

Cedrick Gray, Ed.D.

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Letter of Interest

Dr. Tammy Grissom, Executive Director
Tennessee School Boards Association
Attn: Fayette County Director of Schools Search
525 Brick Church Park Drive
Nashville, TN 37207

Dr. Grissom:

I am writing to express an interest in the Director of Schools for Fayette County Schools. Currently, I am serving as Principal of Lester Demonstration School (Pre-K through 8th grade) with Memphis City Schools. I have been with the Memphis City Schools since August of 1997. Prior to being a school administrator for 8 years and a lead principal of professional development for principals, I was a classroom teacher for five years.

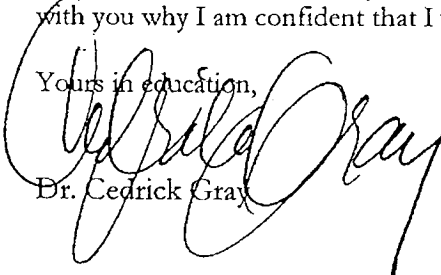
Described by colleagues and team members as visionary, inspiring, and motivational, I am a highly committed leader who believes in the capacity of every child and every adult. There is more we need to do for children and it is our responsibility to make sure every child has the educational foundation needed to pursue their dreams. I believe that in order to inspire excellence in children, we must also develop the vision in adults. I am focused and driven towards development of students and teachers in every school.

As principal, I have been able to achieve great results with a phenomenal team of educators. As an educational leader, I have also been able to systematically raise both math and reading achievement. The collaborative team approach I have used has improved the learning cultures of each school I have led, ensuring every child is met with high expectations and achieves regardless of life circumstances. As a result, our school environments have been safe, welcoming and filled with caring adults who put children first. Our school improvement efforts have revolved around professional development and highly qualified teacher initiatives with priorities on literacy and mathematics. A sharp focus on data and a supportive, collaborative approach using teams of teachers has helped to share best practices among our educators. Every school in which I had the privilege of leading received district-wide attention for our efforts and improvement from the local media for significant gains in our school.

I have a strong passion for seeing children achieve and I love working with teachers, district personnel and board members to inspire within them their belief, passion and knowledge, directing that toward real results. I have additionally been trained and endorsed by the Tennessee School Boards Association in its Prospective Superintendent Academy.

I have attached a resume for your review along with additional references. I look forward to further discussing with you why I am confident that I will be a valuable asset to Fayette County as Director of Schools.

Yours in education,


Dr. Cedrick Gray

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Personal Mission Statement: To lead with passion and inspire excellence as educational leader

EDUCATION

TENNESSEE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION SUPERINTENDENTS ACADEMY FELLOW
Superintendent Endorsement Complete, February 2009

UNION UNIVERSITY – Germantown, Tennessee
Doctor of Education Degree, August 2004

UNION UNIVERSITY – Germantown, Tennessee
Educational Specialist Degree, August 2002

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS – Memphis, Tennessee
Master of Arts in Teaching Degree, May 1999

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS – Memphis, Tennessee
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, December 1994

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

LESTER DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL PRE-K THROUGH GRADE 8 - Memphis City Schools, Memphis, TN
Principal – May 2008 – Present

- Responsible for leadership of 3 grade specific, academic programs (Early Childhood, Elem & Secondary)
- Coordinate and Lead efforts of 1000 volunteer service hours
- Establish and Facilitate College Tutoring Program within School (Peer Power)
- Created district's first Podcasting Lab – Exclusive Middle School Engineering Program

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Memphis City Schools, Memphis, TN
Principal Director – **August 2007 – May 2008

- Responsible for development and administration of professional learning experiences for 400 school leaders
- Create and monitor New Principal Induction and on-going professional growth
- Coordinate and support Mentor Principals; Assist Superintendent with district wide curriculum efforts

CRAIGMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL - Memphis City Schools, Memphis, TN
Principal – May 2005 – July 2007

- Responsible for the academic performance of 1100 students
- Nurture 12 professional learning communities among 56 middle level educators

UNION UNIVERSITY – Germantown, Tennessee
Adjunct Professor – Ed.D. Program, August 2005–Present

NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION – Columbus, OH
Leadership Institute Faculty Member – December 2007–Present

WHITE STATION MIDDLE SCHOOL – MCS, Memphis, Tennessee
Assistant Principal – August 2002–May 2005

CRUMP ELEMENTARY/DOUGLASS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS – MCS, Memphis, Tennessee
 Classroom Teacher / Grade Chairperson/School Council Chair –August 1997–June 2002

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN LEADERSHIP

NATIONAL BOARD of PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS – Accomplished Principal Standards Committee Member, Board of Directors Summer 2009

- Selected from a pool of 775 exemplary applicants to serve on the committee as part of NBPTS ground breaking national certification program for accomplished educational leaders
- Wrote standards that identify knowledge, understandings and skills required of educational leaders and establish standards that will serve as the foundation of assessment, scoring rubrics and scores to obtain National Certification in Administration

NATIONAL VISITING PANEL FOR ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SUPERINTENDENT ACADEMY Member, Winter 2009 (and on going)

- Provided mentoring, knowledge and experience regarding leadership development and capacity building information with focus on preparation for school administrators

AWARD—Man of Distinction – Divine Magazine
 Recognized for Contribution to Society, Fall 2008

PEER POWER Tutoring Program
 Facilitating Principal, Fall 2008

- Contributed the development of a in-school tutoring program involving 25 college students for 25 hours a week assisting teachers in the classroom during the regular school day
- Similar program developed for an after-school program; students scoring below proficiency in reading or math attend Tuesday and Thursday for 2 hours and Saturday for 4 hours

HANDBOOK ON MENTORING
 Contributing Editor, Spring 2008

- Contributed to the development and editing of handbook designed to assist mentor principals in the creation and sustaining of mentor relationship with beginning principals

EFFICACY INSTITUTE, INC. ORIENTATION – Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee
 Facilitator of Orientation Conference of District Initiative for Striving Schools, Fall 2007

- Directed professional learning session for over 800 teachers and 40 district level personnel in cooperation with Memphis' largest church

AWARD—Outstanding Citizen – City of Memphis & Shelby County
 Outstanding contribution to City & County, Summer 2007

AWARD—Nominated PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR – Memphis City Schools
 Youngest Principal Nominee of the District, Summer 2007

- Helped design and lead school transformation to small learning communities, forge community confidence, improve academic achievement and graduation rates

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION FOR DISTRICT ONE OF MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS – Craigmont Middle School, Memphis, Tennessee, Moderator of Conference, Fall 2006

- Assisted with District Board Commissioners in organization of community forum to address violence and parental involvement in schools

PASTORS' CONFERENCE FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING – Craigmont Middle School, Memphis, Tennessee
Facilitator of Conference Workshop, Fall 2005

- Developed effective, empowering, purposeful and meaningful sustained partnerships with community resulting in initial development of Watch D.O.G.S. and Craigmont MOMS organizations

BLUE RIBBON SUMMIT OF MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS – Memphis, Tennessee
Facilitator of Conference Workshop, Summer 2005

- Directed school leaders and teachers on strategies to use to a proactive approach to discipline without the use of corporal punishment

AWARD--TOP MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATOR – Memphis City School Trailblazers
Awarded Assistant Principal of the Year, Fall 2004

- Helped design and lead school transformation to small learning communities, forge community confidence, improve academic achievement and graduation rates

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS – Memphis, Tennessee
Facilitator Middle School Principals Workshop, Summer 2004

- Presented PowerPoint on student accountability practices
- Prepared and implemented strategies in the area of student discipline for middle grades

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Organization primarily for leaders in elementary, middle, and secondary education

NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Organization ensuring every professional educator participates in professional learning that enhances student achievement

NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION – FACULTY MEMBER FOR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Organization established to enhance leadership capacity of middle level educators

MID-SOUTH READS COALITION –MEMBER

Organization primarily for development of literacy in the Mid-South area

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS – PRESIDENT-ELECT

Organization established to enhance leadership capacity of middle level educators within TN

NATIONAL BOARD of PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS – Member, Board of Directors

- Selected from a pool of 775 exemplary applicants to serve on the committee as part of NBPTS ground breaking national certification program for accomplished educational leaders
- Wrote standards that identify knowledge, understandings and skills required of educational leaders and establish standards that will serve as the foundation of assessment, scoring rubrics and scores to obtain National Certification in Administration
- Currently serving on two committees: Education & Nomination

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FACILITATED)

- TENNESSEE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION PROSPECTIVE SUPERINTENDENTS ACADEMY
Endorsement Complete, February 2009
- SUPERINTENDENT'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEMBER, Memphis City Schools
- ADVISORY BOARD, MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM PROGRAM, University of Memphis
- MIDDLE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CONCEPT COUNCIL MEMBER, Memphis City Schools
- ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee
 - Courses Taught: EDU 715 Planning and Finance
EDU 703 Supervision and Instruction
EDU 708 Curriculum and School Improvement
- TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS BOARD MEMBER, President-Elect 2009
- NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FACULTY MEMBER
 - Courses Taught: Positive Culture/Climate
Effective Learning Communities/Teaming
Organizing Staff/Students for Effective Learning
Data – Leadership/Management/Teacher Use

**Professional Experience

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT – Oklahoma City Public Schools, Oklahoma City, OK
Regional Executive Director – July 2007 – August 2007

- Provided leadership and oversight to 8 schools within Frederick A Douglass School Community
- Served as member of superintendent's executive leadership team