



# City of Chicago



R2022-601

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	6/22/2022
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Hadden (49)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Recognition of Chad Thomas' service principal of Sullivan High School and congratulations extended on becoming director of principal engagement of Chicago Public Schools
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	

## **HONORARY RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, After nine years of compassionate and agile leadership, Chad Thomas is stepping down as principal of Sullivan High School, the City's most diverse secondary education institution; and

**WHEREAS**, Chad Thomas is being recognized for his acceptance of a new role as the Director of Principal Engagement at Chicago Public Schools; and

**WHEREAS**, When Principal Thomas started at Sullivan High in 2013, it was on the City's short list of school closures and experienced a remarkable rebound under his tenure; and

**WHEREAS**, When first starting at Sullivan, he convened an 8-hour meeting with all the teachers and staff to hear from them directly about why they chose to be at Sullivan, which informed Sullivan's core values of Family, Integrity, Service and Tenacity; and

**WHEREAS**, After that meeting, he introduced a roadmap on how to bring new life and purpose to the school with the highest population of immigrant and refugee students through the "Sullivan example;" branding the school with the "S" logo; and

**WHEREAS**, Principal Thomas wanted to have the community feel reinvested in Sullivan High School and change the false narrative that permeated the neighborhood at the time, which meant that he had to open the doors for the community to hear the students' stories; and

**WHEREAS**, By opening the doors to the school and letting the students tell their stories, journalist Elly Fishman felt inspired to spend a year at the high school, which led to the publication of her book *Refugee High: Coming of Age in America*, which shares the stories of refugee students and the unconventional ways Principal Thomas and the rest of the Sullivan community ensure a safe learning environment for students to thrive; and

**WHEREAS**, He established the Newcomers Academy to offer comprehensive programming to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of English Language Learners and their families following an influx of refugees to Sullivan High School, which helped usher in services for marginalized students; and

**WHEREAS**, Principal Thomas reshaped student discipline through a restorative justice approach which emphasized listening to the student body, replacing the in-school suspension room with a Peace Room for students and the Sullivan community, granting them a space and chance to share their experiences; and

**WHEREAS**, During his tenure, Principal Thomas expanded the accessibility of Sullivan High School through the installation of an elevator, making Sullivan High School ADA-compliant, and oversaw a \$25 million capital improvement project, including a complete renovation of the roof, updated auditorium, and construction of four new science labs; and

**WHEREAS**, Sullivan High School continues to flourish, and has placed in the top ten of CPS for Freshman-on-Track, with 70 percent of students attending college and nearly doubling the four-year graduation rate; and

**WHEREAS**, Chad Thomas' unwavering leadership, commitment to embody Sullivan's core values daily, and ability to build community through restorative practices and strong, supportive systems for students has had an undeniably positive impact on all neighbors of the 49th Ward; now, and

**WHEREAS**, Chad Thomas will take his experience and leadership skills to his new role to listen to principals across the Chicago Public Schools Network about the needs of their schools and work directly with the Central Office to usher in resources to build stronger schools, empowering principals in the decision-making process; and

**WHEREAS**, Alderwoman Maria E. Hadden, the Sullivan community, and all neighbors in the 49<sup>th</sup> Ward will forever cherish the memories of working with Principal Thomas and are eternally grateful for his leadership transforming our community high school; and are embracing this bittersweet period of transition in our community knowing that he will now be able to extend his expertise, compassion, and experience across the entire Chicago Public Schools network; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council, assembled this twenty-second day of June, 2022, do hereby thank Chad Thomas for his service, dedication, and leadership to the Sullivan High School community and congratulate him on his new role as the Director of Principal Engagement for Chicago Public Schools; and

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Chad Thomas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hadden", written over a horizontal line.

Maria E. Hadden  
Alderwoman, 49<sup>th</sup> Ward