

The 1980's

The demographic changes that had started challenging Blair in the 70's brought the school to perhaps its most critical point in the early 1980's. As Blair struggled to meet the needs of its ever-changing student population, it found itself losing ground to other schools in many areas where Blair had always been a recognized leader. Although there were certainly excellent programs, outstanding teachers, and high-achieving students at Blair, overall the school's standing had slipped. Enter the Magnet Program and the CAP.



The Magnet Program was designed to serve students with

exceptional talents in key areas such as Math, Science, and Computer Science. It gave students from across Montgomery County a centralized place to take advantage of new, focused curriculum and specially trained teachers. Following a few years later, the Communication Arts Program did the same for students with interests in specialized English and history courses and various types of media. The decision to place these programs at Blair transformed the school into a nationally-recognized leader in academic excellence, a reputation it still carries today.

Regardless of whether students were in the Magnet/CAP Programs or in the school's top quality mainstream program, they were still Blazers, enjoying the excitement and fun of being at Blair. The school spirit was as high as ever and the school-sponsored Spirit Days allowed students to really show their true (red and white) colors.

Blair's two Principals in the 1980's, Joe Villani and Philip Gainous, faced the difficult task of creating a new Blair spirit and new traditions. Under their leadership the school made the 1980's the start of a new era of Blair's leadership in educational excellence.

