

Williamsburg Boy's Basketball and Williamsburg City Schools: Excellence is a Tradition

In 1909 the citizens of Williamsburg voted to consolidate the four, one-room school district that educated their youth in order to form a city school system. They agreed to select one trustee from each of the churches in the community as representatives of the Board of Education. The original group consisted of J.M. Gross of the Methodist Church, B.F. Rose of First Baptist Church, and W.H. Brummett of Main Street Baptist Church.

The initial site of Williamsburg City School System was a Brick Building located on the present-day site of the Andersen Building on the Cumberland College Campus. When the original building was consumed by fire in 1926, it was replaced by another brick structure in the same location. This site housed the district until the spring of 1983 when the school occupied its present home at 1000 Main Street. This site also features the home of the Yellow Jackets, the J.B. Mountjoy Gymnasium, named in honor of the longtime superintendent and former coach who helped establish the tradition of excellence at Williamsburg High School.

The first principal, Fleming J. Bowles, taught all high school subjects that included physical geography, algebra, Latin, and history. The first graduating class was recorded in 1915. Soon after its establishment, the high schools was admitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1927 after adding a fourth year of study. The elementary school joined this elite organization in 1970.

The school steadily grew during the 1920's,30's,and 40's as various academic and athletic programs provided extend opportunities for students. In 1955 the district became among the first school systems in the state to racially integrate their enrollment. Since that time, the designation as National Blue Ribbon School in 1922 and top ranking as a district in the KIRIS testing for the state of Kentucky for the 1992-93, 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years. At present, there are more than 3,700 proud alumni around the world who serve society in roles that include doctors, attorneys, business professional, and educators. Basketball became a part of the Williamsburg City School soon after its establishment with the first recorded competition being in 1922 as Williamsburg won the contest. During the time period that followed, the Yellow Jackets made four trips to the Kentucky State High Championships with five. The first trip to the State Tournament came in 1941 before falling to eventual state champion, Hazel Green. The last trip came in 1946 with the Yellow Jackets again facing the eventual state champion, Breckinridge Training Academy.

Several Williamsburg High School alumni have gone on to be quite successful in the field of basketball following their graduation. The late Jim Smiddy, a 1943 Williamsburg graduate, became the all-time winningest high school basketball coach in the nation. 1940 graduate Bill Miller would eventually earn recognition playing professionally for the New York Knicks. Another alum, Scotty Perkins, also played professionally. Ed Fish, a 1941 alum, played under the legendary Adolph Rupp at the University to three Divisions I Men's NCAA Basketball Tournament appearance as the Men's Basketball Coach. 1958 graduate, Dallas Petrey was one of 10 high school players named to the 1958 Courier Journal All State Basketball Team. George LeForce is the only Jacket to earn a spot on the prestigious Kentucky All-Star Team in 1961. Recently, 1995 graduate Ryan Wilson played on the East Tennessee State Men's Basketball team where he earned Southern Conference recognition during his first season with the Bucs. Presently, 1998 graduate Mark Vernon is a member of the coaching staff at Cumberland College.

A host of former jacket players have served as teammates, predecessors, and followers of these men and are each an important testament of the ever-present role that Williamsburg Athletics play in building character, commitment, and dedication in the young men who choose to accept the distinction of being a Williamsburg Yellow Jacket.

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