

Sponsor: *Katrina Alexander*
Councilwoman at Large

RESOLUTION NO. R03

**Resolution to Honor the late Dr. Walter J. Watkins for
Extraordinary Public Service to the People, and particularly
to the Children of the City of Hammond**

WHEREAS, Walter Jerome Watkins was born in East Chicago, IN on May 16, 1947, to the late Rose Miller and Emmanuelle Sims. He inherited a rich legacy of faith, family, friends, and leadership. Walter professed the hope in Christ at an early age.

WHEREAS, Walter was educated by East Chicago Public School System, where he graduated from Roosevelt High School class of 1965. After graduating he then went on to receive his BS in U.S. History from Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. In 1977, he received his Master's in Secondary Education/Reading from Indiana-Purdue at Indianapolis, IN. Wanting to continue achieving his educational goal, Walter went on to receive his Ph.D. from Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN in December 2002.

WHEREAS, Dr. Walter Watkins dedicated his life to the students of the School City of Hammond for the past 42 years. He was hired as a Reading teacher at Eggers Middle School in October of 1977. After nine years in the classroom, Dr. Watkins served as Assistant Principal of Eggers Middle School for three years. He was then promoted to serve as Associate Principal of Eggers Middle School for three years and then Principal of Eggers Middle School for five years. In July 1997, Walter moved to central administration to assume the role of Director of Secondary Curriculum & Instruction. In December 2002, Dr. Walter J. Watkins was appointed as the first African American Superintendent for the School City of Hammond. He served as the Superintendent for 16 ½ years.

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins felt that some of the most significant accomplishments that occurred during his tenure were: Implementation of a full day kindergarten district wide, implementation of the Television and Broadcast Academy at the Area Career

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Center, as well as implementation of the Hammond Academy of Performing Arts (HAPA) at Morton HS. Dr. Watkins worked collaboratively with the School Board and the Teachers' Federation to support the growth of our students. This collaborative atmosphere under his leadership was also the reason that both Referenda were passed in the fall of 2017. The Capital Referenda enabled the School City of Hammond to construct a new secondary school that will open in 2021.

WHEREAS, His civic awards include Outstanding work in Education 1988, NAACP Jule Alexander Leadership Award, PTA State and National Life, Northwest Indiana Urban Principals' Award for Dedicated Service, Honored by the Black History Committee for being the First African American Superintendent in the City of Hammond, IN, honored by the Ministerial Alliance of Hammond and Vicinity, Inc., Hammond Community Coalition Award for Outstanding Services, Woodmar Hammond Kiwanis, Habitat for Humanity, VALUES, NAACP, Phi Delta Kappa 10 year membership.

WHEREAS, the community work of which Dr. Watkins was most proud and that had the most meaning was Habitat for Humanity and VALUES Organization. Each entity involves work of a different nature, yet touches the lives of people, both young and adults in neighborhoods in Hammond. He was pleased and proud to assist families in need of outreach to achieve the dream of home ownership. He further attempted to touch the lives of students through VALUES (Voice Achievement, Life, Understanding, Educations Self-Esteem) This work underscores his reason for entering the field of education. VALUES provided support to at-risk African American males beyond the classroom walls. Identifying positive adult male role models and providing cultural, social, and educational experiences for these students enhanced the opportunity for success in the classroom and into adult life.

WHEREAS, On Monday, December 30, 2019, God came and collected his angel after his long battle with kidney disease. Dr. Watkins will be missed. Many hope that the new high school building for which he worked so hard may be named the Dr. Walter J. Watkins High School if it is the desire of the community.


THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HAMMOND, on behalf of the people of the City of Hammond that Dr. Walter J. Watkins is honored for his extraordinary public service over his long career as an educator, and that the Council expresses its sympathy to his surviving family.

ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Hammond, on the 13th day of January, 2019.

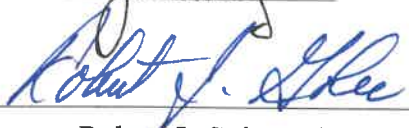
 President

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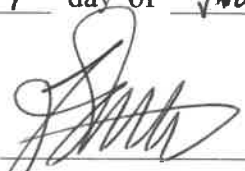
ATTEST:


Robert J. Golec, City Clerk


PRESENTED BY ME, the undersigned City Clerk of the City of Hammond, to the Mayor of said City for his approval on the 14th day of January, 2020.


Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

The foregoing Resolution No. R03 consisting of 3 pages, including this page Approved by the Mayor on the 14th day of January, 2020.


THOMAS M. McDERMOTT, JR., MAYOR
City of Hammond, Indiana

ADOPTED by the Common Council on the 13th day of January, 2020, and Approved by the Mayor on the 14th day of January, 2020.


Robert J. Golec, City Clerk