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Urban Educators To Talk Legislation

Reauthorization of the *No Child Left Behind* law and the development and implementation of national education standards will be major topics to be discussed at the Council of the Great City Schools' Annual Legislative /Policy Conference, March 20-23, in Washington.

Urban school leaders from around the nation will converge at the capital city's Mayflower Renaissance Hotel to focus on federal legislation and national policy that also includes the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and Fiscal Year 2011 budget and appropriations.

Conference highlights on page 9. To register, access www.cgcs.org.

Urban Schools Rank Among the Best In *U.S. News & World Report*

Eight schools in urban districts represented by the Council of the Great City Schools rank in the top 25 of 100 of the leading public high schools in the nation, the *Urban Educator* found in a review of the recent *U.S. News & World Report's* third annual ranking of "America's Best High Schools."

In December, the newsmagazine released its listing of top-performing high schools for 2010 after analyzing 21,786 public high schools in 48 states and the District of Columbia. Some 34 schools in 19 Council school districts ranked in the top 100, earning Gold Medal status.

The highest ranking big-city school is the School for the Talented and Gifted in the Dallas Independent School District - the fifth best among the magazine's top 100.

Other urban schools in the Council that ranked in the top 25 of the 100 Gold Medal Schools are:

- School of Science and Engineering Magnet in Dallas, No. 8;
- Academic Magnet High School in North Charleston, S.C., No. 12;
- Design and Architecture Senior High School in Miami, No. 15;
- Stanton College Preparatory School in Jacksonville, Fla., No. 17
- The Early College at Guilford in Greensboro, N.C., No. 18;

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Tracking the Use of Stimulus Funds



PORTLAND, Ore.—How are urban school systems using their federal stimulus dollars to meet the needs of their districts? That was the focus of a discussion at the recent Annual Fall Conference here of the Council of the Great City Schools.

Three urban school superintendents detailed the initiatives and programs they are implementing using funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Carol Comeau, the superintendent of Alaska's Anchorage School District, said her district is using federal funds to implement a number of innovation projects "we wanted to do for a long period of time, but that we've never had the funding to do."

In an effort to prepare students for postsecondary education, training and careers,

Stimulus Funds continued on page 3

Salt Lake City History Teacher Wins Top National Award

Tim Bailey is a history teacher at Escalante Elementary in Salt Lake City who has written three American history workbooks, serves as a teacher mentor at the University of Utah, and has won several awards, including being named a Fulbright Scholar in 2003.

The fifth-grade history teacher recently received another accolade: the 2009 Preserve America National History Teacher of the Year Award.

The award is sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History; Preserve America, a federal initiative that encourages community efforts to preserve the nation's cultural heritage; and HISTORY, which operates the History channel.

The National History Teacher award program is an effort to promote the study and love of American history. Winners are selected in 50 states, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. territories and then a national award winner is chosen by a panel of history scholars. The national winner receives \$10,000, while each state honoree receives \$1,000.

Bailey, who began teaching in 1989, was recently honored for being named



U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, right, congratulates National History Teacher winner Tim Bailey, left, as two of Bailey's former students look on. Photo Credit: U.S. Department of Education

History Teacher of the Year at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., attended by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, who discussed the importance of American history education. "When students have a real grasp of local, national and world history, they get a sense of place,

and they realize their power," said Duncan.

The ceremony also featured tributes from two of Bailey's former students. "I love Mr. Bailey's teaching style, because he often told us to act it out," said student Araksan Yussuf. "It was like story time."



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A newsletter published by the Council of the Great City Schools, representing 66 of the nation's largest urban public school districts.

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Chicago Leads 2009 Class Of National Board Certified Teachers

Chicago Public Schools led all school districts in the nation in the number of teachers earning National Board Certification in 2009, according to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

Nearly 8,900 teachers across the country became National Board certified in the

U.S. News continued from page 1

- The High School of American Studies in New York City, No. 19; and
- California Academy of Math and Science, a regional school run by the Long Beach, Calif., school system; No. 22.

U.S. News & World Report conducted a three-step process to determine the nation's best public high schools. It measured how each school's students performed on state-mandated tests; evaluated academic performance of each school's disadvantaged students; and analyzed the success of schools in providing college-level coursework.

Other Council districts that have schools ranked in the top 100 of the magazine's 2010 list include Nashville, New Orleans, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, Houston, San Diego, Philadelphia, Palm Beach, Buffalo, Fort Worth and St. Louis.

Some urban districts had more than one or two Gold Medal schools. "We're gratified that so many of our high schools are being recognized for their success," said Chancellor Joel Klein of the New York City school system, which has several schools among the nation's 100 best high schools. "We're especially pleased that schools serving some of our highest-need students are being singled out for their extraordinary work."

Still other urban schools earned silver and bronze medals in the magazine's analysis of the best public high schools.

class of 2009, totaling 82,000 teachers and school counselors certified by NBPTS.

The Chicago school system, the third largest in the nation, has 302 new National Board Certified Teachers. "The leadership and example they're setting for the system is phenomenal," said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, former CEO of Chicago Public Schools.

"What if every child had a chance to be taught by a National Board Certified Teacher? I think the difference it would make in students' lives would be extraordinary," he stressed in a press release.

Nine big-city school districts represented by the Council of the Great City Schools were in the top 20 school systems that had the most teachers who achieved National Board certification in 2009. Ranked behind No. 1 Chicago Public Schools were:

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina (No. 2) with 221 new certified teachers;
- Los Angeles Unified School District (No. 4) with 142;
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools (No. 5) with 112;
- Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (No. 6) with 102;
- Guilford County Schools in Greensboro, N.C. (No. 9) with 69;
- Albuquerque Public Schools (No. 13) with 59;
- Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa, Fla. (No. 14) with 58; and
- Seattle Public Schools (No. 15) with 57.

"We couldn't be prouder of the 59 APS

National Board continued on page 12



Albuquerque Schools Superintendent Winston Brooks discusses stimulus funding at a Council conference.

Stimulus Funds continued from page 1

the district has launched its College and Career Ready project. As part of the initiative, 10 middle school career guides will work with each middle school student to develop an Individual Learning and Career Plan.

In Tampa, Fla., the Hillsborough County Public Schools has created a task force to develop recommendations for the best use of stimulus money in the district.

"We want to invest in initiatives that have an impact on student achievement long after the money is gone," said Hillsborough Schools Superintendent MaryEllen Elia.

The district is investing more than \$8.1 million in providing professional development for teachers and is supporting a leadership development initiative that will begin identifying and training school leaders, particularly in high-poverty schools.

Winston Brooks, superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools in New Mexico, said his district will use stimulus money to increase technology to help its special education students. "Our dream is to have an electronic whiteboard in every special education classroom," said Brooks. "What better way to teach young students than electronically."

The superintendent believes high schools should be more flexible and accessible to students and plans to increase the number of extended school-day programs it offers in its high schools.

This column is the first in a new feature that highlights the use of federal stimulus funds in the nation's big-city school districts.

Former Charlotte School Board Member Gives \$4 Million to District

When construction magnate C.D. Spangler Jr. was a college student, he spent a summer helping to build West Charlotte High School in Charlotte, N.C.

Years later, the former Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board member is continuing his connection to the school by creating a scholarship program for students as part of a \$4-million contribution to the school system.

The C.D. Spangler Foundation recently announced the creation of the Anthony Foxx Scholars program that will provide a \$1,000 scholarship for every African-American male who graduates from West Charlotte and attends Central Piedmont Community College or any of the 16 University of North Carolina (UNC) system schools.

The scholarship program is named for Foxx, a West Charlotte graduate who was recently selected the mayor of Charlotte.

In addition, the Spangler Foundation is donating \$50,000 to pay college application fees for any West Charlotte student who applies to a school in the UNC system. And in an effort to encourage students to stay in school, Spangler is giving \$150,000 to Communities in Schools, the nation's largest drop-out prevention program to support services specifically at West Charlotte High School.

"We don't know if this will work, but we'll give it a try," said Spangler, whose two daughters are graduates of West Charlotte.

According to the *Charlotte Observer*, more than half of the male African-American students at West Charlotte drop out before graduation.

West Charlotte is not the only Charlotte school that is benefiting from Spangler's generosity. Each of the 176 principals in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school dis-



Former Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board member C.D. Spangler Jr. talks with students at West Charlotte High School after the announcement of a scholarship he created for students.

trict will receive \$1,000, and two programs to support economically disadvantaged preschoolers, Parent University and Bright Beginnings, will each receive \$100,000.

"We are blessed to have the Spangler's family support," said Charlotte Schools Superintendent Peter Gorman, who received \$250,000 from the Spangler Foundation for professional growth and development in the district. "This money will have a direct impact on our students, staff and parents."

Debate Students Accelerate Progress, Says Study in Chicago

Students who participate in urban debate leagues increase their chances of graduating from high school and improve their readiness to attend college, according to a recent study published in Howard University's *Journal of Negro Education*.

Conducted by researchers from Virginia Commonwealth University, the study analyzed 10 years of the Chicago Debate League and compared the academic performance of 2,500 students who participated in the league to similar students who did not participate in urban debate.

The study found that African-American male students participating in urban debate were 70 percent more likely to graduate from high school, three times less likely to drop out and 50 percent more likely to reach the ACT college-readiness benchmark than non-debaters.

Currently, urban debate leagues exist in 24 of the nation's largest cities, including Atlanta, Denver, Baltimore, Boston, Los Angeles and St. Louis.

In April, the league will hold its third annual debate championship in New York City in which the best urban debate leagues from across the nation will compete.

Council Receives U. of Phoenix Gift

The Council of the Great City Schools received a big holiday gift in December -- \$50,000.

In a "Support of Public Schools" promotion, the University of Phoenix had pledged a contribution of up to \$50,000 to the Council in a social networking venture with singer/songwriter Kate Voegle, who is affiliated with the university.

The singer encouraged fans during her recent 30-city concert tour to send a text message supporting elementary and secondary public education or pledge their commitment to life-long education.

Each text resulted in a \$1 donation by the university to the Council.

"We are very grateful for the support from the University of Phoenix, singer Kate Voegle and her fans," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. "The donation will help our efforts to improve instruction and operations in our big-city schools, advancing teaching and learning for inner-city students."

Norfolk Student Selected to NYU's Inaugural Class in Abu Dhabi

A high school senior in Virginia's Norfolk Public Schools will be among 100 students to begin college this fall in the inaugural freshman class of New York University in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates.

While many high school seniors consider whether to leave home and attend college out of state, Adam Pivrotto, 17, has his sights set on studying abroad.

"I really want my career to have an international focus...," Pivrotto said. "I want to travel to different countries and NYU-AD is a starting point for that."

With a 4.54 grade-point average at Norfolk's Granby High School, he was selected for the first undergraduate class of 100 chosen from high schools worldwide to begin studies this coming August at the newly established NYU Abu Dhabi campus on the Persian Gulf.

"Preparing the next generation of global leaders requires a new approach to higher education," said John Sexton, president

of NYU, when the Abu Dhabi campus opened in December. "The vibrant connection between NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU New York will provide the foundation for the world's first truly global university."

Even with a high grade-point average and International Baccalaureate program under his belt, Pivrotto wasn't a shoe-in candidate. After the initial challenging admissions process, candidates of the first undergraduate class were flown free of charge to Abu Dhabi for another round of essays and interviews.

A theater buff and passionate public speaker, Pivrotto reportedly learned of his acceptance to NYUAD the same day he had planned to mail other college applications.

"I'm not dissing America at all; I just love the thrill and experience of new cultures and different people," he said. "It's indescribable the feeling of walking down a street next to people in traditional garb and knowing we are all there to learn and grow."



Adam Pivrotto, a student in Norfolk Public Schools, has lunch with students in a visit to New York University in Abu Dhabi. Pivrotto will begin school there in the fall.

Student's Project Helps Save Life In Fort Worth

Just before Christmas and winter break, a student turned in a biology project that focused on diabetes.

To Johnny Trinh, a freshman at Southwest High School in Fort Worth, Tex., it was just another research assignment.

But to his teacher, Lori Roque, who assigned her honors biology students a project on a disease that affects multiple organ systems, Trinh's homework paper stood out.

To her surprise, the project summary described symptoms experienced by her 14-year-old daughter, Hope. She and her husband decided to take Hope to the doctor.

"At the doctor's office, I told them that I wanted to have her tested for diabetes," Roque remembered. "After doing some tests, the doctor told us to take her to the Cook Children's Hospital emergency room right away. My daughter had Type 1 (juvenile) diabetes and it was approaching a life-threatening stage," she stressed.

Meanwhile, Trinh, 15, had no idea that his paper would help save a life.

The doctor joked with the teacher by telling Roque that she owes the student a "consultation fee" for his project. "Then he stopped and looked at me straight and said, 'No. Really, this was very serious,'" she recalled in Fort Worth's *Star-Telegram* newspaper.

Hope, an eighth-grader, is adjusting to her condition, and is now regulating her diabetes with supplemental insulin. She says of Trinh and his paper, "I just want to thank him and let him know it really made a difference."

For his part, Trinh was just as surprised as his teacher that his paper had such life-saving impact. "And I'm happy I got a good grade," he noted.



President Obama greets the winners of the Presidential Awards for Excellence for Mathematics and Science Teaching during a ceremony at the White House. Photo Credit: White House by Chuck Kennedy

Obama Recognizes Top Math, Science Teachers

President Obama honored 87 educators from around the nation on Jan. 6, bestowing on them the Presidential Awards for Excellence for Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Fourteen of the recognized teachers educate students in urban school districts represented by the Council of the Great City Schools, the *Urban Educator* found in a review of the award winners.

Administered by the National Science Foundation for the White House, the award is the nation's highest recognition in math and science for elementary and secondary school teachers.

Of the 46 award-winning teachers in math, five hailed from urban school districts:

- Laura Ann Hulsebus of Alaska's Anchorage School District;
 - Debra Reynolds of Louisiana's East Baton Rouge school system;
 - Kathleen Conroy of North Carolina's Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools;
 - Karen Fredricks of Delaware's Christina School District; and
 - Monica Norwood of Arkansas' Little Rock School District.
- Forty-one science teachers won the presidential award, including nine urban educators:
- Cheryl Silcox of Alaska's Anchorage School District;
 - Candy Ellard of Texas' Austin school district;
 - Erin Flynn of Massachusetts' Boston Public Schools;
 - Kendra Pullen of Louisiana's Caddo Parish district in Shreveport;
 - Mary Meggett of South Carolina's Charleston County school system;
 - Jo Anne Deshon of Delaware's Christina School District;
 - Sally Pellegrin of Ohio's Cleveland school district;
 - Melissa Collins of Tennessee's Memphis school system; and
 - Loreen Whalen-McMains of Nebraska's Omaha Public Schools.

Ex-Homeless Student In Los Angeles Wins White House Award

In 2004, Kiana Coronado-Ziadie was homeless and living with her mother and two younger sisters on the streets and in shelters in Los Angeles. The 6-year-old had also been diagnosed with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder and had to repeat the first grade.

Six years later, Kiana is a seventh-grade honors student and a recipient of an award by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Kiana received the Coming Up Taller Award, which honors and supports outstanding community arts and humanities programs that celebrate the creativity of the nation's young people.

A student at the Milliken Middle School Performing Arts Magnet, Kiana participates in the Harmony Project, a national program that promotes the healthy growth and development of children through study, practice and performance of music.

She performs in two Harmony Project orchestras, participates in group violin lessons, private violin lessons and is part of the Harmony Project choir. The seventh-grader also volunteers as a teacher aide in violin classes with younger students four hours a week.



First Lady Michelle Obama congratulates student Kiana Coronado-Ziadie for winning the Coming Up Taller Award at a White House ceremony. Also pictured is Margaret Martin, founder of the Harmony Project.

Council Presents 'New Tool' To Save School Districts Dollars



Michael Casserly

The Council of the Great City Schools weighed in recently on a national discussion of how school districts can save money during austere economic times.

In a C-SPAN televised forum at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, Council Executive Director Michael Casserly revealed a "new tool" that helps urban school districts to improve business operations.

He presented the new tool from the Council's series of reports titled *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools*, first released in 2007 to give urban school leaders the opportunity to gauge business performance.

Casserly laid out the new tool that allows the nation's big-city school districts to compare themselves utilizing pioneering key performance indicators developed by the Council and modeled after those used in the private sector.

He said the indicators save millions of dollars by improving operations in urban school districts relative to their peers.

"...This new tool is indicative of how serious the nation's major urban school systems are about improving their effectiveness and efficiency despite the bad economy," he stressed.

He noted that the indicators are part of a series of Council initiatives developed over the years to improve both academic and operational performance in America's big-city school districts.

Casserly was one of several speakers at the American Enterprise Institute's forum on "A Penny Saved: How Schools and Districts Can Tighten Their Belts While Serving Students Better," co-sponsored with the Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

The new tool aids urban school leaders in measuring performance on a range of operational functions in business, finance, human resources and technology.

The concept of the key performance indicators, or KPIs, grew out of Council meetings with urban district chief operating officers and chief financial officers some five years ago.

"There were no such tools in public education...except in very limited niche organizations and nothing like what we were looking for in municipal government," Casserly explained. "So we have invented the tools ourselves."

He rattled off examples of school districts utilizing the key performance indicators. "Boston now uses the KPIs as part of its annual budget process.

Los Angeles used them to deploy some \$75 million in bond funds for bus replacements," he emphasized.

"Philadelphia is building the food service indicators into its district report cards. Albuquerque has used the information technology data to better track and improve its customer call centers," he continued.

But more importantly, Casserly stressed that the new tool has sparked discussion within urban school districts about "how to use scarce resources more efficiently."

Former St. Paul CFO Wins Council Award

Lois Rockney, the former chief financial officer of the Saint Paul Public Schools, recently received the Bill Wise Award at the Council of the Great City Schools' Chief Financial Officers Annual Meeting in Nashville.

The award, sponsored by Chartwells School Dining Services, recognizes and honors outstanding school business officials who have distinguished themselves through service to urban education.

Three Urban Districts Ranked At Top In Breakfast Programs

Three big-city school districts—New Jersey's Newark Public Schools, Ohio's Columbus City Schools and Boston Public Schools—have the highest percentage of students participating in the School Breakfast Program, according to a new report by the Food Research and Action Center.

The report, *School Breakfast in America's Big Cities*, examines the performance of the School Breakfast Program in 25 urban school districts in the 2008-09 school year. Newark tops the list with a 95.7 percent participation rate, followed by Columbus, with a participation rate of 65.3 percent; and Boston, with a participation rate of 62.6 percent.

Participation rates were measured by comparing the number of low-income children receiving school breakfast to the number of low-income children receiving school lunch.

The report found that the top three performing school districts all served breakfast in the classroom at no charge to the students in many or all schools.

Newark Public Schools began offering breakfast in the classroom as a pilot program in 2004 and now all of its K-8 schools serve breakfast in the classroom, feeding 25,000 students per day.

"Breakfast in the classroom has increased student attendance and prepares them for the academic day by eliminating the distractions of hunger and fatigue due to lack of nutrition in the morning," said Tonya Riggins, director of food services for the district.

The report recommends that Congress make it easier for children to participate in the School Breakfast Program by creating a grant program to support the start-up and expansion of universal and in-classroom school breakfast programs.

The report is available at: www.frac.org/pdf/urbanbreakfast09.pdf.

Character Education Becomes Reality In Greensboro, N.C.



Edward Myers

Students at Irving Park Elementary in Greensboro, N.C., receive weekly lessons from a counselor about character education.

The lessons made an impression on Irving Park student

Edward Myers because when he recently found a purse with \$2,000, he turned the money over to police.

Edward, who is in the fifth grade, credits his teachers as well as his parents and his scout troop for doing the right thing and turning in the purse.

According to police, the purse was stolen out of a car and when the police returned it, the owner gave the youngster \$100. He used the money to buy a Carolina Panthers jersey and gave the rest to his mom.

"...I'm proud Edward is one of our students and I hope this story will inspire his classmates to always do what is right," said Melissa Nixon, principal at Irving Park.

The Guilford County school district has placed particular emphasis on character education and in its strategic plan, launched last year, included initiatives to expand character education in all schools.

This year, school officials will launch districtwide student-services requirements in an effort to educate the whole child and support students' character development.

In addition, 41 schools have implemented Positive Behavior Support, an initiative to create proactive, school-wide systems with a focus on prevention of inappropriate behaviors and recognition of appropriate behaviors.

Cleveland and Newark Kick Off 2010 With Reform Initiatives



Eugene Sanders

The new year began with two big-city school districts -- Cleveland and Newark -- rolling out strategic reform plans in early January aimed at improving academic achievement.

"As we present a plan for transformation of our schools, we make a bold promise that we will do 'Whatever it takes' to ensure a bright future for every child in Cleveland," said Cleveland Metropolitan School District CEO Eugene Sanders.

"We are entitling our transformation plan 'Whatever it Takes' to stress the importance of the urgency of action that needs to occur," he said. The new plan takes a four-prong approach to support growing schools, refocus schools that need a boost, change struggling schools and close schools.

In addition to Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and other local officials, the plan's rollout event also featured Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools.

"The public should know...that what is being proposed here tonight is in harmony with strategies of some of the fastest improving urban school systems across the country," Casserly pointed out. "In fact, Cleveland would be on the leading edge of many reforms across the country if it stays true to this initiative."

Newark's Plan

In New Jersey's Newark Public Schools, State District Superintendent Clifford Janey rolled out "Great Expectations: 2009-13 Strategic Plan" to serve as a comprehensive blueprint for improving student achievement.

"Our youth need to be able to compete in an increasingly complex, competitive, and diverse world," he said. "We need to



Clifford Janey

raise the bar and this plan will ensure that we do that."

"Great Expectations" focuses on four priority areas: ensuring highly effective educators; building a system of schools that serve students, their families and the community; ensuring a safe and welcoming school environment; and improving the district's educational practice by creating an accountability system.

Other Plans

A number of big-city school districts have initiated strategic reform plans aimed at improving teaching and learning.

In December, the Austin school board adopted a new "Five-Year Strategic Plan" designed to serve as a guide to strengthen instruction and operations from 2010-2015 in the Texas district.

New York's Rochester City School District also unveiled a five-year "Strategic Plan" in December, providing a roadmap to accelerate student achievement.

In pursuing what the Council's Casserly calls "bold reforms," he notes that urban school leaders "are laying out a set of benchmarks on which to hold themselves accountable for the results they get."

D.C. Opens Testing Center for Preschoolers

In an effort to help students get a better start in life, the District of Columbia Public Schools recently opened a testing

Testing Center *continued on page 9*

Council of the Great City Schools

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE/POLICY CONFERENCE

March 20-23, 2010
 Mayflower Renaissance Hotel • Washington, DC



Saturday, March 20

7:30 am- 5:00 pm	Conference Registration
9:00 am-10:00 am	Fall Conference Planning Meeting
10:00 am-11:00 am	Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group Meeting
11:00 am-12:00 pm	Great City Colleges of Education Steering Committee Meeting
11:30 am-2:00 pm	Lunch & Meeting of Legislative & Federal Program Liaisons
12:00 pm-2:00 pm	Executive Committee Meeting
2:00pm- 5:00 pm	Urban Task Force Meetings
5:00 pm-6:00 pm	New Members & New Attendees Orientation
6:30 pm-8:00 pm	Welcome Reception

Sunday, March 21

7:00 am- 5:00 pm	Conference Registration
7:30 am- 9:00 am	Breakfast Buffet
8:30 am-11:30 am	Board of Directors Meeting
8:30 am-11:30 am	Great City Colleges of Education Meeting
12:00 pm-2:00 pm	Luncheon with Speaker
2:00 pm-5:30 pm	Legislative Briefings
6:00 pm-7:30 pm	Reception: Taste of Tampa

Monday, March 22

7:30 am- 9:00 am	Breakfast with Speaker
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Legislative Briefings
12:30 pm-2:00 pm	Luncheon with Speaker
2:00 pm-5:00 pm	Capitol Hill Visits
6:00 pm-7:30 pm	Reception on Capitol Hill

Tuesday, March 23

8:00 am- 10:30 am	Breakfast with Speaker
10:30 am-12:00 pm	Legislative Briefings
12:00 pm	Adjourn

Detroit Recruits 3,000 Volunteers

Detroit Public Schools wants to have every third-grader read at grade level or above by 2015. So to help reach this goal, the district in partnership with the *Detroit Free Press* recently asked citizens to serve as volunteer tutors.

The response has been overwhelming, with 3,000 citizens answering the call to volunteer more than 360,000 hours.

The volunteers are part of the district's new Reading Corps initiative, which targets students in Pre-K through third grade.

Volunteers will tutor children in reading and will be asked to commit at least an hour a week. All volunteers will receive training and undergo a criminal background check.

"This outpouring of assistance underscores the extreme urgency and the need to improve academics in Detroit Public Schools..." said Robert Bobb, the district's emergency financial manager. "We at DPS -- and the thousands of citizens committed to this initiative -- refuse to let DPS children fail."

The Reading Corps initiative was spurred by the district's poor test scores in math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

On the math portion of the test, 69 percent of fourth-graders scored at a below *Basic* level and 77 percent of eighth-graders scored below *Basic*.

Testing Center *continued from page 8*

facility that will evaluate children for developmental delays.

The center will offer free, high-quality evaluations of children ages 3-to-5-years-old and identify the services that will help them succeed as they enter school.

"The impact of early intervention on student growth is just one of the reasons the Early Stages Center is so vital to DCPS," said D.C. Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee. "We finally have the structures in place to make the strongest impact on children's future educational success."

An ESEA Reauthorization on the Cheap?

By Jeff Simering, *Director of Legislation*

What lessons have been learned in the eight years since the enactment of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB)? It is always hard to tell, because the answers always come through the lens of self-interest. But, one we would offer up involves funding.

Traditionally, reauthorized programs under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act garner new investments in their initial years because Congress has renewed hope that its changes to the law will produce better results. Moreover, Congress wants to be seen supporting its own handiwork. And, the implementation of new regulations, guidelines, policies, and procedures—as well as professional development, reporting, assessments, and evaluations—on those new requirements all cost money.

The first few years after the authorization of NCLB were a good example. The Administration requested and the Congress provided a significant boost in elementary and secondary education funding. The FY 2002 and FY 2003 funding levels for Title I, Title II, Title III, 21st Century Learning Centers, and Reading First increased by a total of \$4.8 billion, with Title I receiving sizable increases of \$1.6 billion and \$1.3 billion, respectively, in the first two years of NCLB.

The current economic conditions and the expanding federal deficit, however, appear likely to break this historic pattern. Both the Obama Administration and Congressional officials warn of austere budgets in upcoming years. And



the lack of new federal funds for the revisions in the federal Child Nutrition Programs reportedly contributed to postponement of this overdue reauthorization.

How much new money will be available to launch a new ESEA reauthorization? The very detailed and rather prescriptive nature of the Obama Administration's signature education programs—Race To The Top, Investing In Innovation, and School Improvement Grants—suggest a predisposition toward new requirements and approaches, but little extra funding that is not otherwise tied to their priority programs. With some \$8 billion in funds available for stimulus programs, the Administration currently has the resources to pay for these initiatives, but have limited resources for everything else, including another proposed \$1.3 billion in Race To The Top funds for states and school districts.

This raises the question about how much new funding will be available to invest in major ESEA “title” programs for disadvantaged students, teacher quality, literacy initiatives, English language learners, or safe and supportive school environments—much less the numerous smaller grant programs. The capacity and the willingness of state and local school officials to effectively implement major new legislated priorities is intertwined with their expectations of financial support for ongoing efforts. Will additional resources be there or will we face an ESEA reauthorization on the cheap?

Advanced Placement Enrollment Gets Boost in Birmingham

Enrollment in Advanced Placement classes in three high schools in the Birmingham City Schools is up 254 percent this school year, thanks to an initiative aimed at getting more AP classes in schools.

Huffman, Ramsay and Wenonah high schools offered only six AP classes during the 2008-2009 school year. The schools have joined in an initiative supported by

the national A+ College Ready program and have 15 AP courses in math, science and English.

Enrollment in AP classes at the three schools rose from 123 to 436 students.

“We want more of our students prepared to succeed in college. This initiative will help them succeed individually, and it will also strengthen our state and nation

— which face critical shortages of scientists and engineers,” says Interim Superintendent Barbara S. Allen.

Major financial supporters of A+ College Ready include the National Math and Science Initiative, the Alabama Power Foundation, Boeing, ExxonMobil and Regions Financial Corp.

Free Scholarships Offered To Rochester and Boston Students

Students from the Class of 2010 in New York's Rochester City School District and Boston Public Schools have something in common. They will be able to attend college free, as a result of a new scholarship program being offered in their respective school districts.

Beginning in the fall of 2010, the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) will provide four-year scholarships to graduates of the Rochester school system who are admitted as freshman to full-time study in baccalaureate programs at the university. There are no limits to the number of scholarships that will be awarded.

In order to be eligible for the scholarship program, students must attend the Rochester school system for three years of high school, receive admission to the freshman class at RIT and come from families with income levels below \$60,000.

The scholarship program is an effort by the university to attract talented Rochester students and encourage individuals in the school district to realize that they can attend a postsecondary institution and receive a college degree.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for our students and a phenomenal show of support by RIT for the college-going culture we are developing among our students," said Rochester Schools Superintendent Jean-Claude Brizard. "...This scholarship program reinforces our message that college is an attainable goal for each of our students."

The scholarship support, when combined with federal and state grants, equals full tuition at RIT, which is currently \$28,866 for full-time undergraduates.

And in Boston, 1,012 students will be provided with free tuition at any public college or university in Massachusetts. The students all qualified for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarships, based on their performance on the state-mandated exams.

The scholarships are sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Board of Higher Education. To qualify for the scholarship, students had to score in the advanced category on either the English language arts portion or math sections of the state exams and proficient or advanced on the other. The students' scores also had to rank in the top 25 percent of the district.

Recipients will receive free tuition for four years and must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better.

Houston Grad Wins Rhodes Scholarship

Only 32 Americans were named as 2010 Rhodes Scholars and one of those selected was Steven Mo, a 2006 graduate of Bellaire High School in Houston.

Considered "the oldest and best known award for international study," Rhodes Scholarships provide all expenses for two or three years of study at the University of Oxford in England.

Mo is currently a senior at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology majoring in biology.

Rhodes Scholarship *continued on page 12*

Council of the Great City Schools 2010 Calendar of Events

Chief Human Resources Officers Meeting	Feb. 10-12, 2010	Charleston, SC
Title I Directors Meeting	March 19-20 2010	Washington, DC
Legislative/Policy Conference	March 20-23, 2010	Washington, DC
Chief Operating Officers Conference	April 14-16, 2010	Orlando, FL
Bilingual Directors Meeting	May 6-8, 2010	Omaha, NE
E-Rate Meeting	June 1, 2010	Denver, CO
Chief Information Officers Meeting	June 2-4 2010	Denver, CO
Public Relations Executives Meeting	July 9-11, 2010	Charlotte, NC
Curriculum Directors & Research/ Assessment Symposium	July 15-17, 2010	San Francisco, CA
Executive Committee Meeting	July 2010	TBD
Annual Fall Conference	Oct. 20-24, 2010	Tampa, FL
Chief Financial Officers Conference	November 2010	TBD



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Urban School Districts in South Florida Aid Haiti Earthquake Relief Efforts

In the aftermath of the Jan. 12 earthquake that devastated Haiti, three urban school districts in Florida with large numbers of Haitian students -- Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale and the

National Board *continued from page 4*

teachers who earned National Board Certification in 2009, and of all the nearly 500 teachers in our district who over time have met the high and rigorous standards established by the National Board," said Albuquerque Public Schools Superintendent Winston Brooks. "Teachers who have met this challenge reflect our district's efforts to reform education and improve student learning."

Certification for Principals

In another development, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards recently launched National Board Certification for Educational Leaders, which includes the development of the first national certification program focused on school principals.

School District of Palm Beach County -- stepped up to assist the island nation.

More than 17,000 students in the Miami school district are of Haitian descent and the district created a website that provides information on how people can donate money online to relief efforts.

As of Jan. 20, the Miami school district has collected 21 boxes of medical supplies, 187 boxes of non-perishable food, 1,000 cases of water and other items to assist in the relief effort. Some 40,000 pounds of water collected have been flown directly to the island for distribution.

Moreover, the Miami-Dade school system has already enrolled 60 displaced students from Haiti.

"This is no longer a question of whether children will come to South Florida, but when they will come, and in what numbers," said Miami-Dade Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho.

The school board of Broward County has allowed fundraising and charitable activities such as the collection of supplies to support relief efforts. High schools and district area offices are serving as the main collection sites and items collected will be

sent to charitable agencies, which are active in Haiti.

As of Jan. 25, the Broward school system has enrolled 115 displaced students from Haiti.

Haitian students comprise nearly 8 percent of the student population in Palm Beach. As a result, the district is sending grief counselors to those schools with the highest percentages of Haitian students.

And Aurora Francois, the first Haitian educator to serve as principal of a Palm Beach County school, has initiated "A Dollar for Haiti Project" in which all collected funds will go toward Haitian Earthquake Relief via partnerships being created with Missionary Flights International and Red Cross.

Rhodes Scholarship *continued from page 11*

When he was a student at Bellaire High School, he was active in several organizations and received the Board of Education's Outstanding Senior Award.

Mo will enter Oxford University in the fall to work toward his doctorate degree in biomedical engineering.