

## **CHAPTER 8. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

### **Public Schools**

Raytown residents, except for some along 87th Street, are part of the Raytown Consolidated School District No. 2. Residents on 87th Street are part of the Kansas City School District.

Raytown Consolidated School District No. 2 serves approximately thirty-two square miles, including all of Raytown and a portion of Kansas City, Missouri and Independence, Missouri. The school district has an "AAA" rating (the highest) by the Missouri Department of Education. The school district is recognized for its excellence in education. For instance, in 1992 Westridge Elementary was awarded the Redbook Magazine School of the Year, and more recently three teachers were recognized for their excellence in teaching with the President's Award. The average teacher to student ratio is approximately 1:15. When compared to some of the other recognized school districts, Raytown schools provide greater staff time and attention. For instance, the teacher to student ration is approximately 1:20 for the Blue Valley Unified School District, and 1:18 for the Shawnee Mission Unified School District.

The district has nine elementary schools (grades kindergarten through 5th), two middle schools (grades 6th through 8th), and two high schools (grades 9th through 12th). The district also has a school that serves special education students from thirteen area school districts. All early childhood children in the Title I program and early childhood special education (about 125 students) and the Parents As Teachers program (birth until kindergarten serving approximately 1,500 families) are housed in the Raytown Education Center.

During the late 1960s (on the heels of the City's explosive growth), the school district's enrollment was over 16,000 students. According to district records, its 1994 enrollment is about half that size. As Table 19 shows, Consolidated School District No. 2 had a total enrollment of 8,237 students in 1994.

**TABLE 1. ENROLLMENT TRENDS, 1985 TO 1994**

**Raytown Consolidated School District No. 2**

Enrollment Years	1985	1989	1995	1999	2000	Change
Elementary schools	3,648	3,828	3,742	3741	3672	-<.01%
Middle schools	1,893	1,898	2,005	2026	2090	10%
High schools	2,925	2,503	2,440	2563	2581	-12%
Total Enrollment	8,466	8,229	8,237	8330	8343	-1.5%

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*Source: Raytown Consolidated School District No. 2, Oct., 1995*

In the ten year period between 1985 and 1994, the school district's total enrollment declined by 2.7 percent. During that time, however, elementary enrollment increased by 2.2 percent and middle school enrollment increased by 7.1 percent. The ten year enrollment decline is driven by high school enrollment, which decreased by over 15 percent.

Extensive remodeling and new construction was made possible with the passage of a \$33.5 million bond issue in 1990. New multiple purpose rooms, media learning resource centers, computer labs, and additional classrooms were added to the elementary buildings. New media centers, computer labs, and additional classrooms were added to the two middle schools. Large media centers, technology labs, and completely renovated science laboratories / classrooms were the primary benefits to Raytown South High School. Raytown High School was gutted and a \$11.5 million renovation, complete with additions of a new performing arts center, music classrooms, auxiliary gymnasium, business classrooms, science laboratories / classrooms, and media center, accompanied the renovation of all classrooms.

### **Private and Parochial Schools**

In addition to the public schools, four private institutions offer educational opportunities for Raytown residents: The Blue Ridge Christian School and Seventh Day Adventists School provide private education to nearly 485 students. Our Lady of Lourdes, located at the intersection of Gregory Boulevard and Blue Ridge Boulevard, is administered by the Catholic Diocese. This school serves 240 students. St. Bernadette School lies outside of the Raytown corporate limits but within the Raytown School District boundaries and serves 209 students from pre-school to 8th grade. In addition, nearby Archbishop O'Hara High School serves many students from Raytown.

### **College and Vocational Schools**

Courses through the University of Missouri Extension Center and the PACE program (Metropolitan Community Colleges) are offered in school buildings, but there are no actual buildings devoted to colleges. Seniors in high school may enroll in courses in selected Math, English, Social Studies, and Science and will receive college credit upon graduation from high school.

The Joe Herndon Technical School serves six, including Raytown C-2, area districts with students coming from nine high schools. In 1995 there are approximately 470 students in fifteen different programs, such as Advertising & Display Art, Auto Collision Technology, Business Computer Technology, Technology Information Management, Printing, Cosmetology, Child Care, Electronics Technology, etc.

### **Planning Implications**

Providing quality education is one of the greatest strengths of Raytown. Additionally, the Raytown

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School District clearly has the capacity to enroll a greater number of students. Raytown, however, would benefit from a thorough evaluation of its pre-school education and higher education facilities. Both exhibit low enrollment given the number of preschool children and high school students in Raytown. The City could take advantage of its identity in the metropolitan area, and facilitate an expansion or construction of new high quality preschool through higher education facilities.

