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Urban School Experts Develop New Resource for Helping English Language Learners Achieve

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25 -- Thousands of educators in large urban school districts across the nation now have access to a free resource, designed to guide districts in accelerating achievement for English Language Learners (ELLs).

Developed by a team of ELL experts and contributors from member districts of the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), the resource, entitled [*A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*](#), addresses challenges faced by educators who are implementing new college- and career-ready standards with their bilingual, immigrant, and refugee students who are acquiring English.

Designed as a practical guide for districts with large populations of English learners and created with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the document introduces a new pedagogical framework for English language development that explicitly addresses the higher language demands of new college- and career-ready standards. In recognition of the variety of programs found in districts, the framework also addresses the range of models and contexts in which instruction for ELLs is delivered, and provides a set of considerations for choosing effective instructional materials to accelerate achievement for ELLs.

“This is one of those ground-breaking tools that local school districts will be using to reform and strengthen their instructional programs for English Language Learners and to enhance the quality of the classroom materials that teachers use to boost academic attainment for this growing population in our Great Cities and nationwide,” says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. “This document is one more piece of evidence of how our urban school leaders are sharing their expertise to ensure success for all our students.”

A second, parallel project is currently underway to spur the improvement of instructional materials for ELLs. Funded by the Gates Foundation and Televisa Foundation, this project brings together publishers of instructional materials, ELL experts, and instructional leaders from CGCS member districts with large ELL enrollments. Together, they are working to shape the evolution of instructional materials to reflect the more rigorous expectations embedded in the new standards.

Participating publishers include Amplify, Benchmark Education, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and National Geographic Learning/Cengage, all of whom have committed to participating in a series of in-depth meetings and conversations around materials development, piloting new materials in classrooms in the spring of 2015, and integrating feedback into their development cycle.

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The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 67 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information, and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge in order to deliver the best possible education for urban youth.