



## École normale Jacques-Cartier Girls' Sector / École normale Notre-Dame-de-Montréal

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In the absence of pedagogical institutions, the formation of teachers had been entrusted in Montreal to the sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame and, in Quebec City and in Trois-Rivières, to the Ursuline Sisters. The 1841 legislation on schools made the certificate of competency mandatory for teaching. Religious communities were exempt from this obligation. This brought about the creation of normal schools, institutions which specialized in the formation of teachers. In 1857, two normal schools were established in Montreal: the McGill Normal School (co-educational) and the École normale Jacques-Cartier (for men only). On October 3, 1899, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame opened the girls sector of Jacques-Cartier Normal School in its mother house on Saint-Jean-Baptiste Street in Old Montreal.

In June 1908, the Congregation's various entities housed in this building, including the École normale Jacques-Cartier – Girls' Sector, moved to the newly constructed mother house at 3040 Sherbrooke Street West (today Dawson College).

On January 13, 1913, the Normal School moved to a new building at 2330 Sherbrooke Street West (the current mother house) designed by architect Jean-Omer Marchand to house it. Construction of the new building had begun in 1911 on a site donated by the Sulpicians. It was separated from the mother house by Atwater Avenue.

The Jacques-Cartier Normal School – Girls' Sector celebrated its Golden Jubilee in May 1949. By that date it had awarded over 3,000 diplomas. On January 17, 1957, the school changed its name to École normale Notre-Dame-de-Montréal.

The academic formation of the future teachers hinged on the knowledge of many subjects, teaching methods and practical application. The subjects that were taught were as diverse as Grammar, Reading and Comprehension, Literature, Analysis, Geography, Canadian History and Calisthenics (physical education). The pedagogical methods used to teach French were reading out loud, calligraphy and phraseology. Regarding practical application, the normal school included classes of young students where aspiring teachers could practice in a real classroom environment under the supervision of their professors.

In 1969, the Normal School closed. The Parent Commission, whose responsibility was to study education in Quebec in the 1960s, tabled its recommendation: the formation of teachers will, from now on, be provided by universities. From 1965 to 1969, fifty-three normal schools were closed.