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May 4, 2011

Superintendent Search
School District of Osceola County, FL
817 Bill Beck Boulevard
Kissimmee, Florida 34744

Dear Madam/Sir:

Please accept this letter as my application for the position of Superintendent of Schools. I have enclosed both a functional resume and a chronological resume.

As you will see from my resume, almost my entire career has been in service for schools in Florida. I have enjoyed the years I have served my current district and I am proud of our accomplishments which have occurred under difficult circumstances caused by the economy. Osceola schools have been performing exceptionally well. It would be an honor to be your superintendent to continue the process of continuous improvement of student achievement.

Thank you for your consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Geismar, Ed.D.

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CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Graduate School	Florida Atlantic University Boca Raton, Florida Doctor of Education – 1987 Educational Leadership Educational Specialist – 1985 Administration and Supervision Master of Education – 1974 Administration and Supervision
College	Hiram College Hiram, Ohio Bachelor of Arts – Cum Laude – 1971 Major – History
High School	Brighton High School Rochester, New York

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Petty Officer
United States Coast Guard Reserve
Honorable Discharge – 1975

CERTIFICATION

Florida Professional Educator's Certificate – Expires June 30, 2014

- School Principal (All Levels)
- Social Science (Grades 6-12)

Rhode Island School Certificate – Expires August 31, 2012

- Professional Superintendent of Schools (Grades PK – 12)
- Professional Middle/Secondary School Principal

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

January 2007 to Present Superintendent of Schools
Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District

The biggest challenge in Exeter-West Greenwich has been to respond to decreasing revenues and still maintain quality programs and adequate support for students and teachers.

I have negotiated contracts with the teachers' union and the non-certified staff union. I have developed and maintained good working relationships with both unions.

I was successful in getting a bond issue approved for capital improvements to all of our facilities in 2008. This year, I created a new District Strategic Plan with all stakeholders involved. I am implementing Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) to ensure a positive and equitable approach to dealing with student behavior. I have implemented sound processes for the business aspects of our organization.

The district is committed to Race to the Top. I developed the Scope of Work for our district for Race to the Top with the full collaboration of our management team and the leadership of our unions. Our district is working in concert with other districts in Rhode Island in the implementation of the educator evaluation tools and curriculum and assessment tools. We are migrating to the common core and are part of the PARCC consortium. The district is in the process of implementing a new Student Information System which will improve our data management. We will be rolling out new technology to support instruction in 2011 – 2012.

Three years ago, under my direction, the district adopted a new math program for grades K – 6. This year we adopted new math books for grades 7 and 8 that align with the K – 6 program.. This year our high school had the greatest increase in math scores in the state, ranking 3rd out of 37 districts. We are in the process of field testing two core reading series. I engaged a consultant to gather and analyze data to ensure that I will be able to make an objective recommendation to the school board for adoption. The adoption of a new series along with the technology and professional development needed to successfully implement the program will provide our students and teachers with the materials and support they need to continue to improve student achievement.

I am the vice chairperson of the Southern Rhode Island Collaborative (SORICO) which is made up of nine districts in southern Rhode Island. The collaborative provides support to the member districts. I serve on the executive board for the Rhode Island School Superintendents Association. I was recently asked to become a member of the board for the Boy Scouts.

**November 2003 to
July 2006**

**Chief of School Operations
Charter Schools USA**

Charter Schools USA is an LLC that manages charter schools. I was responsible for school operations and performance. As Chief of School Operations, I was the equivalent of a public school district superintendent. I managed 23 schools. The school principals reported to me. I provided principals with support, direction, and monitored compliance with applicable policy and law. I worked with the school governing boards on the development of policy, processes, and provided them with the information they needed to be able to respond to governance issues.

I supervised schools in a variety of communities ranging from urban poor in Miami, FL, Opa Locka, FL, and San Antonio, TX to suburban schools in Coral Springs, FL and Aventura, FL. There were schools with themes such as the Hollywood Academy of Arts and Sciences. The schools had students representing many different ethnic groups.

I oversaw the development the implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and the FCAT state assessment. Our curriculum was tight and very specific. We provided teachers with professional development and a student information system that gave them data to monitor student progress.

I worked successfully with the various constituent groups that I served. The evidence of my success was that we had our management contracts renewed and we added schools to our portfolio.

August 1971 to October 2003

School Board of Broward County, FL

August 2001 to
October 2003

North Central Area Superintendent
School Board of Broward County, Florida

I was responsible for supervising approximately forty schools. I was also responsible for supervising the area staff which consisted of school social workers and psychologists, exceptional student education staff, school finance staff, school assignment staff for the entire district, school expulsions for the entire district, and charter school oversight staff. Broward Public Schools is the sixth largest district in the United States. The population represents the full diversity of our nation.

One of my greatest challenges was to ensure equity in all of our schools. Equity in terms of educational programs, student discipline, student services, facilities, and stakeholder participation. To those ends, I expected principals to ensure through consistent and sound supervision of instruction that teachers were teaching the state standards, that benchmark test data was reviewed, analyzed, and used to make decisions regarding which students had mastered the standards and needed enrichment activities and which students needed more time to master the standards.

I had a very effective area advisory council that met monthly with me and had broad representation from the communities I served. The advisory council provided me good information regarding the needs of each community. One result was that I formed a special task force to address facilities issues in one of the high schools in my area. The action that followed produced immediate improvements in the physical plant and the learning environment.

Two unique schools that opened under my direction were an alternative school run in partnership with Broward county Sheriff's Office for highly at risk middle school aged children and another was a small pre K – 3 primary school in a very poor part of Lauderdale, FL which was envisioned to provide a learning environment that was smaller than our regular elementary schools and provided more wrap around services for the parents many of whom were young adults in need of additional education themselves.

I led a district task force that developed a student discipline matrix which prescribed consequences for various infractions. The matrix was adopted by the school board and serves to ensure equitable enforcement of rules and equitable consequences for students who break the rules.

**July 2000 -
August 2001**

**Executive Director of Educational Programs
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

The following department directors or coordinators reported to me: Career, Technical, and Adult Education, Before and Aftercare Programs, Title 1, Magnet Programs, and School to Career. I supervised the work of these departments with schools. I was responsible for the development and implementation of School Board policy and the implementation of applicable state and federal law.

**July 1996 -
June 2000**

**Director of Secondary Education
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

The curriculum specialists for all middle and high school academic disciplines reported to me. I supervised their work with schools and provided coordination with the elementary curriculum specialists and the curriculum departments at Broward Community College. I was responsible for the development and implementation of School Board policy and the implementation of applicable state and federal law.

I oversaw the development of curriculum that was aligned to the state standards. My department provided teachers with the professional development support they needed to understand what needed to be taught and how to teach all students effectively. My department also developed assessments to monitor student progress toward mastery. Common assessments also provide the best test for program equity because regardless of ethnicity or socio-economic status, the same outcomes were expected for all students.

**October 1994 -
June 1996**

**North Area Director
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

I reported to the area superintendent. I assisted her with all aspects of area operations for the approximately twenty-five schools assigned to me. I monitored and evaluated principals. I provided support and assistance to principals as needed. I worked with leaders from the various communities and municipalities in the area.

**July 1990 –
October 1994**

**Principal, Boyd Anderson High School
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

I was asked by the Superintendent to take this assignment. I provided leadership to a comprehensive high school with 2700 students, which included the International Baccalaureate program as a magnet to attract white students to a predominately African-American student population. While I was principal at Boyd Anderson, we reformed the use of time as a resource by adopting a trimester schedule and began to develop academic pathways to provide academic focus and relevance for all students.

I developed and maintained strong relationships with elected and appointed officials, parents, and community members including religious leaders. I advocated fiercely for my students who at times I felt were discriminated against by entities outside of the school district. I was and I still am very proud of our students. We had a wonderful student body as shown by the outstanding achievements of our alumni.

I developed and implemented the first block schedule in any high school in our district. It was a trimester schedule in which students took three courses per 12 week trimester. This gave students at all levels a more manageable load. I provided intense professional development because teachers had to use time differently and teach differently under this schedule. The trimesters would allow students to focus on pathways and require more rigor in the curriculum and greater relevance.

I was well accepted by the entire community and the community knew that I was there for them. I was given the key to the city of Lauderdale Lakes, FL as a tribute to my leadership at Boyd Anderson.

While at Boyd Anderson, I was appointed by the superintendent to head a task force to examine school security and safety issues. The result was a report that showed deficiencies and made recommendations for improvement. I presented our findings and recommendations to the school board for the superintendent. The school board accepted the recommendations and approved things such as security cameras and increased school resource officers which resulted in safer campuses.

I was elected and served a term as president of the Broward Principals and Assistants Association which represented school based administrators. I also was elected president of the Broward County Athletic Association and served a one year term

**July 1989 -
June 1990**

**Secondary Director, Central Area
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

I reported to the area superintendent. I assisted him with all aspects of area operations for all secondary schools. My greatest achievement was working with the principal in the lowest achieving school which was all African-American and sat in a low socio-economic community in an old facility to improve student achievement. I helped him develop an improvement plan centered on classroom supervision. Student achievement improved that year based upon the standardized test used at that time.

**April 1987-
June 1989**

**Principal, Forest Glen Middle School
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

I was the founding principal at Forest Glen. I hired all staff, planned and organized the curriculum, accounted for the inventory of furniture, fixtures, and equipment. I worked closely with a very strong school advisory council. They were very helpful in the development of school policies and in providing input regarding our programs.

One unique thing I instituted was a critical thinking model for all classes. I engaged support from the district and provided professional development and classroom follow up. The entire staff incorporated the protocols into daily lessons.

**January 1987 -
April 1987**

**Principal on Assignment
Educational Planning Center – Bond Issue
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

I was appointed by the superintendent to a select task force to identify facility needs for a \$300 million bond issue to raise revenue to build and renovate facilities. I co-facilitated development of the plans for renovations for all middle schools and special centers. I spoke to various civic groups about the importance of the capital projects the bond issue would support. The bond issue was approved by the voters.

**July 1980 -
January 1987**

**Principal, Crystal Lake Middle School
School Board of Broward County, Florida**

I was selected to take over a school of 1500 students with many discipline and achievement problems. Crystal Lake was a school of approximately 1500 students that was 50% white and 50% African-American. There were serious deficiencies in student behavior and student achievement. Parents and the community were not happy with the quality of education at the school. I worked with the staff and the community including religious and elected officials to develop plans and programs that successfully addressed problems. We were among the first schools to provide students with computer education classes. The result was that behavior and achievement improved dramatically and so did the opinion of the community about our school.

While I was principal at Crystal Lake, I was appointed to the Florida Council on Education Management (FCEM). The FCEM was composed of school based administrators, superintendents, university professors, and business people. The FCEM was created by the Florida legislature to develop state criteria for the selection, training, and evaluation of principals. The FCEM controlled a large amount of money that it allocated to research and program development. It was a great honor to be asked to serve on the FCEM.

September 1976 - Assistant Principal, Ramblewood Middle School
June 1980 School Board of Broward County, Florida

I was given the responsibility for all day-to-day operational tasks. I was in charge of the school in the principal's absence. Ramblewood was a new school that was housed in a temporary facility for one year, on double session with another middle school for a year before moving into the permanent new building. I scheduled the school every year. The principal wanted me to be the day-to-day operational leader and I was. I instituted foreign language as part of our curriculum. We were the first middle school in the district to offer foreign language to our students. We were among the first schools to use computers to track student behavior.

I was selected by parents to be chairperson of the advisory council. That was a tribute to the fact that there were warring factions on the council and I was seen as someone who would be objective and lead them to productive outcomes.

January 1974 – Community School Director
August 1976 Crystal Lake Middle School
School Board of Broward County, Florida

I began the community school at Crystal Lake Middle School. I established educational and recreational programs for adults and children after school, at night, and during the summer. Our school was extremely successful providing excellent programs that involved thousands of people in the community, made the school a center for the community, and provided financial resources that benefitted the middle school students.

August 1971 – Social Studies Teacher
December 1973 Crystal Lake Middle School
School Board of Broward County, Florida

I was a member of a teaching team in an open middle school. Our team was composed of Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science. I established the first Student Council, developed a stock market unit as enrichment for my students, was elected faculty chairperson for one year, and

Other Achievements

- Elected President of the Broward Principals and Assistants Association
- Elected President of the Broward County Athletic Association
- Selected by the Superintendent to lead the district safety committee
- Selected by the President of the Florida Senate to serve on the Florida Council on Educational Management
- Served as a representative on the district negotiating team for collective bargaining
- Served as an adjunct professor at Nova Southeastern University
- Member of the Rhode Island School Superintendent's Association Executive Board
- Vice Chairperson of the Southern Rhode Island Collaborative
- Member Phi Delta Kappa
- Member ASCD
- Member AASA

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Employment History

January 2007 – present (EWG)	Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District West Greenwich, RI Public school district Superintendent of Schools
October 2003 – July 2006	Charter Schools USA (CSUSA) Ft. Lauderdale, FL For profit Educational Management Organization Chief of School Operations and Support
August 1971 – October 2003	School Board of Broward County, FL (SBBC) Position upon retirement - North Central Area Superintendent

Experience – Some Highlights

Teaching and Learning

- Identified and implemented a new math programs for grades K – 6 and 7 and 8 resulting in much improved math scores on the state assessment (EWG)
- Piloting two reading programs for grades K – 6 during 2010 -2011 school year; one program will be selected for adoption based upon a variety of data to be compiled by an outside consultant to ensure objectivity (EWG)
- Combining resources through Race to the Top with other districts to develop and align curriculum with the common core and PARCC assessment (EWG)
- Developed, provided professional development, and implemented curriculum, benchmark assessments, and data feedback process aligned to the Sunshine State Standards and FCAT (CSUSA) and (SBBC)
- Upgraded the kindergarten curriculum to reflect higher standards for literacy and numeracy (EWG)
- Increased Child Outreach capacity to ensure that all 3 to 5 year olds are screened and receiving services as appropriate (EWG)
- Increased the district capacity for the use of instructional technology (EWG)
- Students and schools performing well on state assessments (EWG), CSUSA), and (SBBC)

Management

- Made personnel cuts to bring staffing in line with enrollment and the budget without cutting programs for students (EWG)
- Cut 12.5% of the administrative staff and reorganized management responsibilities including some outsourcing to achieve efficiencies and maintain functionality (EWG)
- Revamped legal counsel utilization to align legal representation with legal needs (EWG)
- Negotiated increased co-share and co-pays for health insurance resulting in large surpluses to cover claims and to provide tax relief (EWG)
- Negotiated concessions two consecutive years to help the district successfully deal with the economic crisis without cutting programs for students
- Closed school that was underperforming financially and academically (CSUSA)
- Supervised and monitored the implementation of the class size amendment to ensure that all area school were in compliance (SBBC)
- Monitored school budgets to ensure that schools expended funds appropriately and stayed within their budgets (SBBC)
- Purchased and implementing a new student information system to facilitate the use of data to make decisions (EWG)
- Use data to make decisions regarding the expenditure of resources to have maximum impact on improving student achievement (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)
- Develop annual budget for the district to meet state and federal mandates and legal and contractual obligations (EWG)

Facilities

- Developed and received approval from the school board, state department of education, and the voters for a capital building project funded by a bond issue to address roofing issues, HVAC issues including a new control system to improve efficiency, and school security (EWG)
- Served as ex-officio member of the district building committee composed of citizens to oversee the capital building project to ensure that contracts are awarded properly and the work is done to standard (EWG)
- As area superintendent, established the Boyd Anderson High School facilities task force to address deficiencies that were not being attended to by the district in a timely manner (SBBC)
- As area superintendent, developed contingency plans for new schools that faced possible delays in opening (SBBC)
- Part of the planning and development of prototype designs for schools (SBBC) and (CSUSA)
- Opened several new schools serving in various positions (CSUSA) and (SBBC)

Human Capital

- Facilitated and implemented process for hiring principals, assistant principals, and district staff (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)
- Recommended personnel actions as a result of poor performance (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)
- Provided professional development aligned to curriculum, assessment, and learning objectives to improve student achievement through multiple delivery options (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)
- Working with other districts through Race to the Top to train and implement the new state Educator Evaluation Process (EWG)

School Safety

- Led the district Safety Committee and made recommendations to improve school safety (SBBC)
- Led the district committee that developed the discipline matrix to ensure equitable administration of discipline (SBBC)

Community Relations

- Work with local government officials regarding issues related to schools in the community (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)
- Work with community organizations and school affiliated organizations such as SITs, PTSA, booster clubs, technical advisory committees, community colleges and university partners, business partners, and media to receive feedback and to promote the interests of the district (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)

- Use a variety of media to promote the interests of the district (EWG), (CSUSA), and (SBBC)

Achievements

- Made budget cuts to deal with the economic crisis without cutting programs for students (EWG)
- Achieved outstanding school grade results in charter schools with fewer resources than traditional public schools while making a profit (CSUSA)
- Took on tough assignments and had a positive impact on the lives of students, employees, and the communities I served for over 32 years (SBBC)