ETEP
OFFICE OF EDUCATION THROUGH EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS

Appendix A - History of Individual DC Vocational Schools

Schools marked with an asterisk * had a night school program by 1945.

- Armstrong Manual Training School*
- B.B. French Manual Training school
- Bell Multicultural High School*
- Burdick Career HS* (night school: Dennison Night School)
- Chamberlain Career Senior HS*
- Industrial Home School
- Margaret Murray Washington Professional School*
- McKinley Tech HS*
- National Training School for Women and Girls
- Roosevelt High School*
- Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School

School Chart

School/Program	Timeframe	Ward	Description	Key Programs
Armstrong Manual Training School	1902-1958	Ward 5	Established as Black, co-ed school that offered manual training and vocational education	Carpentry, Machine Repair, Blacksmith, Domestic Art, Business Courses, Lathe Workshops, Sciences, Photography, Architectural and Engineering Programs
Bell School	1897-1980	Ward 1	Established as White, co-ed vocational and academic high school, later integrated	Technical Drawing, Welding, Auto Repair, Auto Mechanics, Bricklaying
Chamberlain Career Senior High School	1939-1996	Ward 6	Established as White, co-ed vocational and academic high school, later integrated	Barbering, Cosmetology, Electrical and Office Machine Repair, Photography, Secretarial Work
Burdick Career High School	1939-1996	Ward 4	Established as a vocational high school for White girls, later integrated and co-ed	Medical Secretary, Practical Nursing, Business, Hospitality, and Occupational Home Economics

School/Program	Timeframe	Ward	Description	Key Programs
B.B. French Manual Training school	1860-1942	Ward 6	Established as White, co-ed vocational/manual training high school	Carpentry, Lumber, Domestic Science, and Industrial Drawing/Art
The Industrial Home School	1875-1954	Ward 3	Established as a co-ed boarding school and orphanage for White children, offering vocational programs	Paper Box Making, Carpentry, Newsie Work, Agriculture, Horticulture
Roosevelt High School	1890-present	Ward 4	Established as a White, co-ed school specializing in business education	Typewriting, Shorthand, Bookkeeping, Business Practices, Employment and Business Law
McKinley Tech HS	1902-present	Ward 5	Established as a White, co-ed vocational and academic high school, later integrated	Mechanical Drawing, Office Machine Repair, Electrical Engineering, Automobile Mechanics, Aviation Sciences, Childcare/Home Management, Shorthand, Typing, and Home Economics
National Training School for Women and Girls	1909-1964	Ward 7	Established as a majority Black school that accepted all races, private girls' high school focused on academic and vocational skills	Dressmaking, Handicrafts, Power Machine Operation, Public Speaking, Music, Cooking, and Physical Education
Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School	1911-1934	Ward 2	Established as a White, primarily girls' vocational and academic school, with some boys enrolled in specific programs	Carpentry and Woodworking (boys only), Preserving food and Cooking (girls only), General Academic Classes (both)

School/Program	Timeframe	Ward	Description	Key Programs
Phelps Vocational School	1912-2002	Ward 5	Established as a Black, co-ed school offering manual training and vocational education	Bricklaying, Carpentry, Mechanical Drawing, Automobile Mechanics, Machine Shop Practice, and Printing, Shoe Repairing, Architectural Drafting, and General Shop
Margaret Murray Washington Professional School	1913-2008	Ward 5	Established as a Black, co-ed school focused on medical-related education and cosmetology	Trade sewing, Dying, Cleaning, Cosmetology, Nursing and Medical Program

A Note on Sources

Most of the information included in this report is from the Charles Sumner School DCPS Archives. The resources at the Sumner School included newspapers, school yearbooks and files, public donations, DC and Federal Government reports, and DC Board of Education meeting minutes.

Armstrong Manual Training School

Photo Credit: Patricia Fisher, photographer, 1986. **Source:** Armstrong Manual Training School, Washington DC. District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

In 1899, the 55th Congress passed legislation authorizing the construction of Manual Training School #2, later renamed in 1903 as Armstrong Manual Training School after General Samuel Chapman Armstrong. Congress appropriated $180,000 for the school build out 1400 First Street NW and opened in August 1902. The original building had 28 rooms and accommodated

300 male and female students. That first year, the school enrolled approximately 20 students. A decade later, the school constructed a building addition, and enrollment rose to 700 students. By 1938, Armstrong served over 1,700 students.[1]

The school originally offered training in carpentry, machine work, foundry, blacksmithing, mechanical drawing, domestic arts, and business. It also had workshops for lathe work and labs for chemistry, physics, and photography.

From its start, Armstrong played a vital role in Washington, D.C.'s African American community. A study sponsored by the United Planning Organization for the D.C. Historic Preservation Division concluded that Armstrong was instrumental in establishing a significant African American architectural community in the District. Its strong architectural and technical programs laid the foundation for many students to pursue professional degrees. Notable alumni include Duke Ellington and John A. Wilson, the namesake of the Wilson Building—home of the D.C. Council.

Beginning in 1946, Armstrong expanded to accommodate returning World War II veterans, operating as a veterans-only high school from 1958 to 1964 and serving approximately 1,300 students annually during that period. In 1964, the school transitioned to become the Armstrong Adult Education Center. In School Year 1995–1996, its final year of operation, it enrolled around 1,500 adult learners. The center was one of the last public night schools in the District where adults could earn their GEDs and technical certifications. Armstrong closed in 1997.[2] Today, the Friendship Armstrong Public Charter School, serving elementary students, occupies the original Armstrong building.

B.B. French Manual Training School

Photo Credit: B.B. French Manual Training School, undated. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

1 National Register of Historic Places - Armstrong Manual Training School

2 National Register of Historic Places - Armstrong Manual Training School

The B.B. French Manual Training School was the first vocational school in DC. The school opened in 1860 as a traditional academic-centered school and rebuilt it in 1898 as a manual training school with six rooms in total. The school was for white male high school students to gain skills in carpentry, woodworking, domestic science, painting, and industrial drawing. In 1923, the school combined with Lenox Vocational School with all students moved into the Lenox building to reduce costs.[3] The old B.B. French building became a military training center during World War II and then sat empty for a number of years.[4] The school was located at 7th and G Streets, SE, and for a majority of the school's existence, it was the only vocational school in Ward 6.

Bell Vocational School

Photo Credit: Bell School, 1889. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

In 1887, Washington High School was a white academic high school at New York Avenue and 6th Street NW. The program became a vocational high school and renamed it "Abbot Vocational School" in 1931. In September 1948, Abbot Vocational School renamed itself again to "Alexander Graham Bell Vocational High School," with 19 shops, one lab, 16 general classrooms, and 36 total rooms. The building at 3101 16th Street NW had a capacity of 580 students and stayed a white co-educational school until the *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Additionally, the school served only male students until the DC Board of Education declared the school co-educational in 1942. The Bell school curriculum included machine shop, print shop, electric shop, sheet metal shop, first-year auto repair, advanced auto repair, diesel shop, English, math, general sciences, home economics, and graphic arts.[5]

[3] School Building Survey of the District of Columbia (Wash, DC: DC Historic Preservation Division, 1938)
[4] Anne Oman, Council to Decide fate of French School (Wash, DC: The Washington Post, December 22, 1977)
[5] Alexander Graham Bell Vocational High School, Annex (Wash, DC: DCPS, Public School Buildings – Past and Present No.43, June 1972)

In 1963, the *Washington Post* reported that there was a 50 percent dropout rate at Bell, which brought proposals to close the school. The Board repeatedly rejected these proposals due to community pushbacks. In 1979, the Multicultural Career Internship Program (MCIP) merged with the Bell Career Center to become Bell Multicultural High School.[6] MCIP needed more space for its rapidly increasing student body, and Bell Career Center enrollment was rapidly decreasing at the time, seeing similar down trends to other vocational schools like McKinley Tech, with a student body closer to the 300–400 range rather than the 800–900 range that it had in the past. The combined school kept most of its CTE programs and increased internship opportunities and education of students from non-English-speaking backgrounds.[7] In 1996, the school reported a 92 percent attendance rate, near the highest for D.C. schools, along with a 10 percent dropout rate, which was similarly impressive.[8] In 2008, Bell MCIP joined Lincoln Middle School to form Columbia Heights Educational Campus.

Burdick Career High School

Photo Credit: Burdick Career High School,1960. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

Burdick Career High School was founded in 1884 as the Dennison Vocational School for Girls, and renamed in 1944 after Anna Lalor Burdick, a noted advocate for women's vocational education.[9] Located at 1300 Allison St NW in Ward 4, the school was originally a vocational high school for white girls, designed to prepare students for skilled jobs such as medical secretary, practical nursing, clerk-typist, retail, cosmetics, dressmaking, and office machine operation. In 1944, the school opened to white male students and expanded its course offerings to include barbering, computer repair, and auto technical work. Just a few months

[6] Columbia Heights Education Campus
[7] Maria Tukeva, Principle of CHEC, Personal Communication Interview (November 4, 2024).
[8] Colbert I. King, A School That Works – No Thanks to the City (Wash, DC: The Washington Post, Opinion Article, March 23, 1996).
[9] Report of Public-School Buildings in Active Service (Wash, DC: DCPS, 1959).

after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the school integrated, but neither the programs nor the funding changed significantly.

In 1982, Burdick reopened after renovations as a Career Development Center. It operated on a shared-time basis, allowing students to take academic courses at their home high schools while receiving skills-based or specialized training at Burdick. Students selected from three training clusters: Business, Hospitality, and Occupational Home Economics, with classes tailored to each focus area. By the 1995–1996 school year, enrollment had dropped to 159 students in a building with a capacity of 348—a 46% utilization rate. Burdick was closed that year due to system-wide budget cuts aimed at schools with low enrollment.[10]

Chamberlain Career Senior High School

Photo Credit: Chamberlain Career Senior High School,1965. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

Lenox Vocational School opened in 1889 as a successor school to a small vocational school located in Anacostia Engine House. Lenox served white students as a prevocational school starting in 1914. In 1923, the school combined with the B.B French School, but remained a manual training school until 1937 when the school closed.[11] In 1939, Chamberlain Career High School was founded as a successor to the Lenox-French School with 200 14–17-year-olds. The school was co-ed and was meant to be a white counterpart to many of the Black vocational schools at the time such as Armstrong or M.M Washington. The school was in Ward 6, at 1345 Potomac Ave SE, close to the old Lenox Vocational School building. Chamberlain offered courses in art, barbering, clerk-typing, cosmetics, drafting, lithography, camera and press, office machines, photography, refrigeration, radio, television, retail, secretarial work, watch repair, English, history, economics, and labor problems.

[10] For D.C. Teens, A Door to Success May Be Shut - The Washington Post
[11] School Building Survey, 1938

Its programs grew gradually to include a typewriter and office machine repair program starting in 1948, followed by a general electrical appliance repair program in 1950, which further strengthened school's technical training capacity in response to workforce needs. Some programs at the school, such as the cosmetology program, began in 1948 with donated supplies from local businesses. This was one example of partnerships with local companies, which played a key role in expanding vocational programs and strengthening firsthand training opportunities for students. Starting in 1942, Chamberlain also launched a night school program to train woman aged 18-50 to become nurse's aides. While the program was in the school, the Red Cross oversaw operations and provided funding.[12]

The school integrated in 1954 following the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and became majority Black by the 1960s, reflecting demographic shifts and the growing African American population in the surrounding neighborhood.[13] Chamberlain was closed in 1996 due to budget cuts implemented under the Control Board.[14]

The Industrial Home School

Photo Credit: The Industrial Home School, undated. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

The Industrial Home School opened on March 30, 1864, in a two-story building near Armory Square, near Seventh and Independence, NW. A few years later, an auxiliary school was opened in Georgetown, modeled after similar institutions in cities like Buffalo, Troy, Detroit, and St. Louis. These schools instructed children who they labeled as those who "would otherwise become criminals." At its founding, the school served 42 students.[15]

---

[12] Nurses' Aide Course to Open Now Nov. 23rd in Chamberlian School (Wash, DC: The Washington Times-Herald, April 26, 1942)
[13] Meeting Minutes (Washington, DC: DC Board of Education, September 13, 1954)
[14] James A. Parcell, DC Vocational Students Protest (September 20, 1996)
[15] ("Roadside Sketches", Star, August 15, 1891; National Republican, November 28, 1867; Annual Reports of the Industrial Home School, 1873, 1880, 1920)

The Georgetown Poor House opened in 1832 to serve "dying paupers, blind, crippled, and mentally ill persons, unwed mothers with infants and children, runaway apprentices, prostitutes, vagrants, and disorderly drunks."[16] In 1868, the Industrial Home School moved to the Georgetown Poor House, replacing the Poor House with a school exclusively for poor children instead. Located at 3600 Calvert St NW, its parlors held carpentry workshops, the second floor served as a school, the third as a dormitory, and paper boxes produced in the attic. Some former "street children," aged 3-17 were employed in the shops, making boxes paid two cents an hour, while the rest worked as newsies (children who sold newspapers) during the day. Monthly subscribers to the *Washington Daily Chronicle*, whose proprietor, John Wien Forney, was a philanthropic donor and board member of the school took care, in part, the expenses of these children.[17]

The school board defended the mission of the Industrial Home School in local papers across DC, "The object of these Schools is to prevent children from begging in the streets, by inducing them to do something better." This mission became increasingly debated between the Trustees of Industrial Home School, who stood for the original mission, and the Board of Children's Guardians, who stood for a new, more progressive way of thinking.

The victory of the latter occurred when Congress abolished the Board of Trustees and put the Industrial Home School under the newly created DC Board of Public Welfare. The Board of Public Welfare pressured the school to take in younger children. Most students were between 9-14 years old by 1885.

The school transitioned from employing children to teaching students general education (e.g., reading, writing, math, and other basic skills) as well as a trade. Instead of the manufacture of boxes and delivering newspapers, the curriculum emphasized agriculture and horticulture. The profits from the selling of flowers and other produce grown by the school went back to the school to pay for books and supplies, and produce not sold was in the students' meals.

With a growing student body, Congress appropriated more funds in 1902 to create a new schoolhouse and dormitory building. The 1902 schoolhouse is the present-day Guy Mason Recreation Center.

By 1920, children still worked and learned in the kitchen, boiler house, carpentry shop, and greenhouses, which the institution used to generate income. However, the staff no longer

[16] The Industrial Advocate, Volume I, No. 1, Washington City, D.C., February 1, 1869; Georgetown Courier, February 15, 22, 1868; Georgetown Ordinances, November 14, 1868; A. M. Gangewer to Andrew Johnson, November 1, 1868, Johnson Papers, Library of Congress

[17] The Industrial Advocate, Volume I, No. 1, Washington City, D.C., February 1, 1869; Georgetown Courier, February 15, 22, 1868; Georgetown Ordinances, November 14, 1868; A. M. Gangewer to Andrew Johnson, November 1, 1868, Johnson Papers, Library of Congress

treated this work as preparation for a future trade or livelihood. Many children were discharged by administrators just a few days after arriving, which made it impossible for the staff to provide consistent industrial training.

After 1920, child welfare officials began focusing on keeping children with their original families. When they had to remove children from their homes, they placed them with foster families as soon as possible. As this approach became more common, institutions like the Industrial Home School were short-term shelters. In 1927, Congress passed an act (44 Stat. 1386) that gave the parts of the school site not needed by the Navy to the District Commissioners for use in schools, recreation, and highway projects. The school officially closed in 1954, and staff transferred the remaining children to the new Children's Center in Laurel, Maryland.[18]

Margaret Murray Washington Professional School or O Street Vocational School

Photo Credit: Patricia Fisher, photographer, 1987. **Source:** M.M. Washington, Washington DC. District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

The District built the O Street Vocational School, later renamed the Margaret Murray Washington Professional School, in 1912 and opened it in 1913 with 96 students. Congress had laid the groundwork for its creation in a 1906 law that defined the duties of the DC Board of Education, which it officially established in 1900.

The Act called for the creation of up to 13 vocational training schools—eight for white students and five for Black students—within the District's racially segregated school system. It designed these schools to serve students graduating from nearby grammar schools.[19]

---

[18] Senate Calendar No.1623, Report No.1619, 69th Congress, 2nd Session, February 25, 1927; Evening Star, July 23, 1954; Files of the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation; Cleere, The House on Observatory Hill, p.9

[19] DC Historic Sites - Margaret Murray Washington School.

Recognizing a particularly strong demand for vocational education among African American students, the Board of Education dedicated the O Street Vocational School to providing advanced training for Black youth. Over its century-long history, the school focused on skill-based learning for African American students, especially women.

During World War I, the school became known for its education of Black women in essential trades, and its reputation as a respected institution continued to grow over the decades. In 1926, the District renamed the school the "Margaret Murray Washington Professional School" in honor of Margaret Murray Washington, an esteemed educator and principal of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (now Tuskegee University).[20]

In 1945, the school launched a practical nursing program, which quickly rose to prominence due to a national shortage of nurses during and after the war. By 1947, the program had earned accreditation from the National Association of Practical Nurse Education. During wartime, the program received high praise: the head of Walter Reed Hospital stated that his facility would "take as many nurses as the school could produce," while another hospital director noted that M.M. Washington students "kept their wards cleaner than nurses from other schools." Students enrolled in the three-year program completed six months of clinical experience in key areas such as medicine, surgery, obstetrics, and pediatrics.[21]

Despite the program's success, budget cuts in the early 1990s threatened the school's future. In 1993, the school narrowly avoided closure after an emotional appeal from students, teachers, parents, and community members. While the school remained open, it scaled back its programming and enrollment in the trade courses declined. M.M. Washington was one of 23 schools closed in 2008 under a broader citywide consolidation plan. Students relocated to Cardozo Education Campus and Roosevelt High School.[22]

[20] DCPS Report of Public-School Buildings in Active Service, 8
[21] Margaret Washington Initiates New Trades (Wash, DC: Washington Tribune, October 22, 1939)
[22] National Registry of Historic Places, Margaret Murray Washington School, OMB No. 1024-0018 (Wash, DC:, Department of the Interior, April 5, 2012

McKinley Technical High School

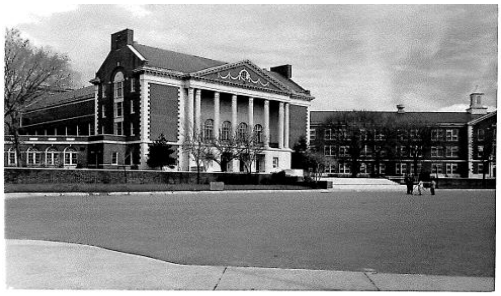


Photo Credit: McKinley Technical High School,1960. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

The 55th session of Congress (1897–1899) authorized the construction of two technical training high schools in the District of Columbia: Manual Training School #1 (later known as McKinley) for white students and Manual Training School #2 (later known as Armstrong) for African American students. Manual Training School #1 opened in 1902 and initially operated out of a small, seven-room facility modeled after the B.B. French School. Students from Central High School's manual training program—approximately 300 students and fifteen staff—transferred into the new school.[23]

By 1926, enrollment had surpassed 500 students, outgrowing the original building. In response, Congress allocated $26 million to construct a new facility at 2nd and T Streets NE, which is still the school's current location. In 1928, the District renamed the school "McKinley Technical High School" and transitioned it from a purely vocational school into a comprehensive high school offering technical education alongside humanities and STEM programs. By 1940, enrollment had grown to 2,400 students. McKinley's curriculum included courses in mechanical drawing, Spanish, French, Latin, office machine repair, electrical engineering, automobile mechanics, aviation science, childcare and home management, shorthand, typing, and home economics. While programs evolved over time to reflect changing workforce needs, many core offerings remained consistent.

Enrollment began to decline after the 1960s, falling to around 500 students by the mid-1990s, which placed McKinley on the school closure list during the 1996 Control Board budget cuts. The school officially closed in 1997 amid the District's fiscal crisis. However, strong alumni advocacy, peaceful protests, and support from city leaders—including Councilmember Vincent Orange and Mayor Anthony Williams—led to renewed investment in the school. In 2002, the District rebuilt the building, and McKinley Technology High School reopened to incoming first-year students in 2004.

[23] History of McKinley High School (Wash, DC: Neighborhood News, December 1946)

National Training School for Women and Girls

Source: Story Maps, 1926. Spliced panoramic view of the National Training School for Women and Girls, from a 1926 advertisement showing the Mary Burdette "Model Home" (left) and the Sunshine Laundry (right)

In 1909, Nannie Helen Burroughs, a DC native and graduate of M Street High School (now Dunbar High School), founded the National Training School for Women and Girls as a vocational school specifically for Black high school girls. Unlike many other schools serving Black students at the time, the institution did not rely on funding from white donors. Burroughs envisioned each student becoming, in her words, "the fiber of a sturdy moral, industrious and intellectual woman." She designed a rigorous and demanding curriculum that combined academic and vocational instruction with religious education. Students enrolled in courses such as dressmaking, handicrafts, power machine operation, public speaking, music, and physical education.[24]

The school was also one of the most diverse educational institutions in the city at the time, attracting boarders from Canada, Africa, Haiti, and Puerto Rico. As a devout Baptist and a leader in the National Baptist Convention's Women's Auxiliary, Burroughs ran Sunday school classes and a missionary training program on campus. Enrollment was open regardless of class background or skin tone, including for members of the school's board. Most students came from working-class families.

Upholding her belief in self-help, Burroughs offered no scholarships, though she led annual fundraising campaigns—one of which sought $100,000 in 1926 (approximately $1.78 million today) after a fire destroyed the original school building. The National Training School was the first institution in the United States to offer all these opportunities—academic, vocational, and religious—within a single educational setting for young Black women. She led the school until her death in 1961, after which the school renamed it "The Nannie Helen Burroughs School" in her honor. In 1964, with the loss of much of its original leadership, the school transitioned into

[24] DC Historic Sites - National Training School for Women and Girls

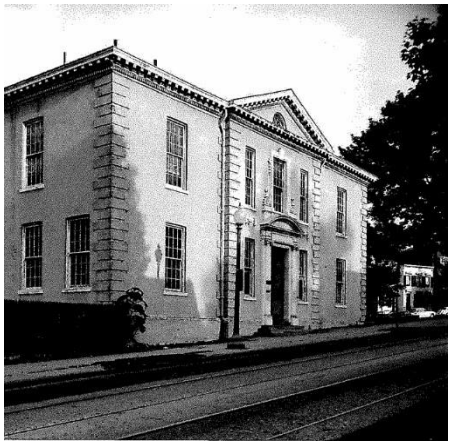
a private elementary school, which later closed in 2006. The property now serves as the headquarters of the Progressive National Baptist Convention.[25]

Roosevelt High School

Photo Credit: Roosevelt High School, undated. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

The District founded Roosevelt High School in 1890 as "Business High School", and at the time it was the only institution dedicated solely to business education. Its curriculum included typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping, business practice, employment law, and business law.[26] The school was coeducational, but served only white students. In 1926, Congress appropriated funds for a new facility, and that same year, the school transitioned from a business-focused institution to a general high school as part of the Board of Education's effort to offer a more well-rounded, college preparatory curriculum. It was later renamed Roosevelt High School.[27]

Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School



[25] DC Historic Sites - National Training School for Women and Girls
[26] Business High School Yearbook (Washington, DC: Business High School, 1906)
[27] Historic Preservation Review Board - Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School

Photo Credit: Marc Blair, photographer, 1966. **Source:** Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School, Washington DC. District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

In 1912, the Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School opened at 1640 Wisconsin Avenue NW. The school was for white male and female high school students interested in learning practical trades and sciences. The school focused on carpentry and woodworking for boys, and domestic science for girls, including classes in food preservation, cooking, and the scientific principles underlying household tasks. It offered general academic classes to ensure practical literacy across subjects.

By 1915, the school ceased functioning as a standalone manual training institution and instead became a center primarily focused on domestic science. In 1934, due to declining demand and changes in educational priorities, the school building was repurposed as a central kitchen for the school system. According to *The Washington Post*, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt once sampled food prepared there and found it so unpalatable that it prompted the decision to convert the building exclusively into a school kitchen.[28]

Phelps Vocational School

Photo Credit: Phelps Vocational School,1960. **Source:** District of Columbia Public School Records, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, DC.

The District built in 1933 the Seth Ledyard Phelps Vocational Junior High School for Black boys as the successor to the Lenox-B.B. French Vocational School. The school opened at 704 26th Street NE, its current location. In July 1940, Phelps operated on a 24-hour, three-shift daily schedule to support National Defense Training initiatives. In 1944, the school District changed its status to a high school and discontinued its 24-hour operation. By 1951, Phelps enrolled approximately 300 students annually, offering training in trades such as shoe repair, architectural drafting, aircraft engine mechanics, automobile mechanics, agriculture, barbering,

[28] A Handsome Georgetown Building Started Life as a Vocational School - The Washington Post

brick masonry, carpentry, electricity, landscape gardening, printing and decorating, plumbing and heating, radio and television repair, and tailoring.[29]

In the mid-1970s, Phelps began admitting female students and allowed them to enroll in all available courses. This change contributed to a rise in enrollment, which soon exceeded 600 students, the highest among the seven career centers in D.C. In 1983, Phelps—along with other vocational schools—transitioned to a "shared-time" model, where students attended their academic high school for part of the day and traveled to Phelps for vocational coursework and certifications. This model included open enrollment, allowing students from public and private schools, including students with disabilities, to attend.[30] However, the logistical challenges of attending two schools daily resulted in significant drops in attendance at both the home and vocational schools. In response, the D.C. Board of Education voted in 1989 to restore Phelps to a full-time school model, requiring students to attend Phelps exclusively.[31]

Returning to a full-day program, Phelps placed a renewed emphasis on student employability, requiring students to complete on-the-job training. Each student attended an assigned course-related job placement for which they earned academic credit.[32] Over time, the school phased out programs such as aircraft mechanics due to the end of military funding.[33]

Despite its legacy, Phelps closed in 2002 due to declining enrollment, reduced funding, and a broader national shift toward college preparatory education. The school reopened in 2008 as Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) High School, following community protests, petitions, and legislation spearheaded by former Councilmember Kwame Brown, a Phelps graduate. Today, many of the school's historic programs remain, with a modernized focus on engineering, architecture, and construction.

Night Schools

Night schools in DC began in 1885–86, with programs for white students held at the Franklin School and for Black students at the Sumner School. Student ages ranged from 16 to 70, with an average age of 24. In 1901, the District reorganized night schools under a unified system. It appointed a Director of All-Night Schools and an Assistant Director specifically for Black night schools. At that time, there were four white night schools and three Black night schools, with

[29] Estelle Greene, History of Phelps Career High School, Chronology of Principals, With Programs, Changes, Trends, and Firsts. 1933-1998 (Washington, DC: DC Public Schools, June 15, 1998)
[30] Greene, History of Phelps Career High School
[31] Sonsyrea Tate, City Opts for Full-Day Schedule at Trade School (Wash, DC: The Washington Times, July 20, 1989)
[32] Greene, History of Phelps Career High School
[33] Greene, History of Phelps Career High School

each receiving equal funding and staffing.[34] Each school offered varying levels of instruction and focused on basic math and English skills. Beginning in 1901, two manual training night schools operated: McKinley for white students (preceded by Jefferson High School until 1910), and Armstrong for Black students. Additionally, there were two business night schools housed in the same facility—Business High School—with segregated classes. Armstrong's vocational offerings included cooking, sewing, carpentry, engineering, millinery, stenography, and typewriting. In the 1901–1902 school year, Armstrong enrolled 392 students, with an average age of 25, representing 42 different occupations. Jefferson Night School and McKinley Tech, both for white students, offered similar courses, excluding engineering and millinery. These schools also provided English classes for immigrants. Jefferson Night School reported 269 students, an average age of 16, and 80 occupations represented. From 1901 to 1910, student numbers across all Black and white night schools ranged between 200 and 400. By 1910, total night school enrollment reached 4,370, marking a 2.2 percent increase from the prior year.[35]

By 1920, night schools remained tuition-free and continued to provide instruction in business, vocational, industrial, and English language skills. Enrollment and funding declined during the Great Depression but rose again under the New Deal. In 1931, 7,553 students enrolled, and another 1,521 registered in the months following, representing a total increase of more than 2,000 from the prior year. During World War II, the District expanded vocational classes for women and funding increased to meet workforce demands. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the School Board added new subjects such as investment, law, art, psychology, and foreign languages to the existing curriculum. Vocational courses at that time included advertising art, auto mechanics, baking, barbering, cosmetology, diesel engines, machine shop, multilith, paperhanging, photography, printing, radio communication and repair, refrigeration, sheet metal drafting, typewriter repair, watch repair, welding, asbestos work, carpentry, electricity, electronics, glazing, ironwork, metal lathing, operating engineering, painting, plumbing, reinforced concrete, steam engineering, and steam-fitting.[36]

Federal funding, made available under the George-Deen Act of 1936, supported schools such as Washington Vocational Night School, allowing states and the District of Columbia to apply for vocational education grants. Beginning in 1938, DC received $12,000 (approximately $267,382 today) in grant funding per semester to support vocational programming in both day and night schools.[37]

---

[34] S. E. Kramer, Director of Night Schools, Report of the Director of Night Schools (Wash, DC: DC Board of Education, 1904-1905)
[35] B. W. Murch, Director, Report of the Director of Night Schools (Wash, DC: DC Board of Education, 1910-1911)
[36] DC Public School Offerings and Courses - Adult Education (Wash, DC: DCPS, 1958-1959
[37] George-Deen Act Funds Received by DC Auditor, Meeting Minutes (Washington, DC: DC Board of Education, April 27, 1938)

Starting in 1901, all night schools had designated buses or streetcars to transport students, and route information was in registration materials. This transportation system continued until the eventual closure of public night schools. These institutions remained tuition-free and operational until the late 1990s when the Control Board cut funding.

ETEP
OFFICE OF EDUCATION THROUGH EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS

Appendix B - Chart Comparison of Current and Historical Offerings

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Agriculture and Horticulture	X	The Industrial Home School	X	**OSSE CTE:** Ron Brown College Preparatory HS
Aircraft Engine Mechanics	X	Phelps Vocational School		
Architectural and Engineering Programs; Architectural Drafting	X	Armstrong Manual Training School	X	**OSSE CTE:** • Anacostia HS • Cardozo EC • Columbia Heights EC • District of Columbia International PCS • Dunbar HS • Friendship PCS Technology Preparatory Academy • Girls Global Academy PCS • H.D. Woodson HS • Jackson-Reed HS • MacArthur HS • McKinley Tech HS • Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering HS

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Auto Repair; Auto Mechanics; Auto Technical Work; Advanced Auto Repair, Diesel Shop;	X	• Bell School • Burdick Career High School • McKinley Tech HS • Phelps Vocational School	X	Ballou HS
Aviation Sciences	X	McKinley Tech HS		
Barbering	X	• Burdick Career High School • Chamberlain Career Senior High School • Phelps Vocational School • M.M. Washington School	X	**Adult Education:** • Ballou STAY HS • Maya Angelou PCS Young Adult Learning Center • Garnet-Patterson STAY HS **OSSE CTE:** Columbia Heights EC
Blacksmith	X	Armstrong Manual Training School		
Bookkeeping	X	Roosevelt High School	X	**OSSE CTE:** KIPP DC PCS
Bricklaying	X	• Bell School • Phelps Vocational School		

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Business Courses; Business Practices; Employment; Business Law	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • Burdick Career High School • Roosevelt High School • Business High School	X	**Adult Education:** Goodwill Excel Center PCS **OSSE CTE:** • Girls Global Academy PCS • IDEA PCS • KIPP DC PCS • Maya Angelou PCS • Roosevelt HS
Carpentry; Lumber; Woodworking	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • B.B. French Manual Training school • The Industrial Home School • Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School • Phelps Vocational School	X	**OSSE CTE:** • IDEA PCS • Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering HS

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Childcare and Home Management	X	McKinley Tech HS	X	**Adult Education:** • Ballou STAY HS • Briya PCS Adult Education • Garnet-Patterson STAY HS • Roosevelt STAY HS • The Family Place PCS **OSSE CTE:** • Columbia Heights EC • IDEA PCS **UDC WDLL:** • UDC WDLL
Cleaning	X	M.M. Washington School		
Clerk/Typist	X	• Chamberlain Career Senior High School • Burdick Career High School	X	**Adult Education:** • Community College Preparatory Academy PCS • Goodwill Excel Center PCS • Maya Angelou PCS Young Adult Learning Center

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Clerk/Typist (cont'd)	X	• Chamberlain Career Senior High School • Burdick Career High School	X	**OSSE CTE:** • Girls Global Academy PCS • IDEA PCS • KIPP DC PCS • Maya Angelou PCS • Roosevelt HS
Cooking; Food Preservation and Safety; Scientific Principles Underlying Household Tasks	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • National Training School for Women and Girls • Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School	X	**Adult Education:** • Carlos Rosario International PCS • The Family Place PCS **DOES:** • Constituent Services Worldwide Public Benefit Corporation • TIS Foundation **OSSE CTE:** • Ballou HS • Cardozo EC • Roosevelt HS

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Cosmetology	X	• Chamberlain Career Senior High School • M.M. Washington School	X	**Adult Education:** • Ballou STAY • Maya Angelou PCS Young Adult Learning Center • Garnet-Patterson STAY HS **DOES:** Constituent Services Worldwide Public Benefit Corporation **OSSE CTE:** Columbia Heights EC
Domestic Arts, Domestic Science, Home Economics; Occupational Home Economics	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • B.B. French Manual Training school • Bell School • Burdick Career High School • McKinley Tech HS • M.M. Washington School • Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School		

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Dressmaking; Tailoring; Trade sewing	X	• National Training School for Women and Girls • Burdick Career High School • M.M. Washington School • Phelps Vocational School		
Dyeing	X	M.M. Washington School		
Electrical	X	McKinley Tech HS	X	**Adult Education:** • Four Walls Career and Technical Education Center • So Others Might Eat **DOES:** IDEA PCS **OSSE CTE:** • Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering HS **UDC WDLL:** UDC WDLL
Foundry Training; Lathe Workshops (also known as a "Machinist Training"); Machine Shop Practice; Machine Work; Power Machine Operation	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • National Training School for Women and Girls • Phelps Vocational School		

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
General Shop (Construction)	X	Phelps Vocational School		**Adult Education:** • Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington • Four Walls Career and Technical Education Center • So Others Might Eat • YouthBuild PCS
Handicrafts	X	National Training School for Women and Girls		
Hospitality	X	Burdick Career High School	X	**Adult Education:** • The Family Place PCS • YWCA National Capital Region **OSSE CTE:** • Columbia Heights EC • Jackson-Reed HS • Maya Angelou PCS • River Terrace Education Campus • Ballou HS **UDC WDLL:** UDC WDLL

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Machine Repair	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • Chamberlain Career Senior High School • McKinley Tech HS		
Mechanical Drawing; Technical Drawing/ Industrial Drawing/Art	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • B.B. French Manual Training school • Bell School • McKinley Tech HS • Phelps Vocational School		
Medical Secretary	X	Burdick Career High School	X	**Adult Education:** • Career Technical Institute (CTI) **UDC WDLL:** UDC WDLL
Music	X	National Training School for Women and Girls	X	**OSSE CTE:** Available in all schools
Newsie Work	X	The Industrial Home School		
Paper Box Making	X	The Industrial Home School		

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Photography	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • Chamberlain Career Senior High School		
Physical Education	X	National Training School for Women and Girls	X	**OSSE CTE:** Available in all schools
Practical Nursing; Nursing and Medical Program	X	• Burdick Career High School • M.M. Washington School	X	**Adult Education:** • Academy of Hope Adult PCS • Carlos Rosario International PCS • YWCA National Capital Region

Practical Nursing; Nursing and Medical Program (cont'd)	X	• Burdick Career High School • M.M. Washington School	X	**OSSE CTE:** • Ballou HS • Columbia Heights EC • Dunbar HS • Friendship PCS Collegiate Academy • Girls Global Academy PCS • H.D. Woodson HS • IDEA PCS • Jackson-Reed HS • KIPP DC PCS • MacArthur HS • Maya Angelou PCS • Paul PCS • Richard Wright PCS for Journalism and Media Arts • Sojourner Truth PCS • Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS • Washington Leadership Academy PCS **UDC WDLL:** UDC WDLL
Public Speaking	X	National Training School for Women and Girls		

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Sciences (physics, chemistry, health, etc.)	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • Bell School • Roosevelt High School • Wisconsin Avenue Manual Training School	X	**OSSE CTE:** Offered at all high schools
Secretarial Work (Non-Medical)	X	Chamberlain Career Senior High School	X	**Adult Education:** • Community College Preparatory Academy PCS • Maya Angelou PCS Young Adult Learning Center
Shoe repair	X	Phelps Vocational School		
Stenography	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • McKinley Tech HS • Roosevelt High School		
Typewriting	X	• Armstrong Manual Training School • McKinley Tech HS • Roosevelt High School		

Area Of Training	Under Vocational Education	Historical Provider	Offered Currently	Current Provider
Welding	X	Bell School	X	**Adult Education:** • Southeast Welding Center **CTE:** Welding is an approved program of study, but not currently offered by any LEAs

Appendix C - Program Labor Market Analysis

Table 1. Selection of Low-Wage, High-Demand Occupations to Which District Programs Are Aligned[38]

Industry	Occupation Title	Number of Aligned Programs	Median Wage	Projected Growth of Occupation	Projected Annual Openings in D.C.	Projected Annual Openings in DMV
Customer service and sales	Customer service representatives	10	$53,907	-3%	762	5117
Education	Childcare workers	5	$40,255	-3%	505	1539
	Teacher assistants	8	$44,597	5%	381	3404
Health care	Home health and personal care aides	8	$39,756	18%	2,055	6753
	Nursing assistants	7	$49,644	7%	455	3504
	Medical assistants	7	$52,320	19%	393	2184
	Medical secretaries	4	$50,705	8%	216	1515
	Pharmacy technicians	2	$49,684	12%	80	647
Human services	Hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists	5	$53,708	33%	206	1312

Notes: This table presents only those occupations linked to programs that are exclusively aligned to low-wage, high-demand occupations. Information on additional low-wage, high-demand occupations aligned with District programs is presented in Appendix B, Table 1. The total number of aligned District programs sums to more than 24 because programs can be aligned to more than one occupation on this list.

[38] Education Northwest's analysis of D.C. career preparation programs and DOES/BLS occupation data.

Table 2. Selection of High-Wage, Low-Demand Occupations with Linked District Programs[39]

Industry	Occupation title	Number of aligned programs	Median wage	Projected growth of occupation	Projected annual openings in D.C.	Projected annual openings in DMV
Audio/visual technology	Audio and video technicians	3	$69,474	9%	59	151
	Media and communication equipment workers	3	$127,612	-3%	37	71
	Sound engineering technicians	1	$104,392	1%	6	32
	Lighting technicians	3	$71,878	4%	5	21
Construction	Stationary engineers and boiler operators	3	$89,417	6%	71	94
	Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators	2	$70,285	13%	49	600
	Construction and building inspectors	2	$96,562	1%	37	323
	HVAC mechanics and installers	6	$85,046	7%	33	715
	Helpers, construction trades	8	$60,320			100
	Occupational health and safety technicians	1	$64,130	12%	4	18
Human services	Makeup artists	5	$115, 499	9%	16	
Transportation, distribution, and logistics	Automotive service technicians and mechanics	1	$67,977	3%	33	1089

Notes: Blank cells indicate missing labor market data. This table presents only those occupations linked to programs that are exclusively aligned to high-wage, low-demand occupations. Information on additional high-wage, low-demand occupations aligned with District programs is presented in Appendix

[39] Education Northwest's analysis of D.C. career preparation programs and DOES/BLS occupation data

B, Table 1. The total number of aligned District programs sums to more than 16 because programs can be aligned to more than one occupation on this list.

Table 3. Selection of Low-Wage, Low-Demand Occupations to which District Programs Are Linked[40]

Industry	Occupation title	Number of aligned programs	Median wage	Projected growth of occupation	Projected annual openings in D.C.	Projected annual openings in DMV
Health care	Emergency medical technicians	3	$50,671	9%	27	106
	Phlebotomists	3	$50,996	-3%	24	250
Human services	Shampooers	8	$35,770			90
	Manicurists and pedicurists	5	$33,490			389
Law enforcement	Crossing guards and flaggers	1	$42,605	13%	74	571

Notes: Blank cells indicate missing labor market data. This table presents only those occupations linked to programs that are exclusively aligned to low-wage, low-demand occupations. Information on additional low-wage, low-demand occupations aligned with District programs is presented in Appendix B, Table 1. The number of aligned District programs sums to more than 10 because a program can align to more than one occupation on this list.

Table 4. Programs Aligning only with Occupations Requiring a College Degree[41]

Sector	Provider	Program
Adult Education	Academy of Hope Adult PCS	Project Management
DOES	Bay Atlantic University	Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies
DOES	Bay Atlantic University	ADOBE Training
DOES	Captivate Perspectives	Achievement Excellence Academy

[40] Education Northwest's analysis of D.C. career preparation programs and DOES/BLS occupation data
[41] Education Northwest's analysis of D.C. career preparation programs and DOES/BLS occupation data

Sector	Provider	Program
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Architectural Design
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Army Cybersecurity Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Biomedical Science (PLTW)
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Biotechnology
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Computer Science (AP)
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Computer Science (PLTW)
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Cybersecurity (ATC)
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Digital Media
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Energy and Natural Resource Technology
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Foreign Service and Diplomacy
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Graphic Design and Illustration
OSSE CTE	OSSE CTE	Networking