FORD SCHOOLS

Henry Ford Trade School

Men desire for their children an education more comprehensive and better in kind than they themselves have secured. This wish is usually broadened to include following generations, and communities joyously spend large sums for school buildings, equipment, and trained teachers. In this pursuit of an education many young people reach their majority and more before they make any contribution to society. In recent years a large number of people in the United States have come to feel that to withdraw a boy from actual life conditions and let him develop there until he is twenty two or older is unfair to him and to society, for it deprives him of actual practice in meeting the problems into which he must soon plunge. It also deprives society of his service during this period and frequently leaves him a liability to society instead of an asset.

Henry Ford feels that even young boys should produce things of value as a part of their education. To demonstrate this belief and to help underprivileged boys he founded the Henry Ford Trade School in October, 1916. From a beginning with six boys and one instructor it has grown in ten years to an enrollment of 1,800 boys and 125 instructors. True to the purpose of its origin, needy boys are given the preference. Orphan boys constitute approximately 10%, and widows' sons 45% of the enrollment. Fully 80% of the boys in attendance must help support themselves. So strongly has the school appealed to boys that there is a constant waiting list of more than 4,000 local boys. For this reason applications are not accepted from other cities in the United States.

The school is incorporated under a Michigan statute to operate without profit. Only boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen are admitted. The academic requirement is that the candidate shall be in the school grade for boys of his own age.

Upon entering, a cash scholarship amounting to $7.20 per week is awarded to each boy. This is paid him on the fifth and twentieth of each month throughout the entire year, including a vacation of three weeks in the summer and one week at Christmas.

The school work is divided into two departments. For one week the boy attends academic work only and during the following two weeks he works in the school shop.

Each six weeks a report is made covering the shop and class work. On this report are also two marks showing the estimate of his instructors on the boy's industry in both departments. If both of these marks are good the boy is given an increase of 40¢ per week. When the $10.00 rate is reached the grade received for the character of work produced in the shop is also considered. As long as the three marks are good the boy receives an automatic increase amounting to 40¢ or more per week. A boy who applies himself should receive $12.80 and $16.00 per week at the end of his second and third years.

By the time the boy is 17 years old he should have a scholarship rate of $18.00 per week, which is the maximum for a boy until he is eighteen, when he completes the junior course.

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In order to help the students develop the thrift habit $2.00 per month in addition to his scholarship is given each boy. This fund must be deposited in some bank and kept there as long as the boy remains in school. The bank books are submitted to the school monthly for examination.

Each noon a hot lunch is furnished to all students. This, with the two cash gifts, makes a boy's minimum rate $450 per year and the maximum $1,020. With the present enrollment the scholarships amount to a million dollars a year.

During the academic week the boy attends class work only. The entire course includes:

English	Algebra	Qualitative Analysis
Mechanical Drawing	Geometry	Quantitative Analysis
Civics	Trigonometry	Metallurgy
Auto Mechanics	Physics	Metallography
Commercial Geography	Chemistry	Shop Theory
Arithmetic		

Boys who wish to attend college take History and Foreign Language in some other school. Many of the boys are doing this.

All boys come to school at 7:30 each morning for five days a week and remain until 3:55, except the boys who have finished their class work for the day. These are excused one-half hour early and credited with an eight hour day.

Not all of the school activity is in class and shop. During the academic week one period a day is devoted to supervised athletics and the school is represented by various athletic teams. The ARTISAN, a very creditable school paper, edited by the boys, is published twice a month.

An orchestra is doing excellent work and the school dramatic society has won an enviable reputation.

The school shop is separate from the Ford Motor Company and covers three acres of floor space. On one floor is a series of rooms totaling a length of 1,400 feet with an average width of 70 feet. In this shop are hundreds of the finest machines of many types. The total equipment is valued at over a million dollars. In this shop there are 18 departments, and two men spend their entire time moving boys from one department to another as fast as they have completed the requirement. An accurate record is kept, not merely of the department in which a boy has worked, but also of the various operations he has performed in each department.

A new boy is always placed on a machine set to do one simple operation and he is kept on this work until he becomes in a measure accustomed to machinery. He is then transferred to work on a shaper, lathe, milling machine, grinder, and bench. As far as possible boys are also given an opportunity to work in the following departments:

Forge	Hardening	Nickel Plating	Wood and Metal Pattern
Die	Foundry	Valve Repair	Carpentry
Gage	Sheet Metal	Car Repair	Tool Repair

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In the shop each job is done on a work order. An expert estimates how many hours it would take a skilled mechanic to complete the work. An accurate record is kept and boys and instructors try to come within the estimate. Over a period of years the per cent of excess time required has varied greatly, rising to 60% and sinking to 13% for the month of September, 1926. The average is about 25% more than the time required by skilled men.

The spoilage averages 4%, which is about equal that of the average tool room. No work is done merely for practice. Everything the boys make is to be used unless spoiled. Even in the class, wherever it is possible, practical work is done by the boys. Instruction in Mechanical Drawing is given during the entire course and many of the older boys, under the guidance of instructors, do development work for the Ford Motor Company for which the school receives credit.

The average annual value of material produced by each boy is approximately $1,000. This income from work done for the Ford Motor Company, therefore, is now at the rate of $1,800,000 per year. This is sufficient to pay the students' scholarships, salaries to instructors, and all the upkeep of the equipment. It does not pay any interest on the investment in buildings and equipment.

In all this training the school holds the following ideals before the boys; in the shop and, as far as possible, in the class room: Cleanliness and Safety come first, then Accuracy. Slow Accuracy is no longer valuable, therefore Speed is the fourth ideal. Fifth is Ingenuity, the ability to develop better methods and better work.

If a student is satisfied with what his instructor can show him he can never know the satisfaction of helping to produce something better, or something in a better way.

The Board of Education for the State and City approve the work of the School.

Many boys long to produce, to do something in their estimation worth while, and this institution offers to them that opportunity without stopping their education.

At eighteen the boy enters the Senior Course. He works in the shop eight hours each day and attends class work in advanced drawing and mathematics four hours each week. His rate is gradually increased to $30.00 per week by the time he is nineteen, and may reach $40.00 per week when he is twenty. At twenty or before he is offered a position in some department of the Ford Motor Company.

Graduates of the school are to-day holding important positions in the Ford Motor Company and elsewhere, and the results seem to justify Mr. Ford's faith.

January 25, 1927.

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