

2016-17



COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

..... ANNUAL REPORT

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Brooklyn College CUNY Dean

Annual Report Prepared by:
Tonya Harris, Communications Manager
Henry Duvall, Director of Communications
Marilyn Gates Davis, Graphic Design Consultant
Photography by: Alex Jones and Clarence Tabb Jr.

Cover Photo: Students from Dallas Independent School District
Contents Page Photo: Student from Long Beach Unified School District
Page 4 Photo: Student from Metro Nashville Public Schools
Page 5 Photo: Student from Des Moines Public Schools
Page 7 Photo: Students from Long Beach Unified School District
Page 10 Photo: Students from Dallas Independent School District
Page 11 Photo: Students from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools
Page 24 Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Chair 2

Message from the Director 3

About the Council 5

Vision 7

Organizational Structure 9

Characteristics and Conferences 11

Annual Fall Conference 12

Legislative/Policy Conference 13

Highlights of Council Activities 15

Award Programs 19

Financial Report 21

Sponsors 22

Publications 23

Council Staff 24

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



June 30, 2017

It is my honor and privilege to offer my thoughts on my tenure as the chair of the Council of the Great City Schools for this 2016-17 annual report.

In reflecting on the 60th Anniversary of the Council, the nation and world was surprised by the election of Mr. Donald Trump as President of the United States. There were major assumptions going into the election that a Democratic president would once again reside in the White House, and with it, an opportunity to continue a collaborative working relationship at the national level.

The election of Mr. Trump, his selection of staff, cabinet posts, and policies, has made it necessary to rethink the Council's strategies going forward. To say that these are challenging times is to put it mildly.

I want to express my admiration for the Council and how it approached a complex set of circumstances by conducting a complete reassessment of the political climate and its potential impact on urban public schools. The Council's commitment to sustaining its bipartisan posture with both houses of Congress represents a focus on the big picture that is in the best interest of urban school districts.

I must admit that at times it was difficult to maintain such a focus when urban school districts were responding to a host of challenges from the Trump administration. But the actions by the Council and its members are important and we attempt to find common ground on behalf of our children.

School districts are working diligently to close the achievement gap with the help and support of the Council, and we are uniquely positioned to continue along this path—something that will not change regardless of who is in the White House.

It's been my sense that it is much easier to guide an organization during relatively stable times, but it is harder to sustain performance during uncertain times, such as the one we are now entering.

What I've learned as a member of the Council during my tenure on the board and as Chair leads me to believe that we as urban educators will meet the challenges going forward as the result of the steady resolve and conviction of the Council's leadership under Michael Casserly, along with the organization's excellent staff and members of the Board and Executive Committee. All of us understand day by day who we serve and why we do so.

Sincerely,

Felton Williams
Chair of the Board, 2016-17



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

June 30, 2017

I am pleased and proud to present this annual report to the membership on the work of the Council of the Great City Schools during the 2016-17 program year.

Once again, the Council had an extraordinary year. Singular among the organization's accomplishments this year was the work the organization did on the federal regulations to the recently-passed Every Student Succeeds Act. The Council worked closely with the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, and the Office of Management and Budget to ensure rules that closely aligned with the new law. Under the new Administration, the Council continues that work in order to guarantee that issues of equity and flexibility for urban school districts are protected.

The Council also filed an amicus brief before the U.S. Supreme Court on the widely-watched *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* case—an amicus that clearly shaped the justices' thinking on the limits of federal law in the area of special education.

The Council marked its 60th Anniversary in 2016, commemorating its founding in 1956 with a birthday celebration and the release of a history of the organization: *1956-2016: Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America's Urban Public Schools*.

The organization also released a number of new reports and tools last year. This included a ground-breaking Academic Key Performance Indicators Pilot Report, with two years of draft data on student outcome measures across member districts. A report on joint work with the nation's urban libraries was also produced. The Council also continued its work to support districts in the implementation of high academic standards, releasing a multi-faceted progress assessment tool entitled *Indicators of Success: A Guide for Assessing District-level Implementation of College- and Career-Readiness Standards*, and putting the finishing touches on a new curriculum framework to help districts design and support high-quality, standards-aligned curricula.

Moreover, the Council released two new guides for selecting instructional materials in English language arts and mathematics that are consistent with grade-level standards and ensure access to core curriculum and instructional rigor for English language learners. The group also continued

to assemble its ELL materials purchasing consortia and to develop a new video platform to provide professional development on teaching struggling readers. The Council also released a guide for the nation's schools to help prevent FGM/C.

Once again the Council published its annual *Managing for Results in the Great City Schools* report, which presented comparative trend lines on a wide array of operational and financial indicators across member districts. A new guide on *Enterprise Risk Management* was also released.

The Council continued to deploy its highly-regarded Strategic Support Teams to member districts in the areas of instruction, school leadership, bilingual education, special education, transportation, facilities, food services, and many more. The group broadened its work this year to providing technical assistance and professional development to school boards. The group also continued to provide webinars for member district staff on the latest legal issues facing urban schools.

Our annual fall conference in Miami, hosted by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, was the best gathering that the organization has ever held, and the spring legislative conference in Washington continued to keep the membership informed about key legislative issues in these very uncertain times. Smaller meetings for specific groups of district staff throughout the year continued to provide members with information and invaluable networking opportunities, and a special conference on males of color continued to move the work forward and signaled the organization's sustained focus on this priority area.

On top of all this, the Council moved its headquarters to a new and bigger space this year to accommodate the growing needs of the membership.

I thank Felton Williams, school board member in the Long Beach Unified School District, for his extraordinary leadership this year. And I thank the amazing Council staff for the dedication and expertise they put into their work on behalf of urban schools every day.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director



ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools brings together the nation's largest urban public school systems in a coalition dedicated to the improvement of education for children in the inner cities. The Council and its member school districts work to help our school-children meet the highest standards and become successful and productive members of society.

The Council keeps the nation's lawmakers, the media, and the public informed about the progress and problems in big-city schools. The organization does this through legislation, communications, research, and technical assistance.

The organization also helps to build capacity in urban education with programs to boost academic performance and narrow achievement gaps; improve professional development; and strengthen leadership, governance, and management.

The Council of the Great City Schools accomplishes its mission by connecting urban school district personnel from coast to coast who work under similar conditions. Staff with responsibilities for curricula, research and testing, finance, operations, personnel, technology, legislation, communications, and other areas confer regularly under the Council's auspices to share concerns and solutions and discuss what works in boosting achievement and managing operations.



"I don't think anybody is satisfied with where we are. But I do think that, as an organization, we've been instrumental in defining a vision for improvement, galvanizing the membership around that mission, and putting the tools in place to help them improve and then measure whether or not we have been effective."

— MICHAEL CASSERLY,
in an *Education Week*
article.

In addition, joint efforts with other national organizations, corporations, and government policymakers extend the Council's influence and effectiveness outside member school districts to the larger, interdependent world that will ultimately benefit from the contributions of today's urban students.

Since the organization's founding in 1956, geographic, ethnic, language, and cultural diversity has typified the Council's membership. That diversity propels the coalition forward to see that all citizens receive an education that will equip them with the skills and knowledge to compete successfully in the world marketplace and to enhance the quality of their lives in a society changing with phenomenal speed. The well-spring of accomplishments and innovations rising from our inner cities testifies to the resounding benefits of investment in the nation's urban centers and in their public schools.



Top photo:
U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, left, is greeted by members of the Council leadership, Chair-elect Darienne Driver and Secretary-Treasurer Larry Feldman.



Bottom photo:
Broadcast journalist Dan Rather moderates the 90-minute town hall meeting featuring surrogates from the Clinton and Trump presidential campaigns at the Council's 60th Annual Fall Conference in Miami.



VISION

Urban public schools exist to teach students to the highest standards of educational excellence. As the primary American institution responsible for weaving the strands of our society into a cohesive fabric, we — the leaders of America's Great City Schools — see a future where the nation cares for all children, expects their best, appreciates their diversity, invests in their futures, and welcomes their participation in the American dream.

The Great City Schools are places where this vision becomes tangible and those ideals are put to the test. We pledge to commit ourselves to the work of advancing empathy, equity, justice, and tolerance, and we vow to do everything we can to vigorously resist the forces of ignorance, fear, and prejudice, as we teach and guide our students. We will keep our commitments, and as we do and as society supports our endeavors, cities will become the centers of a strong and equitable nation, with urban public schools successfully teaching our children and building our communities.

"For 60 years, the Council has been working to keep urban schools vibrant as the communities they serve."

— DONNA BRAZILE

Our Mission

It is the special mission of America's urban public schools to educate the nation's most diverse student body to the highest academic standards and prepare them to contribute to our democracy and the global community.

Our Goals

- To educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards.
- To lead, govern and manage our urban public schools in ways that advance the education of our children and inspire the public's confidence.
- To build a confident, committed and supportive urban community for raising the achievement of urban public school children



Top photo:
Des Moines school board vice chair Cindy Elsbernd and Des Moines Schools Superintendent Thomas Ahart attend a session at the Annual Fall Conference.

Middle photo:
Carmen Fariña, chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, presents information on promoting equity and excellence in urban school districts at a session at the Annual Fall Conference

Bottom photo:
Arlington (Texas) Schools Superintendent Marcelo Cavazos participates in a session at the Annual Fall Conference.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

School districts located in cities with populations over 250,000 and student enrollments over 35,000 are eligible for membership in the Council of the Great City Schools. Membership is also open to those districts serving a state's largest city, depending on its urban characteristics.

The Board of Directors is composed of the superintendent and one board of education member from each member district, making the Council the only national educational organization so constituted and the only one whose purpose and membership is solely urban. The board meets twice a year to determine and adopt policies. It elects a 24-member executive committee, which exercises governing authority when the board is not in session.

The board of directors established five special task forces in 1998 and 1999 to address major issues facing the membership. These included a School Finance Task Force to explore ways to challenge urban school funding inequities around the nation and an English Language Learners and Bilingual Education Task Force to focus on issues around the education of English language learners.

A Task Force on Achievement was established to eliminate gaps in the academic achievement of students by race. A Task Force on Leadership and Governance addresses the increasing concern about issues surrounding urban school leadership and management, and a Task Force on Professional Development explores ways to give teachers and administrators the latest tools and techniques to improve student achievement.

Three subcommittees of the executive committee provide support in financial and organizational areas:

By-Laws: Defines the Council's mission, responsibilities, and composition within the framework of applicable laws and regulations.

Audit: Reviews and studies budgetary matters and ensures that revenues are properly managed.

Membership: Determines eligible cities for membership and recruits, screens, and recommends new members.

In addition to these governing bodies, a network of deans of the Great City Colleges of Education and staff liaisons from various school district departments encourage information exchange with counterparts in other cities. Common concerns in areas such as student achievement, public relations, technology, human resources, finance, research, legislation, special education, and curriculum connect urban education personnel from member cities to share the ideas and experiences of the larger group.



CHARACTERISTICS AND CONFERENCES

Total Student Enrollment	7.3 million
Hispanic	40%
African American	29%
White	20%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8%
Alaskan/Native American/Other	3%
Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility	70%
English Language Learners	17%
Students With Individualized Education Plan (IEP's)	14%
Total Number of Teachers	423,244
Student-Teacher Ratio	17:1
Number of Schools	12,117

Annual Academic, Information Technology & Research Conference
July 11-14, 2016
Palm Beach, FL

Public Relations Executives Meeting
July 15-17, 2016
Chicago, IL

Annual Fall Conference
October 19-23, 2016
Miami, FL

Chief Financial Officers Conference
November 8-11, 2016
San Antonio, TX

HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting
February 8-10, 2017
San Antonio, TX

Legislative/Policy Conference
March 11-14, 2017
Washington, DC

Chief Operating Officers Conference
April 4-7, 2017
New Orleans, LA

Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee Education Directors Meeting
May 16-20, 2017
Los Angeles, CA



ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

More than 1,000 urban school superintendents, senior administrators, board members and deans of colleges of education assembled in Miami for the Council of the Great City Schools' 60th Annual Fall Conference, October 19-23, hosted by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

The conference celebrated the Council's 60th anniversary under the banner Reinventing, Re-imagining, Reinventing Urban Education.

The 2016 presidential campaign took center stage during a 90-minute town hall meeting moderated by broadcast journalist Dan Rather. The panel featured a surrogate from the Clinton campaign, former education adviser Mildred Otero, and Trump surrogate Carl Paladino, a school board member from New York's Buffalo Public Schools. The town hall also featured a panel of two big-city school superintendents and a board member.

Urban educators heard from Eric Holder, former attorney general of the United States, who discussed the need for school districts to implement discipline without discrimination and noted that disparities in discipline between white students and students of color begin as early as pre-school.



Eric Holder

"I owe everything to the New York City school system. I would not be who I am today without Stuyvesant High School. It was great to be surrounded by great teachers and great students.

I'm living proof that public school systems in this country can work."

— ERIC HOLDER at the Council's Annual Fall Conference



Partnership launched among the Council, Khan Academy and the College Board to boost college and career readiness in big-city school districts. The conference also featured numerous breakout sessions.

LEGISLATIVE/ POLICY CONFERENCE

Big-city school educators assembled in the nation's capital March 11-14 to discuss how the Every Student Succeeds Act, which was passed by Congress in a bipartisan fashion, would impact their respective school districts.

Conferees heard from U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, who assured them that she supports public schools and stressed that parents know better than any politician or administrator the unique needs of their children.

The nation's tenth secretary of education also praised out-of-the box approaches that several urban school districts are taking to educate their students, including the Success Express program in Denver Public Schools, which provides transportation options to children in underserved areas, and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District's Project Lead theWay, which connects students with engineering businesses and organizations in the community.

Also addressing the conference was Pulitzer Prize award-winning columnist for the Washington Post Eugene Robinson. He discussed with urban educators the issue of fake news and the spread of misinformation. The veteran journalist acknowledged that there is no easy way to counter fake news but urged the country to push back against the misinformation in politics because the fight for the truth is needed in order for the country to be a strong democracy.



Eugene Robinson

"Does [fake news] matter? I think it matters a lot that there is no longer an agreed set of facts or agreed upon sequence of historical events that we refer to before we take political positions."

— EUGENE ROBINSON
at the Council's
Legislative/Policy
Conference



Betsy DeVos

The issue of protecting students' civil rights was addressed by Catherine Lhamon, chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, who acknowledged the progress made concerning student's civil rights in public schools and urged big-city school educators to continue these efforts.



Top photo:
Sal Khan, the founder and CEO of Khan Academy, left, with David Coleman, president of the College Board, and Council Executive Director Michael Casserly at the Annual Fall Conference. The trio announced a partnership among Khan Academy, the College Board and the Council to offer free, online personalized SAT preparation tools to urban school students.

Bottom photo:
Philadelphia Schools Superintendent William Hite, Cincinnati school board member Melanie Bates and Miami-Dade County Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho participate in the Council's town hall meeting at the Annual Fall Conference.



COMMUNICATIONS

The Council of the Great City Schools works to give the public and the press a balanced and accurate view of the challenges, developments, and successes of urban public schools. In 2016-17 the Council—

- Celebrated the Council’s 60th Anniversary with a series of events and interviews.
- Coordinated Education Week newspaper and video coverage of the Council’s 60th Anniversary.
- Produced a 60th Anniversary video and published a history of the organization—1956-2016: Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America’s Urban Public Schools.
- Coordinated extensive press coverage of U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos’ address at the Council’s Legislative/Policy Conference.
- Enhanced the Council’s social-media presence and redesigned website.
- Coordinated a national town hall meeting on education issues in the 2016 Presidential Campaign, moderated by noted broadcast journalist Dan Rather.
- Issued press releases on numerous Council activities, as well as statements outlining the Council’s positions on various current events and political developments.
- Fielded scores of inquiries from national and regional media outlets, such as the New York Times, Washington Post, National Public Radio, and the Associated Press.
- Managed the organization’s ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships and Shirley Schwartz Scholarships.
- Published eight issues of the Urban Educator.
- Published the organization’s Annual Report and provided each member district with an individualized report of services received in 2016-17 and a calculation of its return on investment.
- Hosted the 16th Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in Chicago.
- Participated in the joint National Associations of Black and Hispanic Journalists Conference as well as the Education Writers Association Conference.
- Managed the Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group.

LEGISLATION

In voicing its proposals and ideas to Congress and other federal policymakers, the Council helps shape legislation to strengthen the quality of schooling for the nation’s urban children. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Successfully prevented major federal regulatory changes that would have forced Great City School districts to reallocate hundreds of millions of dollars in state and local funds.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on proposed regulations for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on accountability, assessments, English language learners, and students with disabilities.
- Participated in multiple meetings with U.S. Department of Education officials to discuss priorities and operational flexibility in the implementation of ESSA.
- Offered multiple recommendations to the new Administration on the implementation of ESSA.
- Convened numerous conference calls to brief the membership on specific details of ESSA as new requirements and policies went into effect during the 2016-17 school year
- Provided ongoing fiscal guidance to member districts regarding Title I funding for the upcoming 2017-18 school year, specifically on the state set-asides affecting school district allocations.
- Acted as a resource for the membership on immigration actions taken by the new Administration, providing summaries of new federal executive orders and memoranda, and sharing information on local district responses.
- Submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in the Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District case on the expected benefits of district programs for students with disabilities.
- Hosted a series of webinars on legal issues facing urban school districts with Husch Blackwell, covering such issues as the Supreme Court, civil rights, hate speech in schools, special education, and the legal rights of immigrant students.

HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- Submitted recommendations to Congress on the reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, highlighting the need for simplification and flexibility.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on the overidentification of students for special education services and disciplinary action.
- Collected Medicaid funding and student services data from member districts, and provided fact sheets to support a Council-wide initiative to oppose massive proposed cuts to the federal Medicaid program.
- Hosted monthly conference calls with member districts and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) to resolve problems in the new E-Rate application portal.
- Convened the Annual Legislative/Policy Conference, which featured four days of briefings on ESSA, federal funding for the upcoming 2017-18 school year, education priorities of the new Administration, and immigration policy.
- Responded to scores of questions on federal legislation and served as an intermediary for the membership in resolving problems with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Fielded multiple information requests from Congress, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Federal Communications Commission, and other federal agencies.

RESEARCH

Timely data collection and analysis allow the Council to prepare comprehensive reports, predict trends, and assess the effects of various policies, reforms, and practices on student performance. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Conducted research on urban school progress on the 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 Trial Urban District Assessment of NAEP, controlling for relevant background variables.
- Conducted statistical analyses of proposed supplement/supplant regulations to ESSA to determine the effects on Council member districts.
- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the: American Educational Research Association, Partnership for Readiness for College and Careers, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, National Assessment Governing Board, National Center for Education Statistics, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Network of Education Research – Practice Partnerships, Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents, National Association of Assessment Directors, Directors of Research and Evaluation, White House Domestic Policy Council, White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans, White House My Brother’s Keeper Initiative, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Council of Chief State School Officers, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, and Educational Testing Service.
- Responded to numerous member requests for statistical information and research assistance.
- Launched the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council’s new academic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on student achievement levels, attendance, suspensions, course participation, AP attainment and graduation rates.
- Managed the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council’s operational Key Performance Indicators.
- Gathered urban school leaders from over 30 school districts to discuss initiatives for young men and boys of color, and wrote a report summarizing issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- Provided technical assistance with member districts on setting up or enhancing programs for their males of color.
- Conducted or provided assistance to numerous strategic support teams to help address issues in several school districts related to curriculum, research, English language learner instruction, supports for young men of color, and student achievement overall.
- Surveyed the member districts on their ethnic studies programs.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council’s most important priorities. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Developed and disseminated the organization’s Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum—a practical guide on what a high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum should look like.

- Disseminated and supported district use of the Council's Indicators of Success tool to assess district-level progress in implementing college- and career-readiness standards.
- Published a report with the Urban Libraries Council on joint efforts to improve literacy.
- Convened the Achievement and Professional Development Task Forces at the Annual Fall Conference and March Legislative/Policy Conference.
- Convened meetings of the organization's college- and career-readiness advisory committees.
- Collaborated with the Vermont Writing Project to offer member districts samples of student expository and argument writing.
- Partnered with the University of Chicago's Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education on a computer science toolkit for K-12 teachers and administrators, which was presented at a pre-conference session prior to the 2016 Annual Fall meeting.
- Convened the 2016 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference in Palm Beach, Florida.
- Made numerous presentations to other organizations in support of college- and career-readiness standards.
- Updated www.commoncoreworks.org to enable greater access to Council materials on standards.
- Expanded the Basal Alignment Project, Anthology Alignment Read-Aloud Project, and Text Set Project.
- Provided districts receiving Wallace Foundation Principal Supervisor Initiative (PSI) grants with technical assistance on sustaining their progress and planning next steps.
- Provided strategic support teams to member districts in the areas of instruction and special education.
- Provided districts with on-site or virtual support for their curriculum initiatives upon request.
- Connected districts with their peers to answer requests for information on a host of academic issues.
- Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners, the Schusterman Foundation, and the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools to implement an augmented balanced literacy pilot project.
- Convened a special pre-conference session in Miami on computer science programs and urban schools.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

The Task Forces on Leadership, Governance, and Management, and School Finance address the quality and tenure of leadership and management in and funding of urban schools. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Conducted a comprehensive survey of member school boards and their governance practices.
- Developed and implemented a groundbreaking new model for providing professional development to school boards to help them improve governance.
- Conducted 20 strategic support team reviews to member districts on organizational structure, staffing levels, human resources, facilities, budget and finance, transportation, and technology operations.
- Convened meetings of member district Chief Financial Officers, Human Resources Directors, Chief Operating Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chiefs of Safety & Security, Facilities Directors, Transportation Directors, Food Service Directors, Internal Auditors, Risk Managers, and Procurement Directors.
- Convened two meetings of the Leadership, Governance, and Management Task Force and the Finance Task Force.
- Published the twelfth edition of *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2016* with an expanded set of operational key performance indicators.
- Maintained an on-line database of operational and financial key performance indicators that member districts can use to compare their performance with one another.
- Provided assistance to member districts in conducting superintendent searches and vetting potential candidates.
- Processed the application for and presented the Council's Award for Excellence in Financial Management to the Fresno Unified School District.
- Managed the Council's Urban School Executive Program (C'USE) for aspiring Chief Financial Officers.
- Published a booklet on Enterprise Risk Management in the Great City Schools, and wrote white papers on Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools and Security Considerations in Today's K-12 Environment.

HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- Fielded numerous member requests for management and operational information and services.
- Posted dozens of district job announcements on the Council's job board.

BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Worked with Department of Education staff on ELL accountability guidance under ESSA.
- Conducted a survey of exit procedures and criteria in member districts to inform discussions with the Department of Education on ESSA guidance.
- Provided strategic support team reviews of ELL programming in member districts and strategic technical assistance to others.
- Launched survey and ELL data collection efforts to update the 2013 "ELLs in America's Great Cities" report.
- Monitored the number of refugees who settled in the United States and provided updates to Council member districts.
- Monitored Executive Orders and Administrative Memoranda related to immigration law and enforcement and provide updates to member districts.
- Developed a school resource to assist district and school staff in the prevention of female genital mutilation in order to support young girls who are at risk or may be survivors of this practice.
- Assembled a team of experts and district practitioners to develop criteria for selecting instructional materials in mathematics for ELLs and other students with language-related needs.
- Established a purchasing consortium to spur the development of quality instructional materials for ELLs. Secured a lead district and commitments from 15 districts to participate in the joint procurement alliance.
- Updated the criteria for the selection of instructional materials in English Language Arts for ELLs.
- Developed and field tested in seven districts a successful professional development platform for teachers working with high-need students who are below grade level in reading.
- Convened the annual meeting of the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education Directors in Los Angeles.
- Convened two meetings of the Task Force on Bilingual, Refugee and Immigrant Education.
- Shared information across the member districts on immigration issues and policies.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council works to manage its resources and ensure the integrity of its programs. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Executed the move of the Council's headquarters to new and expanded office space.
- Convened two meetings of the organization's board of directors and four meetings of its executive committee.
- Had an external audit conducted of the organization's 2015-16 spending and received unqualified audit results for FY2015-16.
- Completed an audit by the Gates Foundation and implemented recommendations for improvement.
- Managed finances and logistics for 25 Strategic Support Team trips, 7 grant projects, 10 programs, and 11 conferences and specialty meetings.
- Hosted the Annual Fall Conference in Miami, FL as well as multiple meetings and forums throughout the year.
- Maintained the online conference registration and hotel reservation system for all meetings.
- Negotiated headquarter and overflow hotel contracts for the 2019 Annual Fall Conference in Louisville, and hotel contracts for all the other peer-to-peer meetings.
- Negotiated with a new provider for staff benefits for basic life insurance and short & long term disability insurance, saving the organization \$16.5K a year in premiums.
- Continued cleanup of the organization's database. Cleaned out old files and converted to e-files.
- Updated the Personnel Policy Handbook and the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual.

AWARD PROGRAMS

GREEN-GARNER AWARD

During the annual fall conference, the Council bestows the Green-Garner Award upon a past or present member district superintendent or board of education member in recognition of exceptional contributions to urban schools and students. As the nation's highest urban education honor, the award pays tribute to the memory of Richard R. Green, former Minneapolis superintendent and New York City Public Schools chancellor, and Edward Garner, a businessman and former school board president of the Denver Public Schools.

The award, sponsored by ARAMARK Education and Scholastic, Inc., includes a \$10,000 college scholarship to be presented to a senior in the winner's school system or system from which the winner graduated.

Eric Gordon, the chief executive officer of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, was presented with the award at the 2016 Fall Conference in Miami.

Gordon took the reins of the Cleveland school district in 2011 -- at a time when the 43,000 students he served lived in neighborhoods suffering from the worst economic decline in the region since the Great Depression. He made a commitment to the children and parents in the community to "do 10 times the work in half the time and do it twice as well."



Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon gives remarks after being named the winner of the Green-Garner award.

"I, at one point, left urban education and came back. I came back because I wanted to know that when I got home at the end of the night what I had done that day really mattered."

— ERIC GORDON

As the architect of "The Plan for Transforming Cleveland's Schools," the CEO has seen graduation rates increase, more and more families involved in their children's schools, and an upturn in student enrollment for the first time in decades.



Cleveland student Brinden Harvey, center, holds his \$10,000 Green-Garner college scholarship after receiving a surprise visit at his home by Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon as his mom looks on. Harvey, a recent graduate from the Cleveland School of Science and Medicine, will attend Ohio's Baldwin Wallace University in the fall to pursue a degree in acting.

GREEN-GARNER AWARD WINNERS

1990 James Griffin, Retired Member Timothy Dyer, Former Superintendent	St. Paul School Board Phoenix Union High School District
1991 Paul Houston, Former Superintendent	Tucson Public Schools
1992 Richard Wallace Jr., Superintendent Emeritus	Pittsburgh Public Schools
1993 Constance Clayton, Superintendent	School District of Philadelphia
1994 Holmes Braddock, Board Member	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1995 Curman Gaines, Superintendent	St. Paul Public Schools
1996 James Williams, Superintendent	Dayton Public Schools
1997 Maxine Smith, Retired Board Member	Memphis City School Board
1998 Gerry House, Superintendent	Memphis City Public Schools
1999 Rod Paige, Superintendent Judy Farmer, Board Member	Houston Independent School District Minneapolis Public Schools
2000 Eric Smith, Superintendent	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
2001 Barbara Byrd-Bennett, Superintendent	Cleveland Municipal School District
2002 John Simpson, Superintendent	Norfolk Public Schools
2003 Arthur Griffin, Board Member Franklin Till, Superintendent	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Broward County Public Schools
2004 Tom Payzant, Superintendent	Boston Public Schools
2005 Anna Dodson, Board Member	Norfolk Public Schools
2006 Beverly Hall, Superintendent	Atlanta Public Schools
2007 Elizabeth Reilinger, Board Member	Boston Public Schools
2008 Pascal Forgione, Superintendent	Austin Independent School District
2009 Emmett Johnson, Board Member	Atlanta Public Schools
2010 Arlene Ackerman, Superintendent	The School District of Philadelphia
2011 Candy Olson, Board Member	Hillsborough County Public Schools
2012 Carol Johnson, Superintendent	Boston Public Schools
2013 Denise Link, Board Member	Cleveland Metropolitan School District
2014 Terry Grier, Superintendent	Houston Independent School District
2015 Bill Isler, Board Member	Pittsburgh Public Schools
2016 Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer	Cleveland Metropolitan School District

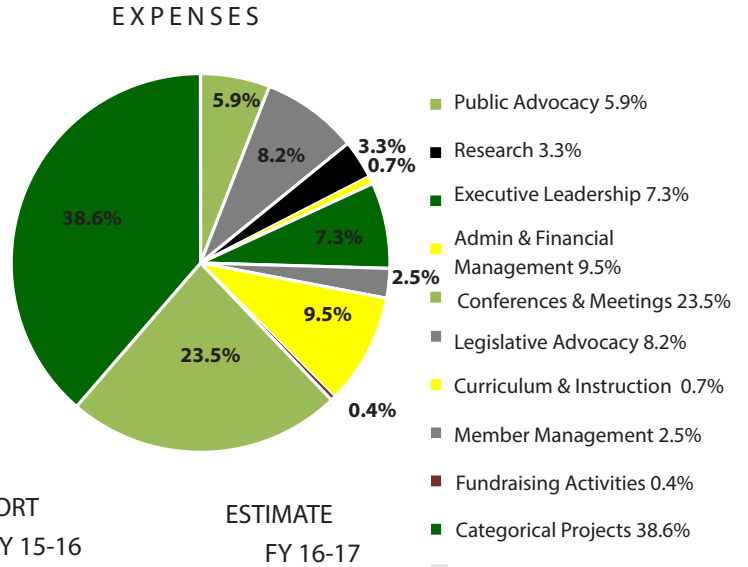
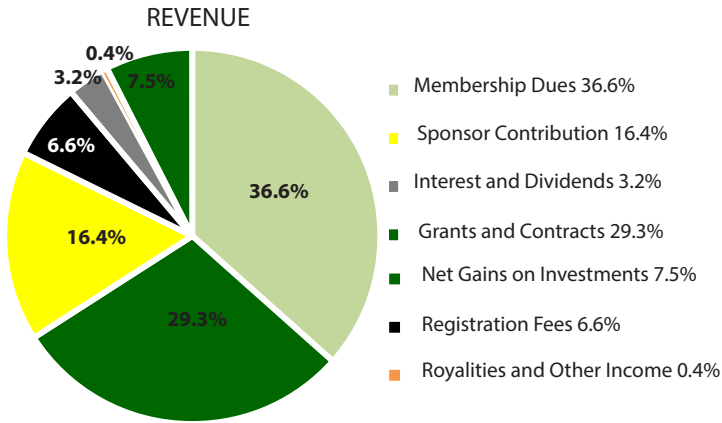
Queen Smith Award For Commitment to Urban Education

Johanna Lopez, a Spanish teacher for 17 years at Colonial High School in Florida's Orange County Public Schools in Orlando, was the recipient of the Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education. Sponsored by the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., the award is named in honor of the company's late vice president of urban programs.

Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award

The Council of the Great City Colleges of Education, an affiliate group of deans working with big-city school leaders, presented the Dr. Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award to Cleveland Metropolitan School District and Cleveland State University for the Campus International School, which is based at the university and opened in 2010. The award honors an outstanding partnership between a university and urban school system and is named in honor of the Council's director of special projects who died in March 2009.

FINANCIAL REPORT



	AUDITED REPORT FY 15-16	ESTIMATE FY 16-17
Revenue		
Membership Dues	\$2,744,256	\$2,754,518
Grants & Contracts	3,697,617	2,209,175
Sponsor Contribution	1,051,050	1,232,150
Registration Fees	380,567	496,473
Interest and Dividends	287,946	242,279
Royalties and Other Income	40,590	31,454
Net Gain on Investments	315,708	564,563
Total Revenue	\$7,886,317	\$7,530,612
Expenses		
Public Advocacy	\$474,980	\$420,292
Legislative Advocacy	519,367	584,368
Research	226,047	234,234
Curriculum & Instruction	19,310	48,202
Executive Leadership	385,691	520,102
Management Services	185,403	179,465
Admin & Financial Management	737,009	676,853
Fundraising Activities	32,160	25,345
Conferences & Meetings	1,402,207	1,666,723
Categorical Projects	2,602,378	2,743,285
Total Expenses	\$6,584,552	\$7,098,869
Change in Net Assets	\$1,301,765	\$431,743
Net Assets, Beginning	\$8,696,127	\$9,997,892
Net Assets, Ending	\$9,997,892	\$10,429,635

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2016 Chief Financial Officers Meeting
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Public Consulting Group
Source4Teachers

2017 Legislative/Policy Conference
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Discovery Education
Gaggle

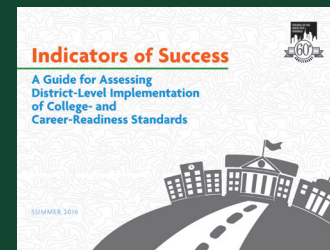
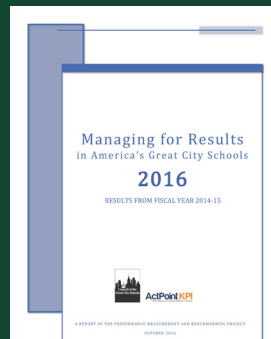
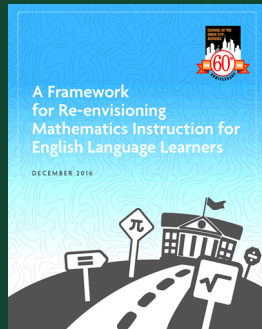
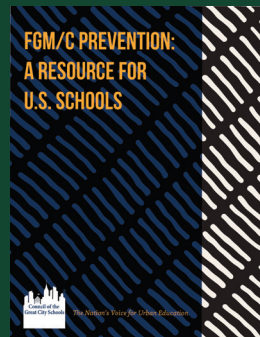
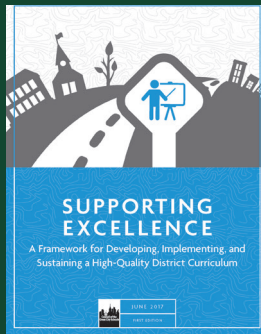
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2017 Chief Operating Officers Conference
AECOM
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Benchmark Education
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2016 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference
American Reading Company
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Dell
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Dreambox
Edmodo.com
Education Networks of America
Edupoint
Follett
Gaggle
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IBM
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PUBLICATIONS



- **Supporting Excellence, A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum - June 2017**
This publication is a framework that provides instructional leaders and staff with a core set of criteria for what a high-quality curriculum entails. This guide includes annotated samples and exemplars from districts around the country.
- **FGM/C Prevention: A Resource for U.S. Schools - June 2017**
The Council has partnered with the Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation to create this resource guide for U.S. school staff to support the prevention of female genital mutilation.
- **Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners - May 2017**
The Council's new criteria for determining whether English language arts materials are compatible with college and career standards and appropriate for English language learners.
- **A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners - December 2016**
The purpose of this document is to define a new vision for mathematics instruction that explicitly attends to the needs of ELLs, addressing the interdependence of language and mathematics.
- **Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools - October 2016**
The Council's annual report on more than 500 Key Performance Indicators of operational performance in the nation's urban schools.
- **Souvenir Journal, Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America's Urban Public Schools - October 2016**
This Souvenir Journal commemorates the 60th anniversary of the Council of the Great City Schools, chronicling the growth of the Council through its 60-year history.
- **Indicators of Success, A Guide for Assessing District Level Implementation of College and Career-Readiness Standards - Spring 2016**
A set of indicators districts might use to track their progress on implementation of college- and career-readiness standards.

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Amanda Rose Corcoran, Special Projects Manager
Michell Yorkman, Special Projects Manager

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1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 1100N
Washington, DC 20004
tel: 202-393-2427 fax: 202-393-2400