

*Historical mini-series*

*Written by B. Pete Schreiner/Jim Keller editor*

*CURRICULUM*

## **Basics Have Been the Backbone of Douglass Education**

"Courses of study were provided by the State in the early 1870's, but in the true sense of the word there were no grade schools in those days. At El Dorado and Augusta in 1874, there were more than one department and a separation of pupils according to age, but the course was not followed according to law. Gradually the two teacher schools or graded schools were able to follow the courses of study. But it was long the custom in the rural schools to begin at the first of the book at the opening of school and read through the readers and work as far as possible in the arithmetic; and next term to repeat the process. The adoption of a uniform series of textbooks and the lengthening of the school term from three months to seven, in 1911, at last enabled the grade schools to get on a grade basis."

"The Barnes Law of 1905, gave a great impetus to secondary education and existing high schools were enlarged and strengthened. "Barnes Schools," with two courses and fully accredited, were maintained at El Dorado, Augusta, Douglass, Rose Hill, Andover, Towanda, Potwin, Leon, Latham, and Whitewater. State funds for maintaining courses in agriculture, domestic science and normal training (was a course in preparing High School students to become teachers) were provided."

There is very little information available concerning the curriculum offered in the Douglass High School over the years, but suffice to say that it has always met State requirements. As mentioned above, the first curriculum had two courses and was fully accredited. As the years progressed, so did the yearly curriculum. Subjects were added and removed each year, in an effort to adjust to the needs and demands of the times.

In 1924, Douglass was given an "A" ranking, because it met the requirements of Class 'A' schools. This put Douglass in the same class with Augusta and El Dorado. These three schools were the only schools in Butler County who were in this class. "No school shall be accredited which does not require at least fifteen units for graduation from any course including the seven required branches: English, three units; Algebra, one unit; Geometry, one unit; History, one unit; Science, one unit, exclusive of physical geography, physiology, elementary science and agriculture. Sixteen units are required at Douglass High School."

In 1925, the course of study was re-organized and placed into six groups, namely: English, Mathematics, Foreign Languages, Science, History and Social Science, Vocational and Fine Arts. The Supervised Study Plan, which became a State requirement, had already been put into effect, before the school became aware of the statute.

To show the progress made in the Douglass Schools, the writer is listing the 1983 offerings in the Elementary School in comparison to the three R's taught in the early schools. Keep in mind that the three R's are still taught today, plus those courses deemed necessary to provide the students a well-rounded education, to prepare them for entrance in to High School.

### Elementary Schedule –1983

Kindergarten- Social, Language Readiness, Reading Readiness, Writing Readiness, Math Readiness, Music, Physical Education, Science and Health, and Art.

First Grade -Alpha One, Math, Reading, English, Science, Writing, Spelling, and Phonics.

Second Grade -Science, English, Reading, Math, Writing, Spelling, and Phonics.

Third Grade -Math, Social Studies, English, Spelling, Writing, Science, and Reading.

Fourth Grade -Cursive Writing, Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science, Spelling and English.

Fifth Grade - Math, Science, Social Studies, Spelling, Reading, and English.

Sixth Grade -Math, Science and Social Studies, Spelling, Reading, and English.

Seventh Grade- Social Studies, Science, English, Math.

Eighth Grade - Social Studies, Science, English, Math.

Jr. Hi. Electives - Combination Social Studies (1st Sem. -Constitution and Government;

2nd Sem. -Current Events).  
Modern American History, Reading, Speech, Crafts and Journalism, Earth  
Science, Career Education, Health, Band, and Vocal Music.  
Elementary Music - Fifth & Sixth Grade Band, First, Second & Third -Vocal Music  
Fourth, Fifth, & Sixth -Vocal Music.  
Phys.Ed. -Grades One through Eight.  
Computers -For Math

The following subjects were taught in the Douglass High School during the 1923-24 school year:

English I, II, III	Algebra, Geometry
Physics, Gen. Science	Modern History
Sociology	Civics
Ancient History	Physiology
Agriculture	Latin
Spanish	Domestic Science
Manual Training	

#### Requirements For Graduation 1983

The Kansas State Department of Public Instruction requires all students graduating from an accredited high school in the State of Kansas to complete the following subjects:

1. Four units of Language Arts.
2. One unit of Laboratory Science.
3. One unit of Mathematics.
4. One-half unit of American Government.
5. One unit of American History.
6. One Unit of Physical Education.

Additional requirements by the Board of Education of the Unified School District #396, Douglass, Kansas:

1. An additional one-half unit of Government.

#### Requirements for Graduation:

Twenty-two credits are required for graduation from Douglass High School. Nine of these twenty-two units must be of the required subjects noted above.

#### Kansas Board of Regents Recommendations 1983

In an effort to provide direction and guidance to students, parents, and secondary schools, the Kansas Board of Regents has recommended that a student who plans on enrolling in an institution of Higher Learning, should have taken the following fifteen units:

4 units of English  
3 units of mathematics  
3 units of social studies  
3 units of natural sciences  
2 units of foreign language

It is further recommended that each of the academic areas consist of the following subject matter content:

English - four units of composition and grammar, including one unit of oral expression.

Mathematics -two units of algebra and the remaining unit consisting of one-half unit of geometry and one-half unit of trigonometry.

Social Studies -One unit of American history, one-half unit of government, one-half unit economics, and one additional social science course.

Natural Sciences -any combination of two of the three natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics) which adds to three units or one unit each of biology, chemistry and physics.

Foreign Languages -two units of one foreign language or one unit of each of two foreign languages.

In 1934, the Douglass High School was admitted to the National Honorary Society of Secondary Schools. To be granted a charter, the school must be rated an "A" class school in the North Central Association. The

principal must be a member of the Department of Secondary School Principals Association of the National Education Association. Membership is based on scholarship, leadership, service and character. Candidates eligible for election to the society must stand in the upper third of their classes scholastically. Only schools whose standards have been raised and maintained at a level qualifying them for membership in the North Central Association, can establish a chapter of the Honor Society. This put Douglass in the first class of schools in Kansas, scholastically.