

Copley's Early Schools

The first log schoolhouse stood on the north side of Copley Circle where the Walter Properties are now. It doubled as a town hall and voting place. The schoolhouse had one room and one teacher. Township trustees oversaw school operations with building repairs and hiring teachers. The Township Clerk kept the school records and paid the teachers.

The first school year began in the winter of 1819 in late November or early December and ran until February or March. The summer term (that's right, summer term) began in May or June and ran until late August or early September. The farmer's planting and harvesting dictated to the school calendar. To attend school, you had to be unmarried and between the ages of four and twenty-one. Primary subjects were reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, history and grammar.

A yearning for a higher education, coupled with dissatisfaction of what one was getting for his tax dollars, brought about the first private school in Copley. In 1858, ten citizens purchased a former store built in 1837 with \$1,000. It sat on the southeast corner of Copley Circle. The headmaster was Reverend John Encell. In addition to the 3 R's, Latin, German, Green's Grammar, Ray's Higher Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry and Natural Philosophy was taught. Copley students and students from surrounding communities attended Encell school at the cost of \$12 per year.

In 1861, several schools were in operation. The original 1819 schoolhouse was replaced with a frame building in 1829. In 1858, the first brick schoolhouse was built on the circle for \$832. H.S. Holshue later purchased the building and opened a grocery store. By this time, the Ohio legislature authorized the establishment of school boards. The Township Clerk served as chairman and the school district directors served as members.

Today, Copley-Fairlawn City Schools reflect the importance of education as in the past.