**Charles Eliot (1934-1926)** is most well-known for his role as Harvard President for 40 years and as an education reform thinker. During his lifetime, he elevated Harvard to an institution of world renown and greatly influenced secondary education.

Timeline

1849: Entered Harvard (yes, at 15 years old)

1853: Graduated from Harvard and was elected a member of Harvard Faculty as a math tutor

1858: Appointed Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Chemistry

1867: Observed Educational Systems on his second trip to Europe

1869: Published his observations in *The Atlantic Monthly*

1869: Appointed President of Harvard

1893: Chaired the Committee of Ten

1909: Retired

“The American university has not yet grown out of the soil. It must grow from seed. It cannot be transplanted from England, France or Germany. The American university will be the outgrowth of American social and political habits. The American college is an institution without a parallel; the university will be equally original.” – Charles Eliot

By raising admissions requirements, he influenced other universities and eventually secondary school standards. With The Committee of Ten, he pushed for the 7th year of a student’s education to feature an introduction to foreign language and mathematics. This came to fruition in 1910 with the introduction of junior high schools.

**The Committee of Ten** was comprised of school leaders, headmasters, and presidents of private schools. The National Education Association (NEA) appointed The Committee of Ten in 1893 to standardize the high school curriculum.

* Recommended nation-wide adoption of four standard patterns for the High School curriculum (Classical, Latin-scientific, modern languages, and English).
* Courses like math, science, history, English, and foreign language were included in all curricula
* Recommended eight years of elementary education and four years of secondary education.
* High school education was preparing students for the “duties of life” whether they were college-bound or not.
* Did not recognize art, music, physical education, or vocational education.

**Works Consulted:**

* Curriculum and Aims p. 29
* <https://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org/biographies/charles-w-eliot-harvard-university-president/>
* *[Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reform](https://www.npr.org/programs/specials/education/education.chapter1.html)* [by Diane Ravitch](https://www.npr.org/programs/specials/education/education.chapter1.html)
* <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-William-Eliot>
* <https://www3.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/neacom10.html>