



## The Establishment of Bagé State School Through the Pages of *Correio do Sul* Newspaper (1950–1955)<sup>1</sup>

O processo de implantação do Colégio Estadual de Bagé pelas páginas do Jornal *Correio do Sul* (1950-1955)

El Proceso de Creación del Colegio Estatal de Bagé a Través de las Páginas del Periódico *Correio do Sul* (1950–1955)

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### Abstract

This study focused on investigating the implementation process of the current Dr. Carlos Antônio Kluwe State High School in Bagé during the 1950s. Using documentary analysis through a review of publications from the newspaper *Correio do Sul* between 1950 and 1955, the research explored how social demands emerged, who the key political actors in the process were, and the impact of this movement on Bagé's educational trajectory. Founded in 1914 by leaders of the Federalist Party, *Correio do Sul* established itself as the main opposition outlet to the dominant Republican Party of Rio Grande do Sul in the local press. In 1961, it became the city's only printed newspaper and maintained continuous circulation until 2008. As the only publication with a fully preserved archive in the Municipal Public Archive's newspaper library, it serves as a privileged documentary source for the study of the period. The findings highlight the historical and educational significance of the school, emphasizing the active participation of the local community and the decisive role of Mayor Carlos Kluwe in launching this new era of free secondary education in the region. Additionally, the school became known for being the first to later offer the complete second cycle of education, reaffirming its pioneering role in promoting free access to education.

**Keywords:** School institution; History of education; Expansion of schooling; Secondary education; High school

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## Resumo

O foco deste estudo foi investigar o processo de implantação da atual Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Dr. Carlos Antônio Kluwe, em Bagé, durante a década de 50. Empregando análise documental, através da revisão das publicações do jornal *Correio do Sul* de 1950 a 1955, a pesquisa explorou como se deram as demandas sociais, os atores políticos chave no processo, e o impacto desse movimento para a trajetória educacional de Bagé. Fundado em 1914 por lideranças do Partido Federalista, o *Correio do Sul* consolidou-se como o principal veículo opositor ao dominante Partido Republicano Rio-Grandense na imprensa local. Tornou-se, em 1961, o único jornal impresso da cidade e manteve presença contínua até 2008. Por ser o único com acervo completo preservado na hemeroteca do Arquivo Público Municipal, constitui uma fonte documental privilegiada para o estudo do período. Os achados apontam para a importância histórica e educacional da escola, destacando a ativa participação da comunidade local e o papel decisivo do Prefeito Carlos Kluwe na inauguração dessa era de ensino secundário gratuito na região. Além disso, a escola se notabilizou como a primeira a oferecer, posteriormente, o segundo ciclo educacional completo, reafirmando seu papel pioneiro na promoção do acesso gratuito à educação.

**Palavras-chave:** Instituição Escolar; História da Educação; Expansão do Ensino; Segundo Grau; Ensino Médio

## Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio fue investigar el proceso de implantación de la actual Escuela Estatal de Enseñanza Media Dr. Carlos Antônio Kluwe, en Bagé, durante la década de 1950. A través de un análisis documental, basado en la revisión de las publicaciones del periódico *Correio do Sul* entre 1950 y 1955, la investigación exploró cómo se manifestaron las demandas sociales, quiénes fueron los actores políticos clave en el proceso y cuál fue el impacto de este movimiento en la trayectoria educativa de Bagé. Fundado en 1914 por líderes del Partido Federalista, *Correio do Sul* se consolidó como el principal medio opositor al dominante Partido Republicano Riograndense en la prensa local. En 1961 se convirtió en el único periódico impreso de la ciudad, con circulación continua hasta 2008. Al ser el único con acervo completo preservado en la hemeroteca del Archivo Público Municipal, constituye una fuente documental privilegiada para el estudio del período. Los hallazgos señalan la importancia histórica y educativa de la escuela, destacando la participación activa de la comunidad local y el papel decisivo del intendente Carlos Kluwe en la inauguración de esta era de enseñanza secundaria gratuita en la región. Además, la escuela se destacó por ser la primera en ofrecer, posteriormente, el segundo ciclo educativo completo, reafirmando su papel pionero en la promoción del acceso gratuito a la educación.

**Palabras clave:** Institución escolar; Historia de la educación; Expansión de la enseñanza; Educación secundaria; Enseñanza media

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## Background

The city of Bagé was founded on July 17, 1811. Located in the southwestern region of Rio Grande do Sul, it is part of the Southern Campaign Region and borders the Eastern Republic of Uruguay. The municipality covers 4,096 square kilometers, is 393 kilometers from the state capital of Porto Alegre, and 513 kilometers from the capital of Uruguay, Montevideo<sup>2</sup>.

According to the most recent IBGE Census<sup>3</sup>, the municipality currently has 117,938 inhabitants. The municipality is bordered by Lavras do Sul and Caçapava do Sul to the north, Aceguá and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay to the south, Hulha Negra and Candiota to the east, and Dom Pedrito and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay to the west (see figure below).

**Figure 1** - Location of Bagé on the map of Rio Grande do Sul



Source: Wikipédia

Through colonial treaties with Portugal and Spain, Portuguese Brazilians expanded their territory by populating it with settlements, chapels, and towns towards the south and west. Thus, the Brazilian Empire consolidated its possession of these localities. Bagé was inserted into this process of urbanization at the beginning of its history and played a strategic role (Ramos, 2006).

When discussing the economic development of border towns in Rio Grande do Sul, Ramos (2006) emphasizes Bagé's importance in the 19th century: "In terms of urban development, Bagé was well-urbanized, boasting 33 streets, five squares, and over a thousand houses [...] Despite military occupation at its inception, economic activity in Bagé was concentrated on livestock and beef jerky production" (p. 442).

Bagé's cultural role can be considered relevant and pioneering. For example, in the mid-to-late 19th century, the city hosted the leading European theater and music companies from Montevideo and Buenos Aires. For example, in 1897, cinema arrived in Rainha da Fronteira, a year after its launch in France (Lemieszek & Garcia, 2013).

Based on municipal revenue statistics from 1908, Gonçalves (2006) reveals that Bagé had the fourth largest economy in the state. The municipality's golden age occurred during Mayor José Otávio Gonçalves's administration from 1892 to 1913, with some interruptions.

<sup>2</sup> Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). *Censo Demográfico 2010: Resultados Finais*.

<sup>3</sup> Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). *Censo Demográfico 2022: Resultados Preliminares*.

In the following decade, Costa (1922) described a prosperous city with a large industrial and financial sector by 1920s standards.

The municipality has five salad factories; a tongue factory; a corned beef factory; two tanneries; three soap and candle factories; two pasta factories; four lime kilns; a tobacco factory; a tickicide factory; a French tile factory, various mosaics; farms, where cheese and butter are produced; three car factories; two clog factories; one suitcase factory; two slipper factories; five sawmills; three potteries; and one ice factory. It has branches and agencies of the Banco da Província, Pelotense, Nacional do Comércio, and Banco do Brasil (COSTA, 1922, p.495).

In this context, Lemieszek (2000) describes Bagé as a thriving city with public works, exuberant theaters, social clubs, orchestras, and literary guilds. These achievements were the result of the city's progress in the early 20th century.

By 1920, Bagé's population had grown from 30,000 in 1900 to 45,000 (Fagundes, 2005).

Another important chapter in Bagé's history occurred during the 1930 Revolution. As Bagé was an important political center in Rio Grande do Sul, Lemieszek (1997) points out that the new directions taken by the country after the implementation of the New State resulted in political changes that led to the city's constant expansion and urbanization.

By the mid-1930s, however, there were signs that the economy would not continue to develop as it had in the past. The 1929 crash of the New York Stock Exchange directly affected the growth of the civil sector. Additionally, the main product exported by the municipality, beef jerky, began to decline, and cattle started being sent to slaughterhouses that emerged in the mid-1940s, replacing beef jerky factories (Gonçalves, 2006).

A report by the National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) reveals that the southern half of Rio Grande do Sul began to receive minimal financial investment starting in the 1950s. Bagé, in turn, experienced particularly hindered development due to increased surveillance along the border. This issue worsened during the military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985, when development was hindered and rural areas were restricted for national security reasons (IPHAN, 2009).

Nevertheless, according to the 1950s Demographic Censuses, Bagé had 66,172 inhabitants, making it one of the largest urban centers in Rio Grande do Sul at the time<sup>4</sup>. It is in this context of impoverishment and realization that education was not reaching most of the young population that the struggle for expanding free education intensified in the municipality.

The presence of private educational institutions and an active educational life, including student unions, literary clubs, and the circulation of ideas among South American metropolises, coupled with economic dynamism, contributed to the consolidation of an intellectually fertile environment. Thus, the demand for free public schools in the 1950s did not arise in isolation but rather was driven by an existing educational infrastructure.

The local press itself echoed this collective feeling of discontent: "Bagé, which contributes so much to the coffers of the Union and the State, expects its senior leaders to satisfy the just aspiration to have another educational institution for the proper preparation of our youth" (Correio do Sul, 1952, p. 5).

Therefore, the establishment of the State College was a response to the city's expectations for a return to regional prominence through new educational alternatives and investments.

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<sup>4</sup> Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). *Censo Demográfico 1950: Resultados Finais*.

## Brazilian educational context

The history of education in Brazil reveals a series of political, social, and cultural transformations that have accompanied the country's trajectory. The expansion of secondary education played a fundamental role in the gradual democratization of education. Until the 1950s, the few public institutions were exclusive and excellent places sought after through competitive entrance exams. These institutions were occupied by middle- and upper-class youth (VEIGA, 2008).

"Secondary instruction," "secondary education," "secondary schooling," "junior high school," and "basic secondary education" are some names given to the school level preceding higher education, as recalled by Pessanha, Assis, and Silva (2017).

From 1930 to 1960, Bittar (2012) notes that although there was an expansion in all levels of education in Brazil, traces of elitism and exclusion persisted in the educational system.

In the history of Brazilian schools, public schools were held in high regard by society, at least during the first 60 years of the 20th century. School groups, high schools, science programs, and public teacher training colleges were generally considered excellent institutions, with admission being highly competitive and reserved for people from the middle and upper classes (Veiga, 2008, p. 502).

Cury (1998) describes secondary education as a place where discrimination is reproduced. According to the author, the level of education reflects the perverse Brazilian reality: an elitist and selective system without a social purpose.

Dallabrida (2009) notes that federal and state public authorities did not cover secondary education and highlights those private institutions dominated this level of education until the 1920s.

According to Gertz (2007), interest in disseminating secondary education began to emerge after 1925, and the reorganization of this level established a foundation for new developments. In contrast to the debates of that time, the solutions for secondary education seemed modest, with stagnation and a tendency toward continuity.

At the same time, some of the elite in Rio Grande do Sul, particularly intellectuals, demanded the expansion of secondary education. Gil (2020) cites a report demonstrating the actions of Porto Alegre's then-mayor, Octavio Francisco da Rocha, who municipalized the Anchieta Gymnasium in 1926 and renamed it the "Anchieta Municipal Gymnasium." Previously, it was a private institution managed by Jesuits. After municipalization, the school began to adopt the same curriculum as Colégio Pedro II. The institution agreed to admit 20 students free of charge.

The idea of modernizing secondary education was officially established throughout Brazil only with the so-called "Francisco Campos Reform" in 1931, which theoretically gave organicity to school culture at this level. According to Dallabrida (2009), a series of measures were created, including increasing the number of years of secondary education, dividing it into cycles, requiring compulsory attendance, and implementing a detailed, strict assessment system for students.

Decree-Law No. 4,144 is noteworthy in this context because it established that secondary education would be taught in two cycles. The first cycle was a four-year course called *ginasial*, and the second cycle consisted of two parallel three-year courses: the classical course and the scientific course. The scientific course focused on the study of science, while the classical course aimed to provide an intellectual education with a focus on philosophy and humanities. Educational institutions would also have different names: *ginsio* for those in the first cycle and *colégio* for the *ginasial* cycle and both courses in the second cycle (JOSGRILBERT, 2015).

Evidence of the longstanding neglect can be seen in the 1940 Census<sup>5</sup>, which recorded an illiteracy rate of 56.17% among the population over the age of 15. The situation began to change slightly when the 1946 Constitution provided for the drafting of the Law of Guidelines and Bases for National Education (LDB). This occurred due to pressure from intellectuals who, in 1932, initiated the New School Manifesto, attributing to the state the duty to guarantee free, compulsory public schooling independent of the church (Linares, 2011).

Another phenomenon that explains the emergence of initiatives to expand public education in Brazil during this period occurred shortly after World War II in a historical process of state expansion. According to Gomes (2021), popular education and cultural movements operated in this context, emerging at the intersection of the state and civil society. This implied social demands for the political category and modified traditional concepts of popular culture.

Among other phenomena, this resulted in movements and ideas that advocated for state and public education for all. This purpose stemmed from a sense of nationhood, in which the state educates its citizens for social life. The popular culture and education movements developed in this context of rupture in relation to pre-established conceptions of what popular education in Brazil would mean. (Gomes, 2021).

In 1953, 616 of the operating secondary schools were in state capitals, and 1,152 were in interior Brazilian cities. According to the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies, 1,253 Brazilian cities had no institution offering secondary education, public or private (ABREU, 2005).

Demand for the Brazilian educational system skyrocketed in the 1950s. Following the example of the primary system, which grew by more than 70%, from 4,352,000 to 7,141,000 students. At the secondary level, enrollment jumped from 540,000 students at the beginning of 1950 to 1,177,000 ten years later (SCANDELAI, 2011). Analyzing enrollment in 1954, we find that it was distributed as follows:

**Chart 5 - Enrollment by cycle and grade in 1954 in Brazil**

1st cycle (middle school)	1st grade	168.009	459.489
	2nd grade	127.297	
	3rd grade	93.980	
	4th grade	70.203	
Second cycle (high school)	1st grade	35.559	76.286
	2nd grade	22.612	
	3rd grade	18.115	
<b>Total</b>			<b>535.775</b>

**Source:** Statistics Service of the Ministry of Education and Culture

<sup>5</sup> Available at: [https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/periodicos/65/cd\\_1940\\_v3\\_br.pdf](https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/periodicos/65/cd_1940_v3_br.pdf)

According to Abreu (2005), based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, only 714 of the 1,771 secondary schools offering junior high school courses provided upper secondary education. Of those, 529 were "scientific" and 189 were "classical." Additionally, 435 were public and 1,336 were private.

In regions farther from the capital and large cities, the demand for and access to education developed more slowly and met resistance from dominant groups, particularly oligarchies linked to the agricultural and pastoral sectors. These groups had no interest in changes that could compromise their local status. As Araújo (2007) details, these groups prioritized ensuring an unskilled, illiterate, and/or semi-literate workforce to maintain production on their large estates.

According to Bica (2013), the Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora was established in the municipality of Bagé for male students in 1904, and the Colégio Espírito Santo was established for female students the following year. Both institutions belonged to ecclesiastical congregations and catered to the local elite. In the 1950s, the Ginásio Perseverança was added to these schools. It was also aimed at female students. These three secondary schools offered the first cycle of secondary education in the city of Bagé. All of them were private (CORREIO DO SUL, 1952).

However, Vieira (2020) describes the Brazilian educational landscape of the 1950s as a period of flourishing theoretical positions and initiatives to reform secondary education. At that time, this stage of education had definitively become the focus. This can also be fully observed in the context of the city of Bagé.

In this context, the establishment of a state school in Bagé during the 1950s can be viewed not only as a response to local educational needs but also as part of a broader transformation of the Brazilian education system. This transformation was characterized by symbolic disputes, economic interests, and political reconfigurations. According to Gatti Júnior (2007), the history of educational institutions cannot be reduced to their pedagogical function because they also operate as mechanisms of social legitimation. These institutions incorporate memories, practices, and objects that reinforce power structures and promote shared meanings of modernity, progress, and prestige. Understanding the trajectory of the Bagé State School requires situating it within a broader context in which the school is both a product of and a producer of its time. As the authors emphasize, historicizing an educational institution means situating it within the broader educational system and articulating it with local and regional dynamics that influence its formation and existence (Gatti Júnior & Oliveira, 2002). Therefore, it is important to understand the school as a space that synthesizes multiple temporalities and logics of belonging. This space is in constant dialogue with the social, political, and cultural transformations of the territory in which it is located.

According to Maria Helena Camara Bastos (2016), the work of educators and researchers in the field of educational history should be grounded in a critical stance that recognizes the importance of understanding the past and present to shape the future. According to the author, it is crucial for the field to develop through interdisciplinary approaches sensitive to the social and educational realities in which it is embedded.

## Methodology and analysis

This work was carried out using documentary, descriptive, and qualitative analytical methods. Based on the explored collections and collected data, this research is classified as documentary. As Sá-Silva, Almeida, and Guindani (2009) explain, documentary research seeks to create new ways of understanding phenomena and to learn how they developed.

Cellard (2008) encourages us to consider the complexity of defining a document. He suggests that, essentially, a document functions as evidence — a written record that legally validates the veracity of what it states. Its purpose is to record, verify, or demonstrate facts and events. For Cellard, this definition encapsulates the multifunctionality of documents, emphasizing their vital role in providing reliable evidence and records.

Written documents are an invaluable resource for researchers in the social sciences. They are irreplaceable for reconstructing the distant past because they often represent nearly all traces of human activity from certain periods. Furthermore, they often remain the only evidence of activities that occurred in the recent past (Cellard, 2008, p. 295).

Cellard (2008) expands the concept of a document to include any trace of the past that serves as testimony. This view encompasses written texts, visual and cinematographic documents, and other types of records, such as newspapers.

Newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines have long been valuable historical research tools, offering a rich variety of perspectives and themes. From the 19th century to the present day, these printed materials—ranging from local and national publications to specialized, militant, alternative, and humorous ones—provide a vast field for analysis. Historians can use editorials, social columns, economic and political sections, news articles, letters from readers, and chronicles to delve into social, political, economic, and cultural analyses. This diversity of content enables historians to interpret history through social, political, economic, and/or cultural lenses (Leite, 2015).

In their book *Imprensa e Cidade* (Press and City) (2006), Tânia Regina de Luca and Ana Luiza Martins ask: Is it wise to trust what we read in newspapers, see on television, or hear on the radio? While not new, this question takes on particular significance when considering the press as a source for historical research. Although absolute objectivity has been called into question by epistemological criticism, this does not justify abandoning the ethics or social function of journalism. In fact, awareness of the limits of objectivity should reinforce commitment to truthfulness and the public interest. In this sense, the press remains a symbolic mediator between facts and society and must be questioned, contextualized, and understood in terms of its production conditions.

Several scholars have noted that the topics covered and opinions presented in the press respond more to the interests of certain political and economic groups than to the collective interests of citizens. This observation reveals the news's selectivity and often-biased editorial orientation—factors accentuated in certain historical contexts, such as the 1950s, which were marked by intense ideological clashes and the consolidation of power projects. Added to this is the tendency to privilege content that is more appealing to readers, even if it is irrelevant from a civic standpoint. Readers are thus treated more as consumers than political subjects, which compromises the public function of the press as an instrument of critical education.



In this context, it is important to understand that newspapers are not accurate portrayals of reality. Rather, they are discursive constructions in social practices and mediated by specific interests. As Roger Chartier (2000, p. 209) warned, it is risky to project anachronistic categories, such as neutrality or disinterested authorship, onto past texts. The same applies to reading the press. It is necessary to consider the social uses, practical purposes, and political functions of newspapers in each era. As Michel de Certeau (1994, p. 244) argues, "To read is to produce," meaning all historical reading must interrogate the text based on its context of production. Questioning the reliability of the press does not mean discarding it but rather understanding it as part of the process of constructing historical memory.

In our work, the data sources are mainly printed newspapers—more precisely, editions of the *Correio do Sul* from Bagé, Rio Grande do Sul—analyzed between 1950 and 1955. Articles of interest were recorded through digital photography. This period was chosen to understand the process of implementing the institution in question. *Correio do Sul* is the only newspaper with uninterrupted editions available in the Newspaper Library of the Municipal Public Archives of Bagé, allowing for better research using the newspaper as a source.

The *Correio do Sul* newspaper was chosen as the main source of documentation for this research due to its significant circulation and influence in the Bagé region, particularly during the 1950s. Founded in 1914, *Correio do Sul* was established to counter the newspaper *O Dever*, which represented traditional republican politics in the municipality (Pimenta, 2021). Since then, the newspaper has occupied a position of discursive and political confrontation, establishing itself as a space for symbolic disputes in the local press. At that time, the press was strongly marked by ideological clashes and functioned not only as a mediator of news but as an active agent in municipal political disputes.

Furthermore, as Pimenta (2021) points out, *Correio do Sul* was the only newspaper in circulation in the city of Bagé in 1961. This proves the newspaper's relevance given the city's importance in the state and the strength of print as a means of communication and information during that period.

Newspapers make it possible to understand and relate to societal processes in a way that is unlikely to be detailed in any other type of source. Leite (2015) notes that the press records relevant debates, such as those concerning political, ideological, and economic positions; social struggles; customs; practices; social groups; and cultural events.

Remember that the quest for power is often expressed through influence over public opinion. Therefore, caution should be exercised when using newspapers as research material due to several issues. Journalists face several pressures, including the race to publish up-to-date news, the challenge of fitting their stories into limited space, and the political leanings of newspaper owners, which can affect their job security directly. These factors can all influence how information is presented to the public (Carneiro, 2014).

All editions of *Correio do Sul* published during the aforementioned period were carefully read for articles or columns mentioning the Bagé Municipal Gymnasium, the idea of free secondary education, or education issues related to this study's objective. As a result, 87 articles were recorded and grouped by year of publication.

**Chart 9 - Materials Found by Year**

YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
MATERIALS	7	25	20	7	6	22

Source: From the Author

In terms of content, we can group them into 12 distinct categories. It is worth noting that some articles may fit into more than one category. The following categories were created:

i) **General Education Analysis** - newspaper articles and reports, whether analyses or demands, on the state of education, especially its shortcomings;

ii) **Notices and Announcements** - space in the newspaper that educational institutions used to publicize their selection processes, notices, and other relevant information;

iii) **Demands for Free High School Education by the Newspaper:** articles where the editorial line was to demand the existence of free high school education;

iv) **Demands for Free High School Education by Society** - the same as the previous category, but grouping articles on demands made by civil society, students, and politicians;

v) **Developments in Implementation** - news about the progress of construction and the bureaucratic and legal procedures involved in the process;

vi) **Developments in Non-Implementation** - as the process of implementing the Municipal Gymnasium was not linear and encountered setbacks, this category grouped articles referring to these repercussions.

vii) **Laws** - publications of laws, in full, relating to the implementation process;

viii) **Student Movement** - articles that reflected the actions and daily life of the Student Movement and entities such as UBES;

ix) **News on the Institution in Operation** - after the Municipal Gymnasium began operating, articles that record its daily life, such as graduations, convocations, and selection processes;

x) **Other Educational Institutions** - news involving other educational institutions, mainly at the secondary level;

xi) **Municipal Power Repercussions** - opinions of councilors, acts of mayors, clashes, and political records recorded by the newspaper;

xii) **State Power Repercussions** - the repercussions of the agenda for the implementation of the first free gymnasium in Bagé being debated by the State Government, usually in the Legislative Assembly.

**Chart 10 - Materials Found by Category**

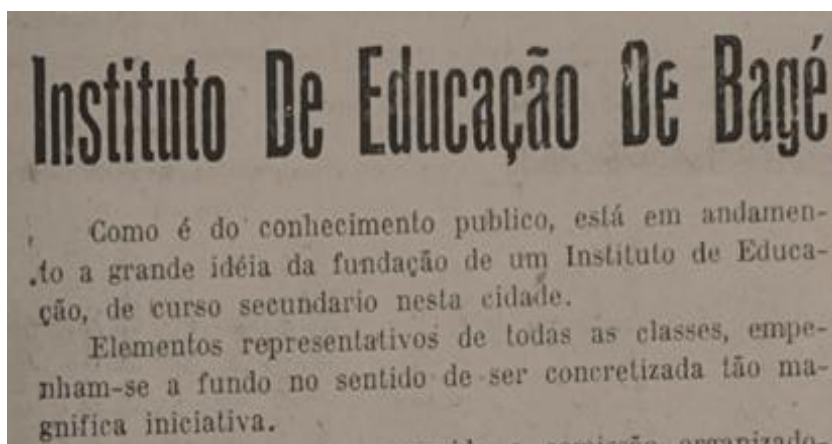
	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
<b>General Education Analysis</b>	3	2	5	-	-	5
<b>Notices and Announcements</b>	-	-	-	-	5	11
<b>Gymnasium Demand (Newspaper)</b>	1	2	-	-	-	-
<b>Gymnasium Demand (Society)</b>	1	3	-	-	-	-
<b>Deployment Implementation</b>	-	2	4	2	-	-
<b>Non-Implementation</b>	-	-	1	1	-	-
<b>Laws (full text)</b>	-	1	-	-	-	-
<b>Student Movement</b>	-	9	-	-	-	1
<b>News in Operation</b>	-	-	-	-	1	5
<b>Other Educational Institutions</b>	2	2	5	1	-	-
<b>Repercussions Municipal Power</b>	-	1	4	2	-	-
<b>Repercussions State Power</b>	-	3	1	2	-	-

Source: From the Author

## Presentation of results

The main materials that contribute to clarifying the objectives and constructing the historical narrative of this stage of the work were filtered.

**Figure 1** – “Bagé Institute of Education” – Correio do Sul (June 21, 1952)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

Here, in this article from 1952, it is possible to see the mobilization of a commission, which was already underway. At that time, it was important to note that the movement was aimed at lobbying the state government for the institute.

As is widely known, there is a great idea underway to found an Institute of Education, offering secondary education in this city. Representatives from all lifestyles are working hard to bring this magnificent initiative to fruition. Just yesterday, the organizing committee, composed of Mr. José Moglia and Drs. Otávio Santos, Telmo Candiota da Rosa, Oscar Salis Filho, and Camilo Gomes, met and discussed the matter at length in all its aspects. It was decided to accredit the committee chairman, Mr. José Moglia, to meet with the state's highest authorities in Porto Alegre to obtain support for this worthy endeavor. The committee is finalizing the draft statutes, which will be submitted to the next general assembly (CORREIO DO SUL, June 21, 1952, p.6).

Here, we see two issues. One is the optimism of one of the city's leading newspapers when addressing the issue of public gyms. The other is the concern in the editorial line when addressing the issue of poverty and exclusion from education, which was already evident to that society.

As is well known, Bagé is currently enjoying a period of rapid development and prosperity. The city is beloved by its inhabitants and admired by visitors thanks to the magnanimous spirit that has emerged and elevated it. In accordance with decisions made by the government and the representative class, various concessions have been made to those less fortunate, such as nursing homes, hostels, shelters, and hospitals. Among the countless events that fill a city and a nation with pride, I would like to highlight the initiative that

arose among Mr. José Moglia, Dr. Otávio Santos, Dr. Telmo C. da Rosa, Dr. Oscar Salis Filho, Dr. Camilo Gomes, and Ms. Melanie Granier (a professor): the establishment of a secondary education institute. Soon, the 'Queen of the Frontier' will benefit from this initiative, which will provide many hopeful young people with the opportunity to gain an education and a better future. The people of Bagé, the studious youth, and, above all, the progressive idealists who have achieved great success are to be congratulated for their vision of a great and strong Brazil. Those who are humble and poor, who dedicate part of their day to earning their 'daily bread', and who are also children of God are also to be congratulated. Only in this way will we forge a better future, lifting young people out of misery and obscurity. (CORREIO DO SUL, 9 July 1950, p. 8).

In addition to this optimism and the vision of free education as a tool for promoting equality, the concept of an elite secondary level is evident. The organizers of this initiative are highlighted as progressive idealists. While there are movements to democratize education with demands free secondary education, the newspaper addresses factors hindering access.

The reported difficulties were: "High tuition fees, expensive books, complicated bureaucracy for enrollment, and, to further complicate matters, the requirement of notarized medical certificates, which were inconvenient and inappropriate" (CORREIO DO SUL, December 8, 1950, p. 3).

Although there was often a demand for a "secular" institution, indicating its secular character, these proposals frequently received majority support from society. Additionally, Venerable Antonio Guedes's efforts as a religious leader exemplify the initiative's universal character, encouraged by all segments of Bajeense society.

The following article reports on the bill presented by state representative Valdomiro Domingues (PTB) in the Legislative Assembly.

**Figure 2** – “Bill proposed by Representative Valdomiro Domingues” – Correio do Sul (March 7, 1951)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

Yesterday, during the Legislative Assembly session, Representative Valdomiro Domingues delivered an extensive speech about the social and economic issues in Bagé. He concluded by presenting a bill to establish a free gym in the city, which would be funded and maintained by the state. **This initiative by the distinguished parliamentarian corresponds to a widespread aspiration of our people**, as evidenced by unity movements among us in which dedicated supporters of public education have been highlighted. Just a few days ago, Representative Cândido Norberto of Bagé addressed the issue with timely and brilliant remarks from the State House floor (Correio do Sul, March 7, 1951, p. 6).

Legislators have often advocated for the creation of free high schools through the state government. However, there have been few state initiatives to expand public secondary education. Additionally, this period has been marked by a lack of initiatives to democratize this level of education, with only modest and scattered offerings throughout the state.

In the Legislative Assembly, state Representative Cândido Norberto from the PL party and a native of Bagé seeks to address this chronic problem by advocating for the creation of a free high school in the city.

A Free Gymnasium for Bagé, Pleads Representative Cândido Norberto from Bagé from the floor of the House of Representatives. At last Friday's session of the House of Representatives, Representative Cândido Norberto, a fellow citizen, spoke, pleading with state authorities to create a free gymnasium for Bagé, similar to those that already exist in other cities in Rio Grande do Sul. During his speech, the Correio do Povo newspaper published the following summary in yesterday's edition: Mr. Cândido Norberto followed at the podium, advocating for Bagé one of the most heartfelt demands of the city's youth (CORREIO DO SUL, May 4, 1951, p.2).

Although Bagé was one of the main cities in Rio Grande do Sul, it had undergone crises until 1950, despite having enjoyed economic prosperity in the early 20th century. Local leaders commonly used the fact that there were free high schools in other places, even smaller ones, as an argument.

The following article discusses and praises Representative Valdomiro Domingues's initiative to promote inclusive education by proposing Free State high schools.

Representative Valdomiro Domingues deserves praise for proposing the creation of a Free State high school in this city to provide secondary education. The truth is that the vast majority of our schoolchildren cannot continue their education after completing primary school due to a lack of resources. As is well known, secondary and higher education are almost forbidden to the poor or those with limited financial resources. If the former is expensive, what can be said about the latter? It is often reserved only for the wealthy (Correio do Sul, March 8, 1951, p. 3).

As previously mentioned, the Correio do Sul newspaper was the main publication in Bagé at the time. It often used its editorials to support and positively reflect on the initiatives presented. This is evident in the above publication, which praised Congressman Waldomiro Domingues's work.

The mobilization and debate among various deputies regarding the proposal for a free gymnasium in Bagé was one of the first signs that some politicians recognized education as a priority. Pressure from society influenced the plenary sessions. Additionally, it reinforced the issue as the "hot topic" in the state and perhaps the country.

**Figure 3** – “It’s time to join forces” – Correio do Sul (March 11, 1951)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

After lengthy and interrupted deliberations, the fellow representative addressed the chamber:

Mr. Candido Norberto: Well, Mr. President and fellow representatives, I will conclude my remarks in this chamber today. The time has come for my final words. I ask the executive and legislative branches of Rio Grande do Sul and its municipalities to pay attention to the just demands of the land of Gaspar Silveira Martins, who brought so much enlightenment to Brazilians. Gaspar Silveira Martins was a millionaire of culture who spread enlightenment throughout the Brazilian homeland. He comes to this plenary to ask for help so that his young, poor people can have a free, secular, and welcoming school that provides them with the indispensable gift of education.

As you can see, the fellow congressional representative's appeal was vehement in his desire to help. From his seat in the Assembly, he supports the long-standing desire of the idealistic children of Bagé to achieve their free gymnasium.

However, to achieve this goal, it is necessary to renew the efforts of those who have long been interested in this socially significant work: a free high school for Bagé (CORREIO DO SUL, March 11, 1951, p. 2).

Over time, the idea of a free gym in Bagé has gained momentum and widespread support, generating enthusiasm and anticipation among various community sectors. The visit of a representative committee composed of local leaders to the newspaper's editorial office symbolizes the broad and determined mobilization for this educational cause and marks significant support for the advancement and realization of the project. This is revealed in an excerpt from the March 14, 1951, edition:

Last night, after all the preparations for today's celebration were complete, we received a visit from Mr. José Torres Rodrigues, Dr. Carlos Frederico Moritz, Councilman Zoroastro Lamote, and Major João Alves. They came to ask for our support for the current campaign to obtain a free gymnasium in Bagé. The commission was appointed at a meeting held on August 10 in the Silveira Martins School Group auditorium. The commission's objective is to study the measures necessary to achieve this great benefit. To implement the movement in favor of free secondary education in this city, the committee sent several telegrams to state authorities, including Colonel Ernesto Dorneles, the governor; Dr. Julio Marino de Carvalho, the secretary of education; and Dr. Emilio Mabil. De Rippoll, Superintendent of Secondary Education; and Deputies Cândido Norberto, Lino Braun, and Valdomiro Domingues. They also made visits to local authorities, political organizations, and professional associations, unions, and syndicates so everyone could express their opinions on the matter. One of the first visits was to Dr. Carlos Kluwe, the mayor, because he is the highest-ranking official in the municipality and is deeply concerned with primary, secondary, and technical-professional education. Upon receiving the commission, Dr. Kluwe learned about its activities and expressed his sympathy for the movement. He is particularly supportive because he shares the same views on this matter, which has always been one of his main concerns (CORREIO DO SUL, March 14, 1951, p. 3).

On March 15, 1951, the commission advocating for free high school education in Bagé stepped up its efforts by reaching out to various local organizations. This demonstrated the community's unity around the initiative, engaging everyone from social clubs and political parties to unions and trade associations.

The commission visited the following associations and entities to request support: Caixeiral, Recreativo Brasileiro, Sociedade dos Amigos de Bagé, and the Rotary Club, as well as the municipal directories of the Libertador, National Democratic Union, Social Democratic, Brazilian Labor, and Social Progressive parties, along with other commercial, rural, and retail associations; the Maio and Palmeira recreational societies; The Sociedade Esportiva e de Socorros Mútuos Lira Bageense; the União Operária; the Sociedade dos Amigos dos Padeiros; the Protetora dos Artistas; the dos Chauffeurs; the dos Cortadores; the Saca Rolha; the Associação dos Trabalhadores em Geral de Bagé; the Unions of Shopkeepers; the Large Structure Civil Construction Union; the Civil Construction Union; the Furniture Workers Union; the Commercial Workers Union; and the Accountants Union.

Regarding the first record of concrete action, the article below highlights one such action. Municipal Law No. 153 established the Bagé Municipal Gymnasium, which gave form to the idea of a free secondary school. Although the municipality would not run the building, the state government would later take it over in response to numerous demands.



**Figure 4** – Law establishing the Municipal Gymnasium is sanctioned – Correio do Sul (June 14, 1951)

**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

Dr. Carlos Kluwe takes office with education as his priority. He has expanded the number of scholarships for disadvantaged youth to attend private schools and has launched an important initiative in response to incessant demands from civil society. The enactment of Municipal Law No. 153 marks a historic moment.

#### Municipal Law No. 153

Creates the MUNICIPAL GYMNASIUM and provides other measures  
Dr. Carlos Kluwe, Mayor of Bagé. I hereby announce that the City Council has approved, and I enact, the following Law:

ARTICLE 1 — Hereby, under the name MUNICIPAL GYM, a free gym is created, with the following characteristics: day school, teaching, and mixed attendance.

ARTICLE 2 — The building belonging to the municipal patrimony, called PALACETE Pedro OSORIO, located at Avenida Silveira Martins No. 1436, will be provided as its headquarters (CORREIO DO SUL, June 14, 1951, p.2).

The creation of the Municipal Gymnasium is an important step for the city in ensuring that secondary education is free. However, this initial effort has faced some challenges. These obstacles are not only bureaucratic but financial as well. As various reports have shown, the municipal government was experiencing a shortage of resources for new investments, and secondary education would be a costly initiative for the public coffers.

Another extraordinary session was held yesterday at the City Council. Apart from Councilman Iolando Machado's proposal to request 120,000 cruzeiros from the state government to assist the Municipal Gymnasium, nothing important was recorded during yesterday's meeting. A new session has been scheduled for today (Correio do Sul, December 6, 1951, p. 8).

The January 5 edition of the *Correio do Sul* newspaper published an article by Dr. Eurico Salis that raises serious concerns about the municipality's financial problems. At the same time, the article proposes a pragmatic solution: handing over the building to Ginásio Perseverança, a private institution managed by Professor Melanie Granier.

**FIGURE 5** – “The timely use of the building” – *Correio do Sul* (January 5, 1952)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

Given the lack of resources and the setback in operating the municipal gymnasium, the newspaper published a solution: the municipality should restrict its role to distributing scholarships. Furthermore, it is clear that the bureaucratic obstacle to operating the municipal institution was not considered easily solvable. The alternative of handing over the building to a private institution in the municipality that was assisted by a federal inspector was even suggested.

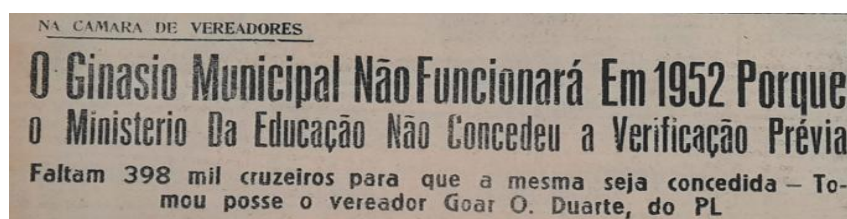
In a subsequent edition, in response to a reader who criticized the newspaper's pessimism, the opinion was reaffirmed that municipalizing the Perseverança Gymnasium would be the quickest way to establish a free gymnasium.

The discussion surrounding the free, secular municipal gymnasium in Bagé highlights the need for cooperation between different levels of government and the educational community to overcome financial and bureaucratic obstacles. Civil society has become demobilized since the passing of the law establishing the Municipal Gymnasium, probably due to the expectation that this would be the final action.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, the excessive criticism in the newspaper led to the aforementioned clarification, which rejects any form of apathy or resignation due to the many challenges faced in making the public gymnasium viable.

The article below presents an uncomfortable verdict from the public authorities: the gymnasium created by municipal law in 1951 would not be operational in 1952. The reason was financial constraints once again.

**Figure 6** – “The Gymnasium Will Not Open in 1952” – *Correio do Sul* (February 14, 1952)

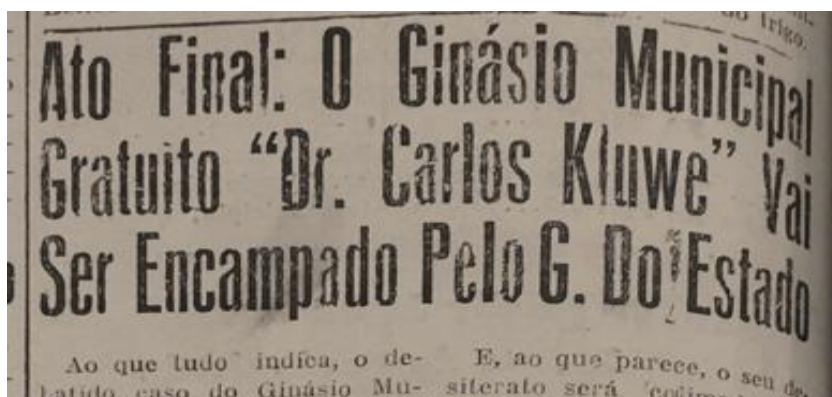


**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

In order for the verification to be granted, it is necessary to construct and complete several works on the Municipal Gymnasium, budgeted at Cr\$ 398,000.00, requested in the current extraordinary credit application, obstacles that are impossible to overcome in 1952 (CORREIO DO SUL, February 14, 1952, p.6).

On November 19, 1952, the state government announced it would support the gymnasium project, ending a long period of uncertainty. This announcement resolved a historic impasse and drew the newspaper's attention to the fact that the city would no longer have to bear the high operating expenses.

**Figure 7** – “Final Act” – Correio do Sul (November 19, 1952)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

It should be noted that the gym agenda continues to be regularly reported on in Correio do Sul. When producing and selecting news, journalists prioritize facts, creating a hierarchy of news values. According to Wolf (2003), one of the main criteria considered by media outlets when talking about newsworthiness criteria in journalism is the public interest represented by the potential audience that a given news story can reach. This suggests that society continues to prioritize the proceedings involving the Municipal Gymnasium.

At the same time, Dr. João B. Fico's involvement in the Gymnasium's operation is notable. He succeeded Dr. Carlos Kluwe in 1952. At that time, the state government needed to expropriate the Municipal Gymnasium to operate it at no cost to the municipality.

**Figure 8** – Mayor goes to Porto Alegre to seek favors – Correio do Sul (September 19, 1952)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

However, the illustrious Mayor of Bagé's trip is not limited to a simple courtesy visit to the Head of State or the magnificent national rural event; rather, it serves higher administrative purposes. During his stay in the state capital, the governor will address matters of local importance. The following issues are on his agenda:

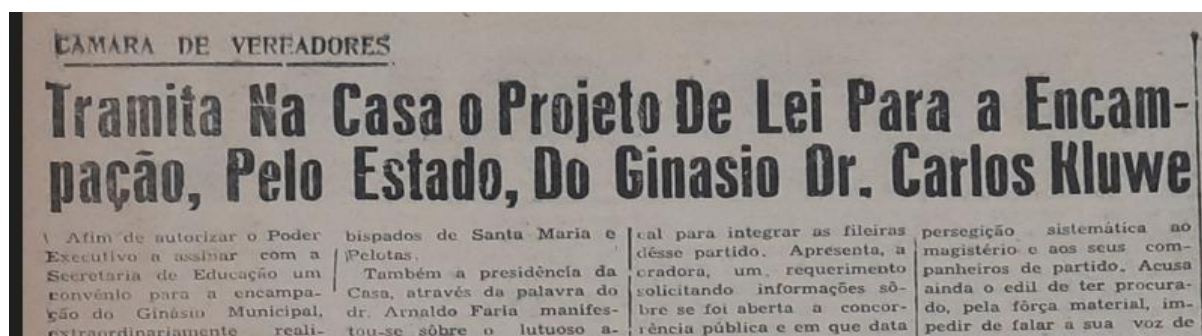
9) Takeover of the "Dr. Carlos Kluwe" Municipal Gymnasium by the state (Correio do Sul, September 19, 1952, p. 4).

However, problems involving the operation of the gym would continue for some time. The following article highlights the confusion surrounding the municipal law governing the creation and operation of the gym, and calls for students who depend on educational facilities not to be left helpless.

There appears to be some confusion regarding the interpretation of the Municipal Law, as well as the subsequent actions of the mayor and city council. From what has been said, it appears that the law was approved by the city council but not by the mayor. Additionally, authorization was mentioned for completing the work, but it does not appear that this has been effectively fulfilled, as there have been no changes to the building recently. Considering the state government's formal promise to operate the gymnasium next school year, the lack of completion is concerning. Decisive action is necessary to ensure that students, especially the poorest, can achieve their educational goals. Instead of just promises, concrete actions are needed (CORREIO DO SUL, November 10, 1953, p. 3).

The following article details the extraordinary session of the Bagé City Council, which focused on authorizing the agreement between the Executive Branch and the State Department of Education to take over the Municipal Gymnasium. The session's purpose was to present the building plans, discuss maintaining the name and faculty, and facilitate the gymnasium's transition to state control.

**Figure 9** – Bill to take over the Dr. Carlos Kluwe Gymnasium (March 18, 1953)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

The following document reveals the complications that arose between municipal and state expectations, particularly regarding the proposal to appoint municipal teaching staff without their undergoing the process of entering state public service. The municipal mayor's desire for the municipal teaching staff to be taken over by the state government is evident. The state identified this as one of the obstacles to signing the agreement. Additionally, the city intended to continue the activities of other educational entities that partially used the location where the gymnasium would be installed. The state government also rejected this factor, as reported in the article in its entirety.



**Figure 10** – Impasse between the State Secretariat and the Municipal Government (April 14, 1953)

Source: Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

As is public knowledge, the Dr. Carlos Kluwe Municipal Gymnasium is about to be taken over by the state government. The Bagé Executive Branch coordinated the steps in this direction because, during his stay in Porto Alegre, Dr. João Batista Fico entered into direct negotiations with the Department of Education and Culture. The department provided him with a draft of the contract to be signed. However, when drafting the law that would authorize the commune's governor to sign the agreement, the City Council included provisions that the Ministry's technical bodies considered contrary to the agreement's spirit (CORREIO DO SUL, April 14, 1953, p. 2).

Once again, the newspaper uses its editorial section to criticize the prolonged and fruitless discussion surrounding the implementation of free gyms. In this case, the newspaper ironically reports that the local community's long-standing desire seems to be going in circles without resolution. The author criticizes the municipality, pointing out the attempt to include the teaching staff in the state's takeover of the gym. This attempt created yet another obstacle.

The lack of progress once again results in the suggestion of an alternative solution: taking over the Perseverança Gymnasium. This proposal is considered more viable and less controversial because, according to the newspaper, the municipality would not be taking over a gymnasium, but rather a building purchased for a never-materialized facility.

**Figure 11** – “Free Gym... Patatí... Patatá...” (April 16, 1953)

Source: Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

I confess that when I set out to write again about this same old topic, I couldn't help but yawn deeply, the kind of yawn that monotonous things provoke. Indeed, no one can deny that this story of Free Gym is beyond boring. It was discussed the year before last... It was discussed last year... It will be discussed again this year. And always the same things. The same decisions. And the same outcome: Chaos [...] (CORREIO DO SUL, April 16, 1953, p.5).

At the end of 1953, the *Correio do Sul* reported on the Rio Grande do Sul Legislative Assembly's vote to approve the state's agreement with municipal high schools in other cities. Bagé was still awaiting a decision. It's important to note that if the Bagé Gymnasium could no longer be considered a pioneer at the state level at the beginning of the proceedings, it was even less so at this point. This level of education would expand throughout Brazil, leading to similar initiatives in other locations.

The Assembly is expected to vote tomorrow on a draft legislative decree that would approve the agreements signed by the state, the management of the gymnasiums in Caçapava do Sul, and Rosário do Sul, which would grant those establishments independence. However, the cases of the gymnasiums in Bagé, Encruzilhada do Sul, and Itaqui have not yet been brought before the Assembly. The matter will be addressed when the bill that allocates funding to the gymnasiums in Caçapava do Sul and Rosário do Sul is voted on (CORREIO DO SUL, December 2, 1953, p. 6).

After publishing numerous articles about the issues that prevented the Free Gymnasium from operating for months, *Correio do Sul* ceased reporting on the final decisions, such as the Gymnasium's takeover by the state and its subsequent renaming as the "State Gymnasium."

The newspaper did not mention the institution again until March, when it published a public notice and announcement demonstrating that the institution was operational for 1954.

The following year, *Correio do Sul* reported on the Bagé community's celebration of the State College high school students' graduation. The ceremony included tributes to Dr. Carlos Kluwe, who was recognized for his fundamental role in developing the college.

**Figure 12** – Graduation Ceremonies (December 22, 1955)



**Source:** Physical Collection of the Tarcísio Taborda Municipal Public Archives

The night before last, the State College auditorium welcomed a small crowd that had gathered for the ceremony awarding certificates to those who had completed the gymnastics course.

In 1955, the renowned company in our community established the "Granjas Reunidas" award, offering one thousand cruzeiros to the most well rounded student in each graduating class, with the amount increasing by one thousand annually. Young Leonardo Dias Barcelos won this prestigious award in his first year. The class speaker was Jefferson Costa, a young Gabriellense man who apologized to Dr. Carlos Kluwe, a pillar of the State College. Next was Dr. Fernando Silveira Abbott, the civil patron of the 1955 graduating class of the State College of Bagé. He delivered a

beautiful speech and paid tribute to the driving force behind the State College: Dr. Carlos Kluwe. He described Kluwe as a man passionate about education who knew how to fulfill the aspirations of Bagé's impoverished youth. Abbott asserted that the State College of Bagé is a highly regarded educational institution in the public opinion of the "Queen of the Frontier" due to the high moral and cultural standards of its teaching staff (Correio do Sul, December 22, 1955, p. 5).

The final event of this period of analysis celebrated the students' successes and reaffirmed the school's status as a pillar of excellence in the region, a reputation that is remembered and recognized to this day.

### **Final considerations**

This study examined the Bagé State School's trajectory, emphasizing its implementation process. Through a documentary and historiographical analysis of the Correio do Sul newspaper, we confirmed the importance of this institution in the local educational landscape and highlighted the general social, political, and cultural dynamics that influenced and resulted from its creation.

The Bagé State School emerged in response to a changing society marked by low educational standards, the rise of capitalism, and the emergence of intellectual elite. The school was founded in an attempt to include more low-income youth in this level of education. Driven by the aspirations of society and the visionary ambition of Mayor Kluwe, the school's establishment represented a milestone in the democratization of access to public education in the city. It was the first institution to offer free primary education, and later, it became the only one to provide complete secondary education in the city. The institution's establishment fulfilled one of the "greatest, oldest, and most just aspirations of the population of Bagé," as the Correio do Sul described, and it established a model of community engagement and social mobilization that overcame legal, bureaucratic, financial, and political challenges.

Several movements and initiatives of varying impact fostered the demand for the creation of a municipal gymnasium and, later, its takeover by the state government. Luiz Mércio Teixeira, the mayor of Bagé at the time, established a free and secular gymnasium in 1941, but the initiative ended before implementation due to his successor's claim that the municipality could not cover the operating expenses. In 1947, Ernani Romero received support from all the city's social organizations and brought the issue to the Legislative Assembly, where he found support from Representative Lino Braun (PTB).

In 1951, an organizing committee was formed, and the following leaders are credited: José Moglia, Otávio Santos, Telmo Candiota da Rosa, Oscar Salis Filho, Camilo Gomes, and Professor Melanie Granier. Granier owned the private gym "Perseverança," and she often volunteered for it to be acquired by the government and offered free of charge. However, excessive bureaucracy and parallel initiatives prevented this alternative from moving forward.

Representatives Valdomiro Domingues (PTB) and Cândido Norberto (PL), both from Bagé, repeatedly defended the initiative in plenary sessions, discussions with the state government, and conversations with other legislators. In 1951, Domingues presented a state bill to establish a free high school in Bagé. Other movements also made appeals and held local campaigns, such as the Parents and Teachers Group formed by José Torres

Rodrigues, Dr. Carlos Frederico Moritz, Councilman Zoroastro Lamote, and Major João Alves. Another commission promoting the idea included José L. Rodrigues, president of the Parents and Teachers Association of the 15 de Novembro School Group; Major Obino Alvares; and Dr. Carlos Frederico Moritz, president of the Parents and Teachers Association of the Silveira Martins School Group.

Eurico Salis, president of the Society of Friends of Bagé, also made a noteworthy contribution when he appealed to state authorities in favor of free high school education. Councilwoman Iolanda Machado sent requests to the state government from the City Council on more than one occasion. Later, despite the initiative losing momentum during the transition to Mayor João B. Fico's administration, it was implemented during his term. There are records of his efforts to achieve this goal.

Finally, it is important to note that one of the most significant initiatives was the acquisition of the Pedro Osório Mansion by then-Mayor Dr. Carlos Kluwe. During his administration, the law establishing the Bagé Municipal Gymnasium was enacted. Initially, the building did not fulfill its purpose due to many challenges, especially economic ones. For years, it was the only concrete representation of a municipal gymnasium. The mayor's greatest desire was to hand it over to the state government. Without the acquisition of the palace, the arrival of free secondary education in Bagé would certainly have been delayed. After leaving office, Kluwe continued to oversee the process until its completion, leveraging his connections with state authorities to establish himself as the driving force behind the school's founding. Later, in tribute, he was proclaimed the institution's patron.

The institution fulfilled its educational role and contributed significantly to the social and cultural development of Bagé. During its early years, the school gained widespread prestige in local society due to the quality and rigor of its teaching. According to Coitinho (2016), after its inception, the Carlos Kluwe School attracted many of the city's intellectuals. Although democratizing education was one of this institution's founding principles, strict entrance exams continued to prevent less privileged students from enrolling. In its early years, the school remained elitist, occupied primarily by students from the private school system.

Upon completing this study, it is clear that the Bagé State School, in all its forms, has surpassed its initial purpose of offering free secondary education. It has become a symbol of social transformation, reflecting changes and continuities in Bagé's educational history. The lessons learned from its history are valuable for understanding the challenges and potential of public education in Brazil, highlighting the importance of local movements and demands. The proposal was favored by the context of educational expansion in Brazil, which was a decisive factor in the state government's takeover of the Gymnasium. This phenomenon became even more popular in the following decade. Considering this milestone in the history of education in Bagé, we can conclude that this work has successfully contributed to the field of history of education in the municipality.

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