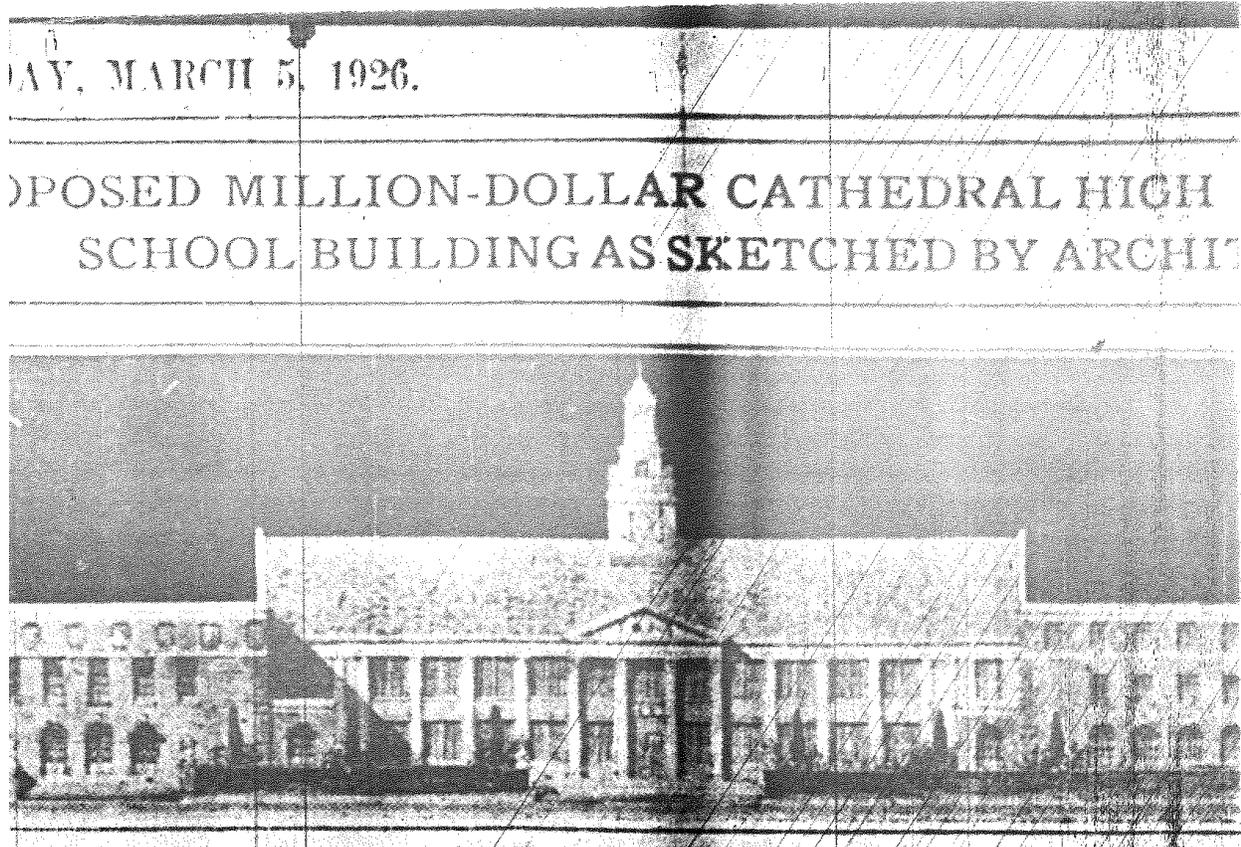


Proposed \$1,000,000 Cathedral High School

Religion: The missing factor of the 1920s Indianapolis education puzzle



The above photo in the *Indianapolis Times* shows the proposed \$1,000,000 Cathedral High School, which is to be built at 14th and Meridian streets. The school was dedicated 09.11.1927 (Divita, 1983).

The formation of Cathedral was announced 09.28.1917. The following September the school opened for 9th and 10th graders on the 2nd floor of the Cathedral Grade School, 14th and Meridian Streets.

The new structure will consist of three units. The first will be a gymnasium large enough for three basketball courts to permit games to be played simultaneously. The second unit will be a senior high school with classrooms, library, laboratories and study halls each large enough for 150 students. Quarters will be available for administrative officers. The third unit will be comprised of the chapel, parlors, and living and recreation rooms for the brothers.

Cathedral High School: A coincidence or was religion part of the missing piece needed to understand the circumstances surrounding the creation of Attucks?

Looking over Indianapolis educational history, most attention is paid to the creation and opening of Crispus Attucks in September of 1927. Yet, we cannot forget George Washington High School opened at the same time. For more see [1921-1929: Events surrounding the creation of Attucks.](#)

Indeed, the events started in 1922 around the creation of Attucks were mainly about race, but we can see now the intersectionality of class, culture/ethnicity/nationality, patriarchy, local neighborhood geography, politics and *yes, religion*. We cannot forget, there were 3 synagogues within 2 blocks of Manual, (The United Hebrew Congregation/Madison & Union; Shara Tefilla /Merrill & Meridian;

Azarus Achim/708 S. Meridian St.) There were also 2 more in neighborhood: Congregation Knesses Israel/1021 S. Meridian; Congregation Bikoor-Chaleem Ansha Hoaree/1051 S. Capitol.

The move of Shortridge from downtown to 34th Street essentially isolated Jewish students at Manual—along with its Irish, Italian, German, and Appalachian students. The creation of Washington isolated the Southern Europeans (and their churches) on the west side of White River. Indy's Eastside students were marginalized to Tech HS.

What gets little or no attention is the opening of Cathedral in September of 1927

What this just a coincidence Cathedral open at the same time as Attucks and Washington? With all the immigrant, racial, religious, and politics of the 1920's, plus the influence of the KKK, pure happenstance is unlikely

Perhaps the 1920's successful national move to have the *Bible* (King James version) read in public schools (https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057%2F9780230106796_9) and the less successful national movement to pass Compulsory Schools laws (aka parochial school laws) that would force most school age children to attend public schools (<https://cuomeka.wrlc.org/exhibits/show/osc>) influenced the Indianapolis Archdiocese to realize they needed more high school classrooms. In particular, is the fact in the summer of 1922, the IPS board allowed the *Bible* to be read, without sectarian comment, in classrooms. See the June 13, 1922 IPS board "Minutes, Book W" p. 228 at [01.31.22-12.26.22 IPS Board Minutes](#).

Coincidence? Both Shortridge and Butler open at new north side locations in September of 1928

As well, it is important to remember that one year later, in September of 1928, both IPS Shortridge moved from Pennsylvania and Delaware streets to 34th and Meridian streets, and Butler College moved from Irvington to Fairview Park at 46th Street and Sunset Avenue. The schools, initially 5 miles apart, were now less than 3 miles.

Note, the decision to move Shortridge and Butler were made in late 1922 and were part of "one big deal." See Part I-A of an IPS history at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kKigk3m4kc&t=2133s> for more. These decisions were all made at the same time and were part of those made by the board regarding Attucks and Washington. See [1921-1929: Events surrounding the creation of Attucks](#).

In summary, what is most significant, **5 major education institutions opened within 1 year**, exemplify the inter-connectedness of forces arising during establishing Indy's Jim Crow school system, one created and enabled by [The "Mind Trust" of the 1920's](#), Indy's oligarchy of education decision-makers.

Divita, J. (1983). *Remembering Bishop Joseph Chartrand of Indianapolis*. Indianapolis, IN: Marian College Campus Ministry Committee

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