

Bob Thomas

January 13, 2017

Ms. Amber Rountree, Chairwoman, Superintendent Search Committee
Ms. Susan Horn, Superintendent Search Committee
Mr. Tony Norman, Superintendent Search Committee
Knox County Schools
P. O. Box 2188
Knoxville, TN 37901

Dear Chairwoman Rountree, Ms. Horn, Mr. Norman:

It is with sincere dedication and great enthusiasm that I submit my "Letter of Interest" expressing my desire to serve as Superintendent of the Knox County Schools. Knox County Schools has established high expectations for students and is committed to a culture of excellence for all children. If selected as superintendent, I will work diligently with the Board of Education to further improve the well-documented successes of the school system.

I have devoted my entire career to public education in Knox County and have demonstrated that I am a person of integrity, honesty and trust. I believe in leadership that is participatory, collaborative and situational. Throughout my career, I have shown that I am a good listener who is willing to consider and have compassion for others with differing views. I am passionate about the positive impact that outstanding educators create for students and I believe that if we are to further improve upon our successes, every school must have well defined achievement goals that are adhered to and continuously measured.

I believe that my past experiences have prepared me to lead our district to greater successes. While serving as an Assistant Superintendent, I have had the responsibility for the operational areas of our school district. These areas include finance, human resources, technology, maintenance and operations, child nutrition, security, facilities and construction, and transportation. Over time, I have worked collaboratively and strategically with each department head to implement efficiencies so that financial resources could be focused on teaching and learning. Prior to serving in the central office, I was a teacher, assistant principal, and principal. My school level experiences, combined with my diverse work in the central office, have made me keenly aware that successful leadership involves building meaningful relationships and holding employees accountable.

Throughout my career, I have worked effectively with both elected and appointed officials. I have established positive working relationships and I have demonstrated that I have an understanding of the challenges facing our office holders. The political environment is an integral part of the success of public education, and I value the importance of fostering constructive relationships with all stakeholders.

If selected as the Superintendent, I am prepared, committed and eager to lead our district in a direction that serves our Board of Education, our employees, our community, our families, and most of all, our students. Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to speaking with the members of the search committee about this exciting opportunity.

Sincerely,

Bob Thomas

Application for Superintendent of Knox County Schools

Please complete the entire application – even if it duplicates information found on your resume. Save the completed application to your computer using the following file name format – Last name First name Date.

Attach the completed application file, a resume and letter of interest to an email and send to superintendent.application@knoxschools.org by 4 p.m., Friday, Jan. 13, 2017.

Clear

Knox County Schools is subject to the Tennessee Open Records Act. As such, much of this application and any employment records will be available to the public upon request. Exceptions include personal information such as Social Security number, date of birth, residential address, personal phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Other exceptions may apply.

GENERAL INFORMATION (section 1 of 9)

Please complete all the required fields in this section.*

First Name* Robert Middle Name* Marion

(As it appears on your Social Security Card)

(If no middle name type "none")

Last Name* Thomas Maiden Name _____
(As it appears on your Social Security Card) (if applicable)

Name Suffix Mr. Social Security Number [REDACTED]

Preferred Name Bob When are you available to start work? Immediately

Are you currently under contract with any Tennessee district?* Yes No

If "Yes" please name district

Knox County Schools

Are you currently an employee of Knox County Schools and/or Knox County Government?* Yes No

If "Yes" what position? Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

Have you previously worked for Knox County Schools?* Yes No

If "Yes" when? _____ What position? _____

Veteran Status: US Veteran Vietnam Era Vet (8/5/64-5/7/75) I am not a Veteran.

Please list all languages, other than English, in which you are proficient:

N/A

How many total years of teaching experience do you have? 0-5 6-10 11-15 16+ Years

Do you hold a Tennessee Educator's Certificate?* Yes No

Do you hold an Educator's Certificate in another State?* Yes No

Please list the certifications that you currently hold or for which you have applied. Do not include licenses or endorsements that you think you might have in the future.

Superintendent, Professional Administrator PreK-12, Supervisor of Attendance, Admin. Supv. 7-12, Business Arithmetic 7-12,

Business English 7-12, Business Law 7-12, General Business 7-12, Salesmanship 7-12, Health Instruction 7-12

Type of Teaching License you currently hold:*

Administrative (BAL/PAL) Apprentice Apprentice Occupational Apprentice Special Group Out of State

Professional Professional Occupational Professional Special Group Transitional

Endorsement 090, 482, 094, 110, 033, 034, 035, 039, 040, 020

License Status* Active Expired Pending

State Tennessee Effective Date* 07/13/2011 Expiration Date 08/31/2021

License Number [REDACTED]

ADDRESS (section 2 of 9)

*Please complete all the required fields in this section.**

Street* [REDACTED] City* [REDACTED]

State* [REDACTED] Zip Code* [REDACTED]

Primary Phone* [REDACTED] Phone Type Home

Additional Phone [REDACTED]

Email* [REDACTED]

COLLEGE EDUCATION (section 3 of 9)

*Please complete all the required fields in this section.**

Institution* University of Tennessee - Knoxville

Did you graduate?

If yes, degree and date (MM/YYYY)* Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (06/1973)

If no, number of hours completed* _____

Major* Transportation Minor _____

Institution* University of Tennessee - Knoxville

Did you graduate?

If yes, degree and date (MM/YYYY)* Master of Science (06/1977)

If no, number of hours completed* _____

Major* School Health Minor _____

Institution* University of Tennessee - Knoxville

Did you graduate?

If yes, degree and date (MM/YYYY)* _____

If no, number of hours completed* Masters + 30 Hours

Major* Education Admin. and Supervision Minor _____

TEACHING/ADMIN EXPERIENCE (section 4 of 9)

Please complete all the required fields in this section. * Provide the details of the contract teaching and administrative positions which you have held and enter your experience records beginning with the most recent. Be sure to include your current employer, if applicable.

Full Time Part Time

If part time, please specify percentage _____

School Type: Charter School Private School Public School

School Designation: Rural Suburban Urban

School District Knoxville City Schools

School or College Rule High School

Address* Vermont Avenue City* Knoxville State* Tennessee

Zip Code * 37921 Phone (000-000-0000)* N/A

Assignment/Position Asst.Principal/Principal Principal/Supervisor Fred Bedelle

Start Date August 1982 End Date June 1985

Briefly describe your duties/accomplishments:

Increased number of students passing state proficiency test required for graduation (led all city high schools with 99% of seniors +

Reason for Leaving: Lay Off Resigned Retired Other

If "Other", please list here: Promoted to Personnel Specialist in Central Office

Full Time Part Time

If part time, please specify percentage _____

School Type: Charter School Private School Public School

School Designation: Rural Suburban Urban

School District Knoxville City Schools

School or College Bearden Junior High School & Bearden High School

Address* 8352 Kingston Pike City* Knoxville State* Tennessee

Zip Code * 37919 Phone (000-000-0000)* (865) 539-7800

Assignment/Position Teacher/Coach Principal/Supervisor Thomas Shook & William R. Turner

Start Date September 1973 End Date June 1982

Briefly describe your duties/accomplishments:

Classroom Teacher, Athletic Director, Assistant Football and Track Coach; Bearden High Teacher of the year - 1981/83 school year

Reason for Leaving: Lay Off Resigned Retired Other

If "Other", please list here: Promoted to Assistant Principal at Rule High School

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (section 5 of 9)

Please complete all the required fields in this section.* Provide your past general employment history, but not certified teaching experience. Only include work history (if any) since college graduation beginning with the most recent. Be sure to include your current employer, if applicable.

Full Time Part Time

Employer Knox County Schools

Position Assistant Superintendent - Administrative Services

Supervisor Buzz Thomas

Address 912 South Gay Street City Knoxville State TN

Zip Code* 37902 Phone (000-000-0000)* 865-594-1620

Start Date 1990 End Date _____

I am currently working in this position: Yes No

Reason for Leaving: Lay Off Resigned Retired Other

If "Other", please list here: _____

Briefly describe your duties and accomplishments:

Responsible for Finance, Human Resources, School Nutrition, Security, Transportation, Maintenance/Operations, Facilities,
Information Technology (See resume for additional information)

Full Time Part Time

Employer Knox County Schools

Position Supervisor/Specialist - Human Resources

Supervisor John Staley, Director of Personnel for Knox County Schools (Retired)

Address 7317 Elegant Dr City Knoxville State TN

Zip Code* 37918 Phone (000-000-0000)* 865-922-2559

Start Date 1985 End Date 1990

I am currently working in this position: Yes No

Reason for Leaving: Lay Off Resigned Retired Other

If "Other", please list here: promoted to Assistant Superintendent

Briefly describe your duties and accomplishments:

Responsibilities included staffing all classified employees and all secondary school teachers (See resume for additional information)

Full Time Part Time

Employer Distinguished Professionals Education Institute (DPEI)

Position Executive Director

Supervisor DPEI Board (Betty Sue Sparks - Board Chair)

Address 5300 Tazewell Pointe Way City Knoxville State TN

Zip Code* 37918 Phone (000-000-0000)* 865-687-2757

Start Date 2010 End Date _____

I am currently working in this position: Yes No

Reason for Leaving: Lay Off Resigned Retired Other

If "Other", please list here: _____

Briefly describe your duties and accomplishments:

Recruit distinguished professionals to teach in hard to staff positions; work with administrators to place teachers; perform other program administrative duties

MILITARY (section 6 of 9)

Branch of Service N/A

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Briefly describe your duties and accomplishments: _____

REFERENCES (section 7 of 9)

Please complete all the required fields in this section. Enter the information about your references in the fields below. Please do not include relatives, friends, and other personal references.*

I authorize any current or former employer, person, firm, corporation, educational or vocational institution and/or government agency to provide Knox County Schools with information they have regarding me. I hereby release and discharge those who provide information from any and all liability as a result of furnishing and receiving this information. References and personal information which become a part of this application will be subject to the Open Records Act. I understand that these references will be submitted electronically and that I must provide an email address for anyone providing a reference for me.

Name* Dr. Joseph E. Johnson Employer University of Tennessee Position/Title President Emeritus

Street Address 1 [REDACTED] Street Address 2 [REDACTED]

City [REDACTED] State TN Zip Code [REDACTED]

Phone Number (000-000-0000)* [REDACTED] Email Address* [REDACTED]

Name* Lawrence Dixson Employer Knox County Schools (retired) Position/Title Operations Foreman
Street Address 1 [REDACTED] Street Address 2 _____
City [REDACTED] State [REDACTED] Zip Code [REDACTED]
Phone Number (000-000-0000)* [REDACTED] Email Address* [REDACTED]

Name* Dr. Bill Snyder Employer University of Tennessee Position/Title Chancellor Emeritus
Street Address 1 [REDACTED] Street Address 2 _____
City [REDACTED] State [REDACTED] Zip Code [REDACTED]
Phone Number (000-000-0000)* [REDACTED] Email Address* [REDACTED]

Name* Mary Lou Kanipe Employer Retired Educator Position/Title _____
Street Address 1 [REDACTED] Street Address 2 _____
City [REDACTED] State [REDACTED] Zip Code [REDACTED]
Phone Number (000-000-0000)* [REDACTED] Email Address* [REDACTED]

ELIGIBILITY AND STATUS INFO (section 8 of 9)

Please complete all the required fields in this section. In order to be considered for employment, you must answer the following questions. If you answer "Yes" to any of the questions, please use the box provided below the question to give a detail explanation, including the date, dates of the charge, the court action and the address of the court involved.*

Are you a U.S. Citizen or otherwise legally authorized to work in the U.S.?* Yes No

Federal Immigration laws require employers to verify and attest to the employment eligibility of new employees to work in the United States. This requirement applies to all applicants. Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?* Yes No

Have you ever been dismissed from a position?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever resigned in lieu of contract non-renewal, non-extension, or termination of employment?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever been refused continuing employment?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever been investigated for misconduct related to your employment?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever been convicted, pled guilty or pled *nolo contendere* to a criminal offense, other than a minor traffic violation?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever received probation, deferred judgment or pre-trial intervention?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever been charged (even if no contest or charges dropped or pled down) with a crime?* Yes No

Details

Are you currently under investigation or been named in an indictment, accusation, or special presentment of offense, other than a minor traffic violation?* Yes No

Details

Had a report of child abuse or sexual activities involving a PreK-12 student or minor filed against you with a school district, a state or federal agency, a police agency or in court?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever had a professional certificate, credential or license (of any kind) revoked or suspended or have you been placed on probationary status for any alleged misconduct or alleged violation of professional standards or conduct?* Yes No

Details

Have you ever been denied a professional license for which you applied or granted a professional license on a conditional or probationary basis for any alleged misconduct or alleged violation of professional standards of conduct?* Yes No
Details

Have you surrendered a professional license of any kind before expiration?* Yes No
Details

Have you ever failed to complete a contract for educational services in any educational services in any educational or school related position?* Yes No
Details

CERTIFICATION OF APPLICATION *(section 9 of 9)*

At least one field is required in this section.

- I understand that all prospective applicants, as stated in Knox County Schools Board Policy G-210 are required to submit to a drug screening. This screening is required prior to employment.
- I certify that the statements given on this application are true. I authorized the investigation of all statements and the contacting of references and/or all former employers as may be necessary in making the hiring decision.
- I agree to release all investigative records to the Knox County Board of Education for examination for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of criminal violation information as required by the Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA), Section 49-5-406(a)(1).
- I understand that if reasonable accommodation is requested due to disability, I must inform Human Resources and identify any specific accommodations that I will request. Further, I will comply with Knox County Schools Procedure G-420-1.
- Knowingly falsifying information required by TCA, Section 49-5-406(a) shall be sufficient grounds for termination of employment and shall also constitute a Class A misdemeanor which must be reported to the District Attorney General for prosecution.
- In the event of employment, I understand that false or misleading information given in my application or interview(s) may result in immediate discharge.
- If my most recent employment was by contract with a Tennessee public school system and my separation was voluntary, I hereby certify that my resignation was or will be, submitted at least 30 days prior to employment with the Knox County Schools.
- I understand that this application becomes inactive after one (1) year and that this application will be discarded after one (1) year if not updated.
- I understand all job offers are contingent upon the review of references, background investigations, drug screening, fingerprint, and other relevant information.
- Finally, my application will be submitted to Knox County Schools as an application for employment. I understand and agree that my act of electronically submitting this application constitutes my electronic signature.

Robert M. Thomas

[REDACTED] | Home: [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]

Experience

- 2016-Present** *Assistant Superintendent - Administrative Services, Knox County Schools*
- Engage with community partners and develop a potential operational and funding plan for a Recovery High School
 - Provide Charter Schools oversight to ensure accountability and compliance
 - Assist with the implementation of the MUNIS Human Resources/Payroll System
 - Work with the Human Resources Department regarding challenging and time-consuming employee related issues
- 2011-Present** *Professional Educators Collaborative Conferencing Act (PECCA) Team Member*
- Serve as chair of the KCS administrative team
 - Helped develop the Board approved Memorandum of Understanding with the Knox County Education Association
- 2010-Present** *Executive Director of the Distinguished Professionals Education Institute (DPEI)*
- Recruit Distinguished Professionals (DPs) to teach specialized courses which require teachers with critical, hard to find skills for KCS and for the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
 - Meet with prospective teacher candidates for KCS and work with principals to set up interviews and secure recommendations for hiring
 - Work with the KCS Curriculum and Instruction Department regarding the approval of school requests and assignments of DP courses.
 - Perform various administrative duties associated with the program
- 2014-2016** *Assistant Superintendent - Administrative Services, Knox County Schools*
- Oversight and responsibility for Finance and Human Resources Departments
 - Facilitated the reorganization of the Finance Department
 - Directed the development and adoption of a Finance Comprehensive Plan
- 2005-2014** *Assistant Superintendent - Administrative Services, Knox County School*
- Oversight and responsibility for the following departments: Finance, Technology, Human Resources, Transportation/Zoning/Attendance, Maintenance and Operations, School Nutrition Program, Security, and Facilities and New Construction
 - Facilitated implementation of online applicant tracking system, supported implementation of online parent payment system for student meal payments, supported expansion of technical support specialists for schools
 - Directed implementation of a district-wide cafeteria Point of Sale System
 - Directed development and implementation of school level staffing model for certified and classified employees
 - Facilitated and expedited partnership agreement between Knox County Schools and the Distinguished Professionals Education Institute, which resulted in the approval of adjunct teaching licenses in critical shortage areas.
 - Facilitated implementation of online applicant tracking system, supported upgrade of payroll system, supported implementation of Parent Portal for

Robert M. Thomas

Home: [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED]

accessing student grades and attendance, supported implementation of online parent payment system for student meal payments, supported expansion of technical support specialists for schools

1990-2010 *Negotiations Team member - Knox County Schools*

- Instrumental in implementing interest-based bargaining with Knox County Education Association

1990-2005 *Assistant Superintendent - Finance and Human Resources, Knox County Schools*

- Oversight and strategic planning/budgeting of general purpose school fund, school nutrition fund, capital fund; management responsibilities including all areas of Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology
- Oversight of development of monthly financial reports for general purpose school fund, school nutrition fund and capital fund
- Initiated procedures for the analysis of district debt capacity and revenue forecasting
- Devised staffing and budgeting strategies to ensure Knox County Schools' compliance with BEP mandates; coordinated hiring over 500 teachers to lower pupil/teacher ratios
- Initiated an annual statistical comparison of financial information with TN Metropolitan School Systems and school districts adjoining KCS
- Restructured salary schedules for all categories of classified personnel and implemented new compacted and more marketplace competitive salary schedules
- Oversaw the development and implementation of a payroll system when the district assumed the responsibility for issuing paychecks in 1993
- Managed the development of the school district budget and presented it to the school board and county commission
- Led effort to provide equitable benefit offerings for classified employees
- Developed and implemented a retirement incentive program that led to a reduction of 20 central office administrative and support personnel positions

1988-1990 *Supervisor - Personnel Department, Knox County Schools*

- Responsible for all areas of staffing, evaluation, placement of middle and high school certified and classified personnel for district of 6000 plus employees
- Initiated Knox County Schools' participation in the research-based Gallup Teacher, Principal and Support Services Perceiver
- Facilitated coordination of Knox County Schools participation as a field test site for Gallup's Urban Teacher Perceiver
- Negotiated agreement and managed project with Hay Management Consultants to analyze all categories of classified employee compensation
- Implemented a substitute teacher training program
- Represented the district at unemployment hearings
- Conducted teacher and principal interviews

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Home: [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]

- 1985-1988** *Personnel Specialist - Knoxville City Schools/Knox County Schools*
- Interviewed and coordinated the hiring of educational assistants, custodial employees and food service personnel
 - Conducted teacher interviews
 - Employed certified and classified substitute teachers
- 1983-1985** *Principal - Rule High School - Knoxville City Schools*
- Formulated programs to recognize and celebrate honor roll students each grading period
 - Developed and conducted teacher in-service sessions using research from Creating Effective Schools
 - Oversaw efforts to increase the number of seniors passing the state's proficiency test required for graduation (led all city high schools with 99% of seniors passing the test in 1985)
 - Initiated strategies to increase ninth grade proficiency test scores (increase of 23.7% in mathematics and 11.2% in language arts)
 - Launched Rule High School's first computer lab and computer-based curriculum (1984)
- 1982-1983** *Assistant Principal - Rule High School, Knoxville City Schools*
- Responsible for student discipline, conducting teacher evaluations, managing physical plant
- 1974-1982** *Teacher - Bearden High School, Knoxville City Schools*
- Taught General Business, Accounting, Business Law, Business Math and Health classes
 - Supervised and managed financial activities of all athletic programs as Athletic Director
 - Assistant Coach for football and track
- 1973-1974** *Teacher - Bearden Junior High School, Knoxville City Schools*

Education

- 1983 Masters +30 hours - Education Administration & Supervision, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- 1977 MS - Education, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- 1973 BS - Business Administration, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Professional Memberships and Community Activities

- 2004-2008 Served as a member of the East Tennessee Chapter - National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame, Inc.

Robert M. Thomas

Home: [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED]

- 2002-2004 President/Vice-President, Beverly Oaks Homeowners' Association
- 1990-2014 Tennessee Association of School Business Officials
- 1990-2014 Southeastern Association of School Business Officials
- 1990-2014 American Association of School Business Officials International
- 1985-1989 Tennessee Association of School Personnel Administrators
- 1983 Phi Delta Kappa Professional Education Fraternity
- 1980 Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
- 1975 University of Tennessee Letterman's Club (Lifetime Membership)

Selected Accomplishments

- 2012-2013 Certificate of Completion awarded by the College of Business Administration - Consortium for Social Enterprise Effectiveness - University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- 2008 Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association A. F. Bridges Award- School System Administrator of the year for Athletic District 2
- 2007-2008 CORRE Team Member (Central Office Review for Results and Equity)
- 1997-2008 National Forum on Education Statistics - Local Education Agency member for the State of Tennessee
- 2004-2008 Board of Directors, East Tennessee Chapter - National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame, Inc.
- 2007 National Association of Secondary School Principals - Interactive 21st Century Principal Development Program Assessor Training
- 1984 Principal's Institute - Peabody College at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN
- 2003-2004 Mayor's Governmental Efficiency Committee - review County government and KCS to examine opportunities for operating efficiencies
- July, 2003 National Forum on Education Statistics, Task Force member for the Development of the Handbook "Facilities Information Management: A Guide for State and local School Districts"
- 1999-2000 President, Metropolitan Area School Systems- responsible for coordinating presentations and programs for monthly meetings of officials from eleven largest school districts in Tennessee
- 1997-1998 "Notes from the Field" Budget Development Booklet & Presentation for The Tennessee Executive Development Program, Tennessee School Boards Association
- 1990-1993 Earned Interview/Perceiver Specialist certification with Gallup, Inc. for the areas of Teacher, Urban Teacher, Support Services, and Principal
- July, 1985 National Association of Secondary School Principals- State of Tennessee Assessment Center Certification
- 1981-1982 Bearden High School Teacher of the Year

Robert M. Thomas

Home: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Certifications and Endorsements (State of Tennessee Professional Teaching License)

Superintendent (090)

Administrative Supervision 7-12 (110)

Prof. Admin. PreK-12 (482)

Supervisor of Attendance (094)

Business Arithmetic 7-12 (033)

Business English 7-12 (034)

Business Law 7-12 (035)

General Business 7-12 (039)

Salesmanship 7-12 (040)

Health Instruction 7-12 (020)