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NEARING 100 YEARS



The cornerstone for Hickman High School was placed in a Sept. 16, 1926 ceremony, with the building officially opening about a year later, Sept. 19, 1927. PROVIDED BY COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Joe Forsee as he celebrated his 100th birthday in 2025. PROVIDED BY JOE FORSEE

Hickman's 'Most Popular Boy' of 1943 looks back at age 100

Roger McKinney
Special to the Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK

The dark cloud of World War II hung over Hickman High School in 1943, and Joe Forsee said everyone was aware of what awaited after graduation.

"The teachers also knew the war was on," said Forsee, now 100, recalling that the school's patriotic assemblies were commonplace.

Though ever-present, the war didn't consume all his time at Hickman. For Forsee, friendship and football went hand-in-hand, as he was a

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Joe Forsee's senior picture before his 1943 graduation from Hickman High School. PROVIDED BY JOE FORSEE

Hickman High School honors history as it closes in on milestone

Roger McKinney
Special to the Tribune | USA TODAY NETWORK

On the Thursday before spring break, Hickman High School students streamed between the school and a neighboring national ice cream chain, getting their free cones.

Inside, Mary Grupe, the school's current principal, was stopped by a student who asked if it was true that she wouldn't be at the school next school year. He jokingly chided her for leaving them. She confirmed the news was true but reassured the student she would be around.

Grupe is leaving Hickman when the school year ends, to be the district's director of student supports.

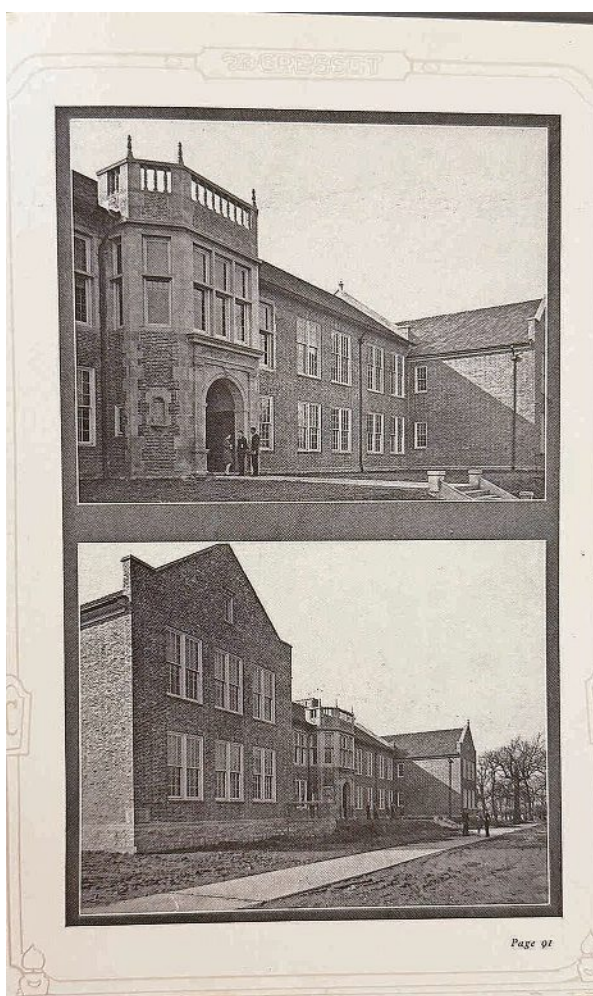
"It doesn't get better than that kid," Grupe remarked later about the interaction. "He's wanting the best for you, wishing the best for you, wondering, making sure you'll still be around."

This is Grupe's fourth school year as principal at Hickman.

"Now I've been longer as principal than I was as a student, because we were only here grades 10, 11 and 12 when I went to school here," Grupe said.

For most of its almost 100 years of life, Hickman was a three-year high school. In that time, students and staff have moved through history,

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Photos of Hickman High School, which opened Sept. 19, 1927, from the 1928 Cresset yearbook. PROVIDED BY BOONE COUNTY HISTORY AND CULTURE CENTER



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