



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Minnesota State Archives

## MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### An Inventory of Its Southeast Alternatives Experimental Schools Project Records

#### OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

- Agency:** Minneapolis Public Schools.
- Series Title:** Southeast Alternatives experimental schools project records.
- Dates:** 1971-1979.
- Abstract:** Records documenting a five-year project to test alternative school styles for grades K-6th and options for 7th-12th grade programs, carried out by the Minneapolis Public Schools under a grant from the United States Office of Education.
- Quantity:** 2.2 cu. ft. (2 boxes and 1 oversize folder in 1 partial box).
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for box locations.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF THE SOUTHEAST ALTERNATIVES PROJECT

Southeast Alternatives (SEA) consisted of five schools in the West Area, Southeast Cluster, of the Minneapolis Public Schools: Marcy Open School, Marshall-University High School, Southeast Free School, Pratt Continuous Progress School, and Tuttle Contemporary School. The project was administered by Minneapolis Public Schools under a grant from the United States Office of Education.

Primary goals of the Southeast Alternatives project were: to provide a choice of educational alternatives for students, parents, and faculty; to provide a K-12<sup>th</sup> continuum of learning experiences; to encourage and provide opportunities for parents, students, staff, administrators, and faculty to participate in the educational and decision making process through decentralized administration; and to incorporate promising educational practices within the curriculum and develop experimental programs.

The National Institute of Education and the Minneapolis School Board, in a program budget for 1971-1976, state that "the project will test comprehensive change over a five year period combining promising school practices in a mutually reinforcing design. Curriculum, staff training, administration, teaching methods, internal research, and governance in SEA make up the mutually reinforcing parts." There were four alternative program formats for elementary level students: Contemporary, Continuous Progress, Open, and Free. The two formats for secondary students were: Free School and the Marshall-University High School, which offered a

traditional curriculum combined with a transitional program and extensions of the Continuous Progress, Contemporary, and Open programs.

The project was funded in June 1971 and became operational in September 1971. Federal funds terminated in 1976, although the school board approved the continuation of a citywide alternative educational system as a result of this project.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE RECORDS**

Reports, studies, surveys, planning papers, and miscellany documenting a five-year project to test alternative school styles for grades K-6th and options for 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade programs. The collection includes records from each of the five participating schools. Many of the project planning and management documents, reviews, progress reports, and parent and student opinion surveys were written by the project's Internal Evaluation Department. There are also newsletters, brochures, and pamphlets describing the various programs.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE RECORDS**

These records are organized into the following sections:

- Project Files, 1971-1978
- External Reports on SEA, 1972-1974
- Internal Evaluation Department Reports, 1972-1976
- Marcy Open School Files, undated and [1971]-1976
- Marshall-University High School Files, undated and 1973-1979
- Pratt Continuous Progress School Files, undated and 1972-1974
- Southeast Free School Files, undated and 1972-1976
- Tuttle Contemporary School Files, undated and 1972-1973
- Post-Grant Period Planning Reports, 1977-1978

## **INDEX TERMS**

*This collection is indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.*

### **Topics:**

- Education—Curriculum planning.
- Education—Minnesota—Hennepin County.
- Education—Minnesota—Minneapolis—Experimental methods.
- Evaluating.
- Federal aid to education—Minnesota—Minneapolis.
- Free schools—Minnesota—Minneapolis.
- Open plan schools—Minnesota—Minneapolis.
- Nongraded schools—Minnesota—Minneapolis.
- Planning.
- Public schools—Minnesota—Minneapolis.

School districts—Minnesota—Minneapolis.

School management and organization—Minnesota—Minneapolis—Parent participation.

Student participation in administration—Minnesota—Minneapolis.

Teacher participation in administration—Minnesota—Minneapolis.

**Places:**

Hennepin County (Minn.). Special School District No.1 (Minneapolis).

Minneapolis (Minn.)--Schools.

**Organizations:**

Marcy Open School (Minneapolis, Minn.).

Marshall-University High School (Minneapolis, Minn.).

Pratt Continuous Progress School (Minneapolis, Minn.).

Southeast Free School (Minneapolis, Minn.).

Special School District No. 1 (Minneapolis, Minn.).

Tuttle Contemporary School (Minneapolis, Minn.).

United States. Office of Higher Education.

**Types of Documents:**

Newsletters.

Pamphlets.

Questionnaires.

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Restrictions:**

None.

**Preferred Citation:**

*[Indicate the cited volume and page or item and folder title here].* Minneapolis Public Schools. Southeast Alternatives. Minnesota Historical Society. State Archives.

*See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.*

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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

*Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the location and box numbers shown below.*

### Project Files, 1971-1978

Location	Box	
128.C.15.3B	1	Facilities Committee, 1977-1978. Financing Alternatives in Education, 1976. By Rodney M. French. Governing Board minutes, 1974. “Guidelines for Student Support Team Formation and Function [in] Elementary Schools,” March 30, 1973. K-12 supportive staff, 1972. Minneapolis schools/University of Minnesota teacher center, undated. National Institute of Education (NIE) papers, 1971-1974. 2 folders. Notification of grant award and overview of progress reports, 1971-1973. Pamphlets and booklets on SEA: <i>I Could Tell Something Good Was Coming . . .</i> , 1973. Poetry and drawings by students at various SEA school sites. Pamphlets, undated and 1972-1973. <i>SEA Journal 1971-1976</i> , October 1975. A collection of twenty essays by people who have been involved in the Southeast Alternatives project during the past five years. <i>Southeast: A Journal of a Minneapolis Community</i> , January 1976 - April 1976. incomplete. <i>Southeast Alternatives 1972-1973</i> , undated. <i>Southeast Alternatives 1974</i> , March 1974. <i>Southeast Alternatives Experimental Schools Program</i> , May 1971. <i>Southeast Community Education</i> , fall 1975. Papers regarding the possibility of closing schools, 1978. “Progress Toward the Development of Educational Choices,” April 30, 1974. Quarterly reports numbers 1-11, September 1973 - June 30, 1976. 3 folders. SEA plan I, [ca. 1975?]. SEA plan II, [ca. 1975?]. “Section II: A Recommended Middle Range Educational Facilities Program for the Minneapolis Public Schools,” June 1976. Section B—proposed innovation, undated. Site visits by United States Office of Education (USOE), 1971-1973. <i>Southeast Alternatives 1971-1976 Plan</i> , February 27, 1973.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
114.E.14.8F(ov)	3	<i>Southeast Alternatives</i> newspaper, October 26, 1972 - May 1976. incomplete.
128.C.15.3B	1	Southeast Council minutes, 1977-1978. Southeast cluster planning papers, undated and 1971-1978. 2 folders.

### **External Reports on SEA, 1972-1974**

These items are in chronological order.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.3B	1	<i>Evaluation Design Plan for the Phase II Evaluation of the Minneapolis Experimental Schools Program (SEA)</i> vol. 1 and 2, February 11, 1972. 2 folders. <i>The Evaluation of Southeast Alternatives: Project Report No. 1</i> , May 8, 1972. <i>Listening to Parents: An Opinion Survey for Southeast Alternatives</i> , September 1972. <i>Alternatives: A Belief in Choice in Public Education</i> , 1973. 3 folders. Deliberate Psychology Education project: Report number 1: <i>Learning Psychology by Doing Psychology: A High School Curriculum in the Psychology of Counseling</i> , November 1973. Report number 2: <i>Psychological Growth for Women: A High School Curriculum Intervention</i> , November 1973.
128.C.15.4F	2	<i>A Report on the Southeast Minneapolis Experimental Schools Project</i> , November 23, 1973. <i>MET Interim Report on Southeast Alternatives Experimental Schools Project: MET Tests</i> , July 31, 1974. <i>Research Methodology in Alternative Education Settings: The MET Plan</i> , 1974.

### **Internal Evaluation Department Reports, 1972-1976**

These items are in chronological order. Internal evaluation reports on single school sites are filed with records for that site.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	List of level I evaluation reports and documents, [1975?]. <i>OCLE (Off Campus Learning Experience): A Formative Evaluation</i> , June 28, 1972. <i>Criterion Referenced Measurement—Objectives and Item Bank Development: A Progress Report</i> , August 15, 1972. <i>Lists of Parents Concerns [from] SEA 1972 Evaluation Seminar/Workshop</i> , August 15, 1972.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	<p><i>AWARE (A Wilderness and Research Experience): Descriptions, Observations, and a Formative Evaluation, September 1, 1972.</i></p> <p><i>Summer 1972 Staff Development Program Description and Evaluation, September 15, 1972.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Elementary Student Mobility Study July 1971 - June 1972, November 1, 1972.</i></p> <p>Parent opinion survey, 1973.</p> <p><i>What Evaluators Do: SEA Internal Evaluation Activities 1972-1973, June 1973.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Study of Elementary Student Characteristics and Movement: The Effects of Offering Alternatives 1971-1973, part 1, December 10, 1973.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Staff Survey—1974 Special Report: Analysis of Items Pertaining to the Minneapolis Public Schools City-wide Standardized Testing Program, May 8, 1974.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Internal Evaluation Plan 1974-1975, October 1974.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Parent Opinion Survey—1975 Final Report, May 20, 1975.</i></p> <p><i>1974-1975 Southeast Alternatives Staff Survey, April 25, 1975, revised June 10, 1975.</i></p> <p><i>Community Resource Volunteers in Southeast Alternatives, June 10, 1975.</i></p> <p><i>Special Service Programs in Southeast Alternatives Schools, November 1975.</i></p> <p><i>Study of Southeast Alternatives Transfer Students: 1974-1975, December 29, 1975.</i></p> <p><i>Diagnosing Sex-Role Stereotyping in SEA, 1976.</i></p> <p><i>Secondary Alternatives in SEA: An Inquiry into Students' Choice Making Process, March 10, 1976.</i></p> <p><i>1975-1976 Southeast Alternatives Staff Survey, May 12, 1976.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Elementary Student's Perceptions of Their School Experience, May 20, 1976.</i></p> <p><i>Final Evaluation Report on the SEA Student Support Team, May 24, 1976.</i></p> <p><i>SEA Parent Opinion Survey—1976 Final Report, June 1, 1976.</i></p> <p><i>Southeast Alternatives Final Report 1971-1976 prepared for the National Institute of Education, July 1976.</i></p>

### **Marcy Open School Files, undated and [1971]-1976**

The philosophy of Marcy Open School is based on the belief that the teacher-child relationship should be one of mutual respect; that school activities should be an outgrowth of the interests of the children; that both the teacher and the child should learn from exploring and experimenting; that the entire community should be seen as a laboratory for learning; and that educating is providing learning experiences that allow an individual to develop his or her own particular talents and strengths. Children should learn how to read, write, and solve problems without going through a structured and sequential skill-building curriculum. Learning should

be as individualized and personalized as possible, but each child should also engage in a variety of flexible groupings in order to learn to work cooperatively, understand personal and physical differences among persons, make group decisions, and improve communications skills. These files are in chronological order.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	<p><i>How to Put It All Together: A Handbook on Organizing Space in the Informal Classroom</i>, undated.</p> <p>Pamphlets, undated and 1975-1976.</p> <p>Goals and philosophy, [1971-1974?].</p> <p><i>1972-1973 Documentation</i>, [1973?].</p> <p>Photographs, [ca. 1973]. 3 items.</p> <p>Community day planning, 1973-1974.</p> <p><i>Marcy Open School 1973-1974 Goal Evaluation</i>, June 1974.</p> <p><i>Community Day Program Report</i>, June 21, 1974.</p> <p><i>Marcy Open School 1974-1975 Goal Evaluation</i> supplement, [1975?].</p> <p><i>Community Day Evaluation 1974-1975</i>, June 2, 1975.</p> <p><i>Mathematics Integrated Curriculum</i>, September 10, 1975.</p> <p><i>Language Arts in an Integrated Curriculum</i>, April 1976.</p> <p><i>What's Going on Here: Internal Evaluation Techniques for Teachers</i>, April 1976.</p> <p><i>Development and Use of Longitudinal Records for Children at Marcy Open School</i>, June 11, 1976.</p>

### **Marshall-University High School Files, undated and 1973-1979**

Known also as Marshall-University Middle/Senior High School, the facility is a 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade school offering ungraded 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> classes, graded 7-12<sup>th</sup> classes, and 6-12<sup>th</sup> open school. Students enrolling in the regular, graded classes combine traditional required courses with additional options such as: Urban Arts, Action Learning, and work centered experiences. The open school setting offers experiential learning in an integrated and project oriented manner, through a curriculum personalized by the student. In addition, open school students attend other classes at Marshall-University which complete the Minnesota graduation requirements. These items are in chronological order.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	<p>Pamphlets, undated.</p> <p><i>A Formative Evaluation of the Quarter Course Plan at Marshall-University High School</i>, June 28, 1973.</p>
114.E.14.8F(ov)	3	<p><i>Kaleidoscope</i> school newspaper, November 15, 1973. 1 oversized item.</p>
128.C.15.4F	2	<p><i>Documentation: Marshall-University High School Open Middle Program April 1974 - December 1974</i>, January 1974 [sic].</p> <p><i>Student's Opinions of a New Program: Marshall-University High School Senior High Open School</i>, March 1976.</p>

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	<p><i>Open School 75-76: A Documentation of Marshall-University Open Middle School</i>, May 1976.</p> <p><i>Marshall-University High School Student Opinion Survey</i>, May 26, 1976.</p> <p><i>Impromptu</i> magazine, 1976-1977.</p> <p>Produced by the Marshall-University High School Senior Open School students.</p> <p>Student and parent letters and handouts, 1976-1977.</p> <p><i>Winter in the Mind</i>, winter trimester, 1977-1978.</p> <p>Booklet of poems by the Urban Arts Poetry workshop students.</p> <p><i>Kaleidoscope</i> school newspaper, September 1978 - June 1979.</p> <p>incomplete.</p>

### **Pratt Continuous Progress School Files, undated and 1972-1974**

The continuous progress school is based on the premise that each child learns best by working at his or her own pace. Instruction is based on a carefully sequenced curriculum in the basic skills of reading, language arts, and mathematics. The children progress through the curriculum without regard to artificial or grade level barriers. No child will spend more than eight or less than six years in the continuous progress program. The program seeks to provide an environment within which persons in the school community (students, parents, and staff) can develop positive feelings about themselves and others; develop and maintain a basic skills program that meets the needs of students; and provide opportunities for students to make choices in other curriculum areas in order to build a background of knowledge particular to their own interests and stage of development. Known also as Pratt-Motley Continuous Progress School, the Pratt facility accommodates primary school children, while the Motley facility serves intermediate school children. These files are in chronological order.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	<p>Pamphlets, undated and 1973-1974.</p> <p><i>Continuous Progress Schools End of Year 1 Staff Self Evaluation</i>, July 3, 1972.</p> <p><i>Continuous Progress Elementary Schools (Pratt-Motley) Evolution and Evaluation End of Year Report</i>, August 1, 1972.</p> <p><i>Pratt-Motley Schools End of Year 1 Parent's Evaluation</i>, September 1, 1972.</p> <p>Photograph, [ca. 1973]. 1 item.</p>

### **Southeast Free School Files, undated and 1972-1976**

“Provisions for a Free School in the initial 1971 proposal represented an attempt to provide an alternative for elementary and secondary students and their parents who had been actively seeking a more humane and creative approach to education. The Southeast Free School bases its learning program on student choice and social involvement. The free school considers that choice making by students is basic to the learning process. . . . [The program] motivates students to come to school and to learn without the traditional motivations of grades, threat of



punishment, or competition. It accepts student interest as a legitimate starting point for all learning. . . . The program emphasizes building confidence and awareness within students so that they will want to learn the skills necessary to survive in today's rapidly and radically changing world. . . . Achieving skills and being able to make choices helps people become free; and being free in this way is what the Free School is about." The free school includes students from kindergarten through high school. These files are in chronological order.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	Pamphlets, undated. <i>Evaluation of Southeast Free School End of Year 1 (1971-1972) Report</i> , November 1, 1972. <i>Southeast Alternatives Free School End of Year Report</i> , May 30, 1974. <i>Southeast Free School End of Year Report</i> , June 15, 1974. <i>Report on the Decision-Making Crisis at the Free School Winter and Spring 1974</i> , July 1974. North Central Accreditation 1974-1975, January 1975. <i>Southeast Free School Volunteer Handbook</i> , [1975?]. <i>Southeast Free School End of Year 5 Report</i> , June 17, 1976.

### **Tuttle Contemporary School Files, undated and 1972-1973**

The contemporary school provides an alternative for students, parents, and faculty that emphasizes the acquisition of basic skills in self-contained classrooms organized by grade levels, kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The atmosphere is much like that found in traditional classrooms, though the newest educational techniques are evident in the materials, learning machines, and methods used incorporating promising practices into the curriculum. The contemporary school does not claim to be experimental; it is committed to providing a proven basic skills educational experience for children, but one that is receptive to change rather than locked into an inflexible pattern.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	Parent information and pamphlets, undated and 1972-1973.

### **Post-Grant Period Planning Reports, 1977-1978**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
128.C.15.4F	2	<i>Final Report on Site Options</i> , May 1977. <i>A Report on the Effect of Enrollment Decline on Facility Usage 1970 to 1983</i> , March 1, 1978. <i>A Five Year Facility Plan 1978-1979 to 1984-1985</i> , March 18, 1978. <i>Southeast Minneapolis School Facilities Recommendations Presented to the Minneapolis Board of Education</i> , March 28, 1978. <i>A Tentative Five Year Capital Improvement Spending Plan</i> , July 18, 1978. <i>A Tentative Five Year Facility Plan</i> , July 18, 1978.