Between 1880 and 1920, New York City’s simultaneous industrial boom and immigrant influx created deplorable living conditions for its ethnic poor. Overcrowding in tenements facilitated the spread of disease and restricted space for indoor movement. Tenement housing offered little in the way of light, ventilation, plumbing, or sanitation. Urban traffic clogged streets and made street-play dangerous for children. Nearby factories sullied the air with smoke and soot.

These urban industrial conditions wreaked havoc on the health of poor immigrant school children, gravely concerning middle-class New Yorkers. Between about 1900 and 1920, some urban reformers began to look to public schools as a means to combat these health problems. In contrast to the overcrowded, poorly-lit, badly ventilated, and largely unsanitary tenements, urban reformers called for the construction of schools that could promote good health among the students through carefully designed buildings. Reformers demanded facilities and curriculum for physical education, programs that would help teachers and school nurses to identify children with serious health defects and encourage all students to develop habits of good hygiene. Some reformers even argued that schools should offer programs to distract students from temptations of urban life such as boxing matches, dance clubs, and pool halls. The public school in early twentieth-century New York was therefore an instrument through which reformers sought to fight urban threats to children’s physical and moral health and to assist in the students’ absorption of middle-class American values.

Middle-class Americans were absorbed by the pursuit of health and fitness throughout the nineteenth century, motivated in large part by religious ideas that linked good physical health with sound morals. Between 1800 and 1840, the idea that humans could perfect themselves physically and morally—and that the Messiah would not return until they did—became popular among many American Christians.1 Throughout the 1850s and the 1870s, the English idea of “Muscular Christianity” was prominent in the United States, explicitly encouraging people to exercise in order to improve their physical and moral discipline.2 As adults struggled for self-improvement, the idea that children were inherently good and pure, and only corruptible by external influences, began to take hold.

These ideas gained particular currency in the fast-growing urban context of the late nineteenth century. By 1860, over half of the residents of the Northeast lived in cities, where they turned to exercise to counteract the stress of being distant from nature, removed from traditional community structures, and drained by sedentary office jobs.3 Writers like Catharine Beecher and William Alcott wrote that exercises such as Swedish

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1 Harvey Green, _Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport, and American Society_, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 82.
2 Ibid., 183.
3 Ibid., 182.
calisthenics and German gymnastics should be taught to school children.\textsuperscript{4} Cities such as New York and Cincinnati borrowed the idea of the public gymnasium from the German immigrants who arrived in the late 1840s, using these facilities to provide social centers for fractured urban communities and wholesome activities for young middle-class men and women.\textsuperscript{5} Families for whom traveling to a gymnasium was inconvenient purchased exercise equipment such as Indian clubs, weights, and rowing machines. Authors such as physical education instructor Dioclesian Lewis published books, articles, and pamphlets on how to exercise properly, with detailed instructions, helpful diagrams, and passages extolling the virtues of physical fitness.\textsuperscript{6}

Between 1880 and 1900, the flood of immigrants to northeastern cities gave middle-class Americans fresh reasons to worry about their health. The development of the germ theory of disease in the 1870s by German scientist Robert Koch created an enthusiasm for public health in most major cities as people began to understand the connection between poor sanitation and the spread of disease.\textsuperscript{7} Cleanliness itself began to be considered an American value, and the poor sanitation evident in immigrant homes demonstrated to the middle-class that the immigrants were fundamentally different, inferior, and even dangerous. Nativists frequently described immigrants as unsanitary breeders of disease. Inspection sites were established at Ellis Island to weed out immigrants who showed symptoms of ailments ranging from conjunctivitis to tuberculosis to mental illness, and thousands of unlucky immigrants were sent back across the Atlantic without entering New York.\textsuperscript{8} Nativists also viewed large immigrant families with alarm, fearing that the large and fast-growing immigrant population would soon outnumber white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant Americans, who tended to have a lower birth rate. In response to this fear, some white Americans drew a connection between improving their own health and increasing their strength and virility as a race. As Dioclesian Lewis wrote in support of exercise regimens, “He who has not seen in the imperfect growth, pale faces, distorted forms and painful nervousness of the American People, enough to justify any and all efforts to elevate our physical tone, would not be awakened by words, written or spoken.” Similarly, as Theodore Roosevelt himself summed up in 1899, “Over-sentimentality, over-softness, in fact washiness and mushiness are the great dangers of this age and of this people.”\textsuperscript{9}

But while some Americans worried increasingly about their own health, others grew concerned about the immigrants’ health in the city environment, and particularly the health of children. Reformers began to take action to protect young immigrant children from the corrupting influences of both urban life and un-American parents. As Dominick Cavallo wrote:

\textsuperscript{4} Green, \textit{Fit for America}, 96.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 99.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 184; Dioclesian Lewis, “The new gymnastics for men, women and children” (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1864); available from http://www.hit.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=moa;idno=AEN3465.0001.001; Internet; accessed 10 April 2005.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid, 4.
“Child saving” was perhaps the most widely supported reform movement in the United States between 1880 and 1920. However vehemently social reformers disagreed among themselves about other issues, nearly all of them supported a host of child-saving efforts aimed at rescuing city children—especially working class, ethnic children—from a cluster of social and economic hazards.10

Among these reformers were “play organizers” spearheaded by the Playground Association of America, which lobbied for cities to develop community playgrounds—with space and equipment for outdoor play—and full-time directors to oversee organized games, sports, and classes for children. The playground movement’s aim was to encourage discipline and physical health within the chaos of the city, and the reformers were fairly successful: by 1920, America’s municipal governments had collectively spent over a hundred million dollars to fund playgrounds and playground programs.11 But because these programs were voluntary, and because the immigrants spoke diverse languages and had varied value systems, the reformers had no way to ensure that children used the equipment or participated in the activities. Frustrated, reformers began to turn to the public schools.

Reformers found public schools to be apt venues for several reasons. First, beginning in Massachusetts in 1852, all American states had established compulsory education laws by 1918, providing reformers with a captive audience in the public school classrooms.12 Second, public financing for schools saved reformers the trouble of private fundraising. Third, throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, school construction took place at a fast pace in many cities because of the need to accommodate the large numbers of immigrant children. Novel curricula such as manual and industrial training were established to teach students relevant skills and to make schools more interesting, thereby limiting truancy, lowering drop out rates, and providing students with practical skills to apply in industrial jobs after graduation.13 The increasing presence of the schools in American cities, and the heightened discourse on public schools in the media and among civic leaders raised the schools status within the city, lending a certain institutional authority to reform programs implemented in the schools.

One of the most influential reformers of the day was William Henry Maxwell, who ascended from the office of Superintendent of Brooklyn schools to become the Superintendent of all New York City Schools when the five boroughs consolidated into New York City in 1898. Maxwell had immigrated to the United States in 1874 after working for a few years as a schoolteacher in Ireland. After arriving in the United States, Maxwell worked as a newspaper reporter—an experience that brought him in close touch with New York’s impoverished immigrants and their horrific living conditions. His powerful writing on the deficiencies of the public schools became so widely known that

11 Ibid, 2.
he was made Assistant Superintendent of the Brooklyn Schools in 1882 and
Superintendent in 1886 where he remained until he assumed control of all New York
schools.14

Once in office, Maxwell was confronted with a school system inadequate to meet
the needs of the increasingly industrial, multiethnic, and impoverished city. Schools
were badly overcrowded and students were turned away when the schools reached
capacity. Although Maxwell quickly implemented emergency measures to handle
overcrowding, such as opening the school to one shift of students in the mornings and
another shift in the evenings, these emergency measures were insufficient to meet the
city’s long-term needs. Between 1898 and 1911, the population of New York’s schools
jumped from 400,000 to 808,000.15 Students who did not speak English or who suffered
from physical or mental handicaps received no special accommodations and usually fell
behind. Many students came to class ill-fed or ill-clothed, and children who were sick
went untreated, often infecting other children. Teachers were poorly paid and not
uniformly qualified. School building types ranged from one-room wooden structures to
large brick buildings of various shapes and sizes.

Maxwell believed that the purpose of public education was to prepare citizens to
participate intelligently in civic life, and therefore that all students should have equal
access to a “minimum amount of knowledge necessary for citizenship.” His school
reforms were intended to equalize the learning process for students from a variety of
ethnic backgrounds, physical and mental abilities, and economic levels.16 To this end, he
implemented a uniform eight-year standard curriculum for all New York elementary
schools.17 He empowered the Board of Examiners to implement standards for teacher
qualifications and salaries citywide.18 He created special classes for students who could
not speak English and for students with physical and mental disabilities, and he supported
school-sponsored breakfasts and lunches for poor students. Maxwell also advocated
vocational and technical training programs to prepare immigrant students for work in the
city’s industries.19

Maxwell’s reforms were supported by diverse reform agencies, including the
Public Education Association, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor,
the Children’s Aid Society, and settlement workers.20 But Maxwell’s efforts to improve
the physical health of the immigrant children received the greatest support of all and were
continued and expanded by his successors. These reforms were rooted in the ideas that
children must be protected from unhealthy urban living conditions and that physical and
moral health are inter-related and fundamentally American.

Building new schools had become necessary by the time Maxwell came into
power. Maxwell demanded that these new “healthful schools” be specially designed to
accommodate the developing bodies and special health needs of children, inspiring a

15 Kraut, 227.
16 Berrol, 222.
Company, 1912), 288; Berrol, 220.
18 Maxwell, 107, Berrol, 220.
19 Berrol, 221.
20 Ibid., 223.
trend toward child-friendly school design in New York.\textsuperscript{21} Members of the playground reform movement, such as Playground Association of America President Luther Gulick, a variety of social scientists, physical education experts, and medical professionals played important roles in defining the ideal school architecture and determining the most suitable equipment for the schools. The qualities identified by these reformers as necessary for a healthy urban school largely reflected the ideas advanced in the 1870s by the tenement reform movements, such as the idea that cleanliness was fundamental to an American home, and thus unhygienic conditions were un-American. Tenement reformers demanded that apartments be constructed with greater access to light and air. They called for clean water and sanitary waste removal. Some reform-era tenement designs included courtyards for children’s play and adult socializing away from the busy street.\textsuperscript{22} In a sense, the school reformers picked up where the tenement reformers left off, but rather than striving directly to make immigrants’ homes more livable, school reformers sought to make the schools havens of health where children could acclimate to American standards of health and behavior and take some of these lessons back to their families.

In constructing the schools, reformers confronted many of the same urban issues that had challenged tenement reformers. Light and ventilation, for example, were critical concerns. “Even in our new buildings it is not by any means certain that the system of ventilation in use is the best which modern science has devised,” wrote Maxwell in his book, \textit{A Quarter Century of School Development}.\textsuperscript{23} In 1913, the governor appointed the New York State Ventilating Commission, which developed five principles of proper ventilation, including that air should be “warm, not hot,” “clean, not dirty,” “moist, not dry,” “moving, not still” and “of changing temperature.”\textsuperscript{24} Implementing these conditions in the city’s schools presented a challenge. Although devices such as humidifiers were installed in some schools to regulate humidity and hot-air furnaces were replaced by steam boilers, the equipment was temperamental. For example, opening the windows interfered with the thermostat systems, yet contemporaries strongly believed that windows should be opened to permit fresh air to flow through the classrooms. In a 1918 textbook called \textit{Healthful Schools}, a carefully-researched set of guidelines for school construction, the authors asserted that, “Stagnant air is like a hot wet blanket wrapped tightly around the person’s body, so thick and impenetrable that the body heat cannot escape, and a man is, in a certain very real sense, ‘consumed in his own fires.’”\textsuperscript{25} For students with serious respiratory illness, open air classrooms on the rooftops of buildings were used to provide maximum exposure to fresh air while protecting healthy children from infection.\textsuperscript{26} But the freshness of the city air itself was also dubious in New York and other major cities, as one survey of Salt Lake City’s public schools demonstrates: “The discolored wall of very many rooms show that dirty air is being forced into the

\textsuperscript{23} Maxwell, 180.
\textsuperscript{24} Ayres et al, 135.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 130.
buildings.” The surveyors recommended installing “air washers” to “prevent the breathing of much injurious dust.”

Light was similarly problematic. The children’s poor eyesight was a real concern to school reformers, particularly those like Maxwell and school nurse Lina Rogers Struthers who saw disease and disability as unfair disadvantages to children struggling to learn. To help children with poor eyesight and to protect the strong eyes of other students, medical workers pushed for better blackboards, duller paper in textbooks, and better lighting in classrooms to reduce eye strain. School reformers advocated buildings with larger, wider windows to allow more light into the classrooms, but noted that “Tall buildings crowd in on every side…there is difficulty in securing proper lighting...we often furnish the pupil with an uninspiring view of brick walls and iron fire escapes.”

The authors of *Healthful Schools* specified such details of proper window-building as the placement of windows in the classroom (set back from the blackboard to prevent glare), the proportion of window space to floor space (1:4), and the height of the windows from the floor (low enough to permit light to flood the room but high enough to prevent children from being distracted by the view). Overhead electrical lighting was still relatively new during this time and mainly confined to factories and a few schools scattered throughout the country. By 1918, although reformers generally recognized that overhead lighting was beneficial because “all parts of the room are lighted equally well, and there are no disturbing shadows,” a few were concerned that the electric light would be too bright and would damage the students’ eyes. The authors of *Healthful Schools* ultimately concluded that a combination of windows and electrical lights was ideal, noting the special challenges of lighting and air quality in the city:

> It will be found that an astonishing difference is made in the amount of light admitted to schoolrooms by the simple expedient of cleaning windows more frequently. Dust and smoke gather on the outer surface of the glass and form a curtain which effectually bars out entering light rays.

Proper sanitation was critical to the school reform agenda as well. Unlike rural schools of the day, which relied on individual wells or springs for their water supply, city schools depended on the city to provide clean water. “If the water contains impurities schools can do little except complain to the authorities….Fortunately public health boards are now thoroughly awake to the perils of impure drinking-water, and most cities are under constant and careful supervision,” wrote the authors of *Healthful Schools*. By 1918, New York had outlawed the use of a common drinking cup, and school nurses distributed disposable paper cups to students to prevent unsanitary sharing. “Bubbling fountains...present[ing] a stream two inches high” were installed in some of the larger schools, although the authors of *Healthful Schools* warned against one particular health risk of this innovation:

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27 Ayres et al, 127.
28 Kraut, 246.
29 Ayres et al, 4.
30 Ibid., 67.
31 Ibid., 74.
32 Ibid., 88.
[The fountain] should be protected by a frame which prevents the mouth from coming in contact with the outlet, but care should be taken to make this frame in such a way that children will not run any danger of breaking their teeth upon it. There is something so peculiarly helpless in the appearance of another person bending over a drinking fountain that most normal children, and some adults, are filled with a sudden strong desire to push the drinker’s head down into the water. If the fountain is not designed to protect the child against just such accidents painful injuries may sometimes result.33

New York City’s water system allowed pressure sufficient for indoor flush toilets but the Healthful Schools authors bemoaned the fact that by 1918, “few definite standards had as yet evolved concerning the number and location of lavatories.”34 By 1918, school reform experts pushed for the installation of individual porcelain flush toilets and urinals in easy-to-clean, white-tiled bathrooms wherever possible, with seats set at varying heights to accommodate the diverse sizes of the school children.35

One of the unique challenges facing school builders in big cities like New York was the problem of finding a site for construction. Land in the city was limited and expensive, so finding adequate land was difficult and sometimes required the destruction of existing structures. “That there is such a necessity of the power of eminent domain for the condemnation of property for public educational purposes…’goes without saying’ so far as the courts are concerned,” wrote Dr. Frank E. Henzlik in a 1924 analysis for Columbia University’s Teacher’s College.36 School reformers usually maintained that “[n]o child should have to walk more than a mile and a half to school,” but it was sometimes difficult to gauge exactly where the children would be walking from because neighborhood compositions changed rapidly during this period.37 New groups of immigrants inundated neighborhoods and as families relocated frequently following jobs, it was difficult to make any long-term projections about how many students would be attending a school or who those students would be.38 Once suitable land for a school was acquired, other urban challenges presented themselves, such as the dangers of street traffic to students walking to and from school and the nuisance of street noise outside classroom windows.39

Although adjusting the architecture of the school building may have been effective for improving students’ health, these reforms did not encourage students to be accountable for their own wellbeing. Reformers like Maxwell and his followers believed that schools should teach students to take active responsibility for their bodies, especially due to the dangers of the urban environment. “In the new buildings the sanitary conditions are very good; in many of the older ones….they are very bad. But in all, the physical health of the children might be improved by appropriate and regular exercise,” wrote Maxwell.40 Physical education was understood by school reformers as critical to

33 Ayres et al, 93.
34 Ibid., 91.
35 Ibid., 107, 110.
37 Ayres et al, 2.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., 4.
40 Maxwell, 170.
the students’ mental and moral development. “Civilized countries have been slow to recognize that the school is the training ground of every child for the battle of life,” wrote Struthers. “A child’s school life should mean a preparation and training that will fit him physically, mentally, and morally for his place in the world, so that each one is given the opportunity to secure health, happiness, and success.” On October 19, 1916, a few years after Maxwell’s tenure as superintendent came to an end, the New York Board of Regents voted that “all male and female pupils above the age of eight years in all elementary and secondary schools shall receive as a part of the prescribed course of instruction…physical training.”

Physical education had three main components: health inspections, hygiene courses, and physical activity. The physical education model curriculum followed a program developed by the state Military Training Commission, which called for “medical inspection, talks and recitations in hygiene and all forms of healthful physical exercise.” The Regents acknowledged that, “New York City has all the elements of this program in one form or another in or related to her public schools,” including “a new syllabus on hygiene…[adopted] this calendar year, setting-up drills,” and gymnastic exercises.

Medical inspections were a critical part of the school reformers’ efforts to improve the quality of the schools. Maxwell began establishing a system of medical inspection early in his tenure as Superintendent, which ultimately included physical inspections of teacher applicants, physical inspections of students for diseases and disabilities, and “inspection of the sanitary arrangements of schools and of the work of janitors in cleaning and disinfecting.” Ordinary teachers were trained to identify symptoms of illness in their students, and procedures were developed through which the teacher could report these observations to the school nurse or school doctor. School nurses undertook regular and rigorous examination of the students’ hair, teeth, skin, hands, and posture, looking for symptoms of ailments ranging from head lice to scoliosis to rotting teeth, as well as signs of poor hygienic practices.

Within the schools, nurses and teachers taught students proper hygienic practices. “The highest objective of all efforts is to teach students how to be healthy and how to stay healthy,” wrote Struthers. Courses in hygiene ranged from nose-blowing drills to hand-washing and tooth-brushing practice. “Little mothers classes” were offered to teach girls how to care properly for an infant’s health and how to manage a hygienic home. Facilities for these and other domestic arts courses were included in the high school design, sometimes including full-scale kitchens and nurseries.

Facilities for physical activity were also incorporated into high school design with the construction of school gymnasiums and sometimes even playing fields and indoor swimming pools. New gyms included space for showering, offices for the full-time

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41 Struthers, 2.
43 Ibid., 191.
44 Maxwell, 184.
45 Struthers, 40.
46 Ibid., 70, 218.
47 Ibid., 117.
48 Maxwell, 171.
medical inspector or physical education teachers, and floors made of maple boards to make the space suitable for school functions after hours.\textsuperscript{49} But acquiring extra land for playing fields was not always possible: “Property values…[were] apt to be so high that the schools feel extra grounds an extravagance, and little space is secured for playgrounds, athletic fields, or gardens.”\textsuperscript{50} Therefore, Maxwell pushed for his teachers to be specially trained to teach calisthenics and encouraged them to allot time for physical exercise within their regular lesson plans: “In a city where there are so few small parks and where schoolhouses are practically unprovided with playgrounds…I think it indisputable that physical exercises introduced between lessons are a great boon for the growing children.”\textsuperscript{51} In the Board of Regents’ 1916 plans for implementing physical education statewide, various curricula were included to accommodate both schools with gymnasiums and playing fields, and schools without these amenities.

Cleanliness, health, and hygiene were fundamental to middle-class American values during this time. Efforts by school reformers to educate students about proper health and hygiene had an underlying purpose to Americanize immigrant communities by educating them about a sanitary lifestyle. Reformers reached out to parents both indirectly and directly through the schools. The reformers instructed their pupils to bring their lessons about proper child care, nutrition, exercise, and hygienic practices home to their families. Lina Rogers Struthers wrote of her little mothers, “These girls love to pass on this information to their neighbors and many a ‘little mother’ leads a mother in Israel [a Jewish neighborhood] into the paths of tidiness and cleanliness.”\textsuperscript{52} School nurses also frequently made “home visits” to teach immigrant parents how to care for their sick children, as well as to offer tips on how to clean, feed, clothe, and bathe children according to American standards. “The school…in some measure, must take the place of the home,” wrote Struthers, “but this should be a partnership between the State and the family and bring the school into closer relation with the home.”\textsuperscript{53} Through direct and indirect means, public school physical education programs became avenues through which school reformers could encourage immigrant families to assimilate and improve their children’s health.

While reformers used the public schools to shape children’s physical health and to extend to the children and their families an American appreciation for hygiene, they also believed that their work in the public schools benefited the students’ moral well-being. First, the reformers sought to use the physical space of the school as a place for organized activity that could keep the children off the streets and away from the immoral temptations of city life. Second, reformers followed through on the nineteenth-century idea that physical and moral health are intertwined, acting on the belief that through physical education children could be taught social values that would be useful in the city.

Within the school reform movement, a sub-group formed that believed that public schools should provide a range of community services. Maxwell himself shared this belief, arguing that “the public school best serves its neighborhood when it is made the

\textsuperscript{49} Ayres et al, 40.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{51} Maxwell, 171.
\textsuperscript{52} Struthers, 126.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 134.
center from which all organized civilizing and elevating influences . . . should radiate.”

Members of the social center movement believed that the facilities of the school, such as the libraries, gymnasium, and auditoriums, should be open for public use after school hours to bring communities together across ethnic, religious, and linguistic divisions.

Supporters of the social center movement argued that not only would these activities help build neighborhood morale, but would recreate some of the city’s social attractions in a supervised space. The schools could then provide a safe yet attractive alternative to immoral and congested social spaces in the children’s communities.

School reformers specifically saw physical education as critical to building social values that were useful in urban life. By using team sports and coordinated gymnastic movements, the reformers hoped to build a sense of unity and teamwork among immigrant children from diverse backgrounds.

Luther Gulick argued that athletics appealed to children’s sense of fair play, and required children to analyze a situation and react quickly. The discipline required for athletic activity was also viewed as morally enriching for the urban youth by providing immigrant children with structure: “Play advocates perceived the peer group as a community-controlled institution providing adolescents with values and skills that were not being transmitted by the urban, especially ethnic, family.”

Cleanliness and hygiene themselves were believed to encourage moral behavior and social values. The acceptance of the idea that illness could be spread by poor sanitation made hygiene a civic duty: by keeping clean, good people could protect others from harm. Reformers understood the responsibility of caring for children as a moral duty, because healthy, happy children would grow into productive members of society in the future. As Lina Rogers Struthers wrote, “These early lessons will prepare them [the students] for citizenship, make them lovers of law and order, health and cleanliness, honesty and morality, and thus insure a happy contented neighborhood.”

In response to the living conditions and social disjuncture that resulted from massive industrialization and immigration to New York City around the turn of the twentieth century, some reformers looked to the public schools as a means of protecting students’ health and instilling American social values. Under the initial leadership of reform Superintendent William H. Maxwell, and later continued by other reformers, as well as the state and city governments, new school construction was undertaken specifically to protect students from some of the ill-effects of urban life. Physical education, including medical inspections, hygiene courses, and athletic training were instituted to instruct students and their families about physical fitness and ways to maintain a healthy American lifestyle. Through physical education reformers believed they could instill in students an appreciation for American social values like fair play, team work, discipline, and healthy competition. Proponents of the social center movement thought that schools could be havens, not only from the foul living conditions of the city, but also from its social dangers by providing students and their communities

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54 Maxwell, 2.
55 Maxwell, 2; Ayres et al., 248.
56 Ayres et al, 248.
57 Cavallo, 6.
58 Ibid., 6.
59 Ibid., 7.
60 Struthers, 124.
with supervised arenas for entertainment and enrichment. New York’s school reformers enjoyed great success in their efforts. By the early 1920s, experts on school construction considered many of the innovative ideas advanced by Maxwell as standard for public schools. The decision by the state to make physical education mandatory statewide reflected the full incorporation of Maxwell’s reform ideas into the state’s own agenda. Thus, schools at the turn of the century were transformed into instruments of immigrant aid and assimilation, providing reformers with a means of addressing threats to the physical and moral health of the immigrants within the evolving industrial urban context.
Primary Sources


**Secondary Sources**


