



The Lakewood Historical Society

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SCHOOL DAYS

By Mazie Adams

It wasn't always easy being a student or teacher in East Rockport Township. During the Board of Education's first year of operations, in 1871, members of the Board met with the Township Clerk and Treasurer to examine the township books and to collect the amount apportioned by the Township for the schools, only to find there were insufficient funds to pay the teachers more than three-fourths of their salary. It was voted to reduce the pay to \$45 for the next term, \$35 the following year, and before long to \$33.33. West School was finished in 1872, a one-room brick, but the board had a difficult time with teachers. One was fired on a day's notice, one stayed a month, another five days, and finally Sophronia Clague took charge.

The most important business of this early board was the adoption of the following rules for the regulation of the schools:

1. Scholars shall not be allowed to assemble or to remain upon the school premises at unseasonable times, before the opening, or after the dismissal of the school
2. Scholars, while in the school house, or upon the school grounds, will be required to abstain from rude and boisterous conduct, scuffling and the use of profane and improper language.
3. Scholars are expressly forbidden bringing, or using upon the school premises, any matches, gunpowder, fire-crackers, fireworks, or anything of the kind.
4. Good order and neatness, in all respects, shall be observed throughout the school premises, and the use of tobacco in the school house shall not, under any circumstances, be allowed.
5. The law of the State provides that any person who shall injure or in any manner deface any part of the school premises, or any books, shall be punished by fine or imprisonment in the county jail.
6. The 6th ruling stated that only books authorized by the board could be used. Then 7th, that any scholar who did not obey the rules of the school or the teacher would be suspended, and the 8th required the teacher to write a daily program of the school exercises, and endeavor to adhere to it.

Rule #9 was adopted at a subsequent meeting and read as follows: "Resolved that in addition to Reading, Spelling and Writing, no scholar shall be required to study more than two of the following studies—viz, Geography, Arithmetic and Grammar."

It seems that times haven't changed all that much!!