

## Paying tribute to an inspiration

9 hrs ago

LOIS GRAY

ISSUE: Former HCS superintendent remembered

OUR VIEW: Lois Gray's career was built on caring

As her family and the community she served offered its final goodbye to revered educator Lois Gray, many accolades have been shared.

Gray, 81, who died Feb. 6 near her retirement home in Florida, was buried Tuesday in Radcliff.

Widely respected for her vision and passion, she was honored both at the state and national level as superintendent of the year during her tenure at HCS from 1992 to 2002.

She made lasting improvements as the district built John Hardin High School and the HCS Performing Arts Center, started all-day kindergarten and she shepherded the transition through massive reforms required by implementation of the Kentucky Education Reform Act while she was superintendent.

But her impact also can be measured by those she inspired, motivated and mentored. Her friendship and support were cherished and she's widely remembered as a thoughtful listener as well as an impactful leader.

Throughout various roles during her career, she remained foremost a teacher. Whether in a classroom setting with children, leading a staff as a principal at Fort Knox, directing the HCS district or serving on the Board of Regents for her alma mater Western Kentucky University, Gray taught others because she cared for others.

Consider this story she shared in 1999 during a time when renewal of her contract at HCS was in the headlines.

As a sixth-grader, Gray knew a boy named Doug, who was labeled a slow learner and seemingly a lost cause for teachers.

Although Doug was shunned by some of his peers and showed little interest in school himself, Gray said his struggle to learn caught her attention.

Determined to help the schoolmate, she said she put on as stern a face as an 11-year-old could muster and drilled Doug on his spelling words, determined he would make an A on his test. And he did.

From this first teaching success, Gray said she was hooked.

The experience became the inspiration for her personal motto: “Every child, no matter his socio-economic status, race or creed, can be taught and can succeed.”

The obituary written by her family did not spell out all her accomplishments or include her long list of achievements and awards. It offered instead a modest summation of a life well lived.

“Lois’ full-time profession was education but she spent her life taking care of others. She loved her family and the children of Hardin County,” the obituary stated. “In life, she accomplished each goal she set for herself while always putting other people’s needs before her own.”

The void left by Lois Gray’s passing is obvious, but she paved a clear path of excellence thanks to her caring heart.

*This editorial represents a consensus of The News-Enterprise editorial board.*