



Council of the Great City Schools  
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## **Urban Schools Advance Business Practices, Performance to New Heights**

### *New Management System Helps Save Dollars and Improves Efficiencies*

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19 – Urban public school districts have pioneered and advanced a data-driven performance management system that helps save dollars and improve business efficiencies, especially beneficial during the nation's economic uncertainties.

A new report -- [\*Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools 2011\*](#)--by the Council of the Great City Schools shows how the business and finance sides of urban schools can now access an online system to give non-instructional executives immediate strategic performance data to improve operations.

The new Performance Management System (PMS), as it's called, is an outgrowth of the Council's Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project, launched in 2004 that pioneered the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) to gauge financial, information technology, business services and human resource operations in big-city school districts.

"With its online data dashboard, the Performance Management System helps school executives focus on needed areas of improvement; connects them to peers who are performing well; and provides a business-modeling tool for planning and validating targets that is saving millions of dollars," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly.

The 2011 edition of the *Managing for Results* report series, a compilation of key performance indicators based on data in business services, finances and technology, also explains the "value-add" benefit in utilizing the key performance indicators. "Benchmarking or comparing data from city-to-city pays special dividends," says the report.

A number of urban school districts, including Albuquerque, Boston, Chicago and Florida's Orange County in Orlando, have tapped into the key performance indicators and have saved dollars and improved business and operational efficiencies as a result.

The Cincinnati Public Schools in Ohio, for example, took advantage of the KPIs to streamline staffing and supply practices in food and custodial services, resulting in the district saving between \$10 million and \$12 million a year.

The urban school performance-management system has also been recently evaluated independently by the American Institutes for Research and results show substantial use of the Council's system and numerous examples of urban school savings and improvements.

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