

EHS Campus 1: 1894 – 1929



The building that would eventually become the first Escondido High School was built in 1882 by the University of Southern California. Located at what is now the intersection of Ivy Street and Second Avenue in Downtown Escondido, the University used the building as a Methodist seminary for ten years. However, the operation ultimately proved to be too costly, and the seminary was forced to close its doors.

In 1894, USC was forced to will the building to a man named Henry Putnam. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Putnam donated the building to the newly-formed Escondido Union High School District. With that donation, Escondido High School (EHS) was born. When classes first began at EHS, total enrollment at the school was less than 100 students.

Classes continued at the original EHS campus until the evening of May 23, 1929. It was on this day that the historic campus was engulfed in flames. By the time the fire was extinguished, the beautiful red brick building was nothing but a memory.

Fun Facts

- The original EHS nickname was the “Grapepickers” — a reference to Escondido’s status at the time as a major producer of grapes and wine.
- Originally, the EHS campus didn’t have a bell. Instead, a Gong was used to signal the end of classes. The EHS yearbook has always been named “The Gong” in honor of this piece of EHS History.
- One day, two male students grew tired of not having a place to swim and cool off during hot summer days, so they began digging a hole. The boys got some assistance from their friends, and two years later, EHS had its very own swimming pool. The school district cemented the pool in 1909.

- In 1915, Escondido High graduate Cliff Cravath hit a major-league record 24 home runs for the Philadelphia Phillies, who advanced to the World Series that season. His record stood until 1919 when Babe Ruth hit 29 home runs.
- The 1919 EHS faculty and staff consisted of only eleven people — a far cry from the hundreds of faculty and staff members it takes to run a present-day high school and school district.
- 1921 marked the first time that hot breakfasts and lunches were served on-campus at Escondido High.
- In the 1920's, EUHSD began to offer a post-graduate program to those EHS graduates who couldn't afford to move away and attend a major university. This program marked the beginnings of what is now EUHSD's Adult Education program.