



October 27, 2022

On behalf of the Board of the Knox Education Foundation, I am pleased to announce that Michael W. Taylor has agreed to serve as our Chief Executive Officer, effective January 2, 2023.

Mr. Taylor is an East Tennessee native who grew up in Oak Ridge and is a 1995 graduate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville from which he received a BS in Business Administration. Mike joins the Knox Education Foundation team after an extensive leadership role at the Henrico Education Foundation in Richmond, Virginia where he has served as CEO since 2014. Prior to that assignment, he served for six years as Executive Director of the Mountain Education Foundation in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. Mike Taylor is both a Certified Education Foundation Leader (CEFL) and Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE), and serves on the board of the National Association of Education Foundations.

Mike is a dynamic, results oriented champion for public schools and advocate for education reform, with an emphasis on innovation, opportunity and equity, especially for students from under-resourced communities. He is an exceptional relationship builder, with a long record of forging effective partnerships with school administrators, concerned citizens, parents, business leaders and elected officials to create initiatives aimed at transforming public education.

"Knox Education Foundation has always been a strong partner to encourage innovation and improve outcomes for our students, and I look forward to working with Mr. Taylor in continuing to support the district's priorities – excellence in educational skills, great educators in every classroom, career empowerment and preparation, and success for every student." said Dr. Jon Rysewyk, Superintendent of Knox County Schools.

The KEF team would like to welcome home Mike, his wife Julie, a native of Chattanooga, and their three children: Mills, a senior at UT Knoxville and member of the Pride of the Southland Marching Band; Madeline, a senior in high school and Luke, a junior in high school.

"I am excited about working with the talented team at Knox Education Foundation (KEF) and returning to Knoxville. I have a passion for helping students reach their fullest potential and building partnerships that create impactful change. This is at the core of KEF's mission, and I look forward to partnering with the community to strengthen our public schools and ignite student learning," said Mike Taylor.

KEF Interim CEO Jerry Askew will continue to dutifully lead the organization in that capacity until Mike's arrival.

I want to thank the KEF Board of Directors and the search committee for their hard work and dedication during this leadership search process. We are all committed to building a dynamic team together and help the Knox Education Foundation be a catalyst for the transformation of public education by investing in and advocating for innovative programs, partnerships, and initiatives to achieve excellent outcomes for all students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Larsen Jay', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Larsen Jay
Chair, Knox Education Foundation Board of Directors