

York Region District School Board

MUSEUM ARCHIVES



In its role as a repository of the past, a museum has a natural place within an educational institution for it is our history that makes us who we are today. An understanding of that history allows us to explore our past, gain an understanding as to why things are the way they are in the present and inform our future actions.

Museums, therefore, help to define us as individuals, as communities and as nations. It is no surprise that a museum is one of the first things that a community will build after it has been impacted by a major event.

“Through museums, we have direct contact with peoples of all ages and cultures, experience the unimaginable variety of the natural world and expand our understanding of what it means to be human.” *David Anderson, A Common Wealth: Museums and Learning in the United Kingdom (1977)*

The York Region District School Board serves a large area with a constantly changing and growing population. Through our museum we document ongoing change and can serve as a place of shared memory for an otherwise disparate group. Newcomers can share their experiences and develop an understanding of their new home. That understanding leads to civic pride and contributes to the shaping of our unique Canadian identity and promotes tolerance and understanding.

Creating and Caring for the Museum and Archive Collection Related to Your School or Department

[Board Procedure #100.0 Museum and Archives](#) outlines the roles and responsibilities of all staff regarding the preservation of the history of public education in York Region.

Please use the following guide to help you determine what you should preserve for the museum and archives. We encourage schools and departments to keep their collection at their location. However, if this is not possible, the Museum and Archives will arrange for storage.

The Museum and Archives will provide the materials (boxes, envelopes, sleeves, etc.) for the proper and safe storage of museum and archival material. Museum and Archives staff will also provide training and assistance as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact us at museum@yrdsb.ca or 905-470-6119.

Collections Guidelines

The York Region District School Board has a Museum and Archives to preserve historical artefacts and documents relating to the Board and the history of public education in York Region.

But what does preserving the history of education mean? It means that we are interested in collecting items that help to answer the following questions:

1. Who taught and who was educated?
2. What was taught?
3. Where did learning take place?
4. How was teaching done?
5. How was education managed?
6. Why did we educate the way that we did?

1. Who taught and who was educated?

Here, we focus on teachers and students. Examples of artefacts and documents that we are interested in would be:

- Attendance registers
- School staff lists
- Teacher certificates or other teacher credentials
- Class photographs – particularly with names and/or dates
- Yearbooks
- Enrolment statistics
- Newsletters

2. What was taught?

We are interested in collecting information about the curriculum and extracurricular activities for all grades. Examples are:

- Curriculum documents
- Report cards
- Blank report cards/progress reports
- Teachers' notes
- Daybooks and Lesson Plans
- Student workbooks, projects, agendas
- Textbook lists
- Textbooks
- Photos of extracurricular activities
- Newsletters
- Yearbooks
- Multimedia – e.g. films, DVDs, videos, tapes, laser discs
- School course calendars
- Extracurricular Activities: Athletics, Choirs, Clubs, Student Councils Notices, programmes, photos, etc. of special activities such as concerts, graduation, parents night, Remembrance Day
- Trophies, Ribbons
- Pennants, Banners
- Badges, Pins, Printed buttons
- Mugs
- Pencils, Pens
- T-shirts, Hats Uniforms

3. Where did learning take place?

We are interested in schools, classrooms, furnishings, and specialized rooms such as gymnasiums, labs and art rooms as well as field trips locations. Examples of artefacts are:

- Opening Ceremonies for school and additions
- Information on school colours, mottos, mascots, songs, and namesakes
- Architectural plans
- Paintings and drawings
- Photographs
- Cornerstones, bricks and other small decorative pieces
- Furnishings eg. desks, chairs, typical school furnishings such as information on school colours, mottos, mascots, songs, and namesakes
- Time capsules

4. How was teaching done?

Over time, teaching styles have changed. Initially, one teacher taught all elementary grades and now we have one teacher per grade. But we do still have some classes with multiple grades and we also have classes for students with particular needs. High school is taught differently from elementary school. Artefacts and records that would illustrate how teaching was done include:

- Records of staff meetings
- Schedules
- Pictures of the classroom
- Documentation around classroom management
- Student rewards
- Programs that include multiple grades (eg. Book buddies or pen pals)

5. How was education managed?

We are looking for artefacts and records from the board of trustees, administrative departments, and teacher and parent groups. These would include:

- Photographs
- Records of meetings
- Lists of members' names
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Official seals
- School policies
- Staff lists
- Interesting old school or office supplies
- Board policies
- Procedures
- Communications with the community
- Organizational charts

6. Why did we educate the way that we did?

We are interested in the big picture issues around education such as theory and philosophy. We are not interested in Ministry guidelines but rather how the YRDSB has used and interpreted those guidelines. Examples would be:

- Board recommended education books
- Memos and other Board communications
- Workshop agendas and notes