, Canada, the furthest removed schools of the expansive Church academy system. The Knight Academy was one of the earliest Church schools transferred to state control, becoming a public high school in 1921. The Juarez Academy never experienced a similar fate.

Juarez Academy's survival may have had to do with the inability of the Mexican government to assume operation of the school during this era. The years immediately preceding Church school transfers were difficult ones for Church members in Mexico. In 1912, political instability forced the exodus of people from the LDS communities in Mexico and the closure of the school for a year (Hatch, 1977, p. 17). A second exodus in 1914 threatened a similar fate. Difficulties caused by the Mexican Revolution hampered public and private education in Mexico throughout the 1910s, making the school's transfer impossible. During the height of the transfer era, Church School Superintendent Bennion answered why some schools were maintained:

The Church has no desire whatsoever to operate a system of schools in opposition to those under state control. . . . The academies that it now operates, it operates not in a spirit of rivalry, but having operated them in communities not served by public high schools, it continues to do so to the relief of the treasury of the state and to the very great satisfaction of the people served by them. (A. S. Bennion, 1920)

Juarez Academy may have been kept because it was not in competition with a rival public school structure.

By surviving the early 1920s, the school in Mexico became the only non-collegiate school kept by the Church. While divesting itself of its private high schools, Church leaders chose to keep the Juarez Academy together with its junior colleges. Superintendent Bennion observed of it and the other schools with joint high school and college enrollment, "There are complications at the present attached to all of these institutions which have led us to hesitate in taking out completely the high school work offered" (A. S. Bennion, "A Brief Summary," February 1, 1928, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1). Available Board of Education records make no further mention of

Juarez's possible closure. Likewise, Juarez Academy histories make no reference to its possible elimination.

Similarly, LDS Business College survived because of the lack of a competitive public alternative. Like the other junior colleges in Utah, rumors swirled concerning its fate in 1931. Anticipating the possibility of closure, school leaders made their case before the Church Board of Education. In May 1931, Business College President Faramorz Y. Fox submitted a packet to Church leaders, entitled, "Should the Church Maintain the LDS Business College." In his preliminary statement, Fox argued for the unique place of a Church business school:

[The school] is not in competition with any public institution, its patronage coming mainly from those above high school age, who cannot or will not enter standard college. It is not a competitor of any other Church school, its plan and organization differing greatly from that of college schools of business. It is not a local institution; its enrollment is drawn from all over the West. Its graduates are to be counted by hundreds. Among them are many now prominent in business and professional affairs. To close the College would be an unnecessary withdrawal of a sponsorship that at small outlay has reflected great credit upon the Church. (personal communication, May 16, 1931, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1).

President Fox supported his argument with enrollment figures, letters from school and business leaders supporting the college, and testimonials from former students. Their arguments centered on the unique nature of the school, especially how its business emphasis differentiated it from other schools. Their efforts carried the day. Though the corresponding LDS College was closed in 1931, the Business College survived, largely because it, like the Juarez Academy, lacked a competitive public alternative.

### *Conclusion*

One by one during the 1920s and early 1930s the LDS Church dropped its programs in secular education, conforming to the American paradigm for a church's role

in education. Philosophically, Church leaders decided not to compete with publicly supported educational systems, focusing instead on release-time religious education for its youth. First, the Church transferred or closed the high school academies, removing itself from competition in secular secondary schools. Next, it backed away from Religion Classes, leaving the elementary school realm to public control. Finally, confident in a growing Church alternative, it transferred junior colleges to state control. This removal of influence was similar to what occurred in other Church-operated community entities during the era. By the mid 1930s, all that remained educationally were release-time seminaries, institutes of religion adjacent to public universities, and four Church-owned exceptions to the policy with their own uncertain futures ahead.

Philosophically, the educational program of the Church had come a long way. Instead of providing separate systems aimed at protecting the youth from state influence, now the Church was transferring its programs and more importantly its youth to state influence. Local leaders had also changed their viewpoint in relation to the Church. In the 1890s, St. George and other rural communities obediently implemented programs like stake academies, even when they were unnecessary. Now, leaders in these communities worked for local interests to preserve the school, even opposing Church efforts and counsel from a member of the Church's governing board. The transition of the Church and individual members' worldviews was complete.

## Chapter Six

### Summary and Conclusions

The LDS Church prior to 1890 was shaped and formed by its theology and the antagonistic world it faced. Challenged by the internal growing pains of a forming institution and buffeted by external forces aimed at its destruction, Church practices turned increasingly inward during the organization's first generation of existence. What developed was an "integration of religion, politics, society, and the economy into a single non-pluralistic community" (Alexander, 1986, p. 14). Brigham Young and John Taylor's motto, "the kingdom of God or nothing" (Taylor, 1859, p. 18; B. Young, 1858, p. 342) came to characterize the "us verses the world" attitude that pervaded Mormon thinking, including educational thought.

The protective communitarian social system of the LDS faith clashed with the industrializing, individualistic America and its leaders who, at the time, were determined to limit communities and local powers. Having passed the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890, the federal government increasingly sought to restrict centralized power, something they felt existed in the LDS Church. Some government leaders even openly acknowledged this goal. In the midst of the anti-polygamy crusade of the 1880s, Territorial Chief Justice Elliot F. Sanford observed, "We care nothing for your polygamy. It's a good war-cry and serves our purpose by enlisting sympathy for our cause; but it's a mere bagatelle compared with other issues in the irrepressible conflict between our parties" (cited in Arrington & Bitton, 1992, p. 182-183). If polygamy wasn't the issue, what was the "irrepressible conflict" between the parties? Sanford continued, "What we most object to is your unity; your political and commercial solidarity; the obedience you

render to your spiritual leaders in temporal affairs. We want you to throw off the yoke of the Priesthood, to do as we do, and be Americans in deed as well as name” (cited in Arrington & Bitton, 1992, p. 182-183). In short, the Mormon integration of religion, politics, society, and the economy into a single non-pluralistic community “was simply unacceptable to Victorian America” (Alexander, 1986, p. 14).

As the expanding American nation surrounded and swallowed the Mormon outpost in the intermountain west, Church leaders realized that their isolation was coming to an end. The Mormons “began groping for a new paradigm that would save essential characteristics of their religious tradition, provide sufficient political stability to preserve the interests of the church, and allow them to live in peace with other Americans” (Alexander, 1986, p. 14). Taking a generation to occur, the period from 1890 to 1930 “marked the end of one phase of Mormon history and ushered in the transition to a second” (p. 3).

Societal changes such as these can be observed through studying educational reforms. As one of society’s largest and most influential programs, education strongly impacts the enculturation of a society’s young. Changes in educational structure, therefore, often reflect changes in societal values and viewpoints. Educational historian Frederick Buchanan (1996) highlights the role education plays as indicator of change, “Public schools mirror the societies that maintain them, however much we would wish otherwise. Although reformers have over the years tried to make schools shape the ‘good society,’ their efforts have been frustrated by the inescapable fact that schools tend to follow, rather than precede, social and cultural change” (p. 286).



This study sought to highlight the transformations within LDS society in Utah by examining the changes in its educational structure during the late 1800s and early 1900s. By reviewing the Church's educational reform during this period and then focusing on education in St. George as a representative Mormon community of the day, the reader can clearly see an example of how one rural community responded to the educational policy decisions made by civic and ecclesiastical bodies during an era of shifting external influences. By highlighting both general and local levels of implementation, institutional and philosophical shifts are also evident. Such changes track the societal debate which ultimately resulted in replacing one educational practice with another.

*Research Question #1: How Did Education Change?*

The first research question for this study asked, How did educational thought, and ultimately practice, change in Utah, both in the public realm and in private LDS education, from the last decade of the nineteenth century to the middle portion of the twentieth century?

Church and state educational policy in Utah changed significantly during this 40 year era. At the start of the time period, distrust characterized the perspectives of the major parties involved. As non-LDS influences grew in the region, Church leaders sought to preserve control over educational systems. Influential men like Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George Q. Cannon impacted most aspects of life in the Utah territory. Holding key ecclesiastical positions, they also acted as economic and societal gatekeepers, influencing settlement patterns, private enterprise, and political thought. Education also fell within their purview, from which a distinct, LDS-dominated educational practice emerged. Schools existed, public

in name because they served the general populace, but controlled by ecclesiastical leaders who held keys to the joint church and schoolhouse doors and who hired those that taught therein. From the lowest grade school to the territory's university in its capital city, all public education in Utah was an LDS education.

As the closing decades of the nineteenth century began, growing non-LDS factions sought to break this power-grip. Protestant church groups led the charge to education, hoping to re-socialize the Latter-day Saint youth. Creating mission schools, they sought to lure away youth with the promise of better schools, even boasting that, "The Mormon people will send their children to our day schools, and Brigham and his bishops can't prevent it" (cited in Szasz, 1988, p. 165). Later, the federal government joined these attacks on LDS society and its educational system. Anti-polygamy legislation impacted education by eliminating LDS control over curriculum and administration. No longer controlling the highest political and educational offices in the territory and losing its power in the legislature, education reform measures long opposed by Church leaders came to fruition. The Free School Act, finally passed in 1890 and made permanent by the 1896 state constitution, required a system of public schools "open to all the children of the State and . . . free from sectarian control" (Utah State Constitution, Article III, cited in R. W. Young et al., 1897).

Attempting to preserve itself from these encroaching national influences, an educational policy of self-determination emerged within the LDS Church. Disdain and distrust for governmental influence, especially by federal control within the territory, drove the decision to establish separate schools. Calling the newly formed public schools a "great evil," (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 196), Church President Wilford

Woodruff warned, “Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal” (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 168).

In 1888, declaring that “the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people,” (Wilford Woodruff, cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 3, p. 168), the LDS Church instituted several separate, privately-run school programs. The first of these was an expansive system of academies, offering religiously-based secondary education alternatives to its members. Relinquishing secular elementary education to the state, the Church also founded an after-school program of religious instruction, known as Religion Classes, for the younger grades.

Though strapped financially, fiscal challenges were of little concern for the newly founded programs. With the salvation of youth at stake, money to run the private education program was of secondary import. When confronted with the principle, President Woodruff’s philosophy regarding temporal concerns was legendary. For example, when faced with a choice of renouncing polygamy or losing Church property, Woodruff famously stated, “I should have let all the temples go out of our hand; I should have gone to prison myself, and let every other man go there, had not the God of heaven commanded me to do what I did do” (Durham, 1969, p. 216). The same seemed true of the education of LDS youth. A Church-wide system to protect the youth was advocated, regardless of the financial challenges facing the Church.

Obedience to general Church mandate was another characteristic of LDS educational philosophy and policy in the 1890s. Local leaders scrambled to implement

the new Church directives, regardless of local circumstances or even needs. For example, the directive authorizing the formation of stake academies was issued in June 1888. By October of the same year, St. George opened their academy. This was quite a jump for a community that struggled previously even to support elementary education. Now they operated a secondary school, though few may have qualified for or even needed it in the rural southern Utah outpost. However, Church leaders had spoken, and strict obedience was expected.

A similar expectation of obedience and sense of greater purpose was true for the personal paradigm of the teachers of the Church's educational system. The inaugural principal of the St. George Stake Academy, Nephi Savage, accepted the assignment with all the enthusiasm of a mission call:

Had I accepted your offer solely from a view to get rich in this world's goods, I would have done better probably by accepting an opening at a place nearer my home which was refused. . . . I feel like placing my services at the disposal of the servants of God. If they say, "Go to the islands of the sea to preach the Gospel" I am ready to go at their call; but, as it is their desire for me to engage in the education of the youth of Zion, which I consider a more praiseworthy calling than the former, your young Brother in the Gospel Covenant is willing to come and live with you and devote his time, his talents, his all, for the welfare of the same. (personal communication, September 7, 1888, LDS Church Archives, LR 7836 24)

These actions and attitudes characterize the paradigm guiding the Church and its members during the 1890s. Separation and self-determination, in a "Mormon versus the world" environment, dominated educational policy and practice. Summarizing the attitude, John Taylor declared, "You will see the day that Zion will be as far ahead of the outside world in everything pertaining to learning of every kind as we are today in regard to religious matters. You mark my words, and write them down, and see if they do not come to pass" (Taylor, 1998, p. 275). Basically, the Church desired to run its own

educational program, and no amount of federal pressure or potential financial ruin was going to change its policy.

From 1890 to 1920, growth characterized both state and LDS school structures in Utah. This growth significantly impacted the educational policy of the region. Initially, secondary schools experienced the most growth, especially in the public realm. High schools sprang up across the state, typical of similar secondary school growth nationally. The first public high school in Utah was formed in 1890, and by the turn of the century, six such schools existed. Just fifteen years later, in the mid 1910s, forty high schools were operative state-wide, enrolling as many as 8,000 students (Moffitt, 1946, p. 190).

After surviving a financial crisis early in their existence, LDS Church academies likewise grew, trying to keep pace with the public school expansion. During this four decade period, nearly forty Church academies operated across the intermountain west. For elementary students, the after-school Religion Class enrollment reached a high of 61,000 students (Quinn, 1975, p. 385). Realizing that an increasing number of LDS students attended the growing public high schools, the Church implemented a similar release-time program, known as seminary, for these schools. As demand increased, Church programs continued to expand. Several of the Church academies became junior colleges to train qualified LDS teachers for the growing number of public and private schools. These institutions also filled a growing desire amongst Utah's populace for post-secondary education. Near the end of the era, college seminaries, later termed institutes of religion, were established adjacent to public colleges and universities to provide religious instruction at the post-secondary level.

Supporting two growing systems was problematic, particularly for LDS Church members who were asked to fund both public schools through taxation and private schools through donation. By the 1920s, these financial challenges forced educational policy change. Eventually, the LDS Church policy of competition with public institutions was replaced by one of cooperation. The Church gradually withdrew from secular education and instead transferred this responsibility to the state. The process of withdrawal began with the transfer of Church academies in 1920, expanded to the Religion Class closure in 1929, and culminated in the junior college transfer of 1933.

Central to this decision was the conscious recognition of the state's role in providing this important function in society and a desire not to duplicate its efforts. Rulon S. Wells of the Church's First Council of Seventy observed, "The present policy of the Church . . . in withdrawing from secular education, must not be construed by the people as a withdrawal from the great cause of education; but it does seem like an unnecessary duplication of work for the Church to undertake to do, in an adequate way, what is already being so well done by our public schools" (Wells, 1929, p. 103). The Church still valued knowledge through education as an important end in itself, but through this policy change restructured the means of achieving it.

By the 1930s, the Church was confident in the role of the public schools. Familiarity with non-Mormon influences eased fears of "evil" public programs present in previous policy decisions. Calling Latter-day Saints "supporters of all sound educational endeavors," Church Apostle John A. Widtsoe declared, "We look upon our public schools, from kindergarten to university, as the finest expression of democracy. They are levelers and equalizers of our citizenry. They offer the even chance in life for rich and

poor, weak and strong. Therefore, we have given our public schools a great trust” (Widtsoe, 1940, p. 62).

Separate public and private systems across all levels of education were replaced by state control over secular learning, augmented by release-time religious programs. Systems originally formed as alternatives to public efforts in education became public entities themselves, as the Church transferred its massive secular education efforts into state hands. This policy change indicates the shift within the Church from opposition to cooperation. “By 1930 that transition had largely been completed” (Alexander, 1986, p. 3). Rather than dominating all aspects of life in Utah, the Church narrowed its focus, accepting the American model of a limited role for church in society. Educationally, as they had done in other fields during the era, the Church transformed “from general to limited church support of education at all levels” (Alexander, 1986, p. 169).

*Research Question #2: Why Did the LDS Church Change its Position?*

The second research question asked, Why did the LDS Church initially resist the American public education model, only to later embrace and even champion it in the state of Utah?

Key to understanding what seem to be opposing opinions by Church leaders is the recognition of significant societal changes that occurred during the era. As the founding generation, headed by Brigham Young, John Taylor, and Wilford Woodruff passed away, a society built on separation passed with them. Utah and the United States as a whole were dramatically different by the 1930s. The Church retained its doctrine and philosophy regarding the importance of education, but a new generation of leaders was forced to change the Church’s policies to adapt to the changing social environment.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Church held one paradigm of unity through central control while American society as a whole fostered another of independence through local power. From 1888 to 1933, both the LDS Church and the greater American society brought these paradigms together, changing the way they viewed each other. The relationship moved from adversarial and confrontational to cooperative and codependent. Church leaders came to trust the state and its systems, including public education. In the end, “Mormons yielded in their determination to teach religion as a part of the public school curriculum and generally accepted the national formula by which religious neutrality was maintained in public schools” (Peterson, 1980, p. 294). State and national leaders, on the other hand, learned to accept Mormons as American citizens rather than as opponents. Citizenship replaced separation for both parties. The LDS Church and its members accepted the American model, and American society accepted the LDS Church.

Not only did relationships between Utah and the nation change, but societal relationships within communities also changed. Adversarial in their original design, cooperation emerged between public and private school systems in Utah. In St. George, for example, academy board members served conterminously on the district school board. Academy principal Nephi Savage interacted with public school teachers, attending area conventions and faculty meetings. Members of his faculty shifted back and forth between Church and state employment depending on the needs for the particular year. With the closure of the school in 1893, Savage himself simply switched employers, teaching for the local district school. Academy furniture and facilities were likewise enlisted for public school use.



The friendly interaction between Church and state continued in southern Utah during the early 1900s. Needing a central elementary and secondary school, community leaders simply acquired the unused Academy building materials and built the public Woodward School. Stake President Edward H. Snow corresponded with the Church's First Presidency, arranging the mission release of the school's first principal. Seeking to further expand educational opportunities in the region, the Church reopened the St. George Stake Academy, arranging with state officials to teach secondary school students for the county in exchange for annual support from public coffers.

At the general Church level, signs were also evident that relationships with the state were changing. Avoiding the adversarial rhetoric of earlier times, public education was increasingly supported by Church officials. As early as 1905, Church President Joseph F. Smith declared, "We wish it distinctly understood that we are not in favor of, but are emphatically opposed to, denominational teachings in our public schools. We are proud of that splendid system of schools, and do not desire that they should be interfered with in any way whatever" (cited in Clark, 1965-1971, vol. 4, p. 101). A decade later, his counselor, Anthon H. Lund, further declared, "We have a splendid public school system in this state" (Lund, 1916, p. 9). These statements are drastically different from those of Presidents Young, Taylor, and Woodruff a generation earlier. A paradigm shift had occurred. Desire for a Church-controlled state was replaced with the reality of separation of Church and state.

These changing Church positions represent a change in policy within the organization. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Church lent its support to public school efforts in the state. Church educators attended and even hosted

national teacher conventions. Deciding to take an active role in the training of public school teachers, the Church expanded select academies into normal and junior colleges. Stepping into the arena of teacher training, the Church and its schools submitted to national and state inspection and accreditation, further evidence that Utah society in the 1920s was different than that of the previous century. LDS Church leadership sought after and embraced a place in a larger society.

Several key individuals in Church educational leadership symbolized the changing acceptance of outside influence in Utah society. Church school Superintendent Adam S. Bennion, champion of the Church's withdrawal from the secular field, expressed confidence in the decision, stating, "My judgment leads me to the conclusion that finally and inevitably we shall withdraw from the academic field and center upon religious education. It is only a question as to when we may best do that" (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 90). His security in that position was strengthened by an assurance that the Church could trust public school officials. Of the state college professors who would assume influence over the LDS youth upon the Church's withdrawal from the field, Bennion declared, "In the main the men in the State universities are seeking the truth, and I think it somewhat a foolish idea to believe that they are willfully perverting the truth" (cited in Bell, 1969, p. 90).

Bennion's trust of public education may have come from his background. A graduate of the University of Utah, he pursued graduate studies at Columbia University, returning to Utah where he became a high school teacher, principal, and college professor (L. R. Flake, 2001, p. 494). His successor, Commissioner Joseph F. Merrill, championed a similar trust for public education from a position of even greater familiarity with it. A

scientist by training, Dr. Merrill studied at the University of Utah, the University of Michigan, Johns Hopkins University, and Cornell University before returning to the state as a professor in physics and chemistry at the University of Utah (p. 458). Like Bennion before him, Merrill brought confidence in public education to his position as Church Commissioner of Education. In a letter to the President of the University of Arizona, Commissioner Merrill revealed his support of public education:

I was connected with the University of Utah for thirty-four years. During this period I was thoroughly converted to the thought that the L.D.S. Church should in nowise compete with the public schools. And so I am using the influence of this office to get over the thought that it is the policy of this Department to give one hundred percent support to the state systems of education under which the L.D.S. Church is doing any educational work. (personal communication, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1540)

The efforts of these two men to entrust secular education to the state indicate the Church's new paradigm, as does their subsequent calls to serve as Apostles, members of one of the Church's highest governing councils.

Superintendent Bennion and Commissioner Merrill were not the only LDS leaders to characterize the change in society. Others also recognized the change and sought to adjust the system accordingly. For example, during the 1926 policy debate surrounding the fate of Church schools, Charles W. Nibley emphasized societal change:

The whole question in a few words is: Shall the Church continue to compete with the State in education and duplicate the work being done by the State or shall we step out and attend strictly to religious education? . . . It must be borne in mind too that the whole school situation in the country has changed very materially in the last ten or fifteen years and the Church has got to face it. (cited in Roundy, 1976, p. 103)

Utah's educational reform reveals much about perception of these changes.

While the growing trust of secular education demonstrates one element of societal change, the interaction between outlying communities and general Church leadership

indicates another. In the previous paradigm, the interests of the greater LDS community were paramount. Church leaders dictated the formation of stake academies, and schools popped up region-wide. Members sacrificed financially to support the endeavor and teachers obediently accepted calls to serve, all at the direction of Church leadership.

Under the changing societal trends, Church leaders gave counsel to local communities, who then acted with more autonomy. This diminished role of the Church in aspects of community life was evident in Dixie College's response to the proposed transfer to state control. Church education leaders, including Commissioner Merrill, lobbied for Dixie's becoming a public high school. Seeing no need for a junior college in the remote location, leaders feared that Dixie's push for state-supported junior college status might undermine the transfer process for other Church schools. Merrill, acting both as Commissioner of Church education and as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, pled with Church leaders in St. George to, "Look at this proposition from a state-wide point of view rather than a narrow local one" (personal communication, February 9, 1933, Dixie College Archives).

Uncharacteristic behavior for the former paradigm but acceptable under the current one, community leaders in St. George sought an alternative future for Dixie College. Fighting to keep their college status, they acted in the community's best interest rather than that of the larger Church program, all without personal repercussion. After the state decided in favor of St. George's desire to keep its junior college, the Church still gave the promised financial support for the transfer. Moreover, Dixie College President Joseph K. Nicholes, who successfully led the charge to transfer the school to the state,

was shortly thereafter transferred to Church-run Brigham Young University, where he continued his teaching career.

Not only was Dixie's opposition a sign that Church and community interactions had changed, the way local leaders had preserved the school indicated a political shift in society. Under the previous paradigm, Church influence dominated the political process in the territory. Even as this power waned during the anti-polygamy legislation of 1890, Church leaders still met privately to decide which bills would pass the legislature, including the feared Free School Act. By 1933, Church control over state politics was greatly diminished. Dixie College successfully brokered an arrangement with other interests in the state to accomplish its goal, opposite that of Church leadership generally. These political negotiations included behind the scenes promises and back room deals with other groups, including similarly situated Church schools like Weber and Snow as well as parties interested in Church-opposed activities like the legalization of alcohol. Educational policy had moved from a religious to a political process, an important societal change in the region.

Societal change explains why Church positions seem so different from 1890 to 1930. In the 1890s, Utah and its leaders struggled for statehood while seeking to maintain independence, spurred by mistrust of federal intervention. LDS Church survival seemed precarious. Forty years later, with the transition to statehood successfully behind them, the LDS Church and Utah were firmly established as part of American society. Society had changed, as had the Church's place in it. Recognizing the reality of this societal change, Church leaders reworked their educational system accordingly.

Exceptions to the Church school policy of closure or transfer clarify the organization's position. By the 1930s, the Church's basic policy was to turn secular education over to public institutions. Four significant programs survived beyond the era, each explaining the new Church position. Foremost among them was Brigham Young University, preserved largely because of the Church's growing seminary and institute systems and the need for qualified teachers. This sectarian need was augmented by a similar dearth of qualified public school instructors. Recognizing the opportunity, Elder David O. McKay convinced fellow leaders to keep BYU as the Church's teacher training school. A secondary reason for preserving the school, as described by Church Commissioner of Education Joseph F. Merrill, was to keep a presence nationally in post-secondary education, a sign of the Church's accepting its place within society.

The other three schools preserved in the era also help explain why the Church changed its educational policy. Ricks College, like the other junior colleges transferred to state-sponsored status, was slated for a similar fate. Consistently rejected by the state of Idaho, the school was saved by President David O. McKay when Church finances improved. The survival of Ricks highlights both the importance finances played in the policy decisions and the role of key individuals. David O. McKay filled a significant policy making position during this era, a role which deserves further study. Finally, Juarez Academy and LDS Business College illustrate the Church's decision not to duplicate public structure. Other schools, either at the academy or collegiate level, were transferred to state control or closed when competing public structures provided viable alternatives. Not finding an alternative either in Mexico for the Juarez Academy or Salt Lake City for the Business College, both successfully lobbied for survival as exceptions

to policy. These exceptions summarize the new Church education policy, one favoring public education, where available, augmented by Church-trained teachers. When a competing institution was unavailable, the Church kept a hand in secular education.

*Research Question #3: How Does This Era Impact Utah Today?*

The third and final question queried, How do the decisions and results of Utah's foundational era in education continue to impact the system today?

Church and state educational organization and relationships in Utah remain largely unchanged since the junior college transfer of 1933. Though programs have grown and policies have changed (credit for religious instruction and state certification of religious educators for example), the decisions made from 1890 to 1933 set the basic structure. Generally, the LDS Church limits itself to religious education, leaving secular interests in what they view to be the qualified hands of the state. With the significant exception of the Brigham Young University system, Commissioner Merrill's statement to the president of the University of Arizona basically summarizes the Church's position today, "The LDS Church does not care to go forward in the field of secular education" (personal communication, February 1, 1929, BYU Special Collections, MSS 1540). Instead, augmenting the public structure, the Church provides released-time religious training for secondary and post-secondary students in conjunction with the public schools. The state of Utah, on the other hand, provides secular instruction at elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels, while allowing the Church to provide its religious instruction by releasing students for high school seminary programs and cooperating with Church institutes of religion adjacent to its state colleges and universities.

Had these changes not occurred, education could look very different in the state. Several members of the state's higher education system, including Weber State University, Snow College, and Dixie State College, owe their existence to the transfer arrangement of the early 1930s. Numerous public high schools likewise had their beginning as LDS-run academies. Because the Church and state chose to replace separation with cooperation, the current educational model that exists in Utah emerged.

The educational model of cooperation is indicative of a similar model within the LDS Church as a whole. Kathleen Flake (2004) observed, "Regardless of its host's governmental system, the twenty-first-century church has applied successfully [the] formula – obedience to law, political tolerance, and loyalty to country – to any country that will allow it to build its version of a kingdom of God" (p. 177). Cooperation, like that exhibited during the transitional era, may have become a new hallmark of the faith.

### *Conclusion*

This era in Utah and LDS Church history is important for the societal and paradigmatic changes that occurred. Of these changes, Arrington and Bitton (1992) observed, "A half-century and more of heated confrontation with the U.S. government had taught Latter-day Saints the practical limits of religious life in America. By the end of World War I, if not before, the Mormons were more American than most Americans. Patriotism, respect for the law, love of the Constitution, and obedience to political authority reigned as principles of the faith" (p. 184).

The half-century of confrontation also taught America something about Latter-day Saint society. Historian Kathleen Flake (2004) observed, "Mormonism was no longer perceived as a political threat, merely an ethnic peculiarity. The Latter-day Saints



had succeeded in becoming merely odd. Like the Amish pietists of the Midwest and Orthodox Jews of the East, the Mormons in the West became part of America's cultural diversity, a reassuring reminder of its capacity for religious liberty" (p. 172). The LDS educational reform of the era, including its reconciliation with the public school structure, may have taught this to the greater American society.

As barometer of societal change, the Church's educational reform reveals its acceptance of the national model and America's acceptance of the Mormons. Educationally, the Church and the state learned to coexist during the transitional phase of the early twentieth century. Though problems continue to exist, a paradigm shift occurred, with both parties agreeing to cooperate in a common worldview. Together, they decide which challenges, like education, they will tackle together.

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## Appendix A

This finding aid is provided for the numerous archival sources generously made available in the pursuit of this study. Because of the unpublished nature of this non-recoverable data, these sources are not included in the reference section (see American Psychological Association (2001), *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.), p. 214). Instead, they are merely cited in-text, usually with the name of the communicator (in the case of a letter or memo) or the name of the work itself (in the case of a manuscript), followed by the appellation “personal communication.”

By their very nature, many references for these archival sources do not fit traditional publication formats. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2001) outlines the procedure for handling reference exceptions:

The most common kinds of references are illustrated herein. Occasionally, however, you may need to use a reference for a source for which this section does not provide a specific example. In such a case, look over the general forms . . . , choose the example that is most like your source, and follow that format. When in doubt, provide more information rather than less. Because one purpose of listing references is to enable readers to retrieve and use the sources, each entry usually contains the following elements: author, year of publication, title, and publishing data—all the information necessary for unique identification and library search. (p. 232)

True to the charge to “provide more information rather than less,” and to “enable readers to retrieve and use the sources,” collection names and/or locations were added to the in-text citations. Further detailed information about each major collection is included herein, including complete collection titles and, where available, archival call numbers.

### *LDS Church Archives*

The vast collection of primary source material housed in the LDS Church Archives is organized with the following codes: CR (Church record), LR (local record),

MS (manuscript), and PH (photograph). Call numbers, included for each entry, begin with each corresponding code. The following collections were used in body of this work:

CR 102 1, Board of Education (General Church: 1888- ), *Letterpress copybooks 1888-1917*.

CR 102 2, Church Educational System (1970- ), *Circular letters 1889-1973*.

CR 102 63, Board of Education (General Church: 1888- ), *Annual statistical and financial report of Church schools 1903-1923*.

CR 102 80, Department of Education (General Church: 1923?-1970?), *Statistical report 1925*.

CR 102 235, Unified Church School System (1953-1970), *Seminary and institute statistical reports 1919-1953*.

CR 102 301, Church Educational System (1970- ), *Historical resource file 1891-1989*.

LR 7836 2, Saint George Utah Stake, *Manuscript history and historical reports*.

LR 7836 18, Saint George Utah Stake, *Primary Association minutes and records*.

LR 7836 24, Saint George Stake, *Board of education records 1888-1895*.

LR 7836 30, Saint George Stake, *President's correspondence 1900-1910*.

LR 7836 39, Saint George Stake, *Board of education minutes 1888-1898*.

LR 7836 45, Saint George Stake, *Correspondence, 1928-1929*.

MS 244, Washington (Utah: County) School District (Silver Reef District), *Minutes, 1880-1892*.

MS 1269, Nuttall, Leonard John 1834-1905, *Papers 1854-1903*.

MS 2203, Miles, Victoria Josephine Jarvis 1866-1941, *History of education in St. George, 1923*.

MS 2926, Utah Territory Superintendent of District Schools, *Records, 1877-1886*.

MS 7642, Weber Stake Academy (Ogden, Utah: 1889-1908), *Board of education minutes, 1888-1902*.

MS 7643, Miller, William Peter 1907-1978, *Weber College – 1888 to 1933*.

MS 8537, Dixie College (Saint George, Utah), *Records, 1888-1932*.

MS 8547, Dixie College (Saint George, Utah), *Papers, 1862-1932*.

MS 8559, Snow College (Ephraim, Utah), *Collection, 1888-1933*.

MS 9145, Board of Education (General Church: 1888- ), *Certificate 1892 Sept. 9*.

#### *L. Tom Perry Special Collections at Brigham Young University*

Like the LDS Church Archives collection, the special collections of Brigham Young University have a unique cataloging system for archival data. Manuscripts like those used throughout this study are classified by the code MSS. In addition to the *Autobiography of Edward H. Snow*, listed in the reference section as a rare published item, the following manuscript collections housed in the Brigham Young University special collections were used in this study:

MSS 1, Bennion, Adam S., *Papers, 1909-1958*

MSS 417, Savage, Levi, 1820-1910, *Diaries, 1852-1903*

MSS 1540, Merrill, Joseph F., *Papers, 1887-1952*

#### *Dixie College Archives*

The special collections and archives housed in the Val A. Browning Library at Dixie College proved extremely valuable in this study. Unfortunately, archival collections in this library are not currently catalogued, making their referencing difficult. Expert knowledge by special collections librarian Bonnie Percival, as well as help from former Dixie College president Douglas D. Alder, made the important material accessible. Three major collections used for the study include the St. George Stake Academy Teaching Record, the St. George Stake board of education meeting minutes and

the presidential papers of Joseph K. Nicholes. The first is a weekly log, compiled by Academy Principal Nephi Savage, of the material taught in every course each week of the school's first academic year. The second item is a book containing entries made by the board from its reconstitution in 1907 to the final transfer of the school to the state in 1935. The final item, the presidential collection of Joseph K. Nicholes, includes correspondence to and from President Nicholes, personal notes made during his tenure, and clippings relative to Dixie College historical events. Cited in the body of this text as personal communication, this largely unorganized collection is invaluable in recreating details of the Church school transfer.

## Appendix B

Reproduction of Church school Superintendent Adam S. Bennion's paper, presented to the Church Board of Education, on February 3, 1926. The original document is located in the Board's minutes, a complete copy of which was made available for this study. By request of the donor, I agreed not to publish the original. This copy, missing only a brief six paragraph "historical sketch," is transcribed from Kenneth G. Bell (1969), *Adam Samuel Bennion: Superintendent of L.D.S. Education – 1919-1928*, unpublished masters thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

### An Inquiry Into Our Church School Policy

#### I. The Issue Raised

Two applications have recently been presented to the General Board of Education which seem to make it advisable to give full consideration to the whole question of our educational program.

The first application is from the Brigham Young College in Logan, asking permission to extend its field service to cover the upper two years of high school as well as the first two years of college. The accompanying statement as prepared by the Board of Trustees of the Brigham Young College sets forth fully their reasons for the proposed change.

The second application is from the Ricks College at Rexburg, Idaho, asking that the policy of that institution be modified so that the institution may offer the regular four years of collegiate work instead of carrying forward the present program of two years of college work and two years of senior high school work. The accompanying statement

indicates fully the reasons which prompt the Board of Trustees of the Ricks College to make this petition.

These two applications bring into the clear two fundamental questions:

1. Can the two-year junior college unit be made successful and can it be made an economic unit?
2. Can the Church afford further to expand its educational program?

As preliminary to an attempt to answer these queries, it may be well to set forward certain facts and tendencies which may serve as a helpful basis in giving consideration to these problems. The enthusiasm which prompts the presidents of the two schools in question to address us is both natural and commendable.

Social as well as any other institutions cannot become static and remain successful. This is a day of great social progress and of marked educational advancement. Public schools are not only being multiplied but they are becoming increasingly complex in their organization and are demanding therefore increased equipment. When one considers that in 1890 there were 200,000 high school pupils in America and that in 1900 there were 500,000 but that in 1924 there were 3,500,000, one can appreciate the tremendous educational growth of recent years. Figures are not available to indicate the collegiate enrollment in 1890 but there is great significance in the fact that there are now 322,965 full time collegiate students in America and a total of 489,064 resident students in attendance at American Universities and colleges. To be in a field where the competition is against such growing institutions as must take care these great numbers necessarily involves a progressive attitude and a corresponding outlay of funds.

If the requested changes should be made at the Brigham Young College and the Ricks College, it is perfectly evident that the budget for each institution must be substantially increased. The increase at the Brigham Young College will be the smaller of the two in view of an already adequate plant. A slight increase accompanied by a relatively small annual appropriation for upkeep would likely see that institution through. This institution can clearly extend the field of its service with relatively nominal increase in its expenditures.

Were the Ricks College to become a senior college it would call for a substantially increased budget along with a building program of significant proportions.

It may be well to point out that the other schools in our system if they are to keep pace with similar institutions operated by the State will have to look forward to a considerable, continuing increase of outlay in the next ten years. Weber College has already indicated building needs and campus needs which if made will run into substantial amounts. The L.D.S. University will likely not be under the necessity of asking for substantial building or equipment appropriations, but its annual budget must continue to be relatively large if we attempt to offer Church School advantages to any considerable proportion of high school pupils in Salt Lake City. The Brigham Young University is growing remarkably and is operating at a very low per capita cost. The new Library Building, which, furnished, has been supplied at the cost of \$165,000.00 is a great asset to the institution, but within the next ten years the school will likely be under the necessity of asking for a new science building, a new gymnasium, a new women's building and possible a new class room building to provide space for such subjects as English, history, sociology, etc. The management of that institution estimates



conservatively that adequately to take care of students who may be reasonably expected to attend the institution, the present budget of \$200,000 should be increased to \$300,000 within the next few years. Snow College, if it is to grow into a real college for Sanpete Valley, has already projected a building program, which in the next few years will approximate \$150,000 with a corresponding increase in annual appropriations. Dixie College seems to have fitted into a serviceable field at present and will likely not call for greatly increased appropriations unless it may be in the matter of one building, which will provide a suitable auditorium. Gila College has projected a program which involves the completion of the gymnasium now under construction, putting into good condition of their football field, the erection of an administration building and other minor improvements which will make the institution a creditable college. Juarez Academy projects its future needs largely in the form of a new building which will offer gymnasium, shop and laboratory facilities at an estimated cost of some \$40,000. If the Mexican schools are to be kept up to standard they will need more money for equipment and teachers with adequate training which will call for increased expenditures.

The expenditures involved in the consideration of all of these questions will of course be spread out over a period of eight or ten years. I call them to the attention of the Board at this time that they may be considered as a part of the issue which is now before us. . . . [section II omitted, see note above]

### III. Our Present Status

The Church now operates the following schools: Brigham Young University, Brigham Young College, L.D.S. University, Weber College, Snow College, Ricks College, Dixie College, Gila College, Juarez Academy. . . .

As already indicated we are now operating 59 seminaries, which to date are serving 9,231 students. The following figures indicate the relative total and per-capita costs as between the Church schools and the seminaries:

School and Seminaries For the Year 1924-25

Schools

Per Capita Cost

1. Salaries . . . . .	\$486,918.50 . . . . .	\$124.94
2. Total Trustee-in-trust Appropriation . . . .	\$647,976.53 . . . . .	\$162.28
3. Total Maintenance, not including salaries and building equipment . . . . .	\$215,726.42 . . . . .	\$54.03
4. Total Building & Equipment . . . . .	\$108,500.10 . . . . .	\$27.17
5. Grand Total . . . . .	\$818,426.01 . . . . .	\$204.97

Seminaries

1. Salaries . . . . .	\$121,987.58 . . . . .	\$14.65
2. Maintenance . . . . .	\$12,415.48 . . . . .	\$1.49
3. Building & Equipment . . . . .	\$63,099.53 . . . . .	\$7.58
4. Grand Total . . . . .	\$197,502.59 . . . . .	\$23.73

IV. Developments Ahead

For the present year, we have appropriated in round figures, \$736,000 of which amount \$555,500 is for schools (this amount is exclusive of building appropriations): \$140,000 is for seminaries; \$22,500 is for gymnasiums; and \$18,000 is for administration.

As we plan for the future three alternatives seem to suggest themselves:

1. That we hold the schools to the present level of operation or perhaps even reduce slightly the amount appropriated to each school and extend the establishment of seminaries until we shall have served all of the senior high schools where Latter-day Saint children may well be served. If we maintain the schools which are now in operation, it is difficult to see how we can reduce the appropriation now being made for them.

From a survey which is now fairly complete, it looks as if we may look forward to establishing nine more seminaries in Utah, eight more in Idaho and three in Arizona and possibly two in Wyoming. These are of high school grade and will cost the Church annually practically \$52,000. In addition, there will in all probability be a call for the establishment of five collegiate seminaries, one in Salt Lake, one in Logan, one in Cedar City, one in Moscow, Idaho, one in Phoenix, Arizona, and one in Tucson, Arizona. Conservatively, these seminaries will likely involve an annual expenditure of \$25,000.

To carry forward the present program, therefore, and to provide adequately for all the seminary needs now in prospect will involve the Church in an annual expenditure, apart from a building program of slightly more than \$800,000.

2. The second plan or procedure is to extend the scope of our operations in keeping with the two applications at the beginning of this report and in keeping with the prospectus of developments set down immediately following these applications. To follow this second plan will clearly involve the Church in an annual expenditure exceeding \$1,000,000 over and above the building program.

3. The third plan open to us is to withdraw from the field of academic instruction altogether and center our educational efforts in a promotion of a strictly religious education program. This program could be financed at a cost greatly under the expenditure involved in our academic program.

Our plan of operation would then be to complement the work of the entire public school system wherever our people are effected by offering an adequate religious instruction. Such a change in policy of course involves certain very fundamental changes and would call for a careful consideration of each of our institutions now in operation. Should this last plan be looked upon with favor, I shall be glad to submit details with reference to the possibilities growing out of the conversion of each of the schools now in operation.

I call these problems to your attention now that we may think through fully our entire educational procedure. In the light of our available resources, in the light of all our needs social and otherwise, in the light of the historical evolution of our schools and the inevitable State expansion of schools with a consequent rivalry and competition in our junior college field, and in the light of our opportunity to render a distinctly unique contribution to the world—in the light of all of these consideration, what ought our field to be?

Any modification of our present practice of course involves serious considerations with reference to (a) the plants now owned, (b) the teachers now in the service, and (c) the attitude of our people who have come to regard our Church Schools as of very great value.

These matters, serious as they may be, are matters always involved in the face of social progress. I call them to your attention only with a view to determining upon a policy which will best meet the educational needs of our people and at the same time help most effectively to meet all of our other needs.

Respectfully submitted,

February 3, 1926

#### Considerations

1. Does the Church receive benefit in returns from an 8 to 1 investment in Church Schools as against Seminaries?
2. Do these returns equal the returns possible in other fields from the same investment?
3. Does there lie ahead in the field of the Junior College the same competition with State institutions that has been encountered in the high school field?
4. Can the Church afford to operate a university which will be able creditably to carry on as against the great and richly endowed universities of our land?
5. Will collegiate seminaries be successful?
6. Can seminaries be operated successfully in communities where Latter-day Saints do not predominate?
7. May Seminaries be legislated out of successful operation?
8. Assuming that the Church should continue to operate Church Schools, can it launch a permanent campaign for funds which will adequately provide for all academic needs? (Consider the Rexburg plan.)

## Appendix C

Reproduction of Church school Superintendent Adam S. Bennion's historical summary, prepared for the Church Board of Education, February 1, 1928, located in the Brigham Young University special collections, Adam S. Bennion *Papers* (MSS 1):

### A Brief Summary of the Historical Background, the Present Status, and the Possible Future Development of the Latter-day Saint Educational System

#### I. Historical Sketch

Latter-day Saint education sends its roots back into New York, Ohio, and Illinois. The Prophet Joseph, privileged to give us our great latter-day message of salvation, early based his learning upon two of the great fundamentals of all education – namely, honest inquiry and divine guidance. It is significant also that the Prophet was always eager in his pursuit of knowledge. In the course of a busy and tempestuous life he devoted much time to the study of law, German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. “The Church has fostered education almost from the year of its founding in 1830. Committees began to select and write school books for special use in the Church schools as early as 1831. So great was the demand for education that only a portion of those calling for schooling could be accommodated in 1835. The experience of the church in Kirtland, Ohio, reveals the fact that in the face of its hardships the church proceeded to construct its first temple and that one of the first uses to which the upper floor of the temple was put was that of a school. The classrooms on that floor, still existing, are reminders of the school of the prophets. Even during the troublesome years from 1835 to 1847 when the people were compelled by persecution to move to a new locality every few years, schools were established at

each new place of settlement. At Nauvoo, Illinois, the schools were becoming important, and a great university was being planned, when the Mormons were driven from the state.” With the great migration west one of the first concerns of the Saints after arriving in Great Salt Lake Valley was the organization of a school. Throughout the winter of 1847-48 a school was taught by Julian Moses. The authorities of Salt Lake City and other centers made ample provision for the maintenance of public schools. In spite of the hardships of those first few years of pioneer life, the Saints never forgot their ideals of learning. Books and school equipment purchased in the east were hauled by ox-team for the educational benefit of young and old. The founding of the University of Deseret, now the University of Utah, the oldest university west of the Missouri River, established when many of its founders still lived in most primitive cabins, is one of the most eloquent witnesses of the high aspirations of the men and women who constituted our pioneer forefathers.

In the early settlement of Utah and adjacent states it is perfectly clear that there were great difficulties in the way of financing education. No scheme of public education was fully under way. The pioneers operated largely as church groups. It is only natural, therefore, that in this early history the church should have been interested in fostering its own educational institutions.

A system of Church Schools became a natural sequence to pioneer settlement. The space of this article forbids a full account of these early developments. The General Board of Education was organized in 1888 (?). Church educational affairs have been administered through four superintendencies to date: that of Karl G. Maeser, 1891-1901;

that of J. M. Tanner, 1901-1906; that of Horace H. Cummings, 1906-1919; and that of Adam S. Bennion, 1919-1928.

The early attention of the Board was directed primarily to the problems incident to the operation of church academies. These institutions offered in the course of their development much that is now regarded as elementary education and gradually left that field to carry forward the regular program of an academy on the high school level. The transition from the academy to the junior college is a matter of our own day. As a matter of fact, the year 1919 marks largely the inauguration of a new educational policy in the church. Prior to that date much of the experience of the General Board of Education, as indicated, was centered in its academies. Religion Classes had been established, but these were conducted under the supervision of the General Board of Religion Classes. Teacher Training had been carried forward under the jurisdiction of the Deseret Sunday School Union Board. Seminaries had been established, but they were of such recent date that they had been incidentally provided for along with academies under the direction of the General Board of Education. The Deseret Gymnasium had been operated under a board of control. In 1919 the First Presidency of the Church appointed a Commission of Education, David O. McKay being Commissioner, with Stephen L. Richards and Richard R. Lyman, first and second assistants respectively. In that same year Adam S. Bennion was appointed Superintendent of Church Schools.

## II. Organization

It may be interesting to glance briefly at the developments in each of the fields assigned the General Board for supervision, during a period of the last nine years.



It was evident that the Church could not operate academies which would serve all of the young people of the Church. It was also evident that all of the young people of the Church needed some kind of specialized religious training. By 1919, therefore, it became clear that the seminary should become the great agency of the Church for promoting religious education on the high school level. It also became evident that it would be to advantage to center other religious education elements under one general board of education. The work of the Religion Classes was assigned to the supervision of the General Board of Education in 1922. The supervision of Teacher Training was added in 1923, as was also a general oversight of the two gymnasiums: Deseret and Weber. During these four years a plan of administrative organization was worked out for the Church at large. Corresponding to the General Board of Education for the Church as a whole, stake Boards of Education were organized for the stakes, as were also ward Boards for the ward units. There now exists, therefore, in the Church a natural scheme of organization from the Presidency of the Church and the General Board of Education down through the smallest ward yet organized.

### III. Church Schools

As already indicated it became increasingly clearer that the Church could not and ought not compete against the public high school. Prior to 1890 there were practically no public high schools in the state of Utah. In that year the Salt Lake City High School was organized with an enrollment of fewer than 50 pupils. In 1891, its enrollment was 53. In 1893, it held its first graduation exercises, when its total enrollment had reached about 103. At the present time the two public Salt Lake City high schools serve 3,415 senior high school students, in addition to the 2,575 ninth grade students now being served as a

part of the junior high school movement. The Ogden high school was established about the same time as the Salt Lake City High School. No record is available which gives the date of the establishment of other high schools in this state, but they followed gradually after 1900, until at present there are 153 public high schools within the state. Church academies had been established from 1875 on. It is evident that the Church pioneered the high school field in Utah. It became evident that when the public high school was established, the Church was in the field of competition. Such competition was costly and full of difficulties. The following table indicates the dates of establishment of the various schools, together with the dates for the closing of those which have been closed.

	Date of Opening	Date of Closing
1. B. Y. University	1875	-
2. B. Y. College	1877	1926
3. L.D.S. College	1886	-
4. Fielding Academy	1887	1922
5. Ricks Academy	1888	-
6. Snow Academy	1888	-
7. Oneida Academy	1888	1922
8. Snowflake Academy	1888	1923
9. St. Johns Academy	1888	1921
10. Uintah Academy	1888	1922
11. Cassia Academy	1889	1921
12. Weber Academy	1889	-
13. Emery Academy	1890	1922
14. Gila Academy	1891	-
15. Juarez Academy	1897	-
16. Murdock Academy	1898	1922
17. San Luis Academy	1905	1923
18. Summit Academy	1906	1913
19. Big Horn Academy	1909	1924
20. Millard Academy	1910	1922
21. Knight Academy	1910	1921
22. Dixie Academy	1911	-

The schools that were not closed were gradually curtailed so as to eliminate in them wholly the idea of competition with public high schools. We now operate eight schools,

high school work being offered only in the LDS College, Dixie College, Gila College, and the Juarez Academy in Mexico. There are complications at the present attached to all of these institutions which have led us to hesitate in taking out completely the high school work offered. The other institutions, while they center their efforts in making Latter-day Saints and training them for carrying forward this great latter-day work, also specialize in the preparation of teachers who are to go out into public schools in this and adjoining states. The following table indicates the number of students, high school and college, and the number of graduates who have been served by Church Schools in the last nine years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>		<u>Graduates</u>	
	<u>High School</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>College</u>
1918-19	4184	328	497	95
1919-20	5984	438	640	110
1920-21	6925	516	734	147
1921-22	6009	866	689	247
1922-23	5150	1370	836	234
1923-24	2531	1670	593	257
1924-25	1898	2095	503	404
1925-26	1972	2489	476	506
1926-27	1853	2274	462	538

#### IV. Seminaries

The first seminary in the Church was the Granite Seminary, established in 1912. The following table indicates the establishment of each of the seminaries since that date: (See table in the attached reproduction of an article which appeared in the Christmas edition of the Salt Lake Telegram.) [document not included]

We are now, therefore, operating 70 seminaries, employing 83 teachers, who serve 79 high schools. The total registrations for this year to date is 11,500. The accompanying reprint indicates more fully the backgrounds underlying this work and the scope of its program.

Two significant achievements in the seminary work in Idaho deserve special mention:

1. The securing of favorable action on the part of the State Board of Education approving the establishment of seminaries and the giving of public school credit for the work done in them.
2. The launching of seminary work on a collegiate level at the State University at Moscow and at the Branch at Pocatello.

#### V. Religion Classes

The following are perhaps the most outstanding features connected with the administration of Religion Classes during the past few years:

1. The adoption of a more or less permanent course of study and the preparation of suitable texts for each of the eight grades of work offered.
2. The simplification of the teaching process, and of the responses expected of pupils.
3. The inauguration of a policy of publishing through the Deseret News a weekly supplement of helpful illustrative material.
4. The increase in enrollment as indicated in the following table:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
1922-23	39,336
1923-24	44,847
1924-25	52,328
1925-26	60,702
1926-27	61,131

5. The use of Church School and Seminary teachers as special aids in carrying to the stakes the messages of the Department of Education.

## VI. Teacher Training

This movement has not made phenomenal progress. It represents an attempt to offer more or less expert guidance to a body of volunteer workers, many of whom have heretofore had but little expert training for their work. Successful teaching rests upon a clearly established technique, any progress toward the perfection of which generally is to be commended. Our records to date indicate that 10,982 officers and teachers are regularly giving their thoughtful consideration to the bettering of their teaching procedure. A number of stakes are doing an eminently fine piece of work and are delighted with the results secured.

## VII. Gymnasium

The Deseret Gymnasium, built in 1910 at a cost of \$215,000, is now serving annually some 3,600 patrons. Its total enrollment to date numbers 61,412. It offers 209 classes per week, with an estimated total attendance of 147,000. Its membership pays regularly about \$30,000 of its annual \$42,000 - \$45,000 costs. With the new annex added in 1926, at a cost of \$50,000, this is one of the finest gymnasiums in the country.

The Weber Gymnasium, built and equipped at a cost of \$300,000, opened its doors to the public in 1925. Already its membership is 1,316, made up of business men, seniors, intermediates, juniors, young boys, women, senior girls, junior girls, and young girls. Its membership pays annually \$20,000 of its total cost of operation of \$30,000. This gymnasium is rendering a very distinctive service to the people of Ogden and is a source of pride to them.

## Observations Looking to the Future

### 1. Organization

a. Due to changes in scope of our work, the title 'Superintendent of Schools' no longer seems appropriate or adequate. It may be that such a title as 'Commissioner or Director of Education' is more suitable.

b. Because of the calling of Dr. Widtsoe to preside over the European Mission, it becomes necessary to complete the organization of an executive committee of the General Board.

c. As our problems become more and more those of religious education, may it be advisable to consider the wisdom of centering in the General Board of Education, the supervision of the educational program of the Church, including the work of the auxiliary organizations.

### 2. Church Schools

These schools have made and are now making a very valuable contribution to the building of the young manhood and womanhood of the Church. Statements have already been laid before this board raising these questions:

a. How far will the finances of the Church allow us to go in carrying forward an academic program, in the face of ever-increasing needs in the realm of religious education.

b. To what extent will the Junior College find itself in the position of the Academy of earlier days when the Public Junior College shall have been established in our Utah educational program.

c. To what extent is the Church warranted in spending money in carrying forward a university program in a field where other institutions backed by well-nigh unlimited funds now operate throughout this land. May there be a way to offer adequate training for those who are to be our religious teachers and leaders without being under the necessity of expending large sums to carry forward an academic program.

### 3. Seminaries

a. Constant care and wisdom in the selection of teachers who not only meet all the academic requirements which may be specified by the state, but who shall be characters of such faith that the very contact with them will enkindle a testimony in the hearts of boys and girls.

b. The extension of the service to meet the needs of all Latter-day Saint communities. Such an extension may at an early date involve the establishment of seminaries of high school grade in the following places:

In Utah: Price, Parowan, Bingham, Park City, Eureka, Ogden, Salt Lake, and a number of smaller settlements.

In Idaho: Idaho Falls, Ammon, Twin Falls, Blackfoot, St. Anthony, Firth, Weston, and Ashton.

In Arizona: Eager, Phoenix, Layton, and Sanford.

In Nevada: Bunkerville, Overton, and Ely.

In Wyoming: Evanston.

On the collegiate level:

The University of Idaho  
 The University of Idaho Southern Branch  
 The Utah Agricultural College  
 The Branch College at Cedar City  
 The University of Utah  
 The University of Arizona  
 The Phoenix Junior College  
 The Tempe Normal  
 The Flagstaff Normal

There has also been an inquiry from our people at Stanford. The future may justify at some such center as the University of Utah a School of Religion, where expert scholarship can be built up at a nominal cost in Greek, Hebrew, Egyptology, Comparative Religion, and other studies constituting a background for intensive religious research.

#### 4. Religion Classes

a. The need of having written more supplementary readers for children – books interesting and faith-building, centering in the achievements of our Church and her people. We have a rich pioneer heritage which is all too little focused in the minds of our children.

b. With the extension and socialization of the elementary school program, may it not be well to deliberate the need of more than one meeting of a religious nature during the week for elementary pupils – a meeting which may be kept wholly religious. At any event may it not be wise to work for a closer coordination of supervision in the matter of our week-day religious program.

#### 5. Teacher Training

Personally, I feel that Teacher Training can be made to be of tremendous service in heightening the quality of the teaching done in the Church. To be of such value it needs, among other things, two reinforcements:

- a. Active championing on the part of presiding brethren, general, stake, and local.
- b. Further subdivision of its membership so that more specific adaptation of materials and methods can be made.



In view of the schedule of the new program as affecting the Priesthood and the Sunday School, the advisability of recommending the hour of 9 o'clock Sunday as a uniform time for holding Teacher Training classes.

#### 6. Gymnasium

It is suggested at times that perhaps these institutions should be made civic institutions that the Church may be relieved of the financial obligation of sustaining them. Relatively, from now on, that obligation should be nominal. I believe the institutions can be made practically self-sustaining and I am convinced that they exert an influence for good in maintaining the physical and moral ideals of our people far beyond our comprehension.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam S. Bennion

Superintendent of Church Schools

February 1, 1928

## Appendix D

Reproduction of the agreement, located in the Dixie College Archives,  
transferring Dixie Junior College to the State of Utah:

Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into at Salt Lake City, Utah, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 1933, by and between the STATE OF UTAH, acting by and through its BOARD OF EXAMINERS and its BOARD OF EDUCATION, hereinafter referred to as FIRST PARTY, and W. O. BENTLEY, W. W. McARTHUR, ORVAL HANSEN, B. GLEN SMITH, AND MATHEW M. BENTLEY, for and on behalf of themselves and as trustees of the Dixie Junior College, hereinafter referred to as SECOND PARTIES.

WHEREAS, by virtue of Chapter 50, Session Laws of Utah, 1933, there has been conveyed, or is about to be conveyed, to the STATE OF UTAH the lands, buildings and equipment known as Dixie Junior College, located at St. George, State of Utah,

And, WHEREAS, because of representations made by representatives of the said Dixie Junior College and by other residents of Washington County, State of Utah, to the State Legislature and to the Governor of the State of Utah, prior to the enactment of said Chapter 50, to the effect that the said Junior College would be operated under the supervision of the said BOARD OF EDUCATION without expense to the STATE OF UTAH, for the biennium period beginning July 1, 1933, and ending July 1, 1935,

And, WHEREAS, because of said representations, no appropriation has been made by the said Legislature for the expense of operating said Junior College during said biennium period,

And, WHEREAS, it is the purpose of this Agreement to provide means whereby the said Junior College may be operated during said biennium period under the supervision and control of the said BOARD OF EDUCATION and without expense to the STATE OF UTAH,

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the sum of \$1.00 and in further consideration of the premises,

IT IS HEREBY MUTUALLY AGREED BY AND BETWEEN the parties hereto, that the said SECOND PARTIES will pay, or cause to be paid, all of the necessary expenses in any manner connected with the operation of the said Dixie Junior College during the period beginning July 1, 1933 and ending July 1, 1935.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that the said Junior College, during said period, shall be operated and conducted under the supervision of the said STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, and that said Junior College shall be operated and conducted as near as is reasonably practical, in the same manner and to the same extent as the Weber and Snow junior colleges of the State of Utah are to be operated and conducted.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED THAT all contracts of employment in the conduct and operation of said Dixie College during said period shall be in the name of SECOND PARTIES, and that all of said contracts, before becoming effective, shall be approved by the said BOARD OF EDUCATION.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that the said BOARD OF EDUCATION shall prescribe the courses of study to be used in said Dixie College, and shall so supervise the said Dixie College that the students thereof shall receive credits in like manner as the students of the said Weber and Snow junior colleges.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that all accounts contracted by SECOND PARTIES during the operation of said Dixie College shall be paid promptly as they become due.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that each party contracting with SECOND PARTIES to perform services or to furnish or supply materials shall be notified in writing by SECOND PARTIES to the effect that the STATE OF UTAH is not liable for the payment of said services or materials.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that, in the operation of said Dixie College during said period, the parties hereto shall comply with the laws of this State relating to the teaching of religion in state schools, and that during said period no sectarian religion shall be taught therein.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that during said period SECOND PARTIES shall not permit waste upon the buildings and grounds constituting said Dixie College, and that they will preserve the same in their present condition, reasonable wear and tear excepted.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that if, during the life of this Agreement, any teacher, supervisor, or principal employed by SECOND PARTIES in the operation of said Dixie College, shall become unsatisfactory to the said Board of Education, then, upon notice from said BOARD, the said SECOND PARTIES agree to dispense with the services of such teacher, supervisor, or principal, and to employ others satisfactory to said BOARD OF EDUCATION.

TIME is of the essence of this agreement, and in the event SECOND PARTIES shall fail to comply with any of the terms hereof, after receiving thirty days' written notice of such failure, then it shall be optional with FIRST PARTY, without further

notice, to declare this Agreement null and void and of no further effect, and to take immediate and complete possession of the premises herein referred to.

IN WITNESSS WHEREOF the parties hereto have hereunto set their hands at Salt Lake City, Utah, this day and year above written.

STATE OF UTAH

By \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

State Board of Examiners

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

State Board of Education

W. O. Bentley

W. W. McArthur

Orval Hafen

B. Glen Smith

M. M. Bentley