



From Facebook, Greater Boston Academy.

Greater Boston Academy

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Greater Boston Academy (also known as GBA) is a co-educational K-12 day school located at 108 Pond Street in Stoneham, Massachusetts (MA). It is owned by the Southern New England Conference and operated by a local school board. The school has student representation from several churches in the Greater Boston area. The chief school publication is the yearbook, *The Mayflower*.

The Greater Boston Academy's roots date back to 1914 in Everett, MA. This is when, after several unsuccessful attempts to organize a church school, one opened in the Everett district with 13 students.¹ The dedication service for what was simply known as the Everett Church-School was held on November 23, 1914, in the basement of the Universalist Church in Everett.² Classes were conducted in the basement of the Universalist Church by a single teacher for two years before moving to 25 Parker Street in Malden, MA, in 1916.

This new building was a large house that was repurposed to fit the needs of the growing school. The two front downstairs rooms were used as schoolrooms and were later converted to one room for the 28 students now attending. In the Fall of 1920, with the merged Everett-Malden district still supporting the school, there was enough interest in the school's future from churches in the area for a name and location change. The name

Greater Boston Intermediate School was adopted. The school reported a fall enrollment of 64 students spread out over 10 grades this year.³ In 1924, Greater Boston Intermediate School classes were held in the newly acquired Boston Temple at the intersection of Warren Avenue and West Canton Street in Boston, MA.⁴

In 1940, the Boston Temple Church was sold, and the school resettled to a converted home at 325 Harvard Street in Cambridge, MA, and was renamed the Boston Temple Junior Academy. In 1944, under the pastoral leadership of Norval F. Pease, the school became a senior academy and a separate elementary. Richard J. Hammond served as the first principal of the renamed Greater Boston Academy, which had an enrollment of 39 students and was serviced by a faculty of four.

In 1946, with the purchase of school property from Middlesex University, Greater Boston Academy was relocated to 415 Newbury Street in Boston, MA.⁵ Grades 1-8 became the Robert W. Hall School, named after a teacher who taught alongside his wife at the school from 1929 until his death in 1942. The formal opening of Greater Boston Academy on the new campus took place on January 21, 1946.⁶

In 1958, Greater Boston Academy was accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The Spring of 1963 saw the school go in a new direction when the old building was sold. A new school plant was erected at 20 Woodland Road in Stoneham, MA, with classes beginning in the Fall of 1965.

This change put the school on the same grounds as the New England Sanitarium and Hospital. In 1999, Boston Regional Medical Center, formerly known as the New England Memorial Hospital and New England Sanitarium and Hospital, filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and was forced to close the hospital. When the decision to build the school on the hospital grounds was made, there was no easement clause – a permanent right to use someone else’s property – agreed upon between the school and the hospital.⁷

As a result of this, the future of the school building became inadvertently tied to the success of the hospital. In the Fall of 1999, the New England Memorial Church, which was also located on the hospital grounds, and Greater Boston Academy went to the first jury trial in the history of the Federal Bankruptcy Court in Boston against the Gutierrez Company, the potential buyer of the property.⁸

The jury found that, although the New England Memorial Church had been given an easement, no legal ground could be found for Greater Boston Academy. In response to this verdict, the New England Memorial Church gave up their right to remain on the hospital grounds so that Greater Boston Academy could complete the 1999-2000 school year on the academy’s campus rather than being required to move mid-school year. New England Memorial Church moved their congregation to a rental church in Woburn, eventually merging with the Stoneham congregation and joining them at their location on 29 Maple Street to become the Stoneham Memorial Church. Greater Boston Academy relocated to the campus of the Edgewood Elementary School at 108 Pond Street⁹ in Stoneham, MA.

The property that housed the hospital, school, and church was sold to the Gutierrez company. Remodeling was done within the building of Edgewood Elementary during the Summer of 2000, and modular classrooms were added to accommodate the needs of both schools in a single building.¹⁰ In February 2009, the combined Edgewood School/Greater Boston Academy was voted to be now known as Greater Boston Academy.

Academy Principals:

Richard J. Hammond, 1944-1948, 1952-1971

Edwin C. Harkins, 1948-1952

Alfred Aastrup, 1971-1976

Theodore Lunde, 1976-1978

Arnold Farenick, 1978-1980

Henri E. Marais, 1980-1985

Donald Watson, 1985-1986

Joelle Andre, 1986-1989

Pierre A. Ramseier, 1989-1992

William C. Arnold Jr., 1992-1998

Kevin Worth, 1998-1999

Nancy Vecchione, 1999-2000

Donald Perkins, 2000-2001

James Norcliffe, 2001-2003

Jerrell Gilkeson, 2003-2005

Rondi Aastrup, 2005-2010

R. Eldon Roberts, 2010-2011

Bordes Henry-Saturné, 2011

E. Angela Walton, 2012-2016

David Branum, 2016-Present

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Ernest L. Knight, "Everett School-Church," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, December 2, 1914, 10.
2. E. L. Knight, "Notice," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, November 18, 1914, 4.
3. E. L. Cardey, "Boston," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, December 15, 1920, 4.
4. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1966), s.v. "Greater Boston Academy."
5. Ibid.
6. Richard J. Hammond, "Formal Opening at Greater Boston Academy," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, February 1, 1946, 6.
7. Donald G. King, "The BRMC San: A Great Loss," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, June 1, 1999, 12.
8. Hal Thomsen, "Resolution of the New England Memorial Church/Greater Boston Academy Case," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, December 1, 1999, 3.
9. Ibid.
10. Heidi Martella, "Edgewood/Greater Boston Academy: Enrollment Exceeds Expectations," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, November 1, 2000, 3.

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