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Deborah Shanley
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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message from the Chair</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message from the Director</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Council</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Structure</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics and Conferences</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fall Conference</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative/Policy Conference</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlights of Council Activities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Award Programs</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Report</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsors</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Staff</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
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
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 schoolchildren 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.
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.
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 concerns 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 of the Great City Schools

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

Conferences

- 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
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 Reinvigorating, Reimagining, 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.

Also addressing the conference was political commentator Donna Brazile. She emphasized the need for educators to help student.

“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
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 the Way, 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.

“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

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.
• 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.
• 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.
HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

• 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.
• 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.
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 ARA-MARK 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.”

“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.
1990  James Griffin, Retired Member  
       Timothy Dyer, Former Superintendent  
1991  Paul Houston, Former Superintendent  
1992  Richard Wallace Jr., Superintendent Emeritus  
1993  Constance Clayton, Superintendent  
1994  Holmes Braddock, Board Member  
1995  Curman Gaines, Superintendent  
1996  James Williams, Superintendent  
1997  Maxine Smith, Retired Board Member  
1998  Gerry House, Superintendent  
1999  Rod Paige, Superintendent  
       Judy Farmer, Board Member  
2000  Eric Smith, Superintendent  
2001  Barbara Byrd-Bennett, Superintendent  
2002  John Simpson, Superintendent  
2003  Arthur Griffin, Board Member  
       Franklin Till, Superintendent  
2004  Tom Payzant, Superintendent  
2005  Anna Dodson, Board Member  
2006  Beverly Hall, Superintendent  
2007  Elizabeth Reilinger, Board Member  
2008  Pascal Forgione, Superintendent  
2009  Emmett Johnson, Board Member  
2010  Arlene Ackerman, Superintendent  
2011  Candy Olson, Board Member  
2012  Carol Johnson, Superintendent  
2013  Denise Link, Board Member  
2014  Terry Grier, Superintendent  
2015  Bill Isler, Board Member  
2016  Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer

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.
## Revenues

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<th>Component</th>
<th>FY 15-16 (USD)</th>
<th>FY 16-17 (USD)</th>
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<td>Membership Dues</td>
<td>$2,744,256</td>
<td>$2,754,518</td>
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<td>Grants &amp; Contracts</td>
<td>$3,697,617</td>
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<td>Sponsor Contribution</td>
<td>$1,051,050</td>
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<td>Registration Fees</td>
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<td>Interest and Dividends</td>
<td>$287,946</td>
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<td>Royalties and Other Income</td>
<td>$40,590</td>
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<td>Net Gain on Investments</td>
<td>$315,708</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
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## Expenses

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<td>Public Advocacy</td>
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<td>Legislative Advocacy</td>
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<td>Curriculum &amp; Instruction</td>
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<td>Management Services</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,584,552</strong></td>
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## Change in Net Assets

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<td>Change in Net Assets</td>
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<td>Net Assets, Ending</td>
<td>$9,997,892</td>
<td>$10,429,635</td>
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- IBM
- K12 Insight
- McGraw Hill Education
- PCG Education
- Pearson
- Reading Plus
- Scholastic
- Schoolwires
- Texas Instruments
- Waterford Institute
- Wilson Language Training

**2016 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference**

- American Reading Company
- Audio Enhancement
- Blackboard
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- Citelighter
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- Infor Public Sector

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- Panorama
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- Performance Matters
- Reading Plus
- Redbird Advanced Learning
- SAP
- Sunsys
- Scholastic
- SchoolCity
- SchoolMessenger
- Schoolology
- Solution Tree
- Texas Instruments
- Think Through Math
- truenorthLogic
- Vantage Learning
- Waterford Institute
- Workday
- Worldgate

**2016 Public Relations Executives Meeting**

- Blackboard
- Discovery Education
- Education Post
- Gaggle
- Peachjar
- SchoolMessenger

**2016-2017 Executive Committee Meeting**

- Curriculum Associates
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- McGraw Hill Education

**2016 Annual Fall Conference**

- ACT
- American Reading Company
- ARAMARK Education
- Blackboard
- Benchmark Education
- Catapult Learning
- Cornerstone OnDemand
- Curriculum Associates
- Discovery Education
- Dreambox
- Edison Learning
- Education Elements
- Frontline
- Goalbook
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- Imagine Learning
- its Learning
- Kelly Educational Staffing

**2016 Chief Financial Officers Meeting**

- Allovue
- American Express
- Aon Hewitt
- ARAMARK Education
- AXA
- ClassWallet
- E&I Cooperative Services
- Exigis
- Gallagher Benefit Services
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- in2vate
- Infor Public Sector
- Kelly Educational Staffing
- Opterra Energy Services
- Plante Moran
- SAP
- U.S. Communities
- Government Purchasing
- Alliance
- Workday

**2016 HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting**

- Cornerstone OnDemand
- Frontline
- Kelly Educational Staffing
- Public Consulting Group
- Source4Teachers

**2017 Legislative/Policy Conference**

- AXA
- Curriculum Associates
- Discovery Education
- Gaggle

**2017 Chief Operating Officers Conference**

- AECOM
- ALC
- American Traffic Solutions
- ARAMARK Education
- BusBulletin
- The Center for Green Schools
- Cooperative Strategies
- CPI
- CrisisGo
- David M Shapiro Disaster Consultants
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- Opterra Energy Services
- Public Consulting Group
- Raptor
- SchoolDude.com
- Seon
- Sodexo
- Thomas Built Buses
- transfinder
- Zonar

**2017 Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee Education Directors Meeting**

- Benchmark Education
- Curriculum Associates
- Ellevation
- Imagine Learning
- McGraw Hill Education
- Pearson
- Public Consulting Group
- Teacher Created Materials
- Ventris Learning

**2017 Shirley Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award**

- Jewish Community Board of Akron, OH
- Barbara Reed
- Teri Trinidad
• 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.

  A set of indicators districts might use to track their progress on implementation of college- and career-readiness standards.
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Alisa Adams, Finance Manager
Terry Tabor, Conference Manager
Angel Gooch, Administrative & Conference Specialist
Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant

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Tonya Harris, Communications Manager
Darrell Robinson, Communications Specialist

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Julie Wright Halbert, Legislative Counsel
David Lai, Special Projects Manager

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Robert Carlson, Director of Management Services

RESEARCH
Ray Hart, Director of Research
Moses Palacios, Legislative and Research Manager
Renata Uzzell, Research Manager
Ashley Ison, Research and ELL Policy Specialist

SPECIAL PROJECTS
Amanda Rose Corcoran, Special Projects Manager
Michell Yorkman, Special Projects Manager
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<th>School District</th>
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1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 1100N
Washington, DC 20004
tel: 202-393-2427 fax: 202-393-2400