

Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

MMSD Principal

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Talks a whole lot but really says very little. Was not impressed with this candidate and do not recommend his hire.

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His response around segregated gifted schools and boarding schools does not fit with our equity strategies. Appears to see achievement through the single lens of student performance on tests.

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He seems incredibly self-centered. Terrible candidate. More focused on himself and his business approach than students and teachers.

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He DOES not understand equity. His "All Lives Matter" approach is not the kind of leadership we need. We can and must tailor our approach to Black and Brown kids to close the opportunity gap.

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Dr Thomas is very outspoken.

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Dr Thomas seemed too vague with his responses. He seems to lack strategy. He doesn't have much experience working with Latino students.

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He and his wife spent three days here: that indicates he is serious about this position and learning about our community. He seems passionate, smart and thoughtful.

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I'm concerned about his ability to collaborate with stakeholders. I'm worried that he is talking about a lot of standardized curriculum and testing. We've always had teachers at the table in MMSD and teachers never really make decisions administrators do. Basically, this is more of what we've been doing in this country for the last 30 years - and we still have opportunity and achievement gaps. We need to do something different - not more drill and kill. Drill and kill doesn't equal fun. The specific teaching examples he gave are the kinds of things that autonomous teachers are supported in doing: that's not what the rest of his answers indicate he believe in. We have already had a superintendent who came in to "fix" us. We need someone who will work with us. He says what we need to do is change our structure, but the systems and his management style are very similar to our last superintendent's. I agree: we can't keep doing the same and expect different results.

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Confident, understands high level system work and politics

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Listening and learning from local community and district leaders

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This guy has a lot of leadership experience. I appreciate the detailed answers to the questions and his emphasis on high expectations. He understands organizations. He has had longevity at previous jobs, which suggests stability. He is both energetic and realistic, understands the political reality of this position. I appreciate his emphasis on teacher collaboration.

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He talks a lot. ?? I'm not sure I can identify any major drawbacks.

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He's got a lot of experience with schools and students and data.

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He's not super dynamic. I found him to be long winded, repetitive and patronizing.

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Focusing on EVERY CHILD; experience as teacher, principle, administrator

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Did not give specific ideas of BEP and plan to improve reading levels

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I really loved that he mentioned restorative justice and apology to peers and the teacher. Mr. Thomas showed strength and that he was ready to take on reforming and building MMSD.

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I appreciated Dr. Thomas' introductory remarks. He is a charming and positive individual. I like the fact that he was a high school social studies teacher and that he talked a lot about helping students have fun. Wow! He has a breadth and depth to his professional resume that is impressive. He has a very good foundation for being our school superintendent.

It was also nice to find out that he and his wife had been visiting here since Tuesday and that he was at least eight years away from retirement eligibility. I believe our district needs a commitment of five to 10 years from the new superintendent.

Dr. Thomas described his management style as using an equity lens so that every single kid is successful and we accelerate every kid. How we need to be strategic, intentional and proactive about the work we are doing. This led to his perspective on the BEP (admittedly not knowing the history of its development). I like that he believes in creating a positive climate and culture using structures & strategies to build relationships need to be intentional. He understands that it is hard to ask teachers to see if they aren't behaving and we need to address students' needs and hold them accountable.

Homelessness: He understands the federal law. We need to honor the law. He tied his answer to how we need to meet students' non-academic needs in order for them to be successful in school/academics. He talked about being attracted to all of the resources available in Madison. We need to coordinate our strategy. We need to work with schools to ensure that IEPs are developed appropriately for all stakeholder and follow the law.

He is familiar with Community Schools as implemented in Ohio and Georgia. He has a good handle on how the external resources can help address the non-academic needs of students and families. This is very good for our future expansion in MMSD.

He understands our greatest challenge is increasing academic achievement for all students (not just subgroups). We have to get kids at grade level reading proficiency by third grade. Reading at grade level by second and third grades. He understands the need for constant monitoring of data and providing support, structures and interventions. I liked that he mentioned not pitting subgroups against each other - being about "every child and every school."

He understands that our greatest strength is that we have an incredible community commitment to see all our students do better. school." He talked a lot about collaboration and believes that there should be some level of consistency and coherency in our district. I believe Dr. Thomas when he says "All means all." He is aware of and understands the need to navigate the political nature of politics which will serve him well in MMSD/Wisconsin.

Dr. Thomas is my first choice for our new superintendent. I think he has exactly the right experiences and philosophy to help our district improve outcomes for students and schools.

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He did not state specifically "how" he would work with MTI; but I like that he shared his experience working collaboratively with union membership on an 18 member committee in Ohio. I would have liked to hear him state he was "pro-union." While I do believe he sees the value of negotiated agreements and that administrators should not make arbitrary decisions affecting teachers. Although I did not hear him say he would reach-out to our MTI leadership for collaborative conversations, I would encourage the BOE to make that a part of his job description.

Charter Schools? What role do they play or what role do we want them to play? He understands the historical context of their creations but stated, "I am an advocate for traditional schools. And, I am an advocate for ensuring that every school is high quality." When we do really well with public schools we won't need charter schools for innovation."

(I wanted to hear more about public dollars are for public schools

ERO: He was not willing to say "no cops" in our schools so I think that may become a challenge for him, if hired. Some BOE members/community/students want them out and some community members/community/students want them to stay. He will need to take a stand, if hired. I am a community member that believes we need EROs in our high schools.

As a retired MMSD educator, I did not like that he talked so much about "using his business lens." I would expect him to be frugal with our budgetary process. I wanted to hear more about his budget development experience but here were not questions about our local budge. He did state that he thinks teachers are underpaid. That speaks well for future COLA increases for our employees!

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Energy, clarity, transparency, business background

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digging into the details

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Building stronger connections with the UW, Edgewood, and MATC. Emphasis on "all means all." I believe the best candidate is Dr. Gutierrez. I remain dismayed that no local candidates were interviewed, among whom were two principals and former principals of color who have dedicated their professional lives to MMSD, and are well-respected by students, families, and staff.

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Areas of concern his corporate business model view of schools and that they need to please customers - schools are not businesses; his contradictory view that schools should follow the district structural framework and yet look to charters for innovation - area of growth would be allowing public schools to innovate. Short, concise answers to questions is another area for growth, as is learning the importance of elementary and middle schools and gaining experience with them - he seems biased toward high school, but perhaps that is because that is where his experience is.

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1) Prepared for the politics of a city like Madison.

2) I liked his systems-thinking approach, and emphasis on fast-moving and frequently adjusted "pilots" before rolling out new initiatives district-wide.

3) Excellent approach to professional development -- not just a few hours of PD on a certain topic once or twice a year, but ongoing observation and coaching by teacher leaders.

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1) There is a risk in a city like Madison that staff "empowerment" may merely lead to empowerment of already entrenched biases or ways of thinking.

2) Staff empowerment or reliance on local models ("are there schools where this is already being done well") could end up overlooking evidence-based best practices from other school districts nationwide.

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NOt Sure

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Dr. Thomas concerns me in that he has taken it upon himself to "All Students Matter" the Black Excellence Strategy. I was disappointed that as an African American male he would not see the benefit in the Black Excellence Strategy which to me simply says, in addition to every student succeeding academically, there are places were Black students are marginalized most and through our plan, additional supports will be put in place so that they are able to see excellence in people who are the same color as them. And that others will promote that excellence is possible for them. For example, I attended an HBCU after 12 years of education in a majority White school as a black male. When I arrived at the Black College, I was so amazed to see so many educated, intelligent, middle class Black people who were comfortable in the own skin and making a difference in the world. Although I had prior academic preparation, I still didn't have the understanding of what was possible as a black person in America. That to me is what the Board of Education and I see in calling out Black Excellence. I believe with him, there will be misalignment of strategy and work from Day 1 with the Board of Education. I felt like he disregarded the hard-work we as a community did to be bold enough to identify what we believe is necessary.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

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Understands process and is strongly focused on the idea of all kids - some may need different resources, but the goal is improvement for all.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

This question needs clarification. I don't understand what it means - it makes no sense. Do you mean in terms of the school district? Frankly I loved how he indicated change starts with the administration. I think he will look at how to more effectively use resources there. This question doesn't really make sense.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

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Confidence

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I'd like a superintendent who is prepared. This candidate basically said he didn't no preparations other than picking a 2nd suit. To me that demonstrates he was more concerned about appearance than substance. There are so many areas that he needs growth that I can't even list them all. Dr Thomas is not a fit for our schools on so many levels. Also the news article about possible harassment is a concern. Based on his "performance" tonight I can see how his demeanor could be perceived as harassing.

Also his dismissal of Black Excellence demonstrates his lack of understanding of equity practices. I was shocked by his responses.

After seeing all 3 candidates, Dr V (the first one) seems to be the best fit for Madison.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

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Focused ideas on how to improve the district.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I like his ideas on finding out what schools are doing well and try to incorporate what that school is doing elsewhere in the district.

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He wants collaborative decision making. He expects to work positively with MTI. He has experience as a teacher and principal.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

He didn't talk much about schools, teaching, and students. He sounded like he was interviewing for a leadership position in a business. His answers were way too long. I was not struck by him being a good fit as an educational leader in a demanding city. His metaphors were strange and unnecessary (this is a marriage; rental car vs. personal car). He admitted to not really preparing for the interview day. Does he really want this position?

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Dr. Thomas seemed to be more genuine in his delivery. He spoke about all kids. I think he was correct when he spoke about relationships with students and families and engagement with the curriculum. He sounds like he asks for input and listens to ideas. I believe he was realistic with his timeline because the issues in MMSD will not be solved in a year. He obviously respects teachers and this is needed in Madison. The moral is very low right now. He is confident and tells it like it is and I think he is the best candidate. I also like that he said that there are times when students cannot be in the classroom but it is rare.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I think he needs to learn more about what charter schools take away from public schools in Wisconsin. He will also need to get to know Madison and the climate here. This is true for all the candidates though.

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Thomas stressed over and over he wants to bring all students up which is the first goal of the district - from the homeless student, to the minority student, to the disabled/IEP student (an important one for our family), to the white student, from the student getting 50% to the student getting 93%. In doing so, he'd also be addressing the achievement gap and the third goal of Black Excellence. He's obviously studied our district and our data thoroughly and sees lots of ways to improve it. He seems to have the experience to implement things and sees things from various points of view. He seems to have high expectations for students and it sounds like he will hold students accountable - including the small percentage where the first lines of interventions don't work. It sounds like he will also support the staff. Well spoken and articulate. He seems like he might be the person to help unify some of our fractured district.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

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He could articulate in detail many of his accomplishments. He seemed to have a very solid understanding of public education. He had led change before. By a wide margin the strongest of the candidates.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

curious about his willingness to use science as a basis for sound teaching practice (reading in this case). Also concerned about the investigation by the State of Georgia into his current office. I have some sense that the investigation may be politically motivated but it does include charges of discrimination.

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Dr. Thomas was charismatic.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

While Dr. Thomas, had a lot to say, very little was meaningful. His answers were not clear, convincing, concise and a few times he did not even answer the question that was being asked. Merely stating "ALL students" is not enough to convince me that he is the right fit for our school district.

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I found Dr. Thomas to be inspirational, collaborative, down to earth, and overall a very strong candidate. He was very real throughout the discussion. I like how I can feel his support for students and teachers in his communication.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I am somewhat concerned about his focus on business practices, but I do acknowledge their effectiveness when he described how he applies them to education.

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I don't like the idea of looking at schools from a business lense

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His prior experiences specifically with district structure. Also, his recognition that we need to meet the health and wellness needs of students in order for them to get to learning. Delegation of responsibilities.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

Inclusive language

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I loved what he had to say about raising the bar on all students and his passion for advanced learning for all students. He had a lot of experience and excitement. He seemed ready to tackle a complex district. I liked what he said about tackling the BEP and making it better work for the district.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

He's been working in the university system for a long time and he sounded more like a dean than an educator. I didn't get the feel that he would be committed for the long haul. At times he sounded condescending and forceful and that's not the approach I look for in a good leader.

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Dr. Thomas is clear on his messaging; he has presence; he is transparent; he's smart and has heart.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I appreciate his lens of accountability. From what I could gather, he just needs to learn more about Madison, the district, and its needs. If he can sustain his straight-forward style and transparency, my hope is that the community will respond in good faith.

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Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are his strengths as a candidate? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son sus aptitudes más sobresalientes? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias nws tej yam zoo raws li yog ib neeg tuaj sib tw ua Tus Tuam Thawj Tuav Tsev Kawm Ntawv yog dab tsi?

Empowering teachers and setting high expectations for ALL. His experience seems to be best suited for district needs!

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

MMSD Elementary teacher (15 years), former MMSD student

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are his strengths as a candidate? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son sus aptitudes más sobresalientes? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias nws tej yam zoo raws li yog ib neeg tuaj sib tw ua Tus Tuam Thawj Tuav Tsev Kawm Ntawv yog dab tsi?

1. ALL students, 2. ALL schools

Collaboration with teachers especially around curriculum—having teachers lead the discussion and lead the creation of a framework (not having a small group decide on curriculum especially when they are out of the classroom), knowledgeable, approachable and understands schools, teachers, students. Dr. Thomas seems to be ready to collaborate with all. “Relationships, clear expectations, academic engagement.” “Teachers shouldn’t be disrespected by a student.” Understands we HAVE to have clear expectations and hold kids accountable. He set high expectations.

“Transforming mindsets and recreating the organization.” As a teacher on the front lines, one who has been in the district for 15 years, I see this quote from Dr. Thomas as what we need. Every teacher that I talk to in MMSD understands that change NEEDS to happen. Mindsets do need to change, but also there is a need for recreating.

It can’t be top down—it has to be collaborative.

(These were some of my notes as he was talking)

After listening to Dr. Thomas speak, I feel motivated, optimistic and ready for change. I truly think he is the one to help us.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntiv yog dab tsi?

He was talking about only being in MMSD for 8 years.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

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Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

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I appreciated that he understands that the job is political in nature.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I have a number of concerns. First, he clearly supports charter schools and views education as a competitive field. Education is about people, children and their growth, which requires an art as much as a science. Therefore, we cannot act in competition with other institutions. Second, he does not offer specific concrete plans beyond what is offered in basic education classes. For example, when asked about SROs, it is not as simple as basic classroom management that any and all teachers know, understand and do. How would he support staff to make it so SROs would not be necessary.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

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Dr. Thomas was charismatic and seemed genuine in his responses. He was honest and open. He emphasized that ALL students would be at the forefront of every decision. He seemed to have a variety of experience in education.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

Dr. Thomas mentioned the analogy of marriage numerous times and it made me feel like he had yet to commit to our district. He seemed a bit like a politician selling himself. I would rank him second behind Dr. Gutierrez.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

██████████

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

██████████████████

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Dr. Thomas was very experienced and knowledgeable about how organizations run effectively. I believe that he has the skillset to move our district forward and harness the talent that currently exists in our district. I appreciate that he has worked in multiple districts nationwide and in various capacities. His suggestions towards empowering the staff and giving teachers a seat at the decision making table resonate well with me. He seems to have the correct attitude towards how to create positive change. I like that he has worked with community school models and with teachers' unions. In addition, his focus on non-academic learning being just as important as academic learning is vital to ensuring that all students thrive in our district. He was hands down the best candidate of the three. I would look forward to working with him as both a parent of kids in the district, as a community member and as a MMSD employee. I also believe that he would be a long term hire due to his philosophy on change taking time and he would want to see that change come to fruition.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

The only negative that I could see, is that he might create a bit of a shake up in the district. This might cause some fear and anxiety in the staff. But, as an employee, parent and community member, I think this might be a much needed response in order to succeed as a district. Holding people accountable will be a blessing..

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

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His experience with schools and school districts that were underperforming

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I was not impressed with his number of comparisons between education & businesses.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

██████████

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

██████████

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Hire him. He has clearly done the most to familiarize himself with madison. He is the first person to candidly bring up MMSD's weaknesses. He gave very clear and specific examples in his answers audience questions. He obviously brings a wealth of experience in addressing achievement gaps. For my son, I wish schools could become perfect over night, but Dr. Thomas recognition that institutional change takes time and requires a measured approach. Hire him.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

Hire him.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

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██████████████████

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He's charismatic & seems to believe in melding both creativity with universal curriculum

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

While he is clearly someone that looks back at his experience as an educator with fondness, I never really heard him explain his stance on anything clearly and directness/clearness is IMPERATIVE.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

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I thought he was great. Specific examples of his achievements, concrete ideas, and up to date on education research. My top choice

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

Worried about pending results of the investigation in Georgia

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

MMSD staff and parent

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

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Experience in looking at large systems with a lens of how to do things differently to get different outcomes. Focus on all kids and all schools (although my concern is he framed this response somewhat based on watching the comments from the previous two finalist's forums). I appreciated him speaking about collaborative leadership and empowering leaders.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

"The school house" IS NOT a business!! The references made to business models made me cringe. Charter school answer was also concerning. I worry he will look the quick fixes that won't help us build the strong sustainable systems we desperately need to have healthy schools for students, families and staff. We are at a critical point and need to retain our amazing veteran staff while also hiring passionate new teachers with a commitment to social justice and equity work.

I don't think he is the one to lead these efforts long term.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

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Dr. Thomas is not for our school district. I did not find many strengths in listening to him. What stood out was this thought that we have the potential not to need SRO's.

Teachers need to be valued and paid more

Teachers should not be disrespected by students.

That being said, he did NOT really answer questions, he is not for MMSD.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

I struggled with Dr. Thomas' "transparency"... it didn't seem all that transparent. It seemed to be spoken in code.

-He is pro-college which is a great goal to have for many students, but some students would prefer to go to a trades program or 2 year program, not Harvard. He spoke A LOT on getting students to college, and did not speak to the trades.

-He didn't really answer questions.

-He is anti-Black Excellence. I get where he is coming from, but our district and our union has committed to this work because of Madison's past, present and hope to educate ALL students about it or create a better future!

-While not answering questions, he didn't come out and say this explicitly, but he seems to be pro charter.

-it seems he does not like many things about MMSD. He is fast to name what is wrong with MMSD and what he wants to change, but does not seem to know anything about Madison to even share any good things.

-He struggled to find a strength in our school district, the other candidates had lists of things they liked.

He got hung up on the name of our community schools program, but told us not to get hung up on the name, the. Proceeded to explain what we already know, NOT how to expand or make it better.

In summation, this candidate is NOT the best for MMSD and does not even appear to like MMSD.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

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Not many strengths...

Says he's pro teacher.

Wants the potential for no STOs.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

As a bilingual educator in this district. If this man is hired. I am quitting. He does not come across to even like Madison. He did not talk about action.

He STRUGGLED to come up with positive things to say about Madison when other candidates were sharing the many reasons they would love to be apart of Madison.

Please do not hire nor endorse this candidate. I am afraid of what will happen to the district I love under his leadership.

Thank you for your time.

Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

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He seemed to have qualities and experiences that would be helpful to our district goals. He seemed to understand that mental health for kids and families needs to come first before learning can take place.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

He's close to retirement--how long will he stay?

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

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His "all lives matter" response to a black excellence initiative is unfortunate. The Board spent time with the community in developing the strategic plan and these initiatives and it felt that he was dismissive of them.

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distanced from school systems. His office is under investigation in Georgia- not a good sign!!

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Will gush in detail about Dr Thomas and send details about mixed reviews of others later this morning, but want to weigh in before deadline to say please choose to hire ("marry") Dr. Thomas! He's seems amazing!!!! The other two left me nervous and hopeless feeling. This man made me feel incredible hope and confidence. Detsils to come

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his idea to mini-pilot reading programs and look at data

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not sure. I like him.

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Dr. Thomas also knew our district well. I like that he wants to put fun back into the classroom. He sounded approachable and thorough. He would be one of the top 2 along with Dr. Gutierrez.

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Dr. Thomas described elements of his leadership style that demonstrate that he is a systems thinker. He was unifying in his speech and ideas, which is key for a leader. He has experience in the classroom and as a principal. Experience as a principal is key. He speaks about collaborative work and can speak to the structures that can be used to carry out collaborative work. He can speak specifically about a number of issues (e.g., how he would work with the union). He has experience in urban areas. To me, this is clearly the strongest candidate based on his described leadership style, specific familiarity with change processes in school districts, and experience in urban districts.

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Dr. Thomas has a great deal of experience administratively. He seems to have done research on the district initiatives, and spoke with that knowledge. He seems to be a “big picture” leader, which in my opinion, is a positive. He is engaging and seems sincere.

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Most of his experience seems to be from a high school level- as were most of his answers when talking about curriculum and engagement. He seemed to discuss many new initiatives, which concerns me- this district needs to focus on one or two major initiatives, and learn to do them well. Also, his talking points around the BEP didn't look at two huge behavior concerns of mine- students new to the system that have NOT engaged with an adult in the system, and students with serious mental health/propensity to violence issues. If a student has those issues, they need to be addressed, no matter how “fun” the lesson may be.

And as an aside, are we also going to require principals and those who plan professional development to be “fun”, too? Teachers are over stressed, and leaving the district/profession. Unless MMSD can turn this around, we are in serious, serious trouble.

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He is an engaging speaker and was a quick study of some surface level data about our district. He has some ideas and experience that could be an asset. However, he is not my choice to lead our district. He would be LAST CHOICE for me.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

Making learning more fun for students is alarming. Not everything needs to be entertaining for students. The learning pit is the pit for a reason and is not a flat line of fun. lck.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

████

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

████████████████

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He's very experienced and seems confident. His answers were clear and relevant. Seems up-to-date with best practices

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He's very experienced and that may be too much to work with. The district knows which direction it wants to go, and I think Dr. Gutierrez is going to be more open to the existing plans and vision. These 2 candidates are strong, and the difference is Dr. Thomas' experience. Don't be afraid to go with Dr. G, he is more likely to be in it for the long haul. Do be very afraid of Wyngaard, she is a terrifying option and will not work out. Thanks for all of your work on this and for the transparency.

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Our district has done a great deal of work with Black Excellence, to highlight the brilliance of our African American students. We have core values articulated in the Strategic Framework including Racial Equity and Social Justice. Dr. Thomas' mantra of All means All could stand in direct opposition to our unapologetic stance for racial equity. If we are to move forward with dismantling systems of inequity we must be clear about our priorities and continue to accelerate the learning of our black students.

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Dr. George Eric Thomas is too focused on running our school district like a business. We need an educator who can lead not a CEO of a private company.

He supports charters schools which take money away from public schools. Charters have a track record of looking good on paper but performing worse than our public schools overall. They also traditionally discriminate against students with disabilities.

Dr. Thomas is also anti-union which is not something that will be popular with our community and definitely not with teachers. We are already losing teachers at a rapid pace and for the most part we are pushing out the best and brightest who can pursue other careers.

Finally I do not want another Superintendent who is anti-teacher. There are many teachers who need to leave the profession AND teachers do not deserve the constant demoralization from their own organization.

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Finalist Dr. George Eric Thomas feedback - Comentarios sobre el finalista: Dr. George Eric Thomas - Kev tawm lus hais txog Dr. George Eric Thomas, tus neeg sib tw kawg

Name (optional) - Nombre (optativo) - Npe (tsis qhia los tau)

MMSD teacher & parent

Email (optional) - Correo electrónico (optativo) - Email (tsis qhia los tau)

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We thought that Thomas out-shined the other candidates.

Thomas gave clear examples of leadership and instructional strategies. This shows that he has experience in improving educational systems and experiences for all students.

Thomas anchored his vision to our strategic goals and in so doing provided a vision whereby all students would make progress under his leadership.

Thomas was brave in addressing Goal #3, how he broadened the goal to "every," which absolutely includes Black Excellence, but would strive for every excellence.

Thomas addressed the gaps that our community has within, and urged that we not pit people against people. In that, he seems to understand some of the complexity in our community.

Thomas provided clear examples of having taught across content areas. His examples of making learning relevant & fun aligns well with our focus on cultural relevance.

Thomas values the important role that teachers have in our society.

Thomas understands that building strong relationships within and across the system undergirds everything - and seems to have a strong understanding of how that can be achieved.

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntiv yog dab tsi?

We are hopeful that MMSD will look at all sides of the current situation involving Thomas's resignation in order to make a fair judgment regarding his MMSD candidacy. From what we observed, he seemed to be the strongest candidate/best fit of the 3.

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He said All students need to be successful not just one race. We should be a very desired school district in the city of Madison. (not one that people are leaving!)

Based on what you learned at your meeting or public forum with Dr. George Eric Thomas, what do you believe are some areas of consideration or growth? - Teniendo en cuenta lo que aprendió en la reunión o el foro público con el Dr. George Eric Thomas, ¿Cuáles cree que son algunas áreas que deba considerar o desarrollar? - Raws li qhov koj tau paub nyob rau tom nej lub rooj sib tham los yog lub rooj sib tham rau pej xeem nrog Dr. George Eric Thomas, koj ntseeg tias tej qhov yuav tau muab kev tuav xam los yog muab kev txhim kho ntxiv yog dab tsi?

After seeing his resignation from other position, not a good choice for MMSD! We don't need baggage coming into a school district that is in crisis !

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Appreciate co-creative approach to change and idea of slow role out to make sure an approach works. Appreciate references to data and systems as well as willingness to leverage community supports. He seems to have experience in turning things around.

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He can be a bit long-winded and repetitive in responses.

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