

Williams Bay School district was organized in November 1899 when State Superintendent of Schools D. D. Harvey met with Village residents at the home of Festus Williams. Arrangements were made to hold classes in the basement of the Scandinavian Church for \$5 per month until a permanent location could be built. Funds were appropriated for building a schoolhouse and for erecting a 7x12 foot outhouse on the church property with the stipulation that it would later be moved to the new school yard.

A site for the new school was found on the northeast corner of Congress & Collie Streets. William H. Orme was hired as the first teacher with a monthly salary of \$30. When Mr. Orme resigned a couple of months later, Fred Webster, son of Joseph P. Webster of Elkhorn, famous composer of "In the Sweet By and By," was hired for the same monthly salary in January 1900. The first elected school board members were Director: Festus Williams, Treasurer: W.G. De Groff, Clerk: Ferdinand Ellerman.

When the new two-story frame schoolhouse opened in September of 1900, the school superintendent's salary was raised to \$50 a month and a second teacher was hired for \$30 a month. When the janitor resigned, the school board asked the superintendent to take over the janitorial duties for an additional \$6 per month.

But this wasn't the first school associated with the settlers of Williams Bay Moses Williams' wife Lucinda taught the first area school in 1839 at Nine Oaks on the south side of the lake. Her pupils were Festus Williams, three of James Van Slyke's children, two of Squire Bell's children, two of Doctor Woods children, and two of Mr. Clark's. The Woods and Clark families were recent settlers on the south shore of the lake. Mrs. Williams taught school at the Van Slyke residence in 1840 and at the Robert Russell home at the head of the lake for two terms.

Later one-room school houses were located to the north, west, and east of the village. To the north, just east of Delap's Corner was Vincent School taught by Elizabeth Vincent. Vincent School was located on a farm owned by Jarvis Vincent one-half mile from Delap's Corner. A school was located east of Williams Bay in an area that was known as the Irish Woods. The original frame structure known as Woods School was built in 1858. Bay Hill School to the west was the first schoolhouse in District #10 in Walworth Township. Built in 1847, the school was at the southeast corner of the Amos D. Johns farm (the current junction of Highway 67 and County Road F). The school was a brick building that measured 16 x 18 feet and was valued at \$100. The school was moved a half-mile east on the north side of the road. In 1930 a new building was erected at this location. One more school in the area was Bailey School near the corner of Bailey Road and County Road F.

In 1915, Vincent School located east of DeLap's Corner voted to join Joint District No. 1. The same year, the School Board, through the efforts of board member Storrs B. Barrett, recognized the need for a high school. With a total cost of \$125,000; \$108,000 for the site and building and \$17,000 for equipment; a new brick school on the southwest corner of Congress and Collie Streets opened in the fall of 1916.