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Town of Douglas, Mass. Municipal Records & Archive

290 Main Street
Douglas, Massachusetts

Town of Douglas School Department
RG_500

Processed by: Rebecca Lavalley
July 28, 2016

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Collection Information

Creator : Town of Douglas, Massachusetts

Title : Town of Douglas, School Department

Abstract : Collection includes information relating to the Douglas School Department. Collection contains annual reports, evaluations, proposals, plans and correspondences.

Dates : Bulk 1861 - 1986

Quantity : 23 Folders

Repository : Simon Fairfield Public Library, Town of Douglas Municipal Records & Archive.

Finding Aid : Finding Aid in print form is available in the Repository.

Preferred Citation : [Box #, Item identification], School Department, Simon Fairfield Public Library, Town of Douglas Municipal Records & Archive.

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MARC Access :

Administrative History

“On the subject of schools the earliest recorded action of the town occurs in 1748.”

~ W.A. Emerson’s *History of the Town of Douglas*, page 87

As of 2016, the Town of Douglas has four public schools that provide education for children from Pre-Kindergarten (PK) to 12th Grade. The Primary School cares for children in PK, Kindergarten and 1st grade. The Elementary School is for the 2nd through 5th grade. 6th, 7th and 8th graders attend Douglas Middle School, while the High School is attended by 9th – 12th grade.¹

Through the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the subject of regionalization was a “hot” topic to the townspeople.

Beginning with the post-war period, the 1949 Regional Schools Act authorized the regional district as an independent legal entity to encourage small towns to form consolidated districts with a single school committee and specified rights and obligations for member towns. Though the state envisioned consolidation, the number of districts actually increased over the next 20 years, from 355 to over 390, as small towns preserved independent elementary districts while creating regional secondary schools. Special commission reports and Board of Education guidelines in the 1960’s promoted the formation of more K–12 districts on the grounds that they would improve educational programs and streamline governance, with little avail.

Real progress toward consolidation did not begin until Chapter 71, the state’s regional school law, was amended in 1974 to expand financial incentives for districts to regionalize. The aid formula was based on enrollment, which provided some incentive for districts to fully regionalize grades K–12. After these reforms the number of school districts declined to the current level of 329, not including charter schools. However, regional school aid was phased out in the early 1990s with the passage of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act.²

The proposal was for the towns of Douglas and Sutton to regionalize. The regionalization never took place. Each town has their own individual school system to date.

In the early 1960s, a proposal was brought forth for the establishment of a

¹Information regarding the Douglas School System found on the Douglas Public School District Website <http://www.douglas.k12.ma.us/>

²Carleton, Sarah, Christine Lynch, and Robert O'Donnell. *School district consolidation in Massachusetts: Opportunities and obstacles*. Brief, Office of Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2009, 18.

vocational regional district high school. In 1964, Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) was formed as a technical school servicing the thirteen towns of the Blackstone Valley (Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge). Currently (2016), students from the Town of Douglas still attend BVT.³

Scope and Content

This collection has room for ten (10) distinct record groups. At this time, there are only seven (7) record groups presented. This collection was laid out with plenty of room for growth of records groups and sub-record groups.

The first record group (RG_501) deals with The School Committee. Presently there are only annual reports and school needs reports available.

The second record group (RG_510) deals with School Buildings. Many of the available records make mention to the school buildings. At this time, the record group only has items involving renovations and new construction.

The third record group (RG_520) is School Evaluations. These evaluations were either requested by the Town of Douglas, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Correspondence regarding these evaluations can be found in the appropriate sub-series along with the full evaluations.

The fourth record group (RG_530) is Academic Program Plans. This series will deal with any academic programs, whether the programs are requested by the Commonwealth or by the Town of Douglas. Evaluations and correspondences regarding these plans are included.

The fifth record group (RG_570) is the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (previously known as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education). This series deals with acts, correspondences, and other items received by the department that are not related the other record groups found in this collection.

The sixth record group (RG_580) is Regionalization. This series includes the regionalization plans, the Commonwealth's correspondences and the lobbying for or against the regionalization by the citizens of Douglas from the 1950s to 1970s.

The seventh record group (RG_590) is Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School. This series includes the proposal for the formation of the school.

³Information regarding Blackstone Valley Regional Vocation Technical School found on the school's website <http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/bvt>

Related Collection: RG_090, Community Development Department includes School Building Committee.

Record Group Description

Record Group RG_501: The School Committee

Sub-Record Group RG_502: Annual Reports of the School Committee

Sub-Record Group Description: Annual reports from the Town of Douglas School Committee

Sub-Record Group RG_503: School Needs Committee Reports

Sub-Record Group Description: Reports from the School Needs Committee

Record Group RG_510: School Buildings

Sub-Record Group RG_511: Renovations & New Construction

Sub-Record Group Description: Reports, circulars and cost estimates for the construction of new school buildings

Record Group RG_520: School Evaluations

Sub-Record Group RG_521: School Evaluations per the Town of Douglas

Sub-Record Group Description: Report of the School Survey Committee

Sub-Record Group RG_522: School Evaluations per the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Sub-Record Group Description: Reports and correspondence regarding the Survey of Douglas Schools conducted by Special Committee

Sub-Record Group RG_521: New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Evaluations

Sub-Record Group Description: Reports and correspondences from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges regarding the Town of Douglas School District

Record Group RG_530: Academic Program Plans

Record Group Description: Program plan for secondary level basic skills for the Douglas School District

Record Group RG_570: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Sub-Record Group RG_571: Educational Acts

Sub-Record Group Description: Education Acts put into effect by the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Record Group RG_580: Regionalization

Sub-Record Group RG_581: Regionalization Reports

Sub-Record Group Description: Reports regarding the regionalization of Douglas and Sutton

Sub-Record Group RG_582: Correspondence from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education

Sub-Record Group Description: Correspondence from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts regarding the State's stance on school improvements and regionalization for the Town of Douglas

Sub-Record Group RG_583: Reports & Letters from Citizens of Douglas, Mass.

Sub-Record Group Description: Reports and letters from the Citizens of Douglas lobbying for or against the regionalization of Douglas and Sutton School Systems

Sub-Record Group RG_584: Miscellaneous Correspondence

Sub-Record Group Description: Letter regarding the status of the Douglas School System in regards to regionalization

Record Group RG_590: Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School

Sub-Record Group RG_591: Formation

Sub-Record Group Description: Proposal for the establishment of a regional vocational technical high school.

Record Group: RG_501, The School Committee
 Sub-Record Group: RG_502, Annual Reports of the School Committee

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	1	RG_502.01	1862 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of Douglas, for the School Year 1861-2</i> . Worcester, MA: Chas. Hamilton, Palladium Office.
7	2	RG_502.02	1870 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of Douglas, for the School Year 1868-70</i> . East Douglas, MA: Geo. W. Spencer, Book & Job Printer, Herald Office.
7	3	RG_502.03	1886 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1886</i> . East Douglas, MA: Charles J. Batcheller, 1886.
7	4	RG_502.04	1887 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1887</i> . East Douglas, MA: Charles J. Batcheller, 1887.
7	5	RG_502.05	1894 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1894</i> . East Douglas, MA: Charles J. Batcheller, 1894.
7	6	RG_502.06	1896 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1896</i> . East Douglas, MA: Charles J. Batcheller, 1896.
7	7	RG_502.07	1903 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1903</i> . East Douglas, MA: Charles J. Batcheller, 1903.
7	8	RG_502.08	1905 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1905</i> . Uxbridge, MA: L.H. Balcome Printer, 1905.
7	9	RG_502.09	1912 - <i>Annual Report of the School Committee of the Town of Douglas for the Year Ending March 1, 1912</i> . Whitinsville, MA: Press of Eagle Printing Co., 1912.

Record Group: RG_501, The School Committee
 Sub-Record Group: RG_503, School Needs Committee Report

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	1	RG_503.01	1967 - <i>School Needs Committee Report, December 1967</i> . Town of Douglas.

Record Group: RG_510, School Buildings
 Sub-Record Group: RG_511, Renovations & New Construction

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	1	RG_511.01	February 12, 1969 - Interim Report of Elementary School Building Committee
7	1	RG_511.02	ca. June 1971 - Circular "School Building Program for the Town of Douglas as Proposed by the New School Building Committee"
7	1	RG_511.03	March 1974 - Cost Estimates Proposed Douglas Elementary School - includes Floor Plans and Drawing of Front of Building (William D. Warner, Architects & Planners)

Record Group: RG_520, School Evaluations
 Sub-Record Group: RG_521, School Evaluations Per The Town of Douglas

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	1	RG_521.01	Report of the School Survey Committee, Town of Douglas, Submitted to the Board of Selectmen, September 2, 1955

Record Group: RG_520, School Evaluations
 Sub-Record Group: RG_522, School Evaluations Per The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	1	RG_522.01	June 1955 - The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education Survey of Douglas Schools, Grade 1-12, Inclusive - Conducted by Special Committee Appointed by Dr. John J. Desmond, Jr., Commissioner of Education and under the Direction of Dr. Franklin P. Hawkes, Acting Director of Elementary and Secondary Education.
7	1	RG_522.02	Letter to the Selectmen of the Town of Douglas from the Douglas School Committee regarding the Survey of Douglas Schools conducted by a Special Committee from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education (ca. 1955)

Record Group: RG_520, School Evaluations
 Sub-Record Group: RG_523, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
 Evaluations

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	1	RG_523.01	November 7, 1963, Letter from Clarence I. Chatto, Director (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) to Ralph E. Dudley, Principal (Douglas Memorial High School) regarding Douglas Memorial High School Continued Membership in the New England Association
7	1	RG_523.02	April 28, 1965, Letter from Clarence I. Chatto, Director (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) to Albert Lukahis, Principal (Douglas Memorial High School) regarding approval of 2-year progress report from Douglas Memorial High School
7	2	RG_523.03	New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Public Schools, Report of the Visiting Committees, Douglas Memorial High School, October 21-24, 1986 (Raymond F. Chamberland, Chairman & Michael Kane, Assistant Chairman)

Record Group: RG_530, Academic Program Plans

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_530.01	Secondary Level Basic Skills Improvement Program Plan for Reading, Writing and Mathematics, For Douglas School District, K-12, Submitted June 1980

Record Group: RG_570, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
 Sub-Record Group: RG_571, Educational Acts

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_571.01	The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Enactment of Chapter 572 - An Act to Improve and Extend Educational Facilities in the Commonwealth, 1965. (Supplement from Annual Survey of Massachusetts Law, 1965 can be found in Digitized Sources, that provides a quick synopsis of this Act)

Record Group: RG_580, Regionalization
 Sub-Record Group: RG_581, Regionalization Reports

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_581.01	Report of the Regional School District Planning Board, Representing the Towns of Sutton and Douglas, 1968 (Respectfully Submitted by The Regional Planning Committee)
8	1	RG_581.02	Report of the Regional School District Planning Board Representing the Towns of Douglas - Sutton for K-12 School District 1970 (Respectfully Submitted by The Regional Planning Committee)

Record Group: RG_580, Regionalization
 Sub-Record Group: RG_582, Correspondence from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,
 Department of Education

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_582.01	February 7, 1968 - letter from Simeon J. Domas, Administrator (The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education, School Building Assistance Bureau) to Blanche Perkins (South Street, Douglas, MA) regarding the State not approving any school construction projects that perpetuate a local high school in Douglas
8	1	RG_582.02	September 25, 1968 - Letter from John E. Hodgen, Specialist in School District Organization (The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education, School Building Assistance Bureau) to Shirley Mosgynski (Oak Street, East Douglas, MA) regarding school construction, small schools and regionalization

Record Group: RG_580, Regionalization
 Sub-Record Group: RG_583, Reports & Letters from the Citizens of Douglas, Mass.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_583.01	"A Report to the Citizens of Douglas" regarding the regionalization of Douglas and Sutton, including a "Population and Project Growth Douglas and Sutton 1920-1990" Chart (ca. 1967)
8	1	RG_583.02.a	September 12, 1968 - Letter from Winfield Schuster to the Citizens and Voters of Douglas regarding the accreditation of the Douglas School System, the

			school buildings and regionalization
8	1	RG_583.02.b	September 12, 1968 - Appropriation Request and Amount of Funds Voted for the School Committee for 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968
8	1	RG_583.03.a	September 19, 1968 - Letter to the Citizens and Voters of Douglas from multiple citizens (47 signatures) regarding voting NO at a Special Town Meeting regarding the Regionalization Plan with Sutton
8	1	RG_583.03.b	September 19, 1968 - "A Second Report to the Citizens of Douglas" regarding the Regionalization Plan with Sutton and the Special Town Meeting
8	1	RG_583.04	September 23, 1968 - Report of the Douglas Regional School District Plan Committee regarding the "Douglas School Problem"
8	1	RG_583.05.a	September 23, 1968 - Letter from the Douglas Civic Association to The Citizens of Douglas regarding the Report Issued by the Special Committee which evaluated Douglas Memorial High School in May 1968 and urging voters to vote YES to regionalization
8	1	RG_583.05.b	May/June 1968 - Report to Douglas Memorial High School, Algert A. Lukshis, Principal regarding the Special Committee (NEASC) Visit of May 20, 1968 and recommendations

Record Group: RG_580, Regionalization
Sub-Record Group: RG_584, Miscellaneous Correspondences

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_584.01	September 12, 1968 - Letter from Dr. Clarence I. Chatto (Director of Evaluation for Public Schools for NEASC from 1956-1966) To Winfield Schuster regarding the status of the Douglas School System, school buildings and whether a small school can survive

Record Group: RG_590, Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School
Sub-Record Group: RG_591, Formation

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	1	RG_591.01	A Proposal for the Establishment of A Vocational Regional District High School comprising: Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Uxbridge, Upton (A Report Prepared by The

			Blackstone Valley Regional Boys' Vocational High School Planning Board) (ca. 1963) - 2 copies
8	2	RG_591.02	1962 - Memo from C.A. Gagne & William Van Ness to the Board of Selectmen, Douglas, Mass. "Regional School District Planning Committee for the Town of Douglas."