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**Statement by Michael Casserly  
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**On the Supreme Court Decision in the Seattle and Louisville Cases**

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest city school districts—including Louisville and Seattle, denounces today's U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking down student assignment plans in Louisville and Seattle designed to promote racial diversity in their public schools.

Today's troubling decision will make it harder for these and other cities to maintain an integrated student body, prevent racial resegregation, improve academic performance, and build a more equitable and competitive America. The ruling now forbids school systems across the nation from using the same strategies that the federal courts once ordered them to implement.

The Council is heartened that a majority of the Court reaffirms that there is a compelling interest in achieving diversity in public school classrooms, and that race-conscious strategies can be consistent with the Constitution. As a practical matter, however, the Court has left school districts across the land with few viable alternatives for using race in pursuit of that interest. School districts now have even fewer options to achieve the racial diversity that was possible before the decision.

Therefore, the Council decries the court's ruling in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District* and *Crystal D. Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education* as a deliberate and pronounced step backwards in the nation's long march toward racial equality. And the Council views the Bush Administration's stance in promoting this outcome as deplorable.

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