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Council of the Great City Schools  
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## **Urban School Research to Get Boost From Federal Task Force**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 18 – A federal task force is being launched today to stimulate educational research to address priorities facing the nation’s urban school districts.

The Urban Education Research Task Force has been established by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to advise IES on issues affecting urban education. “The challenges faced by large urban districts need to be addressed by the most thoughtful and innovative researchers and educators in our country,” says Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst, director of IES.

The task force is composed of senior scholars and urban school leaders, and is chaired by Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of the nation’s largest urban public school districts.

In shaping an urban research agenda, the Council has turned to IES to support research aimed at addressing broader, more systemic, strategic questions about the reform and improvement of urban schools. “We think this new task force will fill a critical void in educational research and will help inform our efforts at improvement and reform,” says Casserly.

The task force is charged with recommending new avenues of research to address current gaps in knowledge, helping IES design and implement projects, and identifying and supporting opportunities for collaboration between researchers and urban educators, as well as finding new ways to advance the use of empirical evidence in urban school reform efforts.

Members of the Urban Education Research Task Force are listed on the next page.

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**Urban Education Research Task Force**  
**Institute of Education Sciences**

Dr. Michael Casserly (Chair), Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools

Dr. Katherine Blasik, Associate Superintendent, Broward County Schools, Fort  
Lauderdale, Fla.

Dr. Geoffrey Borman, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Dr. Carl Cohn, Superintendent, San Diego Unified School District

Dr. Ronald Ferguson, Lecturer in Public Policy, Malcolm Weiner Center for Social  
Policy, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Dr. Pascal D. Forgione Jr., Superintendent, Austin Independent School District

Dr. Russell Gersten, Executive Director, Instructional Research Group

Dr. Dan Goldhaber, Research Associate Professor, University of Washington

Dr. Beverly L. Hall, Superintendent, Atlanta Public Schools

Dr. David Heistad, Executive Director, Research Evaluation, Minneapolis Public Schools

Dr. Caroline Hoxby, Associate Professor, Harvard University

Dr. Valerie E. Lee, Professor of Education, University of Michigan

Mr. Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Education, Rhode Island Department of  
Education

Dr. Jason C. Snipes, Director of Research, Council of the Great City Schools

Dr. Joseph Torgesen, W. Russell and Eugenia Morcom Professor, Florida State  
University

**Ex Officio Members**

Dr. Edward Kame'enui, Commissioner, NCSER, Institute of Education Sciences, DoED

Dr. Lynn Okagaki, Commissioner, NCER, Institute of Education Sciences, DoED

Dr. Grover Whitehurst, Director, Institute of Education Sciences, DoED