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**Statement by Michael Casserly
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**Reaffirming Pledge on Males of Color in the Wake of the Ferguson
And Cleveland Tragedies**

WASHINGTON -- The Council of the Great City Schools, the nation's premier coalition of large urban public school systems, stands in solidarity with President Obama and his call for action, fairness, and understanding in the wake of the recent Ferguson grand jury ruling and the Cleveland incident.

On the surface, the tragic events in Ferguson and Cleveland concerned the police and the local communities. But ultimately, these are cases about how America's institutions, including our schools, respect the rights, well-being and futures of all our young people. This broader reading of Ferguson and Cleveland extends to how our schools define and mete out justice and ensure that all students have access to the highest standards and opportunities.

Therefore, the Council and its member urban school systems recommit themselves to the pledge on males of color we took alongside the president earlier this summer to boost academic outcomes, reduce disproportionate suspensions and expulsions, and improve graduation rates for all our urban children.

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