

*In a Catholic school, if you didn't want to go to school, you had to miss the whole day. Anybody missing just one class was asking to be caught because the schools were too small.*

For the Catholic girls who attended St. Paul's Cathedral High School in Oakland or Sacred Heart High School in Shadyside—now that St. Rosalia High School had closed down—and for the Catholic boys who attended Central Catholic High School in Oakland, high school was an extension of grade school as far as discipline was concerned. Cutting school was nearly impossible because the minute someone noticed you were missing, the principal would call your house looking for you. Central Catholic was also run in the same manner it had been a generation before, and this commitment extended to hiring a former military man as Prefect of Discipline.

Some Catholic kids were able to convince their parents that they would not be corrupted at a public school. Their argument was reinforced by the fact that the mills were cutting back and money was getting tight while, at the same time, tuition in parochial schools was rising rapidly. Many of these students joined the kids from public grade schools on the first day of freshman year at Taylor Allderdice High School.

For most students, the first day at Allderdice was an awakening. They came from smaller schools to a huge school with 2,000 students, where their teachers weren't likely to notice if they misbehaved, and were even less likely to call their parents.

*It was the numbers that freaked me out at first. Going from a place where you literally know everybody in the school to someplace ten times that size.*

Though the mills weren't hiring, many of the students from Greenfield and some of the other mill towns didn't plan to go to college and didn't care about getting an education. They were teenagers, and they were in school to have fun.

Cutting school at Allderdice was easy and, for the most part, tolerated. During a school day, students could always be found sitting on the grassy hill outside the school on Shady Avenue, walking to Frick Park, hanging out on Murray Avenue or eating

*A few Greenfield students also attended Bishop Boyle High School, a coeducational school in nearby Homestead.*