EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Palm Beach, FL
January 21-22, 2022

Present:

Officers:

Barbara Jenkins, Chair, Orange County Superintendent
Kelly Gonez, Chair-Elect, Los Angeles School Board (virtual)
William Hite, Philadelphia Superintendent
Michael O’Neill, Immediate Past Chair, Boston School Committee

Members:

Tom Ahart, Des Moines Superintendent (virtual)
Siad Ali, Minneapolis School Board
Marcia Andrews, Palm Beach County School Board
Sharon Contreras, Guilford County Superintendent
Elyse Dashew, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board
Valerie Davis, Fresno School Board
Talis Dixon, Columbus Superintendent
Joe Gothard, St. Paul Superintendent
Guadalupe Guerrero, Portland Superintendent
Michael Hinojosa, Dallas Superintendent
Shavonna Hollman, Omaha School Board
Jesus Jara, Clark County Superintendent (virtual)
Megan Kerr, Long Beach School Board (virtual)
Diane Porter, Jefferson County School Board (virtual)
Jacinto Ramos, Fort Worth School Board
Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College, CUNY Dean
Sylvia Wilson, Pittsburgh School Board
Darrel Woo, Sacramento School Board

Absent:

Marcelo Cavazos, Arlington Superintendent
Pedro Martinez, Chicago CEO
Sonja Santelises, Baltimore CEO
Barbara Jenkins, Chair of the Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 2:15pm ET. A quorum was established. Palm Beach County School Board Member Marcia Andrews and Superintendent Mike Burke (virtual) welcomed the group to Palm Beach. Members then introduced themselves and gave a short update on events in their districts.

**Appointments and Nominations**

The Chair introduced two appointments to fill vacancies on the Committee.

1) Elyse Dashew (Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board) to serve the unexpired term of Leslie Grant (Atlanta School Board), whose term is set to expire June 30, 2023.

2) Jacinto Ramos (Forth Worth School Board) to serve the unexpired term of Van Henri White (Rochester School Board), whose term is set to expire June 30, 2023.

The Chair then asked Elyse Dashew to step out of the room, so a vote could be taken. A motion to accept both nominations passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Minutes**

Barbara Jenkins presented the minutes of the October 2021 virtual meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

A motion to approve the minutes passed without dissent by voice vote.

**Membership**

Sharon Contreras gave the report of the Membership Subcommittee. An application has been received from the Phoenix Union High School District (PXU). PXU is a former member, meets the city population requirement, and has a diverse student population. However, it is one of the only districts in the country that splits the elementary schools from high schools. While together they would have more than enough students, they do not meet the enrollment requirement on their own. Consequently, making an exception on their behalf would not set a precedent for future membership considerations across the country.

The Subcommittee recommended accepting their request to reinstate their membership.

A motion to accept the membership application of the Phoenix Union High School District passed without dissent by voice vote.

**By-Laws**

No report.
Audit

Bill Hite, Chair of the Audit Subcommittee, informed the group that the organization has received another clean audit for 2021. Ray Hart then briefed the group on the various materials included in the audit section, noting the following:

- The audit report does not reflect as revenue the PPP loan of $457,411 the organization received last year. This loan has been officially forgiven in July 2021 and doesn’t need to be paid back. The forgiven loan will be reflected as revenue in the current fiscal year.

- All of the organization’s asset allocations are within the range stipulated.

- In the 2021-22 audit report, members will find the general operations budget and projected budget for 22-23 fiscal year.

- Membership dues for 2020-21 increased by 1.2%, and the materials provide details for changes in dues by student enrollment. All Council member districts paid their dues last year (with exception for New Orleans and Puerto Rico, whose dues are waived).

- The materials provide a six-month report for this current fiscal year. We have expended about 38% of our budget thus far—part of this is offsets applied to staffing and other operational costs. That accounts for the difference between budgeted 50 percent expenditure after six months and the 38 percent actual expenditure.

- Additional grants have been received this past year. For example, a new grant from Gates Foundation for $1.75 million has been received since the last meeting. We are also working with other foundations to secure additional funding.

- The materials provide information on asset allocations, and a proposed budget for the 2022-23 year.

Ray Hart then addressed a proposal to increase membership dues by 5%. The audit materials provide a history of dues increases dating back to 1995. These increases are tied to the Consumer Price Index. This past year the CPI increased by 6.8%. Ray Hart proposed an increase of 5%, just so it isn’t as stark an increase compared with the 1.2% increase from last year and other previous, incremental increases.

The Committee then discussed this proposed membership dues adjustment. Some raised the question of the wisdom of setting a precedent of not matching CPI increases, and arbitrarily choosing a lower percentage. Ray Hart pointed out that this recommendation was based on the amount of increase from last year, whereas if inflation increases and next year’s increase is 7%, the difference between this year’s proposed increase (5%) and next year’s won’t be as large as the difference between 1.2% and 6.8%. Members voiced their
appreciation for the Council’s desire to keep membership dues low but sustained the
argument of keeping increases consistent with the current policy of matching the CPI, in
recognition of the value of membership and the return on investment for districts.

A motion to maintain the CPI for the purposes of increasing membership dues (6.8%)
passed unanimously by voice vote.

A motion to approve the Audit Subcommittee report passed unanimously by voice vote.

Finally, Ray Hart called the group’s attention to an update to the personnel policy manual
to include telework. Council staff will now be able to telework for two days a week, with
three days in the office, monitored by supervisors.

Conferences and Meetings

Ray Hart then reviewed the lineup of upcoming meetings in 2022. Elyse Dashew invited
the Committee to hold its 2023 winter meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Saturday, January 22, 2022

Legislation

Jeff Simering and Manish Naik provided an update on legislative and agency action.
Simering noted that 2021 was a productive year, but we are facing an ugly year ahead with
a midterm election coming up and the House and Senate up for grabs. He expects little
reason for Republicans to cooperate with items on the White House or congressional
Democrats’ agenda.

The Biden administration asked for a substantial increase to Title I—the biggest one we’ve
ever seen. Whether Congress can come to agreement on an appropriations bill will be an
important hurdle and will likely fall short of the President’s requested increase. The
ongoing delay in completing these spending bills mean we won’t know allocations for
federal education programs until spring and will have to begin the budget process for
school year 2022-23 based on current funding levels.

Democrats and specifically the Senate couldn’t get the White House’s Build Back Better
bill passed, so they will now need to get Democratic consensus on a new and smaller
version of the reconciliation bill. Provisions are pared back (such as tax credit provisions)
won’t have any other chance of being enacted.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration is trying to get as much done administratively as
possible through agency action. The Council has spent a lot of time working formally and
informally to ensure that policies are productive, and not harmful. The inexperience of
many appointed officials has made this difficult, and some of their proposed data requests
are unworkable and do not recognize the reality of the staffing shortage and overburdened
operations in school districts nationwide.
Reopening schools and restarting assessments have been big priorities for Biden. The legislative materials provided for the meeting include comments on assessment and accountability draft guidance, with the Council proposing that Spring 2022 assessment results be used as baseline data. We want to avoid the problem of over-identification of schools as a result of the accountability system.

The legislative section also includes updates/Council comments on:

- Maintenance of Equity provisions in the American Rescue Plan (ARP)
- Data collection provisions in ARP
- The Emergency Broadband Benefit program
- Provision of compensatory services in the Return to School Roadmap document issued by OSERS
- Highlights of the Build Back Better reconciliation bill for school districts
- Status of FEMA reimbursements
- Status of the bipartisan infrastructure bill
- Inclusion of school meal program flexibilities in the FY2022 Agriculture and Rural Development Appropriations Bill
- DHS “Public Charge Ground for Inadmissibility” rules

Finally, the materials include a letter in support of the nomination of Jessica Rosenworcel for permanent Chair of the FCC.

The group then discussed the challenges of strategically allocating ESSER funds given pressure from groups like unions. Jeff and Manish informed the group that in the coming weeks they will be reaching out to request information on district spending plans and challenges to assist in advocacy efforts in Washington. The group suggested the need for additional guidance and research around pay-for-performance and performance evaluation best practices.

Communications

This section of the materials includes a collection of the latest statements, press releases, and articles. There are also update reports on the organization’s social media presence over the past few months, and a flyer for the upcoming meeting of public relations executives.

Research

The Committee materials provide an overview of research department activities, as well as a copy of the recent NAEP special analysis, Mirrors or Windows. Ray Hart noted that we have updated this report to explore effect sizes on achievement gains.

This section also includes an update on the 2022 NAEP administration. Fresno has decided not to participate in TUDA this year. This opens an additional slot for another
district to participate. Several Council districts are eligible, including Nashville, Long Beach, and possibly Orange County.

The Council has created three ‘assessment consortia,’ or groupings of districts according to the assessments they employ. This allows districts who use the same assessments to query their peers around implementation, best practices, etc. The first is made up of districts who use iReady, the second is districts that use MAP, and a third consortia is comprised of districts who use the Star assessment. There is potentially a fourth group we will establish for districts around ELA/ELD assessments.

We have asked assessment providers in each consortium to pull out data for large cities. Typically, they provide national norms but we have requested aggregate results for Council member districts. For example, the materials include charts on data from the NWEA assessment in reading and mathematics, charts from iReady, etc.

Finally, for those districts participating in NAEP, last night an email went out detailing safety measures for administration of the assessment in 2022.

Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development

Deb Shanley gave the report of the Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development. The materials start with an update/overview of academic department projects and activities. This includes details on a recent district convening to discuss priorities in instructional investments of ARP funds, a meeting with educational publishers to share district spending priorities, a summary of biweekly meetings of instructional leaders and the themes arising from these discussions, a series of webinars about addressing unfinished learning, the early reading accelerator project, and a catalog of various instructional support materials released over the past few years.

Work is now underway on an updated version of the curriculum framework, released back in 2017. We are enlisting the assistance of technical partners and an advisory committee of district instructional leaders to help us add a stronger focus on things like equity, technology, addressing unfinished learning, and incorporating social emotional learning into the curriculum.

Task Force on Black and Latino Young Men and Boys

Michael Hinojosa and Bill Hite gave the report of the Task Force on Black and Latino Young Men and Boys. This task force has begun to pivot in their work and focus. We have been frustrated about the lack of progress, so we refocused the work of the task force to concentrate on disproportionality in three areas: performance, access, and discipline. We’re hoping that this added clarity around our goals will help drive the work.

The group then discussed the need for additional data collection and reporting around disproportionality, including not only overidentification of males of color, but the
disproportionate placement of these students in isolated settings and in academic environments with lower standards of instruction.

**Task Force on Black and Latina Young Women and Girls**

Sharon Contereas, Kelly Gonez, and Shavonna Holman gave the report of the Task Force on Black and Latina Young Women and Girls. The focus of this task force is on creating equitable access and outcomes for females of color and building college and career readiness. The Chairs thanked the Council for providing parallel data on performance of females of color, which is provided in the materials.

The Chairs will be meeting next week, and hope to focus on comprehensive health care, and the need for data collection and reporting in this area. We need to dig deep and develop a model of what 360-degree support looks like. Mental health challenges also need to be addressed.

This section of the materials also includes a presentation on sex trafficking. Those districts in counties and locales where they face the greatest pushback and political challenges need additional support to pursue this work on behalf of black and Latina girls.

The group then discussed the experiences of district leaders and board members during COVID, dealing with things such as battles over equity and mask mandates.

**Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education**

Siad Ali gave the report of the Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education. He thanked the Council for providing support and guidance to districts around supporting immigrant and bilingual students during the pandemic, as well as the support for the resettlement of refugees in large cities.

This section of the materials provides an overview of the activities of the ELL department.

Ray Hart informed the group of the Council’s work to procure information on incoming refugees to provide districts with advance planning time. This has been challenging, as the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Education do not share this information readily.

Finally, additional work is being done on the Council’s professional learning platform.

**Task Force on Leadership, Governance, Management, and Finance**

Michael O’Neill gave the report on the Task Force on Leadership, Governance, Management, and Finance. This section begins with an update on the CGCS/Harvard Leadership Institute. This year we will return to an in-person convening. We are still waiting to get a final cost—we are working this out with Harvard. For the first year the
dues were slightly reduced/subsidized to get the program up and running, and then the next year reflected the cost for an online program.

The materials include information on the Casserly Legacy Award, which is focused on educational justice and courage. Anyone focused on urban education is eligible—it is not limited to Council district members. The materials include a memo that was discussed last year when this body approved the award. Eligibility requirements have now been drafted. Anyone on the Council’s Board of Directors can make a nomination.

After being presented with a few options for determining winners, the group decided that award winners will be selected by a committee made up of the Chair of the Board, the Executive Director, and Michael Casserly.

The materials then provide syllabi and applications for four training cohorts the Council is launching—one for board chairs, one for new board members, one for governance support staff, and one for aspiring governance coaches. Ray Hart announced that the meetings of these cohorts will now be virtual in order to accommodate applicants weary of traveling during the pandemic.

Guadalupe Guerrero then presented the Task Force’s work on management and finance. The materials include an internal auditing report, as well as copies of recent technical assistance site visits.

The discussion then touched on the need for additional training for board members around the implementation of district codes of ethics, sexism/racism, and concerns around leadership tenure and churn.

Ray Hart then informed the group that another Council district was hit by a cybersecurity attack last Friday. The materials include a cybersecurity report we released, and we will be focusing on cybersecurity during the Chief Information Officers conference. Hart also highlighted the support network available from peers in member school districts.

Ray Hart then informed group that we will be incorporating our management/leadership work into the Michael Casserly Institute. This will include support for new and interim superintendents. Michael Hinojosa has agreed to lead this work, which will take place in parallel to the work AJ Crabbill is doing around governance with school boards. Others, including Bill Hite, have agreed to serve as coaches. We envision these three pillars of work—leadership, governance, and management—supporting and reinforcing each other to strengthen our school systems.

**Strategic Plan**

For each of the Council’s main goals, Ray introduced a set of indicators or ways of gauging progress on these goals.

Goal 1. To educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards.
To gauge progress on this goal, the Council will track student achievement trends and the closure of the performance gaps between students in Large City Schools and the Nation on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Goal II. To lead, govern, and manage our urban public schools in ways that advance the education of our students and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our institutions.

- To gauge progress on this goal, the Council will monitor the tenure of superintendents in urban member school districts.

Goal III. To bolster the public’s confidence in urban public education and build a supportive community for raising our children and enhancing their future.

- To gauge progress on this goal, the Council will monitor the recruitment and retention of teachers and leaders in large city school districts, with a particular focus on teachers and leaders from traditionally underrepresented populations.

The Chair suggested adding an indicator related to tenure of board members, particularly those who have participated in Council TA/training.

To wrap up this section, the materials include a letter to school districts inviting them to participate in a CGCS partnership/task force with the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The aim is to provide a blueprint for the work we can do together with police departments, sheriffs, and communities to address issues of school and student safety and justice. This work is being undertaken in recognition that what happens in our cities impacts the work of schools.

Respectfully submitted:

Ray Hart
Executive Director
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Barbara Jenkins, Chair of the Board of Directors, called the virtual meeting to order at 11:00 am ET. A quorum of the Executive Committee was established. A quorum of the Board was established later in the meeting.

**Strategic plan**

The materials include strategic plan and an update on status.

We have undertaken a number of new elements related to the pandemic and supporting recovery and student learning. We have also added additional governance elements, which incorporate the board chair, new board member, board secretary, and board coaching cohorts we have established. We have designed a professional learning series to provide training this Spring and Summer for both our board chairs and new school board members. Moreover, we are going to pull together a series of sessions that will allow us to build out a curriculum for our coaching work.

Other additional elements include the support we are providing for strategic ARP spending, support for the effective use of instructional technology, interoperability, and cybersecurity elements/support. Although some of these items are not new goals as much as new tactics.

**Coronavirus Resources**

This section of the materials provides an updated list of conference calls held for various job-alike groups to provide weekly/biweekly support, a screenshot of the Council’s coronavirus resource web page, and copies of all the resources released to assist districts in Covid recovery. The website now has a detailed section that provides a single access point for all of our resources for districts, including those related to social-emotional learning and mental health.

This section also includes a copy of a combined resource for the strategic spending of ARP funds. This resource has been widely disseminated across the country. The document details our recommendations (coming from a high-level advisory committee of district leaders) across a number of topical areas. Through grant support, we are now in the process of taking this report and creating rubrics for implementation, so districts can assess where they are.

**Nominations**

Barbara Jenkins presented her appointments to subcommittees and task forces, including the chairs of each group.
Annual report

Ray Hart presented the annual report, highlights of the past year. Immediate past chair Michael O’Neill and former Executive Director Michael Casserly both addressed the group, praising the achievements of the organization, Council members, and staff over the course of a challenging year. Barbara Jenkins then introduced Eric Gordon, chair of the ED search committee, and thanked him for his leadership. Gordon then addressed the group.

Conferences and Meetings

Ray Hart reviewed the lineup of upcoming meetings in 2022, which will be held in person.

The fall conference in 2022 will be held in Orlando, the 2023 conference will be held in San Diego, the 2024 conference will now be held in Dallas (this was postponed from 2020), and the 2025 conference will now be held in Philadelphia. Boston has been pushed back to 2026 to accommodate this change.

Communications

Ray Hart gave the report on the Council’s communications activities. This section begins with statements on a number of topics, including Mike Casserly’s final statement as Executive Director on critical race theory.

The materials then provide a sample of articles that feature quotes from Council staff or highlight Council activities and resources, press releases that have come out since our last meeting in March, a survey of public relations executives, the latest Urban Educator (which is now all digital), the organization’s monthly social media report, and information on the Bernard Harris scholarship program, including a list of winners and applicants.

Ray Hart thanked the communications team for their incredible work on these programs and resources, and for the annual conference.

Legislation

Ray Hart introduced the legislative team of Jeff Simering and Manish Naik, as well as our general counsel Julie Wright Halbert.

Simering then provided a brief update on legislative developments. According to the Treasury Department the US has spent more money this fiscal year than any other time in history. Interestingly, the deficit was slightly smaller given the rebound of the economy. But with a razor thin majority in the House and Senate, what we’re seeing is very little political consensus in Congress on anything. We were recently on the brink of a government shutdown, which was only narrowly avoided with a Continuing Resolution. There are serious disagreements even within the Democratic party which are holding up President Biden’s agenda. Given the need for a 60 vote super-majority to pass legislation
in the Senate, some degree of bipartisan compromise is necessary, and we’re just not seeing it. The only congressional actions that don’t require super-majority are budget reconciliation votes and some departmental specific actions.

Unfortunately, school facilities funding is not in the current Bipartisan Infrastructure bill, although it is in the proposed budget reconciliation bill. Passing the reconciliation bill will require consensus among Democrats as all votes are needed and getting this consensus will require paring back the House bill by 40-50%. So, the current issue is what programs will be pared back and what will remain. And unfortunately, school programs and investments don’t have the same support as programs or direct subsidies that put money into families’ pockets directly, particularly in the lead up to a midterm election year. But for fiscal year 2023 another budget reconciliation bill is possible. This will be considered sometime next year. Amidst this backdrop of legislative warfare, the Biden administration is churning out a host of additional initiatives, guidance, requirements, and rules (common with Democratic administrations), so it falls on us to ensure and counsel that these initiatives and requirements should be carefully crafted.

Simering then reiterated the point that the annual appropriations bill will need a super majority to pass, so there is a possibility that there will be so much gridlock that we end up with a continuing resolution that keeps current funding levels in place, which would place pressure on districts.

The legislation section of the Board materials includes letters to Capitol Hill, summaries of key administration proposals and agency initiatives/guidance, and comments on the FCC connectivity program, OSERS special education guidance, immigration, and maintenance of effort reporting requirements.

There is also a copy of an award for best education brief, awarded to the Council and Husch Blackwell by the American Law Association for our amicus brief opposing DeVos’ private school funding effort. The compelling analysis and arguments made in the brief allowed us to prevail, saving hundreds of millions of dollars for urban schools. This is the second time we’ve won this award.

Simering then discussed the issue of states offsetting COVID relief aid to districts, particularly in Florida, in violation of federal law on Maintenance of Effort. This has resulted in a warning from the Department of Education.

Research

Ray Hart then introduced the research team, including the Council’s new Director of Research Akisha Sarfo, and announced the departure of Research Manager Renata Lyons.

The research section begins with an overview of the Council’s current research activities. The materials include updates on our work with NAGB, including comments and presentations. In response to a letter petitioning NAGB not to hold NAEP in 2021, the
assessment was postponed to 2022. The materials provide a list of upcoming assessments, which will now be administered on even-numbered years.

There is also a copy of a Rand survey on updates during pandemic, and a copy of the Council’s latest report, Mirrors or Windows. This report presents a unique analysis of NAEP results that provides a picture of how urban districts are helping to overcome the impacts of poverty and discrimination for urban students. Ray Hart then discussed the results and main findings in detail with the group, including standout districts and patterns over the study period.

Akisha Sarfo then introduced herself to the group. Members praised the Mirrors report, and the accompanying dashboard.

Minutes

Barbara Jenkins presented the minutes of the March 21, 2021 virtual meeting of the Board of Directors and July 9-10, 2021 meeting of the Executive Committee in Portland, Oregon.

A motion to approve the minutes passed without dissent by virtual vote.

Audit

Ray Hart gave the Audit Report. The materials provide an update on dues payments. All districts, with the exception of Chicago and Pittsburgh, have paid their dues. In addition, Toronto and Providence have paid, although this isn’t reflected in the materials (the payments arrived today).

Ray Hart then called groups attention to the approved budget for 2021-22, compared to the revised budget. There are two things to note. Our revenues are now $457,411. This reflects the PPP loan we took out last year, which has been officially forgiven, and doesn’t need to be paid back. In addition, offsets from external grants are now reflected in this revised budget. We are now projected to have roughly a million in revenue in the coming year. This doesn’t include several forthcoming grants in excess of $2 million.

Our asset allocations are within strategic targets, and the materials provide details on these allocations for this quarter. We’ve also reduced slightly down our projections for revenue from our investments.

A motion to accept the Audit Subcommittee status report passed without dissent by voice vote.

By-Laws

Darrel Woo gave the report of the By-Laws Subcommittee. During a May call of the By-Laws Subcommittee, there was a recommendation to specifically add HBCU’s as ex officio representatives of colleges of education to the language in the by-laws concerning membership (article IV). However, since the language in the by-laws does not include a
specific number, there is nothing in the by-laws that prevents additional colleges/universities from serving as ex officio representatives.

Therefore, the question to the By-laws Subcommittee was: Do we amend the language to include specific reference to HBCU’s/MSI’s or do we advise that there is nothing in the by-laws that prevents additional representation?

The bylaws sub-committee is recommending adding language specific to HBCU’s/MSI’s

The original text is as follows:

Section 4.04 Colleges of Education. Colleges of Education located in or serving cities that are members of the Council of the Great City Schools may be represented ex officio on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors and may meet and confer with the Council on issues of joint concern as necessary.

And the recommended revision would be as follows:

Section 4.04 Colleges/Schools of Education. Colleges or schools of Education, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and/or Minority Serving Institutions, located in or serving cities that are members of the Council of the Great City Schools, may be represented on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors by a maximum of two ex officio members, who may meet and confer with the Council on issues of joint concern as necessary.

A motion to approve the update to the membership language of the by-laws passed without dissent by voice vote.

Chair Jenkins stated the next step is to reach out to HBCUs and MSIs for interest in serving as ex-officio on the executive committee, and recommendations should be brought back to the executive committee for a vote. Mike Casserly concurred with the next step and stated recruitment can be done in a number of ways at the prerogative of the executive director.

Membership

Sharon Contreras gave the report of the Membership Subcommittee. Fayette County Public Schools, the school district serving Lexington, Kentucky, has applied for membership, and was approved by the executive committee on October 21, 2021. The district meets all membership criteria (data is provided in the membership section of the materials).

Another application has been received from the Phoenix Union High School District, but this came in too late to be considered at this meeting. There is a slight complication with this membership request though, given that Phoenix is one of the only districts in the country that splits the elementary schools from high schools. So together they would have qualified, but they do not meet the enrollment requirement on their own. However, if we
do make an exception, we wouldn’t have to worry about setting any sort of precedent. Given that they are unique in this structure, this exception wouldn’t apply to any other district. The Subcommittee will meet on this and make a recommendation for the next Executive Committee meeting.

A motion to accept the membership application of Fayette County passed without dissent by voice vote.

Achievement and Professional Development

Sonja Santelises gave the report of the Achievement and Professional Development Task Force. She thanked her co-chairs and invited Deb Shanley to discuss the recent Task Force meeting. Many of the topics covered in the Task Force agenda have already been discussed today. The Task Force covered the Mirrors report. Districts also now have access to 2019 KPI data, allowing them to benchmark their work and to chart the impact of the pandemic on instructional outcomes. In our conversation we also focused on the importance of providing access to high-quality grade level content and addressing unfinished learning. In our efforts to support students in the aftermath of school closures we should be cautious about the misuse of remediation when it removes students from grade-level learning. Shanley then highlighted the work of Broward County and San Diego in addressing unfinished learning.

The materials provide an overview of the various projects and resources coming from the academic team. One of the newest documents is a professional development framework. Our regular meetings and Zoom call with instructional staff have also continued to be very impactful, and we are continuing to provide districts with strategic support team reviews. For example, the materials include a copy of a recent review of special education services conducted at the request of Norfolk Public Schools.

In terms of upcoming projects, the team will be working on updating the curriculum framework to reflect pandemic priorities and lessons learned. We will also be conducting an SST review of Atlanta Public Schools’ Office of Student Support Services.

The materials provide details on a project on early reading accelerators. This is a partnership between the San Antonio Independent School District, Student Achievement Partners, and the Council with funding from the Kellogg Foundation, and the continuation of work begun with Metro Nashville. Robin Hall then gave a brief background of the project.

Finally, you will find a flyer for a new convening specifically for Chiefs of Schools. This is going to be a biweekly meeting.

Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education
Siad Ali and Jesus Jara gave the report of the Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education. He thanked districts for their work welcoming refugees and immigrants from around the world. He also thanked his co-chairs and asked them to say a few words.

Gabi Uro updated the group on the Task Force meeting. It is not clear that investments currently being made with federal funds specifically target the needs of ELs. Staffing shortages was another area of discussion for the Task Force. These shortages are only exacerbating pre-existing shortages of bilingual support staff and teachers. The group also discussed the challenges of virtual instruction, which creates difficulties in addressing student needs. Assessment is another challenge.

Finally, during the Task Force discussion Guilford County presented data on their work with the 3Ls approach for ELs and other students struggling with reading.

**Task Force on Black and Latino Young Men and Boys**

Bill Hite gave the report of the Task Force on Black and Latino Young Men and Boys. In our Task Force meetings we have been discussing disproportionality and its impact on student outcomes. Data provided in the materials show that this impact is widely felt across all key performance indicators. During the fall conference we had the opportunity to hear from the Houston Independent School District and Wichita Public Schools about their work in this area. We want to continue to hear from and highlight the work of our colleagues who are making inroads.

Ray Hart then informed the Board that we are currently working to extend data collection to young women and girls of colors, so that we will have complimentary data sets. And we’ve begun conversations about providing opportunities for connecting networks of those doing this work across member districts.

**Task Force on Black and Latina Young Women and Girls**

Sharon Contreras and Shavonna Holman gave the report for the Task Force on Black and Latina Young Women and Girls. During the meeting Oakland Unified School District gave a presentation on strategies for raising black and Latina academic outcomes. We also heard a presentation from Atlanta Public Schools on safety, which included a map showing hotspots for human trafficking. This includes nearly all of our districts. We covered some warning signs and discussed preventative policies and community outreach strategies. We’d now like to develop strategies and training materials to be shared throughout the Council membership and would recommend future sessions on this topic.

Ray Hart suggested that we could host a special webinar on the issue, to be publicized widely.
The group then discussed what types of data should be collected and how to inform necessary partnerships with stakeholders to protect and raise up our girls of color. We are also looking to survey districts on what is working across districts to support girls of color. The Task Force chairs asked for help from the Council’s Research Director Akisha Sarfo on what data points could be collected as part of this effort.

**Leadership, Governance, Management, and Finance**

Guadalupe Guerrero gave the report of the Task Force on Leadership, Governance, Management, and Finance. He thanked his co-chairs. The materials include an agenda from the Task Force discussion. School board governance and leadership development have been an emphasis for us. Governance coaching cohorts are currently being developed and overseen by AJ Crabill. This coaching is focused on student outcome-oriented leadership. As a result of this support many participants have reported a marked shift in their focus and an evolution in their work.

This section of the materials also provides information on the Harvard leadership institute. We held the institute virtually this year, but attendance was good and participants indicated that it succeeded in making an impact on their work. We hope to return to an in-person format for next year’s institute.

On the management and finance side, it is important to recognize the impact of the regular meetings of operational, financial, and other role alike meetings throughout pandemic. This has provided an invaluable opportunity to share challenges and ideas and hear from peers about promising practices and emerging lessons.

The ongoing collection and sharing of operational key performance indicators has also been extremely helpful during this time. Whether it is concerning the allocation of finances, the deployment of technology, or facilities issues such as ventilation and air quality procedures, it helps to be able to benchmark our work.

Strategic support teams have also been ongoing over the past year. We continue to be available to members who want to avail themselves of this process, which is rigorous and hard-hitting but designed to provide concrete, actionable guidance.

**Wrap up**

Chair Barbara Jenkins acknowledged that this is the final meeting for Leslie Grant from Atlanta and Van Henri White from Rochester and thanked them for their service. She then commended Council leadership and staff for hosting a successful meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:42pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Ray Hart, Executive Director