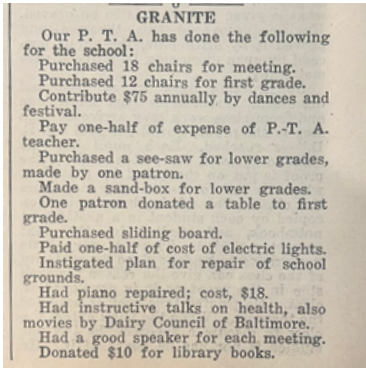


School Life: 1920 -1942

Instruction in a limited number of subjects was offered to students aged 8-13 in two classrooms,. Students competed against neighboring schools in “playground sports.” A walk of one to two miles to school was not unusual, and as more vehicles appeared on the road, these walks became increasingly dangerous.



1927 Report from Granite PTA. Local support helped the school operate.

Attendance at Granite was poor throughout the 1920s and 30s. Sparse PTA reports mention a few artistic performances while painting a picture of a community struggling with poverty.

Health and Safety

Traffic and farming accidents, fires, illness, malnutrition, vaccination, vision and hearing issues, dental problems and “backwardness,” were all the targets of intense focus by teachers, parents and community members. Dentists and doctors visited Granite to provide free examinations and treatment. Students were either passed or labeled “defective,” and the latter seems to have been the most common county outcome.

School Life: 1920 - 1942

Consolidation & Modernization

The schoolhouse model made it a challenge to meet the needs of individual students, especially as the population increased and diversified. Small schoolhouses began consolidating into larger graded schools across the county in 1920. Granite did not shut until 1942, at which point it became a home. It served the community as work in the quarries dried up, the Great Depression ran its course and World War II began.



Granite Students in Costume (1931) incl. Lewis Brantley, Vernon Marr, Zeny Zachindy, Dorothy Trammell and William Dell.

Secondary Education

Education to age 14 was made compulsory in 1916, but secondary education was hard to reach for Granite students. Randallstown High School opened in 1918. Prior to this date, white students would either travel to Reisterstown or Catonsville, a journey that required a mixture of horse-travel, walking, trams and buses. Black students had fewer options until Banneker High School opened in 1939; even then, distance made attendance challenging.

Please visit granitehistoricalsociety.org for citations and source documentation.



Granite Schoolhouse



Education 1800-1850s

Two Room Schooling

A white student in Granite in the early 1800s had three options for early education: private community schooling, a distant boarding school, or one of a few regional academies. Early community schools included one at Quarries Presbyterian Church and one run by the Quaker community, most likely in their meeting house on Wrights Mills. Nearby academies included Powell's Run Academy (founded 1842) at Marriottsville and Powell's Run, and Franklin Academy (founded 1820) in Reisterstown. Academy students would usually board at a local house during the school term.



Powell's Run Students circa 1890

While academies such as Powell's Run were privately owned and administered, funding was both private and public. Public education expanded in the 1850s, and was effectively enacted statewide from 1864 onward. County School Commissioners in the 1850s often found themselves mired in debt and begging for land and money from wealthy landowners. One such solicitation from 1853 reads: **Here is the widest field, here is the greatest need, here you can do the greatest good to the largest number.**

Granite Schools: 1850-80

The two existing Granite schools were made public in the 1850s and a decade later moved to new facilities. Quarries School was rebuilt on Hernwood and Old Court, and Quaker Hill moved to a plot near its original location. Both were one-room schoolhouses for white students aged 5-12.

Standardized Frame Schoolhouse Design (1A) used for Quarries and Quaker Hill Schools



Enrollment and Attendance

Baltimore County enrollment in the 1850s hovered at around 50%. In Granite, Quarries School had an enrollment rate of 75%. In 1858, 60 out of the total 85 children in the community were enrolled; no school existed for black children.

Education for white students was theoretically compulsory after 1865, but schoolhouse attendance (days at school) ranged from 75% to 95%. The school year was about 132 days, with a resulting average of 105 school days per student. Public did not mean free; most students paid tuition and the county capped free enrollment at 15% per school.



Granite School Class of 1915

Granite Schoolhouse

Baltimore County School Commissioners purchased one acre of land near the existing Quarries School in 1879. John Isaacs sold the empty lot for \$200, and while it is impossible to be sure, the impetus for opening a second schoolhouse was likely the 1872 state law mandating free schooling for black students. The district complied by converting Quarries School to a "colored school" and opening the new, larger Granite Schoolhouse for white children in 1880. The schoolhouse's architect, Thomas Kennedy, immigrated from Ireland in 1880, and the school seems to have been one of his first American commissions. The building was constructed with locally quarried granite and had three rooms. Granite operated as a white Two-Teacher Elementary School until 1942, one of the last remaining community schoolhouses in the district. Quarries Colored School closed in 1950, and the house was sold to a private party. The original building is still visible in the expanded home. Both the original Quaker Hill School and its second building no longer exist. In the late 1870s, the school moved to a stone building at 8322 Dogwood Rd, which still stands today.