

= History of Baltimore City College =

The history of The Baltimore City College began in March 1839 , when the City Council of Baltimore , Maryland , United States , passed a resolution mandating the creation of a male high school with a focus on the study of English and classical literature . The Baltimore City College was opened later in the same year on October 20 , with 46 pupils under the direction of Professor Nathan C. Brooks , ( 1809 @-@ 1898 ) , a local noted classical educator and poet , who became the first principal . It is now considered to be the third oldest public high school in the nation . In 1850 , the Baltimore City Council granted the school the authority to present its graduates with certificates of completion . An effort to expand that academic power and allow the then named " Central High School of Baltimore " to confer Bachelor of Arts degrees began in 1865 , and continued the following year with the renaming of the institution as " The Baltimore City College " , which it still holds to this day , with also the retitling of its chief academic officer from " principal " to " president " , along with an increase in the number of years of its course of study and the expansion of its courses . However , despite this early elevation effort , it ended at that time unsuccessfully in 1869 , although the B.C.C. continued for a number of years as a hybrid public high school and early form of junior college ( later known as community college ) which did not fully appear in America until the beginning of the 20th Century . Very often the graduation diploma in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries was accepted by many other colleges and universities entitling City graduates to enter upper @-@ division schools at the sophomore year , ( which was also coincidentally a privilege also accorded to its later local academic and athletic rival , the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute , founded 1883 ) .

As the importance of higher education increased in the early 20th Century , the High School 's priorities shifted to preparing students for college . In 1927 , the academic program was further changed , when the City College divided its curriculum into two tracks : the standard college preparatory program , or " ' B ' Course " , and a more rigorous " Advanced College Prep " curriculum , the famed " ' A ' Course " of study ( also available in the mathematics / science / technology fields at Poly ) .

The school underwent demographic changes following the U.S. Supreme Court 's unanimous ruling in the May 1954 decision " Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka , Kansas " case that called for an end to racial segregation . African Americans joined City College for the first time at the end of that summer , in September 1954 and became a significant proportion of the student population by the 1960s . Mr. Pierre H. Davis , also later became the first " Negro " / " Colored " teacher to join the B.C.C. faculty the following year , who coincidentally became the first Afro @-@ American principal in 1970 . The school saw further changes in the student population with the admission of women in 1978 .

Academic standards and enrollment at the Baltimore City College ( B.C.C. ) went through a period of decline first in the mid 1960s to mid 1970s . The ' A ' and ' B ' courses were slowly dying out and unfortunately discontinued by 1973 , and a single academic track was offered .

After another period of neglect in the late 1980s and early 1990s , by the mid @-@ 1990s , with an increase in funding from the school system , the B.C.C. began to experience a turnaround . Administrators re @-@ strengthened academic standards and , in 1998 , the school began offering the International Baccalaureate ( IB ) Diploma Program . By the beginning of the decade of the 2000s , City College was experiencing an academic resurgence . During this period the school was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School , was listed as one of the top high schools in the United States by Newsweek .

= = Early years = =

The creation of a male high school " in which the higher branches of English and classical literature should be taught exclusively " was authorized unanimously by the Baltimore City Council on March 7 , 1839 . A townhouse of probably two stories with a sloped roof and dormer window structure on what was then known as Courtland Street ( now east side of " Preston Gardens " , built in the late 1910s with terraced and bermed flower beds with shrubs and monumental staircases along St. Paul

Street and St. Paul Place , of five square blocks between East Centre Street in the north and East Lexington Street to the south , as Baltimore 's first downtown " urban renewal " project , which unfortunately resulted in the razing of hundreds of beautiful , but run @-@ down , then neglected Federal , Georgian , and Greek Revival architecture @-@ styled townhomes and classical business structures that would be considered to be saved under the " historic preservation " standards today ) was acquired to serve as the home of the new high school . The school opened its doors that Fall on October 20 , 1839 with 46 students . Enrollment was restricted to white , male students of Baltimore City who had completed grammar school and passed an entrance exam . Additional student applicants from the surrounding rural ( and later suburban ) Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County were considered upon payment of tuition to the Baltimore City Public Schools system Those enrolled were offered two academic tracks , a classical literature track and an English literature track . The sole instructor for both tracks was the educator and poet , Nathan C. Brooks , who also served as principal . To accommodate the two tracks , Brooks split the school day into two sections : one in the morning from 9 am to 12 am , and another in the afternoon from 2 pm to 5 pm . During the morning session , students studied either classics or English ; however , the afternoon was devoted to English .

In its first three years , the school was housed in many locations before returning to the original townhouse building on Courtland Street . In 1843 , the City Council allocated \$ 23 @,@ 000 to acquire a building for the school at the northeastern corner of East Fayette and Holliday Streets , ( across the street from the later Baltimore City Hall , constructed 1867 @-@ 1875 ) , and the site of the present War Memorial Plaza , constructed 1917 @-@ 1925 ) . The renovated new school building was the former old " Assembly Rooms " , a Greek Revival architecture civic landmark , built in 1797 by architects Robert Cary Long , Sr. and Col. Nicholas Rogers ( ancestor owner of the estate which became Druid Hill Park ) to accommodate social events for Baltimore 's social elite at the Baltimore Dancing Assembly , which had begun in the 1780s. and the site of the first private library company of Baltimore . The school was next door to the famous Holliday Street Theatre , where the poem " The Defence of Fort McHenry " , now known as the " Star Spangled Banner " written by Frederick and Georgetown lawyer and amateur poet , Francis Scott Key , ( 1779 @-@ 1843 ) , was first performed on its stage in October and November 1814 , following the Battle of Baltimore , with the British Royal Navy and Army attack on Baltimore during the War of 1812 , ( now known as " Defenders ' Day " ) on September 12 @-@ 13 @-@ 14 , 1814 . Although it was not designed to house an academic institution , the school would occupy this building for 30 years .

The male high school for Baltimore went through the first of a series of name changes in 1844 . First known and founded in 1839 as " The High School " , it was renamed the " Male High School " because of the establishment of two schools for females ? Eastern and Western High Schools , which opened in November of that year .

In 1849 , after a decade of service , Prof. Brooks resigned as principal of the school , which had now grown to include 232 students and 7 teachers , excluding Brooks . Rev. Dr. Francis G. Waters , who had been the president of the Washington College , on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in Chestertown , succeeded Brooks . The following year the city council renamed the school " The Central High School of Baltimore " and granted the commissioners of the public schools the right to confer certificates to the high school 's graduates . Exercising that new authority , the new C.H.S. of B. held its first commencement ceremony in 1851 with noted local philosopher , author and civic leader Severn Teackle Wallis , ( 1816 @-@ 1894 ) , as the guest speaker , ( Wallis has a bronze statue to his memory and many city accomplishments at the eastern end from the Washington Monument of Mount Vernon Place / East Monument Street facing the intersection with St. Paul Street . This bolstered enrollment in the school , as students were drawn by the prospect of receiving a certificate attesting to their level of education . That year 156 students applied to the school ? an increase of 50 students .

The growing enrollment necessitated a reorganization of the school . Under the direction of Waters , the school day was divided into eight periods lasting forty @-@ five minutes : four sessions were held in the morning and four in the afternoon . In addition to reorganizing the schedule , he divided the courses into seven different departments : Belles @-@ letters and history , mathematics ,

natural sciences , moral , mental , and political science , ancient languages , modern languages and music . Each of the seven instructors was assigned to a distinct department and received the title of " professor " .

= = Baltimore City College = =

In 1865 , in accordance with a recommendation from the board of commissioners of the Baltimore City public schools , City College began offering a five @-@ year track , beginning a process aimed at elevating the school to a college and allowing it to grant its graduates degrees . To further these aims , the school was renamed " The Baltimore City College " ( BCC ) by an act of the city council on October 9 , 1866 . That same year , the board of commissioners recommended that the city council make a formal proposal to the Maryland General Assembly to grant City College the authority to confer Bachelor of Arts degrees to its graduates . According to the 38th Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners of the Public Schools to the Mayor and City Council , the elevation of the school was designed to " afford advantages to students ... who may adopt the profession of teacher as a pursuit of life . " Thus , the elevation was intended to provide qualified teachers for the Baltimore school system . However , the city council never acted on this recommendation and though the school changed nominally , it was never truly granted the power of a college . Not only did the city council fail to make the recommendation to the general assembly , but it also failed to adequately maintain the facilities of the school . In the 43rd Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners of the Public Schools to the Mayor and City Council , the president of the board wrote :

In addition , the president of the board again requested that the city council attempt to elevate the status of City College , " so that it shall be placed on equal footing in all respects to that of a first class collegiate institution , " but no action was taken . Since there was no incentive to pursue the five @-@ year track , no student remained at the school for the extra year of study and the course was abandoned in 1869 .

= = Relocation = =

It was not until 1873 , when a fire spread from the Holliday Street Theatre to the " Assembly Rooms , " that the city council finally decided to expend the resources to erect a new building for the school . The city council acquired a lot on Howard Street opposite Centre Street and allocated \$ 150 @,@ 000 for the construction of the new building . During the construction , City College was housed in a building of the Baltimore Female College , where it remained until its new English Gothic revival @-@ style building was dedicated on February 1 , 1875 . While at the Baltimore Female College , the five @-@ year course was reintroduced and the four @-@ year track was eliminated . That allowed students to pursue advanced courses , which included calculus , political economy , logic and higher @-@ level language courses , which were emphasized in the curriculum . Students were expected to learn Latin , French , and German ; and Greek was offered as an optional course .

In 1876 , ceremonies were held in the adjacent Academy of Music for the new Johns Hopkins University , which had established several buildings alongside City College under its first president , Daniel Coit Gilman . Four graduates of City College entered Hopkins as a part of the first undergraduate class . That same year BCC 's academic program underwent further changes with the introduction of a one @-@ year track , which provided an opportunity for students who could not complete the entire course of study because they needed to enter the labor market . Courses in the one @-@ year track focused on providing students with pragmatic skills , such as " book @-@ keeping " , " commercial arithmetic " , and " business correspondence " .

City College 's first extracurricular activity , the Bancroft Literary Association , was established the same year to provide a forum for student debate . A second debating society , the Carrollton Society , was established in 1878 . One of the first athletic teams appeared the following year , when a group of students organized a lacrosse team ? the first at a public high school . The establishment of Baltimore Polytechnic Institute ( Poly ) in 1883 was an important development for City College 's

athletics program . With the founding of Poly , City College acquired an arch rival in academics and sports ? particularly football . The schools have met annually in a football clash since 1889 . The formal organization of an athletic program at BCC did not begin until 1895 . During the early years of the athletic program , City College played chiefly against college teams because few other secondary schools existed in Maryland . City College 's 1895 football schedule included St. John 's College , Swarthmore College , the United States Naval Academy , University of Maryland , and Washington College .

= = Reconstruction = =

City College 's Tudor and Gothic @-@ style building , designed by Baltimore City Hall architect George A Frederick , lasted until 1892 , when it was undermined by the construction of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tunnel from Camden Station to Mount Royal Station , and collapsed . Several years of political in @-@ fighting and the change to a reformist city administration delayed construction of a new structure . Designed by the architects Baldwin and Pennington , the new structure was not completed until 1899 .

The succeeding year , the only time since 1851 , the school did not hold a commencement . Members of the senior class had decided to make fun of the professors in the Green Bag ? City College 's year book since 1896 . When the school board was alerted of the matter , it attempted to censor the edition , passing a resolution requiring the Green Bag to be reviewed by Principal Francis A. Soper . However , the year book had already been printed , and the editors refused to have the edition censored and reprinted . The school board responded by withholding the diplomas of six of the editors of the Green Bag and the business manager , and by preventing the school from holding a commencement ceremony . One of the boys expelled , Clarence Keating Bowie , became a member of the school board in 1926 .

In 1901 , the course of study at City College went through a series of further changes . The most significant was the reduction of the five @-@ year course of study to four years ; though students who entered prior to 1900 were allowed to complete the five @-@ year course . The new course , like the course it replaced , allowed graduates to be admitted to Johns Hopkins University without examination , and provided students with greater flexibility . Instead of requiring students to complete the same set of courses , it allowed students to choose their courses , as long as they completed 150 credits .

The program 's explicit purpose was to provide special preparation for those wishing to attend college because of the increasing significance of college education . Though specific classes were not required , to meet the goal , students were required to complete courses in English literature and composition , four foreign languages , mathematics , science , history , commerce , drawing , music , and physical culture .

= = " Castle on the Hill " = =

By World War I , attendance in the school was rapidly increasing . An annex was added on 26th Street to alleviate overcrowding in the Howard Street building , but it was insufficient . Therefore , during the 1920s , alumni began campaigning to provide a proper building for the school , and in 1926 , ground was broken for a massive Collegiate Gothic stone castle with a 38 @-@ acre ( 153 @, @ 781 m <sup>2</sup> ) campus , on a hill in the newly annexed northeastern suburbs at 33rd Street and The Alameda . The four @-@ level " Castle on the Hill " , which was surmounted by a 150 ft ( 46 m ) tower and designed by architects Buckler and Fenhagen , cost almost \$ 3 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 and accommodated 2 @, @ 500 students . The " castle " featured arched windows and cornices , cloisters , gargoyles , stained glass , mahogany paneling , plaster arches , chandeliers and terra cotta tiles and terrazzo floors with two courtyards and plans for additional wings and buildings .

The following year , in 1927 , the " Advanced Academic Course " ( " A " Course ) was introduced . Students in the " A " Course were able to enter their second year of college following their graduation . This program of study and its counterpart , the college preparatory course ( " B "

Course ), became the backbone of City College 's academic program for over 60 years . On April 10 , 1928 , after nearly two years of construction , " The Castle on the Hill " opened its doors to the students and faculty . The next year , the students published the first edition of The Collegian , City College 's newspaper . The publication quickly became an indispensable part of student life and gained national attention , when it won second place in a contest sponsored by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association of Columbia University . The Collegian held the first place title between 1935 ? 1939 .

When Japan 's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7 , 1941 led to U.S. entry into World War II , blood donor projects , stamp and bond drives , and the dedication of service flags gave the City College a wartime atmosphere . More than three @-@ quarters of the students participated in the Victory Corps , which sponsored courses in communications , map reading , judo and the study of the poisonous and non @-@ poisonous plants on Pacific islands . By the time the war ended in 1945 , 4 @,@ 667 City College students had served in the armed forces , 204 of whom lost their lives . The names of all of the fallen , including two Medal of Honor recipients , are inscribed on a bronze memorial , which sits today in the center of the school .

= = Integration = =

Following the landmark Supreme Court ruling in Brown v. Board of Education , the Baltimore City board of school commissioners was forced to desegregate the school system , which had been racially divided since the 1860s . As a result , 10 African @-@ American students entered City College in September 1954 , comprising 0 @.@ 5 % of the student population . A decade later , in the 1964 ? 65 academic year , African @-@ American students represented 30 % of the student population .

In 1956 the school system also sent two African @-@ American men to teach at the school : Eugene Parker , who coached for thirty years , and Pierre Davis , who left after one year but returned in 1971 as City College 's first African @-@ American principal .

Although African @-@ American enrollment increased , the transition from the segregated system was not seamless . In 1964 , enrollment in the selective " A " Course still skewed disproportionately to white students . Only six African Americans were enrolled that year compared with 110 Whites , and they were similarly underrepresented in extracurricular activities .

Such de facto segregation was a systemic problem in Baltimore throughout the 1960s . To address the problem , Superintendent Laurence G. Paquin proposed a reorganization of Baltimore 's high schools . He called for the creation of 13 comprehensive high schools that would offer both vocational training and college preparatory classes , and the elimination of multiple academic tracks in high school . However , Paquin 's proposal met stiff opposition from City College parents and alumni , who feared that his plan threatened the foundations of City College 's academic program . Councilman William Donald Schaefer , an alumnus of City College , convened a City Council hearing on the proposal , which stymied Paquin 's effort .

By the late 1970s , the school 's population , academic program , and building were all in decline , in part reflecting the economic problems of the city as a whole . In 1977 , the city school system allocated money to refurbish the school and bolster the college preparatory program . That same year the school system announced its intent to make City College coeducational ; however , the all @-@ male tradition did not end easily . Alumni argued for the uniqueness of a single @-@ sex education system , and a task force studying the issue voted 11 ? 6 in favor of keeping the all @-@ male tradition . In a stunning reversal , the board of school commissioners voted to admit women citing constitutional concerns over equal rights . The following year City College enrolled women for the first time .

= = Recent history = =

By 1990 , the school 's academic program was once again deteriorating and enrollment was declining . The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools raised questions about the ability

of City College to offer students an academically rigorous course of study . During this period of decline , the " A " Course was discontinued by Principal Joseph Antenson , who contended that the program was racially discriminatory ? an argument Paquin had made nearly three decades earlier ? and opted for a standardized curriculum . However , the change did little to improve the school ; therefore , in 1992 , the school system hired a private contractor to run City College . That action was a part of the unsuccessful " Educational Alternatives program " , which lasted for about 14 months . Then , in 1994 , Joseph M. Wilson was appointed principal of City College . Wilson , with the aid of alumni and parents , was able to secure more funding and autonomy from the school system , which were used to redesign the curriculum and to introduce the IB Diploma Program in 1998 .

The new academic program attracted increased attention to the school . In 2000 , City College was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education , which placed it among the best schools in the country . The following year , the Toronto National Post reported on the two @-@ month @-@ long task of searching for the perfect high school in Great Britain , the United States , and Canada . It " never found the perfect school ... [ however ] we found a few outstanding ones , " the paper concluded . And one of these ? the subject of a prominent feature article ? was City College , led by Wilson . The school 's rankings in Newsweek 's report of the nation 's top high schools improved during this period . In 2003 , it was ranked 593 . Three years later , in 2006 , City College was ranked 206 , and in 2007 it was ranked 258 . Given an estimated 27 @,@ 500 public high schools across the nation , in 2007 ranking placed City College in the top one percent of all high schools . In its criteria , Newsweek divided the number of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate tests taken by the number of graduating seniors . The magazine stated that the measure showed schools which were committed to helping students take college @-@ level courses .

In addition to the academic resurgence of the school , the building was recognized for its historical and architectural interest . The Castle on the Hill was honored in 2003 by being placed on the National Register of Historic Places . This designation coincided with the 75th anniversary of the structure and campus as well as City College 's 165th year of existence . On April 24 , 2007 it earned the additional distinction of being listed as a Baltimore City Landmark . Mayor Sheila Dixon stated that : " The castle on the hill , as City College is known , is truly a historic landmark . It is worthy of preservation and acknowledgment . "

The landmark status bill was passed by the city council in accordance with a recommendation made by the council 's staff , which found that the building dates from a historic and architecturally significant period . This new status prevents the building 's exterior from being altered without the approval of the city 's Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation . However , the previous year City College was a victim of vandalism at the hands of a group of children ranging in age from 8 to 15 , as a renovation of the school neared completion . In the summer of 2007 , scenes from the 2008 sequel Step Up 2 were filmed at City College . Interior and campus shots were used to form the fictional Maryland School for the Arts .

In 2007 controversy about the academic program arose , when members of the Baltimore City College Alumni Association argued that the IB Program was diverting a significant amount of the school 's resources to benefit a fraction of the student population . Approximately 30 students out of 1300 were enrolled in the full IB Diploma Program at City College . Some members also argued that the rigidity of the program did not give students enough flexibility . Citing these concerns , the alumni association encouraged the school to replace the IB Program with the " A course " and expand the number of Advanced Placement courses offered . In December 2008 City announced the donation of \$ 50 @,@ 000 by alumnus H. Corbin Gwaltney ' 39 . The founder and longtime editor of Johns Hopkins Magazine , Gwaltney 's donation will benefit the modernization of City 's library . This is the second largest donation by a single alumnus to the school , David Rubenstein , founder of the Carlyle Group donated the largest amount ? \$ 100 @,@ 000 in 2006 .

= = Principals = =

? indicates principals who attended Baltimore City College