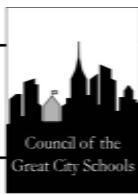


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Third Round of Senior Urban Education Research Fellowships Announced *Latest awards focus on closing the achievement gap in Urban School Districts*

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31 – The Council of the Great City Schools has selected three distinguished education researchers to pursue rigorous, policy-relevant research projects in collaboration with big-city school districts.

The three senior researchers selected in the third round of the Council’s Senior Urban Education Research Fellowship (SUERF) program will receive funding for projects beginning this summer and fall. They are:

- Dr. Martha Abele Mac Iver, Johns Hopkins University, *Identifying the Early Warning Signals of Dropout Outcomes in the Baltimore City Public Schools;*
- Dr. Geoffery D. Borman, University of Wisconsin, *An Evaluation of Professional Learning Communities in St. Paul Public Schools, and Implementation and Evaluation of a School-Based Intervention for Addressing “Stereotype Threat;” and*
- Dr. Nonie Lesaux, Harvard University, *Classroom Talk in Urban Middle Schools: A Study of the ALIAS Program in the San Diego Unified School District.*

Two of the studies will evaluate programs aimed at narrowing achievement gaps and improving student learning for underserved students in urban districts. Dr. Lesaux will focus on effective instruction in urban middle schools with high numbers of English language learners by evaluating the use of the “Academic Language Instruction for All Students” program model to improve the quality of classroom talk. Dr. Borman’s project will analyze the teacher and student outcomes of participation in Professional Learning Communities in St. Paul Public Schools. In addition, Dr. Borman will implement and evaluate an affirmation writing intervention designed to narrow existing achievement gaps in the district by addressing “stereotype threat” among minority students.

The third project, conducted by Dr. Mac Iver, will enhance the SUERF program’s roster of student tracking studies by exploring the causes of student dropout in Baltimore City Public Schools, as well as the school and teacher practices that can help to reduce the incidence of ninth-grade failure in this and other urban districts.

The U.S. Department of Education awarded the Council, a coalition of the nation’s large urban public school systems, more than \$2.5 million in September of 2006 to establish the SUERF program. The program aims to facilitate meaningful, on-going partnerships between senior researchers and urban school districts and to produce a set of high quality studies yielding reliable guidance regarding the challenges and decisions urban school districts face in education reform.

This is the third round of fellowship grants, awarded annually to three senior education researchers. Six other SUERF fellowship projects from two previous rounds of awards are currently under way.

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