



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Ross S. Sterling

HIGH SCHOOL



**Elementary Schools:** Alamo | Bonnie P. Hopper Primary | David Crockett | George Washington Carver | Harlem | Highlands  
James Bowie | Lorenzo De Zavala | Mirabeau B. Lamar | San Jacinto | Stephen F. Austin | Ashbel Smith | Victoria Walker | William B. Travis

**Junior Schools:** Baytown | Cedar Bayou | Gentry | Highlands | Horace Mann

**High Schools & Others:** Goose Creek Memorial | Impact Early College High School at Lee College | John M. Stuart Career Center  
Peter E. Hyland Center | Robert E. Lee | Ross S. Sterling | School Community Guidance Center

300 W. Baker Rd.

### Planning

In 1963 the Board of Education and the Administration of the Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District reached the conclusion that a new high school should be planned and constructed since the projected growth of scholastics in the district indicated that the Robert E. Lee High School would be filled by the time the new school could be built.

Concepts for this new facility for learning began with the passing of a bond issue on June 23, 1963, which made it possible to proceed with planning and designing a new high school for Baytown. The bond election included the new high school building as well as construction in other areas. Plans were started almost immediately for the new senior high school which was to house approximately 2500 senior high school students in grades nine through twelve. With the changes in education that were imminent, the plans were made to reflect the needs of the curriculum for future years.

It was desired to incorporate in this new building flexibility for the trends in education. Hence, committees were appointed to develop requirements for current and future training.

The architect was appointed, a principal was elected, and thirty-two committees were named to help provide basic concepts which were coordinated into a compact and an efficient design for learning. More than 200 Baytown people composed of businessmen, engineers, board members, school personnel and others contributed to the safety, flexibility efficiency, trends climate control and traffic patterns of this modern school. Much research and careful planning was essential in all areas to assure a design with maximum flexibility for the school program and to provide for tomorrow's developments.

### Area

The completed building, with its furnishings, provided an aesthetic atmosphere for instruction. The color décor is pleasing throughout. The library and materials center is in the central part of the academic area. The academic departments are separated from the activities of the gymnasium, cafeteria, and auditorium by a large commons, which provided a center of interest for students passing from classes. Wide corridors facilitated easy flow of traffic from classrooms to activity areas.

### Renovation

1973 - A separate vocational building was completed housing classrooms and lab spaces for Agriculture, Cosmetology, Auto Mechanics and Drafting.

1974 - A competition gym, with the seating capacity of 1400, was built. It also included boy's locker room facilities. The building was dedicated to Mrs. Winnie Brown, the first principal of the high school.

1981 - A state of the art Natatorium was built to house the swimming program and included boy's and girl's locker room



### Ross Shaw Sterling

Ross S. Sterling, governor of Texas, son of Benjamin Franklin and Mary Jane (Bryan) Sterling, was born near Anahuac, Texas, in February 1875.

He attended public schools and farmed until about 1896. He opened a feed store at Sour Lake in 1903, and during the next several years he also entered the banking business by purchasing a number of banks in small towns.

In 1903 he became an oil operator and in 1910 bought two wells, which developed into the Humble Oil and Refining Company (EXXON COMPANY, U.S.A.). The company was officially organized in 1911, and Sterling was president. In 1918 he also was president and owner of the Dayton-Goose Creek Railway Company.

In 1925 he sold his Humble interests and started developing real estate in the vicinity of Houston. He bought the Houston Dispatch and the Houston Post in 1925 and 1926 and subsequently combined them as the Houston Post-Dispatch, which later became the Houston Post.

Sterling was chairman of the Texas Highway Commission in 1930 and was instrumental in highway development in Texas, including the implementation of the 100-foot right-of-way for highways.

On January 20, 1931, he was inaugurated governor of Texas. In September 1931, during the Great Depression, he called a special session of the legislature to deal with the emergency in agriculture. The Texas Cotton Acreage Control Law of 1931-32 was designed to cut cotton acreage in the state, but it was declared unconstitutional and never went into effect.

Because rulings of the Railroad Commission regulating oil proration in East Texas were being ignored, Sterling placed four counties under martial law and shut down all oil production temporarily. Later the courts ruled that he had exceeded his authority by the declaration of martial law. Sterling was defeated by Miriam A. Ferguson in his race for a second term as governor.

In 1933 Sterling returned to Houston, where he appeared little in public life, but in a few years had built another fortune in oil. He was president of the Sterling Oil and Refining Company from 1933 to 1946. He was president of the American Maid Flour Mills and the R. S. Sterling Investment Company and was chairman of the Houston National Bank and the Houston-Harris County Channel Navigation Board.

facilities. A new building was constructed for the Agriculture department consisting of classrooms and a shop. Classrooms were added to the main building that included 4 science labs and 10 classrooms that housed the language department and journalism.

1996 – More additions were added to the main building. An Orchestra room and field house containing a weight room and a training room facility were added to the back of the building. A guidance center was added to the front of the building, which housed all of the counselors.

2003 – To accommodate the growth of the school population, a separate building, the East Annex, was built. It added 37 classrooms, which housed the art department, mathematics, the language department and also included several science labs.

2008 – The Sterling Field House was built as a separate facility and housed a training room, a weight room, girl's and boy's dressing room facilities, and offices for the tennis, soccer, football, track/cross country, and softball coaches.

Sterling married Maud Abbie Gage on October 10, 1898; they were parents of five children.

Among his philanthropies were the gift of his La Porte home to the Houston Optimist Club for a boys' home, establishment of a boys' camp in memory of Ross Sterling, Jr., who died in 1924, and the contribution of \$100,000 to Texas Christian University. He was a Democrat and a Mason.

Sterling died in Fort Worth on March 25, 1949, and was buried in Glenwood Cemetery in Houston.

**Bibliography:**

Houston Post, March 26, 1949. Henrietta M. Larson and Kenneth Wiggins Porter, History of Humble Oil and Refining Company (New York: Harper, 1959).

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Vertical Files, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Who's Who in America (1934-35).

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