



Record Group [RG] 4
Schools
1819 - 1918

Finding Aid

January 2011

RG 4 Schools**Series: School District Records****School Registers****Financial Accounts**

Date range: 1819-1918

Volume: Five (5) bound volumes; twenty-four (24) booklets, totaling 0.60 li ft

Location: Town Clerk's Office

Provenance.

These records were found in the safe that sat in the main room of the "Old" Town Hall until the Spring of 2010. The contents were moved to the Town Clerk / Tax Collector Office. Thanks to the New Hampshire Vital Records Improvement Fund, the Town Clerk / Tax Collector Susan Buchanan was able to obtain a second fire-resistant storage cabinet and archival supplies for assisting in the preservation of these materials.

Historical Sketch.

As soon as North Hill became a parish of Hampton in 1738, a school was established and a schoolmaster elected. By 1749 a second school district east of Sawmill Road (now Mill Road) was set up for families living in the Little River and Little Boar's Head areas. Other outlying sections also desired their own schools and as many six or seven school districts existed between 1773 and 1813. By 1820 there were three, the North, Center or Centre, and East (or Little River) Districts.

The North District in 1815 built a brick schoolhouse. It was located at what are now Post and Cherry Roads. Little River opened a brick school in 1824 at the corner of Woodland Road and Atlantic Avenue, the location of the first school. Then, in 1859 a frame school was built across Atlantic Avenue from what is now known as the Little River Cemetery. In 1825 the Centre District built a two-story brick building on the north side of the road at North Hill. It had two classrooms on the ground floor, and a social hall on the second.

The three districts continued until the building of Centennial Hall when the North and Centre Districts merged. The Little River District continued until 1942.

In 1804 the Town appointed a Superintending School Committee that interviewed and

hired teachers, visited the classes of each teacher twice during a term, and submitted an annual report with recommendations to the Town. There were two terms to a school year, Summer and Winter, the lengths of which varied among the districts. Terms ranged from three to six months.

Families in each district met once a year to decide how the tax money received from the Town should be spent. By the late 1830s, the districts established Prudential Committees to ensure that the money was spent wisely.

Scope and Content.

The School Records are in three series: School District Records; School Registers; and Financial Accounts. There also is a 1881 book *Digest of New Hampshire School Law*.

1) **School District Records** consist of three bound volumes, two for the East or Little River District, 1819-1859; and one for the Centre District, 1856-1885. These volumes contain the notice of the annual meeting, minutes of the meeting including people elected, budget, expenditures, and warrant articles. Apparently, a number of volumes are missing.

2) The **School Registers** date from 1860 to 1877 and represent all three districts but there are many gaps. The booklets were prepared by each teacher at the end of a school term and given to the Superintending School Committee for its review. The Committee then filed the Registers with the Town Clerk.

They are preprinted booklets that provide the daily attendance of the students for a given term. The students' names and ages are listed, and sometimes additional information such as *days tardy*, *times dismissed*, *moral deportment*, *habits of study*, *rank as a scholar*. The booklets may list the text books, other teaching materials, and school equipment. They may give the teacher's qualifications, and include the teacher's remarks. They also may note the visits made by the Superintending School Committee members and others. A digest of school laws is printed on some of the booklets.

3) **Financial Accounts** is a single volume whose spine title is *Journal*. It provides the financial accounts for the Center School (now known as Centennial Hall) from 1898 to 1918. It appears to have been maintained by the Treasurers; and includes a sign-off by the Audit Committee each year. The lists of receipts and expenditures are more detailed than those found in the earlier School District

Records volumes.

Also included with these School records is a book entitled *Digest of New Hampshire School Law* (1881) that may assist researchers in understanding school operations of the time, and the records that have survived.

For other school records among the Town Clerk's historical records, **see RG 5 Ancient Town Papers**. The Superintending School Committee prepared reports about the schools for the Annual Town Meeting. By the mid 1800s, preprinted forms also were prepared and sent to the State providing statistical information. For many years, there also are bills and receipts relating to the schools, including the salaries of the teachers, and amounts paid to those who were boarding a teacher. Tax records in RG 5 Ancient Town Papers as well as in **RG 2 Assessment and Collection** provide information about the school tax.

Container List.

Document Box / Folder #	Contents	Date
1 / 1	<i>Digest of New Hampshire State Law</i>	1881
	School District Records	
1 / 2	Centre District (No. 1) Note: After 1876 united with North District	1865-1885
1 / 3	Little River District (East)	1819-1859
1 / 4	Little River District (East) SEE bound volume next to Document Box.	1859-1886
	School Registers	
1 / 5	Districts 1, 2, and 3 (3 booklets)	1860
1 / 6	Districts 1, 2, and 3 (3 booklets)	1863
1 / 7	District 2 (East) (2 booklets)	1864
1 / 8	District 1 and to be determined (2 booklets)	1865

Document Box / Folder #	Contents	Date
1 / 9	Districts to be determined (6 booklets)	1867-1868
1 / 10	District to be determined (1 booklet)	1871
1 / 11	Districts 1 and 2 (4 booklets)	1873-1874
1 / 12	District to be determined (1 booklet)	1875
1 / 13	District 2 (1 booklet)	1876
1 / 14	District to be determined (1 booklet)	1877
1 / 15	Financial Accounts Journal	1898-1918

Next to Document Box is the bound volume for Little River District, 1859-1886

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