COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

OCTOBER 21, 2017

CLEVELAND, OH

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
Board of Directors Meeting
October 21, 2017
Cleveland

AGENDA

CONVENE   8:30 a.m.

A. Introduction and Quorum Call

B. Minutes

C. Committee-of-the-Whole

 D. Report of the Executive Committee

ADJOURN 12:00 Noon

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

OUR VISION

Urban public schools exist to teach students to the highest standards of educational excellence. As the primary American institution responsible for weaving the strands of our society into a cohesive fabric, we — the leaders of America's Great City Schools — see a future where the nation cares for all children, expects their best, appreciates their diversity, invests in their futures, and welcomes their participation in the American dream.

The Great City Schools are places where this vision becomes tangible and those ideals are put to the test. We pledge to commit ourselves to the work of advancing empathy, equity, justice, and tolerance, and we vow to do everything we can to vigorously resist the forces of ignorance, fear, and prejudice, as we teach and guide our students. We will keep our commitments, and as we do and as society supports our endeavors, cities will become the centers of a strong and equitable nation, with urban public schools successfully teaching our children and building our communities.

OUR MISSION

It is the special mission of America's urban public schools to educate the nation's most diverse student body to the highest academic standards and prepare them to contribute to our democracy and the global community.

OUR GOALS

To educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards.

To lead, govern and manage our urban public schools in ways that advance the education of our children and inspire the public's confidence.

To build a confident, committed and supportive urban community for raising the achievement of urban public schoolchildren.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Executive Committee

2017-2018

OFFICERS

Chair of the Board: Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent

Chair-Elect: Lawrence Feldman, Miami-Dade County School Board

Secretary/Treasurer: Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO

Immediate Past-Chair: Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board

MEMBERS

Thomas Ahart, Des Moines Superintendent
Juan Cabrera, El Paso Superintendent
Richard Carranza, Houston Superintendent
Sharon Contreras, Guilford County Superintendent
Marnell Cooper, Baltimore School Board
Paul Cruz, Austin Superintendent
Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Denver School Board
Michael Hinojosa, Dallas Superintendent
William Hite, Philadelphia Superintendent
Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent
Michelle King, Los Angeles Superintendent
Ronald Lee, Dayton School Board
Aurora Lora, Oklahoma City Superintendent
Lacey Merica, Omaha School Board
Barbara Nevergold, Buffalo School Board
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Committee
Ashley Paz, Fort Worth School Board
Elisa Snelling, Anchorage School Board
Susan Valdes, Hillsborough County School Board
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board

Ex Officio
Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College CUNY Dean

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
Board of Directors (as of October 10, 2017)

CITY	SUPERINTENDENTS	BOARD MEMBERS
Albuquerque	Raquel Reedy	David Peercy
Anchorage	Deena Bishop	Elisa Snelling
Arlington	Marcelo Cavazos	Jamie Sullins
Atlanta	Meria Carstarphen	Leslie Grant
Austin	Paul Cruz	Kendall Pace
Baltimore	Sonja Santelises	Marnell Cooper
Birmingham	Lisa Herring	Wardine Alexander
Boston	Tommy Chang	Michael O'Neill
Bridgeport	Aresta Johnson (Interim)	Sauda Baraka
Broward Co.	Robert W. Runcie	Laurie Rich Levinson
Buffalo	Kriner Cash	Barbara Nevergold
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	Clayton Wilcox	Mary T. McCray
Chicago	Forrest Claypool	Jaime Guzman
Cincinnati	Laura Mitchell	Melanie Bates
Clark County	Pat Skorkowsky	Linda P. Cavazos
Cleveland	Eric Gordon	Denise Link
Columbus	Daniel J. Good	Gary Baker II
Dallas	Michael Hinojosa	Lew Blackburn
Dayton	Rhonda Corr	Ronald C. Lee
Denver	Tom Boasberg	Allegra "Happy" Haynes
Des Moines	Thomas Ahart	Cindy Elsbernd
Detroit	Nikolai Vitti	Steven Rhodes
Duval County	Patricia Willis	Paula Wright
El Paso	Juan Cabrera	Dori Fenenbock
Fort Worth	Kent P. Scribner	Ashley Paz
Fresno	Robert Nelson	Brooke Ashjian
Guilford County	Sharon Contreras	Linda Welborn
Hawaii Department of Education	Christina Kishimoto	Lance Mizumoto
Hillsborough County	Jeff Eakins	Susan Valdes
Houston	Richard Carranza	Diana Davila
Indianapolis	Lewis Ferebee	Samuel Odle
Jackson	Freddrick Murray (Interim)	Rickey Jones
Jefferson County	Martin Pollio	Diane Porter
Kansas City	Mark Bedell	Ajia Morris
Long Beach	Christopher Steinhauser	Felton Williams
Los Angeles	Michelle King	Kelly Gonez
Miami-Dade County	Alberto Carvalho	Lawrence Feldman
Milwaukee	Darienne Driver	Michael Bonds
Minneapolis	Ed Graff	Don Samuels
Nashville	Shawn Joseph	JoAnn Brannon
Newark	Christopher Cerf	Antoinette Baskerville-Richardson
New Orleans	Henderson Lewis Jr.	N/A
New York City	Carmen Fariña	N/A
Norfolk	Melinda Boone	Rodney Jordan
Oakland	Kyla Johnson-Trammell	Jumoke Hinton Hodge
Oklahoma City	Aurora Lora	Paula Lewis
Omaha	Mark A. Evans	Lacey Merica
Orlando	Barbara Jenkins	William Sublette
Palm Beach County	Robert Avossa	Marcia Andrews

Philadelphia	William R. Hite, Jr.	Marjorie G. Neff
Pinellas County	Michael Grego	Peggy O'Shea
Pittsburgh	Anthony Hamlet	Thomas Sumpter Jr.
Portland	Guadalupe Guerrero	Julie Esparza Brown
Providence	Christopher Maher	Nicholas Hemond
Richmond	Thomas Kranz	Dawn Page
Rochester	Barbara Deane-Williams	Van Henri White
Sacramento	Jorge Aguilar	Darrel Woo
St. Louis	Kelvin Adams	Daranetta Clinkscale
St. Paul	Joe Gothard	Jon Schumacher
San Antonio	Pedro Martinez	Patti Radle
San Diego	Cindy Marten	Richard Barrera
San Francisco	Vincent Matthews	Mark Sanchez
Santa Ana	Stefanie P. Phillips	TBD
Seattle	Larry Nyland	Jill Geary
Shelby County (Memphis)	Dorsey E. Hopson, II, Esq.	Kevin Woods
Toledo	Romules L. Durant	Chris Varwig
Tulsa	Deborah Gist	Lana Turner-Addison
Washington, D.C.	Antwan Wilson	N/A
Wichita	Alicia Thompson	Jeff Davis

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Staff

Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Teri Trinidad, Director of Administration, Finance & Conferences
Alisa Adams, Finance Manager
Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant
Terry Tabor, Conference Manager
Angel Gooch, Administrative and Conference Specialist
Jeff Simering, Director of Legislation
Julie Beth Halbert, Legislative Counsel
Manish Naik, Legislative Manager
Gabriela Uro, Director of ELL Policy & Research
David Chi-Wai Lai, Special Projects Manager
Henry Duvall, Director of Communications
Tonya Harris, Communications Manager
Darrell Robinson, Communications Specialist
Raymond Hart, Director of Research
Renata Uzzell, Research Manager
Moses Palacios, Legislative and Research Manager
Ashley Ison, Research and ELL Policy Specialist
Ricki Price-Baugh, Director of Academic Achievement
Denise Walston, Director of Mathematics
Robin Hall, Director of Language Arts and Literacy
Robert Carlson, Director of Management Services
Michell Yorkman, Special Projects Manager
Amanda Corcoran, Special Projects Manager

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MARCH 12, 2017

Felton Williams, Chair of the Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 8:45 am. Present members introduced themselves, and a quorum was established by 9:05 am.

Minutes

Felton Williams presented the minutes of the October 22, 2016 meeting of the Board of Directors at the Annual Conference in Miami, FL, and the January 27-28, 2017 meeting of the Executive Committee in Austin, TX. A motion to approve the minutes passed by voice vote.

Update to Vision, Mission, Goals Statement

An amendment to the Council's vision, mission, and goals statement was suggested by Larry Feldman at the Executive Committee meeting in Miami in October. The additional new wording is as follows:

"We pledge to commit ourselves to the work of advancing empathy, equity, justice, and tolerance, and we vow to do everything we can to vigorously resist the forces of ignorance, fear, and prejudice, as we teach and guide our students."

A motion to approve the new language passed by voice vote.

Nominations

The nominations subcommittee met by phone earlier this month to nominate officers and members to serve on the Executive Committee. The resulting nominations are as follows:

Officers

- Darienne Driver (Milwaukee Superintendent) will serve as Chair of the Board beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.
- Lawrence Feldman (Miami-Dade County School Board) will serve as Chair-Elect of the Board beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.
- Eric Gordon (Cleveland CEO) will serve as Secretary/Treasurer of the Board beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.
- Felton Williams (Long Beach School Board) will serve as Immediate Past Chair of the Board beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.

A motion to accept all nominations for officers passed by voice vote.

Vacancies

- William Hite (Philadelphia Superintendent) will fill the vacancy created by Jose Banda (Sacramento Superintendent), whose term was set to expire June 30, 2017. William Hite will serve a first three-year term, through June 30, 2020.
- Sharon Contreras (Guilford County Superintendent) will fill the vacancy created by Michael Hanson (Fresno Superintendent), whose term was set to expire June 30, 2017. Sharon Contreras will serve a first three-year term, through June 30, 2020.
- Richard Carranza (Houston Superintendent) will serve the unexpired term of Pamela Knowles (Portland School Board), whose term expires June 30, 2019.
- Susan Valdes (Hillsborough County School Board) will fill the vacancy created by JoAnn Brannon (Nashville School Board), whose term was set to expire June 30, 2017. Susan Valdes will serve a first three-year term, through June 30, 2020.
- Lacey Merica (Omaha School Board) will fill the vacancy created by Eric Gordon (Cleveland CEO), who has been nominated as Secretary/Treasurer. Lacey Merica will serve a first three-year term, through June 30, 2020.

A motion to accept all nominations to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee passed by voice vote.

Confirmation of Appointments and Renewal of Terms

- Michelle King (Los Angeles Superintendent) will serve a first three-year term through June 30, 2020. (She was nominated to fill the vacancy left by Darienne Driver, whose term was set to expire June 30, 2017.)
- Elisa Snelling (Anchorage School Board) will serve the unexpired term of Doretha Edgecomb (Hillsborough County School Board), whose term expires June 30, 2018. (She will then be eligible for a three-year term of her own.)
- Barbara Nevergold (Buffalo School Board) will serve the unexpired term of Cedric Gray (Jackson Superintendent), whose term expires June 30, 2019. (She will then be eligible for a three-year term of her own.)

A motion to affirm previous nominations passed by voice vote.

Renewal of Terms

- Juan Cabrera (El Paso Superintendent) will serve a first three-year term ending June 30, 2020.
- Happy Haynes (Denver School Board) will serve a first three-year term ending June 30, 2020.
- Michael Hinojosa (Dallas Superintendent) will serve a first three-year term ending June 30, 2020.
- Barbara Jenkins (Orange County Superintendent) will serve a first three-year term ending June 30, 2020.

- Ronald Lee (Dayton School Board) will serve a first three-year term ending June 30, 2020.
- Ashley Paz (Fort Worth School Board) will serve a first three-year term ending June 30, 2020.

A motion to accept all renewals of terms passed by voice vote.

<u>Conferences and Meetings</u>

Michael Casserly, executive director, presented the meeting lineup for 2017. The annual conference will be hosted by Cleveland, OH, October 18-22. Eric Gordon updated the group on the planning process. Confirmed speakers include Van Jones and Bill Gates. We have released a call for presentations—and the deadline is the end of the first week in April, but early submissions are encouraged.

The 2018 annual conference will be held in Baltimore, MD, October 24-28, and the 2019 conference will be held in Louisville. We will now seeking bids for cities to host conferences in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The criteria for hosting are provided in the materials.

<u>Communications</u>

Casserly reviewed recent Council statements and press releases, as well as a sample of recent articles and editorials. He invited board members to let us know if our media outreach or editorializing was not reflecting their positions or meeting their needs.

The materials also provided the number of downloads for various common core implementation tools developed by the Council, as well as a report tracking the Council's social media presence. In addition, the materials included the latest edition of *The Urban Educator,* and provided information on the Bernard Harris Scholarships, an effort to bolster the number of students of color going into STEM fields. Casserly introduced the communications team, including its newest member, Communications Specialist Darrell Robinson.

<u>Legislation</u>

Most of our legislative materials are provided in our conference briefing book, but a few materials were included for the board of directors. These included a recent amicus brief the Council filed before the U.S. Supreme Court in the Endrew F. case, and information on an upcoming legal webinar on the rights of immigrant students, scheduled for 2:30 pm on March 23. Casserly encouraged members to register for this offering. He then introduced and thanked the legislative team.

<u>Research</u>

The Board materials provided an overview of research department activities. The section begins with information on the Council's new academic KPIs. The organization already has a well-developed set of operational, non-academic KPIs, and this extends that work into the instructional realm. Last year we piloted the collection of the first set of data on

draft academic KPIs across the membership. We are now collecting the next round of data—and we are hoping to have data for 2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16 ready for the annual conference in Cleveland. We are also asking for corrections to earlier data to ensure more robust longitudinal comparisons across the three years.

Casserly then reviewed some sample graphs provided in the research materials to illustrate the potential utility of the data. Some of the indicators are also designed to correspond to the Males of Color pledge, providing a way of tracking progress on the things we pledged to do to improve outcomes for males of color in our districts. We are now working on developing an electronic system for collecting and using the data.

The Board materials provided a list of both instructional and non-instructional KPIs.

Council staff is also working on an analysis of NAEP data, which should be ready in time for the fall conference. The analysis will look at which of the districts have been able to overcome the effects of poverty on achievement. We also plan to conduct some site visits to see if we can identify why some districts seem to do a better job at overcoming these odds, and to document some of the instructional practices behind that progress.

Casserly then thanked the research team.

Achievement Task Force

Eric Gordon gave the report of the Achievement Task Force. He encouraged members to consult the overview of academic department activities, which included a list of resources and materials. At the task force meeting, the Council team presented the latest draft of a framework for developing and implementing a high quality, standards-aligned curriculum. The document outlines seven key features of a strong curriculum, and provides recommendations on design, implementation, and continuous assessment and improvement.

At the task force meeting the research team also reviewed trend data that showed the persistency of achievement gaps, and the problem of proficiency scores not providing data on college and career readiness.

There was also an update on the Wallace Foundation PSI initiative. The Council is half way through its third round of site visits to PSI districts to assess their progress in the area of principal supervisory and support structures.

Finally, the Council's latest instructional SST report involved a review of academic programs in Pittsburgh, and this report was provided in the materials.

The Research, Curriculum, and IT Directors Conference will be held in Pittsburg this year, July 11-14, 2017.

Casserly then thanked the research and academic teams.

Males of Color Initiative

Ray Hart updated the Board on the Council's Males of Color work. A preconference was held earlier this week, which focused on four critical areas in response to our pledge, including socioemotional supports; academics and curriculum; college and career readiness; and leadership, communications, and legal issues. A report will be produced.

Casserly indicated that the organization would continue to emphasize this project since there is considerable need and our work on it pre-dated the MBK initiative from the previous administration.

Professional Development Task Force

Deborah Shanley gave the report of the Professional Development Task Force. She called attention to a book that has been published that highlights urban district/university partnerships. She thanked all the districts who contributed.

Bilingual Task Force

Ashley Paz gave the report of the Bilingual Task Force. She started by thanking the Council's ELL staff. At the meeting the Council team presented the math materials criteria, a resource to help district choose rigorous materials for ELLs in the area of mathematics. Staff also provided an update on the joint materials procurement project and the online professional development project. The task force meeting also included a discussion about Council steps to protect and serve bilingual, immigrant, and refugee students.

Ashley Paz reminded members that there was an ELL survey out in the field, and encouraged members to provide data.

Discussion then followed about how districts could network and share resources to address issues as they arise around immigration. Casserly applauded member districts for being vigilant and aggressive. He informed members about a members-only website that lists all policies concerning sanctuary cities, as well as school district statements and publications, links to homeland security resources, and other materials.

Circling back to the issue of a joint purchasing agreement, Casserly informed the group that there was still time to join as a charter member, and districts can use their own purchasing regulations. He thanked LAUSD for its leadership and support of the initiative.

Leadership, Management, and Governance Task Force

Jose Banda gave the report for the Leadership, Management, and Governance task force. The organization's SST work is ongoing, and materials included one recent example—a report on the transportation system in the Omaha school system. The materials also provided a list of SSTs conducted in cities around the nation. The task force was also updated on the Council's school board governance work.

Robert Carlson then updated the group on the Council's development program for aspiring CFOs. The Council is in the fifth year of this work, and 55 people have gone through the program, with 15 having received a certificate of achievement.

Finance Task Force

Periodically the Council presents a district with a financial excellence award. The criteria is extremely rigorous, and this award has only been given a handful of times. We currently have another contender—the Fresno Unified School District. The finance review team is scheduled to visit the district in the final step of the awards process.

Audit

Larry Feldman gave the audit report. He started by thanking the audit committee, and Teri Trinidad for her strong stewardship of the organization's finances. The materials provided the independent auditor's report, which once again found no material weaknesses or exceptions. The auditor's recommendations have already been accepted and implemented.

The materials provide a status report of dues payments. A couple of districts have paid, or have indicated that payment was forthcoming. Charleston had not paid (due to a recent change in district leadership), and neither had Santa Ana, which will officially be dropped at the end of this program year. But overall, the state of dues payments was on track with the organization's original budget assumptions.

Casserly then reviewed the rest of the budget materials, including a more detailed breakdown of asset allocations. The materials also included a proposed budget for 2017/18, and the dues structure for 2017/18.

A motion to approve the budget for 2017/18 passed by voice vote.

By-Laws

Darienne Driver gave the report of the by-laws subcommittee. The by-laws will be updated to reflect the Council's new office address.

A motion to accept this change to the by-laws passed by voice vote.

Membership

Pam Knowles gave the report of the Membership Subcommittee. She asked for approval of the application of Salt Lake City, which meets membership criteria. A motion to approve membership of Salt Lake City passed by voice vote.

The organization also received an application for membership from Toronto, Canada. This prompted a discussion with the executive committee in Austin about whether we wanted to become an international organization. The by-laws are silent on the issue. The Executive Committee decided it would be open to the possibility, with the understanding that the Council couldn't offer any legislative advocacy for members outside of the US. Members

of the board then discussed the possibility of an international membership category. Members urged caution, but agreed they would be open to Toronto and other international members, as long as they subscribed to the organization's focus. The next step will be for the By-laws Committee to work with the Membership Committee and Council staff to conduct a more definitive assessment of how the move would impact the Council. In the meantime, members suggested inviting Toronto to the upcoming annual conference, and informing them of our intent to move forward with their application.

Address by the Secretary of Education

The new Secretary of Education will address the group at lunch on Monday, March 13. We have invited every Secretary from every administration, and it is clearly in our interest to establish a good working relationship with the department. Casserly asked the group for its traditional graciousness to our guests. Members agreed.

In closing, Casserly thanked Felton Williams for his leadership as Chair of the Board over the past year, and presented him with a commemorative plaque.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
PORTLAND, OR
July 21-22, 2017

<u>**Friday, July 21, 2017**</u>

Present:

Officers:

Darienne Driver, Chair, Milwaukee Superintendent
Lawrence Feldman, Chair-elect, Miami-Dade County School Board
Felton Williams, Immediate Past Chair, Long Beach School Board

Members:

Juan Cabrera, El Paso Superintendent
Richard Carranza, Houston Superintendent
Sharon Contreras, Guilford County Superintendent
Marnell Cooper, Baltimore City School Board
Paul Cruz, Austin Superintendent
Allegra Haynes, Denver School Board
Michael Hinojosa, Dallas Superintendent
William Hite, Philadelphia Superintendent
Michelle King, Los Angeles Superintendent
Ronald Lee, Dayton School Board
Aurora Lora, Oklahoma City Superintendent
Lacey Merica, Omaha School Board
Barbara Nevergold, Buffalo School Board
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Board
Ashley Paz, Fort Worth School Board
Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College, CUNY Dean
Elisa Snelling, Anchorage School Board
Susan Valdes, Hillsborough County School Board
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board

Absent:

Tom Ahart, Des Moines Superintendent
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO
Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent

Darienne Driver, Chair of the Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Members introduced themselves and a quorum was established.

Minutes

Darienne Driver presented the minutes of the March 11, 2017 meeting of the Executive Committee and the March 12, 2017 meeting of the Board of Directors at the Legislative Conference in Washington, DC. A motion to approve the minutes passed by voice vote.

Nominations

Committee materials provided a list of all nominations by Board Chair Darienne Driver for 2017-18 chairs and members of the audit, by-laws, and membership subcommittees, as well as the achievement, professional development, bilingual, leadership and governance, and finance task forces.

A motion to officially combine the achievement and professional development task forces passed by voice vote. A motion to create a task force on Males of Color passed by voice vote.

By-Laws

No report. A copy of the current by-laws was included in committee materials.

Audit

Michael Casserly, the Council's executive director, reviewed the audit materials, including a preliminary final budget report for the 2016-17 budget year (ending June 30, 2017). Documents included the operations budget, categorical programs, and a combined full budget. The organization's annual budget is about $7 million, of which 47 percent comes from membership dues, 32 percent from various grants and contracts, 18 percent from sponsor contributions, 7 percent from conference registration fees, 3.5 percent from interest and dividends on investments, and less than one percent from royalties, etc.

Casserly also provided a detailed breakdown of organizational expenditures, including operating expenses by function and category. He drew the group's attention to the organization's surplus for 2016-17 that was caused by not having to pay rent for the year and by off-setting external grants. Rent payments in the organization's new headquarters started as of July 1, 2017.

Casserly then covered each individual grant, and the activities they supported. He indicated that there was roughly $569K in unspent funds from a previous Gates Foundation grant, and the foundation was expected to approve a proposal for reallocating these funds.

Casserly also described the annual budgeting process and timeline, using the 2017-18 budget as an example.

The audit report also presented the state of membership dues. Four districts were projected not to pay. For new committee members, Casserly explained that New Orleans was exempted from dues. Charleston has also failed to pay, and Michael O'Neill, Boston school

committee chair, informed the group that his efforts to reach out to district leadership had been unsuccessful so far.

Committee audit materials also included the dues letter for the year and a preliminary first-time multi-year budget that the Gates Foundation encouraged the organization to develop. The multi-year budget projected that the organization would remain in good financial health for the foreseeable future. Members then discussed the pros and cons of retaining its policy of requiring that the organization have a carryover fund that was equivalent to at least 50 percent of the annual general fund budget, but the committee took no action.

Casserly indicated that the Gates Foundation had also suggested that the organization conduct some strategic planning, given the expected transition in the group's leadership over the next several years. Discussion followed about starting the January executive committee meeting early to conduct a strategic planning session. The committee agreed and suggested enlisting a facilitator. Casserly welcomed recommendations for facilitators.

Committee materials also provided information on the organization's investment asset allocations. A concern was raised by Sharon Contreras, superintendent of Guilford County, that some of the Council's funds were held in JP Morgan accounts, which were partially invested in private prisons. The question was raised about whether the organization had a policy on this issue. The committee agreed that the group should have such a policy governing the social responsibility of companies that the Council invested in.

Finally, the audit materials included the Council's accounting policies and personnel manual, with changes recommended from the latest external audit that were approved by the committee at its January meeting. In addition, the materials contained a change to the personnel manual on the use of unused sick leave.

Larry Feldman, Miami-Dade County school board chair, suggested adding language that would require written assurances by staff on possible conflicts of interest. Casserly agreed to work with Mr. Feldman on the language.

A motion to accept the Audit report passed by voice vote.

Membership

Three districts were applying for membership in the Council—Peoria, IL; Garland, TX; and Aurora, CO. Membership Subcommittee Chair Larry Feldman reviewed the membership criteria and indicated that it did not appear that Peoria and Garland met the criteria. Membership applications for both were denied.

Aurora, however, appeared to meet the membership criteria, but Mr. Feldman asked Denver school board member Happy Haynes for input. She confirmed that the district was urban in nature and recommended approving the district. Others expressed concern that Aurora was not a major city, despite meeting the criteria.

A motion to approve the membership application of Aurora, CO passed by majority vote.

Mr. Feldman closed the discussion by giving an update on the status of the Toronto membership.

Annual Report

Copies of the 2016-17 annual report were distributed to the committee. Immediate Past Chair Felton Williams offered his perspective on the year.

A motion to approve the annual report passed by voice vote.

In addition, the Council provided individualized reports outlining the services that were provided to each member city school district and the return on investment for each member's dues. Present members received early drafts of their individual member-services reports.

Conferences and Meetings

Casserly presented the meeting lineup for the remainder of 2017 and 2018. The winter 2018 meeting of the Executive Committee will be held in Orlando, January 19 and 20, and the summer 2018 meeting will be held in Anchorage, July 20 and 21.

The annual fall conference will be held in Cleveland, October 18-22. A registration brochure was provided in the materials. Confirmed speakers included Van Jones, Rosario Dawson, and Bill Gates.

The annual conference in 2018 will be held in Baltimore, and the 2019 conference will be in Louisville. Casserly indicated that we needed to start the process of selecting a site for 2020 and beyond. Criteria for hosting the annual conference were provided in the materials.

Awards

Casserly explained the various awards programs that the Council had, including the numerous job-alike awards. Applications for the three broader awards (the Green-Garner Award, the Queen Smith Award, and the Shirley Schwartz Award) were included the committee's materials.

Saturday, January 28, 2017

Legislation

Chair Darienne Driver called the executive committee meeting back to order. Jeff Simering, the Council's legislative director, briefed the group on the current legislative landscape in Washington. He discussed a range of issues, including the political tone that was being set, the increasingly partisan nature of Congressional debates, the new administration's emphasis on deregulation, the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act, proposed Medicaid cuts, proposed school-lunch cuts to the Community Eligibility program, federal education appropriations, the Perkins career and technical education bill, sanctuary cities legislation, vouchers and school choice, tax reform, immigration, DACA, and other items.

Title II and the 21st Century After-school programs, in particular, were being targeted by the administration for cuts. Simering then laid out the specifics of the reconciliation process that might allow the Congressional majority to approve much of its agenda on a simple majority vote. Discussion followed on the Council's strategy on these issues.

Simering resumed by describing the recent *Endrew F.* case in the U.S. Supreme Court and what the decision entailed and what it did not. The Council had filed an amicus brief before the court in the case.

After the briefing, there was considerable discussion about how the administration's focus was shifting from the federal level to the state level, where the Trump White House thought it had a better chance of winning. Members of the committee considered its options for strengthening the Council's presence at the state level.

Communications

Committee materials provided an extensive sample of the Council's recent statements, press releases, and articles. The materials also included a series of draft one-pagers aimed at drawing the public's attention to the critical role of urban public schools. Members expressed their concerns that public schools, in general, needed to be more proactive in their marketing in the face of charter competition.

Casserly asked the group for examples of how the organization could be more proactive. Members generally thought that more extensive use of the data the group had on its improvement and better use of social media would be helpful.

Professional Development

This task force was combined with the achievement task force because of the committee's action on the previous day. Deb Shanley, dean of Lehman College, indicated her support for the task force merger to ensure better alignment between professional development efforts and the academic work of the organization.

Finance

Casserly indicated that the Council had recently given its award for excellence in financial management to the Fresno school district, the first district in California to win. The Council only gives this award when a district meets the specified criteria, and over the years only a handful of districts have earned the honor. These award winners provide great examples of sound financial stewardship.

Research

The research section of the committee materials began with the Council's new draft academic KPI data, including results for 2015-16 and trend data from 2013-14. Casserly reviewed the results. Committee members made several observations about the data and how it was displayed. In general, the committee thought the data had considerable power and usefulness, not only for district improvement but to describe progress to the public.

Casserly indicated that the organization eventually wanted to digitize the information, so the members could analyze it on their own.

The committee's materials also included a new and unique analysis of NAEP data that attempted to answer the question about whether urban public schools were overcoming the effects of poverty and other student barriers or simply reflecting them. Preliminary results were shown to the committee at its January meeting in Austin. The results suggested that urban school districts were better at overcoming these effects than private schools, public schools generally, and better in some respects than charter schools. Districts that were particularly "successful" in the analysis included Boston, Austin, Miami, Hillsborough County, Dallas, and Chicago. It also appears that districts that were less likely to overcome these barriers tend to have unusually high rates of abject poverty.

Males of Color Initiative

Materials for the committee included KPIs specifically tied to the males of color pledge that members took in 2014. Casserly reviewed the results and discussion ensued.

The materials also included a proposal from the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. Casserly asked members to review and consider the proposal. Executive Committee members were generally in favor, but wanted the opportunity to discuss it with their district staff. The issue will be taken up at a subsequent meeting.

Achievement

Casserly introduced the task force materials, which included the Council's new curriculum framework, *Supporting Excellence.* Hard copies were distributed to members. The document lays out seven key features of a strong, standards-aligned curriculum, and provides annotated examples of what these features look like in practice.

Materials also included two reports from recent instructional reviews conducted in Kansas City and Sacramento. Casserly discussed implications of the reports and lessons learned.

Next, Casserly described a project undertaken with new funds from the Schusterman Foundation to boost the efficacy of balanced literacy in Nashville. Other member cities are participating as observers and all materials will be open source. The aim of the project is to test a new way of augmenting balanced literacy to produce better results.

The last item in the achievement section of the committee's materials involved the Council's partnership with Kahn Academy and the College Board. The first set of awards were announced, and copies of a document charting district percentages/rankings were distributed. The Council plans to replicate the project this upcoming school year.

Bilingual Education

Casserly summarized three main items in the Council's ELL work. The first was a tool for assessing the alignment and quality of math materials for ELLs. The second was an updated framework for English language arts materials—ELD 3.0. The third initiative involves the

Council's joint procurement project that was designed to use the combined purchasing power of the membership to improve the quality of instructional materials for ELLs. LAUSD is serving as the lead district for this alliance.

Finally, the Council has developed with funding from the Helmsley Foundation a video-based professional development platform to help the membership better support ELLs and struggling learners. These resources were presented at the most recent bilingual education conference, and the bilingual directors were extremely pleased with the product.

<u>Leadership, Governance, and Management</u>

Michael O'Neill, Boston school committee chair, presented the Council's new draft school board governance tool, a resource designed to help school boards focus more squarely on student achievement. Elisa Snelling, school board member from Anchorage, related her experience with the Council's team working with her school board.

In response to a question, Casserly told the group that we will add a draft watermark to the document so that it can be used immediately.

The second item in this section involved the Council's urban school executives program. This is a Council training program for aspiring district non-instructional leaders that continues to build the pipeline of emerging urban school administrators.

The third item presented by Mr. O'Neill was the Council's draft internal auditing report. Casserly indicated that the report would be finalized in time for the fall conference in Cleveland.

Committee materials also included sample results for the annual *Managing for Results* report. The update included information on response rates over the last three years in five categories.

Finally, Mr. O'Neill reported on several recent strategic support teams conducted by the Council, including a review of the organizational structure and staffing of the Dayton Public Schools, and reviews of food services, transportation, and IT programming in the San Antonio Independent School District.

<u>Personnel</u>

The Executive Committee then went into closed session.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

ANNUAL REPORT

2016-17

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair of the Board
Felton Williams
Long Beach School Board

Chair-Elect
Darienne Driver
Milwaukee Superintendent

Secretary/Treasurer
Lawrence Feldman
Miami-Dade County School Board

Immediate Past Chair
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Denver School Board

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Pam Knowles
Portland School Board

Ronald Lee
Dayton School Board

Aurora Lora
Oklahoma City Superintendent

Barbara Nevergold
Buffalo School Board

Michael O'Neill
Boston School Committee

Ashley Paz
Fort Worth School Board

Elisa Snelling
Anchorage School Board

Paula Wright
Duval County School Board

Ex Officio
Deborah Shanley
Brooklyn College CUNY Dean

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June 30, 2017

It is my honor and privilege to offer my thoughts on my tenure as the chair of the Council of the Great City Schools for this 2016-17 annual report.

In reflecting on the 60th Anniversary of the Council, the nation and world was surprised by the election of Mr. Donald Trump as President of the United States. There were major assumptions going into the election that a Democratic president would once again reside in the White House, and with it, an opportunity to continue a collaborative working relationship at the national level.

The election of Mr. Trump, his selection of staff, cabinet posts, and policies, has made it necessary to rethink the Council's strategies going forward. To say that these are challenging times is to put it mildly.

I want to express my admiration for the Council and how it approached a complex set of circumstances by conducting a complete reassessment of the political climate and its potential impact on urban public schools. The Council's commitment to sustaining its bipartisan posture with both houses of Congress represents a focus on the big picture that is in the best interest of urban school districts.

I must admit that at times it was difficult to maintain such a focus when urban school districts were responding to a host of challenges from the Trump administration. But the actions by the Council and its members are important and we attempt to find common ground on behalf of our children.

School districts are working diligently to close the achievement gap with the help and support of the Council, and we are uniquely positioned to continue along this path—something that will not change regardless of who is in the White House.

It's been my sense that it is much easier to guide an organization during relatively stable times, but it is harder to sustain performance during uncertain times, such as the one we are now entering.

What I've learned as a member of the Council during my tenure on the board and as Chair leads me to believe that we as urban educators will meet the challenges going forward as the result of the steady resolve and conviction of the Council's leadership under Michael Casserly, along with the organization's excellent staff and members of the Board and Executive Committee. All of us understand day by day who we serve and why we do so.

Sincerely,

Felton Williams
Chair of the Board, 2016-17

June 30, 2017

I am pleased and proud to present this annual report to the membership on the work of the Council of the Great City Schools during the 2016-17 program year.

Once again, the Council had an extraordinary year. Singular among the organization's accomplishments this year was the work the organization did on the federal regulations to the recently-passed Every Student Succeeds Act. The Council worked closely with the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, and the Office of Management and Budget to ensure rules that closely aligned with the new law. Under the new Administration, the Council continues that work in order to guarantee that issues of equity and flexibility for urban school districts are protected.

The Council also filed an *amicus* brief before the U.S. Supreme Court on the widely-watched *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* case—an *amicus* that clearly shaped the justices' thinking on the limits of federal law in the area of special education.

The Council marked its 60th Anniversary in 2016, commemorating its founding in 1956 with a birthday celebration and the release of a history of the organization: *1956-2016: Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America's Urban Public Schools*.

The organization also released a number of new reports and tools last year. This included a ground-breaking *Academic Key Performance Indicators Pilot Report*, with two years of draft data on student outcome measures across member districts. A report on joint work with the nation's urban libraries was also produced. The Council also continued its work to support districts in the implementation of high academic standards, releasing a multi-faceted progress assessment tool entitled *Indicators of Success: A Guide for Assessing District-level Implementation of College- and Career-Readiness Standards*, and putting the finishing touches on a new curriculum framework to help districts design and support high-quality, standards-aligned curricula.

Moreover, the Council released two new guides for selecting instructional materials in English language arts and mathematics that are consistent with grade-level standards and ensure access to core curriculum and instructional rigor for English language learners. The group also continued

to assemble its ELL materials purchasing consortia and to develop a new video platform to provide professional development on teaching struggling readers. The Council also released a guide for the nation's schools to help prevent FGM/C.

Once again the Council published its annual *Managing for Results in the Great City Schools* report, which presented comparative trend lines on a wide array of operational and financial indicators across member districts. A new guide on Enterprise Risk Management was also released.

The Council continued to deploy its highly-regarded Strategic Support Teams to member districts in the areas of instruction, school leadership, bilingual education, special education, transportation, facilities, food services, and many more. The group broadened its work this year to providing technical assistance and professional development to school boards. The group also continued to provide webinars for member district staff on the latest legal issues facing urban schools.

Our annual fall conference in Miami, hosted by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, was the best gathering that the organization has ever held, and the spring legislative conference in Washington continued to keep the membership informed about key legislative issues in these very uncertain times. Smaller meetings for specific groups of district staff throughout the year continued to provide members with information and invaluable networking opportunities, and a special conference on males of color continued to move the work forward and signaled the organization's sustained focus on this priority area.

On top of all this, the Council moved its headquarters to a new and bigger space this year to accommodate the growing needs of the membership.

I thank Felton Williams, school board member in the Long Beach Unified School District, for his extraordinary leadership this year. And I thank the amazing Council staff for the dedication and expertise they put into their work on behalf of urban schools every day.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

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The Council of the Great City Schools brings together the nation's largest urban public school systems in a coalition dedicated to the improvement of education for children in the inner cities. The Council and its member school districts work to help our schoolchildren meet the highest standards and become successful and productive members of society.

The Council keeps the nation's lawmakers, the media, and the public informed about the progress and problems in big-city schools. The organization does this through legislation, communications, research, and technical assistance.

The organization also helps to build capacity in urban education with programs to boost academic performance and narrow achievement gaps; improve professional development; and strengthen leadership, governance, and management.

The Council of the Great City Schools accomplishes its mission by connecting urban school district personnel from coast to coast who work under similar conditions. Staff with responsibilities for curricula, research and testing, finance, operations, personnel, technology, legislation, communications, and other areas confer regularly under the Council's auspices to share concerns and solutions and discuss what works in boosting achievement and managing operations.

"I don't think anybody is satisfied with where we are. But I do think that, as an organization, we've been instrumental in defining a vision for improvement, galvanizing the membership around that mission, and putting the tools in place to help them improve and then measure whether or not we have been effective."

— MICHAEL CASSERLY, in an *Education Week* article.

In addition, joint efforts with other national organizations, corporations, and government policymakers extend the Council's influence and effectiveness outside member school districts to the larger, interdependent world that will ultimately benefit from the contributions of today's urban students.

Since the organization's founding in 1956, geographic, ethnic, language, and cultural diversity has typified the Council's membership. That diversity propels the coalition forward to see that all citizens receive an education that will equip them with the skills and knowledge to compete successfully in the world marketplace and to enhance the quality of their lives in a society changing with phenomenal speed. The wellspring of accomplishments and innovations rising from our inner cities testifies to the resounding benefits of investment in the nation's urban centers and in their public schools.

Top photo:
U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, left, is greeted by members of the Council leadership, Chair-elect Darienne Driver and Secretary-Treasurer Larry Feldman.

Bottom photo:
Broadcast journalist Dan Rather moderates the 90-minute town hall meeting featuring surrogates from the Clinton and Trump presidential campaigns at the Council's 60th Annual Fall Conference in Miami.

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Urban public schools exist to teach students to the highest standards of educational excellence. As the primary American institution responsible for weaving the strands of our society into a cohesive fabric, we — the leaders of America's Great City Schools — see a future where the nation cares for all children, expects their best, appreciates their diversity, invests in their futures, and welcomes their participation in the American dream.

The Great City Schools are places where this vision becomes tangible and those ideals are put to the test. We pledge to commit ourselves to the work of advancing empathy, equity, justice, and tolerance, and we vow to do everything we can to vigorously resist the forces of ignorance, fear and prejudice, as we teach and guide our students. We will keep our commitments, and as we do and as society supports our endeavors, cities will become the centers of a strong and equitable nation, with urban public schools successfully teaching our children and building our communities.

"For 60 years, the Council has been working to keep urban schools vibrant as the communities they serve. "

— DONNA BRAZILE

Our Mission
It is the special mission of America's urban public schools to educate the nation's most diverse student body to the highest academic standards and prepare them to contribute to our democracy and the global community.

Our Goals
• To educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards.

• To lead, govern and manage our urban public schools in ways that advance the education of our children and inspire the public's confidence.

• To build a confident, committed and supportive urban community for raising the achievement of urban public schoolchildren

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Top photo:
Des Moines school board vice chair Cindy Elsbernd and Des Moines Schools Superintendent Thomas Ahart attend a session at the Annual Fall Conference.

Middle photo:
Carmen Fariña, chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, presents information on promoting equity and excellence in urban school districts at a session at the Annual Fall Conference

Bottom photo:
Arlington (Texas) Schools Superintendent Marcelo Cavazos participates in a session at the Annual Fall Conference.

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ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

School districts located in cities with populations over 250,000 and student enrollments over 35,000 are eligible for membership in the Council of the Great City Schools. Membership is also open to those districts serving a state's largest city, depending on its urban characteristics.

The **Board of Directors** is composed of the superintendent and one board of education member from each member district, making the Council the only national educational organization so constituted and the only one whose purpose and membership is solely urban. The board meets twice a year to determine and adopt policies. It elects a 24-member executive committee, which exercises governing authority when the board is not in session.

The board of directors established five special task forces in 1998 and 1999 to address major issues facing the membership. These included a **School Finance Task Force** to explore ways to challenge urban school funding inequities around the nation and an **English Language Learners and Bilingual Education Task Force** to focus on issues around the education of English language learners.

A **Task Force on Achievement** was established to eliminate gaps in the academic achievement of students by race. A **Task Force on Leadership and Governance** addresses the increasing concern about issues surrounding urban school leadership and management, and a **Task Force on Professional Development** explores ways to give teachers and administrators the latest tools and techniques to improve student achievement.

Three subcommittees of the executive committee provide support in financial and organizational areas:

By-Laws: Defines the Council's mission, responsibilities, and composition within the framework of applicable laws and regulations.

Audit: Reviews and studies budgetary matters and ensures that revenues are properly managed.

Membership: Determines eligible cities for membership and recruits, screens, and recommends new members.

In addition to these governing bodies, a network of deans of the **Great City Colleges of Education** and staff liaisons from various school district departments encourage information exchange with counterparts in other cities. Common concerns in areas such as student achievement, public relations, technology, human resources, finance, research, legislation, special education, and curriculum connect urban education personnel from member cities to share the ideas and experiences of the larger group.

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Total Student Enrollment   7.3 million
    Hispanic   40%
    African American   29%
    White   20%
    Asian/Pacific Islander   8%
    Alaskan/Native American/Other   3%

Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility   70%

English Language Learners   17%

Students With Individualized Education
Plan (IEP's).   14%

Total Number of Teachers   423,244

Student-Teacher Ratio   17:1

Number of Schools   12,117

Annual Academic, Information
Technology & Research Conference
July 11-14, 2016
Palm Beach, FL

Public Relations Executives Meeting
July 15-17, 2016
Chicago, IL

Annual Fall Conference
October 19-23, 2016
Miami, FL

Chief Financial Officers Conference
November 8-11, 2016
San Antonio, TX

HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting
February 8-10, 2017
San Antonio, TX

Legislative/Policy Conference
March 11-14, 2017
Washington, DC

Chief Operating Officers Conference
April 4-7, 2017
New Orleans, LA

Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee
Education Directors Meeting
May 16-20, 2017
Los Angeles, CA

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ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

More than 1,000 urban school superintendents, senior administrators, board members and deans of colleges of education assembled in Miami for the Council of the Great City Schools' 60th Annual Fall Conference, October 19-23, hosted by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

The conference celebrated the Council's 60th anniversary under the banner Reinvigorating, Reimagining, Reinventing Urban Education.

The 2016 presidential campaign took center stage during a 90-minute town hall meeting moderated by broadcast journalist Dan Rather. The panel featured a surrogate from the Clinton campaign, former education adviser Mildred Otero, and Trump surrogate Carl Paladino, a school board member from New York's Buffalo Public Schools. The town hall also featured a panel of two big-city school superintendents and a board member.

Urban educators heard from Eric Holder, former attorney general of the United States, who discussed the need for school districts to implement discipline without discrimination and noted that disparities in discipline between white students and students of color begin as early as pre-school.

Also addressing the conference was political commentator Donna Brazile. She emphasized the need for educators to help stu-

Eric Holder

"I owe everything to the New York City school system. I would not be who I am today without Stuyvesant High School. It was great to be surrounded by great teachers and great students.

I'm living proof that public school systems in this country can work."

— ERIC HOLDER at the Council's Annual Fall Conference

Donna Brazile

dents become confident and skilled citizens.

Conferees also heard from Sal Khan, founder and CEO of Khan Academy, who discussed the partnership launched among the Council, Khan Academy and the College Board to boost college and career readiness in big-city school districts. The conference also featured numerous breakout sessions.

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Big-city school educators assembled in the nation's capital March 11-14 to discuss how the Every Student Succeeds Act, which was passed by Congress in a bipartisan fashion, would impact their respective school districts.

Conferees heard from U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, who assured them that she supports public schools and stressed that parents know better than any politician or administrator the unique needs of their children.

The nation's tenth secretary of education also praised out-of-the box approaches that several urban school districts are taking to educate their students, including the Success Express program in Denver Public Schools, which provides transportation options to children in underserved areas, and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District's Project Lead the Way, which connects students with engineering businesses and organizations in the community.

Also addressing the conference was Pulitzer Prize award-winning columnist for the *Washington Post* Eugene Robinson. He discussed with urban educators the issue of fake news and the spread of misinformation. The veteran journalist acknowledged that there is no easy way to counter fake news but urged the country to push back against the misinformation in politics because the fight for the truth is needed in order for the country to be a strong democracy.

Eugene Robinson

"Does [fake news] matter? I think it matters a lot that there is no longer an agreed set of facts or agreed upon sequence of historical events that we refer to before we take political positions."

— EUGENE ROBINSON at the Council's Legislative/Policy Conference

Betsy DeVos

The issue of protecting students' civil rights was addressed by Catherine Lhamon, chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, who acknowledged the progress made concerning student's civil rights in public schools and urged big-city school educators to continue these efforts.

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Top photo:
Sal Khan, the founder and CEO of Khan Academy, left, with David Coleman, president of the College Board, and Council Executive Director Michael Casserly at the Annual Fall Conference. The trio announced a partnership among Khan Academy, the College Board and the Council to offer free, online personalized SAT preparation tools to urban school students.

Bottom photo:
Philadelphia Schools Superintendent William Hite, Cincinnati school board member Melanie Bates and Miami-Dade County Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho participate in the Council's town hall meeting at the Annual Fall Conference.

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COMMUNICATIONS

The Council of the Great City Schools works to give the public and the press a balanced and accurate view of the challenges, developments, and successes of urban public schools. In 2016-17 the Council—

• Celebrated the Council's 60th Anniversary with a series of events and interviews.

• Coordinated *Education Week* newspaper and video coverage of the Council's 60th Anniversary.

• Produced a 60th Anniversary video and published a history of the organization—*1956–2016: Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America's Urban Public Schools*.

• Coordinated extensive press coverage of U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos' address at the Council's Legislative/Policy Conference.

• Enhanced the Council's social-media presence and redesigned website.

• Coordinated a national town hall meeting on education issues in the 2016 Presidential Campaign, moderated by noted broadcast journalist Dan Rather.

• Issued press releases on numerous Council activities, as well as statements outlining the Council's positions on various current events and political developments.

• Fielded scores of inquiries from national and regional media outlets, such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, National Public Radio, and the *Associated Press*.

• Managed the organization's ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships and Shirley Schwartz Scholarships.

• Published eight issues of the *Urban Educator*.

• Published the organization's Annual Report and provided each member district with an individualized report of services received in 2016-17 and a calculation of its return on investment.

•Hosted the 16th Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in Chicago.

•Participated in the joint National Associations of Black and Hispanic Journalists Conference as well as the Education Writers Association Conference.

•Managed the Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group.

LEGISLATION

In voicing its proposals and ideas to Congress and other federal policymakers, the Council helps shape legislation to strengthen the quality of schooling for the nation's urban children. In 2016-17, the Council—

• Successfully prevented major federal regulatory changes that would have forced Great City School districts to reallocate hundreds of millions of dollars in state and local funds.

• Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on proposed regulations for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on accountability, assessments, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

• Participated in multiple meetings with U.S. Department of Education officials to discuss priorities and operational flexibility in the implementation of ESSA.

• Offered multiple recommendations to the new Administration on the implementation of ESSA.

• Convened numerous conference calls to brief the membership on specific details of ESSA as new requirements and policies went into effect during the 2016-17 school year

• Provided ongoing fiscal guidance to member districts regarding Title I funding for the upcoming 2017-18 school year, specifically on the state set-asides affecting school district allocations.

• Acted as a resource for the membership on immigration actions taken by the new Administration, providing summaries of new federal executive orders and memoranda, and sharing information on local district responses.

• Submitted an *amicus* brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* case on the expected benefits of district programs for students with disabilities.

• Hosted a series of webinars on legal issues facing urban school districts with Husch Blackwell, covering such issues as the Supreme Court, civil rights, hate speech in schools, special education, and the legal rights of immigrant students.

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- Submitted recommendations to Congress on the reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, highlighting the need for simplification and flexibility.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on the overidentification of students for special education services and disciplinary action.
- Collected Medicaid funding and student services data from member districts, and provided fact sheets to support a Council-wide initiative to oppose massive proposed cuts to the federal Medicaid program.
- Hosted monthly conference calls with member districts and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) to resolve problems in the new E-Rate application portal.
- Convened the Annual Legislative/Policy Conference, which featured four days of briefings on ESSA, federal funding for the upcoming 2017-18 school year, education priorities of the new Administration, and immigration policy.
- Responded to scores of questions on federal legislation and served as an intermediary for the membership in resolving problems with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Fielded multiple information requests from Congress, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Federal Communications Commission, and other federal agencies.

RESEARCH

Timely data collection and analysis allow the Council to prepare comprehensive reports, predict trends, and assess the effects of various policies, reforms, and practices on student performance. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Conducted research on urban school progress on the 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 Trial Urban District Assessment of NAEP, controlling for relevant background variables.
- Conducted statistical analyses of proposed supplement/supplant regulations to ESSA to determine the effects on Council member districts.
- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the: American Educational Research Association, Partnership for Readiness for College and Careers, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, National Assessment Governing Board, National Center for Education Statistics, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Network of Education Research – Practice Partnerships, Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents, National Association of Assessment Directors, Directors of Research and Evaluation, White House Domestic Policy Council, White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans, White House My Brother's Keeper Initiative, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Council of Chief State School Officers, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, and Educational Testing Service.
- Responded to numerous member requests for statistical information and research assistance.
- Launched the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's new academic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on student achievement levels, attendance, suspensions, course participation, AP attainment and graduation rates.
- Managed the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's operational Key Performance Indicators.
- Gathered urban school leaders from over 30 school districts to discuss initiatives for young men and boys of color, and wrote a report summarizing issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- Provided technical assistance with member districts on setting up or enhancing programs for their males of color.
- Conducted or provided assistance to numerous strategic support teams to help address issues in several school districts related to curriculum, research, English language learner instruction, supports for young men of color, and student achievement overall.
- Surveyed the member districts on their ethnic studies programs.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council's most important priorities. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Developed and disseminated the organization's *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a*
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High-Quality District Curriculum—a practical guide on what a high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum should look like.

• Disseminated and supported district use of the Council's *Indicators of Success* tool to assess district-level progress in implementing college- and career-readiness standards.

• Published a report with the Urban Libraries Council on joint efforts to improve literacy.

• Convened the Achievement and Professional DevelopmentTask Forces at the Annual Fall Conference and March Legislative/Policy Conference.

• Convened meetings of the organization's college-and career-readiness advisory committees.

• Collaborated with the Vermont Writing Project to offer member districts samples of student expository and argument writing.

• Partnered with the University of Chicago's Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education on a computer science toolkit for K-12 teachers and administrators, which was presented at a pre-conference session prior to the 2016 Annual Fall meeting.

• Convened the 2016 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference in Palm Beach, Florida.

• Made numerous presentations to other organizations in support of college- and career-readiness standards.

• Updated www.commoncoreworks.org to enable greater access to Council materials on standards.

• Expanded the Basal Alignment Project, Anthology Alignment Read-Aloud Project, and Text Set Project.

• Provided districts receiving Wallace Foundation Principal Supervisor Initiative (PSI) grants with technical assistance on sustaining their progress and planning next steps.

• Provided strategic support teams to member districts in the areas of instruction and special education.

• Provided districts with on-site or virtual support for their curriculum initiatives upon request.

• Connected districts with their peers to answer requests for information on a host of academic issues.

• Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners, the Schusterman Foundation, and the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools to implement an augmented balanced literacy pilot project.

• Convened a special pre-conference session in Miami on computer science programs and urban schools.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

The Task Forces on Leadership, Governance, and Management, and School Finance address the quality and tenure of leadership and management in and funding of urban schools. In 2016-17, the Council—

• Conducted a comprehensive survey of member school boards and their governance practices.

• Developed and implemented a groundbreaking new model for providing professional development to school boards to help them improve governance.

• Conducted 20 strategic support team reviews to member districts on organizational structure, staffing levels, human resources, facilities, budget and finance, transportation, and technology operations.

• Convened meetings of member district Chief Financial Officers, Human Resources Directors, Chief Operating Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chiefs of Safety & Security, Facilities Directors, Transportation Directors, Food Service Directors, Internal Auditors, Risk Managers, and Procurement Directors.

• Convened two meetings of the Leadership, Governance, and Management Task Force and the Finance Task Force.

• Published the twelfth edition of *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2016* with an expanded set of operational key performance indicators.

• Maintained an on-line database of operational and financial key performance indicators that member districts can use to compare their performance with one another.

• Provided assistance to member districts in conducting superintendent searches and vetting potential candidates.

• Processed the application for and presented the Council's Award for Excellence in Financial Management to the Fresno Unified School District.

• Managed the Council's Urban School Executive Program (C'USE) for aspiring Chief Financial Officers.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- Published a booklet on *Enterprise Risk Management in the Great City Schools,* and wrote white papers on *Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools and Security Considerations in Today's K-12 Environment.*
- Fielded numerous member requests for management and operational information and services.
- Posted dozens of district job announcements on the Council's job board.

BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2016-17, the Council—
- Worked with Department of Education staff on ELL accountability guidance under ESSA.
- Conducted a survey of exit procedures and criteria in member districts to inform discussions with the Department of Education on ESSA guidance.
- Provided strategic support team reviews of ELL programming in member districts and strategic technical assistance to others.
- Launched survey and ELL data collection efforts to update the 2013 "ELLs in America's Great Cities" report.
- Monitored the number of refugees who settled in the United States and provided updates to Council member districts.
- Monitored Executive Orders and Administrative Memoranda related to immigration law and enforcement and provide updates to member districts.
- Developed a school resource to assist district and school staff in the prevention of female genital mutilation in order to support young girls who are at risk or may be survivors of this practice.
- Assembled a team of experts and district practitioners to develop criteria for selecting instructional materials in mathematics for ELLs and other students with language-related needs.
- Established a purchasing consortium to spur the development of quality instructional materials for ELLs. Secured a lead district and commitments from 15 districts to participate in the joint procurement alliance.
- Updated the criteria for the selection of instructional materials in English Language Arts for ELLs.
- Developed and field tested in seven districts a successful professional development platform for teachers working with high-need students who are below grade level in reading.
- Convened the annual meeting of the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education Directors in Los Angeles.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council works to manage its resources and ensure the integrity of its programs. In 2016-17, the Council—
- Executed the move of the Council's headquarters to new and expanded office space.
- Convened two meetings of the organization's board of directors and four meetings of its executive committee.
- Had an external audit conducted of the organization's 2015-16 spending and received unqualified audit results for FY2015-16.
- Completed an audit by the Gates Foundation and implemented recommendations for improvement.
- Managed finances and logistics for 25 Strategic Support Team trips, 7 grant projects, 10 programs, and 11 conferences and specialty meetings.
- Hosted the Annual Fall Conference in Miami, FL as well as multiple meetings and forums throughout the year.
- Maintained the online conference registration and hotel reservation system for all meetings.
- Negotiated headquarter and overflow hotel contracts for the 2019 Annual Fall Conference in Louisville, and hotel contracts for all the other peer-to-peer meetings.
- Negotiated with a new provider for staff benefits for basic life insurance and short & long term disability insurance, saving the organization $16.5K a year in premiums.
- Continued cleanup of the organization's database. Cleaned out old files and converted to e-files.
- Updated the Personnel Policy Handbook and the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual.

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GREEN-GARNER AWARD

During the annual fall conference, the Council bestows the Green-Garner Award upon a past or present member district superintendent or board of education member in recognition of exceptional contributions to urban schools and students. As the nation's highest urban education honor, the award pays tribute to the memory of Richard R. Green, former Minneapolis superintendent and New York City Public Schools chancellor, and Edward Garner, a businessman and former school board president of the Denver Public Schools.

The award, sponsored by ARAMARK Education and Scholastic, Inc., includes a $10,000 college scholarship to be presented to a senior in the winner's school system or system from which the winner graduated.

Eric Gordon, the chief executive officer of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, was presented with the award at the 2016 Fall Conference in Miami.

Gordon took the reins of the Cleveland school district in 2011 -- at a time when the 43,000 students he served lived in neighborhoods suffering from the worst economic decline in the region since the Great Depression. He made a commitment to the children and parents in the community to "do 10 times the work in half the time and do it twice as well."

Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon gives remarks after being named the winner of the Green-Garner award.

"I, at one point, left urban education and came back. I came back because I wanted to know that when I got home at the end of the night what I had done that day really mattered."

— ERIC GORDON

As the architect of "The Plan for Transforming Cleveland's Schools," the CEO has seen graduation rates increase, more and more families involved in their children's schools, and an upturn in student enrollment for the first time in decades.

Cleveland student Brinden Harvey, center, holds his $10,000 Green-Garner college scholarship after receiving a surprise visit at his home by Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon as his mom looks on. Harvey, a recent graduate from the Cleveland School of Science and Medicine, will attend Ohio's Baldwin Wallace University in the fall to pursue a degree in acting.

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GREEN-GARNER AWARD WINNERS

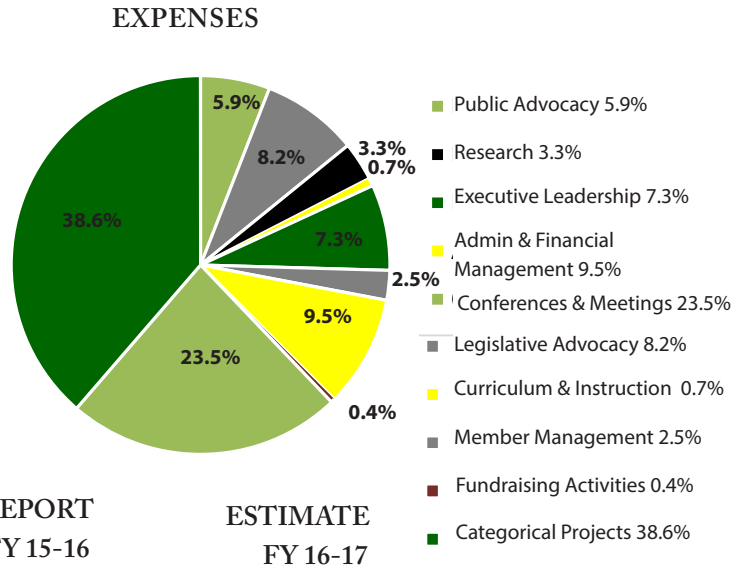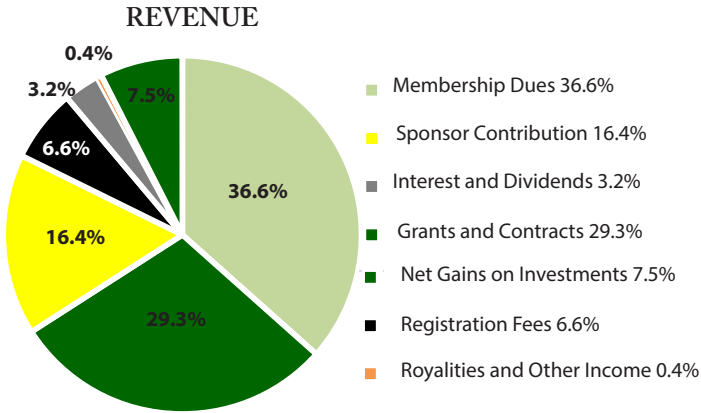|		
1990	James Griffin, Retired Member	St. Paul School Board
	Timothy Dyer, Former Superintendent	Phoenix Union High School District
1991	Paul Houston, Former Superintendent	Tucson Public Schools
1992	Richard Wallace Jr., Superintendent Emeritus	Pittsburgh Public Schools
1993	Constance Clayton, Superintendent	School District of Philadelphia
1994	Holmes Braddock, Board Member	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1995	Curman Gaines, Superintendent	St. Paul Public Schools
1996	James Williams, Superintendent	Dayton Public Schools
1997	Maxine Smith, Retired Board Member	Memphis City School Board
1998	Gerry House, Superintendent	Memphis City Public Schools
1999	Rod Paige, Superintendent	Houston Independent School District
	Judy Farmer, Board Member	Minneapolis Public Schools
2000	Eric Smith, Superintendent	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
2001	Barbara Byrd-Bennett, Superintendent	Cleveland Municipal School District
2002	John Simpson, Superintendent	Norfolk Public Schools
2003	Arthur Griffin, Board Member	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
	Franklin Till, Superintendent	Broward County Public Schools
2004	Tom Payzant, Superintendent	Boston Public Schools
2005	Anna Dodson, Board Member	Norfolk Public Schools
2006	Beverly Hall, Superintendent	Atlanta Public Schools
2007	Elizabeth Reilinger, Board Member	Boston Public Schools
2008	Pascal Forgione, Superintendent	Austin Independent School District
2009	Emmett Johnson, Board Member	Atlanta Public Schools
2010	Arlene Ackerman, Superintendent	The School District of Philadelphia
2011	Candy Olson, Board Member	Hillsborough County Public Schools
2012	Carol Johnson, Superintendent	Boston Public Schools
2013	Denise Link, Board Member	Cleveland Metropolitan School District
2014	Terry Grier, Superintendent	Houston Independent School District
2015	Bill Isler, Board Member	Pittsburgh Public Schools
2016	Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer	Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Queen Smith Award For Commitment to Urban Education
Johanna Lopez, a Spanish teacher for 17 years at Colonial High School in Florida's Orange County Public Schools in Orlando, was the recipient of the Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education. Sponsored by the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., the award is named in honor of the company's late vice president of urban programs.

Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award
The Council of the Great City Colleges of Education, an affiliate group of deans working with big-city school leaders, presented the Dr. Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award to Cleveland Metropolitan School District and Cleveland State University for the Campus International School, which is based at the university and opened in 2010. The award honors an outstanding partnership between a university and urban school system and is named in honor of the Council's director of special projects who died in March 2009.

REVENUE

- Membership Dues 36.6%
- Sponsor Contribution 16.4%
- Interest and Dividends 3.2%
- Grants and Contracts 29.3%
- Net Gains on Investments 7.5%
- Registration Fees 6.6%
- Royalities and Other Income 0.4%

EXPENSES

- Public Advocacy 5.9%
- Research 3.3%
- Executive Leadership 7.3%
- Admin & Financial Management 9.5%
- Conferences & Meetings 23.5%
- Legislative Advocacy 8.2%
- Curriculum & Instruction 0.7%
- Member Management 2.5%
- Fundraising Activities 0.4%
- Categorical Projects 38.6%

	AUDITED REPORT FY 15-16	ESTIMATE FY 16-17
Revenue		
Membership Dues	$2,744,256	$2,754,518
Grants & Contracts	3,697,617	2,209,175
Sponsor Contribution	1,051,050	1,232,150
Registration Fees	380,567	496,473
Interest and Dividends	287,946	242,279
Royalties and Other Income	40,590	31,454
Net Gain on Investments	315,708	564,563
Total Revenue	**$7,886,317**	**$7,530,612**
Expenses		
Public Advocacy	$474,980	$420,292
Legislative Advocacy	519,367	584,368
Research	226,047	234,234
Curriculum & Instruction	19,310	48,202
Executive Leadership	385,691	520,102
Management Services	185,403	179,465
Admin & Financial Management	737,009	676,853
Fundraising Activities	32,160	25,345
Conferences & Meetings	1,402,207	1,666,723
Categorical Projects	2,602,378	2,743,285
Total Expenses	**$6,584,552**	**$7,098,869**
Change in Net Assets	**$1,301,765**	**($431,743)**
Net Assets, Beginning	**$8,696,127**	**$9,997,892**
Net Assets, Ending	**$9,997,892**	**$10,429,635**

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The Council thanks the following contributors for their support in 2016-2017

Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group

American Reading Company
Apple
Ararmark Education
Cornerstone OnDemand
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
DreamBox Learning
Gaggle
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IBM
K12 Insight
McGraw Hill Education
PCG Education
Pearson
Reading Plus
Scholastic
Schoolwires
Texas Instruments
Waterford Institute
Wilson Language Training

2016 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference
American Reading Company
Audio Enhancement
Blackboard
Cisco
Citelighter
Classlink
Clever
Continuity Focus
Cornerstone OnDemand
COSN
Curriculum Associates
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Discovery Education
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Performance Matters
Scholastic
SchoolCity
SchoolMessenger
Schoology
Solution Tree
Texas Instruments
Think Through Math
Truenorthlogic
Vantage Learning
Waterford Institute
Workday
Worldgate

2016 Public Relations Executives Meeting
Blackboard
Discovery Education
Education Post
Gaggle
Peachjar
SchoolMessenger

2016-2017 Executive Committee Meeting
Curriculum Associates
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
McGraw Hill Education

2016 Annual Fall Conference
ACT
American Reading Company
ARAMARK Education
Blackboard
Benchmark Education
Catapult Learning
Cornerstone OnDemand
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
Dreambox
Edison Learning
Education Elements
Frontline
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Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Imagine Learning
its Learning
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Knowledge Delivery Systems
Lexia
McGraw Hill Education
Odysseyware
Panorama
PCG Education
Pearson
Performance Matters
Reading Plus
Redbird Advanced Learning
SAP
Sunesys
Scholastic
SchoolCity
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Texas Instruments
Vantage Learning
Waterford Institute
Wilson Works

2016 Chief Financial Officers Meeting
Allovue
American Express
Aon Hewitt
ARAMARK Education
AXA
ClassWallet
E&I Cooperative Services
Exigis
Gallagher Benefit Services
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
in2vate
Infor Public Sector
Kelly Educational Staffing
Opterra Energy Services
Plante Moran
SAP
U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance
Workday

2016 HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting
Cornerstone OnDemand
Frontline
Kelly Educational Staffing
Public Consulting Group
Source4Teachers

2017 Legislative/Policy Conference
AXA
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
Gaggle

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
K12 Insight
Public Consulting Group
Texas Instruments
Wilson Works

**2017 Chief Operating Officers Conference**
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American Traffic Solutions
ARAMARK Education
BusBulletin
The Center for Green Schools
Cooperative Strategies
CPI
CrisisGo
David M Shapiro Disaster Consultants
First Student
Gaggle
GCA Services Group
Gilbane
Heery
Jacobs Engineering Group
K12 Insight
National Express
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Public Consulting Group
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SchoolDude.com
Seon
Sodexo
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transfinder
Zonar

2017 Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee Education Directors Meeting
Benchmark Education
Curriculum Associates
Ellevation
Imagine Learning
McGraw Hill Education
Pearson
Public Consulting Group
Teacher Created Materials
Ventris Learning

Shirley Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award
Jewish Community Board of Akron, OH
Barbara Reed
Teri Trinidad
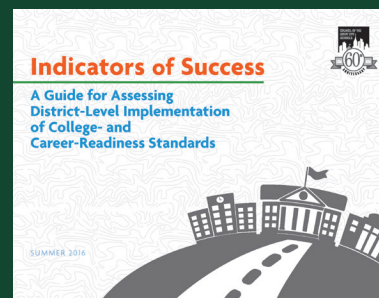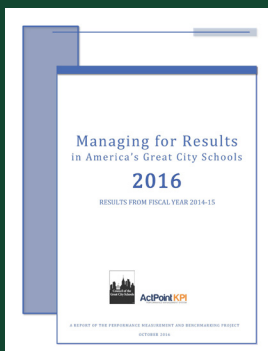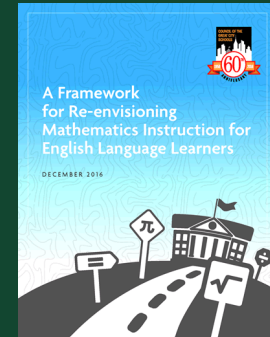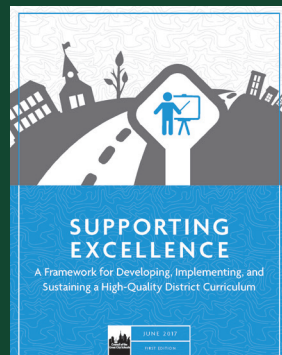
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- **Supporting Excellence, A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum** - *June 2017*
  This publication is a framework that provides instructional leaders and staff with a core set of criteria for what a high-quality curriculum entails. This guide includes annotated samples and exemplars from districts around the country.

- **FGM/C Prevention: A Resource for U.S. Schools** - *June 2017*
  The Council has partnered with the Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation to create this resource guide for U.S. school staff to support the prevention of female genital mutilation.

- **Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners** - *May 2017*
  The Council's new criteria for determining whether English language arts materials are compatible with college and career standards and appropriate for English language learners.

- **A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners** - *December 2016*
  The purpose of this document is to define a new vision for mathematics instruction that explicitly attends to the needs of ELLs, addressing the interdependence of language and mathematics.

- **Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools** - *October 2016*
  The Council's annual report on more than 500 Key Performance Indicators of operational performance in the nation's urban schools.

- **Souvenir Journal, Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America's Urban Public Schools** - *October 2016*
  This Souvenir Journal commemorates the 60th anniversary of the Council of the Great City Schools, chronicling the growth of the Council through its 60-year history.

- **Indicators of Success, A Guide for Assessing District Level Implementation of College and Career-Readiness Standards** - *Spring 2016*
  A set of indicators districts might use to track their progress on implementation of college- and career-readiness standards.

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COUNCIL STAFF

ADMINISTRATION
Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Teri Trinidad, Director of Administration,
 Finance & Conferences
Alisa Adams, Finance Manager
Terry Tabor, Conference Manager
Angel Gooch, Administrative & Conference
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Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant

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Henry Duvall, Director of Communications
Tonya Harris, Communications Manager
Darrell Robinson, Communications Specialist

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Ricki Price-Baugh, Director of Academic
 Achievement
Robin Hall, Director of Language Arts
 and Literacy
Denise Walston, Director of Mathematics

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Gabriela Uro, Director of ELL Policy and Research
Julie Wright Halbert, Legislative Counsel
David Lai, Special Projects Manager

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Ray Hart, Director of Research
Moses Palacios, Legislative and Research Manager
Renata Uzzell, Research Manager
Ashley Ison, Research and ELL Policy Specialist

SPECIAL PROJECTS
Amanda Rose Corcoran, Special Projects Manager
Michell Yorkman, Special Projects Manager

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School District	Superintendent	Board Member
Albuquerque	Raquel Reedy	David Peercy
Anchorage	Deena Bishop	Elisa Snelling
Arlington	Marcelo Cavazos	Jamie Sullins
Atlanta	Meria Carstarphen	Leslie Grant
Austin	Paul Cruz	Kendall Pace
Baltimore	Sonja Santelises	Marnell Cooper
Birmingham	Larry Contri	Wardine Alexander
Boston	Tommy Chang	Michael O'Neill
Bridgeport	Aresta Johnson	Sauda Baraka
Broward County	Robert Runcie	Laurie Rich Levinson
Buffalo	Kriner Cash	Barbara Nevergold
Charlotte-Mecklenberg	Ann Clark	Mary McCray
Chicago	Forrest Claypool	Jaime Guzman
Cincinnati	Mary Ronan	Melanie Bates
Clark County	Pat Skorkowsky	Linda Young
Cleveland	Eric Gordon	Denise Link
Columbus	Daniel Good	Gary Baker II
Dallas	Michael Hinojosa	Lew Blackburn
Dayton	Rhonda Corr	Ronald Lee
Denver	Tom Boasberg	Allegra Haynes
Des Moines	Thomas Ahart	Cindy Elsbernd
Detroit	Alycia Merriweather	Steven Rhodes
District of Columbia	Antwan Wilson	N/A
Duval County	Nikolai Vitti	Paula Wright
El Paso	Juan Cabrera	Dee Margo
Fort Worth	Kent Scribner	Ashley Paz
Fresno	Robert Nelson	Lindsay Cal Johnson
Guilford County	Sharon Contreras	TBD
Hawaii	Stephen Schatz	Lance Mizumoto
Hillsborough County	Jeff Eakins	Susan Valdes
Houston	Richard Carranza	Diana Davila
Indianapolis	Lewis Ferebee	Samuel Odle
Jackson	Freddrick Murray	Benta Burt
Jefferson County	Donna Hargens	Diane Porter
Kansas City (MO)	Mark Bedell	Ajia Morris
Long Beach	Christopher Steinhauser	Felton Williams
Los Angeles	Michelle King	Steve Zimmer
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Milwaukee	Darienne Driver	Michael Bonds
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Omaha	Mark Evans	Lacey Merica
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Providence	Christopher Maher	Nicholas Hemond
Richmond	Dana Bedden	Jeffrey Bourne
Rochester	Barbara Deane-Williams	Van Henri White
Sacramento	José L. Banda	Christina Prichett
St. Louis	Kelvin Adams	Rick Sullivan
St. Paul	John Thein	Jon Schumacher
San Antonio	Pedro Martinez	Patti Radle
San Diego	Cindy Marten	Richard Barrera
San Francisco	Richard Carranza	Hydra Mendoza
Seattle	Larry Nyland	Jill Geary
Shelby County	Dorsey Hopson II	Kevin Woods
Toledo	Romules Durant	Chris Varwig
Tulsa	Deborah Gist	Lana Turner-Addison
Wichita	John Allison	Jeff Davis

Albuquerque, Anchorage, Arlington, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore,

Birmingham, Boston, Bridgeport, Broward County, Buffalo,

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, Clark County, Cleveland,

Columbus, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Duval County,

El Paso, Fort Worth, Fresno, Guilford County, Hawaii, Hillsborough County,

Houston, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson County, Kansas City, Long Beach,

Los Angeles, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Nashville,

New Orleans, New York City, Newark, Norfolk, Oakland, Oklahoma City,

Omaha, Orange County, Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, Pinellas County,

Pittsburgh, Portland, Providence, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento,

San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Shelby County, St. Louis,

St. Paul, Toledo, Tulsa, Washington, D.C., Wichita

Council of the Great City Schools

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER SERVICES REPORT

Report to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District
on the

Benefits and Services

of the

Council of the Great City Schools

in the

2016-17 School Year

Council of the Great City Schools

Report to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District
on the
Benefits and Services
of the
Council of the Great City Schools
in the
2016-17 School Year

BENEFITS TO THE CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

1. Provided Washington's premier and most effective urban education <u>legislative advocacy</u>, resulting in the following additional federal funds to Cleveland in the *2016-2017* school year that would not have been available without Council intervention:

• Title I Targeting	$10,565,149
• Title II Targeting	$475,441
• IDEA Targeting	$2,023,170
• Bilingual Education Targeting	$424,900

   Total Extra for Cleveland Schools in 2016-2017:   **$13,488,660** [1]

Cleveland's Return on 2016-17 Membership Dues:

$362 return for each $1 paid in dues.

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[1] This Total Extra amount does not include future Title I funds that Cleveland stood to lose had the Council not prevented a Title I formula amendment from being approved during the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. A proposed Senate amendment would have reduced Cleveland's Title I allocation by $4.0 million annually. The Council also helped eliminate a Title I "portability" proposal that would have redistributed $14.1 million from Cleveland's current Title I funding to lower-poverty districts in the state.

2. Provided the following other services directly to **Cleveland** between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017—

- Provided monthly copies of the Council's award-winning newsletter, the *Urban Educator*, to the **Cleveland** CEO, school board, and senior staff.

- Honored **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon with the Council's Green-Garner award, the nation's top urban educator of the year recognition. Conducted follow-up press interviews.

- Elected **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon to be an officer of the Council of the Great City Schools

- Traveled to **Cleveland** to conduct an annual review of principal support and supervisory structures under the district's Wallace Foundation grant and provide technical assistance and feedback.

- Sent a copy of a new tool developed by the Council, *Indicators of Success*, to the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and chief academic officer to help the district gauge its success in implementing college and career readiness standards.

- Sent a copy of the Council's testing report from last year to **Cleveland** staff member Sherrill Green per her request.

- Provided the **Cleveland** school board secretary with the results of a Council survey of which member districts had student representation on their boards.

- Provided **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon with a collection of transportation reviews that the Council had conducted in other major urban school districts per his request.

- Invited **Cleveland** to participate in the Council-College Board-Khan Academy SAT Practice Challenge.

- Provided **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon with feedback on potential labor/management negotiators for contract discussions.

- Collected responses from member districts for **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon on their written procedures and protocols to employees about their district's business routines. (Limited responses.)

- Gathered information for **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon on other major city school districts that have seen significant increases in their FAFSA completion rates per his request.

- Presented **Cleveland**'s Director of Funded Programs Angele Latham with a Certificate of Completion for successfully passing all requirements of the CFO Urban Schools Executives Program.

- Sent **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon a copy of a preliminary analysis of NAEP data on urban schools, charters, and private schools per his request.

- Gathered responses from other major urban school systems across the country for **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon on key performance indicators they use in the area of arts education.

- Convened conference call with the White House under the previous Administration on which **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon participated in order to discuss the effect of proposed comparability regulations on urban school districts.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO and school board representative a statement on the continuing priorities and direction of the organization following the presidential election.

- Held a conference call for **Cleveland** school staff on the status of federal legislation in Washington.

- Sent nine messages to the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, chief financial officer, federal programs staff, and special education staff on Congress's proposals to alter the Affordable Care Act and substantially cut school-based Medicaid support to the district, along with a fact sheet, talking points, sample letter, and suggested outreach strategies.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, chief financial officer, special education director, and federal programs staff a letter that the Council wrote to every member of the U.S. Senate opposing cuts to school-based Medicaid funding.

- **Cleveland** staff members Michele Pomerantz, Jessica Baldwin, and Lisa Floyd participated in a conference call on school-based Medicaid to discuss provisions affecting district services and to develop strategies to minimize the harmful impact on urban schools.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative to the Council, and federal programs staff a summary of President Trump's education budget and a statement opposing it.

- Sent a legislative alert to the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and federal programs staff on the FY2017 continuing resolution in Congress that proposed cutting Title II and the 21st Century Schools program.

- Responded to questions from **Cleveland** staff member Diana Ehlert about the use of Title I and Title II-A federal funds for specific activities, in response to questions the district received from the Ohio Department of Education.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, chief financial officer, and federal programs staff a summary and analysis of the final *FY2017* federal education appropriations.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, chief financial officer, special education director, federal programs staff, and others a summary and analysis of the Trump Administration's proposed *FY2018* budget.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, chief financial officer, special education director, and federal programs staff additional analyses of the Trump Administration's FY2018 education budget along with a fact sheet and talking points.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, chief financial officer, and the Title I director the district's preliminary Title I allocation for the 2017-18 school year. Analyzed the effects of state set-asides on the allocation.

- Reviewed **Cleveland**'s pending supplement not supplant regulatory comments and made minor suggestions.

- Arranged a call with **Cleveland** staff member Matt Linick on the upcoming ESSA accountability and state plan comments from the Council and discussed district-specific issues prior to Cleveland's submitting its own regulatory comments.

- Provided **Cleveland** CEO Eric Gordon with copies of the Council's final ESSA Accountability and State Plan comments and additional information on interactions with the Obama administration on the supplement not supplant/comparability regulations.

- Provided updated information on the ESSA Accountability regulations to **Cleveland** staff member Michele Pomerantz, including the flexibilities and requirements that the state plan will need to address.

- Provided an analysis of the potential ESSA accountability/school improvement implementation timeline to **Cleveland** staff member Michele Pomerantz, including the Council's and Hill committees' efforts to implement the regulations beginning in SY2018-19 rather than in SY2017-18.

- Provided information to **Cleveland** staff member Derek Richey on the prospect of the district being exempt from the supplement not supplant regulations due to its serving 100 percent of the district's schools under the Title I program.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO information on the progress of the reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act in the House Education and Workforce Committee.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and federal programs staff a copy of a letter that the Council wrote to the U.S. House of Representatives opposing a bill restricting "sanctuary cities."

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and district legal counsel a Council memo describing and interpreting new OCR guidance on new regulations and investigations.

- Sent a copy of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the *Endrew F.* case to the **Cleveland** director of special education and legal counsel.

- Provided a legal interpretation and guidance from the Council on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the *Endrew F.* case and sent it to the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and special education director.

- Held a legal webinar that provided **Cleveland** staff members Jill Cabe, Matthew Linick, Pamela Scott, and Andrew Roman with information and analysis on Civil Rights priorities during the transition of Presidential Administrations.

- Held a legal webinar that provided **Cleveland** staff members Jonathan Decker, Jose Gonzalez, and Andrew Roman with information and analysis on the legal rights of immigrant students.

- Held a legal webinar that provided **Cleveland** staff member Andrew Roman with information and analysis on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Endrew F.* case and its implications for district IEPs.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and chief academic officer copies of two new Council reports that will allow the district to assess the compatibility of its ELL materials in ELA and math with college- and career-readiness standards.

- Sent a new Council report on preventing FGM/C to the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and bilingual education director.

- Sent the **Cleveland** CEO, school board representative, and chief academic officer a copy of a new Council report, *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum*.

- Worked with **Cleveland** Deputy Chief of Curriculum and Instruction Karen Thompson and Director of Core Curriculum Elizabeth Nelson to plan and facilitate a 1 ½ day professional development session with district curriculum writers to review and revise its Mission Possible units, and to consider revisions to curriculum guidance documents using the Council's curriculum framework.

- Provided technical assistance and support as part of the Trial Urban District Assessment to **Cleveland** assessment staff in preparation for 2017 NAEP testing.

- Included **Cleveland** in a Wallace-funded project to conduct joint ESSA planning with the state.

- Organized and hosted a conference on policies and strategies for serving Males of Color attended by **Cleveland** staff member George Golden.

- Planned and facilitated a one-day computer science pre-conference prior to the 2016 CGCS Annual Fall meeting that provided **Cleveland** Director of Core Curriculum Elizabeth Nelson and a district technology instructor with information and materials about the computer science toolkit for K-12 teachers and administrators and a discussion about how to begin or sustain computer science education efforts in the district.

- Spoke with **Cleveland** Director of Multilingual Multicultural Education José O. González about efforts to revamp and strengthen the ELL programs in the district, using the Council's ELD 3.0 document as a guide.

- Included **Cleveland** staff members Loulou Elias and Sarra Mejri in a series of meetings that brought together ELL program staff and procurement staff to explore the possibility of creating a joint procurement alliance for the acquisition of instructional materials that meet the needs of ELLs.

- Provided **Cleveland** Executive Director of Transportation Eric Taylor with information on effective processes that other districts use to replace their transportation fleets.

- Provided **Cleveland** Chief Talent Officer Lori Ward with data and research on teacher recruitment and retention efforts across Council member districts.

- Provided **Cleveland** CIO Ron Houpe with copies of RFPs issued for UPS acquisitions and on-going maintenance service.

- Provided **Cleveland** CIO Ron Houpe with information on districts using a challenge question or SMS texting to authenticate user identity.

- Provided **Cleveland** Chief Communications Officer Roseann Canfora with access to the Public Relations Executives listserv to inquire about cyber issues resulting in mass email to staff asking for personal banking information.

- Provided **Cleveland** Chief Communications Officer Roseann Canfora with access to the Public Relations Executives listserv to find out if any districts have been approached with an invitation for the superintendent to interview with the MindRocket Media Group.

- Provided **Cleveland** Chief Communications Officer Roseann Canfora with access to the Public Relations Executives listserv to find out if any districts have received a pitch to appear on the Yahoo "Cities Rising" series with Katie Couric.

- **Cleveland** staff members accessed the Council's Key Performance Indicators system 64 times between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017.

- Posted a **Cleveland** job announcement for Executive Director of Talent Acquisition and Management upon request from the Human Resource Department.

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator:* "Cleveland Transgender Student Finds Support" (June/July 2016).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator:* "Attendance Campaign Reaches Goal in Cleveland to Reduce Absenteeism" (June/July 2016).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator*: "Big-City Schools Start New Year with Renewed Focus" (September 2016).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator:* "Nine Finalists Vie for Top Urban Education Award" (October 2016).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator:* "Cleveland Schools CEO Named Urban Educator of the Year" (November/December 2016).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator*: "Freedom Rider Meets Cleveland Students in Wake of Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration" (January/February 2017).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator*: "Education Secretary, Civil Rights Official Address Big-City School Leaders" (April 2017).

- Carried a story on **Cleveland** in the *Urban Educator*: "National Commission to Study Cleveland's Social, Emotional Learning Program" (May 2017).

3. Individuals from **Cleveland Metropolitan School District** attending Great City School conferences and meetings in 2016-17—

Curriculum & Research Directors Meeting Palm Beach, FL July 11-14, 2016	Chief Human Resource Officers and Personnel Directors San Antonio, TX February 8-10, 2017
• Shawn Braxton • Christopher L. Broughton • Nicholas D'Amico • Jose Gonzalez • LaTisha Grimes • Roderick Houpe • Matthew Linick • Blessing Nwaozuzu • Nicholas Petty • Angelique Shields • Karen Thompson	• Lori Ward • Martha Woerner
Public Relations Meeting **Chicago, IL** **July 15-17, 2016**	**Legislative Policy Conference** **Washington, DC** **March 11-14, 2017**
• Roseann Canfora	• Donna Bowen • Dr. Christopher L. Broughton • Roseann Canfora • Diana Ehlert • Eric Gordon • Juanita Holt • Michele Pomerantz • Julie Snipes-Rea • Jessica Wilson
60th Annual Fall Conference **Miami, FL** **October 19-23, 2016**	**Food Services Directors, Security Directors,** **and Chief Operating Officers Conference** **New Orleans, LA** **April 4-7, 2017**
• See following page	• Lester Fultz • Richard Novak • Gary Sautter • Eric Taylor • Joseph Vaughn • Patrick Zohn • Larry Battle • Jerome Pratt

Chief Financial Officers Conference San Antonio, TX November 8-11, 2016	Bilingual & Immigrant Education Directors Meeting Los Angeles, CA May 16-20, 2017
- Marilyn Landrum - William Martin - Angela Foraker - Angele Latham - Larry Johnston, CPA - Derek Richey	- Janice Cedeno - Loulou Elias - Jose Gonzalez - Samuel Roman - Michelle Sanchez - Ricardo Torres - Caitlin Kilbane

60th Annual Fall Conference
Miami, FL
October 19-23, 2016

- Jessica Baldwin - Donna Bowen - Shawn Braxton - Jacquinette Brown - Kevin Burtzlaff - Roseann Canfora - Diana Ehlert - Lisa Farmer - Juliane Fouse-Shepard - Christine Fowler-Mack - Erin Frew - Lester Fultz - Jose Gonzalez - Denine Goolsby - Eric Gordon - Heather Grant - Shirrell Greene - Robert Heard - Lorri Hobson - Juanita Holt - Roderick Houpe	- Lisa Howell-Scott - Jennifer Janovitz - Luther Johnson, Jr. - Andrew Koonce - Gerard Leslie - Marcy Levy Shankman - Matthew Linick - Denise Link - Carol Lockhart - Justin Monday - Trent Mosley - Valentina Moxon - Elizabeth Nelson - Blessing Nwaozuzu - Faye Phillips - Brittny Pierre - Michelle Pierre-Farid - Michele Pomerantz - Desiree Powell - Lori Riddick - Lorenzo Russell	- Pamela Scott - Angee Shaker - Melissa Skelly - Lisa Thomas - Karen Thompson - Megan Traum - Nicole Vitale - Lori Ward - Edward Weber - Ronald Abate - Ronald Berkman - Kate Coleman - Diane Corrigan - Mary Ellen Isaac - Deborah Morin - Sajit Zachariah - Analee Maestas - Katarina Sandoval - Lorenzo Garcia - Peggy Muller-Aragon - Rose-Ann McKernan

General Benefits to the Membership

Highlights

- Secured some $897 million in federal aid for the member districts in 2016-17 that would not have been available without the Council's efforts over the years.
- Celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the Council of the Great City Schools.
- Was instrumental in getting rid of burdensome regulations that were about to be issued to guide ESSA implementation.
- Launched a ground-breaking system of academic Key Performance Indicators to help districts compare how they were doing.
- Developed and published a new tool to help the membership strengthen the quality of their instructional curriculum.
- Wrote and disseminated two new reports to help the membership select materials for English language learners that were compatible with college and career-readiness standards.
- Developed a trailblazing purchasing consortia to help spur the improvement of commercial materials for English learners.
- Provided numerous Strategic Support Teams to member districts to help strengthen instructional programming, budgeting, and various business services.
- Filed an effective amicus brief before the U.S. Supreme Court in the widely watched *Endrew F* case.
- Developed and piloted a new model of professional development for school boards in the member districts.
- Held the best-ever Annual Fall Conference in October 2016 in Miami.
- Released the organization's Managing for Results report with newly updated Key Performance Indicators on budgets and operations.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Council of the Great City Schools works to give the public and the press a balanced and accurate view of the challenges, developments, and successes of urban public schools. In 2016-17 the Council—

- Celebrated the Council's 60th Anniversary with a series of events and interviews.
- Coordinated *Education Week* newspaper and video coverage of the Council's 60th Anniversary.
- Produced a 60th Anniversary video and published a history of the organization—*1956-2016: Celebrating 60 Years of Service to America's Urban Public Schools*.
- Coordinated extensive press coverage of U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos' address at the Council's Legislative/Policy Conference.
- Enhanced the Council's social-media presence and redesigned website.

- Coordinated a national town hall meeting on education issues in the 2016 Presidential Campaign, moderated by noted broadcast journalist Dan Rather.
- Issued press releases on numerous Council activities, as well as statements outlining the Council's positions on various current events and political developments.
- Fielded scores of inquiries from national and regional media outlets, such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, National Public Radio, and the *Associated Press*.
- Managed the organization's ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships and Shirley Schwartz Scholarships.
- Published eight issues of the *Urban Educator*.
- Published the organization's Annual Report and provided each member district with an individualized report of services received in 2016-17 and a calculation of its return on investment.
- Hosted the 16th Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in Chicago.
- Participated in the joint National Associations of Black and Hispanic Journalists Conference as well as the Education Writers Association Conference.
- Managed the Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group.

LEGISLATION

In voicing its proposals and ideas to Congress and other federal policymakers, the Council helps shape legislation to strengthen the quality of schooling for the nation's urban children. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Successfully prevented major federal regulatory changes that would have forced Great City School districts to reallocate hundreds of millions of dollars in state and local funds.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on proposed regulations for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on accountability, assessments, English language learners, and students with disabilities.
- Participated in multiple meetings with U.S. Department of Education officials to discuss priorities and operational flexibility in the implementation of ESSA.
- Offered multiple recommendations to the new Administration on the implementation of ESSA.
- Convened numerous conference calls to brief the membership on specific details of ESSA as new requirements and policies went into effect during the 2016-17 school year.
- Provided ongoing fiscal guidance to member districts regarding Title I funding for the upcoming 2017-18 school year, specifically on the state set-asides affecting school district allocations.
- Acted as a resource for the membership on immigration actions taken by the new Administration, providing summaries of new federal executive orders and memoranda, and sharing information on local district responses.
- Submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* case on the expected benefits of district programs for students with disabilities.

- Hosted a series of webinars on legal issues facing urban school districts with Husch Blackwell, covering such issues as the Supreme Court, civil rights, hate speech in schools, special education, and the legal rights of immigrant students.
- Submitted recommendations to Congress on the reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, highlighting the need for simplification and flexibility.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on the overidentification of students for special education services and disciplinary action.
- Collected Medicaid funding and student services data from member districts, and provided fact sheets to support a Council-wide initiative to oppose massive proposed cuts to the federal Medicaid program.
- Hosted monthly conference calls with member districts and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) to resolve problems in the new E-Rate application portal.
- Convened the Annual Legislative/Policy Conference, which featured four days of briefings on ESSA, federal funding for the upcoming 2017-18 school year, education priorities of the new Administration, and immigration policy.
- Responded to scores of questions on federal legislation and served as an intermediary for the membership in resolving problems with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Fielded multiple information requests from Congress, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Federal Communications Commission, and other federal agencies.

RESEARCH

Timely data collection and analysis allow the Council to prepare comprehensive reports, predict trends, and assess the effects of various policies, reforms, and practices on student performance. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Conducted research on urban school progress on the 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 Trial Urban District Assessment of NAEP, controlling for relevant background variables.
- Conducted statistical analyses of proposed supplement/supplant regulations to ESSA to determine the effects on Council member districts.
- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the: American Educational Research Association, Partnership for Readiness for College and Careers, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, National Assessment Governing Board, National Center for Education Statistics, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Network of Education Research – Practice Partnerships, Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents, National Association of Assessment Directors, Directors of Research and Evaluation, White House Domestic Policy Council, White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans, White House My Brother's Keeper Initiative, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Council of Chief State School Officers, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, and Educational Testing Service.
- Responded to numerous member requests for statistical information and research assistance.
- Launched the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's new academic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on student achievement levels, attendance, suspensions, course participation, AP attainment and graduation rates.

- Managed the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's operational Key Performance Indicators.
- Gathered urban school leaders from over 30 school districts to discuss initiatives for young men and boys of color, and wrote a report summarizing issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- Provided technical assistance with member districts on setting up or enhancing programs for their males of color.
- Conducted or provided assistance to numerous strategic support teams to help address issues in several school districts related to curriculum, research, English language learner instruction, supports for young men of color, and student achievement overall.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council's most important priorities. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Developed and disseminated the organization's *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum—a practical* guide on what a high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum should look like.
- Disseminated and supported district use of the Council's *Indicators of Success* tool to assess district-level progress in implementing college- and career-readiness standards.
- Published a report with the Urban Libraries Council on joint efforts to improve literacy.
- Convened the Achievement and Professional Development Task Forces at the Annual Fall Conference and March Legislative/Policy Conference.
- Convened meetings of the organization's college-and career-readiness advisory committees.
- Collaborated with the Vermont Writing Project to offer member districts samples of student expository and argument writing.
- Partnered with the University of Chicago's Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education on a computer science toolkit for K-12 teachers and administrators, which was presented at a pre-conference session prior to the 2016 Annual Fall meeting.
- Convened the 2016 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference in Palm Beach, Florida.
- Made numerous presentations to other organizations in support of college- and career-readiness standards.
- Updated www.commoncoreworks.org to enable greater access to Council materials on standards.
- Expanded the Basal Alignment Project, Anthology Alignment Read-Aloud Project, and Text Set Project.
- Provided districts receiving Wallace Foundation Principal Supervisor Initiative (PSI) grants with technical assistance on sustaining their progress and planning next steps.
- Provided strategic support teams to member districts in the areas of instruction and special education.
- Provided districts with on-site or virtual support for their curriculum initiatives upon request.
- Connected districts with their peers to answer requests for information on a host of academic issues.

- Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners, the Schusterman Foundation, and the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools to implement an augmented balanced literacy pilot project.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

The Task Forces on Leadership, Governance, and Management, and School Finance address the quality and tenure of leadership and management in and funding of urban schools. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Developed and implemented a groundbreaking new model for providing professional development to school boards to help them improve governance.
- Conducted 20 strategic support team reviews to member districts on organizational structure, staffing levels, human resources, facilities, budget and finance, transportation, and technology operations.
- Convened meetings of member district Chief Financial Officers, Human Resources Directors, Chief Operating Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chiefs of Safety & Security, Facilities Directors, Transportation Directors, Food Service Directors, Internal Auditors, Risk Managers, and Procurement Directors.
- Convened two meetings of the Leadership, Governance, and Management Task Force and the Finance Task Force.
- Published the twelfth edition of *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2016* with an expanded set of operational key performance indicators.
- Maintained an on-line database of operational and financial key performance indicators that member districts can use to compare their performance with one another.
- Provided assistance to member districts in conducting superintendent searches and vetting potential candidates.
- Processed the application for and presented the Council's Award for Excellence in Financial Management to the Fresno Unified School District.
- Managed the Council's Urban School Executive Program (C'USE) for aspiring Chief Financial Officers.
- Published a booklet on *Enterprise Risk Management in the Great City Schools,* and wrote white papers on *Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools and Security Considerations in Today's K-12 Environment*".
- Fielded numerous member requests for management and operational information and services.
- Posted dozens of district job announcements on the Council's job board.

BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT, AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Worked with Department of Education staff on ELL accountability guidance under ESSA.

- Conducted a survey of exit procedures and criteria in member districts to inform discussions with the Department of Education on ESSA guidance.
- Provided strategic support team reviews of ELL programming in member districts and strategic technical assistance to others.
- Launched survey and ELL data collection efforts to update the 2013 "ELLs in America's Great Cities" report.
- Monitored the number of refugees who settled in the United States and provided updates to Council member districts.
- Monitored Executive Orders and Administrative Memoranda related to immigration law and enforcement and provide updates to member districts.
- Developed a school resource to assist district and school staff in the prevention of female genital mutilation in order to support young girls who are at risk or may be survivors of this practice.
- Assembled a team of experts and district practitioners to develop criteria for selecting instructional materials in mathematics for ELLs and other students with language-related needs.
- Established a purchasing consortium to spur the development of quality instructional materials for ELLs. Secured a lead district and commitments from 15 districts to participate in the joint procurement alliance.
- Updated the criteria for the selection of instructional materials in English Language Arts for ELLs.
- Developed and field tested in seven districts a successful professional development platform for teachers working with high-need students who are below grade level in reading.
- Convened the annual meeting of the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education Directors in Los Angeles.
- Convened two meetings of the Task Force on Bilingual, Refugee and Immigrant Education.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council works to manage its resources and ensure the integrity of its programs. In 2016-17, the Council—

- Executed the move of the Council's headquarters to new and expanded office space.
- Convened two meetings of the organization's board of directors and four meetings of its executive committee.
- Had an external audit conducted of the organization's 2015-16 spending and received unqualified audit results for FY2015-16.
- Completed an audit by the Gates Foundation and implemented recommendations for improvement.
- Managed finances and logistics for 25 Strategic Support Team trips, 7 grant projects, 10 programs, and 11 conferences and specialty meetings.
- Hosted the Annual Fall Conference in Miami, FL as well as multiple meetings and forums throughout the year.

- Maintained the online conference registration and hotel reservation system for all meetings.
- Negotiated headquarter and overflow hotel contracts for the 2019 Annual Fall Conference in Louisville, and hotel contracts for all the other peer-to-peer meetings.
- Negotiated with a new provider for staff benefits for basic life insurance and short & long term disability insurance, saving the organization $16.5K a year in premiums.
- Continued cleanup of the organization's database. Cleaned out old files and converted to e-files.
- Updated the Personnel Policy Handbook and the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual.

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
2017 Conference Schedule

Executive Committee Meeting
January 27 & 28, 2017
Omni Austin Hotel Downtown, Austin, TX

HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting
February 8-10, 2017
Hotel Contessa, San Antonio, TX

Legislative/Policy Conference
March 11-14, 2017
The Mayflower Hotel, Washington, DC

Chief Operating Officers Conference
April 4-7, 2017
Le Meridien New Orleans, New Orleans, LA

Bilingual Directors Meeting
May 16-20, 2017
The Garland Hotel, Los Angeles, CA

Public Relations Executives Meeting
July 7-9, 2017
Hyatt Regency Hotel, San Antonio, TX

Chief Information Officers Meeting (Joint Meeting with C&R Meeting)
July 11-14, 2017
Omni William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA

Curriculum & Research Directors' Meeting (Joint Meeting with CIO Meeting)
July 11-14, 2017
Omni William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA

Executive Committee Meeting
July 21 & 22, 2017
Hotel Monaco, Portland, OR

Annual Fall Conference
October 18-22, 2017 at the Hilton Hotel in Cleveland, OH
October 24-28, 2018 at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront in Baltimore, MD
October 23-27, 2019 at the Omni Louisville Hotel in Louisville, KY

Chief Financial Officers Conference
November 14-17, 2017
EPIC Hotel, Miami, FL

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COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
2018 Conference Schedule

Executive Committee Meeting
January 19 & 20, 2018
Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress, Orlando, FL

HRD/Personnel Directors & CIO Meeting
February 6-9, 2018
Gallery One Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Legislative/Policy Conference
March 17-20, 2018
The Mayflower Hotel, Washington, DC

Chief Operating Officers Conference
April, 2018
TBD

Bilingual Directors Meeting
May, 2018
TBD

Curriculum & Research Directors' Joint Meeting
June, 2018
TBD

Public Relations Executives Meeting
July 12-14, 2018
Hyatt Regency Orange County, Garden Grove, CA

Executive Committee Meeting
July 20 & 21, 2018
Hilton Anchorage, Anchorage, AK

Annual Fall Conference
October 24-28, 2018 at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront in Baltimore, MD
October 23-27, 2019 at the Omni Louisville Hotel in Louisville, KY

Chief Financial Officers Conference
November, 2018
TBD

FALL CONFERENCE
2018

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS'
62nd ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

BUILDING A GENERATION:
BLUEPRINTS
FOR SUCCESS IN URBAN EDUCATION

SEE YOU IN   OCTOBER 24–28, 2018
BALTIMORE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

62nd ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

Hosted by the
BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Baltimore, MD

OCTOBER 24 - 28, 2018

CONFERENCE HOTEL:
Baltimore Marriott Waterfront
700 Aliceanna Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 385-3000

GROUP RATE: $239/night for Single and Double Occupancy
Plus 15.5% tax

Raise your expectations. Then expect to exceed them. Marriott Baltimore Waterfront Hotel is located in the renowned Harbor East neighborhood. Just 15 minutes from BWI Airport, 5 minutes from Penn Station, 5 minutes from Camden Yards Light Rail Station, and 10 minutes to Baltimore passenger cruise ship terminal. A short ride or leisurely walk to the Baltimore Convention Center, Orioles Park at Camden Yards, Raven's M&T Bank Stadium, National Aquarium Baltimore, Fells Point, Little Italy and the Inner Harbor restaurants and shops.

FALL CONFERENCE
2019

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

63rd ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

Hosted by the
JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Louisville, KY

OCTOBER 20 - 28, 2019

CONFERENCE HOTEL:
Omni Louisville Hotel
400 South 2nd Street
Louisville, KY 40202

GROUP RATE: $214/night for Single and Double Occupancy
Plus 16.07% tax

Set to open in early 2018, the Omni Louisville will be a catalyst to the city's growth and urban development. Considered the tallest hotel in Louisville and located at Liberty and 2nd Street, one block from the Kentucky International Convention Center, the hotel will be the cornerstone in the city's most exclusive entertainment, retail and office district, "Fourth Street Live!" The hotel will feature 612 finely appointed guestrooms and suites topped by 225 luxury apartments.

The hotel will offer approximately 70,000 square-feet of flexible meeting and event space. Meeting and convention attendees will have access to an additional 300,000 square-feet of meeting and exhibit space at the Kentucky International Convention Center

The 30-story luxurious property will reflect Louisville's warmth and hospitality, while embracing and celebrating the city's authentic quality and charm. The hotel will be the luxury brand's first property in Kentucky.

FALL CONFERENCE 2020

Criteria for Selection of Fall Conference Host Cities

1. Potential to draw increased number of attendees and their families.
2. City of interest for attendees to visit.
3. Wide array of cultural sites, restaurants, music, museums, theaters, sporting events, and other attractions for after-hours.
4. Conference hotel rooms prices under $200 for attendees.
5. Conference hotel with at least 500 sleeping rooms.
6. Presence of nearby backup hotels.
7. Hotel ballroom space capable of holding 700 to 1,000 people banquet style with room for a 24'x12'x2' stage riser.
8. Hotel with sufficient number of small meeting rooms to accommodate about 15 to 20 breakout sessions simultaneously over two to three day period.
9. Host city willing to offer amenities to guests.
10. Host city willing to devote media attention to work of conference.
11. Collaboration by host city convention bureau, chamber of commerce, mayor, and other similar groups.
12. City with reasonable number of direct flights from other Great Cities on major carriers.
13. City willing and able to secure major cultural attractions for receptions and other similar events.
14. Host school system with staff capable of assisting in organization of large events.
15. Host school system willing and able to conduct necessary fundraising to offset local expenditures.
16. Locally available talent with national name recognition to events and speeches.
17. Host school system with schools and educational programs of national interest to conference attendees.
18. Host city with national news capacity or serves as media hub.
19. Host city is a member in good-standing of the Council.
20. Other criteria as necessary.

LEGISLATION

OVERVIEW: CHALLENGES

Email to Superintendents and School Board Representatives
Regarding Challenges Facing Urban Schools in Congress

From: Michael Casserly
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2017
To: Superintendents and School Board Representatives
Subject: Immediate and Future Action in Congress--Need Your Attention

Great City School Superintendents/Chancellors/CEOs and School Board Representatives--

My apologies for the lengthy email, but the challenges facing urban schools are mounting in Washington and need your attention. Please be sure to read this email to the end to ensure your district is fully engaged in the fights that lie ahead.

BACKGROUND: The passage of legislation to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act in the U.S. House of Representatives last week demonstrates the severity of the challenges we face on Capitol Hill and the resolve of Congress and the new Administration to achieve victory on their legislative priorities. One significant feature of the health bill for urban schools was the capping of Medicaid funds for States and the subsequent elimination of the traditional Medicaid entitlement for all eligible low-income children and adults, resulting in an $880 billion reduction in Medicaid spending over ten years. These are funds that all of us receive for school-based Medicaid services for students with disabilities. We cannot let these cuts be finalized into law and as the Senate begins consideration of health care legislation, we must demonstrate the importance of Medicaid funds and health services for students with disabilities and other vulnerable children in our cities.

Unfortunately, the threats for urban schools are not limited to the health care legislation. We have additional battles ahead on Capitol Hill, beginning this summer, as the House and Senate develop both tax reform legislation and the FY 2018 appropriations bills that will fund federal programs in school year 2018-19. We anticipate that the tax reform legislation will not only include private school tuition subsidies or tax credits, but also provisions that could further undermine our financial stability, such as eliminating state and local tax deductions. We know the President's proposed budget for FY 2018 (which we expect later this month) aims to eliminate funding for Title II and afterschool services in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and will propose to fund new portability-type proposals with Title I and a pilot program for private school vouchers. We must all work together to fight these changes, and convince congressional appropriators to provide sufficient funding for the core federal programs for urban students living in poverty, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

The exact timing for these proposals are still being determined, but we must pick up the pace to defeat them immediately and prepare ourselves for ongoing fights for the rest of the year.

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED IN THE <u>SENATE</u>: Engage leaders and personnel in your school district (central office, building principals, school nurses, teachers, therapists, psychologists, etc.), as well as the mayor's office, local stakeholders and community groups, and

like-minded districts in your region and throughout your state (i.e., your state urban coalitions) and urge all of them to **contact your Senators immediately around health care legislation and Medicaid**. Legislation that cuts Medicaid spending – either by capping State funding or other types of reductions – will result in a growing gap between eligible costs and available funding and create enormous financial pressure on States to reduce eligible services and lower (or eliminate) reimbursements to certain providers, including school districts. The school-based Medicaid services our districts provide to students with disabilities must be protected. Be sure to provide your local partners and Senators with information on the amount of Medicaid funding you receive each year, as well as the types of services provided and the number of students who benefit.

PREPARE FOR IMMINENT ACTION IN THE <u>HOUSE</u>: Prepare the same in-district and external stakeholder networks that you mobilize on the health care issue for upcoming fights on critical issues such as private school subsidies and protecting your local tax base in the tax reform legislation as well as the erosion of funding for public K-12 funding in the FY 2018 appropriations bill. Keeping this network energized and poised for action will be critically important when issues arise, especially if mobilization is needed this summer when school is not in session. Unfortunately, we will have to fight on two fronts simultaneously.

CGCS SURVEY ON FEDERAL ALLOCATIONS (see attached): More than half of the Council members have completed our survey on federal funding, but we need responses from all urban districts to have a full picture of the federal support our schools receive. This information will be extremely important in all of the above debates, as the survey will provide us with information on the number of students receiving Medicaid services in your district, the number of teachers funded with Title II, and afterschool funding and services provided through the 21st Century Community Schools program. <u>If your district is NOT listed below, we have not received a survey and ask that you complete the information ASAP. Thank you very much and please let me know if you have concerns or questions. My cell is 202/421-8578.</u>

<u>Surveys Received (as of July 5th):</u>

Albuquerque	Cleveland	Fresno	Nashville	Richmond
Austin	Columbus	Guilford	Newark	Rochester
Baltimore	Dallas	Hawaii	Norfolk	San Antonio
Boston	Dayton	Hillsborough	Orange	San Francisco
Broward	Denver	Houston	Palm Beach	Seattle
Buffalo	Des Moines	Indianapolis	Philadelphia	St. Louis
Charlotte	DC	Long Beach	Pinellas	Tulsa
Chicago	Duval	Los Angeles	Pittsburgh	Wichita
Cincinnati	El Paso	Milwaukee	Portland	
Clark	Fort Worth	Minneapolis	Providence	

Thank you for your attention and vigilance during this important time for urban schools. We can prevail but we must be active and work together to achieve success.

--Michael Casserly, Council of the Great City Schools

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

May 2, 2017

Dear Senator and Representative:

The FY 2017 Consolidated Appropriations bill shortchanges the nation's school districts that are set to begin implementation of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in the upcoming school year. While an omnibus appropriations bill must address many national priorities, the Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, cannot support the inadequate funding levels contained in the pending bill for this inaugural year of nationwide ESSA implementation.

The FY 2017 bill provides a microscopic 0.04 percent increase across all ESSA appropriations accounts – a mere $10 million -- to meet the multiple new statutory requirements of the new education reauthorization. These new ESSA requirements for FY 2017 include: more accountability indicators for school districts; more schools expected to be initiate school interventions; more federal reporting and data analysis; new federally-required entrance and exit procedures for English learners; more funding reserved for services in private schools; and newly authorized "off-the-top" state reservations of local funding allocations under ESSA Title I and Title II.

ESSA directs States to reduce FY 2017 Title I formula grant allocations for school districts by a mandatory 7 percent reservation for state-determined discretionary school improvement projects (in contrast to 4 percent in FY 2016). It also authorizes a new optional 3 percent state set-aside for direct student services to be taken off-the-top of school districts' Title I allocations. Additionally, new shifts in census counts among school districts will further exacerbate reductions in Title I funding allocations for many schools. In short, a sizeable segment of the nation's school districts will be surprised and alarmed to find their local Title I funding allocations cut for the new school year 2017-18.

Moreover, the meager 0.67 percent increase in the Title I appropriation for disadvantaged students in the pending bill will fail to offset these reductions for the upcoming school year, especially in states like Texas, Illinois, and Ohio that are planning to trigger the new 3 percent optional ESSA state set-aside. And, the 12.5 percent cut to Title II funding for teacher quality and class-size reduction programs will add to local financial disruptions. Finally, the FY 2017 bill also may minimize the broad-based benefits anticipated under the new $400 million consolidated Title IV Support and Enrichment program for school districts by allowing states to distribute these funds on a competitive basis to selective school districts rather than by formula as provided in ESSA.

The fact that the 115th Congress has reached a bipartisan agreement on thousands of items in the FY 2017 Consolidated Appropriations bill does not necessarily make it a good bill for thousands of the nation's school districts. The longstanding priority on federal education funding during multiple administrations – Democrat and Republican – appears to be eroding. The nation's Great City Schools do not support the inadequate K-12 funding levels for the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provided in H.R. 244.

Sincerely,

Michael D Casserly

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

Email to Superintendents and School Board Representatives
Regarding Final Spending Agreement for FY 2017

From: Michael Casserly
Sent: Monday, May 01, 2017
To: Superintendents and School Board Representatives
Subject: Congress Reaches Spending Agreement for School Year 2017-18

Great City Schools Superintendents/CEOs/Chancellors and School Board Representatives–

Congressional leaders have negotiated an agreement on the delayed FY 2017 spending bill that will fund federal education programs for school year 2017-18.

The agreement includes a total increase of $550 million increase for Title I, but approximately $450 million of that increase will be reserved by States as part of a larger School Improvement Grant (SIG) set-aside authorized under ESSA. The remaining $100 million in increases will be too small (1%) to offset changes in Census poverty counts or state set-asides, and could result in cuts to some districts.

This Consolidated Appropriations agreement also includes a $90 million increase in IDEA grants for special education, level funding for English Language Learners (Title III), and a cut of $294 million (approximately 13%) to Title II for Teacher Quality. The agreement does provide $400 million for the new Title IV block grant that was created in ESSA, but it includes language allowing States the option of distributing these funds through a competitive grant (as opposed to the targeted formula distribution to LEAs authorized in ESSA).

The Council will not be supporting the funding levels in the new bill, because they are too low to adequately support the first year of ESSA's implementation—but you need to know what the new levels are for your planning purposes. House and Senate leaders have until the end of the week to pass the agreement on their respective floors and send the final spending bill to the president for signature.

Details from the agreement include:

- **Title I:** $100 million increase for grants to LEAs (plus $450 million to offset the larger State set-aside for SIG under ESSA)

- **Title II Effective Instruction (formerly Teacher Quality):** $294 million decrease

- **Title III English Language Acquisition:** no change

- **Title IV Block Grant**: $400 million appropriation (new program funded for the first time)

- **IDEA Part B:** $90 million increase

- **Impact Aid:** $23 million increase

- **21st Century Community Centers:** $25 million increase

- **Comprehensive Literacy (formerly Striving Readers):** no change

- **Charter Schools:** $9 million increase

- **Magnet Schools;** $1 million increase

- **Head Start (in Department of Health and Human Services):** $85 million increase

- **Preschool Development Grants (moved to HHS):** no change

We will provide more information as the week continues, and please let us know if you have any questions.

--Michael Casserly
  Council of the Great City Schools

FY 2018 Budget Request

At the end of May, the Trump Administration released their full budget proposal for federal FY 2018, which will fund education programs in the 2018-19 school year. The president's proposal requests $9 billion in cuts to federal education programs, reducing the U.S. Department of Education budget by approximately 13%.

Overall, the Trump Budget seeks to cut both discretionary appropriations and entitlement/mandatory spending by $3.6 trillion, while increasing defense and security spending and assuming 3% annual economic growth. Cuts to social safety-net programs – like TANF (welfare), SNAP (food stamps), and SSDI (social security disability payments), as well as $610 billion in further cuts to Medicaid on top of the more than $800 billion in Medicaid cuts in the House health care legislation – will have both direct and indirect consequences for low-income students and their families, as well as the public schools serving them.

Education Department Budget

As expected, any new or increased funding for K-12 education in the budget proposal is directed to choice initiatives. It is important to note that the budget request cuts traditional K-12 education programs while funding these new proposals, and leaves other important programs like IDEA for students with disabilities and Title III for English learners with no additional funding. Significant K-12 education cuts in the budget proposal include:

- Title I, the cornerstone federal program for disadvantaged students, is cut by more than $575 million
- 21st Century Afterschool Centers is eliminated (-$1.2 billion)
- Title II-A for Effective Instruction, used for class-size reduction and professional development is eliminated (-$2.1 billion)
- Title IV Academic Enrichment and Student Support program is eliminated (-$400 million)
- Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants are eliminated (-$190 million)
- Perkins Career and Technical Education is cut by 13% (-$168 million)

ACTION NEEDED:

The phone number for the U.S. House of Representatives switchboard is (202) 225-3121. Call your House representative and ask them to:

- Support increased investments – AND NOT FUNDING CUTS – for critical K-12 programs, particularly Title I for disadvantaged students, Title II for professional development and class size reduction, Title III for English learners, and IDEA for students with disabilities.

- Increase Title I by at least $350 million over FY 2017 to offset new state set-asides and to help school districts meet the new requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

- Reject any proposal that uses federal funds for private school tuition.

Proposed FY 2018 Funding Levels for Federal Education Programs (school year 2018-19)
(in thousands)

Federal Education Program	FY 2017 Final	FY 2018 Proposed Trump Budget Request	FY 2018 House Omnibus	FY 2018 Senate Committee
Title I - Grants to LEAs [1]	15,459,802	14,881,458	15,459,802	15,485,000
Title I - FOCUS Demonstration (new Trump proposal)	*NA*	*1,000,000*	*0*	*0*
School improvement grants (SIG) [1]	0	NA	NA	NA
Migrant Education	374,751	374,039	374,751	374,751
Neglected and delinquent	47,614	47,523	47,614	47,614
Homeless children and youth	77,000	69,867	77,000	77,000
Impact Aid	1,328,603	1,236,435	1,334,000	1,340,000
Comprehensive Literacy Development Grant [2]	190,000	0	0	190,000
Title IV - Student Support and Academic Enrichment [3]	400,000	0	500,000	450,000
Advanced placement [3]	0	NA	NA	NA
State assessments	369,100	377,281	369,100	369,100
Rural education	175,840	175,506	175,840	175,840
Education for Native Hawaiians	33,397	0	33,397	33,397
Alaska Native Education Equity	32,453	0	32,453	32,453
Promise Neighborhoods	73,254	60,000	60,000	73,254
School counseling [3]	0	NA	NA	NA
Physical Education [3]	0	NA	NA	NA
21st century learning centers	1,191,673	0	1,191,673	1,191,673
Indian Education	164,939	143,665	164,939	164,939
Race to the Top	0	NA	NA	NA
Education Innovation and Research [2,4]	100,000	370,000	0	95,000
Math and science partnerships [3]	0	NA	NA	NA
Title II - Effective Instruction [2]	2,055,830	0	0	2,055,830
Transition to teaching	0	NA	NA	NA
Teacher quality partnership (HEA)	43,092	0	NA	38,092
School Leader Recruitment/Support	14,500	0	0	0
Teacher and Leader Incentive Fund [2]	200,000	199,563	200,000	187,000

Federal Education Program	FY 2017 Final	FY 2018 Proposed Trump Budget Request	FY 2018 House Omnibus	FY 2018 Senate Committee
Charter schools grants	342,172	500,000	370,000	367,172
Magnet schools assistance	97,647	96,463	96,463	97,647
English Language Acquisition	737,400	735,998	737,400	737,400
IDEA - Part B	12,002,848	11,890,202	12,202,848	12,002,848
IDEA Preschool	368,238	367,538	368,238	368,238
IDEA Infants and Families	458,556	457,684	458,556	458,556
Perkins Career and Technical Education	1,117,598	949,499	1,117,598	1,117,598
Adult Education	581,955	485,849	581,955	581,955
GEAR UP	339,754	219,000	349,754	339,754
Research, development, and dissemination	187,500	194,629	187,500	187,500
Statistics	109,500	111,787	109,500	109,500
Regional educational laboratories	54,423	54,320	54,423	54,423
National assessment (NAEP)	149,000	148,717	149,000	149,000
National Assessment Governing Board	7,745	8,219	7,745	7,745
Statewide data systems	32,281	34,473	32,281	32,381
Preschool development grants (in HHS)	*250,000*	*0*	*250,000*	250,000
Head Start (in HHS)	*9,253,000*	*9,168,000*	*9,275,000*	9,253,000
Child Care and Development Block Grant (in HHS)	*2,856,000*	*2,761,000*	*2,860,000*	2,856,000
Department of Education Discretionary Appropriations total	**66,929,000**	**58,989,000**	**62,753,000**	**65,668,000**

1:   Only $100 million of the FY 2017 final Title I amount are additional formula funds for school districts over FY 2016. Approximately $450 million in Title I offsets the increased set-aside for School Improvement under ESSA. The increased set-aside replaced the separate SIG line-item.

2:   These existing programs - Striving Readers, Investing in Innovation, Teacher Quality State Grants, Teacher Incentive Fund - were given a new name under ESSA.

3:   Title IV is a new program under ESSA consolidating Math and Science Partnerships; Advanced Placement; School Counseling; and Physical Education for Progress Program.

4:   A $250 million increase was requested by the Trump Administration to research the effectiveness of private school voucher programs.

ESSA REGULATIONS

Council *of the* Great City Schools®
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1100N, Washington, DC 20004
(202) 393-2427   (202) 393-2400 (fax)   www.cgcs.org

August 25, 2017

Comments on Existing Education Department Regulations
Docket ID: ED–2017–OS–0074

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington D.C. 20202

Attention: Hilary Malawer, Assistant General Counsel

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city public school districts, submits the following comments on existing Education Department regulations in response to the June 22 Federal Register notice. This initial set of regulatory comments on the *Every Student Succeeds Act's* (ESSA) final assessment regulations were previously submitted to the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) based on a May 31 request for comments. Additionally, the Council now has included a few other comments on the June 30 IDEA final regulations (34 CFR 300) that replicate a number of the ESSA assessment regulations and appear to incorporate others by reference, specifically the overly expansive ESSA translation regulations and the unauthorized ESSA regulatory requirement that every State establish a definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The Council notes that many of the proposed ESSA rules developed by the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee have little or no basis in the Act and have now been incorporated by reference into the IDEA final regulations. The result is unnecessary and unwarranted federal requirements for the development and implementation of ESSA-related assessments, as well as in other areas not directly related to assessments. The Council requests that the Education Department exercise the leadership and direction that were lacking during Negotiated Rulemaking, and revise the assessment regulations in direct conformity with the provisions of the Act.

Moreover, the Council disputes any thought that the final ESSA assessment regulations from December 8, 2016 cannot be revised without reconvening a Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. First, it is specious to assume that subsequent administrations could not undertake notice and comment rulemaking on any set of final regulations, particularly when it took some 14 years to complete the last ESEA reauthorization. Second, the 2015 Neg Reg process appears to satisfy the ESSA section 1601 requirement for assessment regulations. And finally, the Secretary retains clear statutory authority in section 1601(c) to determine that Neg Reg is unnecessary, or the Secretary could determine under section 1601(c)(3) that there is an emergency need to have revised assessment regulations prior to the spring 2018 state testing period.

The following comments by the Council of the Great City Schools recommend revisions to the ESSA and IDEA assessment regulations, including the unauthorized requirement on the use of the ESSA 8th grade advanced math testing flexibility provision; the overregulation of provisions related to alternative assessments and state waiver conditions; and several other overly expansive assessment regulations.

Unauthorized Regulatory Requirements to Utilize the 8th Grade Advanced Math Testing Flexibility Provision under ESSA sec. 1111(b)(2)(C).

To prevent "double testing," ESSA allows an 8th grade student enrolled in advanced math classes to take a higher-level math assessment without being required also to take the regular 8th grade statewide math assessment. The assessment regulations [34 CFR 200.5(b)(4)], however, convert this narrow flexibility provision designed to avoid "double testing" into a federal mandate for statewide strategies "to provide **all** students in the State with the opportunity to be prepared for and to take advanced mathematics coursework in middle school" (emphasis added). In effect, this regulatory provision, drafted by the Department during negotiated rulemaking, imposes mandatory State-level policies to provide <u>any</u> middle school student universal access to prerequisite middle school advanced math coursework and to the advanced 8th grade math assessment--if the State opts to use this ESSA flexibility. This rule regulates statewide instructional course offerings, in contrast to the ESSA statute, which solely addresses a math assessment option. The regulation far exceeds the "double testing" flexibility specified in the Act, and propels the U.S. Department of Education into the arena of requiring additional State instructional coursework. Moreover, it is entirely unclear whether the requirement on "advanced mathematics coursework in middle school" would apply to Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, other advanced math courses, or all the above.

The somewhat ambiguous language developed during Negotiated Rulemaking on "strategies to provide all students … advanced mathematic coursework" does not absolve the state or its school districts from having to provide access to universal advanced middle school math coursework or the substantial costs that would result. Although many districts (including large urban districts) are actively expanding their advanced courses, requiring advanced math coursework for all middle school students in a state – apparently at each student's option -- is extremely cost-prohibitive for most school districts and would be difficult to staff due to shortage of qualified math teachers. Besides, this may not even be a good idea instructionally. And finally, the universal advanced math coursework provision, if enforced, would have a chilling effect on States seeking to exercise the flexibility to avoid 8th grade math double testing. This excessive and unauthorized regulatory add-on should be deleted from the final regulation.

Recommendation: Strike sec. 200.5(b)(4).

Multiple Areas of Federal Overregulation of Alternate Assessments and Conditions for State Waivers

ESSA Assessment Regulations Impose Unrelated and Unauthorized Requirements and Conditions on Receiving a Waiver of the 1% Statewide Alternate Assessment Cap in Direct Contradiction of ESSA Section 8401(b)(1)(E) and (b)(4)(D), and Are Designed to Circumvent Local IEP Team Determinations under IDEA.
The ESSA assessment regulations for the statewide 1 percent alternate assessment waiver option [ESSA sec. 1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(IV)] add multiple requirements and conditions that are unrelated to alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and are in direct violation of ESSA prohibitions [sec. 8401(b)(1)(E) and (b)(4)(D)] on imposing unrelated information requirements and "external conditions outside the scope of the waiver request".

These regulations also attempt to negate the ESSA prohibition [ESSA sec. 1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(II)] aimed at preventing both the Education Department and SEAs from imposing additional limitations on decisions made by local IEP teams in determining which individual students will be provided with an alternate assessment regardless of any state-level percentage caps. The extensive conditions and requirements in the assessment regulations [sec. 200.6(c)] for the submission and approval of a federal waiver of the statewide 1 percent cap were drafted originally by the Department during the 2016 negotiated rulemaking process to force states into limiting school district and IEP team determinations on the use of alternate assessments. In effect, the Department's regulation establishes a "back door" cap on LEA determinations of alternate assessments by conditioning state access to a statewide 1 percent waiver on the states' establishing policies that would reduce the use of local alternate assessments--despite ESSA prohibitions cited above.

In addition, the following unrelated regulatory requirements and conditions are prohibited under ESSA sec. 8401(b)(1)(E) and sec. 8401(b)(4)(D), but were nonetheless included in the December 8, 2016 alternate assessment waiver rules. Each of these unwarranted and unauthorized regulatory add-ons should be modified or deleted according to the following Council recommendations:

1. The unnecessary data requirement in sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(A) regarding the numbers and percentages from each separate subgroup of students taking an alternate assessment is unrelated to whether each individual student would qualify to be alternately assessed based on the decision of the IEP team.
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(A), strike "in each subgroup of students defined in section 1111(c)(2)(A), (B), and (D) of the Act";*

2. The unnecessary data requirement in sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(B) to demonstrate compliance with the 95 percent testing participation requirement is a separate issue unrelated to the number and percentage of students determined to need alternate assessments by their IEP team.
   Recommended Revision: *Strike sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(B) and renumber appropriately.*

3. The unnecessary state assurance to verify assessment numbers even for LEAs that have not exceeded the permissible 1 percent of locally assessed students has no basis in the Act [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)].
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)) strike "the State anticipates".*

4. The unnecessary regulatory language referencing "each" State guideline is excessive [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(A)].
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(A) strike "each of".*

5. The expansive regulatory requirement to address low-income, racial and ethnic, and English learner subgroup disproportionality in alternate assessments is likely to contravene the role of the IEP team in making individual (rather than subgroup) decisions on assessments and other services [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(B)].
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c(4)(iii)(B) strike "Will address" and insert "Reviewed"*

6. The reference to the unauthorized regulatory requirement for a new state definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities has no basis in the Act (see comment below), and includes another unauthorized rule apparently requiring the State to meet the 1 percent statewide cap in future years despite no statutory limitation on subsequent year waivers [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iv)(A)].

   Recommended Revisions:

   Strike sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iv)(A) and insert the following: "(A) The State will review the implementation of its guidelines under paragraph (d), including reviewing any disproportionality in the percentage of students taking alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards for any LEA under subparagraph (iii); and" and Strike clause (C).

Requiring through Department Regulations a State Definition of Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities Has No Basis in ESSA and Does Not Reflect the Statutory Role of Each Individual IEP Team in Determining the Instructional Strategies, Services and Support for Each of These High-Need Students.

The regulation [sec. 200.6(d)(1)] requiring a State definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) fails to acknowledge the decision-making role of the student's IEP team, regarding the selection of assessments, instruction, and supports. No federal definition of SCD has <u>ever</u> been required in ESEA or IDEA, and a prior attempt in 2005 to establish a national definition through proposed federal regulations to IDEA failed. In 2016 the Department again tried and failed to establish a federal SCD definition during negotiated rulemaking, but succeeded in mandating that each state establish its own SCD definition – <u>despite ESEA and IDEA operating without a SCD definition for decades</u>. While states likely have the inherent authority to establish their own SCD requirements consistent with federal law, this federal regulatory mandate to establish a statewide SCD definition represents a major and unnecessary expansion of federal regulatory authority over ESSA, and an intrusion on state and local decision-making, as well as on the operation of IEP teams.

Recommendation:

In sec. 200.6(d)(1) strike "Such guidelines must include a State definition of "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities" that addresses factors related to cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior, such that – ", and insert "Such guidelines must ensure that – "; and

In sec. 200.6(d)(1)(i) insert "and" at the end of the subparagraph; and

In sec. 200.6(d)(1)(ii) strike "and" at the end of the subparagraph; and

In sec. 200.6(d)(1) strike subparagraph (iii).

<u>IDEA Regulation Revision</u>: The changes in the June 30 IDEA final regulation appear to have included -- by a vague cross-reference -- the unauthorized ESSA regulatory requirement mandating that each State establish a State definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (SCD). As underscored in the Council's ESSA comment above, a definition of SCD has never been required in federal law under ESEA or IDEA, including the failed attempt in the 2005 IDEA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking--again without a statutory basis. Moreover, the ESSA regulations require consideration of cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior factors similarly without statutory basis. The Council recommends eliminating the vague Title I cross-reference to the unauthorized SCD definition requirement from the IDEA June 30 regulations.

<u>IDEA Recommendation</u>: *In 34 CFR 300.160(c)(2), strike "under Title I of the ESEA".*

Remove the Restrictive Language in the ESSA Alternate Standards Regulations to Properly Reference the Purposes of the Rehabilitation Act.
Sec. 200.2(b)(3)(ii)(B)(2) of the final regulations imposes a new restriction not found in the ESSA relating to the adoption of state alternate academic achievement standards. ESSA requires alternate achievement standards to be aligned to postsecondary education coursework or employment skills, including those consistent with the "purposes" of the Rehabilitation Act. The regulation, however, narrows the statutory authority by referencing only the "competitive integrated employment" purpose of the Rehabilitation Act, rather than the multiple purposes in the various titles of the Act. In sum, if Congress had wanted to narrow the application of the Rehabilitation Act to only include competitive integrated employment, Congress could have done so, but did not. Since the Rehabilitation Act merely seeks to "maximize" competitive integrated employment, the Act is clearly acknowledging that other employment experiences are acceptable, even though not necessarily desirable in every case. It remains uncertain whether this restrictive regulatory provision will result in states ultimately having to undertake revisions to their current alternate standards due to the specific federal regulatory focus on competitive integrated employment. The final regulation, therefore, should directly reflect the language of the Act without expansion or restriction.
Recommendation: In sec. 200.2(b)(3)(ii)(B)(2), strike "competitive integrated". [In the alternative, strike "competitive integrated" and insert "gainful".]

Miscellaneous Assessment Regulations for Reconsideration

Expanded Translation Requirements for Parent Notices and Reporting Exceed the Requirements of the Act, and Are Costly and Impractical to Implement.
ESSA includes multiple notice and reporting requirements in order to provide parents with information on the programs, options, and performance of the district, school, and their students. These ESSA statutory requirements include consistent translation responsibilities across the various sections of Title I to provide parents with applicable information "*in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand*". School districts, particularly large school districts, typically enroll students with over a hundred different language backgrounds. Written translations of some of these multiple languages are often impractical and at times impossible. The ESSA assessment regulations, however, require written translations or oral translations, as well as alternative formats. The cost of written translations typically ranges from 12 to 22 cents per word depending on how common or uncommon the language may be. Moreover, the required LEA and individual School Report Cards also will be much lengthier under ESSA because of new reporting requirements in the law. The broad, new regulatory provisions of the Department are an unwarranted expansion of ESSA, which denigrates the "to the extent practicable" flexibility built into the Act. The ESSA assessment regulations should directly reflect the language of the Act without expansion.
Recommendation: In sec. 200.2(e)(1) insert "and" at the end of the paragraph; and in sec. 200.2(e)(2) and (3) strike "written" in the first instance that it appears, and strike everything after "understand", and add a period. And, make appropriate conforming revisions in other sections of part 200.

IDEA Regulation Revision: The parent information-sharing responsibilities under IDEA, including assessment results, are much more extensive than under ESEA, and often involve

hundreds of pages of documents, evaluations, reports, IEPs, notes, etc. The overly expansive ESSA translation regulations relating to assessments (see above comment) create new, unauthorized, and costly requirements for school districts that could be readily generalized or misinterpreted to apply to any or all special education functions based on the June 30 IDEA final regulation changes. The Council strongly recommends returning to the actual language of the ESSA statute without embellishment, and cross-referencing the actual statutory provision [see ESEA sec. 1111(b)(2)(B)(x)] within the IDEA assessment regulations [34 CFR 300. 160(e)], rather than the current ESSA regulatory cross-referencing.

IDEA Recommendation: In 34 CFR 300.160(e), strike "consistent with 34 CFR 200.2(e)" and insert "consistent with sec. 1111(b)(2)(B)(x)".

Unnecessary Regulatory Requirement Allowing Only a "Districtwide" Option of Using a Locally Selected, Nationally Recognized High School Assessment.
ESSA provides the local option of using a locally selected, nationally recognized high school academic assessment in lieu of the regular statewide high school assessments -- but only with state approval. However, the "districtwide" implementation requirement added during negotiated rulemaking may be particularly impractical for large school districts with dozens of high schools. Large school districts rarely make instructional decisions without piloting a new initiative in a few schools to determine its efficacy. This "all or nothing" districtwide regulatory requirement – not required by the Act – eliminates the potential of piloting a nationally recognized high school assessment. Moreover, districts with a wide variety of high schools – comprehensive, CTE, magnet, themed, alternative, examination, etc. – may want to use a nationally recognized high school assessment for only certain types of high schools and not others. Since state approval is required in any case, districts should have the flexibility to propose to their SEA how best to use this national high school assessment option.

Recommendation: In sec. 200.3(a)(2), strike "all high school students in the LEA" and insert "all students in the high school". And, make appropriate conforming revisions in other sections of part 200.

Unwarranted Expansion of the Regulatory Definition of an Assistive Technology Device by Referencing Unspecified Nationally Recognized Accessibility Standards.
IDEA sec. 602(1) and 34 CFR 300.5 provide the operational definitions of assistive technology devices for school districts. The final ESSA assessment regulations [sec. 200.6(b)(1)], however, expand that definition by inserting a reference to being consistent with unspecified "nationally recognized accessibility standards". Such non-federal, third-party standards can readily change over time without any review, control, or input from Congress or the Department of Education, and without notice to the nation's school districts. The Council suggests that it is inappropriate for a federal agency to effectively delegate regulatory criteria or authority to third parties, and to hold school districts responsibility for compliance with such unspecified and variable external standards.

Recommendation: In sec. 200.6(b)(1), strike "consistent with nationally recognized accessibility standards,".

Unclear Regulatory Reference to Students with a Disability Under an Act Other Than IDEA.
ESSA refers to students with a disability "under an Act other than IDEA" under sec. 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii)(II) <u>only</u> in the context of appropriate accommodations. For all other purposes, ESSA references the IDEA sec. 602(3) definition of a child with a disability, and does not include other Acts. The ESSA assessment regulations [sec. 200.6(a)(1)], however, include other Acts for all assessment purposes, rather than solely for accommodations. The implications of this regulatory expansion to other Acts are difficult to predict, but nonetheless should be clearly restricted to only the accommodations specified in ESSA.
Recommendation: In section 200.6(a)(1)(iii), insert "for accommodations purposes only," before the word "including". And, make any other conforming changes in other provisions.

Please let us know if there are questions at mcasserly@cgcs.org or at jsimering@cgcs.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

September 20, 2017

Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW - Room 6E231
Washington, DC 20202
Attention: Hilary Malawer, Assistant General Counsel

Comments on Existing Education Department Regulations (IDEA)
Docket ID: ED–2017–OS–0074

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, submits the following comments on existing Education Department regulations relating to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in response to the August 11, 2017 notice in the Federal Register. The Council notes that it has already submitted comments on assessment regulations under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and has inserted here those ESSA assessment comments that directly apply to students with disabilities as Appendices at the end of these comments.

Over the years, the Council has submitted multiple written comments and pointed out in numerous meetings that the U.S. Education Department often expands federal legislative requirements beyond what is specified in statute when it promulgates education regulations. This has occurred in elementary and secondary school-related regulations spanning multiple presidential administrations. The Council, therefore, supports the Department's initiative to systematically review past administrative and regulatory actions. We also request that this review process consider not only regulations and guidance, but also Department policy letters.

The Great City Schools strongly supports universal access to public education for students with disabilities guaranteed by the landmark IDEA legislation 40 years ago. The Council also supports transparency and accountability for the educational performance of students with disabilities established in No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

In amending IDEA multiple times over the past 40 years new statutory requirements were added each time. In most instances, the IDEA amendments were followed by additional federal regulations, guidelines, policy letters, new state plans, revised state statutes, and additional state regulations, policies and procedures. After 40 years of layering special education requirements on top of each other, some regulatory reform at the federal level is warranted.

The current labyrinth of legal requirements in special education continues to grow, and requires highly trained compliance and content experts to navigate the maze. Substantial state and local school resources, including staffing, are devoted to compliance. And those resources -- at least in part – might be better utilized in strengthening instruction and support services.

The Council's comments in this letter are focused on IDEA regulations that either have no basis in the statute, or unnecessarily dictate, require consideration of, or even discourage local actions or activities that more appropriately should be determined by school officials in collaboration with professionals, parents, other applicable stakeholders, and students. Please let us know if clarification is needed on any of these comments.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS COMMENTS
ON EXISTING FEDERAL IDEA REGULATIONS

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

The Department's Regulatory Definition of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) at 34 CFR 300.17 is Overly Expansive, Inconsistent with the 2004 IDEA Amendments, and Should Be Limited to the Specific Language of the Act.
The Department's IDEA regulations add a phrase to the statutory definition of FAPE which incorporates every federal IDEA regulatory provision as a component of FAPE compliance – something that the Act does not. Section 602(9)(b) of the Act specifies that special education and related services must "meet the standards of the State educational agency;" as one of four statutory requirements for the provision of FAPE. The Department's regulations [34 CFR 300.17(b)], however, insert "meet the standards of the SEA**, including the requirements of this part**;" – encompassing every requirement of the Part 300 federal regulations (substantive, procedural, definitional, interpretative, financial, etc.). If read strictly, this major regulatory add-on phrase makes little operational sense. A violation of each provision of the federal IDEA regulation logically would <u>not</u> constitute a violation of a student's right to a free appropriate public education as defined in section 602.9(b) of the Act. This IDEA regulation clearly exceeds the statute, and reflects the ongoing over-regulation of the Act by the Department from the earliest years of IDEA. The Council acknowledges that this particular over-regulation was included in the 1983 iteration of IDEA regulations [then 34 CFR Part 300.4(b)]. However, amendments to IDEA since 1983 make the Department's over-regulation of the FAPE definition not only illogical but also unequivocally inconsistent with the current statute. Under current section 615(f)(3)(E) of the Act, for example, a FAPE violation must be substantive not procedural, unless a procedural violation rises to the level of a deprivation of a student's educational benefits or a substantial impediment to a student's or parent's rights. In short, a minor or technical violation of any of the numerous procedural requirements of IDEA regulations is not a FAPE violation per se – as the current regulatory definition now reads. An omission from an IDEA notice requirement, a minor delay in a timeline, or an oral *versus* written explanation, for example, would not be a FAPE violation under the 2004 amendments to the Act. The regulatory definition of FAPE warrants correction.

<u>Recommendation</u>: In 34 CFR 300.17(b) strike ", including the requirements of this part".

IEP and Evaluation Related Regulatory Issues

There is No IDEA Statutory Requirement for Extended School Year Services.
Extended School Year Services (ESY) is not mentioned in the IDEA statute. Nonetheless, the Department has inserted specific ESY regulatory provisions in the IDEA rules [34 CFR 300.106(a)(1) through (3) and (b)(1) & (2)]. The Department references a general FAPE provision of the Act [section 612(a)(1)] as its legal "authority" despite no mention of ESY in that provision or any other section of the Act. The Department's IDEA regulations require a school district to "ensure that extended school year services are available", using the term "<u>must ensure</u>"

[34 CFR 300.106(a)(1)] in a manner that is indicative of a federal requirement. Because of this provision, numerous States have required ESY as part of their statewide IEP form or part of their State-level regulations. And, although paragraph (a)(2) of the regulations notes that ESY is only required upon an IEP team determination of necessity on an individual student basis, this additional paragraph does little to temper the previous "must ensure" provision. The Department should not draft federal regulations that have the appearance of regulatory requirements, even though technically permissive – particularly when there is no basis is the statute for the regulation, as is the case with ESY.

Recommendation: In 34 CFR, strike section 300.106 entirely, and reserve.

Transition Plans
The 2004 IDEA Amendments repealed the earlier IDEA age 14-16 transition plan requirements, adding new statutory language for transition plans "not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16" [sec. 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)]. The 2005 regulations, nonetheless, inserted the unauthorized regulatory requirement for transition plans "when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team" [34 CFR 300.320(b)] replicating the identical language now repealed from the 1997 IDEA amendments, and thereby improperly continuing the requirements of the amended legislative iteration of IDEA. This regulatory requirement is also inconsistent now with section 614(d)(1)(A)(ii)(I) of the Act, specifying that no additional information is required in an IEP other than what is explicitly required by the statute itself. This regulation should directly reflect the amended language of the Act.

Recommendation: In 34 CFR 300.320(b), strike ", or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team,".

Alternative Means of IEP and Other IDEA Meeting Participation
The 2004 IDEA amendments provided for alternative means of IDEA meeting participation, including for IEP Team members [section 614(f)]. Congress recognized that technology provided for active participation by parents, parental representatives, and school personnel in multiple administrative matters under IDEA without necessitating a formal in-person meeting of all participants – including IEP team and placement meetings, as well as mediation, resolution, and certain administrative due process meetings. Physical attendance now is not required with alternative participation, providing greater convenience and comparable productivity. The 2005 regulations, however, include language that appears to discourage alternative means of participation. The Council recommends removing the negative connotations in the current regulations concerning alternative means of participation.

Recommendations:
- In 34 CFR 300.322(c), strike "the public agency must use other methods to ensure parent participation" and insert "the public agency may use other methods to facilitate parent participation".
- In 34 CFR 300.322(d), strike "if the public agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend.", and insert "if the public agency is unable to arrange for a parent to attend."

- In 34 CFR 300.501(c)(3), strike "If neither parent can participate in a meeting in which a decision is to be made relating to the educational placement of their child, the public agency must use other methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference telephone calls, or video conferencing.", and insert "If neither parent can attend a meeting in which a decision is to be made relating to the educational placement of their child, the public agency may use other methods to facilitate parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls, or video conferencing."

Transferred Students

To make the 2005 regulations more workable in relation to developing IEPs for transferred students, a few clarifications are needed. Some disabilities will not be immediately obvious in the school enrollment process or even in the first days of school attendance. Moreover, school districts need to have a reasonable basis to suspect that a disability exists, and to initiate the IDEA process and determine if a transferred student is a student with a disability. This may include a records transfer from the previous district or input from the parent or the student's new teacher(s). The comparable service requirement for a transferred student, however, can only be addressed if the receiving district has been notified of the content of the previous IEP or that a previous IEP exists.

Recommendation: In 34 CFR 300.323(e) and (f), strike "If a child with a disability" and insert "Subject to subsection (g), if a child with a disability".

Basis of a Parent's Disagreement with the School District's Evaluation Should Be Provided Prior to Obtaining an Independent Educational Evaluation at Public Expense. The current IDEA regulation [34 CFR 300.502(b)(4)] established in 1999 allows a parent of a student with a disability to "disagree" with a school district's evaluation and obtain an independent educational evaluation at public expense without providing any basis for the disagreement with the school's evaluation. Under this regulation, a parent can trigger a substantial public expenditure for a private independent evaluation without providing any reason why the school's evaluation is not appropriate. The school district then must file and prevail in a due process proceeding to prove that their evaluation is appropriate, and not be financially responsible for the cost of an independent evaluation. The regulation allowing for a parental disagreement with the public agency's evaluation resulting in a public expenditure for an independent evaluation was included in the 1983 IDEA regulations referenced in the Act. The 1999 IDEA regulations, however, expand this earlier regulatory requirement to the point of absurdity – despite no statutory changes -- by allowing the basis for the parent's disagreement with the current evaluation to be entirely undisclosed. Moreover, the 1999 regulation effectively requires the school district to file for a due-process hearing without any allegation or indication of noncompliance, inappropriateness, or error in the public agency's evaluation. The Council offers a common-sense recommendation that the basis of the parent's disagreement with a public evaluation be provided to the public agency in a timely manner.

Recommendation: In 34 CFR 300.502(b), strike paragraph (4) and insert "(4) If a parent requests an independent education evaluation at public expense under paragraph (b)(1), the parent must provide the basis for the disagreement or objection to the public evaluation to the public agency in a timely manner."

Withdraw or Modify the 2016 *Jennifer Carroll* Policy Letter on Independent Evaluations.
The 2016 Carroll policy letter provides for an independent educational evaluation at public expense at any time when a parent's disagreement with the public agency's evaluation indicates that the school district "did not assess the child in all areas related to the suspected disability". During the three-year period between the last public evaluation and the next required reevaluation, a student may manifest other areas of disability not suspected earlier by the school or the parent. The Carroll policy letter appears to indicate that in all circumstances, an independent evaluation at public expense can be obtained, apparently including even newly manifested conditions or where there was no concurrent disagreement by the parent with the public evaluation. The Council believes that before a school district is required to shoulder the substantial additional public cost to pay for an independent evaluation for a newly suspected condition, that a public reevaluation should be allowed in an expeditious manner. The Council acknowledges that if the public agency or the parent had indications of a suspected area of disability that was not assessed during the evaluation, then the Carroll policy letter would be applicable.

Recommendation: Withdraw or modify the Jennifer Carroll policy letter in accordance with the above circumstances.

State Complaint Process

Unnecessary and Unauthorized State Complaint Rules Included in IDEA Regulations.
There is no authorization in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for the state complaint procedures inserted in 34 CFR 300.151 to 300.153. In fact, it is the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA at 20 USC 1221e-3 - The General Authority of the Secretary) that is cited as the basis for these particular IDEA regulations, not IDEA itself. Moreover, the State complaint rules have been included, then removed, then reinserted again into the IDEA regulations over the decades. And, the state complaint rules -- when removed from the IDEA regulations in 1979 -- were not included in the 1983 regulatory protections adopted by statutory reference [sec. 607(b)].

In short, the state complaint regulations should be part of the general compliance framework of regulations for all federal education programs under the Education Division General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), rather than as a set of unauthorized IDEA regulatory requirements. These pages of unauthorized state complaint regulations are so expansive as to duplicate the resolution and mediation procedures [34 CFR 300.152(a)(3)(i) and (ii)] that are only authorized under the due process provisions of section 615(d)(2)(E) and (e) of the Act. Finally, the state-complaint regulatory provisions of IDEA [34 CFR 300.151(b)(1)] provide for the award of compensatory services or monetary damages without any statutory authority, and without any guaranteed access to a neutral tier of facts.

Unfortunately, the unauthorized state complaints rules within the IDEA regulations also tend to confuse stakeholders given the similarity to numerous other IDEA due process notice, complaint, hearing, resolution, and appeal procedures, which are specifically authorized in the Act. A state complaint process was designed to provide a basic opportunity to identify and correct issues of systemic local violations of grant-in-aid requirements under any state-administered federal

education program, and was <u>not</u> intended for the adjudication of individual rights and benefits that are remediable under the separate due process procedures of IDEA.

The three references to state complaints in the Act were added in 2004 -- two of which were added to clarify any confusion between these state complaints previously inserted into the IDEA regulations for violations of IDEA grant requirements and the statutory due process complaints filed under the detailed procedures of section 615 of the Act. The other reference in the Act provides for the use of state set-aside funds by state officials for investigating complaints of noncompliance. EDGAR requirements are the appropriate regulatory location for general federal grant complaint and resolution procedures for state-administered federal education programs under the GEPA authority of the Secretary.

<u>Recommendation</u>: In 34 CFR 300, strike 300.151 through 300.153 regarding state complaint procedures, and make any associated conforming changes in other regulations.

Additional and Unauthorized Procedural Safeguard Notice for State Complaints Inserted in IDEA Regulations.
In addition to the above set of IDEA state complaint procedural regulations having no statutory authority under IDEA, an additional procedural safeguard notice for state complaints has been inserted in the IDEA regulations at 34 CFR 300.504(a)(2) without any basis in the Act. Section 615(d)(1)(A)(ii) of the Act requires a procedural safeguards notice "upon the first occurrence of the filing of a complaint <u>under subsection (b)(6)</u>". A "subsection (b)(6) complaint" in section 615 is <u>solely</u> a due process complaint and, in fact, includes a specific cross reference to the Impartial Due Process hearing timeline in section 615(f)(3)(D). The statutory procedural safeguard notice requirements, therefore, do not apply to state complaints, and neither should the regulation's requirements.

<u>Recommendation</u>: In 34 CFR 300.504(a)(2), strike "of the first State complaint under sections 300.151 through 300.153 and upon receipt".

The Resolution Process Applies to a Due Process Complaint and Not to a State Complaint as Misconstrued in the IDEA Regulations [34 CFR 300.504(c)(5)].
Prior to an Impartial Due Process Hearing under section 615(f)(1) of the Act, an "opportunity to resolve" meeting must be convened by the school district. There is no mention of the state complaint process regarding the resolution process in the Act, therefore, there is no basis for expanding the regulations to the state complaint process. The Council, nonetheless, supports retaining the required explanation of the difference between due-process procedures and the state complaint process in the procedural safeguards notice to minimize confusion among stakeholders regarding the complexities of special education procedures as referenced above.

<u>Recommendations</u>:
- In 34 CFR 300.504(c)(5), strike "and State complaint".
- In 34 CFR 300.504(c)(5)(i) and (ii), insert "due process" prior to "complaint".
- In 34 CFR 300.504(c), redesignate 300.504(c)(5)(iii) as 300.504(c)(6), and renumber current paragraphs (c)(6) through (c)(13) as (c)(7) through (c)(14).

Misinterpretation of the Section 615(f)(3)(F) "Rule of Construction" in the Existing IDEA Regulations [34 CFR 300.513(b)].

The Education Department entirely misinterpreted section 615(f)(3)(F) of the Act, which sought to clarify that filing a state compliant is not precluded by the multiple requirements of the IDEA due process procedures. This provision of the Act has nothing to do with appealing due process hearing decisions in a two-stage administrative hearing structure. This new statutory subparagraph in 2004 directly followed another new revision of the Act requiring due process hearing officers to make decisions on substantive grounds, not technical procedural violations [sec. 615(f)(3)(E)(i)]. This Rule of Construction [sec. 615(f)(3)(F)] was included to clarify that the state complaint process provides an opportunity for parents to identify and correct procedural violations that did not rise to the level of a substantive due process violation or denial of FAPE in filing a state complaint--in the same manner that any state complaint could be filed on an alleged violation of ESEA or other state-administered federal grant program requirement. This erroneous IDEA regulation should be corrected.

Recommendation: In 34 CFR strike 300.513(b), and insert a new subsection (b) as follows: "(b) Construction Clause. Nothing in sections 300.507 through 300.513 shall be construed to affect the right of a parent to file a compliance complaint with the State educational agency."

Disproportionality Regulatory Requirements and Methodologies from 2016 Should Be Withdrawn and Re-Promulgated Due to a Lack of Discernable Standards or Criteria, as well as Questionable Impact Analysis.

Over-identification of students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds for special education services and for disciplinary action is a longstanding national issue. The implementation of current law clearly has been inadequate. While the nation's Great City Schools have a responsibility to improve local policies and practices to correct disparities, we believe that the U.S. Department of Education has a responsibility and a legal mandate under IDEA to better address this national issue. Yet, even with nearly three years of federal information collection and deliberation, the Department's December 19, 2016 regulatory action on disproportionality was inadequate and indefinable.

Under the 2016 regulations, States are required to establish new "thresholds" for identification, placement, and discipline among students of color in special education based on a methodology that no state is currently using (see Federal Register statement at 81 FR 10993). Nearly half of the states currently use a weighted risk ratio that is now prohibited under the 2016 regulations -- apparently because of its complexity and lack of public understanding, rather than a specified weakness in the methodology itself. More importantly, instead of providing the customary compliance criteria for the newly-required and simplified risk ratio or offering acceptable compliance ranges or parameters, the 2016 disproportionality regulation establishes monitoring and enforcement based on an unspecified standard of "reasonableness" determined at U.S. Education Department discretion. And, without specific criteria or a defined standard of reasonableness, the Department's national impact estimate seems purely speculative and insufficient to justify the regulation. Moreover, with some $1.8 billion in expenditures at issue, the nation's school districts deserve a better thought-out and less ambiguous set of regulations.

The Council suggests rolling back the disproportionality determination methodology and new requirements from the December 19, 2016 regulations – particularly since compliance is not required until July 2018 -- while maintaining the increased flexibility provided under the comprehensive coordinated early intervening services (CCEIS) regulations and the progress-based local disproportionality safe-harbor.

Recommendations:
- In 34 CFR 300.646:
  1) In subsection (a)(3) strike "removal from placement" and reinsert "actions" from earlier regulations;
  2) Strike subsection (b) and renumber subsection (c) as subsection (b);
  3) In redesignated subsection (b), strike ", including disciplinary removals", and strike "and (b)";
  4) In redesignated subsection (b)(1), strike "annual", and strike "in particular education settings, including disciplinary removals,";
  5) In redesignated subsection (b)(2), strike "paragraph (c)(1)" and insert "paragraph (b)(1)";
  6) Renumber subsections (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (c), (d), and (e); and make any necessary conforming changes; and
- Strike 34 CFR 300.647, and issue new proposed regulations for public comment.

APPENDIX A

Council of the Great City Schools
Conforming IDEA Regulation Comments Submitted on August 29, 2017
In ESSA Assessment Regulation Review Comments

Department Regulations Requiring a State Definition of Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities Has No Basis in ESSA and Does Not Reflect the Statutory Role of Each Individual IEP Team in Determining the Instructional Strategies, Services and Support for Each of These High-Need Students.*

The regulation [sec. 200.6(d)(1)] requiring a State definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) fails to acknowledge the decision-making role of the student's IEP team, regarding the selection of assessments, instruction, and supports. No federal definition of SCD has ever been required in ESEA or IDEA, and a prior attempt in 2005 to establish a national definition through proposed federal regulations to IDEA failed. In 2016 the Department again tried and failed to establish a federal SCD definition during negotiated rulemaking, but succeeded in mandating that each state establish its own SCD definition – despite ESEA and IDEA operating without a SCD definition for decades. While states likely have the inherent authority to establish their own SCD requirements consistent with federal law, this federal regulatory mandate to establish a statewide SCD definition represents a major and unnecessary expansion of federal regulatory authority over ESSA, and an intrusion on state and local decision-making, as well as on the operation of IEP teams.

Recommendation:
In sec. 200.6(d)(1) strike "Such guidelines must include a State definition of "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities" that addresses factors related to cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior, such that – ", and insert "Such guidelines must ensure that – "; and
In sec. 200.6(d)(1)(i) insert "and" at the end of the subparagraph; and
In sec. 200.6(d)(1)(ii) strike "and" at the end of the subparagraph; and
In sec. 200.6(d)(1) strike subparagraph (iii).

*IDEA Regulation Revision: The changes in the June 30 IDEA final regulation appear to have included -- by a vague cross-reference -- the unauthorized ESSA regulatory requirement mandating that each State establish a State definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (SCD). As underscored in the Council's ESSA comment above, a definition of SCD has never been required in federal law under ESEA or IDEA, including the failed attempt in the 2005 IDEA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking--again without a statutory basis. Moreover, the ESSA regulations require consideration of cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior factors similarly without statutory basis. The Council recommends eliminating the vague Title I cross-reference to the unauthorized SCD definition requirement from the IDEA June 30 regulations.
IDEA Recommendation: In 34 CFR 300.160(c)(2), strike "under Title I of the ESEA".

Expanded Translation Requirements for Parent Notices and Reporting Exceed the Requirements of the Act, and Are Costly and Impractical to Implement. *****

ESSA includes multiple notice and reporting requirements in order to provide parents with information on the programs, options, and performance of the district, school, and their students. These ESSA statutory requirements include consistent translation responsibilities across the various sections of Title I to provide parents with applicable information "*in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand*". School districts, particularly large school districts, typically enroll students with over a hundred different language backgrounds. Written translations of some of these multiple languages are often impractical and at times impossible. The ESSA assessment regulations, however, require written translations or oral translations, as well as alternative formats. The cost of written translations typically ranges from 12 to 22 cents per word depending on how common or uncommon the language may be. Moreover, the required LEA and individual School Report Cards also will be much lengthier under ESSA because of new reporting requirements in the law. The broad, new regulatory provisions of the Department are an unwarranted expansion of ESSA, which denigrates the "to the extent practicable" flexibility built into the Act. The ESSA assessment regulations should directly reflect the language of the Act without expansion

Recommendation: In sec. 200.2(e)(1) insert "and" at the end of the paragraph; and in sec. 200.2(e)(2) and (3) strike "written" in the first instance that it appears, and strike everything after "understand", and add a period. And, make appropriate conforming revisions in other sections of part 200.

*IDEA Regulation Revision: The parent information-sharing responsibilities under IDEA, including assessment results, are much more extensive than under ESEA, and often involve hundreds of pages of documents, evaluations, reports, IEPs, notes, etc. The overly expansive ESSA translation regulations relating to assessments (see above comment) create new, unauthorized, and costly requirements for school districts that could be readily generalized or misinterpreted to apply to any or all special education functions based on the June 30 IDEA final regulation changes. The Council strongly recommends returning to the actual language of the ESSA statute without embellishment, and cross-referencing the actual statutory provision [see ESEA sec. 1111(b)(2)(B)(x)] within the IDEA assessment regulations [34 CFR 300. 160(e)], rather than the current ESSA regulatory cross-referencing.

IDEA Recommendation: In 34 CFR 300.160(e), strike "consistent with 34 CFR 200.2(e)" and insert "consistent with sec. 1111(b)(2)(B)(x)".

APPENDIX B

ESSA Comment on Imposition of State Alternative Assessment Waiver Conditions (For Information Purposes Only -- No IDEA Regulation Revision Recommended)

ESSA Assessment Regulations Impose Unrelated and Unauthorized Requirements and Conditions on Receiving a Waiver of the 1% Statewide Alternate Assessment Cap in Direct Contradiction of ESSA Section 8401(b)(1)(E) and (b)(4)(D), and Are Designed to Circumvent Local IEP Team Determinations under IDEA.

The ESSA assessment regulations for the statewide 1 percent alternate assessment waiver option [ESSA sec. 1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(IV)] add multiple requirements and conditions that are unrelated to alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and are in direct violation of ESSA prohibitions [sec. 8401(b)(1)(E) and (b)(4)(D)] on imposing unrelated information requirements and "external conditions outside the scope of the waiver request". These regulations also attempt to negate the ESSA prohibition [ESSA sec. 1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(II)] aimed at preventing both the Education Department and SEAs from imposing additional limitations on decisions made by local IEP teams in determining which individual students will be provided with an alternate assessment regardless of any state-level percentage caps. The extensive conditions and requirements in the assessment regulations [sec. 200.6(c)] for the submission and approval of a federal waiver of the statewide 1 percent cap were drafted originally by the Department during the 2016 negotiated rulemaking process to force states into limiting school district and IEP team determinations on the use of alternate assessments. In effect, the Department's regulation establishes a "back door" cap on LEA determinations of alternate assessments by conditioning state access to a statewide 1 percent waiver on the states' establishing policies that would reduce the use of local alternate assessments--despite ESSA prohibitions cited above.

In addition, the following unrelated regulatory requirements and conditions are prohibited under ESSA sec. 8401(b)(1)(E) and sec. 8401(b)(4)(D), but were nonetheless included in the December 8, 2016 alternate assessment waiver rules. Each of these unwarranted and unauthorized regulatory add-ons should be modified or deleted according to the following.

Recommendations:
1. The unnecessary data requirement in sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(A) regarding the numbers and percentages from each separate subgroup of students taking an alternate assessment is unrelated to whether each individual student would qualify to be alternately assessed based on the decision of the IEP team.
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(A), strike "in each subgroup of students defined in section 1111(c)(2)(A), (B), and (D) of the Act";*
2. The unnecessary data requirement in sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(B) to demonstrate compliance with the 95 percent testing participation requirement is a separate issue unrelated to the number and percentage of students determined to need alternate assessments by their IEP team.
   Recommended Revision: *Strike sec. 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(B) and renumber appropriately.*
3. The unnecessary state assurance to verify assessment numbers even for LEAs that have not exceeded the permissible 1 percent of locally assessed students has no basis in the Act [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)].
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)) strike "the State anticipates".*
4. The unnecessary regulatory language referencing "each" State guideline is excessive [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(A)].
   Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(A) strike "each of".*
5. The expansive regulatory requirement to address low-income, racial and ethnic, and English learner subgroup disproportionality in alternate assessments is likely to contravene the role of the IEP team in making individual (rather than subgroup) decisions on assessments and other services [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(B)].

Recommended Revision: *In sec. 200.6(c(4)(iii)(B) strike "Will address" and insert "Reviewed"*

6. The reference to the unauthorized regulatory requirement for a new state definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities has no basis in the Act (see comment below), and includes another unauthorized rule apparently requiring the State to meet the 1 percent statewide cap in future years despite no statutory limitation on subsequent year waivers [sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iv)(A)].

Recommended Revisions: *Strike sec. 200.6(c)(4)(iv)(A) and insert the following: "(A) The State will review the implementation of its guidelines under paragraph (d), including reviewing any disproportionality in the percentage of students taking alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards for any LEA under subparagraph (iii); and"; and strike clause (C).*

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA)

<u>**ACTION NEEDED:**</u>

Contact both of your Senators and ask them to oppose the Senate health care bill since it does not protect Medicaid funding for students in your school district. <u>The phone number for the Senate switchboard is 202-224-3121.</u>

<u>**REQUESTS OF YOUR SENATORS:**</u>

1) Do not cut Medicaid funding in the Senate health care bill because of the impact on the health and education of low-income students, particularly those with disabilities.

2) Ensure that <u>current Medicaid services for children</u> (at the current low-income eligibility levels) remain federal requirements for every State, including the existing requirement for Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services.

3) Oppose the Senate health care bill since it does not protect Medicaid funding for low-income students.

<u>**TALKING POINTS:**</u>

- Any reductions in Medicaid funding – such as the $840 billion reduction in the House health care bill or the $770 billion in the pending Senate version – will have a severe impact on the health and education of low-income students in our school districts and across the country, including their everyday readiness to learn and their absences due to sickness.

- The only primary health-care professional that many low-income students see is the school nurse.

- The Medicaid program is a crucial resource that helps school districts with the costs of providing "school-based" medical services for eligible low-income students, most often students with disabilities.

- Federal laws – the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rehabilitation Act – require school districts to provide students with disabilities with an individualized plan outlining the specialized education, health, and related services they need for school success.

- The Medicaid-eligible health services provided to students include physical, occupational, and speech therapy, psychological and counseling services, and medication administration, as well as medical screenings that can help diagnose and prevent long-term and costly treatment.

- $2 billion in federal reimbursements for school-based Medicaid services are at risk in the House-passed health care bill (H.R. 1628) and the pending Senate legislation.

- If a new health care bill reduces Medicaid funding – either through State funding caps or other methods – the result will be less Medicaid funds for each State and a growing gap between eligible costs and available funding.

- These cuts will put enormous financial pressure on States to reduce or ration eligible medical services, and either lower or cut funding to providers, including school districts.

- The health and related services provided to students with disabilities are federally-required under IDEA and Section 504, and the loss of Medicaid funding for these services will shift an even larger share of these costs onto school district budgets – shortchanging other education expenditures to cover cuts to Medicaid.

School-based Medicaid and Students with Disabilities

In addition to supporting schools by providing basic health services for Medicaid-eligible, low-income children, the Medicaid program is a vital resource reimbursing school districts for a portion of the costs of providing "school-based" medical services for eligible students, most often students with disabilities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act require students with disabilities to each have an individualized plan that outlines the specialized education, health, and related services necessary to benefit from their public education program.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal program that receives annual funding from Congress each year. Although Congress initially intended to pay 40% of the cost of educating students with disabilities when the IDEA law was first passed in 1975, the federal government has never provided sufficient funding to meet this 40% commitment. Congress currently provides enough funding in IDEA to cover about 16% of the cost of educating students with disabilities, while the remainder of the federally-required services must be funded with State and local money. Federal Medicaid reimbursements for school-based services to eligible students with disabilities help meet the additional medical costs of ensuring access to the free appropriate public education (FAPE) guaranteed to every special education student.

Examples of the types of Medicaid-eligible services that students with disabilities are currently receiving include:

- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech therapy
- Audiology
- Psychological services
- Nursing services
- Medication administration
- Counseling
- Medical screenings
- Personal care services
- Case management
- Transportation to services

Changes to Medicaid in Health Care Legislation

Health care legislation that passed the U.S. House of Representatives in early May and the draft legislation currently pending in the Senate both include significant changes to the current Medicaid entitlement system for eligible individuals – including kids. The House legislation cuts Medicaid by $840 billion over the next ten years, and the Senate bill cuts $770 billion over the same time period. Medicaid funding is reduced in a number of ways in both bills, including elimination of the current federal entitlement or guarantee to match all eligible State medical expenditures for eligible beneficiaries. The bills will also convert Medicaid to a capped payment system that gives States a fixed dollar amount per enrolled beneficiary. This fixed or capped amount will not adjust for rising health care costs, new medical innovations, pharmaceutical developments, etc.

The result of these changes will be less Medicaid funds for each State, and a growing gap between eligible costs and available funding. This will put enormous financial pressure on States to reduce eligible services and lower (or eliminate) reimbursements to certain providers, including school districts. Since the health and related services provided to students with disabilities are federally-required under IDEA and Section 504, the loss of Medicaid funding will shift an even larger share of these costs onto State and local budgets.

Leadership in the U.S. Senate hopes to schedule a vote on health care legislation by the end of July.

School-based Medicaid Federal Expenditures by State (2015)

State	Federal Expenditure	State	Federal Expenditure
Alabama	$17,281,056	Montana	$35,666,244
Alaska	$2,192,400	Nebraska	$13,303,816
Arizona	$27,049,503	Nevada	$10,158,902
Arkansas	$36,769,009	New Hampshire	$26,531,270
California	$90,147,654	New Jersey	$143,432,313
Colorado	$32,945,196	New Mexico	$18,044,216
Connecticut	$41,838,703	New York	$136,781,511
Delaware	$4,626,906	North Carolina	$87,216,152
District of Columbia*	$3,810,382	North Dakota	$925,971
Florida	$63,206,315	Ohio	$51,023,143
Georgia	$30,932,107	Oklahoma	$1,706,720
Hawaii**	$0	Oregon	$3,300,296
Idaho	$25,665,305	Pennsylvania	$131,095,440
Illinois	$144,391,000	Rhode Island	$32,464,511
Indiana	$9,473,111	South Carolina	$21,429,977
Iowa	$56,708,832	South Dakota	$4,881,539
Kansas	$36,959,435	Tennessee**	$0
Kentucky	$20,872,855	Texas	$250,343,667
Louisiana**	$0	Utah	$21,801,456
Maine	$26,484,778	Vermont	$4,810
Maryland	$39,503,532	Virginia	$29,359,835
Massachusetts	$73,506,866	Washington	$4,664,392
Michigan	$162,144,442	West Virginia	$17,621,320
Minnesota	$53,210,621	Wisconsin	$107,416,062
Mississippi	$4,556,343	Wyoming**	$0
Missouri	$19,924,000	Total	$2,163,798,102

*   District of Columbia data is from federal FY 2014.

**In Hawaii, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Wyoming, school-based service expenditures may be reflected in other health service line items on the CMS-64 or could be included in managed care capitation payments.

Source: CMS-64 data compilation (via http://www.cbpp.org/research/health/medicaid-helps-schools-help-children)

Graham-Cassidy Block Grant Version of Senate Healthcare Bill
As Bad As Earlier Versions of Repeal & Replace Bills for Medicaid Services
(September 19, 2017)

Background: The newest version of the Senate healthcare "repeal and replace" bill is a "State Block Grant" approach to federal subsidies that includes nearly identical reductions in Medicaid funding as earlier House and Senate healthcare reconciliation bills. The block grant package proposed by Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA) is getting renewed attention due to the looming deadline to use the FY 2017 simple-majority "budget reconciliation process" before September 30th (the end of the federal fiscal year). Unfortunately, this "new" draft proposal still **eliminates the traditional Medicaid entitlement for eligible services to low-income adults and children, as well as repeals the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion** with some $700+ billion in cuts to Medicaid funding over the next ten years -- compared to current law – and further cuts thereafter. A limited cost and budgetary impact report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is expected in the next few days, but a full analysis of the impact on nationwide insurance coverage and market implications is unlikely to be available before of Senate consideration early next week.

- The federal Medicaid program is the fourth largest federal resource for the nation's elementary and secondary schools at over $2 billion in annual school reimbursements – only exceeded by the federal school lunch and breakfast programs, the ESEA Title I program for the disadvantaged, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- Few changes are anticipated from the CBO's earlier projections that federal Medicaid funding would be cut by some 25% compared to current law by 2026, increasing to 35% or more in the subsequent 10 years.

- Such massive cuts in federal Medicaid matching funds will create a gap between the cost of medical services and the availability of funding.

- States will be forced financially to reduce eligible services, limit eligibility for low-income individuals, lower reimbursement rates for services, require copayments, and/or restrict allowable service providers (including school districts) – and probably all of the above.

- State waivers or block grant flexibility options would allow the States to implement limitations on current healthcare services, subsidies, and reimbursements.

- The draft Graham-Cassidy proposal pending for Senate consideration (analogous to the earlier healthcare replacement bills) eliminates the traditional Medicaid federal-state partnership structure of guaranteed federal Medicaid matching payments for a set of eligible medical services replacing it with a finite per-capita grant for each state. These proposed per-capita state Medicaid grants would be further limited in later years using a restricted inflationary index that would not reflect rising healthcare costs or innovations in equipment, treatments, or medications. And, the Graham-Cassidy proposal also phases-out the Medicaid expansion and enhanced payment rates adopted by 31 States under the current Affordable Care Act.

- While nothing in the pending Senate draft or House bill specifically prohibits States from continuing to reimburse school districts for eligible services, the extent of the Medicaid funding cuts in the upcoming years is expected to severely limit or outright eliminate school-based reimbursements in many, if not most states. And, nothing in the new Senate draft proposal or the House bill require states to pass-through any amount of their reduced federal per capita Medicaid grant as payments or reimbursements to school districts, clinics, or other practitioners and providers.

In sum, federal Medicaid reimbursements for school-based medical services (now over $2 billion annually) remain subject to reduction or elimination because of the projected federal funding cuts to state Medicaid programs -- and possibly even more vulnerable to cuts than services in other more traditional medical settings, like hospitals and community clinics, under this new Graham-Cassidy amendment to the Senate healthcare repeal and replacement legislation (H.R. 1628).

REQUESTED ACTION:
A Senate vote on this new Graham-Cassidy "block grant" approach to the healthcare replacement bill is anticipated early next week and is expected to come down to a one or two votes margin. Once again, immediate calls from your school district and your community partners to your Senators (Republicans in particular) are critical to underscore the continued strong opposition to this new "revised" Senate healthcare reconciliation bill.

Call the Senate switchboard at 202-224-3121

September 20, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, opposes the Graham-Cassidy block grant proposal to the FY17 healthcare reconciliation bill (H.R. 1628). The Council's opposition to this healthcare block grant is based on the massive Medicaid reductions caused by rolling-back Medicaid expansions in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and cutting funds to the traditional Medicaid program compared to current law.

The proposed Medicaid funding reductions under the Graham-Cassidy bill are expected to limit Medicaid-funded health services for school-age children, particularly students with disabilities, and reduce or eliminate Medicaid reimbursements for school-based health services in many states. Even without an updated CBO analysis, it is clear that state and local budgets would be severely affected by the proposed legislation, including resources for the nation's urban public schools.

The nation's urban public schools know that block grants traditionally have been used as a legislative device to reduce long-term federal financial commitments under the pretext of providing increased flexibility in setting social policy priorities. The pending legislation would produce a sea change in the financial structure of the Medicaid program by shifting from the guaranteed federal matching reimbursements for a set of eligible medical services to a finite per-capita grant for each state. This change would place substantially increased financial burdens on state and local governments, including school districts. Tying per-capita Medicaid state grants to an inflationary index that is lower than the actual increase in healthcare costs will create further shortfalls in federal Medicaid funding. The classic false promise of allowing recipients "to do more with less" is particularly disingenuous in the context of ever-increasing healthcare costs, including those incurred by schools.

In opposing the Graham-Cassidy legislation, the Council also knows that the proposal would have substantial implications for our students' families and low-income communities, because it allows for reductions in essential insurance benefits, revises provisions on pre-existing conditions, and redistributes federal health subsidies in a way that would create short-term State "winners" and "losers."

The nation's large urban school districts join with most of the medical community and much of the nation in opposing the pending health care reconciliation legislation, including the new Graham-Cassidy proposal. The Council urges a NO vote on the Senate version of H.R. 1628. The Council recommends returning to the traditional legislative process and a deliberative approach to fixing the federal health care law.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

July 27, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, opposes final passage of the Senate health care reconciliation bill (H.R. 1628). Addressing the nation's health care system should not be done in the piecemeal fashion transpiring under the Senate reconciliation process.

The Council opposes going to conference committee with the House-passed reconciliation bill, including its massive cuts to the Medicaid program. A conference committee with the House will undoubtedly produce unacceptable reductions in health services for children and adults. State and local budgets will be severely impacted, including resources for the nation's urban schools.

The ongoing uncertainty regarding the content of the final reconciliation bill continues to extend and exacerbate the financial insecurity experienced by most States and local government entities under this health care reconciliation process.

The nation's large urban school districts join with the vast majority of medical community and most of the nation as a whole in opposing the pending Senate health care reconciliation legislation. The Council urges a NO vote on the Senate version of H.R. 1628. The Council recommends returning to the traditional legislative process and a fully deliberative approach to fixing federal health care law.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

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Email to Legislative Liaisons Regarding CBO Analysis of Senate Health Care Bill

From: Jeff Simering [mailto:JSimering@cgcs.org]
Sent: Monday, June 26, 2017
To: Legislation <legis@cgcslists.org>
Subject: New Senate Health Care/Medicaid Bill cost analysis just released

Legislative Liaisons of the Great City Schools:

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) just released a cost/impact analysis of the Senate version of the health care repeal and replacement bill (the Better Care Reconciliation Act – link at: https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/115th-congress-2017-2018/costestimate/52849-hr1628senate.pdf).

The similarities between the Senate bill and the earlier House-passed bill (the American Health Care Act – H.R. 1628) are reflected in fairly similar projections on both costs and impact with some variations. In general, the Senate bill would minimally reduce the number of uninsured people, but the ranks of the uninsured would still increase by some 22 million people over 10 years. The Senate bill similarly would cut taxes primarily for business and higher income individuals, as well as reduce penalties for businesses and individuals, at massive levels ($751 billion in the Senate bill and $875 billion in the House bill over 10 years).

The Senate bill would decrease the federal deficit somewhat more than the House bill by providing less federal health care subsidies. The Medicaid program, on the other hand, would be cut somewhat less <u>initially</u> at $770 billion in the Senate version compared to $834 billion in the House bill over 10 years – however, starting in 2026 the Senate cuts would be greater than the House. Nonetheless, the Medicaid program would be ultimately cut by some 26 percent under the Senate bill over 10 years.

These massive cuts in the Medicaid program result from phasing out the Obamacare Medicaid expansion in 31 states, and eliminating the open-ended Medicaid entitlement payments to states in favor of a per-capita payment cap calculation or a similar fixed "block grant" allocation to states. The Medicaid payments over time would be significantly reduced for most categories of Medicaid eligible beneficiaries. The CBO indicates, however, the per capita cap would not be applied for disabled children (see page 29), but the average cut of 26% in the overall Medicaid program would still shift greater Medicaid cost onto states, forcing states to cut back on services, seek waivers and flexibility for service coverage, limited provider payments, or restrict provider eligibility – any or all of which could easily reduce or eliminate school-based Medicaid reimbursements at any time

The newly required 6-month or less eligibility "re-certification" could bounce adults and children in-and-out of the Medicaid program, as could the new Medicaid "work" requirement necessary for continued eligibility. In short, the Senate bill generally is as bad or worse than the House-passed health care bill.

The Council continues its unequivocal opposition to the Senate bill based on the severity cuts to the Medicaid program. The Council has not taken into account other hot-button issues affecting families and communities in the broader insurance markets, such as higher out-of-pocket costs, less covered services, age-related increased costs, backdoor provisions to dilute "pre-existing condition" protections, and planned parenthood restrictions.

The Senate still plans to vote on their version of the health care bill later this week, and is expected to try placate any hesitant Republican senators with minor "state-specific" legislative adjustments. Continued contact with your Senate delegation to advocate for a NO vote on the bill remains essential, in particular for the handful of potentially waiving Republican senators.

Let us know if you have questions.

Thanks.

Email to Superintendents and School Board Representatives on Senate Health Care Proposal and Cuts to Medicaid

From: Michael Casserly
Sent: Thursday, June 22, 2017
To: Superintendents and School Board Representatives
Subject: Senate Health Care Proposal--Major Cuts to Medicaid Proposed

Great City School Superintendents/Chancellors/CEOs and School Board Representatives--

This morning, Republican leaders in the Senate unveiled a draft of the health care bill they have been developing over the last two months. We have provided a longer summary of the proposal at the end of this email, but the quick takeaways from the new proposal are these:

- The traditional Medicaid program fares even worse in the Senate bill than it did in the House.
- The Senate bill would eliminate current Medicaid entitlements in 2025 and convert the program into a capped/block grant system for States.
- In the new system, the Senate bill would ultimately reduce the amount of Medicaid funding provided to States even more so than the House health care bill does.
- The loss of federal Medicaid funds will put enormous financial pressure on States to reduce enrollment, eligible services, or provider payments – all of which are likely to result in cuts or elimination of school-based Medicaid services for low income students and especially those with disabilities.

The Senate bill also phases down support for Medicaid expansion States over three years, starting in 2021. The goal of these future timelines is to try and convince Senators that the consequences of the bill won't be felt locally for multiple years, until after the next round of elections take place. Now that the draft bill has been released publicly, Senate leaders hope to have a vote next week, i.e., by June 30.

We have attached our fact sheet, talking points, and a template letter on school-based Medicaid. **The phone number for the Senate switchboard is 202-224-3121. It is more important than ever that you and your local and state networks continue to contact your Senators and urge them to oppose the health care bill because of the impact on school-based Medicaid services.**

--Michael Casserly
  Council of the Great City Schools

Initial Summary of the Senate Health Care Bill: Massive Medicaid Cuts Remain

The Senate majority leader has released a draft of the Senate's health care repeal and replacement bill in anticipation of a final vote in the last week of June. Since Senate Democrats are universally opposed to the bill, Senate Republicans must hold 50 of their 52 votes under the truncated voting process known as "budget reconciliation", which would allow Vice President Pence to cast the tiebreaking 51st vote. Defeating the bill will require 3 Republican Senators to vote "NO."

The draft Senate bill retains the main contours of the House-passed American Health Care Act (ACHA), including: repealing the bulk of the taxes now funding the Affordable Care Act (ACA, aka Obamacare), and revising and capping Medicaid payments to States in order to sufficiently support other provisions of the health care replacement bill.

A full analysis of the implications of the draft bill will take some time. Nonetheless, establishing a per capita payment cap for the Medicaid program or providing a block grant would eliminate the current Medicaid entitlement payments to States for all eligible low-income adults and children. The result would be a reduction over time in federal Medicaid funding, forcing States to limit health services in proportion to their reduced federal payments, as well as possibly limiting approved Medicaid providers such as school districts. In addition, States would have new flexibilities to define and likely restrict the range of now-mandated Medicaid services, including for children, and will be required to re-determine eligibility every six months or less.

While the Senate bill would delay some of the cuts in federal Medicaid payments by phasing down the Obamacare Medicaid expansion for 31 States over multiple years, the bill actually cuts long term Medicaid funding more than the House bill through further restrictions on per capita State payments. The full financial scope of these cuts and the costs of the draft Senate bill will likely not be available from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) until the end of this week or early next week. In any case, the draft bill appears to delay some of the Medicaid cuts in the short term, but appears to cut this critical safety-net program even more severely than the House-passed bill in the long run -- producing significant reductions in services, eligible beneficiaries, or probably both.

Further complicating the outcome of a vote on the Senate health care bill are other political flash points, such as backdoor provisions increasing insurance costs for pre-existing conditions; state authority to limit certain health coverages, opioid programs, anti-abortion provisions, and defunding of Planned Parenthood programs. And procedurally, the bill must awaits the CBO cost analysis and must be deemed to be in compliance with reconciliation rules by the Senate Parliamentarian.

There will likely be further modifications to the draft bill to attempt to placate concerns from both moderate and conservative Republicans in order to secure the 50 votes needed for passage (with Vice President Pence providing the 51st vote). It is, therefore, important to continue our efforts to push back on the funding cuts and accompanying service reductions in the Medicaid program, particularly for children, over this critical last week in June.

Council *of the* Great City Schools®

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1100N, Washington, DC 20004
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Council *of the*
Great City Schools®

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Shelby County
St. Louis
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Tulsa
Washington, D.C.
Wichita

June 1, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central-city school districts, writes to express our strong opposition to Medicaid funding cuts in the health care legislation being developed in the Senate.

Medicaid not only makes available critical funding to schools to provide basic health services for eligible, low-income students, it helps urban school districts provide badly-needed medical and support services for students with disabilities. We urge you to ensure that Medicaid services for children (at the current low-income eligibility levels) remain as statutory requirements for every state.

The Medicaid-eligible health services provided to students in their schools include physical, occupational, and speech therapy; nursing services; medication administration; and vital medical screenings that can help diagnose health issues in young children and prevent long-term and costly treatment. The only primary healthcare professional that many low-income students see regularly is the school nurse, and schools have proven to be an efficient and cost-effective provider of numerous medical services under Medicaid.

Federal laws – the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act – also *require* school districts to provide students with disabilities with an individualized plan outlining the specialized education, health, and related services they need for school success. Yet current federal funding falls far short of paying for the mandates that Congress stipulates. In fact, Congress currently provides only enough IDEA funding to cover 16 percent of the additional costs of educating students with disabilities rather than the 40 percent that Congress promised when it passed the legislation. Federal Medicaid reimbursements for school-based services to eligible students with disabilities help schools meet the additional medical costs of ensuring access to the free appropriate public education (FAPE) guaranteed to every special education student.

Reducing Medicaid reimbursements – either through State funding caps as the House approved in H.R. 1628 or other methods, such as cuts proposed in the president's FY 2018 budget request – will result in less Medicaid funds for each state and a growing gap between costs and available funding. The health and related services provided to students with disabilities are required by the federal government under IDEA and Section 504, and the loss of Medicaid funding for these services will shift an even larger share of these costs onto school district budgets – shortchanging other education expenditures in order to cover cuts to Medicaid.

The vulnerable and disadvantaged populations that are concentrated in our nation's cities rely on Medicaid. A reduction in funding for the program will have a severe impact on the health and education of low-income students, particularly those with disabilities, and must be avoided in the Senate health care bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

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ENDREW F. V. DOUGLAS COUNTY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Great City Schools Superintendents and School Board Members

FROM: Julie Wright Halbert, Esq. and Jeff Simering

RE: Supreme Court of the United States Unanimous Decision
                in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*

DATES: Argued January 11 and decided March 22, 2017

In yesterday's [unanimous decision](#) in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District,* the Supreme Court rejected the standard previously applied by the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Douglas County school district, *while also rejecting* the standard proposed by *Endrew's* parents *and the U.S. government*. The ruling and discussion in the opinion significantly reflects the legal arguments set out in the amicus curiae brief of the Council of the Great City Schools.

Holding:
The Supreme Court ruling articulates a standard requiring federal courts to evaluate IEPs for students with disabilities under IDEA that is ***"reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances."***

In the 1982 case of *Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson Central School District, Westchester County v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, the Supreme Court considered what was required for a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under IDEA but did not define a specific educational benefit standard. In *Endrew,* the Court reviewed the varying standards used by the different Circuit Courts, including standards that referred to *"some educational benefit", "meaningful benefit",* and *"more than de minimis benefit",* which was the standard used by the 10th Circuit in this case.

The Supreme Court rejected the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals' test, holding that the standard should be "markedly more demanding" than the "merely more than *de minimis*" test. Similar to the Council's brief, the Court focused on IDEA's individualized inquiry targeted toward the needs of each child. The Court rejected the parents' claims that a FAPE must, "aim to provide a child with a disability opportunities to achieve academic success, attain self-sufficiency, and contribute to society that are substantially equal to the opportunities afforded children without disabilities." Noting that this proposal was "strikingly similar" to a standard rejected in its own 1982 *Rowley* decision, the Supreme Court "decline[d] to interpret the FAPE provision in a manner so plainly at odds with the Court's analysis in that case."

Instead, the Court followed the basic *Rowley* precedent, consistent with the Council's brief, co-authored with the education group at Husch Blackwell and their lead attorney John W. Borkowski. The *Endrew* holding, "requires an educational program reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances" under IDEA. This ruling emphasized that the unique circumstances of each child is the core of the analysis. Courts are not to substitute their own judgment for that of educational professionals, and those professionals in turn are expected to be able to explain their IEP decisions for each student.

Conclusion:
The Endrew Court recognized congressional amendments to IDEA relating to educational progress enacted since the 1982 *Rowley* decision, but did not set out a bright line standard. The Court chose to primarily rely on the professional expertise of educators and the input of parents in considering the child's <u>individual</u> circumstances in crafting an IEP (See holding above).

Important Note:
The Court references a child who is not in the regular education classroom, but rather may be in a self-contained setting and discusses the educational program to be "appropriately ambitious **in light of his circumstances**". (Emphasis added.) This language is being described by advocates and the press to argue that the ruling states that advancement from grade to grade must be appropriately ambitious. This is not entirely accurate. The "appropriately ambitious language" is not the holding in this case per se but rather is *dicta.* (See page 2 of the syllabus of the case.) PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR COUNSEL IS PREPARED TO RESPOND WHEN RAISED FOR LITIGATION.

If that is not a reasonable prospect for a child, his IEP need not aim for grade- level advancement. But his educational program must be appropriately ambitious in light of his circumstances, just as advancement from grade to grade is appropriately ambitious for most children in the regular classroom. The goals may differ, but every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives. (OP. Page 14)

If you have questions, please contact Jeff Simering or Julie Halbert at the Council. More detailed information will follow this memo.

Highlights of What This Means by Husch Blackwell

Several key quotes from the opinion highlight the important takeaways from today's decision:

- *"To meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances."* It will take a while to see how lower federal courts react to this new standard, but this will be the paradigm by which all IEP challenges are reviewed going forward. The "merely more than *de minimis*" standard applied by some federal courts is conclusively rejected.

- *"The 'reasonably calculated' qualification reflects a recognition that crafting an appropriate program of education requires a prospective judgment by school officials."* The relevant inquiry remains prospective (as opposed to a retrospective review of actual outcomes). This inquiry is fact-intensive and involves school officials and parents.

- *"Any review of an IEP must appreciate that the question is whether the IEP is* reasonable, *not whether the court regards it as ideal."* In what will likely prove to be an oft-quoted passage in litigation, the Court warns against courts substituting their judgments for those of education professionals.

- *"A focus on the particular child is at the core of the IDEA."* This is one example of a frequent refrain from the Court, reiterating several times that this inquiry must be individualized to the particular student.

- *"A reviewing court may fairly expect [school] authorities to be able to offer a cogent and responsive explanation for their decisions that shows the IEP is reasonably calculated to enable the child to make progress in light of his circumstances."* In another line likely to be frequently quoted in litigation, the Court reiterates the importance of school districts offering justifications for their decisions. School district should strive to develop complete records of their bases for decision and be responsive to legitimate parent concerns in the IEP process.

SANCTUARY CITIES

June 28, 2017

U. S. House of Representative
Washington D. C. 20515

Dear Representative:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, strongly opposes H.R. 3003, a bill that requires state and local governments to acquiesce to federal immigration enforcement activities even when inconsistent with their own jurisdictional policies. The federal government has plenary immigration authority, while state and local governmental units, including school districts, have no responsibilities relating to immigration. The pending House legislation, however, seeks to impose overreaching and unwarranted restrictions on the responsibilities and activities of state and local governments. And it intrudes on state and local governmental authority, policy making, and staffing directives. The bill clearly extends well beyond the criminal enforcement focus suggested in the bill's title, and would destabilize community-school relations in many jurisdictions.

School districts have clear and legal responsibilities to provide free and appropriate public educational services to all students, including undocumented students under the 1982 Supreme Court decision in Plyer v. Doe. School districts also have a legal duty under federal law to protect personal information about all their students, which the pending legislation seems to contradict. And more importantly, school districts strive to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all students and parents so that daily learning can take place. H.R. 3003, however, appears to prohibit school districts – and other state and local government entities – from adopting and implementing policies and practices that facilitate such safe and welcoming environments. Moreover, the bill would authorize, if not encourage, staff of state and local governments to work at cross purposes with their own state and local elected or appointed officials.

H.R. 3003 is bad public policy, and improperly imposes federal authority over the governmental powers reserved for states and localities in the American federal system. The Council of the Great City Schools urges a NO vote on H.R 3003.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

CHILD NUTRITION

SCHOOL MEALS ADMINISTRATIVE AND REGULATORY REFORM ISSUES

(Primary Administrative/Regulatory Recommendations in **BOLD** and Others in *Italics*)
[From 2015-2016 Great City Schools Child Nutrition Reauthorization Issues]

Address Program Costs

Financial Burdens:
- HHFKA regulations increased breakfast costs of approximately 20 cents per meal from a survey of a dozen urban districts, primarily due to fruit and whole grain requirements (27 cents per meal cost increase was projected according to USDA final regulation summary with NO increased reimbursement)
- HHFKA regulations increased lunch costs generally ranging from 10 and 35 cents per meal primarily due to increased fruits and vegetables, whole grain requirements, and proliferating costs overall (15 cents per meal cost increase was projected according to USDA final regulation summary with only a 6 cents additional reimbursement)

Commodities:
- Provide USDA commodities for breakfast program (analogous to lunch program) and allow for local farm purchase option

Competitive Foods:
- **Allow al la carte entrees served anytime during the week as a part of the reimbursable meal to be offered on the lunch line without having to meet the competitive foods requirements**

Paid Meals:
- **Codify that the increased paid meal price provisions are not applicable to programs with positive fund balances from the preceding year**

Program Flexibility

Multi-Grade Span:
- **Allow for additional flexibility in meeting calorie levels for schools with multiple grade spans by allowing for weekly averages and/or expanding the permissible range in these schools**

Fresh Fruit/Veggies:
- Allow 1/2 cup decrease in fruit volume for breakfast
- **Allow for substitutions, combinations, or double servings of either fruits or vegetables for lunch**
- **Allow for local program flexibility in form and color requirements if the reimbursable meal meets all nutrient standards**
- *Explore revisions in Offer Versus. Served to address the volume and waste issues with particular attention to OVS difficulties in elementary schools and in breakfast delivery options (e.g. Breakfast in the Classroom)*

Meeting Nutrient Standards:
- **Provide for general local flexibility in food items if reimbursable meals meet all nutrient standards**

Program Efficiency
Community Eligibility:
- Add Medicaid to the Direct Certification programs for Community Eligibility
- Ensure access to direct certification data bases by appropriate LEA staff (including direct certification and status eligibility data)
- Allow school meals account to pay for household income survey in CEP schools (as long as food service account has positive balance at the end of the preceding year)

Seamless Meal Services:
- *Require USDA to issue multi-program guidance which eliminates or simplifies requirements not common to all programs* (provide statutory authority to implement)
- *Allow local flexibility in congregate meal service requirements for summer/CACFP programs*

Program Reviews:
- *Require states to conduct concurrent program reviews for LEAs that operate multiple USDA meal programs (except for summer site monitoring)*
- *Require consistent procedures, and simplify requirements where not common across programs* (provide statutory directive to implement)
- Return to 5-year review cycle for programs in substantial compliance

Fresh Fruit and Veg Program:
- Allow funds to be used for nutrition education as well

Competitive Foods:
- *Require USDA to conduct nutrition analysis for product compliance with competitive foods nutrition standards for any commercial product voluntarily submitted to USDA) -- LEAs would continue to conduct their own nutrition analysis of products not in USDA competitive foods data base*

Modify Other Current Requirements
Freeze Sodium requirement at current level

Personnel Standards:
- Require only minimum standards for all LEAs, not differentiated qualifications by LEA size

Training Requirements:
- Codify local discretion in the format and subjects of training activities

Wellness Plan:
- Create separate program funding line or eliminate the requirement
- Define periodic report as every three years rather than the proposed 1 year
- Require only a district level report without reporting school-by-school activities

SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Council *of the* **Great City Schools**®

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1100N, Washington, DC 20004
(202) 393-2427   (202) 393-2400 (fax)   www.cgcs.org

May 17, 2017

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Scott:

The Council of the Great City Schools is pleased to support the Rebuild America's Schools Act of 2017 for the long-term improvement of public school facilities – the first school infrastructure bill to be introduced in the 115th Congress. The nation's major city public school districts have substantial construction, renovation, modernization, and deferred maintenance needs because of the age and size of their school buildings, overcrowding, and the need to devote substantial resources to instructional personnel to meet their core academic mission.

The Rebuild America's Schools Act would help States and school districts address infrastructure needs in their highest poverty schools, and provides both facility bonds and grants for specific infrastructure and instructional improvements, including enhancing building safety, expanding facilities to allow for smaller class size, and increasing access to learning technologies. A 2011 survey from the Council found that 50 urban school districts had facility needs of approximately $20.1 billion in new construction, $61.4 billion in repair, renovation, and modernization, and $19 billion in deferred maintenance costs, or some $100.5 billion in total facilities needs.

This legislation will help high poverty school districts make long-needed upgrades to improve student learning, and would help put hundreds of thousands of Americans back to work in our nation's biggest cities. The Rebuild America's Schools Act also recognizes the benefits of the E-Rate program for schools and libraries, and protects the important technology upgrades that districts are making as a result of the program's prioritization on 21st century classrooms.

Continuous federal investment in school modernization is necessary to address a recognized and established local need and will help more students receive a high quality education in safe, modern, and well-equipped buildings. The Rebuild America's Schools Act of 2017 will assist urban schools improve the learning environment for all students, and has the full support of the Council of the Great City Schools.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

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PERKINS

Perkins Act – Career and Technical Education (CTE):
CGCS Preliminary Recommendations for the 2016 Reauthorization

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the largest central city school districts in the nation, has a limited number of recommendations to improve the focus and operation of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. It is important to retain the program flexibility at the local level in order to meet the needs of CTE students and adapt to the labor market needs which vary from one jurisdiction to the next.

Our recommendations are divided into three sections:
1) recommended improvements to current law;
2) areas of current law important to retain; and
3) changes proposed in recent reauthorization discussions that would limit or inhibit potential program benefits.

Please contact us with any questions or clarifications as needed [Jeff Simering or Manish Naik at 202-393-2427 or jsimering@cgcs.org or mnaik@cgcs.org].

Recommended Improvements to Current Law

Add Specific Access and Opportunity Language to the Perkins "Purpose" Provision and the "Special Populations" Definition.
The initial Carl D. Perkins Act focused new attention on traditionally underrepresented categories of students in vocational education programs. The last Perkins IV reauthorization seemed to lose some of this programmatic attention in the effort to build comprehensive state and local accountability systems on the heels of No Child Left Behind.

Recommendation:
1) In section 2 insert a new paragraph (3) and renumber other paragraphs according – "(3) providing opportunities and facilitating access to high quality career and technical education coursework and programs of study leading to industry-recognized certifications and competencies in high demand occupations and professions for students who have been traditionally underrepresented in these programs and occupations."

2) In section 3(29) strike the heading and everything through "(A)" and insert the following language, redesignating the other six subparagraphs according: "(29) Traditionally Underrepresented Categories of Students. The term 'traditionally underrepresented categories of students' means – "(A) individuals from major racial and ethnic groups;".
[Also making conforming amendments throughout the Act to revise the current use of the term "special populations".]

Simplify the Perkins Act by Eliminating Dozens of Unnecessary Federal Requirements and Statutory Provisions, and Refrain from Adding Back New Requirements.

Clarify that Career Exploration and Introductory CTE Coursework is Allowable Prior to High School.
The need to begin career exploration and introductory CTE coursework earlier than the high school level has been a nearly universal recommendation from CTE Directors in the nation's largest urban schools, as well as from other organizations.

Recommendation:
1) In section 3(5)(A)(iii) strike "courses" and insert "or introductory courses at the high school level or in earlier grades"; and insert a new paragraph (C) as follows: "and (C) may include career exploration at the high school level or in earlier grades."
2) In section 135(c)(19) strike "and" and insert a new paragraph 20 in section 135(c) as follows: "(20) to provide career exploration and awareness activities for students at the high school level and in earlier grades; and" and renumber current paragraph (20) as (21).

Clarify that Eligible Agencies and Eligible Recipients Can Use Funds for Liability Insurance or Indemnification to Cover CTE Students Excluded from Work Experience and Workplace Learning Activities Due to Employer Concerns About Liability for Students.
Employer liability concerns for students placed in work experience or workplace learning environments have precluded many local CTE programs from providing these essential practical work experiences for CTE students. Particularly in the construction and manufacturing field as well as in health care, the liability concerns often prevent employers from providing these workplace opportunities. In order to overcome this barrier, the Council recommends that State agency and local programs are allowed to permissibly use Perkins funds to cover such liabilities.

> **Recommendation:** In section 124(c) and section135(c) respectively insert a new paragraph at the end of the subsection to read: "(__) provide liability insurance or indemnification to cover employers offering work experience or workplace learning activities for CTE students.

Sharpen the Perkins Accountability Provisions to Reflect the Primary Impact of CTE Programs.
On the heels of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Perkins IV attempted to measure multiple dimensions of CTE programs resulting in the use of tangential indicators and difficulty in securing consistent and relevant outcome data. For example, academic content achievement from statewide reading and math assessments – already captured for all students under ESEA – is a Core Performance Indicator in current law, despite numerous states assessing these academic skills as early as 10th grade before many CTE students have the benefit of multiple courses in their career pathway or program of study. Moreover, postsecondary education, training, or employment outcomes are also a Core Performance Indicator, despite the restricted availability of data on such postsecondary outcomes due to privacy laws, out of state jurisdictional issues, employer policies, etc. Similar barriers often exist for CTE work experience opportunities. The Council, therefore, recommends eliminating unproductive and unavailable indicators, duplicative language, and tangential metrics, in order to narrow the federally-required Core Performance Indicators primarily to the acquisition of industry-recognized certifications, apprenticeships, and competencies for CTE concentrators. And, the Council also recommends adding a Core Indicator for course access and completion of certifications and competencies by traditionally underrepresented categories of students in the local CTE programs compared to data on all students statewide. States would be free to establish – or not -- their own optional additional measures without federal direction. End of course exams, which have greatly proliferated over the years, would be not required in the Perkins Act, in favor of relying on third party certifications and competencies. Program "participants" accessing elective CTE courses would not be a part of the Perkins Act accountability requirements, other than any access and completion disparities identified as significant and unwarranted for traditionally underrepresented students (an N size benchmark of not more than 30 students is recommended to properly reflect these disaggregated categories of students).

> **Recommendation:**
> 1) In section 113(b)(2)(A) strike clauses (i)-(vi) and insert the following:

"(i) The percentage of CTE concentrators who were included as graduating with a regular high school diploma in the state's computation of its four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate or its extended graduation rate as defined under ESEA;

(ii) The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school who have obtained industry-recognized certifications or competencies upon exit from secondary education;

(iii) The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school who are enrolled in postsecondary education or training activities or in unsubsidized employment, in the second quarter following the program year in which they exit from secondary education to the extent such data is available and determined to properly reflect the outcomes of the secondary CTE program; and

(iv) The percentage of traditionally underrepresented students disaggregated by the categories in section 3(29) who have enrolled and completed CTE courses, CTE programs of study, and attained industry-recognized certifications or competencies in comparison comparable data on all students in the State."

2) In section 113 insert a new subparagraph (G) as follows: "(G) Disaggregation of Performance Data. Programs support with funds under this Act shall report performance information required under this section disaggregated by the categories of students under section 3(29) in any instance in which the number of students in a category exceeds 30."

3) Also consider eliminating some of the other real barriers to practical workplace learning or work experience activities for CTE students with federal "notwithstanding" language. For example, "(___) Expansion of Work Experience Activities. No CTE high school student shall be precluded from participating in a work experience or workplace learning activity in conjunction with a program support under this Act, notwithstanding any other provision of law including child labor restrictions or lack of a social security number."

Prioritize Programs of Study for CTE Concentrators While Not Restricting Perkins Support for CTE Participants Enrolling in Elective CTE Coursework or More Narrowly-Tailored CTE Pathways.
An emphasis on the core group of CTE students who are concentrating on CTE programs of study should be reflected in the local use of funds, as well as in the accountability provision of the Act. Nonetheless, the Act should not preclude support for CTE "participants" rather than "concentrators" taking elective CTE courses or a series of CTE courses in a career pathway, as opposed to a comprehensive program of study.

Recommendation: In section 135 insert a new subsection (d) [redesignating current subsection (d) as (e)]: "(d) Priority. – Priority in the use of funds under this section shall be given to CTE programs of study designed for CTE concentrators without precluding support for elective CTE courses and less comprehensive career pathways."

Clarify that the Perkins Administrative Cost Cap for Local Programs Is Applicable to "Direct" Administrative Costs . In recent years the U.S. Department of Education has interpreted administrative cost limitation provisions in federal programs to encompass both direct administrative costs, such as for a program director or coordinator, and indirect costs such as paying invoices, acquiring equipment, facility costs, etc. The result is that local programs, particular LEA programs with reasonable indirect costs, have to absorb substantial direct administrative costs of running an efficient program or forego receiving indirect costs as allowed in virtually all federal programs. This recommendation would clarify that the Perkins program would not place an undue financial burden of eligible recipients.

Recommendation: In sec. 135(d) strike "administrative costs" and insert "direct administrative costs".

Repeal the Unfunded Title II Tech-Prep Authorization [Title II].

Establishing A Small New National CTE Innovation Program with an Authorization of Appropriations Not to Exceed An Amount Equal to 10 Percent of the Amount Appropriated for Perkins Title I.
A limited authorization to encourage various innovations in local CTE programs appears warranted, replacing the Demonstration and Dissemination provision of the current National Activities section [sec. 114(d)(5)]. However, in order to ensure that the competitive program cannot supersede the cornerstone Perkins Title I program – as has occurred in past years with Race To The Top and Investing in Innovation competitive programs exceeding increases to ESEA and IDEA – both a cap and a trigger provision should be enacted. The Innovation Program should only be triggered once Perkins Title I formula grant appropriations exceed the $1.2 billion, and should be capped at an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the CTE Title I formula grant funding level.

Recommendation:
1) Revise National Activities Sec. 114(d)(5) to authorized a "CTE Innovation Program"; and
2) Revise Sec. 114(e) to read: "(e) Authorization of Appropriations. There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the amount appropriated under section 9 for any fiscal year from fiscal year 2016 to fiscal year 2021 in which the amount appropriated under section 9 exceeds $1.2 billion."

Retain Key Provisions of Current Law

Retain Current Perkins Fiscal Provisions and Protections, including:
- Maintaining the "such sums" authorization for Perkins Title I formula grants (sec. 9).
- Retaining the current formula funding distribution provisions without modification (sec. 111, 112, 131, and 132). Perkins funding levels have been insufficient for years, and any revision in funding distribution would serve to exacerbate the problem.
- Retaining the current maintenance of effort and the current supplement not supplant provisions [sec. 331(a) and (b)].

Retain Coordination Provisions of the Perkins Act with WIOA and other Related Program Plans at the State and Local Level, But Ensure That Specific Perkins Program Elements, Requirements, and Allocations Are Separately Addressed, Complied With, and Implemented by the Eligible Agency and Eligible Recipients [sec. 122(d)]. Also, update references to the applicable current federal statutes.

Retain Current Provisions Allowing and Encouraging Articulation Agreements, Dual Enrollment and Cooperative Programs of Study Between Secondary and Postsecondary CTE Programs, But Do NOT Require One-Size-Fits-All Secondary/Postsecondary Consortia Programs [sec. 3(4), sec. 122(c)(1)(C), sec. 124(c)(2)and (3), and sec. 135(c)(10)].
Postsecondary access issues and incongruent and duplicative jurisdictional service areas are among the variety of issues that make mandatory consortia arrangements impractical in many, though not in all instances. Incentives for consortia programs are unnecessary, since current permissive language is sufficient to encourage these arrangements where practicable.

Maintain the Negotiated Local Performance Levels for the More-Focused Core Performance Indicators (above) for CTE Concentrators and Subgroups [Sec. 113(b)(4)].

Proposals To Be Avoided

Refrain from Requiring Annual Local Needs Assessment.
Local labor market conditions, program performance, student characteristics, etc. rarely change overwhelmingly in a single year. Updated needs assessment information remains allowable, but the staff time and paperwork at the district and school level for annually conducting a local needs assessment is prohibitive and not sufficiently productive. Note that no recommendations have been made for an annual State-level needs assessment in the 6-year State Plan process that would be comparable to the extensive new local needs assessment required for every secondary and postsecondary Perkins program.

> **Recommendation**: No such language should be included, including in section 134 – Local Plan.

Refrain from Restricting Local Perkins Flexibility to Create and Adapt Programs of Study to Local Labor Market Conditions.
The proposal to establish a new requirement for States to affirmatively "approve" every program of study implemented by every LEA and every postsecondary institution receiving Perkins support would be a major and unwarranted new program restriction and a significant departure from current law, which allows the flexibility of LEAs and postsecondary Perkins programs to address local student needs and meet local labor markets condition in their local programs of study. The local labor market in a school district jurisdiction is often very different than the labor market conditions at the regional and state level – hence the need for local program flexibility in the design and adaptation of local programs of study.

> **Recommendation**: No "approved" or "state-approved" CTE program of study language should be included in the 2015 Perkins amendments, as proposed by some for this reauthorization, including in Sec. 3 – Definitions, Sec. 122 – State Plan, Sec. 124 – State Leadership, Sec. 134 – Local Plan, or Sec. 135 – Local Uses of Funds.

Email to House Education Committee Majority Staff with CGCS Comments on Proposed Perkins CTE Reauthorization Bill

From:	Jeff Simering
Sent:	Tuesday, May 09, 2017
To:	James.Redstone@mail.house.gov
Cc:	Mandy.Schaumburg@mail.house.gov>; MNaik@cgcs.org
Subject:	Perkins reauthorization comments from Great City Schools

James:

The Great City Schools comments on the Perkins bill remain consistent on the financial provisions, previously noted below.   We have also included comments on a couple of substantive policy provisions as well.

Financial Provisions:
1) We appreciate the modifications made to the state maintenance of efforts provisions in the bill. While we remain concerned over the prospect of some states resetting their MOE level to 90% of current expenditures, we also realize that the Committee is unlikely to accommodate further MOE revisions regardless of local-level concerns.

2) We remain concerned with the increase in the "state reserve" from 10% to 15% out of the local formula grant allocations. In ESSA, we are seeing similar increases in state-determined, discretionary set-asides resulting in lower local Title I formula allocations for a sizeable segment of school districts in the first year of ESSA implementation – which will be an unwelcome surprise for most such school districts in the upcoming school year. We are very hesitant to see this similar increase in a state-level reserve/set-aside included in Perkins Act, even as an optional authority, and the respective decrease in local allocations for multiple school districts. As an alternative, if the Committee is wedded to this increased state discretionary set-aside, *the Great City Schools recommends inserting a "trigger provision" as a new subsection (d) for implementation of the optional 5% increase in the sec. 112(a)(1) state reserve percentage to begin once a comparable 5% appropriations increase over current law or $1.168 billion is appropriated*.

Operational Provisions:
1) Establishing an effective date for federal education legislation that is midway through a "program year" creates unnecessary confusion in program transition. We saw this happen during ESSA implementation which necessitated clarifying appropriations language. *The Great City Schools recommends setting the effective date as July 1, 2018 for the Perkins reauthorization*.

2) The draft bill changes current law and <u>flips the order of "eligible recipients"</u> by placing postsecondary recipients first, and secondary school recipients second. This change in

the order of eligible recipients is also inconsistent with secondary CTE provisions in sec. 131 and postsecondary CTE provisions thereafter in sec. 132.   While we do not understand the reasoning behind such a statutory change in the order of eligible recipients, it sends a signal – in our opinion – that secondary CTE programs are now somehow a lower priority than postsecondary CTE programs. ***The Great City Schools recommends returning to the current statutory order in the definition of eligible recipients by renumbering sec. 3(20)(A) as (B) and (20)(B) as (A).***

3) The Great City Schools questions the need for a "comprehensive local needs assessment" at "not less than once every 2 years". Local labor market conditions, program performance, student characteristics, etc. rarely change so significantly in two years to necessitate the substantial administrative cost and effort involved in a conducting a new comprehensive local needs assessment. Moreover, there is no similar State-level needs assessment required in the 4-year State Plan process that would be comparable to this new extensive local needs assessment for every secondary and postsecondary Perkins eligible recipient. Additionally, the Council cannot find another federal education program requiring such a frequent local needs assessment, further suggesting that this new administrative requirement should be aligned with the 4-year State Plan process. ***The Great City Schools recommends in sec. 134(c) [p. 78 line 20] strike "not less than once every 2 years" and insert "periodically, but not less than once every 4 years".***

Hope these comments are helpful   Happy to discuss.   Thanks.

COMMUNICATIONS

STATEMENTS

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Council of the Great City Schools
1331 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Suite 1100N, Washington, D.C. 20004
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Statement Condemning DACA Rollback

By Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

WASHINGTON -- It should be remembered that Abraham Lincoln, the nation's first Republican president and arguably its best, signed into law the "Act to Encourage Immigration" on July 4, 1864. He argued strenuously in favor of the legislation not only because it appealed to the aspirations of a good many people who wanted a brighter future, but because it was good for the nation, economically and culturally. In his view, immigrants and their children formed a "replenishing stream." Of course, much has changed since 1864. But the fact that we are better off as a nation thanks to the contributions of immigrants has not. Yet before Lincoln's advocacy and since, there have been forces loose in the country that would demonize that stream as a polluted river that must be dammed up—or walled off.

For those who work in public education, of course, these broader concerns over immigration come second to our immediate focus on the health and welfare of our immigrant children who were brought to this country through no fault of their own. The mission of public schools is to create opportunity—not for some children, but for all. The public-school system has not always been true to that dream, but it is striving to meet the needs of those dreamers now. For urban public schools, whose classrooms are filled with students from all over the world, our mission is not to reflect or perpetuate the walls that others would build. Our job is to tear them down, to educate future generations of informed, engaged citizens. In the spirit of this mission, we condemn the dissolution of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program— whether now or in six months—by the president, and the value system that led him to conclude that America could only be great again without the patriotism, ingenuity, and voices of these children.

We now call on Congress to act swiftly to enshrine this protection into law and remove the fear and uncertainty facing so many of our nation's schoolchildren.

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Council of the Great City Schools
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Statement on Charlottesville and its Aftermath
by Michael Casserly, Executive Director

WASHINGTON -- As the most diverse group of children in American history returns to their classrooms over the next several days, they are getting a hard lesson on intolerance, hatred, and political cowardice. In the face of a national tragedy, our president—and others—have attempted to stoke the fires of division and equate the moral standing of various white supremacy organizations with the justifiable outrage of counter-protesters in Charlottesville. At a time when we need strong, unifying leadership the president has chosen to equivocate, sending the signal that displays of racial hatred have the same valence as the voices of indignation and hope. This kind of thinking warps our common understanding of what freedom and opportunity mean, and it loosens our grip as a nation on our founding principles. These are vile and dangerous sentiments that should be roundly rejected by the citizenry.

Our schools, particularly our diverse urban public schools, will once again need to serve as a source of inspiration and courage during these rough political times. As educators, we have the power to build a future that is more thoughtful, charitable, respectful, and broad-minded—a future that counters the forces of intolerance to which our leadership has turned a blind eye. In fact, it is our patriotic responsibility to ensure that our students learn to think critically, differentiate fact from fiction, understand the key principles of our founding ideals, and live their lives with forbearance and respect for each other. It is a challenge that the nation cannot afford for us to neglect, for these are the assets that will keep us glued together as one people and will ensure that the moral arc of history bends ever faster towards justice.

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PRESS RELEASES

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Council of the Great City Schools
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FOR RELEASE   CONTACT: Henry Duvall
August 31, 2017   (202) 393-2427 or hduvall@cgcs.org

Urban Schools Coalition Mobilizes Big-City School Districts
To Help Houston Public Schools in Aftermath of Hurricane Harvey

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31 – The Council of the Great City Schools this week responded to the challenges of Hurricane Harvey by mobilizing the coalition's 68 large urban public-school systems to provide clothing, school uniforms and school supplies and other assistance to aid the Houston Independent School District.

Many big-city school districts have responded to the Council and plan to donate school supplies and offer other assistance to the Houston school system, including Atlanta, Des Moines, Miami-Dade County and San Diego, to name a few. **(Examples below.)**

"The Houston Independent School District continues to have an immediate need for children's clothes of all sizes, school uniforms and school supplies," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. Donations should be sent to Mark Smith, Delmar Stadium, 2020 Mangum, Houston, TX 77092.

Another way to help Houston's schools is through a donation to the school district's HISD Foundation – http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/164281.

Moreover, the Dallas and Austin school districts are preparing to accept thousands of displaced Houston students. And Houston Schools Superintendent Richard Carranza, past chair of the Council's Board of Directors, has received advice from other superintendents in the coalition, especially those who have experience in responding to major natural disasters.

"This is yet another example of how the nation's urban public schools work to support and improve each other," Casserly points out.

The urban schools coalition has mobilized big-city school districts in the past to respond to large-scale catastrophes. The Council helped the New Orleans school system in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and provided aid to urban schools recovering from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Oklahoma City bombing, and at least two California earthquakes.

It has also worked with FEMA and other federal authorities, including the U.S. Department of Education and Congress, in helping provide disaster relief to urban schools.

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Council of the Great City Schools
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Urban Schools Launch Purchasing Consortium to Increase the Quality of Instructional Materials for English-Language Learners

WASHINGTON, Aug. 10 – The Council of the Great City Schools has formed a unique purchasing consortium of the nation's big-city public school districts to spur the production of better instructional materials for English-language learners and to use their joint buying power to incent the marketplace to improve quality.

The lead district in this first-ever instructional procurement alliance formed across state lines will be the Los Angeles Unified School District, which serves over 100,000 English learners. Together, the 70-member Council serves some 1.3 million ELLs or about 26 percent of all such students in the nation.

Nearly a dozen urban public school districts, including Austin, Boston, Cleveland, Denver, El Paso, Nashville, Milwaukee, Palm Beach County (FL), San Diego, and Wichita, contributed to the conceptualization and design of this singular purchasing force.

L.A. Unified's procurement requirements and protocols form the basis of a Request for Proposals (RFP) that was issued yesterday and seeks responses from commercial publishers to create mathematics materials that are consistent with college- and career-readiness standards and that meet the needs of English-language learners in middle-school grades. Materials would need to ensure that ELLs are ready to take a rigorous Algebra I course no later than grade nine and could apply their mathematics skills to real-world problem-solving.

"Proposals from publishers that successfully meet the RFP criteria would be those that show high expectations and the promise of meeting the needs for language development in preparation for rigorous algebra coursework," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly.

"This is an opportunity for students and teachers to have access to high quality rigorous materials that are designed with language development and mathematical reasoning to ensure academic success," said L.A. Unified's Executive Director of Multilingual and Multicultural Education Department Hilda Maldonado.

Winning publishers will collaborate with a Council working group of urban educators and experts to develop specified instructional materials.

Based on the terms of the RFP, school districts that are members of the procurement alliance will be able to jointly purchase instructional materials from the successful publishers. Districts can either purchase directly from the L.A. Unified contract or enter negotiations with publishers to meet specific purchasing requirements of their districts.

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Council of the Great City Schools
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Five Urban School Districts Win
SAT Practice Challenge

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 – Five urban school districts have won the 2017 Official SAT Practice All In Challenge aimed at boosting college and career readiness in the nation's largest urban public-school systems, the Council of the Great City Schools announced today.

The winners – Long Beach, Fresno, Orange County (Orlando), Denver and Chicago – competed among 28 big-city school districts that volunteered for the first-ever Official SAT Practice All In Challenge through a partnership between the Council, the College Board, and Khan Academy.

"There are many success stories to share about the hard work and incredible growth that our districts and students made through this challenge," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. "We're proud of the 28 school districts that stepped up to the challenge and hope others will follow."

The Official SAT Practice All In Challenge connects urban students with free, official, and personalized SAT practice on Khan Academy to prepare for the SAT and postsecondary success. Students who've taken the SAT or a PSAT-related assessment in the past can unlock a custom practice plan on Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy that identifies strengths and weaknesses.

"The PSAT is now a diagnostic for Khan Academy," says Khan Academy founder Sal Khan. "If students share their PSAT score, Khan Academy can use that information to provide tailored practice in math, reading and writing."

To recognize the achievement of the five winning school districts, they will be presented awards in five categories:

- California's **Long Beach Unified School District** received the "MVP" prize for having the highest overall percentage of students linking their College Board and Khan Academy accounts to receive free, personalized SAT practice.

- California's **Fresno Unified School District** received the "Growth" prize for having the highest overall percent increase of students linking their College Board and Khan Academy accounts to receive free, personalized SAT practice.

- Florida's **Orange County Public Schools** in Orlando received the "Student: Proof of Practice" prize for having the highest average weekly percentage of students with active Official SAT Practice accounts.

- **Denver Public Schools** received the "Time: Proof of Practice" prize with its students logging the most minutes on Official SAT Practice per week.

- **Chicago Public Schools** received the "Problems Completed: Proof of Practice" prize with its students completing the most Official SAT Practice problems per week.

"Our partnership with the Council of the Great City Schools and Khan Academy is helping bring these free, highly personalized practice tools to every corner of the country," says College Board President and CEO David Coleman. "But make no mistake: behind every story of a student practicing on Khan Academy and succeeding on the SAT is a caring adult. We applaud the community of leaders across the five winning districts for their commitment to adopting these tools and propelling their students forward."

Official SAT Practice features video lessons, test-taking tips and strategies, thousands of interactive practice questions and nine full-length, practice tests. There are now more than four million unique users registered for Official SAT Practice.

In May, the College Board and Khan Academy announced research that showed that students who prepared for the SAT using Official SAT Practice have seen substantial score gains. Twenty hours of practice is associated with an average 115-point increase from the PSAT/NMSQT to the SAT, nearly double the average gain of students who do not use Official SAT Practice.

As a part of the award, the districts will receive money to put toward initiatives that advance student success and opportunity.

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Council of the Great City Schools
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Milwaukee Public Schools Superintendent
To Lead Council of the Great City Schools

WASHINGTON, June 28 -- Superintendent Darienne Driver of the Milwaukee Public Schools becomes chair of the Council of the Great City Schools' Board of Directors for a one-year term, effective July 1.

She will preside over the policymaking body of the nation's primary coalition of large urban public-school systems, succeeding Felton Williams, a school board member of California's Long Beach Unified School District.

The 136-member board is composed of the superintendent and a school board member from each of the 68 big-city school districts represented by the Council.

Superintendent Driver moves up to the chair post after serving as chair-elect, which will now be assumed by Lawrence Feldman, a school board member of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Rounding out the Council's 2017-18 leadership team will be Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, who has been elected to the secretary-treasurer post that was held by Feldman. Gordon was deemed the Council's 2016 Urban Educator of the Year by his peers.

"With energy and experience, the Council's board is in capable hands with Dr. Driver and her leadership team. Our

urban-school reforms and improvements will continue to advance under their guidance," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly, who is beginning his 41st year with the coalition – completing 25 years at the helm.

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Council of the Great City Schools
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   CONTACT: Henry Duvall
June 9, 2017   (202) 393-2427 or hduvall@cgcs.org

Four Urban Students Named 2017 Math and Science Scholars

Council of the Great City Schools Awards ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Scholarships

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Business Wire) — Four graduating high school seniors have been selected by the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) to receive the 2017 ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship. The students were chosen from several hundred applicants in big-city school districts across the nation for academic performance, leadership qualities and community involvement.

Now in its eighth year, the scholarship was created by former NASA astronaut Dr. Bernard Harris Jr., the first African American to walk in space, and ExxonMobil to encourage and assist promising students of diverse backgrounds who plan to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies after high school.

"ExxonMobil is helping to foster the next generation of STEM leaders," said Ben Soraci, general manager of Public and Government Affairs for ExxonMobil. "These scholarships represent just one way we are encouraging students of diverse backgrounds to pursue STEM-related studies and careers."

The awards are given annually to African-American and Hispanic seniors from high schools in the 68 urban school districts represented by Council.

"We are indeed proud of the winners in this highly competitive national scholarship program," said Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. "These young men and women may become the leaders and innovators of tomorrow thanks to the support of ExxonMobil and the encouragement of Dr. Harris."

Each scholar will receive $5,000 for continued education in a STEM-related field. This year's award winners are:

- Paul Davis, who attended Lincoln College Preparatory Academy in Kansas City, MO
- Diana Moreno, who attended Maxine L. Silva Health Magnet High School in El Paso, TX
- Caleb Myers, who attended Townview School of Science and Engineering in Dallas, TX
- Robin Ryce, who attended Renaissance High School in Detroit, MI

In the fall, Davis plans to attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University to study aerospace engineering. Moreno will pursue a degree in biochemistry at University of Texas El Paso. Myers plans

to study chemical/biomedical engineering at Prairie View A&M University, and Ryce will study engineering at University of Michigan.

"I am consistently amazed and inspired by these students and their eagerness to succeed," said Dr. Harris, also a physician and president and founder of The Harris Foundation. "Each of them will be such an asset to the universities they attend and as future innovators in our workforce. It's an honor to help support them in their endeavors."

Administration of the scholarship program, including the application process, pre-selection and presentation of awards, is provided by the CGCS. Dr. Harris makes the final selection of recipients.

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About The Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 68 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 to deliver the best possible education for urban youth. www.cgcs.org

About ExxonMobil

Exxon Mobil Corporation, the largest publicly traded international oil and gas company, uses technology and innovation to help meet the world's growing energy needs. ExxonMobil engages in a range of philanthropic activities that advance education, with a focus on math and science in the United States, promote women as catalysts for economic development, and combat malaria. In 2016, together with its employees and retirees, ExxonMobil, its divisions and affiliates, and the ExxonMobil Foundation provided $242 million in contributions worldwide.. Additional information on ExxonMobil's community partnerships and contribution programs is available at www.exxonmobil.com/community.

About The Harris Foundation

Founded in 1998, The Harris Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization based in Houston, whose overall mission is to invest in community-based initiatives to support education, health and wealth. The foundation supports programs that empower individuals, in particular minorities and the economically and/or socially disadvantaged, to recognize their potential and pursue their dreams.

The education mission of The Harris Foundation is to enable youth to develop and achieve their full potential through the support of social, recreational and educational programs. The Harris Foundation believes students can be prepared now for the careers of the future through a structured educational program and the use of positive role models. More than 50,000 students have participated and benefited from THF programs. www.theharrisfoundation.org

OP-EDS

Education Week (commentary)

'Equity for All Is Everyone's Business'

Equity means supporting students in and out of school

By Darienne Driver
May 31, 2017

The Milwaukee public school system serves over 77,000 students from diverse backgrounds: 87 percent are students of color, 80 percent live in poverty, 20 percent receive specialized education services, and 10 percent are English-language learners. In one of the most segregated cities in the United States, decades of racially and socioeconomically inequitable practices have resulted in glaring opportunity gaps for our schools. District leaders, including myself, view addressing these gaps as our responsibility. Equity for all is everyone's business.

As the superintendent of schools, I have helped the district take a hard look at how we allocate resources, including money, time, and human capital. Viewing all of our decisions through a lens of equity is critical. Last year, we created an equity commission, composed of educators, school psychologists, and community members, to oversee decisionmaking on education and operational practices.

We refuse to accept the data that show that our black and Latino young men consistently have the worst outcomes in our district. For example, only 14 percent of the district's black male students and 28 percent of Latino male students meet readiness in English on the ACT, compared with 52 percent of their white counterparts. We committed to creating a department of black and Latino male achievement. A group of educators and school leaders will report to the office of the superintendent about how they plan to oversee academic-improvement programs and strategies.

We also implemented nondiscrimination and gender-inclusion policies, and adopted a safe-haven resolution to address the needs of students who are recent immigrants or undocumented.

But special commissions and offices can't do the work alone.

That's why we also prioritize partnerships to expand academic and extracurricular opportunities.

For example, with help from the Council of the Great City Schools and College Board—a national coalition of urban public-school systems of which I am chair-elect—and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, we expanded Advanced Placement courses to every high school in the district, using online technology. Nearly all our high schools now offer five or more AP classes. As a result, more than 20 percent of public high school students are taking college-level coursework, such as AP and International Baccalaureate courses, this school year.

Equity in Milwaukee also means supporting our students after the school day ends. At the neighborhood level, our newest initiative, MPS C.A.R.E.S., coordinates resources in a community with one of the highest incarceration and unemployment rates in the country. We have a cross-functional team of schools, health-care providers, elected officials, and community partners that focuses on the well-being and enrichment of students, providing late-night and weekend recreational activities to more than 11,000 students across the district.

We cannot allow race, class, and gender to divide our schools any longer. We have a long way to go in Milwaukee, in our state, and as a nation. As district leaders, we must work with those at the state level to identify the issues that challenge all of our schools and prevent us from treating students fairly—and to produce solutions that will benefit all students. Milwaukee is my home, and our students and families are my neighbors. That is why we have approached these issues with such passion and tenacity.

Darienne Driver is the superintendent of the Milwaukee Public Schools.

Washington Post Editorial

The hard work of school reform is paying off in the District

By [Editorial Board](#) August 22 at 7:34 PM (print edition August 23, 2017)

RISING STUDENT test scores. Refurbished schools. That is the backdrop for the start of a new school year for D.C. Public Schools students, and it is a far cry from what existed before school reform. A decade's investment in public education is paying off, and that is cause for celebration, even given the obvious need to do more to ensure that all children — no matter where they live or what their parents earn — are equipped for college or careers.

Monday's start of classes was seamless, yet it was not that long ago — before Mayor Adrian M. Fenty (D) [got control of schools in 2007](#) — that the District struggled with even the most rudimentary functions, such as readying classrooms, ordering books and paying teachers. Even worse: Expectations for the majority of students — African American children, many from poor families — were low, and failure was accepted.

The progress the city has made since that sorry time was underscored with [last week's release](#) of scores on the national Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Significant gains across almost all grades and subjects, with all groups of students showing improvements, were a testament to reforms that overhauled a dysfunctional school system and allowed charter schools to flourish. The percentage of traditional- and charter-school students meeting the benchmark for college and career readiness [increased in 2017](#) by four percentage points in English language arts and two percentage points in math.

The performance of the traditional D.C. public school system was particularly impressive, with its students showing gains of [6.4 percentage points](#) in English language arts and 3.5 percentage points in math in 2017. Not only did the public school students show improvement on all grade levels in every ward, but every subgroup — race, economic, special- education status, English-learning status — posted gains. PARCC, administered for just the second time, represents new rigor in measuring student achievement and gives added heft to the results.

Michael Casserly of the Council of the Great City Schools told us he has never seen such gains on PARCC, calling them "quite remarkable." He credited the system, which has shown steady improvement over the past 10 years, for not resting on its laurels but bearing down on reforms and deepening instruction to overcome barriers of poverty and language.

A significant achievement gap persists, with minority and low-income students lagging behind their white and more prosperous peers. With fewer than a third of public school students considered college- and career-ready, it is apparent, as a spokeswoman for the school system said, that "no one is declaring victory." What is encouraging is that the District — despite changes in administrations and school leadership — remains committed to reform of a public education system that has failed generations of

Washingtonians, realizing there will be no quick, easy fix. The new PARCC scores — and the absence of shocking headlines about the start of school — show a willingness to do the hard work over the long haul, and that holds the best promise for lasting results.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Memorandum

TO: Michael Casserly, Executive Director

FROM: Henry Duvall, Director of Communications

DATE: October 2, 2017

RE: **One-Year Twitter Progress Report**

In a renewed effort to increase and monitor the growth of the Council's Twitter presence, the Council communications team presents the first one-year Twitter progress report. This report highlights the performance of the Council's primary social-media channel for the third quarter of 2016 in comparison with the same quarter that ended September 30th this year.

The team added a new communications specialist last October to coordinate the Council's social-media traffic. A social-media audit was conducted prior to his arrival, which provided a blueprint for the Council to advance its social-media presence.

To accurately gauge Twitter performance, one needs to measure impressions (number of people who've viewed a tweet), engagement and followers.

Here is a brief comparison-and-contrast analysis between the two years:

July-Sept. 2016 (3rd Quarter)	July-Sept. 2017 (3rd Quarter)
Impressions	Impressions
77,600	188,000 (142% increase)
Engagement	Engagement
203 link clicks	290 link clicks (43% increase)
59 retweets	227 retweets (285% increase)
134 likes	644 likes (381% increase)
Followers	Followers
121 new followers	233 new followers (93% increase)

With 5,882 core Twitter followers, the communications team continues an aggressive effort to heighten the Council's social-media outreach and presence, which also includes Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo and LinkedIn.

ARTICLES

Education Week

In Puerto Rico, a Daunting Effort to Reopen Schools, Headed by a Determined Leader

By [Andrew Ujifusa](#)
October 8, 2017

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Can Puerto Rico's schools get back on their feet in just over a month after the island was devastated by Hurricane Maria? The U.S. territory's top school official has an urgent need to do just that.

There's been little sleep for Puerto Rico's Secretary of Education as she and her staff work the phones and back channels from a busy command center here to get as many schools open as possible within the next two weeks. Doing so could bring much-needed solace and stability to the commonwealth's 700,000 students and their families in the aftermath of one of the worst storms to hit the commonwealth in recent memory.

That could mean very different things for communities depending on where they are. Indeed, Julia Keleher still hadn't gotten word on 20 percent of Puerto Rico's nearly 1,200 schools, many in remote and mountainous regions. Many people are struggling to access basic supplies, including water and food.

While they are working hard to reopen those buildings that are still viable, many could be torn down as a result of the devastation from the storm.

Keleher is getting help from the ==Council of the Great City Schools== and is also lining up aid from school officials in the Miami-Dade school district and from the University of North Carolina to provide support for educators.

"We understand that if our teachers aren't well, they're not going to be able to take care of our students," said Keleher, who's been Puerto Rico's schools chief since January and took over a system with a massive debt and that had to close a large number of schools recently.

As for the U.S. Department of Education, Keleher said she appreciates the funding flexibility that Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has provided. What else do Keleher and her department need to help schools recover? Congress could also waive requirements around adult and special education. And Keleher said she looks at the funding package given to schools in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina and says something similar would be appropriate for her schools.

"Those restart funds were huge [after Katrina]," Keleher said in an interview here with *Education Week*. "If we're strategic about it, it's only going to advance our reforms quicker."

Reality on the Ground

Strategy can't change the realities. At a minimum, about 35 instructional days will be lost if schools begin something like regular academic work later this month. For many, that lost time could extend for months. And the delay, however long, will have a tremendous domino effect. To name just one example, college entrance exams for many students were slated to start the week of Oct. 9.

Right now, activities at schools that are open consist of providing students the opportunity to talk about their experiences during the hurricane and giving them both an emotional outlet and a positive support system. In addition, other schools are providing supplies to students and their families.

Students at one middle school, for example, were cutting out paper images of hands and writing what they would do to help others affected by the hurricane.

Some of Keleher's most difficult moments have come when she's watched poor families in remote areas move into shuttered school buildings with all of their possessions, seeking shelter.

"It's the most vulnerable of the vulnerable," Keleher said. "That's kind of heartbreaking, but it's inspiring. It makes one very committed."

In order to operate, Keleher told us, schools have to have running water and be structurally sound: Nothing on school grounds can look like it's about to crash down on top of people. Power isn't a necessity—if a school has a generator, that's more than enough. But that means plenty of schools with no air conditioning when the temperature is still reaching into the sticky high 80s and low 90s.

Supporting Students

These are the sorts of conditions, along with an uncertain future, that are driving teachers, among others, to leave the island and seek a better future for them and their children. How does Keleher deal with that dynamic? She's more committed than when she began in January, but she's also flexible.

"My main objective is that every child in Puerto Rico gets a quality education. If my system provides that, great. If another system in a state is going to provide that, that's great too," she said. "What I'm committed to is to work collaboratively with the leaders of those systems so that our students get a little briefcase, and they can go. So that we help them. That's what we're here for. The adults can figure out what's important to adults later. ... I need to make sure if that kid goes, that kid has everything he or she needs to adapt."

The Puerto Rican education department itself isn't back at home yet: Keleher and her top staffers have relocated from their normal headquarters to the island's convention center, cheek by jowl with military personnel, aid workers, and other Puerto Rican government officials.

On Saturday, Keleher was working with her chief of staff, Carmen Denton, and Ruben Huertas, her top legal adviser, to get data to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about the state of individual schools. The engineer corps, in turn, would then make decisions about which schools would get priority. So far, her department had gathered information about roughly 85 percent of the territory's public schools.

The week following the storm, she only had information about a third of the schools. In Humacao and in Caguas, some of the hardest-hit areas, there's still missing data on the schools.

Keleher is also negotiating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to use schools as warehouses for food to distribute to communities, beyond the meals and other necessities already being provided to surrounding neighborhoods. And she was wrangling with federal authorities about reimbursement for funds. That sort of bureaucratic jujitsu is possible even in this situation, Keleher said, but only if the demands of paperwork are met and rules are followed.

The New York Times

Explosions and Black Smoke Reported at Chemical Plant

By THE NEW YORK TIMES UPDATED 9:09 AM August 31, 2017

As water began to recede in some parts of flood-ravaged Houston and as Harvey, now a tropical depression, shifted its wrath to the Beaumont-Port Arthur area of Texas, there were reports early Thursday that a chemical plant at risk of exploding had done just that.

There were two explosions at the Arkema plant in Crosby, about 30 miles northeast of downtown Houston, around 2 a.m., the French chemicals company that owns the plant said in a statement. It said there was a risk of further explosions at the site.

"We want local residents to be aware that the product is stored in multiple locations on the site, and a threat of additional explosion remains," Arkema said.

CBS19, the Houston affiliate, reported the two explosions at the plant and showed photos of black smoke. The blasts were also reported by Fox 26.

The company had already ordered all workers to leave the damaged plant, and Harris County ordered the evacuation of residents within a 1.5-mile radius. After the explosion, at least one Harris County deputy was taken to the hospital after inhaling fumes from the plant, the Harris County Sheriff's Office said on Twitter.

Later, the sheriff's office tweeted that company officials believed that the smoke inhaled by the 10 deputies was "a nontoxic irritant."

Richard Rowe, the chief executive of Arkema's North American division, told Reuters that the company had expected the chemicals to catch fire.

The Arkema plant manufactures organic peroxides, which are used in making plastic and other materials. When the chemicals warm, they start to decompose, which creates more heat and can quickly lead to a rapid, explosive reaction. Some organic peroxides also produce flammable vapors as they decompose.

The plant was shut down last Friday in anticipation of the storm, and a skeleton crew of 11 was left behind to ensure that the chemicals, which are kept in cold storage, remained safe.

But Arkema said the plant had been without power since Sunday, and the torrential rains and flooding had damaged backup generators. With the storage warehouse warming up, the crew transferred the chemicals to diesel-powered refrigerated trailers, but some of those stopped working as well.
Here is the latest:

• The storm was downgraded to a tropical depression on Wednesday night. It is expected move through central Louisiana on Wednesday night, then move through northeastern Louisiana and northwestern Mississippi on Thursday.

• Vice President Mike Pence is expected to visit four locations around Corpus Christi, Tex., on Thursday, to meet with storm survivors, according to a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the details of the trip were still being worked out.

• Officials have reported at least 38 deaths that were related or suspected to be related to the storm. The victims include a police officer who died on his way to work; a mother who was swept into a canal while her child survived by clinging to her; a woman who died when a tree fell on her mobile home; and a family that is believed to have drowned while trying to escape floodwaters in a van.

• More than 32,000 people were in shelters in Texas, and 30,000 shelter beds were available, Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas said. Houston officials said the city's largest shelter at the George R. Brown Convention Center had 8,000 and was no longer accepting evacuees. New evacuees would be taken to NRG Center, a conference hall in Houston.

• Houston's two airports reopened, and airport officials said on Wednesday night that United Airlines had boarded a flight from Los Angeles bound for Houston. Five more flights were on their way and three aircrafts were scheduled to leave the Houston area. International flights are expected to resume Thursday.

• The governor said 210,000 people have registered with FEMA for assistance.

• The National Guard has conducted 8,500 rescues since the storm began, Mr. Abbott said, and the police and firefighters in the Houston area have done a similar number. About 24,000 National Guard troops will soon be deployed for disaster recovery in Texas.

• Times journalists are chronicling the storm and its aftermath. Here is a collection of the most powerful photographs, and a guide to our coverage.

• Follow Times correspondents covering the storm on Twitter: Manny Fernandez, Alan Blinder, Julie Turkewitz, Jack Healy, Dave Philipps, Annie Correal, Rick Rojas, Monica Davey, Richard Fausset, Richard Pérez-Peña and Audra Burch. A collection of their tweets is here.

• Are you in an affected area? **If you are safe**, and are able to, share your story by email to hurricane@nytimes.com. And here are ways you can contribute to relief efforts.

Austin and Dallas prepare to absorb thousands of schoolchildren.
The cities of Austin and Dallas were expecting to absorb thousands of schoolchildren displaced by the storm, said Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of 68 large urban school districts. In both cities, school officials were waiving certain paperwork requirements, including immunization records and birth certificates, in order to quickly enroll displaced children, he said.

Robyn L. Harris, a spokeswoman for the Dallas Independent School District, said that the students would be classified as homeless and that the district was ready to provide psychological counseling and health services.

The Houston Independent School District remained closed, but announced that when school resumes, all students would receive three meals a day, regardless of a family's income, for the school year.

Mr. Casserly has been working with urban districts in Texas over the last week and also assisted school officials after past disasters, including Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York. He said he expected Congress to pass special disaster relief legislation, but that after previous catastrophes, the federal funding provided for schools did not come close to covering the costs associated with getting classes back up and running.

ABC News

More than 1 million public school students estimated to be affected by Hurricane Harvey

By Katie Kindelan Aug 31, 2017

As Harvey continues to bring devastation to the Gulf Coast, the Texas Education Agency estimates more than 1 million students in the state's public school system have been affected by the storm.

"Roughly 20 percent of our student population has been affected by Harvey," Texas Education Agency spokeswoman Lauren Callahan told ABC News Wednesday. "This is absolutely an ongoing situation and our first and foremost priority is making sure everyone is safe."

The TEA, which oversees the education of 5.3 million public school students, reports that 200 of the state's 1,200 school districts have had some sort of closures this week.

Aransas County Independent School District, which includes schools in the hard-hit town of Rockport, announced Wednesday that schools in the district would be closed "indefinitely."

The district serves 3,316 students, according to its website. A later statement from Superintendent Joseph Patek to clarify how long schools will be closed painted a stark picture of the area's current conditions and road to recovery.

"We used this word because we are attempting to be as transparent as possible. We do not have a timeline for how long the recovery process will take," Patek's statement read. "We must first have drinkable water and power. After that, we must ensure our facilities are safe and then we will be able to allow teaching staff in the buildings to look at their needs for supplies."

Students in Houston, the state's largest city, where an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 homes have been destroyed, were supposed to start school on Monday.

Today, on the eve of what would have been the end of the first week of school, district officials have only been able to reach around 45 of the district's nearly 300 campuses to assess the damage.

"We're anticipating once the waters start receding, we're going to be finding pretty extensive damage," Houston Independent School District (ISD) Superintendent Richard A. Carranza told ABC News Wednesday, adding that water and roof damages and power outages have been found so far in the accessible campuses.

Houston's school district is the largest in the state and the seventh-largest in the U.S., and serves around 215,000 students and 29,000 employees, according to its website. Carranza said district officials assume 90 percent of students were affected by Harvey.

The district announced today that schools will reopen on Sept. 11, conditions permitting.

Administrative staff will return to work next Tuesday, with teachers returning to their classrooms on Sept. 8.

Students will be allowed to follow a relaxed dress code policy through the end of the year, the district also announced.

The school district is working with the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of 68 of the nation's largest urban public school systems, to place crisis counselors in schools when they reopen and make sure students have the clothes and school supplies they need, Carranza said. The district has already posted a resources page on its website for employees.

Houston ISD also announced Wednesday that all students will receive three free meals per day during the 2017 to 2018 school year through the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program in the wake of Harvey.

 "Once [the students] come back we promise that we're going to love them and they're going to have a safe place to learn," Carranza said, telling students and parents directly, "So just hang in there and we're going to see you."

The stability of the school day will be a crucial element for students and staff as school districts across Texas recover, according to Doug Harris, professor of economics at Tulane University and the director of the Education Research Alliance for New Orleans.

Harris studied the rebuilding of the New Orleans school system after Hurricane Katrina.

"One thing we saw in New Orleans that you can expect in Texas is, especially for young kids, it's easy for them to be traumatized and have symptoms like post-traumatic stress disorder that are long-lasting in something like this," he said. "One lesson just from that alone is that you want to get them resources."

Harris continued, "Make sure [students] are being fed and have access to counselors and give them a sense of normalcy as quickly as possible."

Kathryn Mills, a second-grade teacher in the Katy Independent School District, which has been closed since last Friday, is using social media to give students a sense of normalcy while they are still home from school.

Mills, a mother of two, created the Hurricane Harvey Book Club after seeing photos on Facebook of students gripping books as they sought shelter in bathrooms and kitchen pantries during near-constant tornado warnings in the Houston region.

"It was super heavy on my heart to try to find a way I could get their mind off of it," said Mills, who invited a handful of Facebook friends to the group and asked them to post videos of themselves reading books for kids in Texas to watch.

The group has gone to 30,000 members in just a few days and Mills is receiving messages from publishing houses and authors who want to help.

 "For me as a teacher, I'm watching these videos and I'm like, 'That's exactly what I wanted," said Mills. "One kid had to evacuate his house and went in and grabbed books because he wanted to be part of the book club."

The Katy Independent School District, where Mills teaches, anticipates that schools will reopen next week for the district's nearly 90,000 students and staff members but officials are still trying to access some of the schools to see the damage.

"The safety of students traveling to and from our schools, along with ensuring the safety of campus building structures, is our number one priority as we consider the return date for students," superintendent Lance Hindt told ABC News in a statement. "We will be updating the community on the status of school openings this week once crews have completed their assessments."

When students affected by Harvey are able to return to school, schools across Texas will be ready to welcome them.

"Our schools will certainly be able to take any student that is displaced because of the storm, for however long," said the TEA's Callahan who said the agency is working with their counterparts in Louisiana to implement best practices learned from Hurricane Katrina.

"We're fully prepared to be of assistance to both our districts that have suffered unimaginable devastation as well as the districts who are taking in students because of the storm," she said. "Every district and charter in our state has a homeless liaison in the district in place already who can help get students enrolled."

Commissioner of Education Mike Morath announced this week that schools in the state's 58-county disaster declaration for Harvey can submit a waiver so they will not have to make up instructional days missed due to the storm.

One additional lesson from Hurricane Katrina, according to Harris, is that schools are a "natural point of connection" and parents should take their children to the school nearest their location, no matter where they have evacuated.

"The problem now is that not only are families living in different locations, if they're not in a shelter they're going to be disconnected and schools and social services won't know that they're there," he said. "Schools are a great way to make that connection."

He continued, "[Officials] should be getting the message out that kids should go to the nearby school even if it is temporary, and the state will have to step in with resources to make sure their needs are met."

ABC-TV10 San Diego

San Diego Unified: Help Houston schools by donating clothing, supplies

Mark Saunders

Aug 29, 2017

SAN DIEGO (KGTV) - San Diego Unified School District is teaming up with <mark>Council of the Great City Schools</mark> to get clean clothing and school supplies to Houston area schools affected by Hurricane Harvey.

SDUSD is asking San Diegans to send donations of clothing of all sizes, school uniforms, and school supplies to aid the Houston Independent School District.

Any clothing should be in clean and reasonably good condition. Donations should be sent to: Delmar Stadium, 2020 Mangum Road, Houston, TX, 77092

Another way to provide immediate help is to donate to the HISD Foundation [here](#).

"Some 50 of the Houston schools have been flooded, and many families are staying in other less-damaged schools and children do not have extra clothes or school supplies," a SDUSD release said. "Many families have lost their home and most of their belongings."

The Council of Great City Schools is a coalition of 68 of the nation's largest urban school systems. The council works to keep media, lawmakers, and the public informed of progress and problems affecting big-city schools.

Atlanta Journal Constitution

Atlanta schools to send 250 backpacks to Hurricane Harvey's youngest victims

By Vanessa McCray
Friday, Sept. 1, 2017

Atlanta Public Schools will send 250 backpacks stuffed with school supplies to Houston students recovering from Hurricane Harvey.

The backpacks are left over from Atlanta's back-to-school bash in July. APS had about 450 packs remaining from its stock of nearly 6,000 that it gave away to Atlanta students before school started, said district spokeswoman Pat St. Claire. The district will send several hundred backpacks to flood victims. Individual Atlanta schools also are organizing drives to collect hygiene products and other necessities to send to Houston, she said.

Both APS and Houston Independent School District are members of the Council of the Great City Schools.

The 68-member council represents some of the country's biggest urban public school systems. The organization focuses on improving inner-city education.

Houston school officials announced plans to hold the first day of school on Sept. 11, as long as the weather permits and facilities are ready.

The Texas school district also will relax its uniform policy for the first few months of classes.

FOX26 News (Fresno)

Fresno Unified sends donations to Houston schools affected by Hurricane Harvey

by Fox26 News

Tuesday, September 26th 2017

FRESNO, Calif. (FOX26 NEWS)-- Fresno Unified sent more than a thousand boxes of donations to help those affected by Hurricane Harvey.

Responding to the Council of the Great City Schools' call to help Houston Independent School District recover from the devastating effects of Hurricane Harvey, Fresno Unified School District has collected more than 1,000 boxes full of donated school supplies, clothes and other items for the students and staff at Houston Independent School District.

Papé Kenworth, which has a location in Fresno, has generously offered to load up two trucks and ship all of the items for free to Houston.

"Papé Kenworth has demonstrated itself as a true community partner with this extremely generous offer. It's with great pride that we join with them to provide some much-needed help to the families in Houston who have been suffering from the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey," said Superintendent Bob Nelson.

DTL Transportation also stepped up to donate two trailers to hold all of the donated items.

FUSD has been diligently working to pack up all of the items and will have them ready to load onto Papé Kenworth's trucks on Tuesday morning

Omaha World-Herald

Schools collect donations for Hurricane Harvey relief funds

- By Hailey Stolze / Staff Writer
- Sep 1, 2017

Schools in the metro area are collecting money to aid Hurricane Harvey relief, including Omaha Public Schools and Gross Catholic High School.

OPS educators are raising money for the Houston Independent School District. Created by OPS, the OPS Foundation and the Omaha Education Association, the fund will provide HISD students and staff financial assistance, according to a Sept. 1 OPS news release.

"We're fellow educators helping fellow educators with one goal in mind — helping students," Omaha Education Association President Bridget Donovan said in the release.

OPS and HISD are both part of the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of 68 national urban public school systems with the goal of improving education in inner cities.

OPS Board President Lacey Merica said the council informed them HISD needed help, so OPS decided to create a relief fund, along with several other districts in the council. Merica said in times of tragedy, it's important to come together to support one another.

"If we were in a similar situation, I know people would step up and help us," Merica said. "They're hurting; they have a need, and we can help out."

Donations will be accepted until Sept. 30 online, with a goal of raising $5,000. Money collected will be given to the HISD Foundation for it to use at its discretion.

As of 2 p.m. today, the fund had raised $1,250.

Gross Catholic High School is also contributing to hurricane relief efforts, as students there recently hosted a sock collection drive, said Denise Fanslau, the school's communications director.

Class of 1985 Gross Catholic alumna Joanie Garro, a who lives in Texas, posted on her class' Facebook page requesting her classmates support hurricane victims. Class of 1985 Gross Catholic alumna Tracy Kenny and Assistant Campus Minister Michele Sweetmon then coordinated collection efforts.

Students and staff donated socks, which are on their way to a school in Texas. Each pair includes a positive message.

Toledo Blade

Toledo Public Schools students, others, raise money for Houston school district

By [Nolan Rosenkrans](#) | BLADE STAFF WRITER
Published on Sept. 1, 2017 | Updated 5:16 p. m.

Students and staff at Toledo Public Schools are raising money for their counterparts in Houston, after the city — and much of its public school district — were devastated by Hurricane Harvey.

Perrysburg schools and Penta Career Center are joining in the effort, called "Hugs for Houston." The schools will also hold donation drives next week for school supplies to be sent to Houston, and donation bins will be at Friday night football games on Sept. 8.

The idea came from Arlington Elementary principal Melisa Viers, whose daughter is an administrator in the Houston school district. Hope Viers managed to remain unscathed in the storm, as her apartment building did not flood, Ms. Viers said, but many of her friends, coworkers, and students have lost homes, belongings, or had relatives who died in the flooding.

"One of her friends, his house was completely underwater and he had to be rescued," she said.

By midday Friday, Arlington students had raised about $600, with one eighth grader donating $100.

"I actually started to cry," Ms. Viers said. "This has really allowed discussions of empathy."

Arlington normally does a dress-down day each month, with students donating money to a local charity in order to dress down. The idea to send this month's funds to the Houston district just made sense, Ms. Viers said. A resident of the neighborhood heard about the drive and came to the school to write a check.

The Toledo district did not have a complete tally for how much was donated district-wide Friday, but about a dozen schools were running dress-down days where students could donate in order to wear casual clothes, TPS spokesman Patty Mazur said. Beverly Elementary had raised $1,453, Riverside Elementary raised $435, and Robinson Elementary raised $310, Ms. Mazur said.

Students have been learning about Hurricane Harvey and the severe flooding, with older social studies students reading current events, and teachers of younger students explaining how much is 50 inches of water, and how that affects a community.

A number of large urban districts have coordinated donation drives for the Houston school system, according to the ==Council of the Great City Schools==, a coalition of 68 urban districts of which TPS is a member.

"The Houston Independent School District continues to have an immediate need for children's clothes of all sizes, school uniforms, and school supplies," Council Executive Director Michael Casserly said in a news release.

Other districts in northwest Ohio ran collection drives this week. For instance, Sylvania's Northview High School announced Friday students and staff had sent more than 900 pounds of items to Texas, and had donated more than $900 to the Red Cross.

Beyond supplies and cash donations, other districts -—including Dallas and Austin — are willing to accepted displaced Houston students, according to the council. The Houston district needs clothes for students in all sizes, uniforms, toiletries, and school supplies.

Those interested in donating directly to the Houston school district can do so at www.houstonisd.org/Page/164281, or to Mark Smith, Delmar Stadium, 2020 Mangum, Houston, Texas 77092.

Contact Nolan Rosenkrans at nrosenkrans@theblade.com, 419-724-6086, or on Twitter @NolanRosenkrans.

Education Week

Urban Districts' Group Decries President Trump's Response to Charlottesville

By Denisa R. Superville on August 17, 2017 3:26 PM

The Council of the Great City Schools, the Washington-based organization that represents largely urban school districts, criticized the president's response to the Charlottesville violence, joining critics who say that the response has been inadequate.

"As the most diverse group of children in American history returns to their classrooms over the next several days, they are getting a hard lesson on intolerance, hatred, and political cowardice," the group's executive director, Michael Casserly, said in a statement on Thursday, nearly five days after white nationalists and Neo-Nazis clashed with counter-protestors in the Virginia college town. "In the face of a national tragedy, our president—and others—have attempted to stoke the fires of division and equate the moral standing of various white supremacy organizations with the justifiable outrage of counter-protesters in Charlottesville."

"At a time when we need strong, unifying leadership the president has chosen to equivocate, sending the signal that displays of racial hatred have the same valence as the voices of indignation and hope," Casserly wrote. "This kind of thinking warps our common understanding of what freedom and opportunity mean, and it loosens our grip as a nation on our founding principles. These are vile and dangerous sentiments that should be roundly rejected by the citizenry."

An Ohio man faces charges after allegedly plowing his car into counter-demonstrators on Saturday, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer. Two members of the Virginia state police who were monitoring the events—H. Jay Cullen and Berke Bates—also died when their helicopter crashed.

The Council of the Great City Schools represents 70 of the nation's largest school districts—about 7.3 million students, the majority of whom are Hispanic and African-American.

Casserly released a similarly blunt statement last year after the police killings of Philando Castile in Falcon Heights, Mo.; Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, La.; the fatal shootings of five police officers in Dallas and three officers in Baton Rouge; and the terrorist attack on the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla., in which 49 people were killed.

President Trump's initial response condemned hatred, bigotry and violence on "many sides." On Monday, he struck a more conciliatory note, condemning Neo-Nazis and white supremacists. In a press conference on Tuesday, he blamed both sides for the violence.

Trump's comments have been criticized for equating counter-protestors with Neo-Nazis and white nationalists. Former **Ku Klux Klan grand wizard David Duke has praised Trump for his response.**

The Charlottesville violence has led to renewed push to remove confederate monuments from parks and other public spaces—a debate that bubbled to the fore two years ago after Dylann Roof killed nine black parishioners in a church in Charleston in 2015.

"Our schools, particularly our diverse urban public schools, will once again need to serve as a source of inspiration and courage during these rough political times. As educators, we have the power to build a future that is more thoughtful, charitable, respectful, and broad-minded—a future that counters the forces of intolerance to which our leadership has turned a blind eye," Casserly said. "In fact, it is our patriotic responsibility to ensure that our students learn to think critically, differentiate fact from fiction, understand the key principles of our founding ideals, and live their lives with forbearance and respect for each other. It is a challenge that the nation cannot afford for us to neglect, for these are the assets that will keep us glued together as one people and will ensure that the moral arc of history bends ever faster towards justice."

The council was among education groups and school leaders have weighed in.

Education secretary Betsy DeVos condemned the violence on Saturday on Twitter, but has not addressed it since on the platform.

Chiefs for Change, the bi-partisan group of state and district chiefs, also responded after the president's press conference on Tuesday.

"As the nation's top leader, the President of the United States offers a model and example to children throughout this country," the group's statement said. "Equivocation about racism, white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and domestic terrorism is intolerable anywhere, but especially from our top elected officials. As a bi-partisan coalition of state and school district leaders, we commit to advance civil discourse that stands against evil. We will redouble our efforts to ensure students learn to be responsible adults and patriotic citizens who work toward a far different and more positive vision for this nation, and we urge our fellow leaders to join us in standing strong against hatred and bigotry."

Chiefs for Change board of directors include John White, Louisiana's education chief; Tom Boasberg, the schools chief in Denver, Colo.; Hanseul Kang, the director of the Washington, D.C., Office of the State Superintendent of Education; Robert Runcie, the superintendent of Broward County schools in Florida; Hanna Skandera, the former New Mexico schools chief; and Antwan Wilson, the chancellor of the Washington D.C., public schools system.

Education Week

Education Community Takes Trump to Task for Charlottesville Remarks

By **Alyson Klein** on August 17, 2017 2:01 PM

Like the rest of the country, school leaders are coping with the fallout from a far-right rally last weekend that drew white supremacists and other extremists to Charlottesville, Va., and resulted in the death of at least one counterprotestor and injuries to more than a dozen others people. And many have singled out President Donald Trump's response for harsh criticism.

Several K-12 organizations and leaders emphatically condemned the Unite the Right rally, which included racist and anti-semitic participants, and descended on Charlottesville to protest the planned removal of a statue of Conferate General Robert E. Lee. And several of them spoke out against Trump's contention that "both sides," including counterprotestors, were to blame for the violence.

Case in point: The board of directors of **Chiefs for Change**, which represents education-redesign oriented district and state leaders, put out a statement saying:

As the nation's top leader, the President of the United States offers a model and example to children throughout this country. Equivocation about racism, white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and domestic terrorism is intolerable anywhere, but especially from our top elected officials. As a bipartisan coalition of state and school district leaders, we commit to advance civil discourse that stands against evil. We will redouble our efforts to ensure students learn to be responsible adults and patriotic citizens who work toward a far different and more positive vision for this nation, and we urge our fellow leaders to join us in standing strong against hatred and bigotry.

50CAN, a bipartisan state advocacy group, shared similar sentiments. Its alumni include Jason Botel, the acting assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education at the U.S. Department of Education, and Jim Blew, who is also rumored to become a top

Trump political appointee. The organization said it's clear that there aren't "two sides" to this particular issue:

We unequivocally denounce the hate, intolerance, bigotry and violence shown by the forces of evil gathered together under the banner of Nazism and white supremacy in Charlottesville this past weekend.

We are also shocked by President Trump's statement that these violent white supremacists have been treated unfairly by the media and that there were "fine people" who marched with torches under a Nazi flag. When you choose to march with Nazis you are rejecting our country's founding belief that all people are created equal and dishonoring the basic convictions of the American political system.

Council of the Great City Schools Executive Director Mike Casserly also took Trump to task:

As the most diverse group of children in American history returns to their classrooms over the next several days, they are getting a hard lesson on intolerance, hatred, and political cowardice. In the face of a national tragedy, our president—and others—have attempted to stoke the fires of division and equate the moral standing of various white supremacy organizations with the justifiable outrage of counterprotesters in Charlottesville.

At a time when we need strong, unifying leadership the president has chosen to equivocate, sending the signal that displays of racial hatred have the same valence as the voices of indignation and hope. This kind of thinking warps our common understanding of what freedom and opportunity mean, and it loosens our grip as a nation on our founding principles. These are vile and dangerous sentiments that should be roundly rejected by the citizenry.

The leadership of the **American Federation of Teachers,** the second-largest teachers' union, called on the administration and Congress to investigate terrorism by white supermacists:

Sieg heils and proclaiming white supremacy are threats against our communities. Running people over for saying that black lives matter is attempted, if not actual, murder. And the president of the United States should not equivocate; he should denounce Nazis, the KKK and white supremacy in the most forceful and unambiguous terms. Only one side intended violence and intimidation and hate—the white supremacists—and anyone in a position of power or with a responsibility to keep people safe must not equivocate or mince words.

Success Academy Charter Schools CEO Eva Moskowitz, who met with Trump one-on-one after his election and endorsed his choice to tap Betsy DeVos as secretary of education, **wrote in a letter to her staff and board members**:

Like so many of you, I am deeply distressed both by the hateful violence in Charlottesville and by President Trump's refusal to clearly denounce it. Nobody with any empathy for the plight of people of color in this country could respond the way he did. His comments have left many in our community feeling unsafe and uncertain about their place in society. It's one thing to have a President with whose politics you disagree; it's another to have a President who doesn't even seem to care about your welfare.

Chris Minnich, the executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, which represents all 50 state chiefs, put out a **statement** Wednesday saying he was "deeply saddened and troubled" by the news out of Charlottesville. He quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and added:

We cannot be apathetic or complacent. We cannot allow this type of hatred to continue to persist. It is through education that we can work together toward positive action that can eradicate this type of hate and create safe, supportive learning environments and a better, more equitable world for all kids—especially those who have been historically marginalized and disadvantaged in our country.

The Institute for Educational Leadership condemned "racist ideology":

The terrible occurrence of violence in Charlottesville is a painful reminder that hate, racism, and xenophobia still exist. The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) would

like to express how deeply saddened we are for those hurt and killed working for social justice.

IEL stands up for the causes of those in underserved communities who fight to provide opportunity in the face of poverty, trauma, and inequity. We strongly condemn the racist ideology displayed in Charlottesville and find the hateful actions of white supremacists egregious and unacceptable.

The superintendents and school board members of Charlottesville schools and surrounding Albemarle County put out this joint statement, affirming the need to respect children from every background:

The message from Charlottesville to our nation must be stronger than ever before—that we are a community that values the safety of every person, the dignity of every resident, the respect of every background, the equality of every opportunity and the strength of every collaboration that promotes the common good.

As they should be, the values of our communities are found in our public schools. Our schools, after all, are the source of our greatest dreams and aspirations for our children. It is where we learn about the power of ideas, the importance of history, the strength of community and the right of every child to reach their highest potential.

Milwaukee Journal Constitution

Borsuk: In troubling times, we count on educators more than ever

Alan J. Borsuk, Special to the Journal Sentinel Published 3:30 p.m. CT Aug. 18, 2017 | Updated 11:46 a.m. CT Aug. 19, 2017

Muscle and music.

Four years ago, I used that phrase as the key to a column kicking off a new school year. I repeat myself now because I need a pep talk, and I bet a lot of other people do, too. That includes teachers and all other school staff people, parents, students and, for that matter, pretty much everybody.

It's hard for me to count the ways in which recent times have been dispiriting. From Charlottesville, Va., and 140-character threats of global warfare to the frightening increase in dangerous driving on local streets, it all weighs me down.

As hard as it is to see long-term, healthy answers, I am convinced a big part of moving forward requires good, vibrant schools giving good, vibrant education to all children. Name almost anything going on and I can connect it to education.

Pushing the horrifying hot buttons of hate? Where did people learn to be that way? A good education at home and in school (and that means more than academics) is crucial for children to become caring, thinking, responsible adults.

Ignorance and hostility toward fundamentals of American rights, responsibilities and community living? A good education includes an emphasis on understanding the fabric we are all part of and the need for people to help make that fabric stronger. Also, the need to recognize facts and realities and cope with them properly.

Foxconn debate in Wisconsin? I'll pass on taking sides in the debate on its merits, but if this enormous factory complex moves forward successfully, it is going to [require great work by the educators and schools at all levels](#) in our area to put people on track for the promised jobs. The same is true more broadly for our economic future.

Those knuckleheads driving on the street? Not all of them are young, and many may be nice people when they're not behind the wheel. But I bet there is a pretty strong connection overall between problems at home and in school and the way many act in public, including what they do in the driver seats of cars they might not even own.

Broadly speaking, the road to a healthier, more just, more rational, more thriving — just generally better — Milwaukee, Wisconsin and America is linked to education in so many ways and so many senses of the term "education."

So for all of you heading back to school — some are there already, especially with the new, early start date for many Milwaukee public schools — I have two encouraging thoughts:

You're involved in something hugely important. Particularly to all who are going to be teaching this year, the factors that make it hard and often frustrating work are often linked closely to the factors that make it so valuable. For those teaching low-income and/or minority kids, the chances are so high that a good future for any one of them is connected to the great work teachers will do for that student along the way.

For those of us who don't go to school every day, our support and appreciation for the work being done within all those walls are valuable. As a whole, we fall short on this so often. It's a new school year. In a way that is broad but can also be deep, it's a fresh time to support educational success for all kids.

And then there's muscle and music. That's my answer to the question of what I see in a school that strikes me as particularly good.

By muscle, I do not mean anything involving physical force or bullying or anything like that. I mean the attributes you might see in a top athlete — someone serious, focused, strong in good ways, energetic, committed. A school or a teacher with muscle has high expectations and well-chosen ways of pushing for students to reach them.

By music, I do not mean an instrumental program (although that can be a valuable part). I mean a place that, so to speak, sings. Amid hard work, a good school is a happy place overall. A place where both adults and kids are glad to be there. They sense that good things are happening — and they're part of those good things.

No, it's not easy to have a school with muscle and music. On so many levels, we haven't done a good job of maximizing the chances of kids being in such schools.

But a lot of the muscle and music can come from what goes on in a classroom between a teacher and the students. The relationships, the energy, the striving for success — education is such a human process and there are so many great humans involved, both grown-ups and kids.

Even with all those downer things going on around us, that's my pep talk, that's my wish for the coming year: For educators, parents, students to have a year with the most muscle and music that can be summoned.

Amid the flood of reactions last week to Charlottesville, I liked a statement from Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a peer organization of leaders of urban districts nationwide, including MPS. Casserly wrote:

"Our schools, particularly our diverse urban public schools, will once again need to serve as a source of inspiration and courage during these rough political times. As educators, we have the power to build a future that is more thoughtful, charitable, respectful, and broad-minded — a future that counters the forces of intolerance to which our leadership has turned a blind eye."

All of this calls for all of us to support muscle and music. To use our brains and hearts. We need the best of these, now and ahead.

Alan J. Borsuk is senior fellow in law and public policy at Marquette Law School. Reach him at alan.borsuk@marquette.edu.

Washington Post

'Irresponsible and immoral:' Education leaders condemn Trump's decision to wind down 'dreamers' program

By [Moriah Balingit](#) September 5 at 4:17 PM

Undocumented students join a rally in support of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program outside the Edward Roybal Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles on Friday. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

Education leaders Tuesday swiftly condemned President Trump's decision to wind down a program that offered protections for undocumented immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as young children, warning the move will disrupt the lives of hundreds of thousands of students.

The Trump administration announced it would end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program in six months, giving Congress a chance to address the issue. The program, introduced by President Barack Obama in 2012, offered work permits and a reprieve from deportation to 800,000 undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children. Many DACA recipients are high school and college students who face uncertain prospects as they head back to class.

Daniel A. Domenech, executive director of the national association of school superintendents, known as AASA, said his members supported the immigration policy and are "concerned by the uncertainty today's announcement brings, not only to our students and their families, but also our broader schools and communities."

Of the nearly 1.2 million eligible for DACA by 2014, [the Migration Policy Institute estimated](#) that 365,000 were in middle and high school, and 241,000 were in college. Teachers and administrators say they fear that ending DACA could disrupt the education of students, and have sought to reassure them they are safe at school.

Critics of the program said Obama overstepped his authority when he created the program and that it allows undocumented immigrants to take jobs away from U.S. citizens and legal residents.

But education leaders and groups from across the country assailed the Trump administration for ending a program that paved the way for undocumented immigrants to attend colleges and universities. Hundreds returned to school to get their high school diploma or GED because the program required it.

Some DACA recipients became teachers. Teach for America, the teacher-training corp, has 100 DACA recipients in its ranks. Denver Public Schools, where more than half of students are Latino, said the move could be devastating for its teachers who are DACA recipients.

In Denver, more than 1,100 high school students walked out of class to protest Trump's announcement, joining a massive rally at the Auraria Campus in that city. High school principals also joined the assembly, said Denver schools spokesman Will Jones. Jones said the district began recruiting DACA recipients to teach because it wanted its classroom teachers to reflect the demographics of its students.

John B. King Jr., who served as education secretary under President Obama and is now CEO of the Education Trust, an advocacy organization, called the move "irresponsible and immoral."

"DACA has benefited communities, schools and colleges — but most importantly, this program has helped students by giving them the chance to attain a higher education so they can build a better future for themselves, their families and the country they love," King said.

Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation for Teachers, said Trump is breaking his promise to treat DACA recipients — widely known as "dreamers" — "with great heart."

"Betraying DACA dreamers is betraying the values of our diverse and welcoming nation. America will not be stronger or more secure when these young people are torn away from the country they love and call their own," Weingarten said. "As children return to school, many carry with them constant, crippling terror and uncertainty because of their immigration status. Children should be free to learn and live without fear. Inhumane immigration policies deprive them of that freedom."

Education leaders have warned that if Trump pulled the plug on the program, fearful students might stay home.

"A lot of these kids might start going into hiding," said Robert Runcie, superintendent of Broward County Public Schools in Florida. "There's going to be a lot of fear and uncertainty for young people."

The Council of the Great City Schools, a nationwide coalition of large, urban school districts, called on Congress to extend protections for "dreamers."

"The mission of public schools is to create opportunity — not for some children, but for all," the coalition said in a statement. "For urban public schools, whose classrooms are filled with students from all over the world, our mission is not to reflect or perpetuate the walls that others would build."

"In the spirit of this mission, we condemn the dissolution of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program — whether now or in six months — by the president, and the value system that led him to conclude that America could only be great again without the patriotism, ingenuity, and voices of these children."

Education Week

Trump Cancels DACA, Impacting Tens of Thousands of Students and Teachers

By Corey Mitchell on September 5, 2017 11:16 AM UPDATED

President Donald Trump will end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an Obama-era program that gives protection to an estimated 800,000 immigrants who came to the United States illegally as children.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the order to end DACA Tuesday morning at the U.S. Department of Justice.

The decision leaves the undocumented residents, an undetermined number of whom work and learn in the nation's K-12 schools, in a state of limbo.

The Trump administration's decision could also affect the lives of children born in the United States. Millions of students in the nation's public and private schools are the children of undocumented immigrants, the Washington-based Pew Research Center estimates.

The announcement drew widespread condemnation from K-12 leaders and education associations from across the country, from Washington and New York to Los Angeles and Denver.

"The mission of public schools is to create opportunity—not for some children, but for all. The public-school system has not always been true to that dream, but it is striving to meet the needs of those dreamers now," said Michael Casserly, the executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, which represents more than 60 of the nation's largest urban public school systems.

"For urban public schools, whose classrooms are filled with students from all over the world, our mission is not to reflect or perpetuate the walls that others would build. Our job is to tear them down, to educate future generations of informed, engaged citizens."

Los Angeles Unified Superintendent Michelle King, and former U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr., the CEO of The Education Trust, and Chiefs for Change, a bipartisan group of district and state-level school leaders, also weighed in.

"We are deeply troubled by the Trump Administration's decision to cease protections for the law-abiding young people known as "Dreamers,"' Chiefs for Change wrote in response to the announcement.

"This move by the Administration heightens the urgency for Congress to take action to protect Dreamers in the form of common-sense immigration reform. Pushing these young people into the shadows will hurt our schools and communities."

The Trump administration will begin a "wind-down" of the DACA program, allowing Congress time to find a legislative solution to address the status of the so-called Dreamers, the young undocumented people who benefit from the program.

The House and Senate now have until March 5 to pass an immigration reform bill, something they've tried and failed to do for more than a decade.

In a statement issued by the White House on Tuesday, President Trump wrote that the federal government will honor all existing DACA permits until their date of expiration up to two full years from today. Applications already in the pipeline will be processed, as will renewal applications for those facing expiration within that six-month window.

However, a Department of Homeland Security memo also issued Tuesday inidicates all new applications for DACA protection will be rejected. Here's a link to a Homeland Security fact sheet explaining the full details of the DACA phase-out.

While on the campaign trail, Trump promised to repeal DACA—which offers a two-year deportation stay to young undocumented immigrants who can prove they meet a number of criteria —including that they came to the U.S. before age 16, have lived here for at least five years continuously, attend or graduated from high school or college, and have no criminal convictions.

"We will resolve the DACA issue with heart and compassion—but through the lawful Democratic process—while at the same time ensuring that any immigration reform we adopt provides enduring benefits for the American citizens we were elected to serve. We must also have heart and compassion for unemployed, struggling, and forgotten Americans," Trump said in the statement issued Tuesday.

"Above all else, we must remember that young Americans have dreams too. Being in government means setting priorities. Our first and highest priority in advancing immigration reform must be to improve jobs, wages and security for American workers and their families."

Trump's decision comes on the day that Republican attorneys general in nine states planned to file suit against the federal government if the president did not end the program. It was not immediately clear if they still look to sue the White House.

Attorneys general in New York and Washington state have announced plans to file a countersuit in an effort to stop the Trump administration from ending DACA.

The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)

Report: Shelby County Schools procurement process could cause financial issues

Jennifer Pignolet, Sept. 20, 2017

A report detailing possible loopholes that could lead to financial issues in Shelby County Schools is driving an overhaul of the district's procurement processes.

Superintendent Dorsey Hopson requested the review last year that produced the report from the Council of Great City Schools. The school board reviewed the report for the first time this week.

The procurement department oversees purchasing and contracts for the district.

Among the findings was "evidence of multiple numbers in the vendor file assigned to a single vendor, which could lead to duplicate payments and inaccurate spending reporting." Another finding noted, "There are no automated systems controls to prevent overspending of contracts."

It also listed a series of recommendations, many of which the district is already in the process of implementing, Chief of Business Operations Beth Phalen told the board Tuesday. Hopson hired Phalen in February, after the council conducted its review of departments she now supervises. The district also recently hired a new head of procurement. Both positions had interim leaders for the last year.

"This is not a 'gotcha', this is just something to help process improvement," Hopson said.

Phalen said the recommendations will be part of a "broader process improvement project" for operations in the district.

Hopson challenged on some of the report's findings, including an assertion that the district didn't have an accurate count of electronic devices in schools.

"That's not accurate," Hopson said. "We can track every bit of computer equipment we've had since the merger" with Memphis City Schools in 2013.

He also said the council team was "overly critical" of the district's audit department, which was not the focus of the review. The report stated the audit department's scope is too narrow, leaving room for problems to go unnoticed.

Board Chairman Chris Caldwell said the goal of the review and implementing the recommendations is to make sure the district has a "tight system" to avoid any maleficence.

"The key to this is closing the loophole, so to speak, so the board is comfortable that the resources and assets we have are protected," he said.

Caldwell asked Phalen and her team to prioritize the report's 21 recommendations in order of greatest risk to the district.

He said Wednesday the meeting Tuesday was "a good first step" in addressing issues raised in the report, and that he was satisfied with the administration's handling of them as he continues to request more information. The new director of procurement was not at the meeting due to a death in the family, so not all questions could be answered immediately.

"The primary concern is to make sure that we are fulfilling our fiduciary responsibility and being good stewards of public assets," Caldwell said.

Education Week

Urban Schools Join Forces on Instructional Materials for English-Language Learners

Michele Molnar
Associate Editor

The Council of the Great City Schools, dissatisfied with the quality of middle school math resources for English-language learners, is launching a purchasing consortium of large, urban public school districts with the goal of influencing content providers.

The procurement alliance represents 11 districts. The largest—the Los Angeles Unified School District—released an RFP this week to develop print and digital middle school math products that address the needs of English learners.

Seventy big urban districts are members of the council, and they educate 1.3 million ELLs, or 26 percent of all such students in the nation. L.A. alone educates over 100,000 English learners.

Part of the goal is to "incent the marketplace to improve quality" with the joint buying power of the districts, according to an announcement from the council. Other participants in, and contributors to, the purchasing consortium are school systems in Austin, Boston, Cleveland, Denver, El Paso, Nashville, Milwaukee, Palm Beach County, Fla., San Diego and Wichita.

"We brought together experts on the ground working on math, who know there's a dire need to make sure our kids are ready for Algebra I," said Gabriela Uro, the council's director for ELL policy and research, in an interview. The organization also coordinated collaboration among the procurement officials from participating districts.

For the middle school math procurement, the 91-page RFP seeks responses from commercial publishers to create mathematics materials that are "consistent with college- and career-readiness standards and that meet the needs of ELLs to ensure that they are ready to take a rigorous Algebra I course no later than 9th grade, so they can "apply their mathematics skills to real-world problem-solving," according to a written description about the procurement.

To be selected, vendors would have to demonstrate"high expectations of meeting the needs for language development in preparation for rigorous algebra coursework," said Michael Casserly, the council's executive director, in the announcement. Winning content providers will collaborate with a working group of urban educators and experts to develop or refine the print and digital materials.

Focus on Math, With More to Come?

Whether the materials/programs are existing or new, companies are expected to respond with a 3-page project proposal that answers these questions:

1. *How are your proposed print and digital materials designed to work together?*
2. *How will you document that instruction, activities, and assessments are aligned to standards for intended grade levels?*
3. *What is your vision for how the proposed unit fits into a coherent instructional framework, i.e., this unit as one part of a well-developed instructional pathway.*
4. *How do/will the materials support for ELLs across multiple proficiency levels without compromising grade-level rigor?*

Among the list of requirements in the RFP are considerations such as: in what classroom context the materials would be used; a detailed description of professional development expectations; and the need to provide samples of formative assessments. In the list of evaluation criteria, one is that preference will be given, as appropriate, to products or prototypes that are consistent with the Theory of Action expressed in the council's A Framework for Re-envisioning Math Instruction for English Language Learners.

The focus on middle school math for English learners is "a very strategic move and a good one," said Timothy Boals, the founder and director of WIDA, (formerly known as the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium) at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

"Too many people have seen support for these students as being limited to English/language arts, when really we need to support them in all of the academic classes, and mathematics is very important in helping to ensure that kids get into the right classes in high school."

It looks like math might just be the start of the procurement consortium's focus on influencing the marketplace.

"This consortium opens the door to similar approaches with other categories of products," said Henry Duvall, the council's communications director in an emailed response to an *EdWeek Market Brief* question. "We are simply taking steps, and this is the first major step."

The RFP is listed here, under Instructional Materials for English Language Learners, with a due date of Sept. 12. Vendors must register with the district to access the document.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Wolf announces reduction in classroom time for taking PSSA tests

Liz Navratil
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
Aug 14, 2017

HARRISBURG -- Gov. Tom Wolf and state education officials delighted educators across the state when they announced plans Monday to reduce the amount of classroom time students spend taking standardized exams.

The state Department of Education plans to reduce the length of PSSA tests that students take in grades 3 through 8. The math test will be 48 minutes shorter, the English exam 45 minutes shorter, and the science test 22 minutes shorter. Those changes could eliminate two full days worth of testing in some schools, according to the governor's office.

The changes, which go into effect next spring, will affect hundreds of thousands of students. It is part of the state's proposed plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act, the federal education law that replaces No Child Left Behind. Many educators say they spend close to a month preparing students for the tests and administering exams.

"Teachers will be spending more time teaching," said Secretary of Education Pedro Rivera.

Wolf said he hopes the changes will allow teachers to focus on providing students with a "complete education rather than preparing for one exam."

The plan must technically be submitted to the federal government for approval, but state officials said they do not expect to encounter any problems.

Wolf's announcement comes amid a backlash against PSSA testing in recent years by parents who have questioned the length and merits of the exam.

The news was greeted with acclaim across the state.

Locally, Dan Castagna, superintendent of the West Mifflin Area School District, said, "I think everyone in education would agree that this was a much-needed step in the right direction."

Patrick O'Toole, superintendent of the Upper St. Clair school district, said he was "thrilled with the change."

"The feedback I received from parents is that there was too much testing," he said.

The news was received enthusiastically in Philadelphia, where Cheryl Logan, the academic chief, said that the school system has been putting less emphasis on testing for the past two years. In 2015, a report by the ==Council of Great City Schools== underscored what teachers, parents and students had long been saying.

Logan said she appreciated the governor using his "bully pulpit" to de-emphasize testing, and said that Philadelphia would use this opportunity to examine its testing strategies more broadly.

"There's lots of things to work out, but I think this is good for kids," she said.

Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Anthony Hamlet said he was pleased to learn of the plan, "which will result in 20 percent less time on statewide exams for our students in grades 3 through 8. This decrease falls in line with the work we have undertaken as a District to reduce the amount of time our students in grades K-5 spend taking tests. We heard loud and clear from teachers and families their concerns about the amount of instructional time lost to testing. We appreciate the efforts of Governor Wolf and the Department of Education to consider the voices of educators from across Pennsylvania to take these steps that will benefit students across the Commonwealth."

Staff writers Molly Born, Kristen Graham and Kathy Boccella contributed to this article.

District Administrator

States begin shedding standardized tests in K12

Alison DeNisco
8/29/2017

In just the last few months, several districts and states have eliminated tests and cut assessment time to make room for instruction and reduce stress.

The average student takes 112 mandated standardized tests from pre-K through grade 12, according to the Council of the Great City Schools.

"It allows superintendents and other policymakers to experiment with and implement alternative forms of assessment based on real performance, not just filling in bubbles," says Bob Schaeffer, public education director at the National Center for Fair & Open Testing.

Concern with over-testing picked up steam around 2015, says Julie Rowland Woods, policy analyst at the Education Commission of the States. And since, a slow trickle of state policies have moved forward to mitigate it, she adds.

This past summer, Ohio eliminated state social studies exams for grades 4 and 6. And in June, New York shortened standardized testing in public schools by one day in reading and math, leaving two days for each assessment.

Many states are studying K12 assessments to determine exactly how many tests are mandated at the state and local levels, and the purpose of each exam. "Some states find that some are redundant or overlap," Woods says.

In April, Maryland passed the "More Learning, Less Testing Act," capping standardized testing at 2 percent, or about 25 hours, of overall classroom time per year. But it won't have much of an immediate impact, says Andrew Smarick, president of the Maryland State Board of Education. Most districts were already testing under 25 hours per year.

The Maryland Education Association said the act will eliminate an estimated 730 hours of testing across 18 districts in 2018-19. Smarick, who objected to the law's passage, says such a mandate could tie the hands of administrators who want to make assessment decisions based on student needs.

"Good superintendents, school boards and principals can solve most of the problem by reassessing their assessment systems and getting rid of old or duplicative tests," Smarick says.

Empowering principals

Vancouver Public Schools in 2016 removed 105 district-required assessments, returning as many as 15 hours of instructional time back to classrooms in grades 3 through 8.

"We were not focusing on eliminating a certain number of tests," says Layne Manning, Vancouver's curriculum director. Instead, the district determined which tests overlapped or were not informing instruction and replaced them with teacher-created assessments that better align with district [standards](#) and measure student growth.

Vancouver administrators play a larger role in analyzing assessment results—giving them data-driven flexibility to make decisions, says Travis Campbell, assistant superintendent and chief academic officer.

Alison DeNisco is a freelance writer in Kentucky.

The Plain Dealer (Cleveland)

Microsoft founder Bill Gates will talk to big-city school leaders at Cleveland conference

September 19, 2017 at 7:30 PM

By Patrick O'Donnell, The Plain Dealer

CLEVELAND, Ohio - Microsoft founder Bill Gates will give a lunchtime speech to leaders of the nation's large city school districts at their conference here in Cleveland next month.

The Cleveland school district will host the fall conference of the Council of the Great City Schools from Oct. 18 through 22 at the Hilton Cleveland Downtown Hotel. School leaders from across the country will visit some district schools in between sessions on policy and teaching at the hotel.

Gates is the lunchtime speaker on Thursday, Oct. 19. The talk is only open to conference attendees.

Gates, the co-founder of Microsoft, also created the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with his wife, Melinda. The foundation has donated millions to several educational initiatives, including a movement to break large high schools up into small ones and attempts to improve teaching by rating teachers.

Cleveland is also participating in Gates' plan to create a "compact" for collaboration between school districts and charter schools in several cities.

Cleveland schools CEO Eric Gordon and former school board chair Denise Link are previous recipients of the council's "Urban Educator of the Year Award." Gordon received it last year.

Member districts of the council are: Albuquerque, Anchorage, Arlington (Texas), Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Birmingham, Boston, Bridgeport, Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), Buffalo, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, Clark County (Las Vegas), Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Duval County (Jacksonville), El Paso, Fort Worth, Fresno, Guilford County (Greensboro, N.C.), Hawaii, Hillsborough County (Tampa), Houston, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson County

(Louisville), Kansas City, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Nashville, New Orleans, New York City, Newark, Norfolk, Oakland, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Orange County (Orlando), Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, Pinellas County, Pittsburgh, Portland, Providence, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Shelby County (Memphis), St. Louis, St. Paul, Toledo, Tulsa, Washington, D.C., and Wichita.

Long Beach Post

LBUSD Recognized with National SAT Prep Honor

By [Asia Morris](#)
August 07 2017 13:09

The Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) was recently recognized for encouraging and supporting students as they practice for the SAT and college-level courses using the Khan Academy's [Official SAT Practice](#) program, offering students free video lessons, practice tests and more, LBUSD officials announced today.

In May, research released by the College Board and Khan Academy showed that students using the program saw substantial score gains, with 20 hours of practice associated with an average 115-point increase from the PSAT/NMSQT to the SAT, according to the release.

Official SAT Practice features video lessons, test-taking tips and strategies, interactive practice questions and also includes nine full-length practice tests. Four million unique users are now registered.

"The PSAT is now a diagnostic for Khan Academy," Khan Academy founder Sal Khan said in a statement. "If students share their PSAT score, Khan Academy can use that information to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses and provide tailored practice in math, reading and writing."

Of the 28 big-city school districts that volunteered for the inaugural 2017 Official SAT Practice All In Challenge, Long Beach was one of the five that won, with Fresno, Orange County (Orlando), Denver and Chicago all recognized for their efforts to boost students' college and career readiness.

The first-ever award from the [College Board](#), the [Council of the Great City Schools](#) and [Khan Academy](#) recognizes council districts for encouraging and supporting students' SAT practice with the Khan platform.

"There are many success stories to share about the hard work and incredible growth that our districts and students made through this challenge," Council Executive Director Michael Casserly said in a statement. "We're proud of the 28 school districts that stepped up to the challenge and hope others will follow."

The Washington, D.C.-based Council of the Great City Schools, founded in 1956, brings together the nation's 68 largest urban public school systems, Long Beach included, in a coalition for the improvement of education for children in big cities.

LBUSD received the "MVP" prize for having the highest overall percentage of students linking their College Board and Khan Academy accounts to receive free and personalized SAT practice. LBUSD will

receive $10,000 to put toward initiatives that advance student success and opportunity, according to the announcement.

"Our students and staff work hard, and the nation has noticed," LBUSD Superintendent Christopher J. Steinhauser said in a statement. "The Council of the Great City Schools is a leading voice for America's large school districts. We appreciate this high honor and our ongoing collaboration with the College Board and Khan Academy."

Michigan Chronicle (July 28, 2017)

DPSCD's 2017 Excellence Awards honorees earn shopping spree at Office Depot

Donald James

Twelve ecstatic students, who graduated in June from Detroit Public Schools Community District high schools, were all smiles recently as they embarked on a $1,000 each shopping spree at Office Depot on Greenfield Rd. in Southfield. These 12 high school graduates, who will be heading to various colleges this fall, are not your average students, as they all earned straight A's during their four-year journeys through their respective high schools.

As 2017 DPSCD Excellence Awards honorees, the students were acknowledged recently during in instore ceremony, just before spreading out to pick supplies for their upcoming freshmen year in college. The 12 honorees, their high schools, and future colleges are, Kasem Almusaisi (Western High School/Schoolcraft College), Rumi Begum (Detroit International Academy for Young Women//Wayne State University), Carlos Estrella (Cass Technical High School/University of Michigan).

Saika Islam (Detroit School of Arts/University of Michigan), Aini-Alem Robertson (Cass Technical High School/University of Michigan), Robin Ryce (Renaissance/University of Michigan), Rejwana Sadia (Detroit International Academy for Young Women/Wayne State University), Iffat Saiyara (Cass Tech/University of Michigan, Triniti Smith (Cass Technical High School/Morgan State University), Tasnim Syed (Cass Technical High School/University of Michigan), Suma Taher (Ben Carson High School of Science and Medicine/University of Michigan), and Alexia White (Detroit School of Arts/Stanford University).

"This shopping spree meant that the four years of effort that I put into high school was greatly recognized and appreciated," said Robin Ryce, a Renaissance High School graduate who will major in engineering this fall at the University of Michigan. "The first item I chose was a laptop. With this laptop, I will have more accessibility to my schoolwork, and get it done more efficiently."

Ryce explained how she managed to achieve straight A's for the entire four years at Renaissance.   "I continuously challenged myself," Ryce said, who also is a recipient of a $5,000 scholarship from the Council of the Great City Schools' ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship Program. "I stayed motivated for four years to always achieve above and beyond."

Now in its fourth year, Office Depot's shopping spree for straight A's high school students in DPSCD, is the brainchild of Akoco Grace, the company's education solutions managers.

"Office Depot is committed to learning," said Grace. "We have an education division in school districts around the country. I felt that it would be great to honor straight-A students who graduated from DPSCD high schools. Since the inception of Office Depot's Excellence Awards four years ago, the store's shopping sprees for straight-A students from DPSCD have totaled $50.000."

Asked about feedback from honorees, Grace said, "The feedback from students has been tremendous," she said. "They are very appreciative of this opportunity, as they prepare to go to their respective colleges all over the country. They are all my babies! "

Grace added.

"The parents are very happy as well, because in many cases they just don't have the means to get all the supplies their children need to begin college," explained Grace. "So this shopping spree is something that the company feels very strongly about. We don't do it to get ourselves on the map, because Office Depot is already on the map. We do it because we are committed to learning, committed to encouraging students, and committed to seeing students excel in school."

Education Week

New York Education Chief Removes Controversial School Board Member

By Denisa R. Superville on August 17, 2017 2:07 PM

New York state education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia ruled Thursday that controversial Buffalo school board member Carl Paladino should be removed from the board.

The commissioner ruled that Paladino willfully violated the law by disclosing confidential information related to negotiations between the district and the Buffalo Teachers' Union and that his disclosure warranted his removal from office under state education law.

The ruling followed **five days of hearings in the state capital, Albany, in June**.

Paladino will be barred from serving in a district office for one year from the date of his removal, according to the department of education.

The recent efforts to oust Paladino date to December 2016, **after he made derogatory comments about former President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle Obama** to a local paper, the Artvoice.

In a questionnaire published on Dec. 23, Paladino said his wishes for 2017 included former President Obama dying from mad cow disease and for the former first lady to "return to being a male" and "let loose" in Zimbabwe.

In an emotionally-charged meeting on Dec. 29, following the article's publication, **the school board voted 7-0 to give Paladino an ultimatum to resign within 24 hours or the body would ask the commissioner to remove him.** Paladino refused.

The board later voted in January to ask Elia to remove Paladino based the alleged disclosure of confidential information related to negotiations of Buffalo teachers' union contract that were discussed in executive session.

Paladino generally denied the allegations, but argued that the board's decision to oust him was in retaliation for his comments about the Obamas. He also argued that the information was a matter of public interest, not subject to confidentiality, and that his actions were intended to prevent crime or fraud. He also argued that the proceedings infringed on his constitutionally-protected First Amendment rights.

Elia was unpersuaded by Paladino's contention that he acted in good faith and that his disclosure was meant to prevent fraud or crime. She said that Paladino did not prove that the board's action was retaliatory

She also said that the disclosure was willful.

"Respondent's testimony at the hearing concerning such legal responsibilities was evasive and demonstrated a lack of regard and appreciation for his responsibilities as a member of a board of education," according to the decision. "For example, when asked if he was governed by the board's policies, respondent answered: "I'm governed by it to the extent that I don't disagree with it" (Jun. 27, 2017 Tr. p. 297). Respondent further testified that he "may have" been reading the newspaper for a portion of the NYSSBA training, and when asked if he was paying attention during the training testified: "I don't remember the circumstances" (Jun. 27, 2017 Tr. p. 279). Respondent declined to answer whether he was aware of any board policy prohibiting the disclosure of confidential information, testifying that while he was "responsible to be aware of it," he was "[n]ot specifically" aware of such a policy when he wrote the January 5, 2017 Artvoice article (Jun. 27, 2017 Tr. p. 283). Weighing all of the evidence in the record, any suggestion by respondent that he was unfamiliar with a board member's duties is not credible."

The board's petition to the commissioner was among four filed seeking Paladino's removal. Elia dismissed the other three.

Paladino and his attorney Dennis Vacco were unavailable for comments when *Education Week*reached out to them by telephone on Thursday afternoon.

In the past, Paladino told *Education Week* that he intended to fight the allegations and that the board was targeting him because of his efforts to root out corruption in the district. He had **also said that he had no intention of resigning.**

He has a **federal lawsuit pending against the district and the school board** alleging that they violated his First Amendment rights by voting to kick him off the board.

Paladino was first elected to the school board in 2013 and was re-elected in 2106. He served as the New York state chairman of President Trump's campaign and is a former gubernatorial candidate.

The New York State Union of Teachers, **NYSUT, which backed one of the petitions to remove Paladino,** hailed Elia's decision as the right one.

"There is absolutely no place in public education for someone who flagrantly disregards the rules and spouts disgusting, racially charged ideas that harm students and the teaching environment," the union said in a statement.

The Council of the Great City Schools, which represents nearly 70 of the nation's largest school districts and had **called for Paladino's removal from the board**, also expressed gratitude for the commissioner's ruling.

"The New York state education commissioner made the right decision at a time that someone needed to think sensibly about the effects this kind of divisive and hateful language has on our children," Michael Casserly, the group's executive director, said.

Omaha World-Herald

As school year approaches, OPS officials are confident in fixes for busing woes

- By Erin Duffy / World-Herald staff writer
- Aug 14, 2017

Omaha Public Schools officials are hoping for a smooth start to the new school year — and that means getting busing right.

They're trying to avoid a repeat of last year, when bus driver shortages led to delays and confusion.

The first day of school for most OPS students is Thursday. Officials say the district's transportation plan is in good shape, but changes to the OPS student assignment plan will add another wrinkle.

Here's more information on the busing changes that will go into effect this year and the district's efforts to avoid last year's troubles.

What happened last year?

OPS handles special education busing in-house but contracts with Student Transportation of America to transport general education students. Shortly before the start of the 2016-17 school year the company realized it didn't have enough drivers to cover OPS routes.

The company was short about 65 drivers from the approximately 500 it needed. That meant some routes went unmanned and others experienced delays in pickups and drop-offs. Parents were frustrated and upset. Officials estimated that about 3,000 students out of the more than 17,000 who ride school buses were affected by busing problems.

In addition to those problems, in September, a preschooler, a refugee from Myanmar, was left for hours on a small school bus operated by Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership.

OPS and Student Transportation initially traded blame for the problems but ultimately agreed to work together to recruit drivers and improve communication.

A transportation audit commissioned by the district and conducted by the Council of Great City Schools found that there was insufficient planning leading up to the school year, that communication was spotty between the two entities and that too many buses had too few students.

What can be expected this year?

Officials say they've been working through the summer to improve busing.

Due to changes in OPS's student assignment plan, general education bus routes decreased from 476 last year to about 330 this year. Student Transportation said it has plenty of permanent and substitute drivers. The company also is providing a monthly staffing and recruiting report to OPS.

Student Transportation received preliminary bus routes nearly two months earlier than usual. Drivers practiced their routes Aug. 9 and will do another test run today. Parents should have already received a letter outlining their route number, bus stop and pickup time. And OPS has contracted with a call center to have more representatives ready to answer questions and concerns. Parents can call one central phone number: 531-299-0140.

Some middle and high school routes have been combined, and some middle and high schoolers may face longer bus rides. OPS has also hired Chief Transportation again to cover routes on an as-needed basis.

What are the student assignment plan changes?

In 2015 the OPS board overhauled its student assignment plan, which dictates who gets a bus ride and to which school. Those changes — which affect only elementary and middle school students — go into effect this school year.

The goal was to make busing more efficient and less expensive. Students can still attend their neighborhood school or opt into any school with space. But the number of schools they can opt into and still receive a bus ride has been sharply reduced. Now OPS uses a partner zone system to determine which schools students can get bused to.

Officials estimate roughly 3,800 students have been affected by the changes and lost their bus ride. But walk zones also have been shrunk, so more elementary and middle schoolers may be eligible for busing this year.

For more information on the changes, visit [sap.ops.org](sap.ops.org).

Will the changes affect transportation costs?

Parents, taxpayers and school board members have long complained about OPS's costly busing system. OPS budgeted $46.24 million for transportation last year.

By reducing bus routes and filling buses with more kids, officials estimate the changes will cut general education busing costs by roughly $6 million, from $26.7 million to $20.4 million for the upcoming school year.

OPS also received about $1 million back from Student Transportation related to last year's problems. Student Transportation's contract, which runs through 2019, allows it to be charged penalties for late buses or missed trips as long as the delays are not caused by traffic or misbehaving students.

Achieve the Core

Supporting Excellence: Real Support for Teachers Starts With the District's Curriculum: A new framework for developing and implementing clear district-wide support for teaching and learning

By: Ricki Price-Baugh
Posted: 08/24/17

Through my work with the Council of the Great City Schools, I've had the opportunity to visit school districts throughout the country, speaking with leaders and staff at all levels of the system. Often, what we hear in these conversations is a wide range of interpretations of district standards and instructional expectations. What is consistent, however, is that teachers and principals do not feel they have the resources and support they need.

This is one of the reasons we at the Council of Great City Schools have shifted our focus over the last year or so to ensuring that clear guidance and standards-aligned resources are actually making it into classrooms. And we feel that this work begins with the development and implementation of a strong district curriculum. When we look at curriculum documents and guidance materials written by districts, we often see missed opportunities for clarifying the district's vision and supporting instructional staff.

Our work in urban districts has revealed time and again that, regardless of a district's approach to instructional management and oversight—whether it is a highly-centralized system or one that places more emphasis on school autonomy—there is a need for this unifying foundation. Learning standards and expectations, for instance, should not vary by school, even if other things do. This provides equity in terms of student learning goals no matter where a student attends school, and no matter how frequently students transfer from school to school. But even when working from the same set of standards, how will staff in every school know whether they have interpreted the curriculum expectations accurately? What would convey the reason they ought to use the curriculum?

What is a Curriculum?

Now, curriculum is a word that means many different things in different places. So this was the first thing we found ourselves grappling with as we were developing our most recent district resource, *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum*. In this resource, we start by laying out a working definition of a curriculum and the preconditions we feel are needed to ensure that a district's curriculum has the best chance of improving instruction systemwide.

As far as definitions go, we take a very expansive view of what a curriculum entails. When we talk about curriculum, we are talking about much more than a textbook or a set of instructional materials, and more than a compilation of grade-level college- and career-readiness standards. A district curriculum is the central guide for teachers and all instructional personnel about *what* is

essential to teach and *how deeply* to teach it throughout the district. It provides guidance for all instructional staff who support and supervise teaching and student learning, and *explicitly indicates* what the district requires in every classroom, and where schools and teachers have autonomy. And while a curriculum is more than a set of materials, it should identify and connect educators to resources that the district requires, and provide guidance in the selection and use of other classroom resources.

We felt it was essential to get this definition right because, again, when we talk about meaningful support for teachers and classroom instruction, this is where it begins. Districts need to be clear not only about their expectations, but also about the knowledge, skills, and support teachers need to meet these expectations.

Seven Key Features of a Curriculum

With our foundation in place, we go on to illustrate seven key features of a strong curriculum, providing annotated excerpts from real and simulated district curriculum guidance documents. We know that some districts are developing completely new curriculum documents, while others are revising their existing documents to provide greater support and clarity. These seven features could be the foundation for determining what to include in curriculum guidance. However, a district wanting to revise its curriculum might first take stock of how their curriculum documents address these seven features, and prioritize which ones they need to strengthen given the time and resources they have for curriculum development and the feedback they receive about the usefulness of their current curriculum.

1 A district's curriculum documents reflect the district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement.

2 A district's curriculum documents are clear about what must be taught and at what depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level.

3 A curriculum builds instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college- and career-readiness standards for each grade.

4 A curriculum explicitly articulates standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points during the school year.

5 A curriculum contains scaffolds or other supports that address gaps in student knowledge and the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.

6 A curriculum includes written links to adopted textbooks or computer-based products to indicate where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations.

7 A curriculum provides suggestions for the best ways to measure whether students have met specific learning expectations.

Seven key features of a standards-aligned curriculum

Annotated Examples

Making our observations and recommendations clear and concrete is one of the biggest challenges we face when we go into districts to conduct reviews and provide support, and it is a challenge we face in developing resources such as the curriculum framework. We hope the examples included in the framework will remove some of the guesswork and frustration curriculum staff face as they work to design and improve on instructional resources for teachers.

It is important to note that, since there is no perfect model for writing curriculum, we use a variety of annotated examples. Some examples even show that multiple features can be incorporated into a model. Each district needs to consider typical student performance and the expertise of its own teaching staff in determining what to emphasize and the level of detail to provide.

Figure 7: Sample Grade Four Mathematics Unit

Notice the district paraphrased the standards for this unit rather than listing them separately. This helps teachers understand how the standards connect so that students can meet learning expectations.

Number and Operations in Base-Ten: At grade four, students generalize their place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers and use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic. As a result, students extend their work in the base-ten system to adding and subtracting using the standard algorithm to meet grade four fluency expectations (CCSS 4.NBT.4).

Rationale: At the beginning of the year students in grade four reinforce place value understanding and teachers include experiences so that students are able to recognize and generalize that the value of each place is 10 times the value of the place to the immediate right. Similarly, multiplying by 10 yields a product in which each digit of the multiplicand is shifted one place to the left. During classroom instruction, these observations and generalizations should not merely be conveyed to students. Instead, as a result of the lessons and instructional experiences, students are able to grasp these ideas and generalize these concepts with supportive questioning, probing, and explicitness by the teacher.

Use prior knowledge to make explicit connections to new learning
Instructional Notes

In grade three, students used their place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. Students developed an understanding that when moving to the right across the places in a number (e.g., 456), the digits represent smaller units. Students learned how to explain instances of a calculation pattern when multiplying one-digit numbers by multiples of ten (for example, the product 4 x 50 can be represented as 4 groups of 5 tens, which is 20 tens, which is 200. The reasoning relies on the associative property of multiplication: 4 x 50 = 4 x (5 x 10) = (4 x 5) x 10 = 20 x 10 = 200. Additionally, students developed proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 and they achieve fluency with strategies and algorithms that are based on place value, properties of operations, and the relationship between addition and subtraction.

At the beginning of grade four, some students will refine their computational strategies **as they develop proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 using the standard algorithm.** For example, in grade three students use strategies to find 756 + 378. At the beginning of grade four, some students will use the standard algorithm without any difficulty, while others will still rely on one or more strategies (e.g., some students will remove 4 from 378 and give to 756 to rewrite the problem as 760 + 374 = 1134 while other students will merely add—digits in the hundreds, tens, and ones place to find the sum—adding from left to right (e.g.),

The curriculum provides guidance about student performance at different times of the school year. This leads to meeting the proficiency expectation by the end of grade four.

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   756
 + 378

  1000
   120
    14
  1134
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At the beginning of the year, students explain their solution by relating it to place value. Early in the year, students may add from left to right or right to left using this strategy. For example, they state: 7 hundreds + 3 hundreds = 10 hundreds = 1000; 5 tens + 7 tens = 12 tens = 120; 8 ones + 6 ones = 14 ones which is 1 ten , 4 ones = 1134 or explanations are given by adding from the right using the same method. By the end of the year, students will use the standard algorithm to meet grade four fluency expectations.

During class discussions, intentional connections must be made between strategies and the standard algorithm. Throughout the school year you will hear students explaining solutions to tasks/problems using these strategies as they gradually make connections to the standard algorithm. This will allow students to develop proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 using the standard algorithm by the end of grade four.

One of the annotated examples included in the Supporting Excellence framework.

It is by design that some of our final recommendations within the framework center on the importance of creating and nurturing strong, two-way lines of communication with teachers and other school-based staff to ensure that a district's curriculum is providing the types of support and guidance that teachers need. In particular, we encourage districts to:

- Regularly reach out across departments and to teachers and administrators to gauge the quality and alignment of the curriculum and its usefulness to end users in supporting student achievement.
- Establish a process for refining and improving curriculum based on the feedback collected from teachers and administrators as well as student achievement and student work data.
- Clearly communicate all changes to the curriculum to teachers, administrators, and staff, acknowledging the role of data and feedback in these revisions.

This framework will support districts in designing curriculum with both the instructional vision of the district and the needs of teachers in mind; implementing it district-wide in a comprehensive, inclusive manner, and continuing to refine and improve it based on feedback from the front lines is what makes it a "curriculum" and not just a textbook series or a set of learning standards. That's the difference between sending out boxes of materials and providing teachers and administrators with meaningful guidance and the support they need to best serve students.

PRE SURVEY

Public Relations Offices in the Great City Schools

July 2017
11th Survey

Council of the Great City Schools
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Public Relations Offices: An Executive Summary

In an effort to determine the structure and function of Public Relations (PR) offices in our member districts, the Council of the Great City Schools distributed a survey requesting information on these offices. This is the Council's 11th survey on PR offices; the first one was published in 1997.

Of the Council's 68 districts, 35 are included in the survey. The PR offices displayed many similarities, but also ranged in size and budget.

- Nineteen (57.1%) have PR offices with staff between 5 and 20 people
- Five of the districts (14.3%) have PR offices with staff of fewer than 5 people.
- Eleven districts (28.6%) have PR offices with staff of more than 20 people.
- Seventeen districts (48.6%) have PR budgets greater than $750,000.

PR offices in the Great City Schools often encompass different functions and are located in different departments. However, the survey indicated that most of the PR offices are either in Communications, Public Information or Community Relations Departments.

- Broward County Public Schools has the largest staff with 91.5 people but its Public Information Office includes BECON, which broadcasts educational and instructional programs on BECON-TV (WBEC-TV)
- Buffalo has the smallest staff with two people.
- Twenty districts have their PR offices handle television operations.
- Nineteen districts have web masters on their PR staffs.
- Eleven districts have translators or provide translation services.
- Twitter and Facebook are the most widely used social media (35 districts), followed by Youtube (29 districts), Instagram (23 districts), Pinterest (6 districts), and Flickr (4 districts).

The Districts that responded to the PR Offices Survey

Anchorage	Fort Worth	Pittsburgh
Broward County	Guilford County	Providence
Buffalo	Hawaii	Richmond
Charlotte	Houston	Sacramento
Cleveland	Jackson	San Francisco
Columbus	Kansas City	Seattle
Dallas	Miami	Shelby County
Dayton	Milwaukee	St. Paul
Denver	Omaha	Toledo
Des Moines	Orange County	Tulsa
Duval County	Palm Beach	Wichita
El Paso	Pinellas County	

District	District Size	Total Staff	Fewer than 5 people	Between 5 and 20 people	More than 20 people	Total Budget
Anchorage	48,000	7		x		$ 900,000
Broward County	271,000	92			x	$ 7,277,308
Buffalo	34,000	2	x			$356,770
Charlotte	147,157				x	$2,700,000
Cleveland	39,000	16		x		$2,000,000
Columbus	51,000	10		x		N/A
Dallas	157,886	59			x	$7,990,175
Dayton	13,000	8		x		N/A
Denver	90,150	30			x	$ 3,000,000
Des Moines	32,979	7		x		$ 600,000
Duval County	128,702	13		x		$2,398,226
El Paso	60,000	13		x		N/A
Fort Worth	87,000	25			x	$ 3,000,000
Guilford County	73,000	6		x		$ 660,000
Hawaii	179,902	14		x		N/A
Houston	215,000	45			x	$3,800,000
Jackson	27,000	21			x	$631,404
Kansas City	16,000	12		x		$650,000
Miami	356,086	23			x	$ 2,611,103
Milwaukee	77,856	8		x		$ 1,491,160
Omaha	52,000	6		x		$650,000
Orange County	203,000	42			x	N/A
Palm Beach	195,331	38			x	$ 2,300,000
Pinellas County	103,242	14		x		$1,177,225
Pittsburgh	24,652	3	x			$ 664,536
Providence	24,000	3	x			N/A
Richmond	24,000	5.0		x		N/A
Sacramento	47,000	4	x			N/A
San Francisco	55,613	7		x		$ 868,874
Seattle	54,976	6		x		N/A
Shelby County	111,500	24			x	$ 3,309,026
St. Paul	38,000	15		x		$ 1,425,667
Toledo	23,000	3	x			$232,586
Tulsa	40,000	7		x		N/A
Witchita	50,561	12		x		$ 1,044,967
TOTALS			5	19	11	

223

Public Relations Office Size in the Great Cities

Fewer than 5
14.3%

Greater than 20
28.6%

Between 5 and 20
57.1%
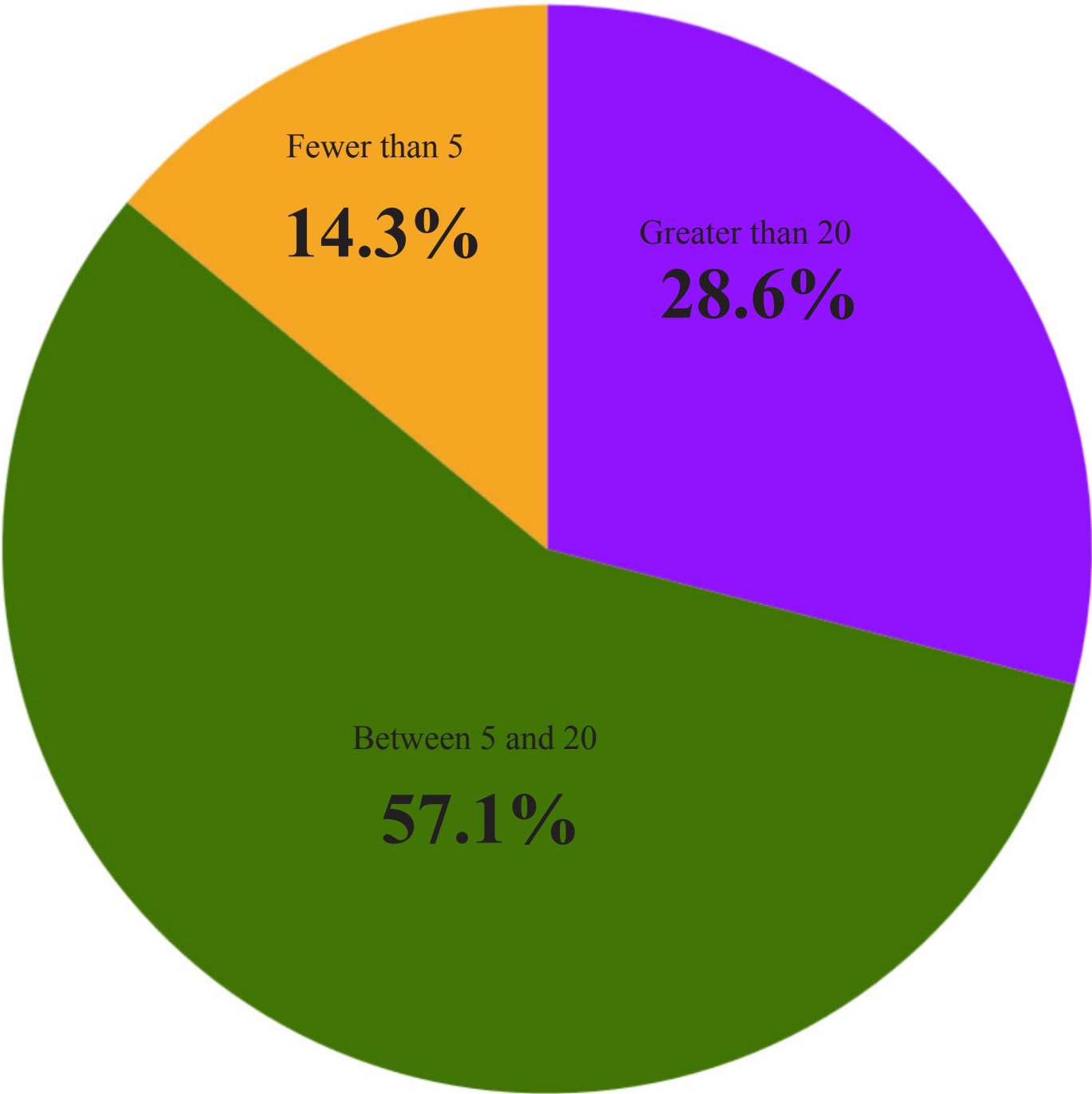
Budgets of Public Relations Offices in the Great Cities

Not Answered
17.1%

Less than $250,000
11.4%

Between $250,00 and $750,000
22.9%

Greater than $750,000
48.6%
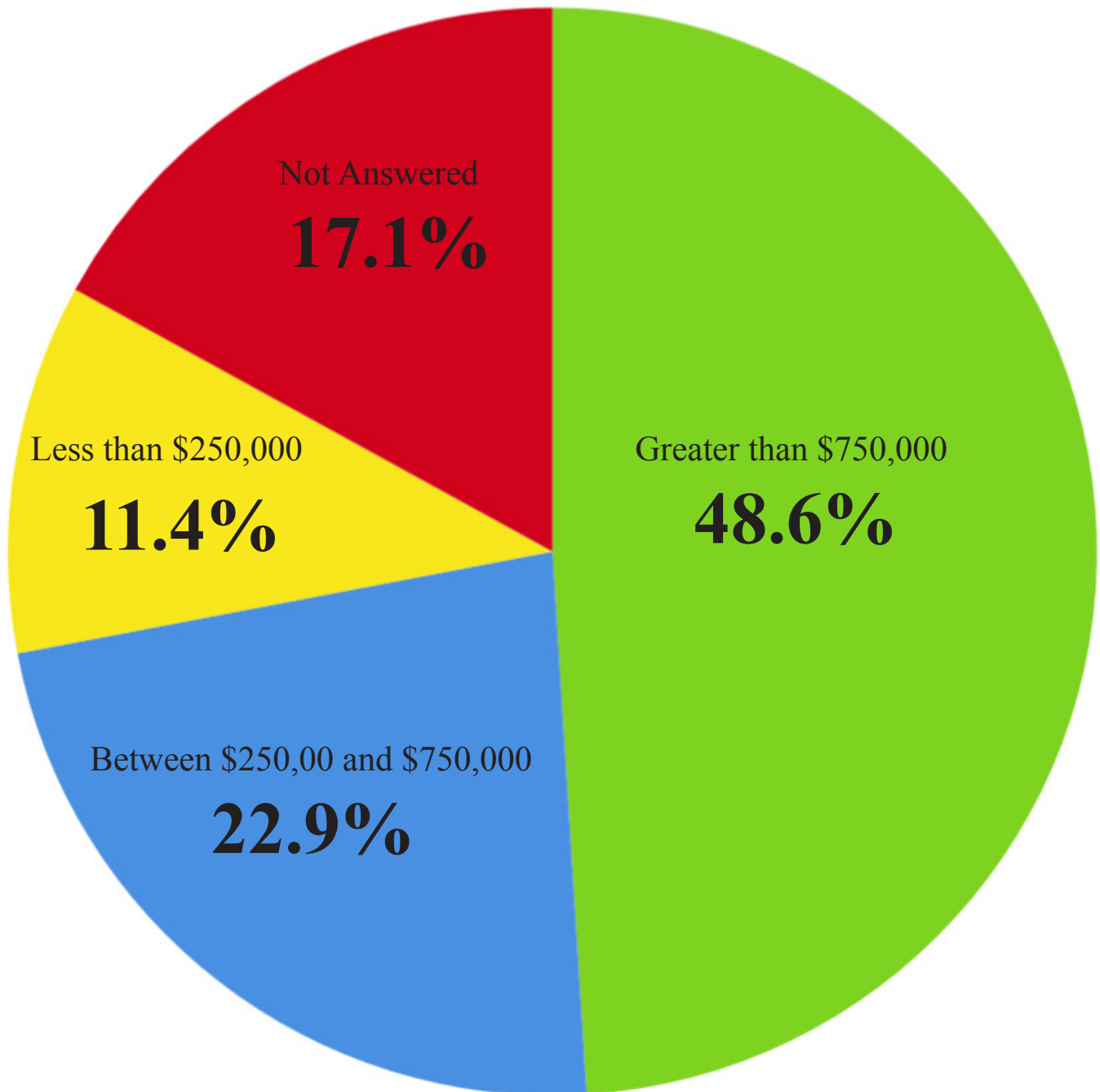
Social Media Use
in the Great Cities

Twitter

Facebook

Youtube

Instagram

LinkedIn

Pinterest

Flickr

Other

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

Percent of Districts Who Use the App
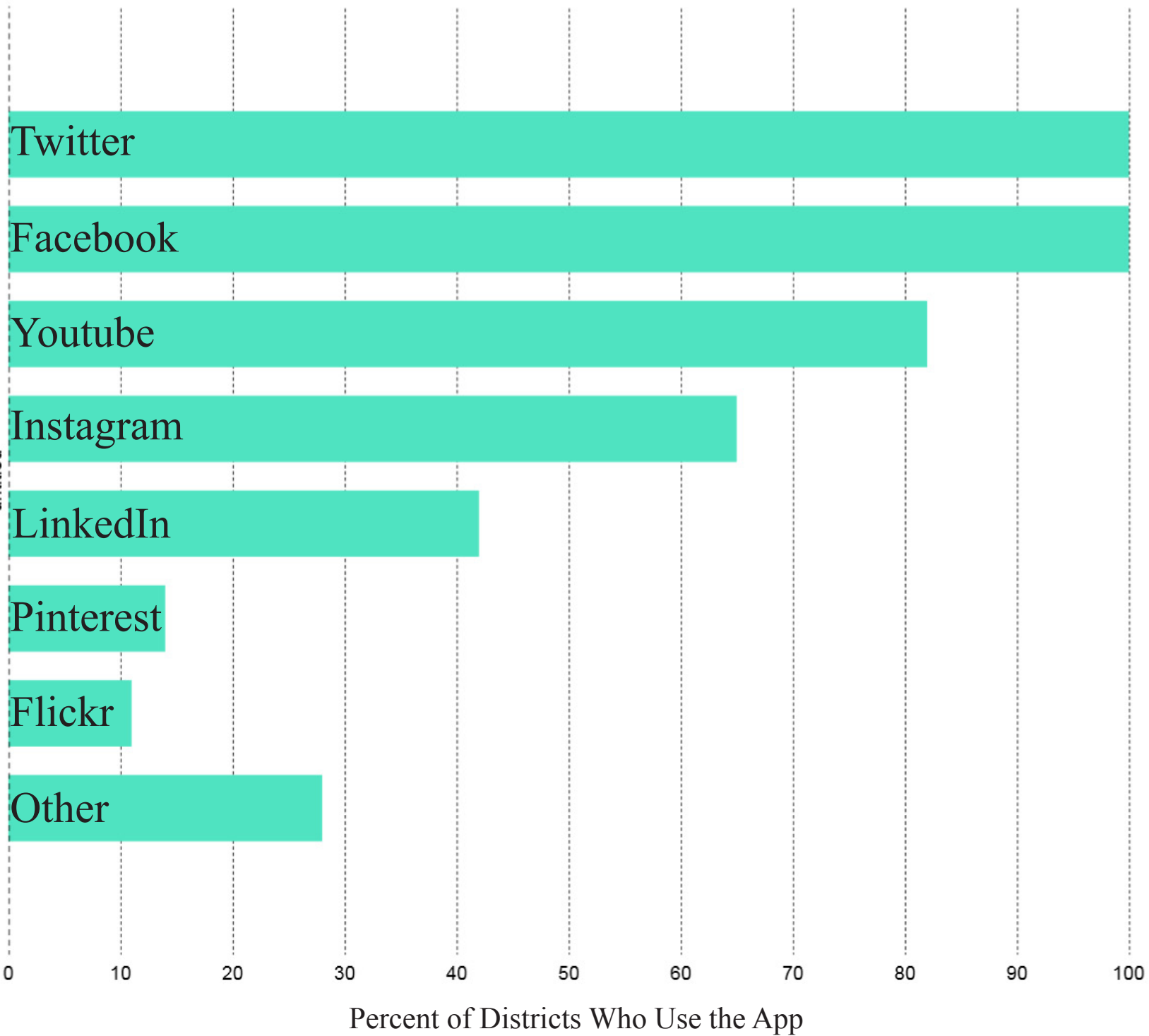
Summary of
Descriptions of
Public Relations Offices

The following descriptions of the PR offices will not be able to cover the huge amount of material submitted for the survey, but will present a snapshot of the organization of the offices and those responsibilities closely aligned with public relations. The following information includes the name of the district, the number of k-12 students enrolled in the district, the department charged with public relations responsibilities, the staff within the department, their budget, and a summary of the department's responsibilities. Districts also listed their use of consultants as well as their use of social media. Below are the symbols for social media.

Facebook
(online social network)

Twitter
(online social network)

YouTube
(video-sharing website)

Google+
(social network)

Instagram
(photo sharing app)

Vimeo
(video sharing website)

LinkedIn
(social networking website
for professionals)

Flickr
(photo sharing)

Pinterest
(content sharing service)

Tumblr
(blogging platform)

Eduvision
(education video-sharing website)

Anchorage School District

Enrollment: 48,000
Budget: $900,000

Communications & Community Outreach Department (7 Positions)
Director
Assistant Director
Publications Supervisor
Publications Specialist
Offset Equipment Operator (2)
Digital Copy Operator

Anchorage School District's **Communications Department** supports Anchorage's students, staff and the community by providing accurate and timely information about student achievement, budget and other district initiatives. By working collaboratively with the superintendent, administrators, principals and all school staff, we are able to help them communicate clearly and effectively.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website

Consultants: Video production - $30,000/year
Contractor for bond campaign - $70/hour

Social media is handled by the Assistant Director. The average amount of time spent on social media is 7-12 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

28,253 followers	**8,980** followers	**840** subscribers	**1,558** followers

Broward County Public Schools

Enrollment: 271,000
Budget: $7,277,308

Public Information Office (91.5 Positions)
Marketing and Communications
Director, Marketing & Communications
District Webmaster
Specialist, Public Affairs (2)
Chief Public Information Officer
Community Relations Assistant
Executive Secretary
Manager, Integrated Marketing, Communications
Office Manager
Graphic Artist (4)
Community Resource Specialist (2)
Webmaster
Bilingual Clerk (2)
Coordinator, District Community Relations
Clerk Specialist IV, (2)
Manager of Graphics, Print Production

Broward Education Communication Network (BECON)
62.5 positions, including:
Director/General Manager
TV Producer/Director
Broadcast Engineer

Old Dillard Museum- First school for African American students in Ft. Lauderdale, created in 1907
Curator
Campus Monitor
Technical Specialist
Secretary

The **Public Information Office** is responsible for the majority of the District's internal and external communications and is the liaison between the District and the news media. From media releases to the District's website - to events and press conferences, the Public Information Office continually looks for ways to engage the community, while sharing the incredible achievements of Broward County Public Schools. There are a total of 113.5 staff positions.

Duties: District Switchboard, District Radio Station, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: Plain Language/Web Writing Training for Staff - $38,000

All staff participate with **social media** in some way, shape or form, but we have a dedicated Integrated Marketing Communications & Social Media Manager. Other team members, Public Affairs Specialist and Community Relations Assistant provide back-up support. The amount of time spent on social media is 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

15,400 followers	82,800 followers	13,155 followers

Buffalo City School District

Enrollment: 34,000
Budget: $356,770

<u>**Public Relations Department (2 Positions)**</u>
Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Community Relations
Public Relations Clerk

The **Public Relations Office** gathers and disseminates District topics and news items in order to promote goodwill and build a rapport between the District, its students and parents, employees, the public, and the community at-large. The department manages all aspects of communication internally, and externally between the District and the public, including coordinating media, crisis communications, electronic communications and social media.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Public Records

Consultants: West Interactive Services (parent notification system) - $45,560
Niagara IT Solutions (web site support specialist) - $47,899

Social media is handled by the Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Community Relations. Three hours a week is the average amount of time spent on social media.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

4,293 likes	**1,797** followers

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Enrollment: 147,157
Traditional Communications Budget: $2,700,000
Graphic Production Budget: $1,800,000

Communications Services (11 Positions)
Chief Communications Officer
Executive Director of Media Relations
Media Relations Specialist (3)
Internal Communications Specialist
Social Media Specialist
Editor
Creative Media Specialist
Manager of Internal Media
Administrative Assistant

Graphic Production (15 Positions)

The **Communications Services** is responsible for media relations, internal communications, district broadcast media channels as well as district web, intranet and social media sites. It also includes a graphic production arm.

Duties: Graphic Production, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Event planning - $50,000
Photography - $25,000

Social media is handled primarily by one Social Media Specialist. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 50 hours total, one full-time person and some time by media relations.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

35,292 followers	85,488 followers	505 subscribers		18,779 followers	8,595 followers	321 followers	

Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Enrollment: 39,000
Budget: $2,000,000

<u>**Communications Department (16 Positions)**</u>
Chief Communications Officer
Director, CMSD News Bureau
Director, Marketing & Advertising
CMSD-TV Station Manager
Manager, Digital and Social Media (Open)
Multi-Media Journalist
Reporter/Copywriter
Marketing & Advertising Assistant
Graphic Designer
Webmaster
Manager, Alumni & Community Relations (Open)
Spanish Translator/Interpreter (2) *grant-funded*
Arabic Translator *grant-funded*
College Interns (2)

The CMSD **Communications Department** is the hub of all internal and external communications in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Members of the CMSD Communications Team work cooperatively with all departments to keep students, parents, staff, citizens and news media informed of activities, events, strategic initiatives, opportunities for partnership and engagement and progress in our schools.

Our News & Information Team works in concert with our Marketing & Advertising Team to support central office departments and 109 schools with messaging and translations through print, web, traditional and social media, writing, photography, direct mail and digital video communications.

Duties: Branding, Crisis Communications, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Social media is handled by multiple people on our News & Information Team. Fifteen hours a week is the average amount of time spent on social media.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

7,147 followers	5,394 followers	799 subscribers	1,540 followers

Columbus City Schools

Enrollment: 51,000
Budget: $580,000 *this does not include salaries*

<u>**Office of Communications and Media Relations (10 Positions)**</u>

Executive Director of Strategic Communications & Public Relations   Media Tech Supervisor
Communications Specialist - Media   Communications Manager
Communications Specialist - Graphic Design   Administrative Secretary
Business Partnerships Coordinator   FACTLine Coordinator
Customer Relations Coordinator   Customer Relations Supervisor

The **Office of Communications and Media Relations** goal is to advance the reach and reputation of Columbus City Schools by promoting the accomplishments of students, staff, schools, and school district, and vital information to the public, using an array of internal and external communication vehicles; in support of the mission and vision for Columbus City Schools.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Back to School Mailers - $24,840.44; Photographer - $8,000; News Clips - $5,400; District Mailers/Publications - $226.70; Graphic Design - $350; Marketing - $15,000; Photographer/Media Technologies - $3,000; Website Management - $66,000; State of the District - $2,600; Mobile Application - $10,084.32; State of the District Media Tech - $21,340.50; District Mailer - $4,036.20; Web Maintenance/Web Revamp - $52,900; Graphic Design - $10,000; Fast Signs - $8,000; Event Coordinator for State of District - $15,000

Social media is handled by various people in the communications department--executive director, communications manager, communications specialist - graphic design, business partnerships coordinator, administrative secretary, media tech supervisor. the average amount of time spent on social media each week is 40 plus hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

11,000 followers	**10,600** followers	**438** subscribers	**819** followers

Dallas Independent School District

Enrollment: 157,886
Budget: $7,990,175

Communication Services (59 Positions)
Chief of Communications

Internal and External Messaging and Marketing
Director
Communications Coordinator
Publication Specialist
Graphic Artist (2)
Director, Bond Communications

Dallas Schools Television- DSTV
Producer (3)
Broadcast Engineer
Master Control Operator
Administrative Support

News and Information
Director, News and Information
Content Manager, The Hub
Coordinator, Social Media

Translation Services

Web Services

Dallas ISD Connect- (Call Center)

Marketing Project/Service Requests

Communication Services offers a full range of creative services and strategic planning designed to share the message of the Dallas Independent School District. We work to communicate the mission and goals of the district as it seeks to raise the academic achievement of each student. Communication Services is committed to providing timely, effective communications that engage our students, parents, employees and community members

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: In February 2015, the Dallas ISD board approved a Communication Services with a $2.9 million RFP over three years for various marketing/communication service vendors.

Social media is handled by one person for each language, while they also handle other duties. One manages English and oversees Spanish platforms. Both are coordiantors. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 10-15 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

32,392 likes	**31,800** followers	**10,680** subscribers	**N/A** followers	**3,552** followers	**838** followers

Dayton Public Schools

Enrollment: 13,000
Budget: N/A

Office of Strategic Communication (8 Positions)
Director
Communication Specialist/Webmaster
DPS TV/WDPS FM
Office Manager
Production Specialist (2)
Instructor
WDPS FM Music Director

The **Office of Strategic Communication** is responsible for oversight and coordination of the district's internal and external communication efforts. Strategic communication works with an internal information network through regular contact with the district's schools and special centers to gather and disseminate the good news about DPS for general release and publication. Our department is on call to assist schools and departments with everything from event planning and publicity to news conferences and crisis communication.

The WDPS FM and DPS TV stations are operated by sophomore, junior, and senior students enrolled in the Radio/Television/Digital Design career tech program. Students are instructed on how to plan, operate and post produce radio and television productions.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

8,808 followers	**777** followers	**936** followers

Denver Public Schools

Enrollment: 90,150
Budget: $3,000,000

Communications Team (30 Positions)

Chief Communications Officer

Strategic and Policy Communications Director

Media Relations Director

Internal Communications Director

Creative Services Director

Multicultural Services Director

Digital Communications Manager

Media Relations Manager

Interpretations and Translations Manager

Multicultural Outreach Manager

Marketing Manager

Executive Video Producer

Web Developer

Senior Media Specialist

Coordinator (administrative role)

Specialists (various areas)

The **Communications Team** is made up of five smaller teams/focus areas: Internal Communications for our 15,000 employees, including daily newsletters and employee intranet; Policy Communications for pro-active district initiatives, including our district strategic plan and academic priorities; Media Relations including news media, crisis and open records requests; Multicultural provides interpretation and translations in 10 languages, plus multicultural outreach; and Creative Services, which includes graphic designers, web developer, videographer, school marketing and district publications.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: We occasionally use outside consultants, but not on a regular basis.

Social media is handled by a social media specialist who is responsible for strategy across the platforms and training of other team members (in communications and across other teams). She also supports school-based staff as requested. However, we have many members of our team trained so the actual content creation and posting does not fall on this one person. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 40-plus hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

f	t	You Tube	g+	in	Instagram
17,000 followers	**11,000** followers	**774** subscribers		**15,526** followers	**1,476** followers

Des Moines Public Schools

Enrollment: 32,979
Budget: $600,000

<u>**Communications and Public Affairs (6.5 Positions)**</u>
Director of Communications & Public Affairs
Communications Officer
Graphics/Web Designer
Staff Writer
Videographer/Photographer (2)
Broadcast Coordinator (half-time)

The **Communications & Public Affairs** office works closely with administration and staff to inform employees and the public about what's happening in the district. The office handles all media requests, publishes TheWeek@DMPS and other district and school publications, maintains the district website and social media presence, and creates content for the district's cable channel DMPS-TV. The director also works to support the district's legislative initiatives.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Juicebox Interactive (web site services) - approximately $50,000 per year

All staff members in the department are involved in **social media** efforts for the district. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 20 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

41,500 followers	14,000 followers	2,000 subscribers	320 followers	2,417 followers	825 followers

Duval County Public Schools
(Jacksonville, FL)

Enrollment: 128,702
Budget: $2,398,226

Communications Department (13 Positions)

Assistant Superintendent, Communications
Director of Marketing
Supervisor, Media & External Communications
Supervisor, Web
Supervisor, Video
Coordinator, Social Media

Coordinator, Video
Coordinator, School Marketing
Technical Manager, Internal Communications
Support Technician, Graphic Arts
Switchboard Operator (2)
Executive Secretary IV

The DCPS **Communications Department** works collaboratively with the superintendent, school board, and schools to strengthen and build a culture that increases confidence, awareness, engagement, customer service, and brand equity. The DCPS brand is the sum of all schools and voices shared throughout the community from positive experiences to press coverage. Key goals and objectives are tied to strengthening our district brand, and increasing the awareness about services, offerings, and achievement. DCPS is committed to marketing school programs and offerings, district services and resources, and our leadership's vision and mission. Key district messaging focuses on raising student achievement, recruiting and retaining the best educators, creating safe academic environments conducive to quality teaching and learning, and improving the perception of public education by sharing accomplishments. In order to increase reach and awareness, the DCPS Communications Department implements and leverages multiple tools, tactics, and methods consisting of district/school based websites, mobile apps, automated messaging, advertising (print, digital, television, radio, outdoor, theater), social media, direct marketing (internal and external), and events.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: Web Hosting & Content Management System - $245,000

Social media is handled by Coordinator - Social Media. One full time position is dedicated to social media, but additional support for monitoring and creating content is provided by other personnel. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 50 hours or more.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

14,100 followers	**9,189** followers	**452** subscribers	**1,763** followers	**7,699** followers

El Paso Independent School District

Enrollment: 60,000
Budget: $150,000 (not including salaries)

<u>**Office of Community Engagement (13 Positions)**</u>

Executive Director	Staff Writer
Director	Video Production Specialist (2)
Assistant Director	Photographer
Senior Communications Specialist	Computer Graphic Artist
Communications Specialist-Branding	Assistant to Executive Director
Studio Producer	Clerk

The El Paso Independent School District is committed to transparency, accountability and on-going communication with our stakeholders.

It is the mission of the Office of Community Engagement to:
•Promote engagement between the district and all of its stakeholders, to include: students, parents, employees, taxpayers, elected officials, the media and the community at large.
•Educate our stakeholders as to the value and benefits of proactive stakeholder engagement.
•Promote the message that we are the PreK-12 educational institution of choice within the region.

Duties: Governmental Relations, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Marketing firm - $250,000

Social media is handled by multiple staff members. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 20 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

7,487 followers	**4,483** followers	**1,213** subscribers	**502** followers

Fort Worth Independent School District

Enrollment: 87,000
Budget: $3,000,000

Division of Strategic Communications (25 Positions)

Senior Communications Officer
Director of External and Emergency Communications
Director of Marketing and Multimedia
Director of Family Communications
Director of Community and Strategic Partnerships
Web and Creative Coordinator
Social Media Coordinator
Communications and Web Coordinator
Branding Coordinator
Broadcast Traffic Assistant
Video Journalist/Content Editor

Special Projects Coordinator
Strategic Communications Coordinator
Faith-based/Social Services Coordinator
Spanish Language Outreach Specialist
College Readiness Specialist
Internal Communications Coordinator
Volunteer Specialist
Community Partnerships Coordinators (2)
Administrative Associates (2)
District Switchboard Receptionists (2)

We are comprised of four departments: Communications, Family Communications, Community and Strategic Partnerships, and EdTV (video production and TV station.)

Duties: SurveyAnswerTextNull, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: We employ contract help for large campaigns, such as bond elections or our Gold Seal Schools and Programs of Choice informational initiatives. We set aside about $100,000 for these campaigns.

We anticipate hiring a **social media** coordinator in the next two months (one of two new positions we've added, and reflected above.) However, social media responsibilities are shared by everyone in the division with the expectation that some time is invested on a daily basis. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 40 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

106,000 followers	**19,700** followers	**614** subscribers	**7,134** followers	**2,778** followers	**305** followers

Guilford County Schools
(Greensboro, NC)

Enrollment: 73,000
Budget: $360,000 in salaries
$300,000 in marketing, special events

District Relations (6 Positions)
Program Administrator - GCSTV
Program Administrator - Community Relations
Program Administrator, Media Relations
Program Administrator - Communications
Broadcast Production Manager, GCSTV
Director, Communications

The **District Relations** Department of Guilford County Schools is responsible for planning and executing the district's communication and public relations efforts. We work closely with the Board of Education, superintendent and all GCS departments and schools to support the district's mission, vision and goals through effective communication strategies.

Consultants: Graphic Designer - $65 per hour
 Photographer - $50 per hour
Social Media Consultants - $7,500 per semester (2 semesters)
Website Consultants - $50 per hour

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Social media is handled by multiple people in the department - all staff are able to post. We have a consultant that posts daily.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

18,397 followers	**54,700** followers	**710** subscribers	**7,030** followers

Hawaii State Department of Education

Enrollment: 179,902
Budget: $20,500 *does not include salaries*

<u>Office of Communications (14 Positions)</u>
Director of Communications
Multi-media Specialist
Communications Specialist
Media Relations Specialist
Video Production Manager
Video Production Staff (7)
Secretary
Clerk

The Hawaii State Department of Education is the ninth-largest U.S. school district and the only statewide educational system in the country. It is comprised of 256 schools and 34 charter schools, and serves 179,902 students. King Kamehameha III established Hawaii's public school system in 1840. To learn more, visit HawaiiPublicSchools.org.

Duties: Video Production, Social Media, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

The web-page content management is handled by the multi-media specialists who also is lead on **social media**. A total of five people work on social media, including the director. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is seven hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

8,039 followers	**5,668** followers	**58** subscribers	**52** views	**222** followers	

Houston Independent School District

Enrollment: 215,000
Budget: $3,800,000

Office of Communications (45 Positions)

Chief Communications Officer

General Manager, Communications & Publications

General Manager, Bond & Multimedia Services

General Manager, Strategic Partnerships

Communications Director

Manager, Information Center

Community Relations Liaison

Special Events Planner

Volunteers in Public Schools Administrator

Community Partnerships Manager

Community Partnerships Liaison

Producer

Web & Mobile Design Team Lead

Manager, Translation Services

Bond Strategic Communications Specialist

Press Secretary

Media Relations Specialist

Senior Administrative Assistant

Senior Information Specialist

Information Specialist

Receptionist

Brand & Design Manager

Web Content Administrator

Bond Communications Manager

Senior Manager, Video & Photography

Strategic Communications Specialist

Senior Producer/Director

Producer

Writer

Web designer

Translator

Bond Senior Writer

Bond Multimedia Manager

Senior Media Relations Specialist

The mission of the **Office of Communications** is to effectively engage with stakeholders to enhance the HISD experience and strengthen public confidence. The department includes multiple functions: Media Relations, Translations, Publications, Social Media, Web Services, Parent Information Center, Multimedia and A/V Services, Volunteers in Public Schools, Internal Communications, Strategic Partnerships and Bond & Building Communications.

Duties: Bond & Building Programs, Communications & Translations Department, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Social media is handled by multiple people across the department depending on the event. The average amount of time our department spends on social media each week is 28 hours a week, including monitoring.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

f	t	You Tube	v
26,156 followers	**107,000** followers	**2,233** subscribers	**131,000** views

Jackson Public Schools

Enrollment: 27,000
Budget: $631,404

Public and Media Relations (21 Positions)

Executive Director of Public and Media Relations
Communications Specialist
Web Manager
Public and Media Relations Administrative Secretary
Central Office Receptionist
Partners in Education Director
Mail Clerk
Instructional Television Producer/Videographer

Instructional Television Secretary
Instructional Television Writer/Producer
Instructional Television Coordinator
Graphic Arts Operator I
Graphic Arts Operator II
Graphic Arts Operator III
Graphic Arts Director

The **Public and Media Relations Office** supports the mission and vision of Jackson Public Schools. We strive to improve stakeholder satisfaction and support by providing consistent, timely and accurate information while making the most of opportunities for effective, two-way communication with our community as we aim to increase student achievement.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Comcast Cable service for advertising campaign of 30 second commercial spots on local television; cost approximately $10,000 for 6 month contract.

Social media is handled by Web Manager and Communication Specialist. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 10 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

3,295 followers	**4,334** followers
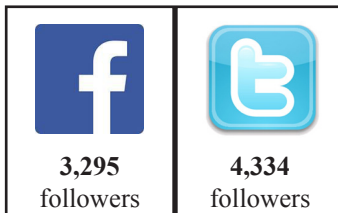
Kansas City Public Schools

Enrollment: 16,000
Budget: $650,000

<u>**Communication Services (9 positions)**</u>
Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer
Administrative Assistant to the Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer
News and Media Technology Manager
Senior Communications Specialist
Communications Specialist
Communications Tech
Webmaster
Graphic Design/Videographer
Enrollment Marketing Specialist

Communications Services offers a full range of creative services and strategic planning designed to share the message of the Kansas City Public Schools. We work to communicate the mission and goals of the district as it seeks to raise the academic achievement of each student. The department is committed to providing timely, effective communication that engages our students, parents, employees and community members.

Duties: Internal Communications; External Communications; News and Information; Kansas City Public Schools Television (KCPS-TV); Web Services; Media Technology Training and Event Planning

Social media is handled by multiple people. 20 hours a week is the average amount of time spent on social media.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

4,292 followers	**4,314** followers	**323** subscribers	**3** followers	**663** followers

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Enrollment: 356,086
Budget: $2,611,103.45

Office of Communications (19 Positions)
Chief Communications Officer
Administrative Director

Citizen Information Center
Supervisor
Administrative Specialist

External Communications
Director
Media Relations Specialist

Haitian Affairs & Media
Director
Translation Specialist (2)

Internal Communications
Executive Director
Communications Manager

News Media Relations
Media Relations Specialist

Spanish Translation Services
Educational Specialist
Translation Specialist

Strategic Educational Marketing
Director
Marketing Supervisor
Media Relations Specialist
Digital Communications Specialist

WLRN
General Manager

The **Office of Communications** is committed to the timely and accurate dissemination of information that highlights the school district's programs, initiatives, and achievements to reinforce awareness among internal and external stakeholders. We pursue this mission through targeted messaging, integrated marketing, social media, and public relations activities that inform and educate parents, students, employees, and all stakeholders of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Duties: Radio Operations, Telephone Operators, Translations, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Meltwater News $ 12,500

Social media is handled primarily by the Chief Communications Officer, Executive Director External Relations, Marketing Supervisor and Digital Media Specialist. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 40 hours. **Social Media At-A-Glance**:

45,465 followers	**62,517** followers	**126** subscribers	**5,945** followers	

Milwaukee Public Schools

Enrollment: 77,856
FY17 Budget: $1,491,160
FY18 Budget: $1,537,883

Department of Communications and Outreach (8 Positions)
Director
Webmaster
Communications Associate III (writer)
Communications Associate II (social media and school website support)
Graphics & Design Specialist
District Translator
Media Manager
Administrative Assistant
Planning Assistant (to be added in 2018)

The **Department of Communications & Outreach** works to aggressively and strategically promote Milwaukee Public Schools, provide the community with important information about MPS, and assist in efforts to recruit and retain students and staff. The office works through a wide variety of media and print platforms with a focus on creating and reinforcing a positive image of MPS that reflects our achievements and our challenges. The Department also oversees district translation requests.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website

Consultants: $150,000 in FY17

Social media is handled primarily by Communications Associate II, with normally 25 - 30 hours per week including district and school support.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

12,141 followers	**11,086** followers	**1,351** subscribers		**5,812** followers	**1,427** followers	**1,011** followers

Omaha Public Schools

Enrollment: 52,000
Budget: $650,000

District Communications Office (5.5 Positions)
Director, District Communications
Coordinator of Marketing and Visual Information
Public Relations Specialist (2)
Administrative Assistant
Videographer

Duties: Web Site Content, Issues and Crisis Communications; Press Secretary/Media Relations; Marketing/PR/Promotions; Print & Online Publications; Internal Communications; Event Planning; Social Media/Website; Television Operations

Consultants: Amount varies, but we do use consultant support from time to time.

Social media is handled primary and secondary support. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 35 plus hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

8,732 followers	**6,696** followers	**334** subscribers

Orange County Public Schools
(Orlando, FL)

Enrollment: 203,000
Budget: N/A

Communications Division (42 Positions)

Chief Communications Officer
Senior Director District Foundation
Director Marketing and Events
Director Media Relations
Interim Director Legislative & Congressional Relations
Assistant Director Marketing and Events
Assistant Director Web and Technology Services
Assistant Director Community Resources
Senior Manager Public Relations
Senior Manager Events
Senior Manager Sales and Marketing
Senior Manager Media Promotions
Senior Manager Video Services
Senior Specialist Media Relations
Senior Specialist Community Resources (2)
Senior Specialist Public Relations

Manager Social Media
Manager Public Information
Administrator District Foundation (3)
Plus numerous classified

The **Communications Division** is comprised of four department: Media Relations, Marketing and Events, Foundation and Legislative & Congressional Relations.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: Crisis Communications - varies
Advertising/Sponsor Sales - $50,000

Social media is handled mainly by Manager Social media, and others contribute. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 40 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

26,700 followers	**7,680** followers	**898** subscribers

School District of Palm Beach County
(Palm Springs, FL)

Enrollment: 195,331
Communications Budget: $2,300,000
TV Station Budget: $1,600,000

Department of Communications and Engagement (38 Positions)

Chief Officer, Strategic Communications and Engagement	Media Relations Specialist
Marketing and Communications Manager	Graphic Designer
IT Solutions Manager	Volunteer Coordinator
Communications Specialist	Business Partnership Liaison
Engagement Specialist	Clerk, Video Library
Executive Administrative Assistant	Instructional TV Manager
Administrative Assistant	Tech Instr TV Broadcast Pro
Online Communications Coordinator	Scheduler
Executive Communications Specialist	Production Tech
Writer/Editor/Producer, Educational TV	IT Specialist

The **Department of Communications and Engagement** is charged with engaging all of the district's diverse communities and informing the community of district policies, programs, services, successes, challenges and opportunities.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Outside consultants used for photography and graphic design/marketing. Budget for photography was approximately $4,000 for FY17. Graphic design/marketing budget was approximately $17,000.

Social media is a handled by our Communications Specialist, though other team members have access and post occasionally. We also have two engagement specialists that handle Haitian Creole and Spanish language Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is between 30-40 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

28,000 followers	**20,700** followers	**447** subscribers	**1,238** followers	**7,527** followers

Pinellas County Public Schools
(Largo, FL)

Enrollment: 103,242
Budget: $1,177,225

Office of Strategic Communications (14 Positions)
Director
Public Information Officer
Webmaster
Communications Coordinator (3)
Multimedia Manager
Multimedia Producer (3)
TV Operations Manager
Multimedia Coordinator
Station Technician
Secretary

The **Office of Strategic Communications** directs public awareness campaigns, gathers and disseminates news to internal and external audiences, produces video content for web and TV, manages the web content management system, supports district events, and leads communications planning for district initiatives. In support of the District Strategic Plan, the Office of Strategic Communications uses promotional communication to position Pinellas County Schools as the district of choice for quality teaching, learning and student achievement.

Duties: Speechwriting, Crisis Communications, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Schoolwires - content management system and TV station technical consultant: $20,000

Social media is a handled by multiple people, and the average amount of time spent on social media each week is 10 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

10,665 followers	2,294 followers	411 subscribers

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Enrollment: 24,652
Budget: $664,536

<u>Office of Public Information / Communications and Marketing (3 Positions)</u>
Public Information Officer
Communications Officer
Project Assistant

The Division of **Communications and Marketing and the Office of Public Information** promotes and looks after the image and reputation of Pittsburgh Public Schools. We do so by developing and implementing clear, consistent and engaging strategies that enhance the public's understanding of PPS.

Both offices offer a variety of communications services, tools, and strategies to support schools and departments. Our team has expertise in strategic communication, media relations, crisis communication, communications planning, event planning, project management and content creation. It is our goal to ensure families, staff, community members and the media receive accurate and timely information.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: Graphic Design, Photography, Copy Writing - $88,000

Social media is handled by two staff members.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

16,608 followers	**8,852** followers	**2,255** followers	**21** views	**3,239** followers

Providence Public Schools

Enrollment: 24,000
Budget: N/A

<u>**Office of Communications (3 Positions)**</u>
Director of Communications
Communications Specialist
Translator

The Providence Public Schools **Office of Communications** oversees internal and external communications and integrated marketing communications for key stakeholders throughout the district, using multiple communications channels.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website

Consultants: Graphic designer -- $3,000
Professional photographer -- $1,200

Social media is handled by the Director of Communications. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is five hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

4,853 followers	**2,831** followers	**24** subscribers	**458** followers

Richmond Public Schools

Enrollment: 24,000
Budget: $132,181 *excluding salaries*

Office of Communications & Media Relations (5 Positions)
Director of Communications & Media Relations
Communications & Media Relations Specialist
Administrative Assistant
Multimedia Production Manager
Multimedia Production Specialist

The mission of the **Office of Communications & Media Relations (OCMR)** is to communicate the district's goals, objectives and successes to both internal and external stakeholders - including employees, students, parents, civic organizations and area businesses - through a comprehensive, multi-tiered public relations / marketing program.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Social media is handled by the administrative assistant. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 5 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

7,755 followers	**4,257** followers	**108** subscribers	**599** followers

Sacramento City Unified School District

Enrollment: 47,000
Budget: N/A

Communications Office (4 Positions)
Chief Communications Officer
Communications Manager
Webmaster & Digital Media
Administrative Assistant

The **Communications Office** is responsible for strategic communications planning, responding to media inquiries, and all internal messaging to staff and external messaging to parents.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Public Records

Social media is handled by the Webmaster and Chief Communications Officer. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is eight hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

f	t	You Tube
3,065 followers	**1543** followers	**105** subscribers

255

Saint Paul Public Schools

Enrollment: 38,000
Budget: $1,425,667

<u>**Office of Communications, Marketing and Development (15 Positions)**</u>

Interim Director	Communications Specialist
Communications and Marketing Senior Associate	Digital Media Manager
Digital Editor	Program Assistant
Communications and Marketing Senior Associate	Audio Visual Technician,
Translations Manager	Translation Specialist
Management Assistant 2	Senior Development Specialist
Fund Development Coordinator	

The **Office of Communications, Marketing and Development** keeps information flowing to the people that make up, surround and support Saint Paul Public Schools. The office merges story-telling, grant-seeking and marketing into one unit.

Duties: development -- grants, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: our development team sometimes uses writers to help with grant-writing. The fees vary based on the consultants and the length of time they help with the project.

Social media is handled by multiple people with one person primarily responsible for twitter, another primarily responsible for Facebook. Other staff do assist as needed.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

3,065 followers	**1543** followers	Eduvision

San Francisco Unified School District

Enrollment: 55,613
Budget: $868,874

Communications Division (7 Positions)
Chief Communications Officer
Public Relations Manager
Internal Communications Manager
Public Information Officer (2)
Online Communications Coordinator
Public Relations Assistant

The **Communications Division** informs, educates and inspires the SFUSD community and beyond by telling the stories of SFUSD students and staff and by providing timely and accurate news and information. Through partnering across the district to strengthen communication systems and grow the district's presence across multiple platforms, we help to build the coherence, connections and resources necessary to achieve our vision for students.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Social Media/Website

Consultants: Underground - $75,000
Spark Inbound Marketing - $6,000
Free Range Studios - $6,200
845a, LLC - $7,500
Mitzi Mock - $4,00
Lewis Company, LLC - $5,000
Sonia Savio - $2,500

Social media handled by mutliple people including the Online Communications Coordinator, Public Information Officer, and Public Relations Assistant. Fifteen hours a week is the average amount of time spent on social media, which can possibly double during a crisis situation.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

2,755 followers	**8,339** followers	**95** subscribers	**428** followers	**7,155** followers

Seattle Public Schools

Enrollment: 54,976
Budget: N/A

<u>**Communications Department (6 Positions)**</u>
Chief Engagement Officer
Web Content Editor
Communications Specialist, Internal
Communications Specialist, External
Communications Specialist, Facilities & Capital
Communications Specialist, Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction

The **Communications Department** provides Seattle Public Schools with expertise in strategic communications, media relations, social media, crisis communication, communications planning, and content creation. It is our goal to ensure families, staff, community members and the media receive accurate and timely information.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

6,589 followers	**14,000** followers	**98** subscribers	**608** followers	**6,411** followers

Shelby County Schools
(Memphis, TN)

Enrollment: 111,500
Budget: $3,309,026

Department of Communications and Community Engagement (24 Positions)

Chief of Communications and Community Engagement
Communications Executive Director
Public Information Officer
Media Relations Analyst
External Communications Advisor
Internal Communications Analyst
Bilingual Communications Analyst
Graphics Advisor
Graphic Designer
Webmaster

Executive Administrative Assistant
Community Engagement Manager
Community Engagement Specialists (3)
Clerical Assistant
TV/Radio Station Manager
TV/Radio Station Advisor
Broadcast Specialists (2)
Instructors/On-Air Personalities (2)
Chief Engineer
Administrative Assistant

The **Department of Communications and Community Engagement** supports the acceleration of student achievement in Shelby County Schools by building a culture of collaboration among students, families, and the community. We build strong partnerships, increase capacity, and create a culture of inclusiveness among internal and external stakeholders.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, .Television Operations

Consultants: Kingdom Quality Communications and TNTP

Social media is handled by the external communications analyst. Twenty-five hours a week is the average amount of time spent on social media.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

26,672 followers	**46,700** followers	**556** subscribers	**2,401** followers	**8,395** followers

Toledo Public Schools

Enrollment: 23,000
Budget: $232,586

<u>**Communications Department (3 Positions)**</u>
Communications Director
Communications Manager
Administrative Assistant

The **Communications Department** manages all district communication efforts including media relations, public relations, marketing, website, publications and community outreach. The office also handles crisis communications, acts as a board liaison, writes speeches for superintendent and cabinet members and other duties as assigned.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website

Consultants: Web maintenance and design support - $3,000 per year
Advertising agency - amount varies per year
Freelance designers and photographers - amount varies

Social media is handled by the communications manager. Ten to 12 hours a week is the average amount of time spent on social media.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

f	t	You Tube	Instagram	in
10,844 followers	**2,567** followers	**40** subscribers	**577** followers	**3,033** followers

Tulsa Public Schools

Enrollment: 40,000
Budget: N/A

Communications and Public Relations (7 Positions)
Director of Communications
Executive Assistant
Multimedia Journalist
Web Designer
New Media Coordinator
PR & Marketing Coordinator
Digital Content Specialist

The **Communications** team manages public and media relations, marketing and outreach, and strategic communications for Tulsa Public Schools, a pre-K-12 urban school district with 7,000 employees serving 40,000 students.

Duties: Crisis Management, Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Social Media/Website, Television Operations, Public Records

Consultants: Graphic design, printing, and translation for our annual calendar - approximately $10,000 Design, printing, and translation for various marketing materials - approximately $50,000

Social media is handled by PR & Marketing, but this position is vacant, so the Director leads strategy and content development with execution support from multimedia journalist. Between the district and superintendent accounts, we do about 30 posts per week (3/day) - time varies, probably 3-5 hours total.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

f	t	You Tube	flickr	in
12,353 followers	**9,446** followers	**394** subscribers	**71** followers	**5,780** followers

Wichita Public Schools

Enrollment: 50,561
Budget: $1,044,967

Division of Marketing and Communications (12 Positions)

Division Director	Special Projects/Employee Engagement Specialist
Division Secretary	Community Engagement/Partner Specialist
News and Media Relations Manager	Graphic/Marketing Specialist
WPS-TV Producer/Director (technical)	District Mediator
WPS-TV Producer/Director (projects)	Mediator's Secretary
WPS-TV Cable Technician/Office Manager	Spanish Language Communication Specialist
Social Media/Web Specialist	

The **Marketing and Communications Division** creates and enhances positive relationships with district stakeholders to support the educational needs of Wichita students. We encourage and facilitate interactive dialogue; cultivate an environment of mutual trust and support; and collaborate with students, families, staff, the community and our partners in businesses, organizations and faith communities to realize the district's mission.

We believe communication should be concise, transparent, respectful, responsive, timely, inclusive, student-focused, relevant and accurate.

We accomplish this work with 12 talented team members in Marketing and Communications, Media Productions and Parent and Community Support, as well as Spanish-language media support from Multilingual Education Services.

Duties: Press Secretary/Media Relations, Marketing/PR/Promotions, Print & Online Publications, Internal Communications, Event Planning, Alumni/Parent & Community Engagement, Partnerships & Volunteers, Social Media/Website, Television Operations

Consultants: External web hosting, occasional photography support

Social media is handled by multiple people, primarily Social Media/Web Marketing Specialist, News and Media Relations Manager, and as needed, the Division Director and Special Projects/Employee Engagement Specialist. The average amount of time spent on social media each week is 35-40 hours.

Social Media At-A-Glance:

18,300 followers	**8,394** followers	**453** subscribers	**458** followers

Albuquerque	El Paso	Omaha
Anchorage	Fort Worth	Orange County
Arlington	Fresno	Palm Beach
Atlanta	Greensboro	Philadelphia
Austin	Hawaii	Pinellas County
Baltimore	Houston	Pittsburgh
Birmingham	Indianapolis	Portland
Boston	Jackson	Providence
Bridgeport	Jacksonville	Richmond
Broward County	Kansas City	Rochester
Buffalo	Long Beach	Sacramento
Charleston	Los Angeles	San Antonio
Charlotte	Louisville	San Diego
Chicago	Miami-Dade	San Francisco
Cincinnati	Milwaukee	Seattle
Clark County	Minneapolis	Shelby County
Cleveland	Nashville	St. Louis
Columbus	New Orleans	St. Paul
Dallas	New York City	Tampa
Dayton	Newark	Toledo
Denver	Norfolk	Tulsa
Des Moines	Oakland	Washington, DC
Detroit	Oklahoma City	Wichita

Council of the
Great City Schools

AWARDS

NSRA

National School Public Relations Association

PUBLICATIONS AND
ELECTRONIC MEDIA AWARDS

AWARD OF
MERIT

Presented to

Council of the Great City Schools

For Distinguished Achievement
in the Category of

Education Association — Excellence in Writing

for

*Support Male Students of
Color Through Mentoring*

June 2017

Date

265

Executive Director

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
Communications Department Awards

1993 - National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) *Honorable Mention* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

1994 - NSPRA *Award of Merit* for ORGAZATIONAL LOGO

1994 - NSPRA *Honorable Mention* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

1994 - Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) *Excalibur for Excellence Award* for
SCHOOL SAFETY AND VIOLENCE VIDEO PROJECT
(Houston Independent School District and Council of the Great City Schools)

1995 - NSPRA *Award of Merit* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

1996 - NSPRA *Award of Merit* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

1997 - NSPRA *Honorable Mention* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

1998 - NSPRA *Award of Merit* for *A VISION FOR AMERICA'S URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS* booklet

1999 - No entries submitted

2000 - NSPRA *Award of Merit* for *HOW WE HELP AMERICA'S URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS* booklet

2000 - NSPRA *Award of Merit* for "URBAN SCHOOLS CAN CLOSE RACIAL GAPS" advertorial in *USA TODAY*

2000 - NSPRA *Honorable Mention* for "CITIES HELPING CITIES" story in the *Urban Educator*

2000 - NSPRA *Honorable Mention* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

2001 - NSPRA *Award of Excellence* for *ANNUAL REPORT*

2001 - NSPRA Award *of Merit for URBAN EDUCATOR*

2002 – NSPRA *Honorable Mention* for PUBLICATIONS CATALOG

2003 – NSPRA *Award of Merit* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

2003 – NSPRA *Award of Merit* for *2001-2002 ANNUAL REPORT*

2004 – NSPRA *Award of Merit* for "Thank You" PSA

2005 – NSPRA *Award of Excellence* for "Tested" PSA

2006 – Telly Award for "Pop Quiz" PSA (Not-for-Profit Category) for Outstanding Television Commercials

2006 – Telly Award for "Pop Quiz" PSA (Public Service Category) for Outstanding Television Commercials

2006 – NSPRA *Award of Excellence* for "Pop Quiz" PSA

2006 – NSPRA *Award of Excellence* for 'URBAN DEBATE LEAGUES" story in the *Urban Educator*

2007- NSPRA, *Honorable Mention* for *2005-2006 ANNUAL REPORT*

2007 – NSPRA, *Award of Merit* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

2007- NSPRA, *Honorable Mention* for *SOUVENIR JOURNAL*

2008 – NSPRA *Award of Honorable Mention* for *URBAN EDUCATOR*

2008 – NSPRA *Award of Honorable Mention* for *ANNUAL REPORT*

2008-2014 – No entries submitted

2014 **– Telly Award for Common Core video (Use of Animation)**

2014 **– Telly Award for Common Core video (Education)**

2015 –Telly Award for "Conversation" Common Core video (Online Video: Education)

2015 – Telly Award for "Conversation" Common Core video (Film/TV-Education)

2015 – Telly Award for "Conversation" Common Core video (Use of Animation)

2015 – NSPRA *Honorable Mention* for story on "Big-City School Districts Strive to Break the School-to-Prison Pipeline" in the *Urban Educator*

2017 – NSPRA *Award of Merit* for story on "Supporting Male Students of Color Through Mentoring" in the *Urban Educator*

THE URBAN EDUCATOR

Council Town Hall Meeting to Address Equity in Education

Moderator Van Jones of CNN

"What does equity really mean?"

That's the question to be discussed at the Council of the Great City Schools' National Town Hall Meeting on Oct. 20 in conjunction with the coalition's 61st Annual Fall Conference, Oct. 18-22, in Cleveland.

Moderated by CNN political commentator Van Jones, the 90-minute town hall meeting will feature a panel of urban-school leaders, a parent and two students:

• Cleveland Metropolitan School District CEO Eric Gordon;

• Milwaukee Public Schools Superintendent Darienne Driver;

• Denver school board member Allegra "Happy" Haynes;

• Dallas Independent School District Superintendent Michael Hinojosa;

• Parent of two Cleveland students, Jessica Nelson;

• Cleveland high-school senior Shauntia Adams; and

• Cleveland 10th-grader Jonathan Chikuru.

"Equity for all is everyone's business," said Superintendent Driver, who chairs

2017 Blue Ribbon Schools Named

Louisville's Norton Elementary, Philadelphia's Gen. George A. Mc-Call School and St. Louis' Mallinckrodt Academy of Gifted Instruction are among 33 urban public schools recently named 2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools.

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos on Sept. 28 honored 342 public and private elementary, middle and high schools as Blue Ribbon Schools, recognizing them for overall academic performance or closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

Graduation Rates in Several Urban Districts Exceed the 83 Percent National Rate

At least nine big-city school districts in the nation have four-year graduation rates that exceed the national rate, the *Urban Educator* found in reviewing most recent reports.

The nation's public high-school graduation rate reached a record 83 percent in the 2014-15 school year, according to the latest data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

But far exceeding the federal rate in the 2015-16 school year were three big-city school districts: San Diego Unified School District (91 percent), Austin Independent School District (90.7 percent) and North Carolina's Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (90 percent).

A new report by the San Diego Education Research Alliance recently documented San Diego Unified's record 91 percent graduation rate. And the students who graduated in the Class of 2016 did so under the district's new, more rigorous standards.

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2016 Top Urban Educator Surprises Cleveland Student with Scholarship

Brinden Harvey, a 2017 graduate of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, learned he received a $10,000 college scholarship not in the mail or in a phone call, but in the form of Cleveland Schools' CEO Eric Gordon, who appeared on the front steps of his house one day in June holding a $10,000 cardboard check.

Gordon surprised Harvey with the news that he was the winner of a $10,000 Green-Garner scholarship that was given to Gordon last year to give to a student after winning the nation's top urban leadership award—the Green-Garner Award—at the Council of the Great City School's 60th Annual Fall Conference in Miami. The award is sponsored by the Council, Aramark Education and Scholastic, Inc.

Harvey is currently attending Ohio's Baldwin Wallace University to pursue a bachelor of fine arts degree in acting and is following in the footsteps of his mother and brother, who are both Baldwin Wallace graduates. The scholarship is more than just a weight off his shoulders financially, but also a testament to the love and support he feels from his school, the district and the city.

"It's a lot of love coming from my city to be able to get things like this and have the support of amazing people in Cleveland," Harvey said in a story that appeared on the school district's website. "I'm speechless about how amazing the love is."

Gordon not only selected Harvey to receive the scholarship, but will also mentor the young man throughout his college career.

"You and I will stay in touch for the four years you're in college to make

Cleveland CEO Eric Gordon surprises Brinden Harvey at his home with a $10,000 scholarship check. Harvey, a 2017 graduate of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, is using the money to attend Ohio's Baldwin Wallace University.

Betty Arnold   **Sharon Bailey**   **Carol Cook**   **Alan Duncan**   **Kathleen Gordon**   **Michael O'Neill**

Peggy O'Shea

Diane Porter

Manuel Rodriguez Jr.

Chuck Shaw

Felton Williams

'Envelope, Please! And the Urban Educator of the Year Is..."

Eleven finalists will be announced on the evening of Oct. 19 for the nation's top award in urban-education leadership. One of them will become the Urban Educator of the Year.

The winner will be honored by peers at the Council of the Great City Schools' 61st Annual Fall Conference, Oct. 18-22, in Cleveland.

Anticipation will be in the air when the envelope is given to announce the winner among 11 big-city school board members vying for the top prize at the 28th Annual Green-Garner Award Banquet.

The Green-Garner Award recognizes outstanding leadership, and is presented to an urban-school superintendent and board member in alternative years.

The 2017 finalists are school-board members:

Betty Arnold of Wichita Public Schools;

Sharon Bailey of Denver Public Schools;

Carol Cook of Florida's Pinellas County Schools (St. Petersburg);

Alan Duncan of North Carolina's Guilford County Schools (Greensboro);

Kathleen Gordon of Florida's Orange County Public Schools (Orlando);

Michael O'Neill of Boston Public Schools;

Peggy O'Shea of Florida's Pinellas County Schools;

Diane Porter of Kentucky's Jefferson County Public Schools (Louisville);

Manuel Rodriguez Jr. of Houston Independent School District;

Chuck Shaw of Florida's School District of Palm Beach County; and

Felton Williams of California's Long Beach Unified School District.

And now the moment everyone has been waiting for. And the winner is…!

Sponsored by the Council, Aramark K-12 Education and Scholastic, Inc., the Green-Garner Award is named in memory of Richard R. Green, the first African American chancellor of the New York City school system, and businessman Edward Garner, who served on the Denver school board.

The winner receives a $10,000 college scholarship to present to a student.

Last year's awardee was CEO Eric Gordon of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Town Hall *continued from page 1*

the Council's Board of Directors. "As district leaders, we must work with those at the state level to identify the issues that challenge all of our schools and prevent us from treating students fairly--and to produce solutions that will benefit all students." she stressed in an *Education Week* commentary.

Eric Gordon

The Council holds a national town hall meeting every year on an issue of the day in urban education, and it's the pinnacle event of the annual Fall Conference.

Darienne Driver

Bill Gates to Speak

Business leader, entrepreneur and philanthropist Bill Gates, who co-founded Microsoft, will deliver the conference's keynote address on Oct. 19. Other guest speakers on Oct. 20 will be actress Rosario Dawson, and Van Jones will address urban school leaders before he moderates the town hall meeting.

Michael Hinojosa

Hosted by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, the five-day conference will be held at the Hilton Cleveland Downtown.

Happy Haynes

To register for the conference, access the Council's website at www.cgcs.org. Registration can only be conducted online.
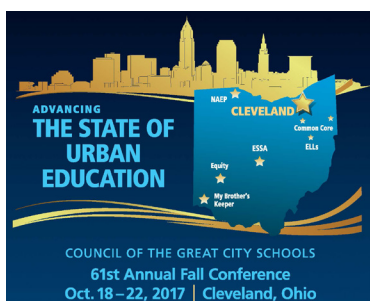
Graduation Rates *continued from page 1*

"We now have another report that validates the improving academic results in our district," said Superintendent Cindy Marten in a news release. "It shows again that academic excellence is on the rise across San Diego Unified."

The Austin Independent School District graduation rate rose to 90.7 percent in the 2015-16 school year, according to the Texas Education Agency. "I am so #AISDProud of the gains our students and staff have made in graduation and dropout rates," said Superintendent Paul Cruz in a recent news release, noting that the dropout rate has decreased to 1.1 percent.

"... This is a great step in preparing all students for college, career and life, and shows our dedication to reinventing the urban school experience," he emphasized.

The nation's 83 percent public high-school graduation rate is the highest since 2010-11 – the first year a four-year adjusted graduation rate was measured for high school completion. "In other words, more than 4 out of 5 students graduated with a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting 9th grade," says NCES.

In addition to San Diego, Austin and Charlotte-Mecklenburg, six other urban school districts also had higher graduation rates than the national rate in the 2015-16 school year of students completing high school in four years, according to a recent Council of the Great City Schools survey.

The six were Guilford County Schools in Greensboro, N.C. (89 percent), the School District of Palm Beach County (89 percent), Norfolk Public Schools (88 percent), San Francisco Unified School District (87 percent), Fresno Unified School District (85 percent) and Fort Worth Independent School District (85 percent).

And there were several big-city school districts near or at the 83 percent national rate, including Nashville, Houston, Orange County in Orlando, El Paso, Sacramento, Richmond, Va., Miami-Dade, Jefferson County in Louisville and Pinellas County that covers St. Petersburg, Fla.

"National Blue Ribbon Schools are active demonstrations of preparing every child for a bright future," Secretary DeVos said in a press statement.

"The Blue Ribbon School award affirms the hard work of students, teachers and staff in schools demonstrating achievement at the highest levels – and Norton is a great example of that in our district," said Acting Superintendent Marty Pollio of Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville.

By state, big-city school districts that saw their schools win Blue Ribbon honors include:

Alaska – a K-8 school in Anchorage, the only school in the state to be recognized;

California – schools in Long Beach, Los Angeles (2) and San Francisco Unified;

Colorado – an elementary school in Denver;

District of Columbia – an elementary and high school;

Florida – schools in Miami-Dade County (3) and Broward County;

Illinois – two elementary schools in Chicago;

Kentucky – Norton Elementary in Jefferson County (Louisville);

Minnesota – an elementary school in Saint Paul;

Missouri – Mallinckrodt Academy in St. Louis;

Nebraska – an elementary school in Omaha;

Nevada – two elementary schools in Clark County (Las Vegas);

New York – three schools in the New York City school system;

Pennsylvania – McCall Elementary in Philadelphia;

Rhode Island – a high school in Providence; and

Texas – schools in Dallas (3), Houston (2), El Paso (2) and San Antonio.

ADVANCING
THE STATE OF URBAN EDUCATION

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
61st Annual Fall Conference
Oct. 18 – 22, 2017 | Cleveland, Ohio

San Francisco STEM Education Receives Millions Of Dollars in Support From Tech Firm

Already widely acknowledged as one of the leading cities in the nation for technology-based careers and organizations, STEM (Science, Technology, Education, Math) education in San Francisco is now receiving a significant boost.

Salesforce.org, the philanthropic arm of the technology company Salesforce, recently donated $7 million to the San Francisco Unified School District. The donation comes through a partnership between the San Francisco-based company and the school district by the city's mayor, Edwin Lee, and his Middle School Leadership Initiative.

After five consecutive years of contributing, the company has accumulated a grand total of $26.7 million in giving to the school system. The latest multi-million-dollar donation will be directed to specific operations such as increased computer science enrollment, math coaches, teacher professional development with New York University, personalized learning capabilities for students, and $100,000 in unrestricted funds to all middle and K-8 schools.

"Salesforce.org understands that an investment in our youth is an investment in the future of San Francisco," said Mayor Lee.

STEM Middle Schoolers

The Middle School Leadership Initiative is in place to connect young students with the STEM skills needed to succeed in high school and beyond. The plan is to use middle schools as the bridge to make that connection with young students. "In addition to enabling improved teaching and learning for all our students, this partnership is bringing access to young people who have historically been underrepresented in STEM fields. It's a game changer," said San Francisco Schools Superintendent Vincent Matthews.

Nationally, President Donald Trump has recently issued a memorandum order-

ing the Department of Education to spend $200 million yearly on STEM education grants with the hope of increasing the number of female students and minority students involved in high level STEM classes.

In the San Francisco school district, females and underrepresented groups have already risen tremendously to equal almost half of the enrollment of computer science courses. San Francisco is also the first school district in the nation that provides a computer science curriculum for every grade.

With the program's ongoing successes, Salesforce plans on continuing their contributions to the school district.

"We want to live in a city, and in a country, where every child has access to education that will prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow," said Rob Acker, CEO of the company.

Cleveland Student *continued from page 2*

sure you stick with it and go all the way through," Gordon told Harvey. "If you're having a bad day or you feel like you can't do it anymore, you can reach out to me."

As a student at the Cleveland School of Science and Medicine, Harvey had plans to become a doctor. But after he participated in an arts apprenticeship program, he realized that acting was his true passion. During his senior year, he performed in several local theater productions.

After graduation, Harvey said he would like to come back to Cleveland and create an after-school arts program for children so they can express themselves and develop their artistic talents.

"Growing up in Cleveland, I've seen so many diamonds in the rough," said Harvey. "I fell in love with the beauty of the people and how genuine it is. I've always wanted to give back to the city in the same way I've seen people give to me, if not better."

Mexico Honors K.C. School Administrator

Luis Cordoba, the chief student support and intervention officer for Missouri's Kansas City Public Schools, has worked closely with the Consulate of Mexico in Kansas City to create programs that serve Mexican nationals and other Latinos who are parents of children in the district.

For his efforts, the consulate recently presented him with the Ohtli Award, which honors those who dedicated their lives and efforts to the welfare of the Mexican community abroad. It is considered one of the most prestigious awards given by Mexico.

"His is truly an awe-inspiring life story," said Head Consul Alfonso Navarro-Bernachi, at the award presentation. "The results of his efforts are indisputable."

Cordoba was born in Mexico and moved to Los Angeles, where he grew up among some of the toughest gangs in East Los Angeles. He eventually joined the California Highway Patrol, excelling at drug interdiction and anti-gang efforts.

In 1988, he moved to Missouri and continued his work with high-risk youth and gang members and utilizing his bilingual skills to help Kansas City's Latino communities. He volunteers his time teaching race relations at the Kansas City Police Depart-

Kansas City Schools administrator Luis Cordoba, right, accepts the Ohtli Award as Alfonso Navarro-Bernachi with the Consulate of Mexico City looks on.

Newark District to Return to Local Control

After 22 years, New Jersey's Newark Public Schools will regain control of its school district. The New Jersey State Board of Education recently voted to return control of the school system to a locally elected school board, citing the significant academic progress the district was making.

The board approved two resolutions: one resolution moves control of the final functional areas of governance and instruction to the Newark School Board. The second resolution calls for the Newark school district and the New Jersey Department of Education to collaborate on creating a transition plan, which will include a timeline for returning local control and the hiring of a superintendent. A city-wide vote must also be held to determine if the school system will continue to have an elected school board or a school board appointed by the mayor.

The State Board of Education cited academic improvements the district made including: gains in both English Language Arts and math on the preliminary 2016-17 PARCC results, with the district's growth exceeding the state in both subjects.

The school system has also improved on the state student growth measure, with students growing in reading faster than their peers across the state in 2015-16. In addition, the district has also experienced an improvement in graduation rates.

In 1995, the State Department of Education seized control of New Jersey's largest school district with 48,000 students because for more than 10 years it was unable to meet the state education department's standards for school district certification.

An examination of the school system found the district suffered from low student test scores, high dropout rates, financial mismanagement and unsafe and deteriorating school buildings.

After the takeover, the district was run by superintendents appointed by the state, including Beverly Hall, Marion Bolden, Clifford Janey and Cami Anderson.

ment cadet classes and is a former member of the Missouri Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs. He taught multicultural studies as an adjunct professor at the University of Central Missouri and served as a national consultant on the Safe Schools Healthy Student Initiative, managing 10 major public schools in a 10-state region. As a result of his experiences, Cordoba has been an invited speaker at more than 300 national presentations.

Cordoba joined the Kansas City school system in 2010, where has led efforts to build a compassionate system of support and guidance for students who face difficulties getting to schools and succeeding in class.

In February, he helped the Kansas City School system launch a partnership with the Mexican consulate called "Plaza Comunitaria," which will help offer English language classes to native Spanish-speaking parents and help them receive a high school diploma.

Upon accepting the Ohtli award, created from the indigenous Nahuati word for "the one who opens the gap," Cordoba discussed the invaluable contributions immigrants have made to the United States and how educators must help immigrant students succeed.

"We must continue to promote a welcoming environment in our schools, workforce and community in everything that we do, which includes hiring highly skilled bilingual Latinos to form positive and caring relationships with our Spanish-speaking communities here in Kansas City, Missouri," said Cordoba. "I will continue to create pathways and be the voice of *mi familia*."

Yale University Recognizes Inspiring Urban Educators

Janet Waldeck is a physics teacher at Pittsburgh Taylor Allderdice High School. She wanted to ensure that students in Pittsburgh Public Schools were getting the most up-to-date materials they needed, so in 2012 she began creating a series of science learning kits teachers across the district can use to teach science to their students.

Going out of her way to help students succeed is one of the reasons Waldeck was selected to receive the 2017 Yale Educator Award, which recognizes outstanding educators from around the world who have supported and inspired Yale students to achieve at high levels.

Students matriculating at Yale University are invited to nominate high school teachers and counselors who have motivated and supported them. The winning recipients are selected by a committee composed of Yale admission officers.

Waldeck, who has a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from Stanford University, was nominated for the award by former Allderdice student Cecily Gao, who spent two years in Waldeck's science research class.

According to the *Print*, a local Pittsburgh newspaper, in an essay to accompany the nomination, Gao wrote that because of

Pittsburgh Public Schools teacher Janice Waldeck received a 2017 Yale Educator Award.

A Superintendent Returns to Lead a District Again -- Where it All Began

Michael Hinojosa grew up in Dallas, is a graduate of the Dallas Independent School District, began his career teaching at a district school, and served six years as the school system's superintendent, before leaving in 2011.

So, when another Dallas superintendent departed abruptly in 2015, who did the board of trustees turn to? Hinojosa was named interim superintendent, and four months later became the leader of the school system for a second time.

"He's from here, grew up here, went to school here, taught here, was the superintendent here," said trustee Edwin Flores in an interview with KERA-Radio, right after Hinojosa was hired. "I mean, who knows our community better?"

And why did Hinojosa, who a year earlier had finished a three-year stint as superintendent of Cobb County Schools, Georgia's second largest school system, come out of retirement to take over the nation's 14th largest school district?

"Dallas is in my blood, it's always been a part of me," said Hinojosa in an interview with the *Urban Educator*. "I love this city, and I love this district so much, so it was very easy for me to say yes."

This time around, Hinojosa has set several objectives he would like to accomplish before 2020. He recalled that a board member once said that picking a superintendent is an inexact science, so his goal is to have at least one or more candidates ready to step into the position when he leaves.

"It's much easier for a district to keep moving forward with their initiatives if you have a leader from within," said Hinojosa, who was Dallas' seventh superintendent in 10 years when he first took the reins in 2005.

Hinojosa also wants to modernize instruction, teaching and technology as well as the district's buildings. "A lot of parents pick schools because of how good their buildings look, so we need to have a plan to make sure we modernize our physical structures," said Hinojosa. In November 2015, he helped persuade voters to approve a $1.6 billion bond program, the district's
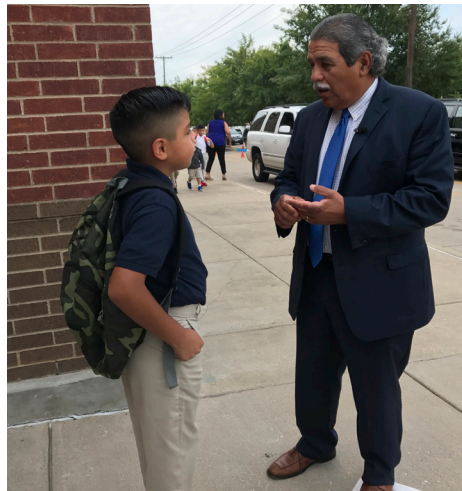
Dallas Schools Superintendent Michael Hinojosa talks with a student on the first day of school.

largest in history.

And in a partnership with the Dallas County Community College District, the Dallas school system has opened 18 new collegiate academies that offer first-generation college students an opportunity to simultaneously earn a high school diploma and an associate degree in four years. The new schools are a dream come true for Hinojosa, who said he would love to be on stage in 2020 when the first cohort of students graduate.

Making Diversity a Priority

When Hinojosa tried to get a job as an assistant principal in Dallas, he couldn't even get an interview and had to go to another district. So, increasing the number of people of color and women in the district's leadership ranks is vitally important to him. One of the proudest accomplishments in his 30-year career is witnessing 29 people who have worked alongside him become superintendents, the majority of whom are people of color and women.

"I believe in diversity and that's what I practice," said Hinojosa, who has developed an executive leadership academy composed of a diverse group of central office administrators, as well as a top performing principals group.

Diversity is not only a goal for the administration, but for its students. Dallas schools, with a student population of 70.2 percent Hispanic, 22.5 percent African American and 4.9 percent white, is seeking to launch 35 new choice schools by 2020, in hopes of not only competing against charter and private schools but also integrating more schools.

"That's our biggest challenge, how do we hang onto our market share and make sure that this district is a choice for our families," said Hinojosa.

Believing that "sleep is overrated," the 61-year-old starts his day at 4:15 a.m. every morning. In his first go-around as superintendent, he visited a school every Wednesday—a tradition that continues to this day.

Born in Mexico, his father and mother moved him and his nine siblings to the United States at the age of 3 for a chance at a better life. "That's why I do what I do," said Hinojosa, "because even though my parents had a third-grade education, they knew [education] was our ticket out.

In his spare time, the former basketball and baseball coach attends student baseball games and has been married for 28 years to his wife Kitty. He has three sons, two of whom are graduates of the district.

In 2008, Dallas schools faced a huge deficit that forced him to lay off 1,000 teachers, an experience he vows will never happen again. "Having the humility to know you've made a mistake, you work extra hard to make sure you don't repeat that mistake," said Hinojosa.

Despite the challenges he faces running a big-city school district with 157,000 students, 20,000 employees and 239 schools, he loves his job and enjoys coming to work every day.

"I love that in urban America; you can make a big difference," said Hinojosa.

Selena Sena

Justin Pena

Yilian Sanchez

Tampa Teachers Return to Childhood Alma Mater

Back to school carried a double meaning for third-grade teacher Selena Sena, physical-education teacher Justin Pena and first-grade teacher Yilian Sanchez. They recently became teachers at the same school they attended as children.

They began the 2017-2018 school year as teachers at Crestwood Elementary School in Florida's Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa.

Sena is happy to be working with some of her former teachers, including music teacher Nate Strawbridge. "I remember thinking Mr. Strawbridge was the meanest and scariest teacher ever," Sena said. "But I left with him being one of my favorites."

Physical education was one of Pena's favorite classes when he was a student, so it seems fitting that he is now teaching the class he enjoyed as a child.

And new teacher Sanchez credits her time working as a classroom aide for inspiring her to become a teacher.

Three Urban Schools Named Among America's Healthiest Schools

Three big-city schools are among America's Healthiest Schools, according to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, an organization that helps children develop lifelong, healthy habits.

Marjorie Rawlings Elementary School in Pinellas Park, Fla., Edward A. Reynolds West Side High School in New York City and Maxine Smith STEAM Academy in Memphis were awarded the organization's National Healthy Schools Award, Gold-level designation. Only 10 schools in the nation were honored with the alliance's highest achievement, the Gold-level award.

A health evaluation program outlining the basic standards was followed and analyzed to be named one of America's Healthiest Schools. The program included progressive health policies, effective health education and community involvement.

All recognized schools must meet or exceed federal nutrition standards for school meals and snacks, offer breakfast daily, implement district wellness polices and update progress annually, and provide students with at least 60 minutes of physical education a week and ensure physical activity throughout the school day.

Each recognized school participates in the Healthy Schools Program--one of the nation's largest school-based childhood obesity prevention initiatives.

"Every child deserves to go to a healthy school," said Howell Wechsler, CEO of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. We couldn't be prouder to recognize these schools for leading the way."

Newark District *continued from page 6*

In 2014, the district was given control of its finances, and in 2016, two years later, regained control over personnel decisions, including hiring and firing.

"This is really an historic moment," said Schools Superintendent Christopher Cerf in the *Newark Star-Ledger*. Cerf was appointed in 2015. "The Newark public school students have indeed made great progress as reflected in virtually every measurable statistic that one cares to look at."

In a press release, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka recalled that he was a young teacher in Newark Public Schools when they were taken over in 1995. "So it is wonderful to be mayor of the city of my birth at this point, to be able to say that now we have control of our schools, and ready for responsibility to move our kids into the next century."

Kansas City Superintendent Named One Of Top School Communicators

Mark Bedell

Communication is obviously important to any group operation, yet everyone is not capable of doing so adequately. Mark Bedell is not only capable, he thrives at communication and has made it a significant part of his ability to lead as superintendent of Missouri's Kansas City Public Schools.

His efforts were rewarded recently when named a "Superintendent to Watch" by the National School Public Relations Association. (NSPRA)

This year's "Superintendent to Watch" list is compiled of outstanding superintendents across the country with fewer than five years of experience. They all must be effectively using communication technology with an innovative approach.

From the start, Bedell was communication-driven, launching a listening and learning tour at the very beginning of his term as superintendent. This face-to-face interpersonal communication even extended to evening and weekend pickup basketball games to positively interact with staff, students, and the community. Bedell has also been very active through social media, arranging town hall meetings and speaking engagements, and establishing a concise strategic plan for the district.

Bedell claims a major asset to his performance is his revamped communication department. "As superintendent, it's my job to provide the big ideas around how to reach the community at large, but those ideas have to be executed by the experts in that department, so all credit goes to those professionals." As he enters his second school year as superintendent, Bedell joins just 20 others as a "Superintendent to Watch."

American Heart Association Honors School Superintendent in Tampa

Through his leadership as superintendent in Hillsborough County Public Schools in Florida, Jeff Eakins has been honored as the national Administrator of the Year by the American Heart Association.

Under Eakins' leadership, more than 97,000 students and families received information on heart attack and stroke warnings, the district raised more than $300,000 for heart attack and stroke pre-

Hillsborough County School Superintendent Jeff Eakins, left, is presented with a plaque by an American Heart Association official.

vention and awareness, and developed an internal American Heart Association District Leadership team.

This team is tasked with organizing methods to reach staff, students, and the community on important health issues. Exercise and healthy eating was also an important component to Eakins' strategic health plan.

Fresno Unified Elevates Interim Superintendent

Robert Nelson

Serving as the interim superintendent since this past February, Robert Nelson has officially been named the superintendent of California's Fresno Unified School District. His promotion marks the first time an internal employee from the district has held the office of superintendent in almost 30 years.

Nelson has spent most of his career in education serving Fresno. "I've been through the system," says Nelson. "I've seen what works and what doesn't, as well as the needs of our students and employees. I'm thankful for the relationships I have made in Fresno over two decades."

His career began as an elementary school teacher in the district in 1991. After a short stint as superintendent with a neighboring school district, Nelson returned to Fresno in 2015 as chief of staff and is optimistic about Fresno's future as its new superintendent. "...I'm looking forward to showcasing how innovative, compassionate and progressive Fresno Unified is becoming," said Nelson.

Waldeck's efforts in her science research class, "both I and many of my peers were able to make significant strides in our respective fields of science."

This year, 58 teachers and 30 counselors were selected to receive the award out of 411 nominees. In addition to Waldeck, urban school educators from Florida's School District of Palm Beach County, Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Shelby County Schools in Memphis and New York City were honored.

Year-End Deadlines Looming in Jam-Packed Federal Legislative Calendar

By Jeff Simering, *Director of Legislation*

Once again, Congress faces another set of year-end fiscal cliffs over which they could topple. The federal government's annual appropriations bills to keep the trains running through fiscal year 2018 still need to be enacted. In this case, the cliff is on December 8, a date set by the last continuing resolution (CR). Moreover, the short-term extension of the debt ceiling also was enacted to prevent a federal default, something that could be extended another few months with some creative accounting. Resolving either one or both issues is hard enough, but their passage is further complicated by other key legislative priorities, including hurricane disaster relief, DACA immigrant status, increased border security, and a major tax overhaul.

Each house of Congress has begun moving its respective appropriations bills, but the measures are designed mostly to signal congressional spending priorities and will not necessarily be carried forward in a final omnibus appropriations measure. Few if any of the separate appropriations bills are likely to pass, although an emergency disaster relief bill to handle the three recent hurricanes may move ahead on an omnibus spending package.

At this point, however, the House appropriations bill freezes funding for the $15 billion Title I program at current levels, and the Senate bill adds a meager $25 million. For the $12 billion IDEA formula grants, the Senate bill freezes current funding, and the House adds a modest $200 million. Both House and Senate bills freeze Title III grants for English language learners, and the 21st Century After-School program. And both houses would increase the new Title IV Support and Enrichment Program by $50 million and $100 million, respectively. The House adopted the Trump administration's request to terminate the Title II program for teacher quality and class size reduction, while the Senate preserves the current $2.1 billion level. And, no new private school voucher program has been included in any of the spending bills. Still, school districts may see their current federal grant allocations temporarily reduced because of a small across-the-board cut (less than 1 percent) enacted in the short-term continuing resolution.

The September announcement by President Trump of a six-month phase out of the "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA) program sparked renewed bipartisan interest in enacting authorizing legislation. Packaging some version of the "DREAM Act" together with an expansion of border security may provide the basis for action in the politically-volatile area of immigration reform.

All those issues aside, a comprehensive tax overhaul has become the centerpiece of the congressional "to do" list. The high-profile failures to pass healthcare repeal and replacement legislation add to a renewed sense of urgency to achieve a major legislative win for the Trump administration and the Congressional majority. Congress is now ready to pass a "budget resolution" bill that will trigger a "fast-track" process for the new tax bill, requiring a simple majority, and circumventing any Senate filibuster. Nonetheless, the framework for the tax bill, which was issued jointly by the Trump administration and the Congressional majority, provides only the barest details about what is being proposed. The business tax cuts alone would reduce federal revenue by over $2 trillion in a ten-year period. An elimination of the estate tax and changes to individual tax provisions (e.g., lowering the highest income tax bracket and repealing the Alternative Minimum Tax) would reduce federal revenue by another $700 billion or so. The main tax increase under this joint proposal would involve the repeal of the state and local tax deduction, which would reap over $1 trillion in federal revenue for a ten-year period. Of course, eliminating state and local tax deductions on both income and property taxes would substantially affect the ability of state and local governments -- and school districts -- to raise their own revenues, since residents' federal tax bills would no longer be lowered correspondingly. Real estate property values (as well as assessed tax valuations) are projected to fall as a result--if this time-honored deduction is terminated. In addition, the state and local tax (SALT) deduction has become one of the most controversial proposals in the proposed tax framework. No private school tax subsidy has been included yet in the tax framework to date, but the bulk of smaller tax revisions have yet to be determined.

How these varied legislative issues will be crafted and managed – either separately or together– remains to be seen. Thankfully, there is little appetite for a government shutdown or government default as a way of leveraging policy concessions or budget cuts. But, the confluence of all these major pieces of legislation at the end of 2017 allows a small opening in the next few months to craft major legislative agreements with slim bipartisan majorities. Nonetheless, there have been few agreements between the Trump administration and the many factions on Capitol Hill on either side thus far, making the upcoming action some of the most challenging in years. On the other hand, Congress rarely faces a deadline it couldn't extend or delay. Stay tuned.

Council Bus Transportation Study Yields Results in Omaha; MIT Improves Boston School Bus Operation

Last year Nebraska's Omaha Public Schools experienced a shortage of bus drivers on the first day of school, resulting in delays of students being picked up and dropped off. According to the *Omaha World-Herald*, district officials estimated that about 3,000 students who ride buses were affected by the problems, with the headline of one article stating, "Officials apologize to OPS families for busing problems, promise to improve."

In an effort not to repeat the mistakes, the district turned to the Council of the Great City Schools to conduct an audit of its transportation program. Under the Council's Cities Building Cities program, which provides on-site assessments, technical assistance and peer reviews to Council member districts, a team of senior managers with extensive experience in transportation operations from school districts such as Los Angeles and Denver was assembled.

The team traveled to Omaha to conduct a four-day site visit, where they observed transportation operations, conducted interviews and examined documents and data. After the visit was concluded, they issued a report to the school district with a number of recommendations.

Omaha Public Schools contracts with the company Student Transportation of America to transport its general education students, and the Council recommended that the district work more closely with the company as well as prepare and give the firm student bus routes earlier.

The audit also recommended an effective call-center that provides parents, school staff, students and employees a single point of contact for callers seeking information, and called for the school system's Department of Transportation to play a bigger role in bus driver recruitment.

The Council also suggested that Omaha Schools reduce its transportation costs by identifying stops, runs and routes that could be consolidated or eliminated.

After the report was presented to the district, officials took several steps to implement the recommendations, according to Trevis Sallis, Omaha school system's transportation director in an interview with the *Urban Educator*. Sallis said that the district has updated its phone system and now has a single point of contact for parents. The district also provided student busing routes to the busing contractor two months earlier than it had in the past and boosted its recruitment efforts, working closely with the Human Resources Department.

"We also initiated a student assignment plan that helped reduce the number of routes from 476 needed at the beginning of last year to 330 starting this year," said Sallis.

And most importantly, the school district has developed a closer working relationship with the bus contractor, increasing official meetings to weekly from monthly.

Sallis believes the Council's audit was extremely helpful because "anytime you can get assistance or input from people who are subject-matter experts, it's always going to be an asset and benefit to you."

So how was busing in the district on the first day of the 2017-2018 school year? "It was a success," said Sallis, with 99 percent of general education buses arriving on time.

And Sallis was not alone in his assessment. The editorial in the *Omaha World-Herald* the day after schools opened in Omaha stated, "OPS buses are off to a good start."

The report, *Review of the Transportation Program of the Omaha Public Schools*, can be accessed on the Council's website at: www.cgcs.org.

Boston Gets Help from MIT

Boston Public Schools was spending $120 million on its school bus transportation program, one of the most expensive per-pupil school transportation systems in the nation. In an effort to reduce these costs, the district held a contest in April, awarding $15,000 to the winner to devise a system that would enable the district to use fewer buses for the same number of students.

Called the BPS Transportation Challenge, the contest was a way for the school system to tap into the expertise of the nation's leading experts and solve a problem that if fixed, could save the district millions of dollars that could go toward the classroom.

The "Quantum Team" from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology won the contest by creating a computer-based model that decreases the number of bus routes by strategically reconfiguring bus stops, increasing the number of students riding each bus and reducing the amount of time buses travel when no students are on board.

While it's one thing to create a system, how did the system work when put in place the first days of school?

"The MIT Quantum Team's new algorithm has indeed revolutionized the way we are routing our buses, and it's been quite a success," said Richard Weir, the district's director of communications, in an email to the *Urban Educator*.

Weir said that the new computer-based bus routing model the school system implemented has enabled the district to eliminate 50 buses from its fleet, without laying off any bus drivers, and generated $5 million in cost savings that is being reinvested back into the schools.

"It is also creating a 20,000-pound reduction in carbon emissions produced by [Boston] buses each day and will remove nearly 1 million miles of traffic-clogging bus trips off the road each year," said Weir.

Cleveland District Wins Council Research Award

In the education field, research is the foundation of professional development and student achievement. Which is why the Council of the Great City Schools recently honored an urban school district research department that has demonstrated excellence in the field of research and assessment.

The Office of Research and Evaluation for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District was the winner of the Council's 2017 Research and Assessment Leadership Award. The award was presented at the Council's Annual Academic, Information Technology & Research Conference in Palm Beach, Fla.

Cleveland's Office of Research and Evaluation has developed vendor and partner report cards for the district, which collect and analyze data about each vendor or partner-sponsored program, then assigns each program a grade based on the evaluation. The grading system is identical to school grades for easy comprehension.

"The Vendor Report Cards are easy to access and are an example of bridging school district evaluations and feedback with external research to improve instructional quality," said Moses Palacios, legislative and research manager with the Council. "Now Cleveland can make sound assessments on the progress of multiple initiatives. This will make the district more effective and ultimately aiding its students."

The award comes with a $1,000 prize to be given to any educational organization or scholarship fund of the winner's choice.

Tampa Superintendent *continued from page 9*

More than 6,000 elementary students participated in the Heart Healthy Challenge, where children played for 60 minutes a day and learned about making the right choices for a healthy diet.

"We believe this award is well-earned and well-deserved," said Eric Stommes, youth market director with the American Heart Association. Superintendent Eakins promotes health and wellness throughout the district and that is truly saving lives."

Founded in 1924, the American Heart Association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization fighting heart disease and stroke.

Great City Grads

Carlos Santana

Grammy Award-Winning Musician

1965 Graduate

Mission High School

San Franciso Unified School District

RESEARCH

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Research Department Overview
October 2017

Overall Research Department Goals/Priorities

The goal of the research department is to conduct, facilitate and disseminate research that will provide guidance and support to the Council's member districts and other key stakeholders as they work to improve academic achievement and reduce achievement gaps in large urban school districts. The following reports and presentations will be available on our Research Department webpage: http://www.cgcs.org/Research.

Update on New Projects

Analysis of Student Performance in State Recovery School Districts: Examining Data from Tennessee, Louisiana, and Michigan

This project will start in November 2017 and is expected to take 7 months and will include two major reviews:

- The research team will analyze longitudinal student achievement data from state assessments for recovery/achievement school district students and public school students across two states and districts. This will include analysis of school performance and demographic composition (race, family income, ELL status, SWD status, etc.) prior to the transition of schools to state recovery status and post-transition. The analysis will include a study of the differences in student populations of the current schools compared to their population prior to becoming recovery schools.
- The research team will also conduct a qualitative analysis that will include analyzing closure trends, parent perceptions of new schools, administrator perceptions of the new districts through surveys and interviews.

Project Timeline:
The timeline for this project includes the following:
- Quantitative data collection and analysis – school performance data, demographic data, etc. – 3 months
- Qualitative data collection and analysis – closure trends, parent perceptions of new schools, administrator perceptions of the new districts, etc. – 3 months
- Final Report – 1 months

Trial Urban District Assessment Advisory Task Force to the National Assessment Governing Board

Given the 2017 expansion of the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) program to 27 districts, the Council submitted a technical proposal to the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) to establish a Task Force of local education leaders from TUDA districts. The Task Force is expected to provide feedback to the Governing Board, including recommendations on areas of policy, research, and communications related to the TUDA program. It is our hope that the Task Force will help inform the Strategic Vision of the NAGB and help strengthen and guide the evolution of the TUDA program.

The Council has proposed a 24-month effort that will include the creation, project management, and on-going coordination of the TUDA Task Force. The Council proposed to establish and coordinate a TUDA Task Force for NAGB to provide advice and feedback on the development and operation of the TUDA program. The effort will be devoted to creating, coordinating, and supporting the on-going work of a 10 member – excluding Council and NAGB staff – Task Force of local education agency leaders from TUDA districts. The Council proposed a 10 member distribution as follows:

- Two (2) district superintendents,
- Two (2) deputy or associate superintendents,
- Three (3) research and evaluation or assessment directors, and
- Three (3) public information officers.

Update on On-Going Projects

Analysis of TUDA Performance and the Influence and Impact of Private and Charter Schools on Student Achievement and Urban School Districts

In the spring of 2011, the Council research team published the study *Pieces of the Puzzle: Recent Performance Trends in Urban Districts – A Closer Look at 2009 NAEP Results (An Addendum)*. A portion of that report analyzed the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) performance of Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) performance while adjusting the district performance based on key background variables. The key background variables included race/ethnicity, special education status, English language learner status, free- or reduced-price lunch eligibility, parental education level (grade eight only), and a measure of literacy materials available in the home. The analysis compared the predicted NAEP performance (after controlling for the background variables) to the actual NAEP performance of the districts. The analysis allowed the Council to identify districts that were performing better than expected on the NAEP assessment and beginning to mitigate some of the effects of poverty and other background characteristics of students that typically suppress academic performance.

The lessons learned from that study have prompted the Council research team to replicate the analysis using data from the 2011 and 2015 administrations of NAEP reading and mathematics assessments in grades four and eight. This study not only identifies

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districts that continue to perform better than expected based on background variables, but when combined with the analysis of the 2009 data, district trends in performance can be examined which provide a very different picture of the changes in district effects over time. For example, Detroit has typically been one of the lowest performing TUDA district, and even when controlling for relevant background variables, Detroit performs lower than expected. However, this analysis revealed that Detroit is one of only a few districts that has made consistent progress on the NAEP assessment each year across multiple grades and subjects (grade eight reading and grade four math). The progress Detroit is making is all but lost in any other analysis of student performance in the district, but indicates that student achievement, though not where it needs to be, is improving.

Methodology

For this analysis, the research team conducted a regression analyses to estimate the performance of a district if its demographic profile, in terms of the selected student background characteristics, is the same as the average profile of all students across the country. The analyses put the districts on a more level playing field with regard to these characteristics. Based on this regression analyses (using student level data), we computed the expected performance of each district based on their profile in terms of the selected student background characteristics. We subtract the expected performance from the actual performance to calculate the "district effect." We then analyzed the changes in the district effects over the 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 NAEP administrations. The results of the analysis of TUDA districts for 2009 through 2013 are presented below. Albuquerque, Dallas and Hillsborough County began participating in NAEP in 2011 and trends are reported for only two assessment cycles.

A draft report of the results of the full study has been completed. A final formal report will be released in the Fall of 2017.

Academic Key Performance Indicators

The board of directors authorized the development of Academic Key Performance Indicators in the October 2014. In the fall of that year, several teams of educators from Council member districts crafted a list of desired indicators for general core instruction, special education, and English language learners. The list was refined and narrowed to a smaller set of indicators for a pilot conducted in the fall of 2015. Based on this pilot, data collection instruments and indicators were further refined and all Council member districts were asked to participate in a full pilot of the Academic Key Performance Indicators in the spring of 2016. The refined set of Academic Key Performance Indicators are designed to measure the progress among the Council's membership toward improving the academic outcomes for students and include the following:

- Ninth grade algebra completion
- Ninth graders failing one or more core courses
- Ninth graders with a GPA of B or better

- Number of high school students enrolled in advanced placement
- AP exam scores of 3 or higher
- Number of high school students enrolled in AP-equivalent courses
- Four-year high school graduation rate
- Five-year high school graduation rate
- Percent of students with 20 days or more absent from school
- Instructional days per student missed per year due to suspension
- Percent of students identified as needing special education
- Percent of students placed in each general education setting by percent of time

Report. The research team initiated the first wave of updated Academic KPI data collection in January 2017. The Council released a preliminary report of the pilot results and a description of the potential analysis of data collected. The Council plans to release another full report in Fall 2017.

Males of Color Initiative

<u>Overview</u>

In October 2010, the Council of the Great City Schools released *A Call for Change*, which attempted to summarize our findings and the analyses of others on the social and educational factors shaping the outcomes of Black males in urban schools. *A Call for Change* documented the many challenges facing our Black male youth, and the Council's Board of Directors has agreed to move forward aggressively on solutions.

In July 2014, the Council joined President Barack Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative to address opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color. Sixty-one Council districts have signed *A Pledge by America's Great City Schools* to ensure that pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school educational efforts better serve the academic and social development of Males of Color.

<u>Update</u>

Preconference. Preceding the 2017 March Legislative Conference, the Council convened a Males of Color Policy Conference. The purpose of this conference was to allow district leaders to collaborate and learn from one another on a range of topics important to improving the academic outcomes of young men and boys of color. This gathering allowed districts who are in the beginning phases of planning to network with colleagues from other cities.

Report. The Council has developed a set of Key Performance Indicators to measure the progress among the Council's membership toward improving the academic outcomes. As part of the project, the Council requested disaggregated data by race and gender in order to be able to analyze outcomes for Males of Color. A preliminary report was released fall 2016 analyzing data from the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. An update to that report

with newly collected data for the 2015-16 is currently in progress with a new report anticipated in Fall of 2017. In addition, a full report on the challenges and recommendations stemming from the rich discussion of the policy pre-conference is in progress and scheduled for release in the Fall of 2017. The report is titled *Supporting Environments of Excellence for Males of Color in the Great Cities*, and the elements of the report include a collection of research literature supporting the report's recommendations for schools and districts.

Upcoming/Pending Projects

Analysis of ACT/SAT Results in CGCS Districts

The Council will partner with the College Board and ACT to analyze results on college and career readiness for Council districts. The report will also include analysis of SAT and ACT results to assess high school achievement and progress. The Council research team plans to follow the data analysis phase of this project with a qualitative look at district efforts that have contributed to any improvements in student achievement uncovered.

ACADEMIC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
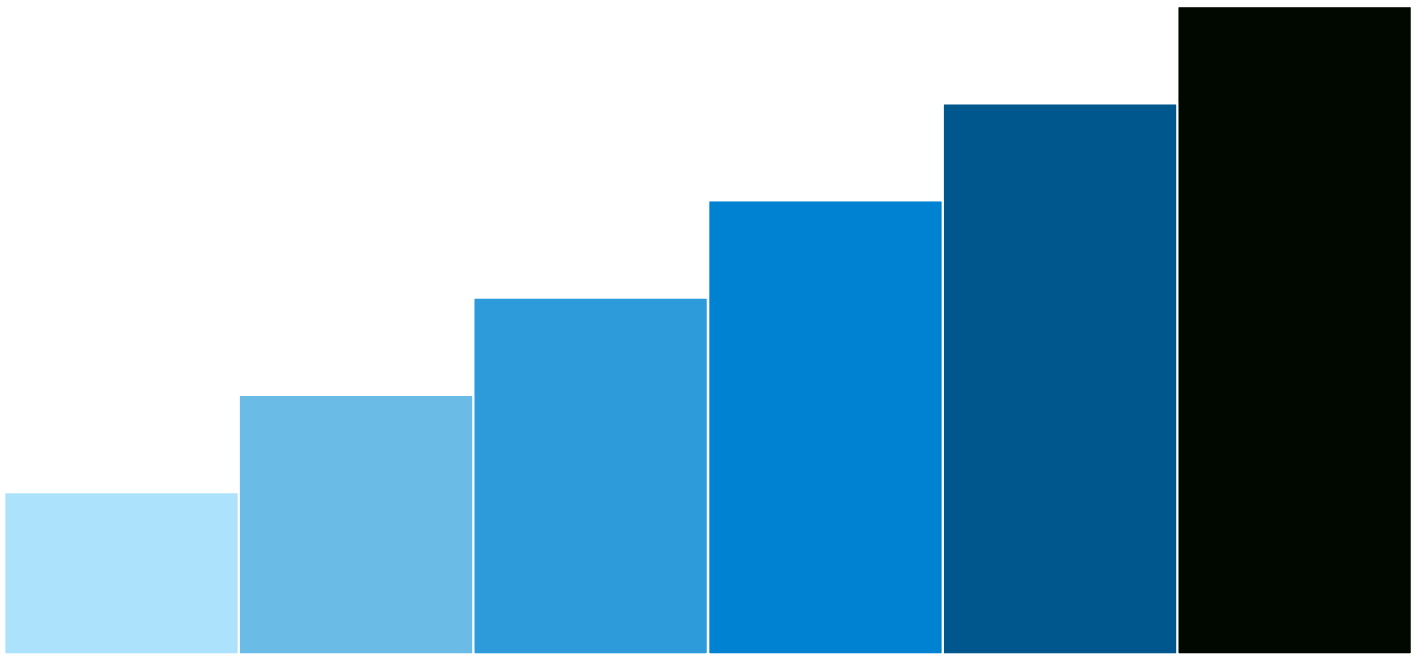
Academic Key Performance Indicators Pilot Report

Council of the Great City Schools

October 2017

Academic Key Performance Indicators:
Pilot Report

By the

Council of the Great City Schools

Ashley Ison

Renata Lyons

Moses Palacios

Ray Hart

Michael Casserly

October 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the nation's large urban school districts have consistently learned from the progress of their peer districts across the country. Great City School districts that have embraced the challenge of educating America's urban children have recognized the value of benchmarking their performance and growth against the progress of others.

In 2002, the board of directors of the Council of the Great City Schools (Council) authorized what became known as the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project to develop and implement key performance indicators across the member school districts in operations, business services, finances, human resources, and technology. These performance indicators in operations have evolved over the years and are now reported annually by the Council's in its *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools* series. However, one critical element was not included in these annual reports: academic performance.

In the same year, 2002, six member districts of the Council began participating in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The purpose of this participation was to gauge performance across state lines, compare progress, and ascertain what reforms seemed to be working. As of 2017, there will be 27 Council member districts participating in TUDA. Of course, not all Council member districts are eligible for TUDA, and TUDA results do not provide all the academic comparisons that the member districts would like to make.

Because of that information gap, the board of directors took the next step in authorizing the development of ***Academic*** Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in October 2014. To put the board's wishes into place, teams of educators from Council member districts came together to begin drafting initial indicators in general instruction, special education, English language learners, and a number of academic cost-indicators. A lengthy list of potential indicators developed by the teams was refined and narrowed to a smaller set for piloting in 2015. Eight member districts participated in the pilot.

Based on the pilot, data-collection surveys and the indicators themselves were further refined, and all Council member districts were asked to participate in a full-scale pilot of the Academic Key Performance Indicators in 2016. The preliminary and summary results of this data collection are presented in this report. In addition, this report presents a number of different ways that member districts can analyze the data themselves by disaggregating results, showing trends, and combining variables. An electronic system is under development by which members will be able to do this on-line.

In the meantime, this report focuses on the data collection and analysis of the following Academic KPIs:
- Pre-K enrollment relative to Kindergarten enrollment
- Percent of 4th and 8th graders proficient in reading and math on NAEP
- Algebra I completion rates for credit by grade 9
- Ninth grade course failure rates — at least one core course
- Ninth graders with B average (GPA) or better
- Absentee rates by grade level
- Suspension rates
- Instructional days missed per student due to suspensions
- AP participation rates
- AP-equivalent participation rates

- AP exam pass rates
- Early college enrollment
- Four-year graduation rate

Because this report is considered a pilot, the data presented should be viewed cautiously. Districts will need to review and discuss the results, fine tune their survey responses, and certify that their results are accurate. In the meantime, districts should not use these preliminary results to make decisions, but they should use the results to ask questions.

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

A. Methodology

Developing the KPIs

This pilot study sought to answer the following questions:

1. Is it feasible to develop Academic KPIs and collect data on them across member urban school districts?
2. Are comparisons between districts on academic performance measures valid and reliable?
3. Do districts collect and maintain requested KPI data in a way that they can retrieve and format them?
4. Are data collection tools clear and easy to use?
5. Do the results of data analysis provide valuable insights into district academic performance and student achievement?
6. How should the indicators be refined going forward?

To answer these questions, Council staff organized a process to develop and collect KPIs in three phases. The first phase involved the development of academic performance and cost KPIs. The second phase involved a small pilot of performance and cost KPIs in eight districts. These district included Albuquerque, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Houston, Los Angeles, Kansas City (MO), and Milwaukee. The final phase assessed the viability of collecting comparable performance indicators across all Council member districts.

During the first phase, three advisory groups were formed and convened to develop the academic and cost indicators. These groups included administrators from Council member districts in the areas of curriculum and instruction, English language learners, and special education. Representatives from each area formed three homogeneous advisory groups. After several meetings, the groups submitted a list of potential KPIs on academic indicators as well as financial expenditure indicators in each area. Finally, a literature review was conducted to identify variables that predicted student outcomes and could be used to formulate KPIs, and to identify past efforts by others to benchmark performance and costs.

The indicators and costs were then reviewed by a team of general education, special education, English language learner, finance, and research department representatives to determine the feasibility of collecting comparable data across districts. The review included the relative value of each indicator, the data collection burden of the indicator, and the ability to disaggregate the data by student group (e.g., ELL, students with disabilities, ethnicity, gender, etc.). The original list of KPIs was then narrowed from 200 key performance indicators to approximately 58 cost and performance measures.

During phase two of the process, the Council team piloted the data collection instruments and the KPI definitions in 2015 with the eight member school districts listed above. Throughout the piloting process, data-collection tools and definitions were continuously revised based on feedback from participating districts and results from an initial data analysis effort.

Phase three of the pilot involved a full-scale data-collection effort to assess the viability of the indicators across a larger number of Council member districts. After revising indicator definitions and the survey instrument based on the pilot, the Council team developed two methodologies by which to collect the data. The first methodology involved an on-line survey, and the second methodology involved Excel data sheets that district staff could populate with their information. The purpose of this phase of the work was to test the potential of collecting academic performance indicators across all districts. The cost indicators

developed in phase 1 and phase 2 were deferred to future data collection efforts, while the Council devoted the work this year to the performance indicators.

The remaining sections of this report illustrate the potential use of the performance indicators across all member districts. The data are based on results from more than 50 member districts. Not all member districts completed all KPIs, but the charts and tables summarize the data from all respondents. The data reported here is for illustrative purposes only, and have not been fully verified by member districts, so the results should not be used yet to make decisions. Nonetheless, they should be used to ask questions and fine-tune the data.

B. Analysis

Organizing and Presenting the Data

The analysis presented here is divided into four sections: 1) elementary achievement indicators, 2) secondary achievement indicators, 3) attendance indicators, and 4) disciplinary indicators. In this report, we include sample charts only to illustrate the viability of the Key Performance Indicators. Not all data were presented or analyzed.

Finally, data are reported here by district using codes for each one that correspond to the codes used in the non-instructional KPIs. In the graphs, each bar represents a responding school district.

Elementary Achievement Indicators

Two elementary achievement indicators were used in the phase-three pilot. The first focused on the percentage of students annually advancing from pre-K to kindergarten, and the second focused on the percentage of fourth and eighth grade students who were proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and math assessments. Data on the percent of students below basic are also reported.

The KPI team developed another KPI from the data submitted. The new KPI divided the pre-K enrollment reported on the KPI data survey by the kindergarten enrollment. This gives a preliminary proxy measure of the size of districts' pre-K program relative to kindergarten enrollment.

Figures 1.1 to 1.18 show the relationship between the two variables and provides insight into the relative availability of pre-K seats compared to kindergarten enrollment for all students and select student groups in 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16.

Figures 2.1 to 2.48 show reading and mathematics percentages of fourth and eighth grade students who are *at or above proficient* and *below basic* on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2015. Figures 2.49 to 2.96 illustrate the *change* in *at or above proficient* and *below basic* rates between 2009 and 2015. The data are reported only for Trial Urban Assessment Districts (TUDA), Large City, and National public jurisdictions.

Figure 1.1: Pre-K Enrollment as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment, 2015-16

Label	Percent
30	90%
39	82%
76	78%
2	76%
41	71%
51	70%
29	70%
46	69%
40	66%
26	64%
19	62%
71	62%
54	59%
68	57%
27	56%
431	55%
43	55%
12	54%
4	51%
79	49%
21	47%
3	46%
67	38%
66	35%
47	35%
Median	34%
34	34%
55	32%
52	31%
15	30%
33	30%
32	30%
18	30%
11	30%
35	28%
49	27%
97	27%
48	26%
8	24%
44	24%
10	23%
5	22%
28	21%
13	19%
16	15%
77	14%
74	11%
1	11%
58	9%
62	7%
57	7%
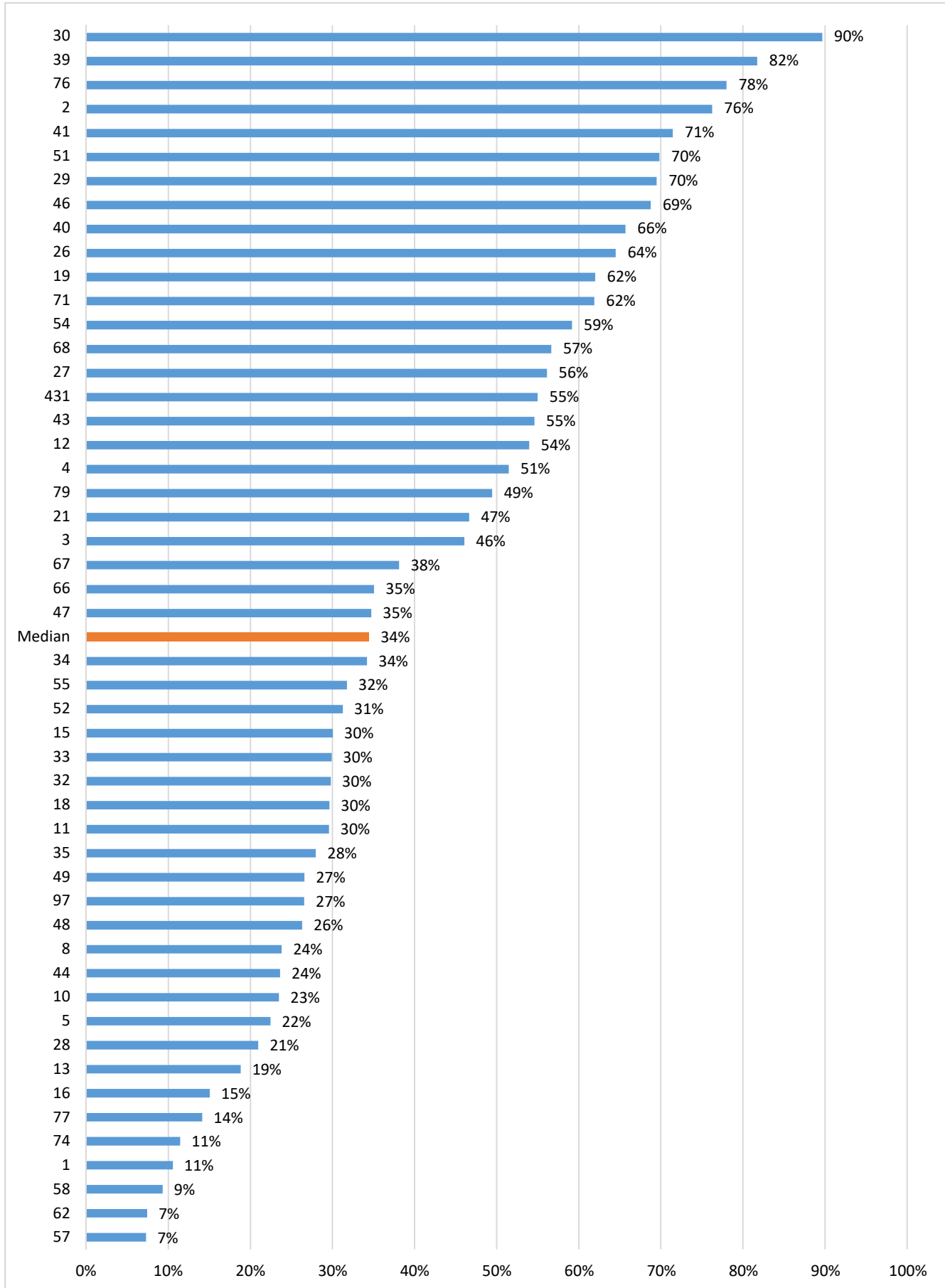
Pre-K Enrollment as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment

Note: Higher values and increases are desired

- Figure 1.1: Total number of pre-K students divided by total number kindergarten students.
- Figure 1.2: Percentage point difference in the ratio of pre-K to kindergarten students within the district between 2013-14 and 2015-16.
- Figure 1.3: Upper and lower quartile change across years in the pre-K to kindergarten students within the district.

Figure 1.3: Trends in the Percent of Pre-K to Kindergarten Enrollment by Quartile, 2013-14 to 2015-16

	13-14	14-15	15-16
Upper Quartile	56.7%	59.7%	58.6%
Lower Quartile	21.9%	24.6%	24.4%
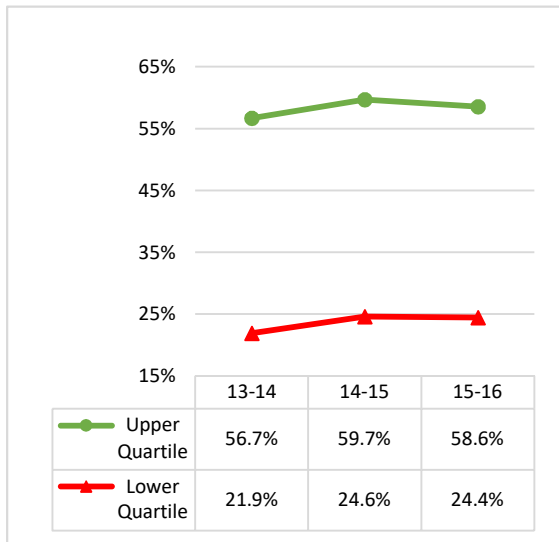
Districts in the best quartile (2015-2016)

- Austin
- Baltimore
- Boston
- Chicago
- Dallas
- Dayton
- District of Columbia
- Fort Worth
- Houston
- Milwaukee
- Oklahoma City
- Richmond
- San Antonio

Figure 1.2: Percentage Change in Pre-K Enrollment Relative to Kindergarten Enrollment, 2013-14 to 2015-16
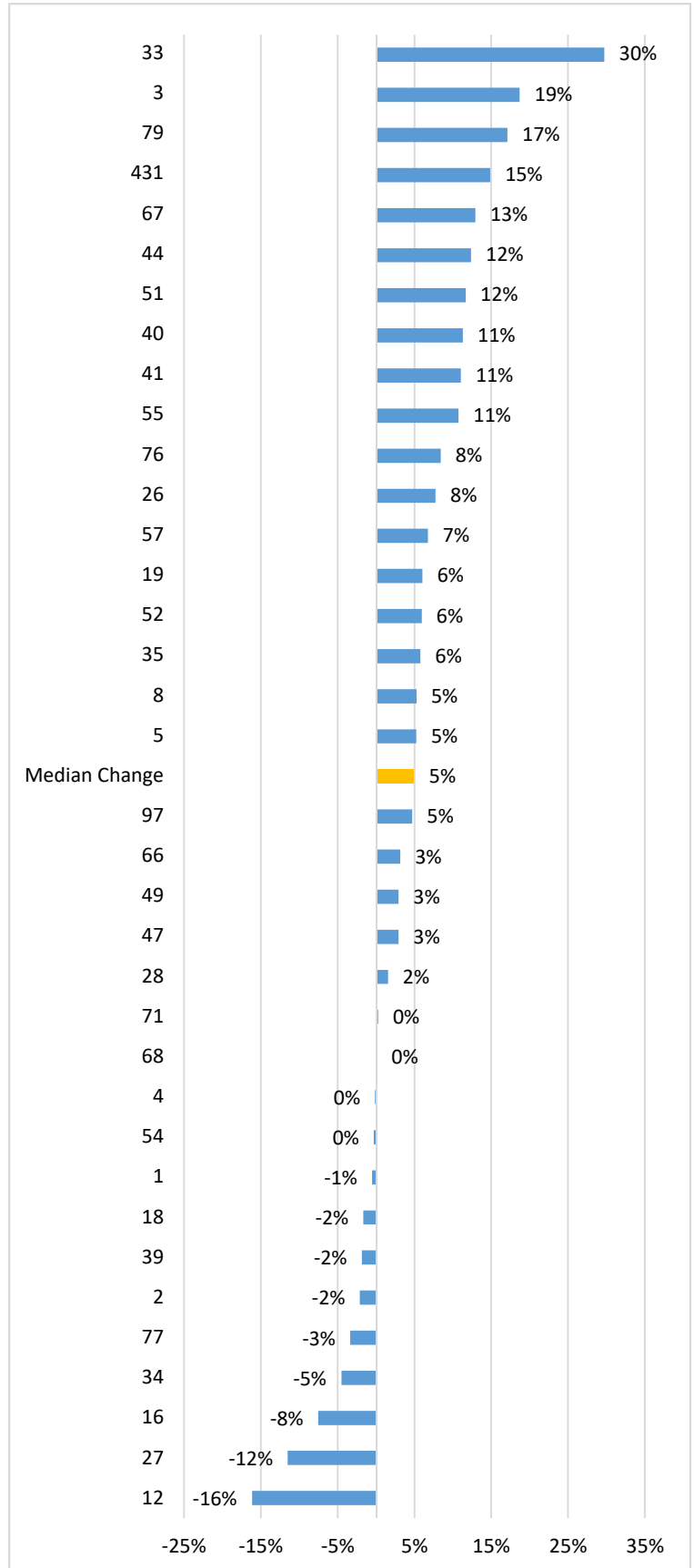
Figure 1.4: Pre-K Enrollment of Black Males as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Black Males, 2015-16

District	Percent
2	94%
39	88%
30	88%
76	87%
71	79%
29	70%
46	69%
40	68%
26	67%
32	67%
43	65%
51	64%
27	63%
19	61%
54	61%
41	58%
79	56%
68	55%
21	49%
47	49%
4	48%
66	47%
12	46%
431	45%
52	41%
Median	40%
34	39%
55	39%
10	38%
53	37%
3	37%
5	36%
8	34%
35	34%
49	33%
48	33%
44	32%
33	32%
97	32%
18	31%
13	30%
1	28%
15	28%
67	27%
11	27%
28	24%
77	21%
16	18%
62	10%
74	9%
57	7%

299
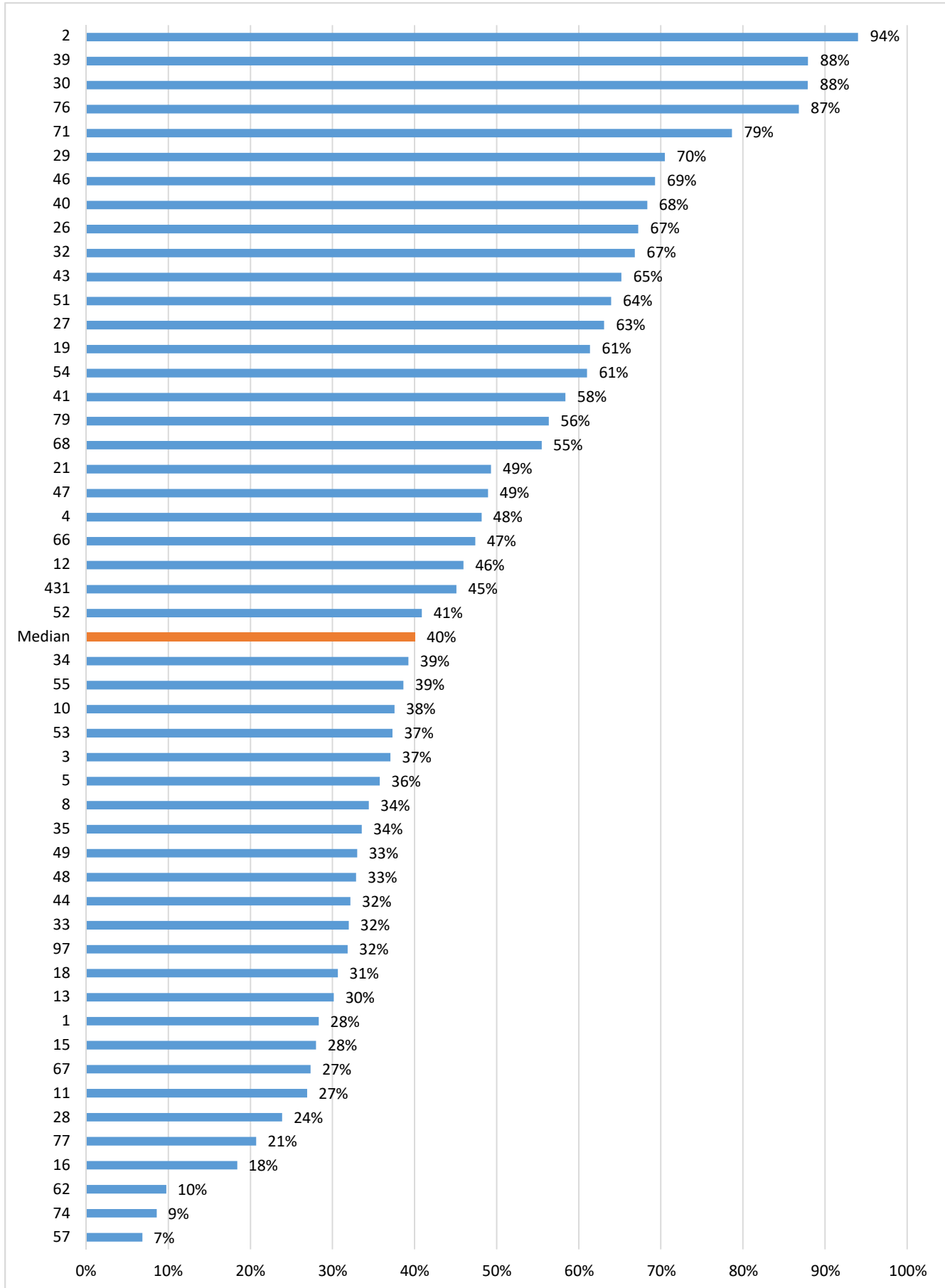
Pre-K Enrollment of Black Males as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Black Males

Note: Higher values and increases are desired

- Figure 1.4: Total number of Black male pre-K students divided by total number of Black male kindergarten students.
- Figure 1.5: Percentage point difference in the ratio of pre-K to kindergarten Black male students within the district between 2013-14 and 2015-16.
- Figure 1.6: Upper and lower quartile change across years in the percentage of Black male pre-K to kindergarten students within the district.

Figure 1.6: Trends in the Percent of Pre-K to Kindergarten Black Male Enrollment by Quartile, 2013-14 to 2015-16

	13-14	14-15	15-16
Upper Quartile	55.1%	58.5%	62.7%
Lower Quartile	26.5%	30.7%	31.9%
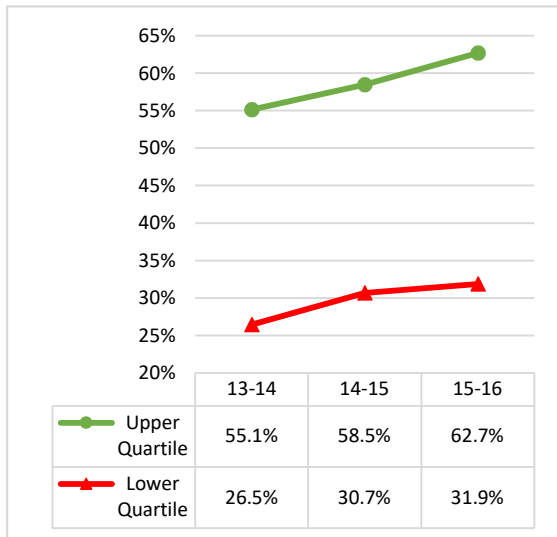
Districts in the best quartile (2015-2016)

- Austin
- Baltimore
- Boston
- District of Columbia
- Fort Worth
- Houston
- Miami-Dade
- Milwaukee
- Norfolk
- Oklahoma City
- Pittsburgh
- Richmond
- San Antonio

Figure 1.5: Percentage Change in Black Male Pre-K Enrollment Relative to Black Male Kindergarten Enrollment, 2013-14 to 2015-16

District	Change
33	32%
79	21%
40	19%
26	18%
3	18%
76	16%
431	16%
71	15%
44	14%
55	14%
41	10%
67	10%
52	9%
1	9%
97	9%
51	8%
8	7%
35	7%
Median Change	5%
47	5%
49	5%
54	4%
68	4%
5	3%
57	2%
66	1%
39	0%
28	0%
19	-1%
2	-1%
34	-2%
4	-4%
77	-9%
18	-10%
16	-11%
27	-13%
12	-19%
53	-23%
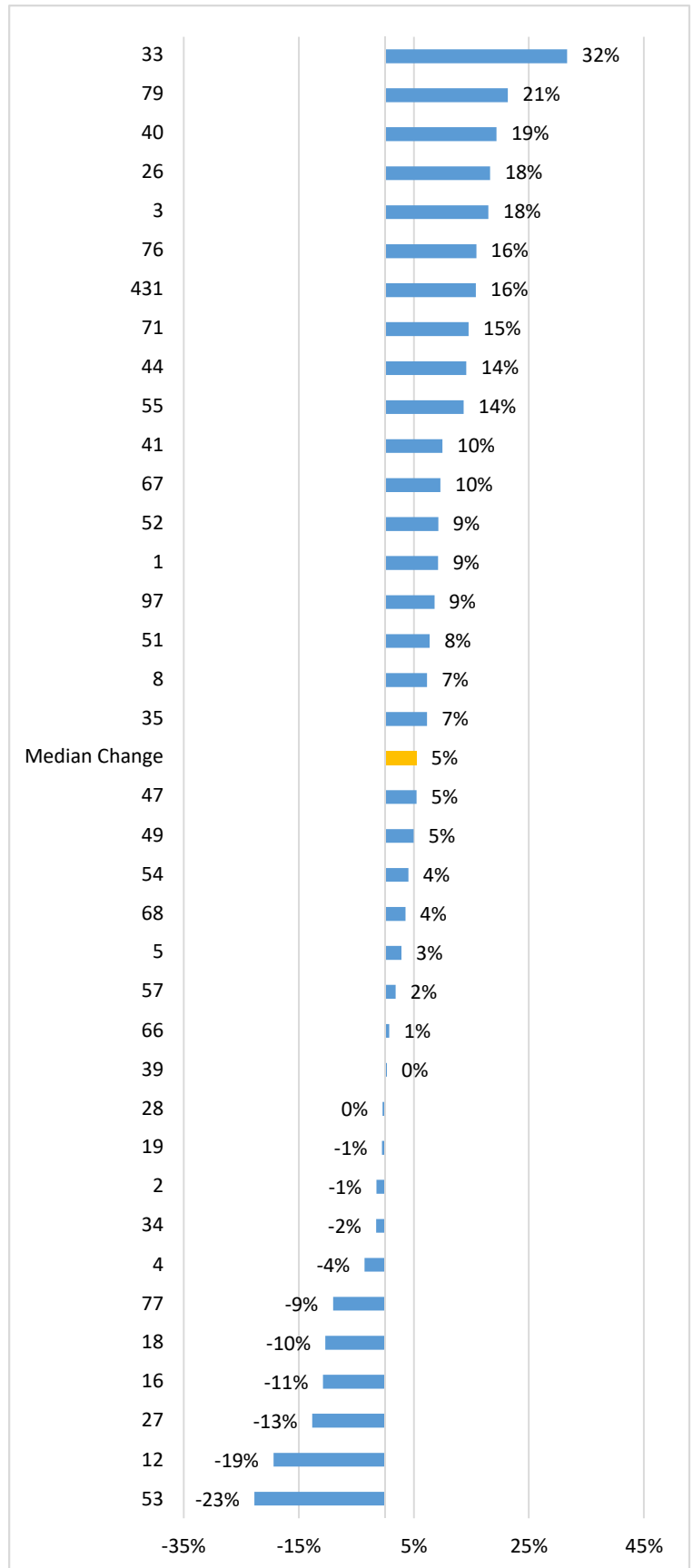
Figure 1.7: Pre-K Enrollment of Hispanic Males as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Hispanic Males, 2015-16
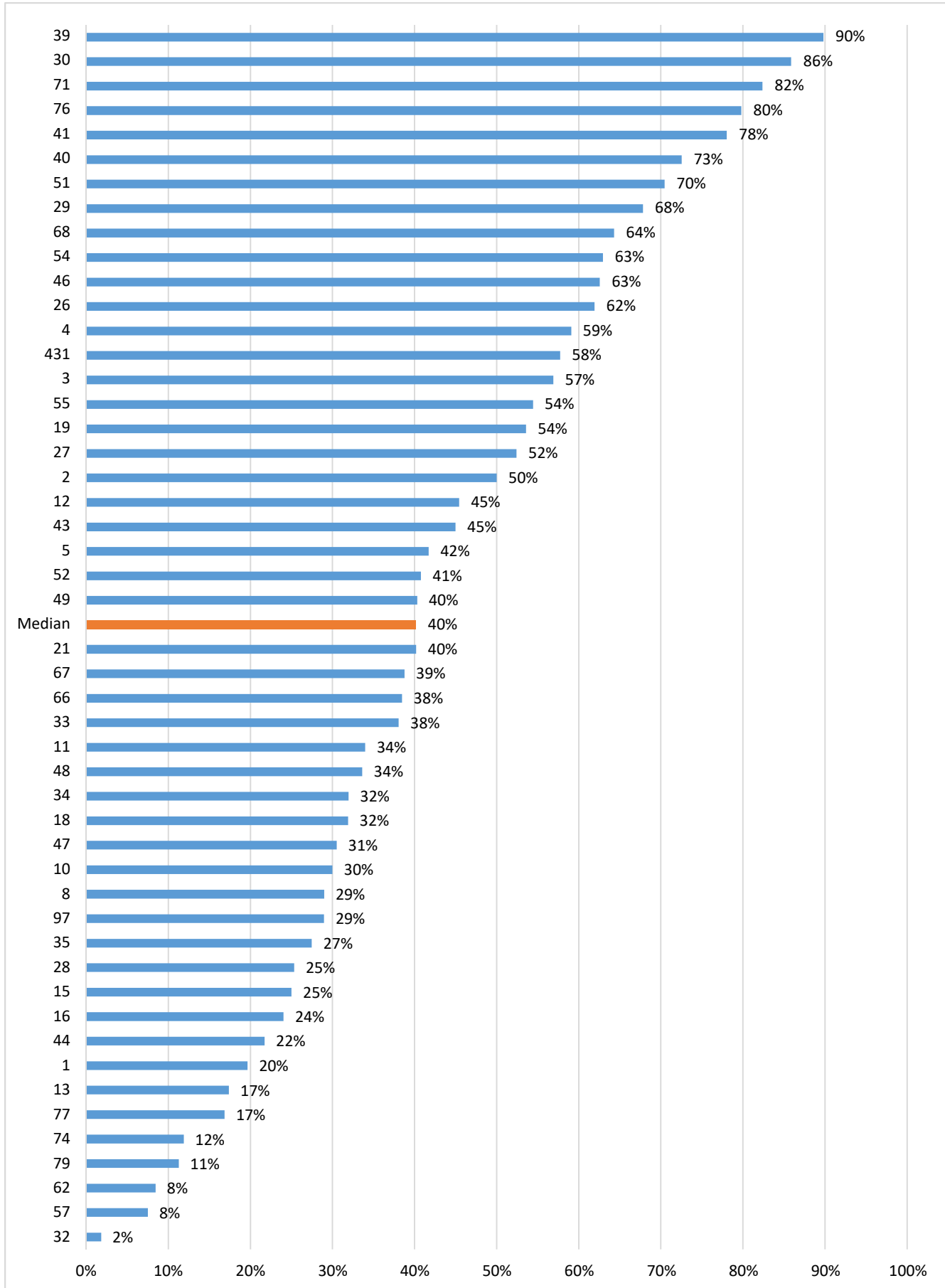
ID	Percent
39	90%
30	86%
71	82%
76	80%
41	78%
40	73%
51	70%
29	68%
68	64%
54	63%
46	63%
26	62%
4	59%
431	58%
3	57%
55	54%
19	54%
27	52%
2	50%
12	45%
43	45%
5	42%
52	41%
49	40%
Median	40%
21	40%
67	39%
66	38%
33	38%
11	34%
48	34%
34	32%
18	32%
47	31%
10	30%
8	29%
97	29%
35	27%
28	25%
15	25%
16	24%
44	22%
1	20%
13	17%
77	17%
74	12%
79	11%
62	8%
57	8%
32	2%

301

Pre-K Enrollment of Hispanic Males as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Hispanic Males

Note: Higher values and increases are desired

- Figure 1.7: Total number of Hispanic male pre-K students divided by total number of Hispanic male kindergarten students.
- Figure 1.8: Percentage point difference in the ratio of pre-K to kindergarten Hispanic male students within the district between 2013-14 and 2015-16.
- Figure 1.9: Upper and lower quartile change across years in the percentage of Hispanic male pre-K to kindergarten students within the district.

Figure 1.9: Trends in the Percent of Pre-K to Kindergarten Hispanic Male Enrollment by Quartile, 2013-14 to 2015-16
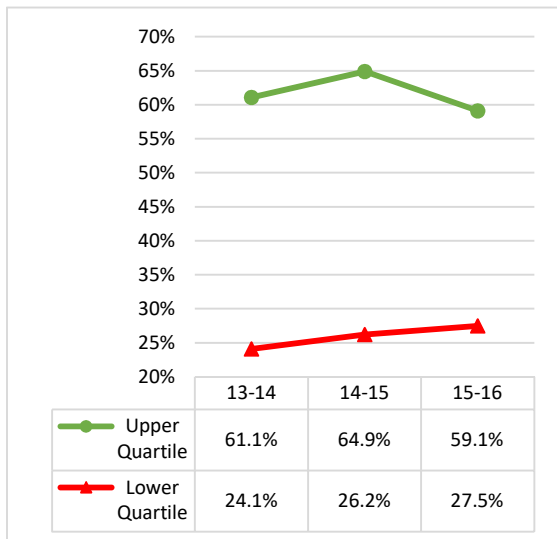
	13-14	14-15	15-16
Upper Quartile	61.1%	64.9%	59.1%
Lower Quartile	24.1%	26.2%	27.5%

Districts in the best quartile (2015-2016)

- Arlington
- Austin
- Baltimore
- Boston
- Chicago
- Dallas
- District of Columbia
- Fort Worth
- Houston
- Milwaukee
- Oklahoma City
- San Antonio
- Wichita

Figure 1.8: Percentage Change in Hispanic Male Pre-K Enrollment Relative to Hispanic Male Kindergarten Enrollment, 2013-14 to 2015-16

District	Change
19	44%
33	38%
3	24%
55	14%
28	14%
431	14%
44	12%
5	12%
41	11%
67	11%
76	11%
35	10%
40	9%
79	8%
52	8%
51	8%
8	8%
Median Change	5%
97	5%
49	1%
66	1%
71	1%
26	1%
1	1%
54	1%
4	-1%
39	-1%
47	-2%
18	-4%
2	-4%
68	-5%
77	-7%
27	-7%
16	-9%
34	-13%
12	-22%

302
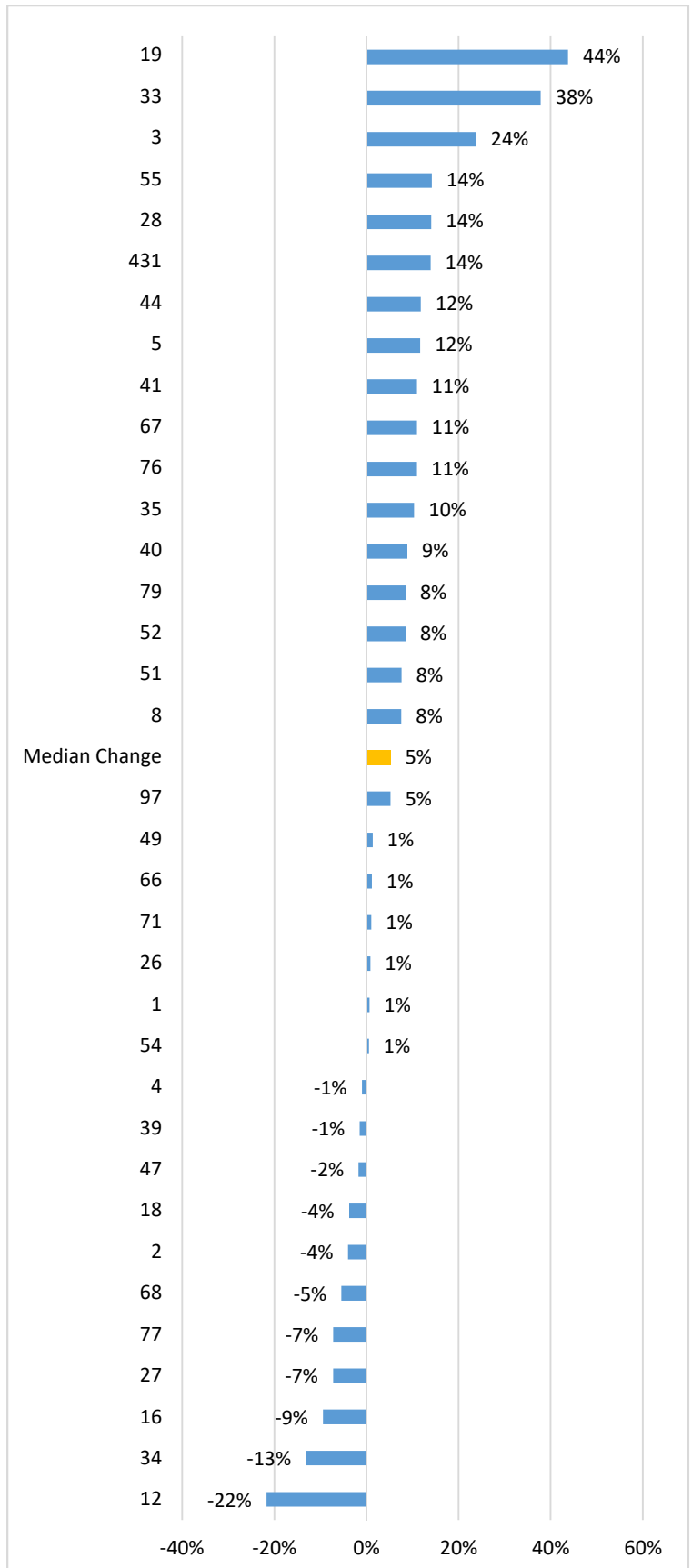
Figure 1.10: Pre-K Enrollment of Free or Reduced Price Lunch Students as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Free or Reduced Price Lunch Students, 2015-16
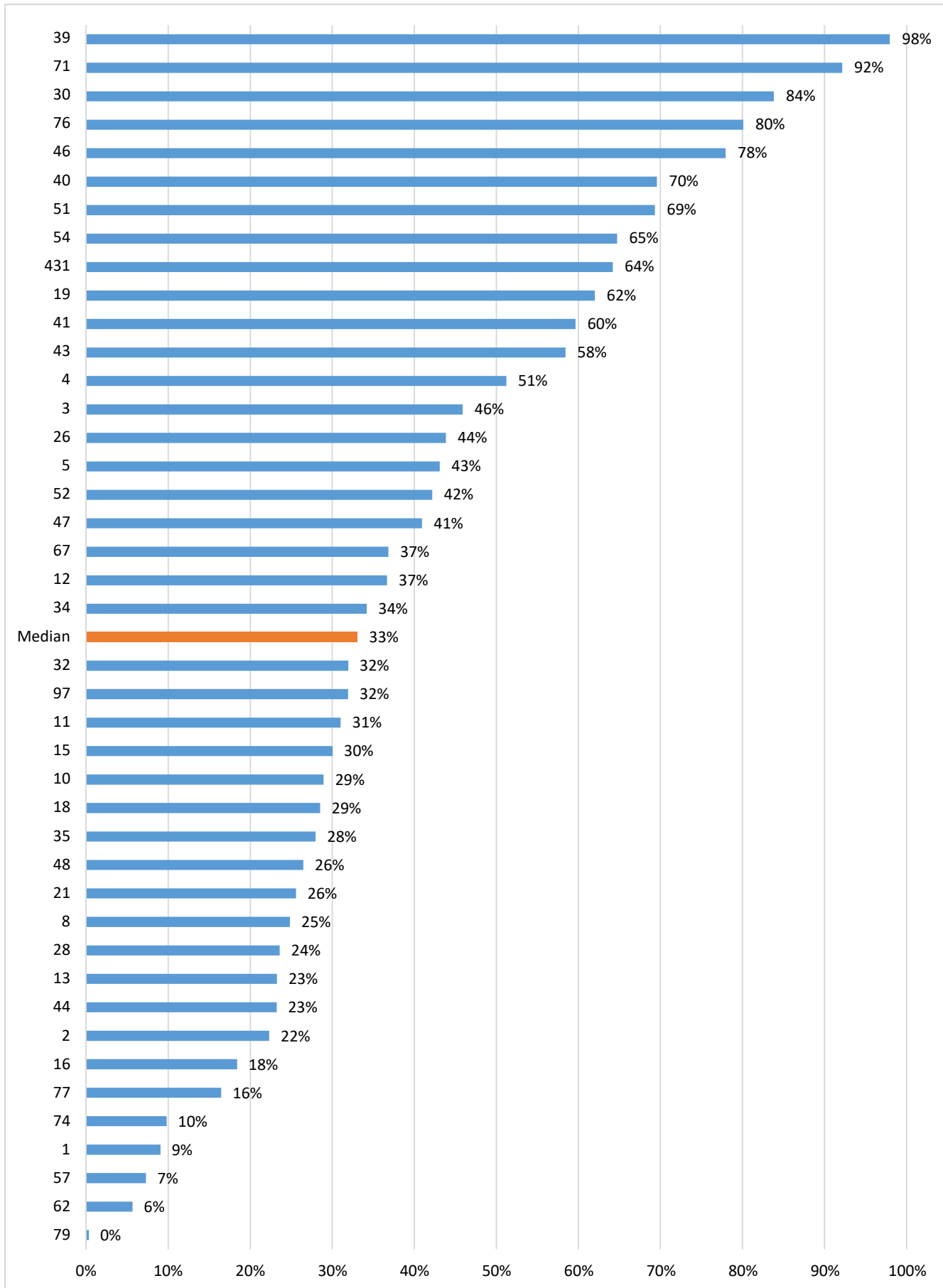
Category	Percent
39	98%
71	92%
30	84%
76	80%
46	78%
40	70%
51	69%
54	65%
431	64%
19	62%
41	60%
43	58%
4	51%
3	46%
26	44%
5	43%
52	42%
47	41%
67	37%
12	37%
34	34%
Median	33%
32	32%
97	32%
11	31%
15	30%
10	29%
18	29%
35	28%
48	26%
21	26%
8	25%
28	24%
13	23%
44	23%
2	22%
16	18%
77	16%
74	10%
1	9%
57	7%
62	6%
79	0%

303

Pre-K Enrollment of Free or Reduced Price Lunch Students as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Free or Reduced Price Lunch Students

Note: Higher values and increases are desired

- Figure 1.10: Total number of FRPL pre-K students divided by total number of FRPL students enrolled in kindergarten.
- Figure 1.11: Percentage point difference in the ratio of pre-K to kindergarten FRPL students within the district between 2013-14 and 2015-16
- Figure 1.12: Upper and lower quartile change across years in the percentage of FRPL pre-K to kindergarten students within the district.

Figure 1.12: Trends in the Percent of Pre-K Free or Reduced Price Lunch Students to Kindergarten Free or Reduced Price Lunch Students by Quartile, 2013-14 to 2015-16

	13-14	14-15	15-16
Upper Quartile	59.1%	51.9%	59.3%
Lower Quartile	29.4%	23.1%	23.9%
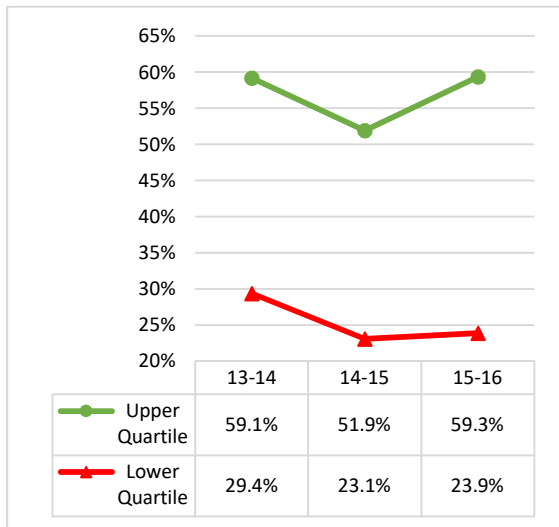
Districts in the best quartile (2015-2016)

- Austin
- Baltimore
- Chicago
- Dallas
- Dayton
- El Paso
- Fort Worth
- Houston
- Milwaukee
- Oklahoma City
- San Antonio

Figure 1.11: Percentage Change in Free or Reduced Price Lunch Pre-K Enrollment Relative to Free or Reduced Price Lunch Kindergarten Enrollment, 2013-14 to 2015-16
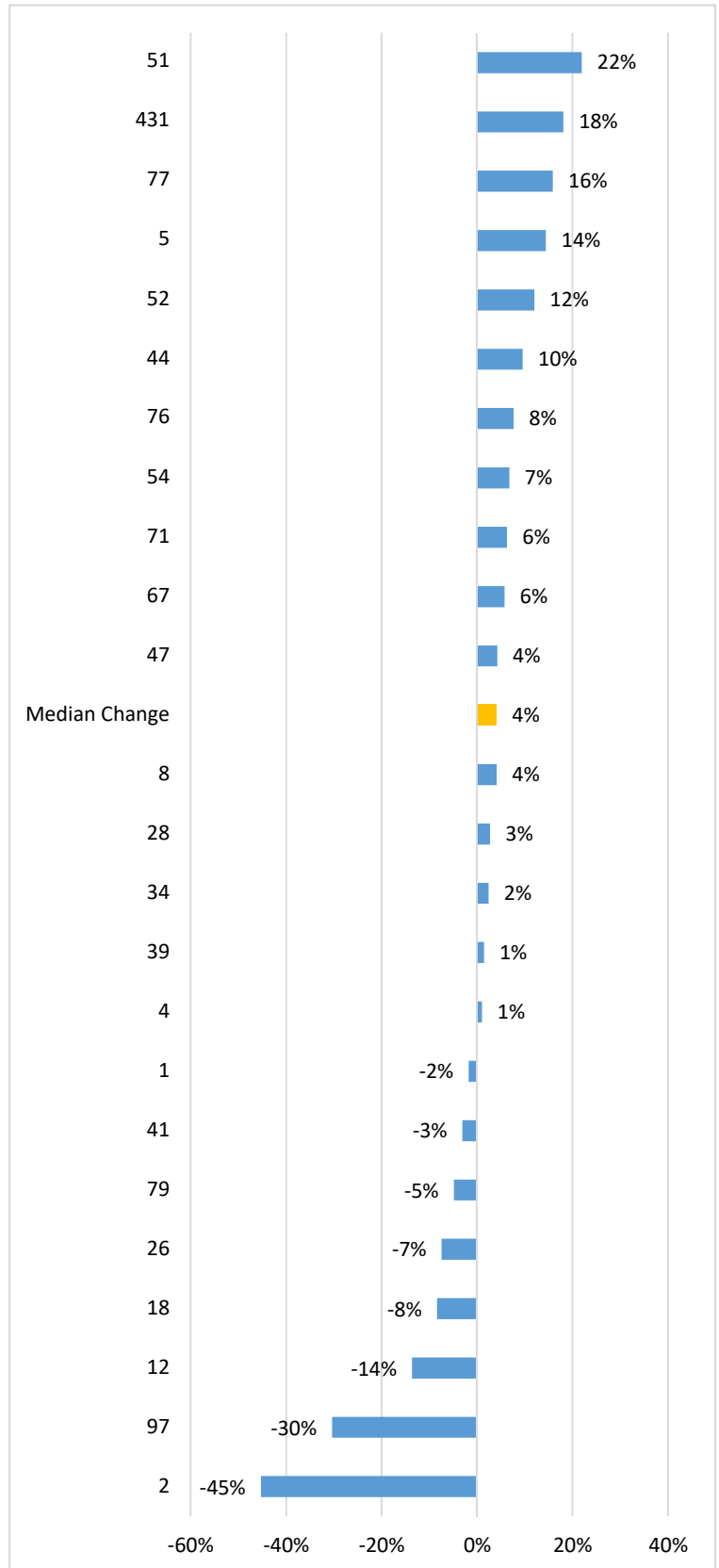
Figure 1.13: Pre-K Enrollment of Students with Disabilities as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Students with Disabilities, 2015-16
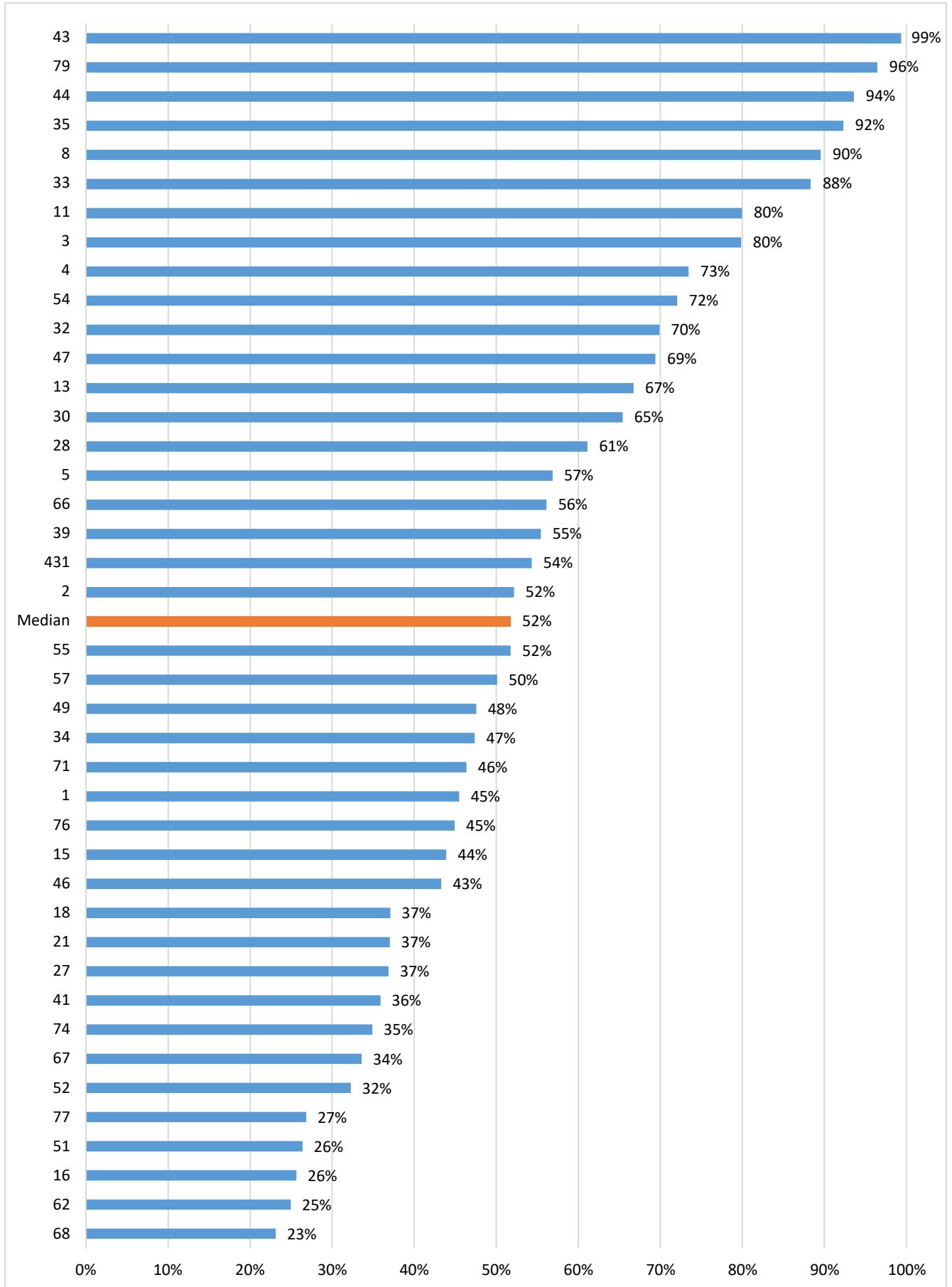
Category	Percent
43	99%
79	96%
44	94%
35	92%
8	90%
33	88%
11	80%
3	80%
4	73%
54	72%
32	70%
47	69%
13	67%
30	65%
28	61%
5	57%
66	56%
39	55%
431	54%
2	52%
Median	52%
55	52%
57	50%
49	48%
34	47%
71	46%
1	45%
76	45%
15	44%
46	43%
18	37%
21	37%
27	37%
41	36%
74	35%
67	34%
52	32%
77	27%
51	26%
16	26%
62	25%
68	23%

305

Pre-K Enrollment of Students with Disabilities as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of Students with Disabilities

Note: Higher values and increases are desired

- Figure 1.13: Total number of pre-K students with disabilities divided by total number of students with disabilities enrolled in kindergarten.
- Figure 1.14: Percentage point difference in students with disabilities enrolled in pre-K compared to kindergarten within the district between 2013-14 and 2015-16.
- Figure 1.15: Upper and lower quartile change across years in percentage of pre-K to kindergarten students with disabilities within the district.

Figure 1.15: Trends in the Percent of Pre-K Students with Disabilities to Kindergarten Students with Disabilities by Quartile, 2013-14 to 2015-16

	13-14	14-15	15-16
Upper Quartile	60.4%	67.7%	69.9%
Lower Quartile	32.9%	40.4%	37.0%
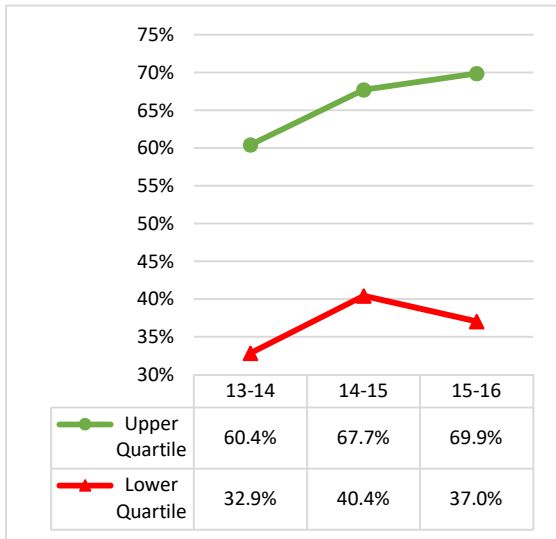
Districts in the best quartile (2015-2016)

- Chicago
- Columbus
- Duval
- Indianapolis
- Los Angeles
- Miami-Dade
- Palm Beach
- Pittsburgh
- St Paul
- Toledo
- Wichita

Figure 1.14: Percentage Change in Pre-K Enrollment of Students with Disabilities Relative to Kindergarten Enrollment of Students with Disabilities, 2013-14 to 2015-16
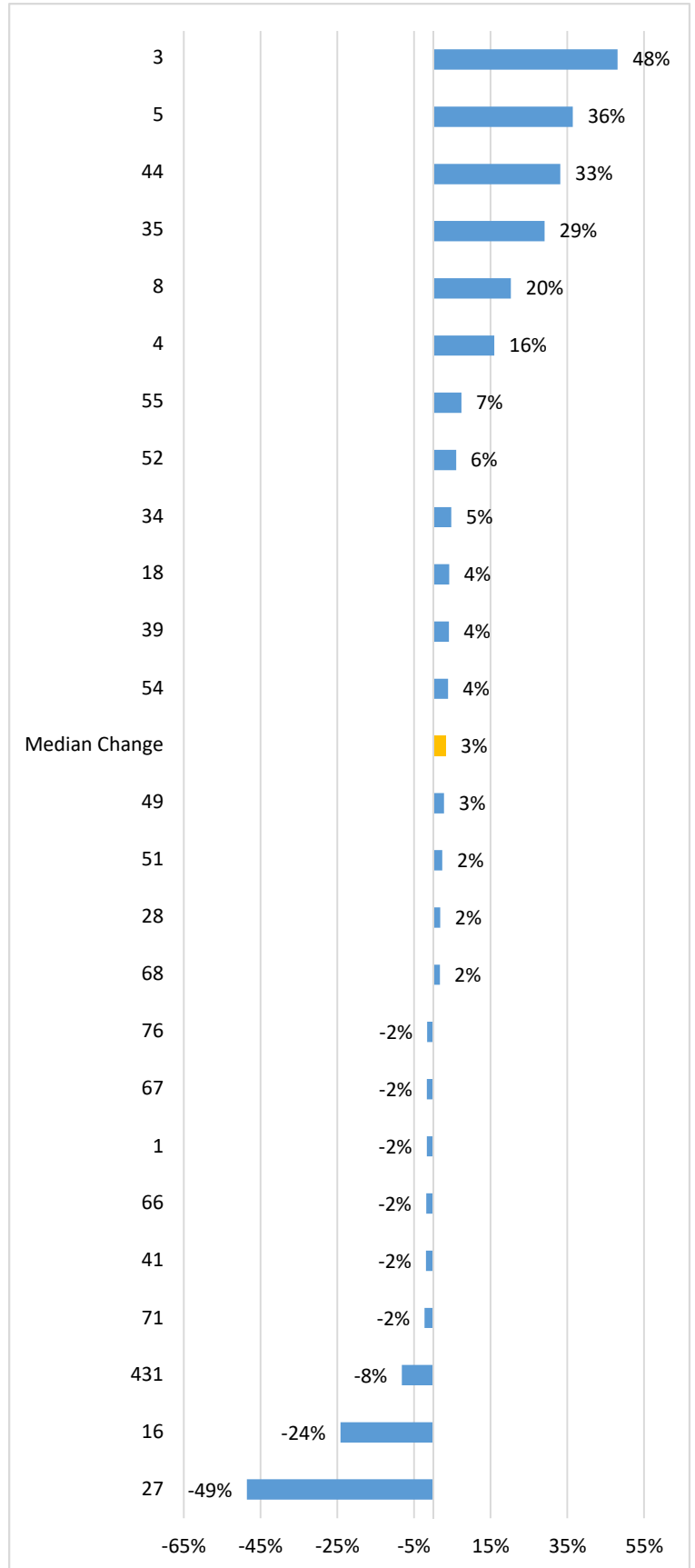
Figure 1.16: Pre-K Enrollment of English Learners as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of English Learners, 2015-16
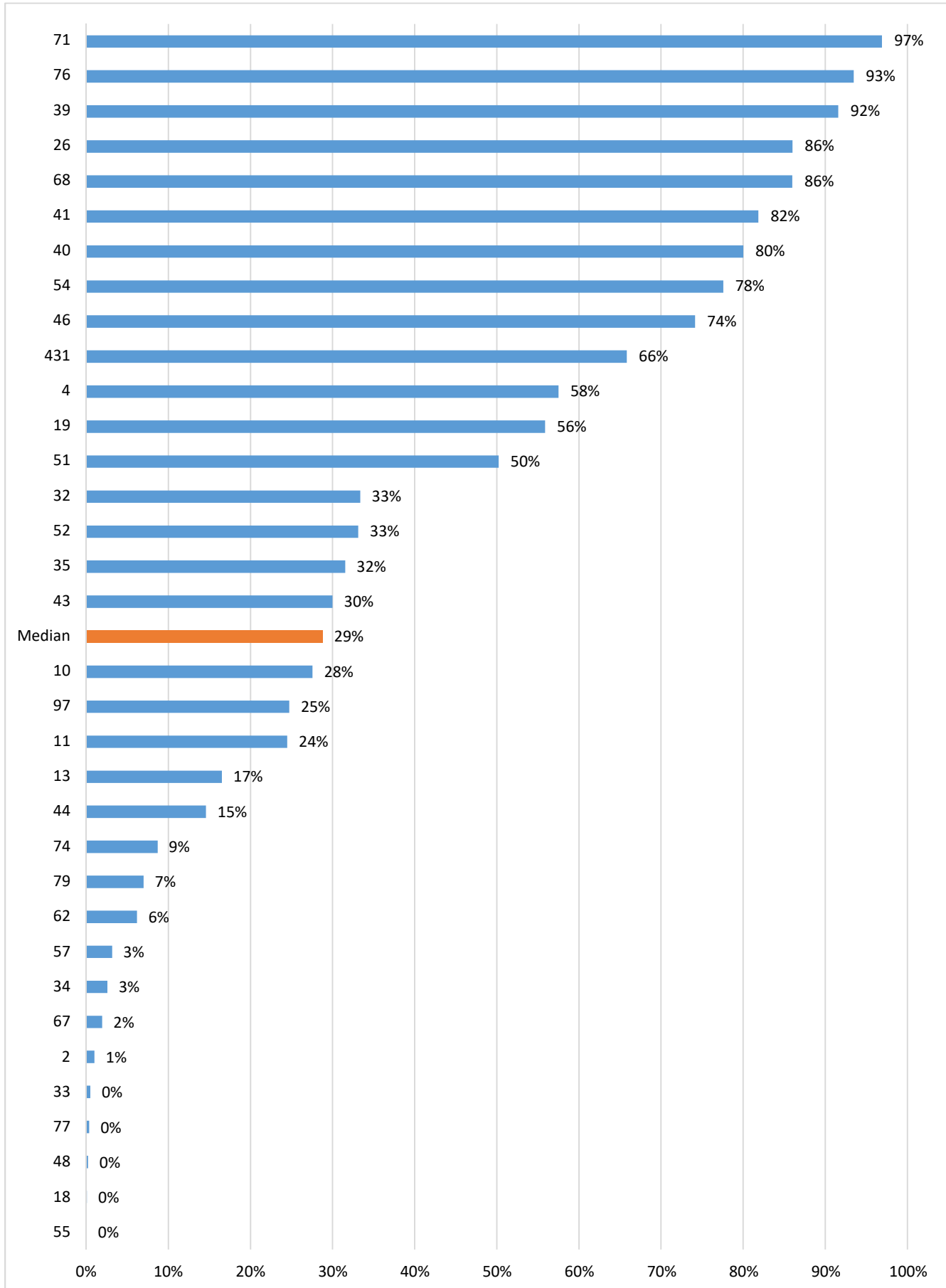
Label	Value
71	97%
76	93%
39	92%
26	86%
68	86%
41	82%
40	80%
54	78%
46	74%
431	66%
4	58%
19	56%
51	50%
32	33%
52	33%
35	32%
43	30%
Median	29%
10	28%
97	25%
11	24%
13	17%
44	15%
74	9%
79	7%
62	6%
57	3%
34	3%
67	2%
2	1%
33	0%
77	0%
48	0%
18	0%
55	0%

Pre-K Enrollment of English Learners as a Percent of Kindergarten Enrollment of English Learners

Note: Higher values and increases are desired

- Figure 1.16: Total number of English learners enrolled in pre-K divided by total English learners enrolled in kindergarten.
- Figure 1.17: Percentage point difference in English learners who enrolled in pre-K and kindergarten within the district between 2013-14 and 2015-16.
- Figure 1.18: Upper and lower quartile change across years in percentage of English learners enrolled in pre-K and kindergarten within the district.

Figure 1.18: Trends in the Percent of Pre-K English Learners to Kindergarten English Learners by Quartile, 2013-14 to 2015-16
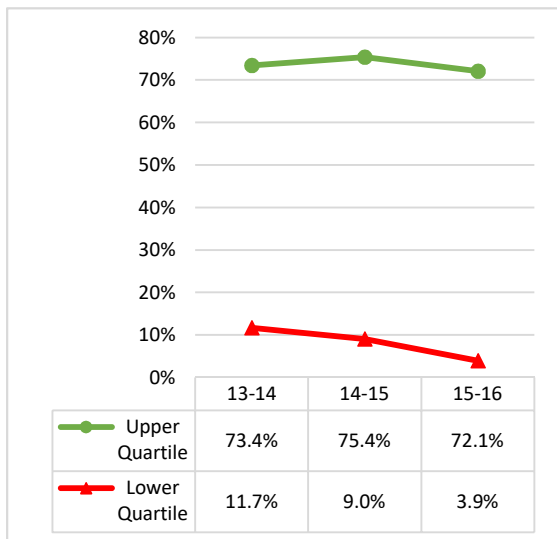
	13-14	14-15	15-16
Upper Quartile	73.4%	75.4%	72.1%
Lower Quartile	11.7%	9.0%	3.9%

Districts in the best quartile (2015-2016)

- Arlington
- Austin
- Baltimore
- Boston
- Chicago
- Dallas
- Fort Worth
- Houston
- San Antonio

Figure 1.17: Percentage Change in Pre-K Enrollment of English Learners Relative to Kindergarten Enrollment of English Learners, 2013-14 to 2015-16

308
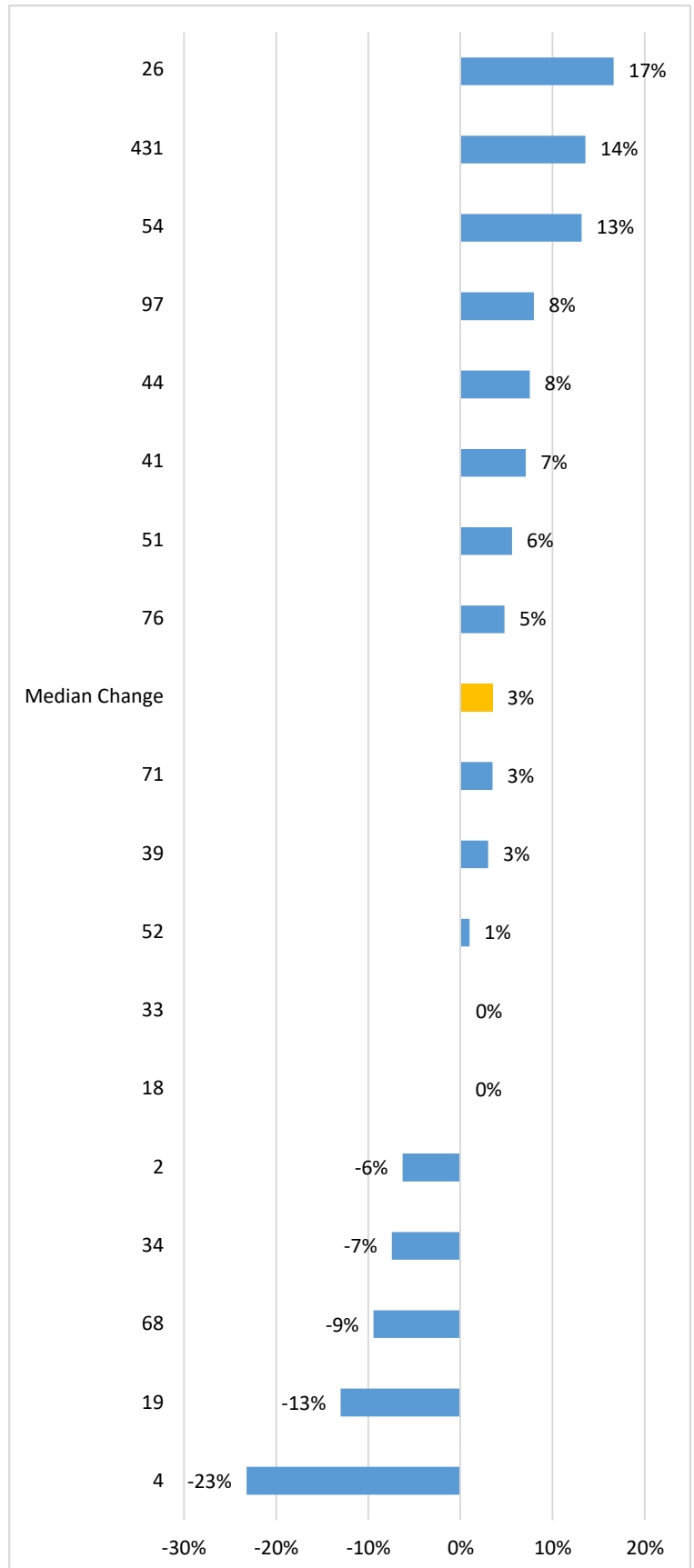
SPECIAL NAEP ANALYSIS

MIRRORS OR WINDOWS:

How Well Do Large City Public Schools Overcome the Effects of Poverty and Other Barriers?

About the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public-school districts. Composed of 70 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, instructional support, leadership, management, technical assistance, 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 to deliver the best education for urban youth.

Mirrors or Windows: How Well Do Large City Public Schools Overcome the Effects of Poverty and Other Barriers?

Council of the
Great City Schools

Ray Hart
Michael Casserly
Moses Palacios
Renata Lyons
Ashley Ison

2017

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Mirrors or Windows: How Well Do Large City Public Schools Overcome the Effects of Poverty and Other Barriers?

Introduction

One of the most consistent and long-standing relationships in social science research is the one between poverty and student academic performance. In nearly every case, study after study demonstrates that student achievement declines as poverty rises. At least as far back as the Coleman report (1966), research has suggested that poor students do not do as well in school as students whose parents are better off financially. More recently, a study by Reardon (2016) showed similar results and concluded that the gap between high- and low-income students may have widened between the 1980s and the early 2000s.

At the same time, education has been depicted by countless politicians, philosophers, scientists, and advocates as the ticket out of poverty. Education is thought to be society's main engine for smoothing out its inequities. In fact, Horace Mann once stated, "Education then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance-wheel of the social machinery." To be sure, schooling aspires to level the playing field for rich and poor alike. Immigrant and native born. Commoner and blue-blood.

But it is not possible for these two themes to be true at the same time. Either schools help overcome the effects of poverty and other barriers or they reflect those inequities. Either schools serve to perpetuate society's inequalities or they serve to overcome them. Either schools work to level the playing field or they keep opportunity at bay. As noted Chicago journalist Sydney Harris once asserted, "The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows."

Our question in this report is a straightforward one: Are urban public schools, which have the largest numbers and concentrations of poor students in the nation, mirrors or windows?

Do urban public schools overcome the effects of poverty and other barriers or do they simply reflect them? Do urban public schools do a better job at overcoming the effects of poverty on achievement than public schools nationally? Do some urban public-school districts do a better job at overcoming these effects than other urban school districts? Which are they? Are urban school districts getting any better at overcoming these effects over time, or are they producing the same results they have always produced? What is the difference between urban school districts that appear to be 'beating the odds' and those that are not progressing? What are the more effective urban school districts doing that other urban school districts are not doing? Do other types of schools, e.g., charters and private schools, do a better job at overcoming these barriers? Why might that be?

These are questions that are infrequently asked in the research or answered in a way that gives urban schools better guidance about what they need to be doing differently. Instead, most research is backward leaning in the sense that it helps explain why things in the past looked like they did. This study and the one to follow will lean forward and will attempt to show where to look for clues for a better future.

To conduct this analysis, the Council of the Great City Schools used data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and looked at the effects not only of poverty but also of language status, parental education, disability, literacy materials in the home, and race to answer many of the questions above. We predict statistically what results are likely to be based on these variables and compare those predictions against actual results over four separate administrations of NAEP.

In other words, we have created a 'district effect' or 'value-added' measure to determine whether urban school districts have enough educational torque to overcome these long-standing effects to any degree and to ascertain if they are getting better at it.

To be sure, urban public schools are under more pressure to improve than any other institution in the nation, public or private. They are being told to produce results or get out of the way. They are being told to improve or see the public go somewhere else. They are being told to be accountable for what they do or let someone else do it. Some of this pressure is justified. Some of it is not. Either way, they are being challenged in the court of public opinion and by history to improve in unprecedented ways.

Demographics of Large City and Comparison Schools

Members of the Council of the Great City Schools educate disproportionately large numbers of the nation's students facing barriers to their educational success. The 69 cities whose school districts are members of the Council are home to about 17.4 percent of the U. S. population (56,863,400 of 326,474,013 est.). Their school districts enrolled some 7.3 million students in 2016-17 or about 15 percent of the nation's public elementary and secondary school enrollment.

This report primarily looks at the educational performance of Large City schools using data from the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). In general, the Council's membership comprises the bulk of the Large City variable in NAEP, a variable that we use extensively in this report. Reading and math performance on NAEP for students in grade eight are controlled statistically for relevant background variables summarized earlier, i.e., race/ethnicity groups, national school lunch program (FRPL), students with disabilities (IEP), English language learners (ELL), literacy materials in the home, and parent education level. Relevant background variables are defined in more detail in subsequent sections, but generally they were selected because previous research indicated that they consistently predict student outcomes.

We also compare the results of NAEP test takers[1] in Large City schools with the results of test-takers in other types of schools. Our analysis looks at five distinct, mutually exclusive, and not-overlapping types of schools—

- Large City Schools that are not charters--Large City Schools (Not Charter)

- Large City Schools that are charters (but are <u>not</u> differentiated according to which ones are authorized by a school district and which ones are authorized by some other group)—Large City Schools (Charter)

- Schools that are not in large cities and are not charters—Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)

- Schools that are not in large cities but are charters (but are not differentiated according to which ones are authorized by a school district and which ones are authorized by some other group)—Not Large City Schools (Charter)

- National Non-Public/Private schools.

The reader should keep in mind throughout the report that NAEP data on charter schools is not coded in a way that would allow one to determine which charters are authorized and governed by regular public-school districts and which ones are chartered and operated independently or are chartered by some other entity. Consequently, in this analysis, charters include both district-authorized and otherwise-authorized schools. In addition, the sample sizes for charter schools are typically not large enough to generate charter estimates city by city. This is also true for data on non-public schools.[2] In fact, sample sizes for non-public schools

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[1] The analysis uses test-takers in math in both fourth and eighth grades rather than test takers in English language arts, because the numbers of ELA test-takers is likely to be more skewed by testing exclusions related to English proficiency or disability status.

[2] Nonpublic/private schools include Catholic, Conservative Christian, Lutheran, and other private schools. (Data on these schools for 2015 was limited because of low participation rates that year.)

were too small in 2015 to yield even national estimates. Our purpose is to see how well Large City (Not Charter) schools are doing in overcoming the various barriers we examine. We compare results from that group with others to provide some context for the findings.

Finally, the reader should keep in mind that there is often wide variation within each school type—more variation, in fact, than between groups. The reader should bear this in mind in going through the analysis.

We start the analysis by looking at the student demographic characteristics of Large City (Not Charter) schools and compare them with other school types. One should keep in mind that the demographics of school types in the fourth grade are different from demographics in the eighth grade.

Exhibits 1 through 5 summarize critical demographic characteristics of the five types of schools reported in the NAEP data for Large City (Not Charter) schools and other school types.

Exhibit 1. Percentages of NAEP Fourth Grade Math Test Takers by Race and Type of School, 2009 to 2015.

	% Black				% Hispanic				% White			
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	27%	25%	24%	22%	43%	45%	44%	47%	21%	20%	22%	20%
Large City Schools (Charter⚹)	59%	53%	46%	42%	24%	27%	38%	36%	14%	16%	11%	16%
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	14%	14%	14%	14%	19%	20%	22%	22%	61%	59%	58%	56%
Not Large City Schools (Charter⚹)	31%	29%	27%	19%	21%	20%	21%	23%	43%	47%	46%	53%
National Non-Public/ Private Schools	10%	10%	12%	--	10%	12%	11%	--	74%	69%	71%	--

Source: NAEP Data Explorer (NDE) based on NAEP reported demographics for mathematics.
⚹ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Data in Exhibit 1 shows that Large City (Not Charter) schools had an aggregate enrollment in 2015 that was 22 percent African American, 47 percent Hispanic, and 20 percent white. The composition of students in these schools who were either black or Hispanic remained about the same between 2009 and 2015 (approximately 70 percent.)

By comparison, black students made up a larger percentage of students in Large City (Charter) schools than in Large City (Not Charter) schools, although the difference was somewhat smaller in grade eight than in grade four. On the other hand, Hispanics made up a larger percentage of students in Large City (Not Charter) schools than in Large City (Charter) schools. At the same time, the enrollment in Large City (Charter) schools that was either black or Hispanic dipped from 82 percent in 2009 to 78 percent in 2015—while the enrollment of these two groups in Large City (Not Charter) remained about the same.

In addition, white students were considerably more prevalent in Non-public/private schools than in Large City (Charter and Not Charter) schools. Only 23 percent of students in Non-public/private schools nationally were either black or Hispanic in 2013. (Again, the numbers for Non-Public/Private schools in 2015 were too small in the NAEP sample to estimate results.)

Finally, the enrollment in Not Large City (Not Charter) public schools in 2015 was 14 percent black, 22 percent Hispanic, and 56 percent white. The percentage of black students in Not Large City (Charter) schools was 19 percent in 2015, the percentage of Hispanic students was 23 percent, and the percentage of

white students was 53 percent. Interestingly, the percentage of African American students in Not Large City (Charter) dropped from 31 percent in 2009 to 19 percent in 2015, while the percent of white students in these schools increased from 43 percent to 53 percent over the period.

Across the study period—2009 to 2015—the enrollments of Large City (Not Charter), Large City (Charter), and Not Large City schools—charter and not charter—became increasingly Hispanic—particularly among fourth graders; while the racial demographics of Non-public/private schools remained consistent.

Exhibit 2. Percentages of NAEP Fourth Grade Math Test Takers by FRPL Status, Language Status, and IEP Status and Type of School, 2009 to 2015.

	% FRPL				% ELLs				% IEPs			
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	71%	74%	73%	74%	20%	22%	20%	21%	11%	11%	12%	13%
Large City Schools (Charter[‡])	76%	73%	81%	71%	9%	12%	18%	12%	10%	9%	12%	12%
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	43%	48%	50%	51%	8%	9%	9%	10%	12%	12%	13%	14%
Not Large City Schools (Charter[‡])	54%	52%	50%	46%	9%	8%	6%	8%	11%	9%	11%	11%
National Non-Public/ Private	8%	8%	10%	--	1%	2%	1%	--	4%	5%	4%	--

Source: NAEP Data Explorer (NDE) based on NAEP reported demographics for mathematics.
‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

The NAEP data also show that 74 percent fourth-grade students in Large City (Not Charter) schools were eligible for free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) in 2015, somewhat higher than the 71 percent level in 2009 (Exhibit 2). Large City (Charter) schools had FRPL rates of 71 percent in both fourth and eighth grades in 2015, somewhat lower than in 2009. Both types of Large City schools (Charter and Not Charter) had higher FRPL rates in fourth grade than Not Large City schools (Not Charter, 51 percent), Not Large City schools (Charter, 46 percent), or Non-public/private schools nationally (10 percent in 2013). Between 2009 and 2015, the portion of students who were FRPL-eligible increased somewhat in Large City (Not Charter) schools and in Not Large City (Not Charter) schools, but decreased in both Large City (Charter) and Not Large City (Charter) schools.

NAEP data on fourth grade English Language Learners (ELLs) show that these students composed 21 percent of the population in Large City schools (Not Charter) in 2015, about the same as in 2009. This was larger than any of the other comparison school types, although these students increased in Large City (Charter) schools between 2009 and 2015. Only about 1 percent of students in Non-Public/Private schools were ELLs in 2013.

In addition, NAEP data in 2015 showed that fourth grade students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) account for some 13 percent of the Large City (Not Charter) school sample, about the same as the Not Large City (Not Charter) sample, 14 percent. Large City (Charter) and Not Large City (Charter) samples had slightly smaller percentages of students with IEPs (12 percent and 11 percent, respectively), while only 4 percent of students enrolled in Non-Public/Private schools in 2013 had IEPs. All school types, except Not Large City (Charter) and Non-Public/Private, showed some increases in their proportions of students with IEPs over the study period, 2009 to 2015.

Eighth grade NAEP data showed similar patterns as those in the fourth grade. As indicated above, the differences between the percentage of black students at Large City (Not Charter) schools and Large City (Charter) schools were smaller at the eighth-grade level than at the fourth-grade level. This appears to be due to Large City (Charter) schools having lower rates of black eighth grade students in 2009 than in 2015, while the percentage of black students in Large City (Not Charter) schools remained about the same over the period. Conversely, charter schools in both large city and not large city settings appeared to have a larger percentage of Hispanic eighth graders in 2015 than in 2009. (See Exhibit 3.)

Exhibit 3. Percentages of NAEP Eighth Grade Math Test Takers by Race and Type of School, 2009 to 2015.

	% Black				% Hispanic				% White			
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	26%	25%	25%	25%	42%	44%	43%	44%	22%	21%	21%	21%
Large City Schools (Charter‡)	44%	42%	41%	36%	40%	41%	34%	44%	13%	12%	18%	12%
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	14%	14%	13%	13%	17%	19%	20%	21%	63%	60%	59%	58%
Not Large City Schools (Charter‡)	19%	24%	25%	18%	27%	17%	28%	29%	48%	55%	42%	45%
National Non-Public/ Private	8%	10%	10%	--	11%	11%	13%	--	74%	71%	70%	--

Source: NAEP Data Explorer (NDE) based on NAEP reported demographics for mathematics.
‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

At the eighth-grade level, the data also indicated that the percentage of students who were FRPL-eligible was about the same as at the fourth-grade level, and that Large City (Not Charter) and Large City (Charter) schools had almost identical portions of such children. All types of schools saw at least some increases in their percentages of poor students over the study period. (Exhibit 4)

Exhibit 4. Percentages of NAEP Eighth Grade Math Test Takers by FRPL Status, Language Status, and IEP Status and Type of School, 2009 to 2015.

	% FRPL				% ELLs				% IEPs			
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	66%	69%	69%	71%	12%	11%	11%	12%	11%	11%	12%	13%
Large City Schools (Charter‡)	69%	72%	65%	71%	9%	12%	6%	8%	13%	8%	14%	12%
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	39%	44%	46%	48%	5%	5%	4%	5%	10%	10%	12%	12%
Not Large City Schools (Charter‡)	42%	44%	53%	48%	8%	2%	4%	7%	9%	12%	11%	12%
National Non-Public/ Private	6%	7%	8%	--	1%	1%	--	--	4%	5%	7%	--

Source: NAEP Data Explorer (NDE) based on NAEP reported demographics for mathematics.
‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

In addition, the eighth-grade data indicate that the percentages of ELL students in Large City (Not Charter) schools remained at the same level (12 percent) between 2009 and 2015. ELLs were considerably more prevalent in these schools than in any of the other comparison schools. (Exhibit 4)

Thirteen percent of eighth-grade students in Large City (Not Charter) schools had IEPs in 2015, the same level as among fourth graders, a level that that showed some increase over 2009. In other types of schools, about 12 percent of eighth graders had IEPs, an uptick from 2009 in all types of schools, except Large City (Charter) schools.

Finally, we examined changes in the education levels of parents of students in Large City and other types of schools. (Exhibit 5) The data on this NAEP background variable were available only on eighth graders, not fourth graders. In this case, there were small changes over the study period in the percentage of eighth graders in Large City (Not Charter) schools whose parents had not finished high school or who had graduated from college. However, there were somewhat larger changes among parents of Large City (Charter) students, i.e., the percentage of these parents who did not finish high school dipped while the percent who had graduated from college increased appreciably over the period. The data also show that the percentage of parents who did not finish high school and whose children were in Large City (Not Charter) schools was higher than the percentage of parents who sent their children to Large City (Charter) schools. Conversely, the percentage of college-educated parents whose children were in Large City (Charter) was higher than the percentage of such parents in Large City (Not Charter) schools. The percentage of students in Non-Public/Private schools whose parents had graduated from college was considerably higher in 2013 than either Large City (Not Charter) or Large City (Charter) schools.

Exhibit 5. Percentages of NAEP Eighth Grade Math Test-Takers Whose Parents Had Differing Levels of Educational Attainment, 2009 to 2015.[3]

	Did Not Finish High School				Graduated High School				Graduated College			
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	13%	12%	11%	12%	17%	17%	17%	17%	35%	37%	38%	38%
Large City Schools (Charter[‡])	10%	12%	7%	8%	19%	18%	18%	19%	34%	38%	45%	42%
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	7%	7%	7%	7%	17%	17%	16%	16%	47%	49%	50%	50%
Not Large City Schools (Charter[‡])	10%	5%	9%	7%	15%	15%	16%	15%	45%	51%	49%	50%
National Non-Public/ Private	1%	2%	2%	--	7%	6%	5%	--	75%	77%	77%	--

Source: NAEP Data Explorer (NDE) based on NAEP reported demographics for mathematics.
‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters
Note: Parental income data were not available on fourth grade students.

In sum, the data indicate that the demographics of Large City (Not Charter) schools and Large City (Charter) look similar, but one must remember that the charter sample includes both district-run and independent charters. Charter enrollment, in general, was more African American in the fourth grade (42 percent) in 2015 than in the eighth grade (36 percent). And the percentage of African Americans that compose Large City (Charter) school enrollment in fourth grade—but not in eighth—was almost twice that of Large City (Not Charter) schools (22 percent). In addition, it appeared that African American students made up a declining share of Large City (Charter) fourth-grade enrollment between 2009 and 2015 (59 percent vs. 42 percent, respectively). Moreover, the Hispanic share of enrollment in Large City (Not Charter) schools considerably higher than in Large City (Charter) schools in grade four, but by 2015 both types of large city

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[3] The variable is defined as "at least one parent."

schools had the same percentage of Hispanic students in grade 8. Both types of schools were substantially different from schools not in large cities, and all public schools in the sample differed demographically from Non-public/private schools.

Also, the percentage of students in both Large City (Not Charter) and Large City (Charter) schools who were eligible for a free and reduced-price lunch was nearly identical in both fourth and eighth grades, as were the percentages of students with IEPs. The percentage of students who were ELL in Large City (Not Charter) schools, however, was substantially higher than in Large City (Charter) schools in both the fourth and eighth grades. Both types of schools differed from charter and non-charter schools that were not in large cities and from non-public schools.

Finally, the data on eighth graders (only grade available) showed some interesting differences in the percentages of parents who either did not finish high school or graduated from college when comparing Large City (Not Charter) and Large City (Charter) schools—differences that do not appear in public schools outside of large cities. In general, Large City (Not Charter) schools had a *larger* portion of eighth graders whose parents did not graduate from high school and a *smaller* portion whose parents graduated from college than did Large City (Charter) schools. In addition, the share of eighth graders in Large City (Charter) schools whose parents graduated from college increased faster between 2009 and 2015 (34 percent vs. 42 percent) than did such parents in Large City (Not Charter) schools (35 percent vs. 38 percent). The percentage of students in non-public schools whose parents graduated from college was substantially higher than those in public schools of any type.

Methodology

In 2010, the Council of the Great City Schools, along with the American Institutes of Research, analyzed the results of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) in a way that had not been done previously (Dogan, et al., 2011). The two prominent research questions of that study were:

1. How did urban districts participating in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) in 2009 compare to other districts when one controls for relevant background variables?
2. How did urban districts participating in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) in 2009 perform, compared to their statistically expected performance based on relevant background variables?

To answer these questions, the study compared the performance of each district against other districts after adjusting for specified student background characteristics, i.e., race/ethnicity, special education status, English language learner status, eligibility for free- or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program, the highest level of education attained by either parent, and information on the availability of written materials and computers in a student's home. The analysis employed a methodology used elsewhere in the literature (e.g., Braun, Jenkins, and Grigg, 2006). A regression analysis was conducted to estimate the "expected" performance of an urban district against a national sample of other public-school students, controlling for variations in these demographic characteristics.

Next, each district's actual performance was compared to the expected performance for that district. The difference between the two (actual vs. expected) was called a "district effect." Positive effects indicated that the district was performing better than expected statistically, and negative effects indicated that the district was performing below what was expected statistically.

A similar methodology using NAEP restricted-use data from 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 was used in this report. The following background variables were used to calculate (using regression analysis) "adjusted" NAEP scale scores in TUDA districts and to make comparisons between actual and statistically expected scores. The variables included:

- **Race/ethnicity**

  In the NAEP files, student race/ethnicity information is obtained from school records and classified according to six categories: *White, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native*, or *unclassifiable*. When school-reported information was missing, student-reported data from the Student Background Questionnaire were used to establish student race/ethnicity. Using restricted NAEP data sets, we categorized as *unclassifiable* students whose race-ethnicity based on school-records was *unclassifiable* or *missing* and (1) who self-reported their race as *multicultural* but not *Hispanic* or (2) who did not self-report race information.

- **Special education status**

  Student has an Individualized Educational Program (IEP), for reasons other than being gifted or talented; or is a student with a Section 504 Plan.

- **English language learner status**

  Student is currently classified as an English language learner and is receiving services.

- **Free- or reduced-price lunch eligibility**

  Eligibility for the National School Lunch Program is determined by a student's family income in relation to the federally established poverty level. Based on available school records, students were classified as either currently eligible for free/reduced-price lunch or currently not eligible. If the school record indicated the information was not available, the student was classified as not eligible.

- **Parental Education**

  Highest level of education attained by either parent: *did not complete high school*, *graduated high school, had some education after high school*, or *graduated college*. This indicator is only available for grade 8 students.

- **Literacy Materials**

  The presence of reading materials in the home is associated with both socioeconomic status and student achievement. The measure reported in 2009 was based on questions in both grade 4 and grade 8 in the *Student Background Questionnaires,* which asked about the availability of computers, newspapers, magazines, and more than 25 books in the home. Between 2009 and 2015, the *Student Background Questionnaire* changed, and a different combination of items was used to calculate a summary score of how many materials were present. In 2011, the items included the availability of computers, magazines, and more than 25 books in the home (newspapers were dropped as a survey item). In 2013 and 2015, the items included the availability of computers in the home, the availability of the internet, and more than 25 books in the home (magazines were dropped as a survey item). A summary score was created to indicate how many of these types of literacy materials were present in the home.[4]

Information on race/ethnicity, free-lunch, ELL, and disability status come from the school and are available for all students. However, data on background characteristics for students who did not participate in NAEP are not available: excluded students or students who are not tested do not complete the *Background Questionnaire*. Therefore, data on *reading materials in the home* and *parent education* are only available

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[4] This summary score has been used for reporting NAEP background variables for several years and has been shown to be associated with students' achievement scores. (See, for example, NAEP 1996 Mathematics Cross-State Data Compendium.)

for the tested populations. Consequently, the calculation of adjusted scores controlling for background characteristics was conducted on the reported sample only.

The data analysis for this study compared the predicted NAEP performance levels (after controlling for background variables) in grades four and eight in both reading and mathematics, to actual NAEP performance for the Large City districts in 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015. Comparisons were also made to other types of schools. The analysis allowed the Council to identify districts and school types that were performing better than expected on the NAEP assessment and those that were performing under expectation. In other words, we could estimate over time whether Large City schools and others were getting better at mitigating the effects of poverty and other variables that typically suppress academic performance.

Exhibit 6 shows the actual performance for all school types that are compared in this report, so the reader can see uncorrected results. After making the corrections or adjustments, we analyzed the changes in district effects for 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 to see if Large Cities were getting better at overcoming these effects. Note that Albuquerque, Dallas, and Hillsborough County began participating in TUDA in 2011, and trends are reported for only two assessment cycles. Duval County began participating in 2015, and Milwaukee public schools did not participate in 2015. Further, the minimum sample size for estimating effects was not met by Non-Public/Private schools in 2015, so their results could not be estimated for that year.

Exhibit 6. Actual Scale Scores of TUDA Districts and Other Types of Schools, 2009 to 2015

| | 2009 | | | | 2011 | | | | 2013 | | | | 2015 | | | |
| | Math | | Reading | | Math | | Reading | | Math | | Reading | | Math | | Reading | |
Jurisdiction	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8
Albuquerque	—	—	—	—	235	275	209	254	207	256	235	274	231	271	207	251
Atlanta	225	259	209	250	228	266	212	253	214	255	233	267	228	266	212	252
Austin	240	287	220	261	245	287	224	261	221	261	245	285	246	284	220	261
Baltimore	222	257	202	245	226	261	200	246	204	252	223	260	215	255	199	243
Boston	236	279	215	257	237	282	217	255	214	257	237	283	236	281	219	258
Charlotte	245	283	225	259	247	285	224	265	226	266	247	289	248	286	226	263
Chicago	222	264	202	249	224	270	203	253	206	253	231	269	232	275	213	257
Cleveland	213	256	194	242	216	256	193	240	190	239	216	253	219	254	197	240
Dallas	—	—	—	—	233	274	204	248	205	251	234	275	238	271	204	250
Detroit	200	238	187	232	203	246	191	237	190	239	204	240	205	244	186	237
D.C. (DCPS)	220	251	203	240	222	255	201	237	206	245	229	260	232	258	214	245
Duval County	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	243	275	225	264
Fresno	219	258	197	240	218	256	194	238	196	245	220	260	218	257	199	242
Hillsborough County	—	—	—	—	243	282	231	264	228	267	243	284	244	276	230	261
Houston	236	277	211	252	237	279	213	252	208	252	236	280	239	276	210	252
Jefferson County	233	271	219	259	235	274	223	260	221	261	234	273	236	272	222	261
Los Angeles	222	258	197	244	223	261	201	246	205	250	228	264	224	263	204	251
Miami	236	273	221	261	236	272	221	260	223	259	237	274	242	274	226	265
Milwaukee	220	251	196	241	220	254	195	238	199	242	221	257	—	—	—	—
New York City	237	273	217	252	234	272	216	254	216	256	236	274	231	275	214	258

Jurisdiction	2009				2011				2013				2015			
	Math		Reading		Math		Reading		Math		Reading		Math		Reading	
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8
Philadelphia	222	265	195	247	225	265	199	247	200	249	223	266	217	267	201	248
San Diego	236	280	213	254	239	278	215	256	218	260	241	277	233	280	216	262
Large City (Not Charter) Schools	232	272	210	252	233	274	211	255	235	275	213	257	234	274	214	256
Large City (Charter‡) Schools	224	266	205	251	232	275	210	254	232	279	209	261	233	275	214	259
Not Large City (Not Charter) Schools	241	284	222	264	242	284	222	265	242	285	222	268	241	283	223	265
Not Large City (Charter‡) Schools	235	281	215	261	239	285	222	266	241	282	224	267	239	284	222	268
Non-public/ Private Schools	246	296	235	282	247	296	234	282	246	296	235	285	*	*	*	*

* Indicates that minimum reporting standards (sample size) were not met for this jurisdiction.

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

The raw data show that Large City (Charter and Not Charter) schools generally scored below public schools (Not Large City) outside the large cities (Charter and Not Charter) by between six and nine scale score points in 2015—depending on grade and subject. The same Large City schools also scored below Non-Public/Private schools by between 11 and 28 scale score points in 2013—depending on grade and subject. (There were no 2015 data for private schools because of low participation rates.) Individual Large City school districts also showed extensive variation. In 2015, differences in scale scores from one city to another could exceed 40 points in some cases.

However, comparing these results without statistically controlling for background variables is only one way to look at these data. For instance, comparing Detroit and Charlotte-Mecklenburg on raw scores clearly indicates that one scores better than another, but they have vastly different demographics and quite different challenges. To sort out these distinctions and how they might mask how districts improve, we asked a series of questions—

- Are Large City (Not Charter) schools performing the same level as, above, or below statistical expectations in reading and math on NAEP in fourth and eighth grades after adjusting for differences in demographic characteristics? In other words, do urban public schools overcome—to any degree—the effects of poverty and other barriers, or do they simply reflect them?
- Are Large City (Not Charter) schools getting better at overcoming these effects over time (2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015)? Which school districts appear to be improving the most at overcoming these effects?
- Do Large City (Not Charter) schools do a better job of overcoming the effects of poverty and other variables on achievement than public schools outside the cities?
- Do some urban public-school districts do a better job of overcoming these effects than other urban school districts? Which are they?
- Are there any fundamental differences between urban school districts that overcome these effects compared with ones that do not?
- What are the more effective urban school districts doing that other urban school districts are not doing? (Subsequent study.)

- Do other types of schools, e.g., charters and private schools, do a better job of overcoming these effects than large urban school districts do? Are they making more progress after controlling for relevant background variables?

To answer these questions, this study compared the performance of each district or type of school against other districts and school types after adjusting for their student background characteristics. A regression analysis estimated the performance of a district or type of school had its demographic profile been the same as the average profile of all districts or jurisdictions in the nation using the NAEP restricted data set for each of the study years. The methodology to estimate the adjusted mean scores is shown below.

Let y_{ijv} be plausible value[5] v of student j in district (or school type) i, and

X_{ijk} be the demographic characteristic k of student j in district (or school type) i.

Assume the mean plausible value student j in district i, $y_{ij\bullet}$, can be expressed as a function of an overall mean achievement μ, a differential effect α_i associated with district (or school type) i, and differential effects β_k associate with characteristic k of student j in district or school type i:

$$y_{ij\bullet} = \mu + \alpha_i + \sum \beta_k X_{ijk} + e_{ij} , \qquad [1]$$

where μ is the overall mean,

α_i is the district (or school type) i effect, and

β_k is the effect of demographic characteristic k of student j in district (or school type) i.

Letting the subscript • indicate average, then the average scale score in district (or school type) i is expressed as
$$y_{i\bullet\bullet} = \mu + \alpha_i + \sum \beta_k \ X_{i\bullet k} + e'_i, \qquad [2]$$

Subtracting [2] from [1] we can estimate the regression in [3]
$$z_{ij} = y_{ij\bullet} - y_{i\bullet\bullet} = \sum \beta_k [X_{ijk} - X_{i\bullet k}] + e''_{ij} \qquad [3]$$

and obtain estimates of β_k directly, without any contamination from α_i because α_i has been subtracted out before the regression.
With the estimates $\hat{\beta}_k$, we compute the average effect of the demographic characteristics of student j in district (or school type)) i.

$$\hat{y}_{ij\bullet} = \sum \hat{\beta}_k [X_{ijk} - X_{\bullet\bullet k}] \qquad [4]$$

where $X_{\bullet\bullet k}$ is the overall mean of $X_{\bullet\bullet k}$.

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[5] Plausible values are imputed values that resemble individual test scores and have approximately the same distribution as the latent trait being measured. Plausible values were developed as a computational approximation to obtain consistent estimates of population characteristics in assessment situations where individuals are administered too few items to allow precise estimates of their ability. Plausible values represent random draws from an empirically derived distribution of proficiency values that are conditional on the observed values of the assessment items and the background variables. The random draws from the distribution represent values from the distribution of scale scores for all adults in the population with similar characteristics and identical response patterns. These random draws or imputations are representative of the score distribution in the population of people who share the background characteristics of the individual with whom the plausible value is associated in the data.

The adjusted score, y'_{ijv} is estimated by subtracting $\hat{y}_{ij\bullet}$ from each y_{ijv}:

$$y'_{ijv} = y_{ijv} - \hat{y}_{ij\bullet} \qquad\qquad [5]$$

The adjusted score, $y'_{i\bullet\bullet}$ is the critical statistic for the analysis. It is an estimator for $\mu + \alpha_i$, and we can estimate its standard error by the usual NAEP procedures. Note that $\mu + \alpha_i$ is the overall mean plus the effect of district (or school type) i. It is what the mean of district (or school type) i would be if the mean of all demographics in district (or school type) i were the same as the overall mean.

Next, the expected performance of each district and school type—based on the selected student background characteristics—was computed. Each district's actual performance was then compared to the expected performance for that district or comparison group. The difference between the two was called a "district effect" or group effect. Significant positive effects indicated that a district or group was performing better than expected statistically, and significant negative effects indicated that the district or group was performing worse than expected statistically.

Variance Accounted for by the Regression Analysis

Exhibit 7 estimates the variance, or the R-squared value, explained by the background variables for each of the regressions calculated on the *national* sample (including all public and non-public school students nationally). The variances in the national sample ranged from a low of 0.2966 to a high of 0.3838. A recent presentation by Ward, Broer, and Jewsbury (2017) estimated explained variance at about 0.306 when using similar background variables. Their R-squared values were consistent with the values reported in this study.

Exhibit 7. Percentage of Variance (R^2) Explained by Relevant Background Variables for the Total NAEP Sample of Students (Public and Non-public) by Subject and Grade, 2009 to 2015

R2 Values for All Students in NAEP Sample (Public and Non-public) by Grade and Subject				
	Math		Reading	
Year	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8
2009	0.2966	0.3530	0.3031	0.3471
2011	0.3198	0.3607	0.3390	0.3498
2013	0.3457	0.3733	0.3802	0.3712
2015	0.3367	0.3838	0.3777	0.3671
Δ	+0.0401	+0.0308	+0.0746	+0.0200

In addition to the significance of these variables in explaining overall NAEP results, the analysis suggests that the power of these variables in predicting results has increased somewhat over time. In each subject-grade combination, the R-squared value increases somewhat between 2009 and 2015.

Limitations of this and similar analysis

Several limitations in the current study—and other similar studies—should be mentioned. First, both the adjusted and expected performance numbers are estimates based on variables that research indicates affect student achievement. Most of these variables are beyond the control of educators and policy-makers even though they affect performance. Still, the purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which Large City schools were overcoming their effects.

Second, there may be other variables related to achievement that were not controlled for in this analysis. Some of these variables are not measured in NAEP, and possibly some are not measurable at all. A district

effect is the product of our best estimate of whether a district or school type was performing differently than expected, given its student profile on a limited number of variables measured in NAEP. We did not look at other background variables like spending levels, in part because previous studies have not shown them to be as powerful in predicting performance as the ones we did choose.

Third, comparing school types at any grade level ignores the fact that public, private, and charter school students may enter the formal educational process at very different achievement levels. Consequently, attempts to control for differences using various student characteristics or attempts to match students based on background variables will not always account for other differences that affect student achievement. For example, parents electing to enroll their children in private or charter schools may have very different parenting practices than parents who send their children to neighborhood public schools – particularly in high poverty urban areas.

Research (e.g., Wilder, 2014; Jeynes, 2012; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Patall, Cooper, & Robinson, 2008; Senechal & Young, 2008; Jeynes, 2007; Erion, 2006; Jeynes, 2005; Jeynes, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001) indicates that differences in parental involvement and expectations have a significant impact on student achievement, yet many studies, including this one, do not adequately account for these differences except to the extent that we look at parental education levels and literacy materials in the home.

Fourth, this study was not able to parse the differences between charter schools that were authorized by school districts, those that were authorized by other entities, and those that were entirely independent. NAEP does not code charter schools in a way that would allow analyses of each type.

Fifth, this analysis does not control for differences in such in-school variables as teacher experience, school location, or school size. Other studies have shown that these variables have little impact on difference between school types (see, e.g., Braun, Jenkins, & Grigg, 2006), although these variables may have effects in other types of analyses.

Finally, differences in concentrations of poverty are likely to affect comparisons as well. (See, for example, Orfield & Lee, 2005 for a discussion of concentrated poverty.) This study attempts to explain some of this effect in the next section by looking at income levels within jurisdictions with Census data, but additional analyses are needed.

Results of Analysis

This section answers study questions posed in the previous section. First, we look at "district effects" using the 2015 restricted-use NAEP data set. Second, we look at trends city by city and across cities using NAEP restricted-use data from 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015. Third, we more carefully examine the poverty levels in cities whose school districts show district effects above and below what might be expected statistically. Fourth, we compare the performance of large city school districts to others.

(a) Actual vs. Expected (Adjusted) Mean NAEP Performance

Exhibits eight through 11 show the actual mean scale scores of districts and school types in 2015, the expected mean of the same groups after adjusting for relevant background variables, and the overall "district effect" of individual cities and various school types. Comparable tables for 2009, 2011, and 2013 are available in Appendix A. Again, the district effect is the difference between the actual performance and the adjusted performance. A positive effect suggests that the entity is scoring higher than one would expect statistically, given its demographic characteristics; a negative effect suggests that the entity is scoring lower than one would expect statistically, given its demographic characteristics. Zero is the point at which an entity scores exactly what one would expect statistically—suggesting that the entity is more likely to reflect its demographic characteristics.

In grade four reading (Exhibit 8), Large City (Not Charter) schools generally and many individual TUDA districts—the focus of this study—nominally out-scored their expected performance in 2015 after adjusting for relevant background variables. The Large City (Not Charter) school effect was +1.18, and individual city effects ranged from a high of +15.39 in Boston to a low of -18.25 in Detroit. Overall, 13 of 21 cities (Boston, Chicago, Houston, New York City, the District of Columbia, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, San Diego, Austin, Jefferson County, Miami-Dade County, Dallas, Hillsborough County, and Duval County) on which there were NAEP data on grade four reading in 2015 had positive district effects; and eight of 21 had negative district effects.

Not Large City (Not Charter) schools and Large City and Not Large City (Charter) schools had district effects that were slightly below zero (-0.91, -0.55, and -1.19, respectively). There were no data in 2015 for either non-public schools or for Milwaukee, which did not participate in TUDA that year.

In grade 8 reading (Exhibit 9), Large City (Not Charter) schools had a district effect of +1.09 while individual cities ranged from +9.85 in Boston to a low of -7.16 in Albuquerque. Overall, 12 of 21 cities (Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, New York City, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, San Diego, Austin, Jefferson County, Miami-Dade County, Dallas, Hillsborough County, and Duval County) on which there were NAEP data in 2015 had positive district effects, and nine of 21 had negative district effects.

The highest-performing entity in eighth grade reading was Large City (Charter) schools (+4.76). Public schools outside the large cities had somewhat lower effects. Again, there were no data in 2015 for either non-public schools or for Milwaukee.

Exhibit. 10 shows that Large City (Not Charter) schools had an effect of +2.15 in fourth grade math and while individual cities ranged from a high of +12.94 in Austin to a low of -19.76 in Detroit. Overall, 12 of 21 cities (Austin, Chicago, Houston, the District of Columbia, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Jefferson County, Miami-Dade County, Albuquerque, Dallas, Hillsborough County, and Duval County) posted positive effects. and nine had negative effects.

Large City (Charter) schools, Not Large City (Not Charter), and Not Large City (Charter) generally trailed the Large City (Not Charter) schools, and no data were available for non-public schools that year.

Exhibit 11 shows that Large City (Not Charter) schools overall had a positive effect, +2.48, in eighth grade mathematics, while individual cities varied from a high of +17.27 in Boston to a low of -14.04 in Detroit. Some 11 of 21 cities (Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, New York City, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, San Diego, Austin, Miami-Dade County, Dallas, and Hillsborough County) on which there were NAEP data in 2015 had positive district effects, and 10 of 21 had negative effects.

Overall, Large City (Charter) schools had the highest positive effect at +5.88, while public schools outside the cities had lower district effects. No data on non-public schools were available in 2015.

Exhibit 8. Grade Four Reading Actual Performance, Expected Performance, and District Effects in 2015

TUDA/ Jurisdiction	Actual Mean	Expected Mean	District Effect
Albuquerque	206.89	214.63	-7.74
Atlanta	212.12	213.28	-1.16
Austin	220.02	211.09	8.93
Baltimore	198.95	208.08	-9.13
Boston	219.46	204.07	15.39
Charlotte	225.58	218.85	6.72
Chicago	213.04	211.63	1.41
Cleveland	196.81	202.98	-6.17
Dallas	204.02	201.78	2.24
Detroit	186.43	204.68	-18.25
District of Columbia (DCPS)	213.90	212.98	0.92
Duval County	225.27	220.26	5.01
Fresno	198.95	209.15	-10.21
Hillsborough County	229.65	217.92	11.73
Houston	209.55	206.33	3.22
Jefferson County	221.95	218.74	3.20
Los Angeles	204.43	210.56	-6.13
Miami	226.41	215.79	10.62
Milwaukee			
New York City	214.01	211.91	2.09
Philadelphia	200.53	213.13	-12.60
San Diego	215.91	213.22	2.69
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	213.54	212.36	1.18
Large City Schools (Charter‡)	214.43	214.98	-0.55
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	223.05	223.96	-0.91*
Not Large City (Charter‡)	222.09	223.29	-1.19
Non-Public/Private	--	--	--

*District effect is significantly different from zero.

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Exhibit 9. Grade Eight Reading Actual Performance, Expected Performance, and District Effects in 2015

TUDA/ Jurisdiction	Actual Mean	Expected Mean	District Effect
Albuquerque	250.99	258.16	-7.16
Atlanta	252.46	251.71	0.75
Austin	261.49	258.09	3.40
Baltimore	243.42	246.76	-3.34
Boston	257.87	248.01	9.85
Charlotte	262.67	261.38	1.29
Chicago	256.60	251.81	4.79
Cleveland	240.16	242.42	-2.26
Dallas	249.59	244.67	4.92
Detroit	237.28	244.07	-6.79
District of Columbia (DCPS)	244.71	248.33	-3.62
Duval County	264.00	262.28	1.72
Fresno	241.84	253.60	-11.76
Hillsborough County	261.03	258.24	2.79
Houston	251.63	252.24	-0.60
Jefferson County	261.42	261.11	0.31
Los Angeles	250.90	254.52	-3.61
Miami	264.62	258.60	6.01
Milwaukee			
New York City	257.74	256.11	1.62
Philadelphia	248.40	254.19	-5.79
San Diego	261.74	261.67	0.07
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	256.23	255.14	1.09
Large City Schools (Charter‡)	258.90	254.15	4.76
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	265.39	265.82	-0.43
Not Large City Schools (Charter‡)	267.81	265.73	2.08
Non-Public/Private	--	--	--

*District effect is significantly different from zero.
‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Exhibit 10. Grade Four Mathematics Actual Performance, Expected Performance, and District Effects in 2015

TUDA/ Jurisdiction	Actual Mean	Expected Mean	District Effect
Albuquerque	230.58	224.33	6.25
Atlanta	228.09	230.46	-2.38
Austin	246.14	233.21	12.94
Baltimore	214.96	225.66	-10.71
Boston	235.53	226.42	9.11
Charlotte	247.82	236.61	11.21
Chicago	231.94	230.76	1.18
Cleveland	219.15	223.15	-4.00
Dallas	237.92	236.96	0.97
Detroit	204.66	224.41	-19.76
District of Columbia (DCPS)	232.21	230.77	1.44
Duval County	242.80	231.98	10.82
Fresno	217.68	230.52	-12.84
Hillsborough County	243.61	238.04	5.57
Houston	238.71	227.91	10.80
Jefferson County	235.74	235.53	0.21
Los Angeles	224.18	231.58	-7.40
Miami	242.10	234.64	7.46
Milwaukee			
New York City	231.03	232.17	-1.14
Philadelphia	217.45	235.40	-17.95
San Diego	232.76	235.16	-2.40
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	234.15	231.99	2.15*
Large City Schools (Charter‡)	232.69	233.09	-0.40
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	241.20	241.72	-0.52
Not Large City Schools (Charter‡)	239.17	241.01	-1.83
Non-Public/Private	--	--	--

*District effect is significantly different from zero.

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Exhibit 11. Grade Eight Mathematics Actual Performance, Expected Performance, and District Effects in 2015

TUDA/ Jurisdiction	Actual Mean	Expected Mean	District Effect
Albuquerque	270.72	274.22	-3.49
Atlanta	266.37	265.19	1.19
Austin	283.99	275.17	8.83
Baltimore	255.24	258.28	-3.04
Boston	281.15	263.88	17.27
Charlotte	286.23	277.92	8.31
Chicago	274.88	267.09	7.79
Cleveland	254.32	254.97	-0.64
Dallas	270.87	260.45	10.43
Detroit	244.16	258.20	-14.04
District of Columbia (DCPS)	258.37	261.76	-3.40
Duval County	274.53	278.38	-3.86
Fresno	256.87	270.86	-13.99
Hillsborough County	275.62	274.93	0.69
Houston	276.48	268.24	8.25
Jefferson County	271.59	277.00	-5.42
Los Angeles	263.48	270.55	-7.06
Miami	274.50	274.20	0.30
Milwaukee			
New York City	275.36	273.08	2.28
Philadelphia	267.09	269.46	-2.37
San Diego	280.40	279.89	0.51
Large City Schools (Not Charter)	273.53	271.05	2.48*
Large City Schools (Charter‡)	275.09	269.21	5.88*
Not Large City Schools (Not Charter)	282.76	283.08	-0.32
Not Large City Schools (Charter‡)	283.51	282.14	1.36
Non-Public/Private	--	--	--

*District effect is significantly different from zero.

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

(b) Trends in Overcoming Poverty and Other Variables

Exhibits 12 through 15 show the district effects for all TUDA districts across all four assessment periods (2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015) in grades four and eight, reading and math. These data are meant to answer the question about whether or not Large City (Not Charter) schools are getting better at overcoming the effects of poverty, language, and other demographic variables or not.

In grade four reading, several cities had district effects that were above expectations and several had improved those effects between 2009 and 2015. In 2015, there were 13 cities that showed overall positive effects. Of these districts, five had improved since 2009--Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Austin, Jefferson County, and Miami-Dade County. Moreover, in 2015, there were eight cities with negative effects. Of these districts, four showed gains over 2009. (Milwaukee showed gains between 2009 and 2013.) Three districts—Chicago, the District of Columbia, and Jefferson County—moved from having a negative district effect in 2009 to having a positive one in 2015.

In grade eight reading (Exhibit 13), 11 cities had positive effects in 2015. Of these cities, five showed larger effects in 2015 than in 2009—Boston, Chicago, New York City, Jefferson County, and Dallas. Duval County had only one year of data. Nine districts had negative district effects in 2015. Of these districts, two showed a larger effect in 2015 than in 2009, even though they remained in negative territory—the District of Columbia and Detroit. One district—Cleveland—held steady during the study period. (Milwaukee showed gains between 2009 and 2013.) And both New York City and Jefferson County moved from below the zero line in 2009 to above it in 2015. The remaining districts showed slippage.

In grade four mathematics (Exhibit 14), 11 of the TUDA districts performed better than expected in 2015. All these districts, except Dallas and Hillsborough County, showed gains in 2015 over and above their effects in 2009. (Duval County had only one year of data.) Nine other districts had negative district effects in 2015, two of which showed gains over and above 2009—even though they remained in negative territory throughout the period. (Milwaukee essentially saw no movement over the three years that it participated in NAEP.) Only three districts—Chicago, the District of Columbia, and Albuquerque--went from below the line to above the line between 2009 and 2015.

Finally, in grade eight mathematics (Exhibit 15), 10 of the TUDA districts performed better than expected in 2015. Of those 10, three—Boston, Atlanta, and Chicago—had larger effects in 2009 than in 2015. Dallas remained essentially the same over the period, and the remaining six showed some slippage. In addition, 10 cities showed a negative district effect in 2015. Four of these districts (D.C., Cleveland, Detroit, and Jefferson County) showed higher district effects in 2015 than in 2009; one (Baltimore) remained about the same), and one (Duval County) only had one year of data. Milwaukee improved in the three assessment cycles that it participated in despite performing lower than expected in 2013. The remaining districts slipped in their district effects. Only Atlanta moved from a negative district effect in 2009 to a positive one in 2015.

Overall, there were several notable trends. Boston, for instance, which had the largest positive district effect, showed improvements in all four assessments (i.e., reading, math, fourth grade, and eighth grade) from 2009 to 2015. Chicago also posted increased district effects on all four assessments, as did the District of Columbia. Cleveland, Detroit, and Jefferson County showed gains on three of four assessments areas. And several districts showed gains across two assessment areas: Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Austin, Miami-Dade County, and Albuquerque. In addition, several districts went from a negative district effect in 2009 to a positive one in 2015 in at least one assessed area—Chicago, the District of Columbia, Jefferson County, New York City, San Diego, Albuquerque, and Atlanta. Chicago, the District of Columbia, and Jefferson County did so in two areas. Later in this analysis, we will see that Large City (Not Charter) schools, in general, had larger effects in 2015 than in 2009 and that Large City (Not Charter) schools had positive effects in all four tested areas in 2015.

Exhibit 12. Trends in District Effects in Grade Four Reading by City, 2009 to 2015

* Note. District effect is the difference between district mean and expected district mean.
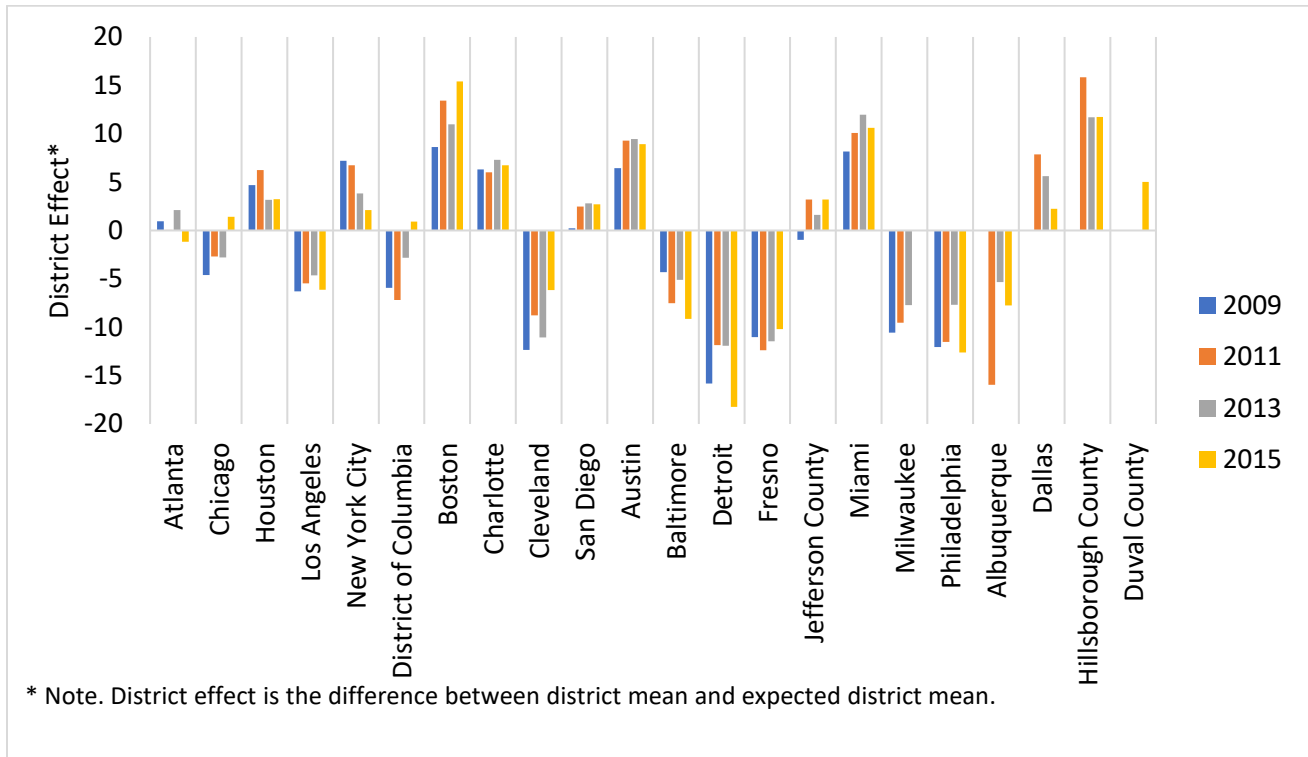
Exhibit 13. Trends in District Effects in Grade Eight Reading by City, 2009 to 2015

* Note. District effect is the difference between district mean and expected district mean.
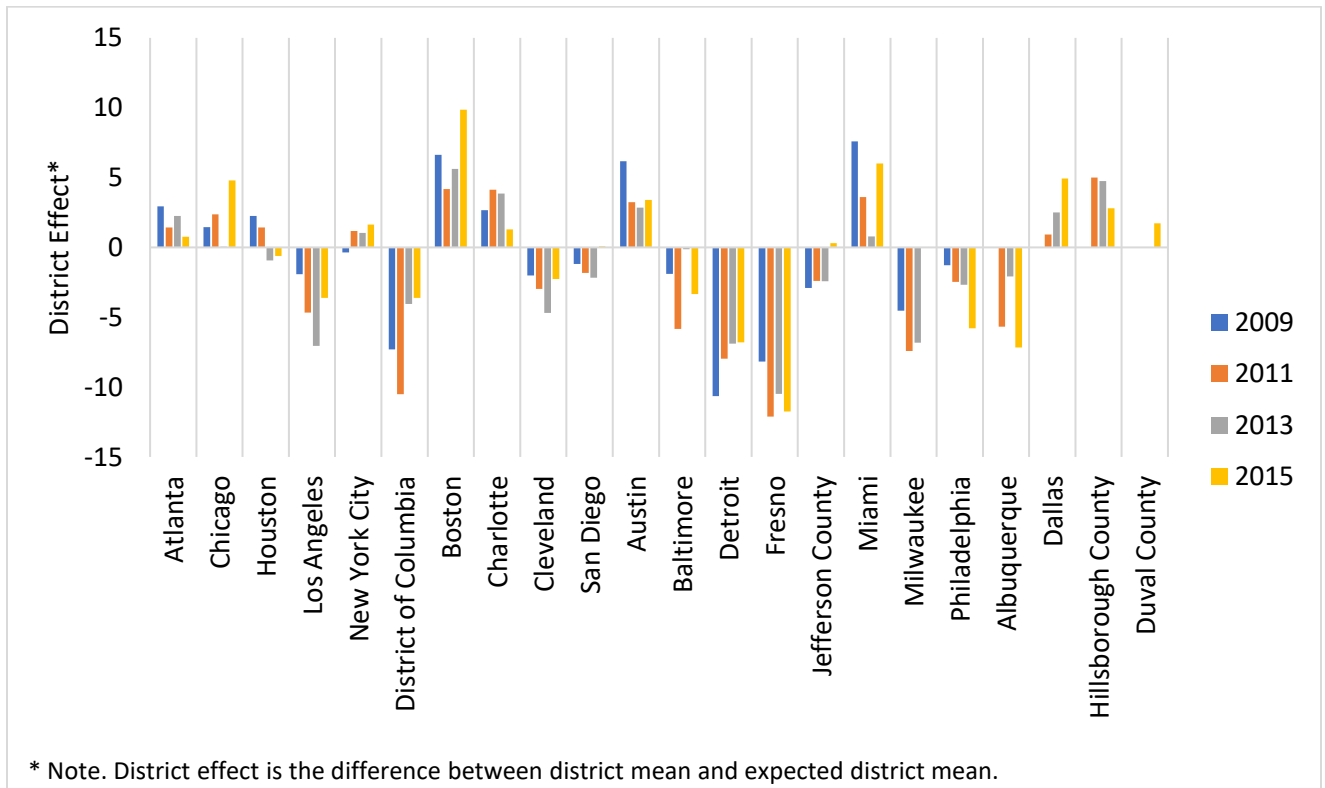
Exhibit 14. Trends in District Effects in Grade Four Mathematics by City, 2009 to 2015

* Note. District effect is the difference between district mean and expected district mean.
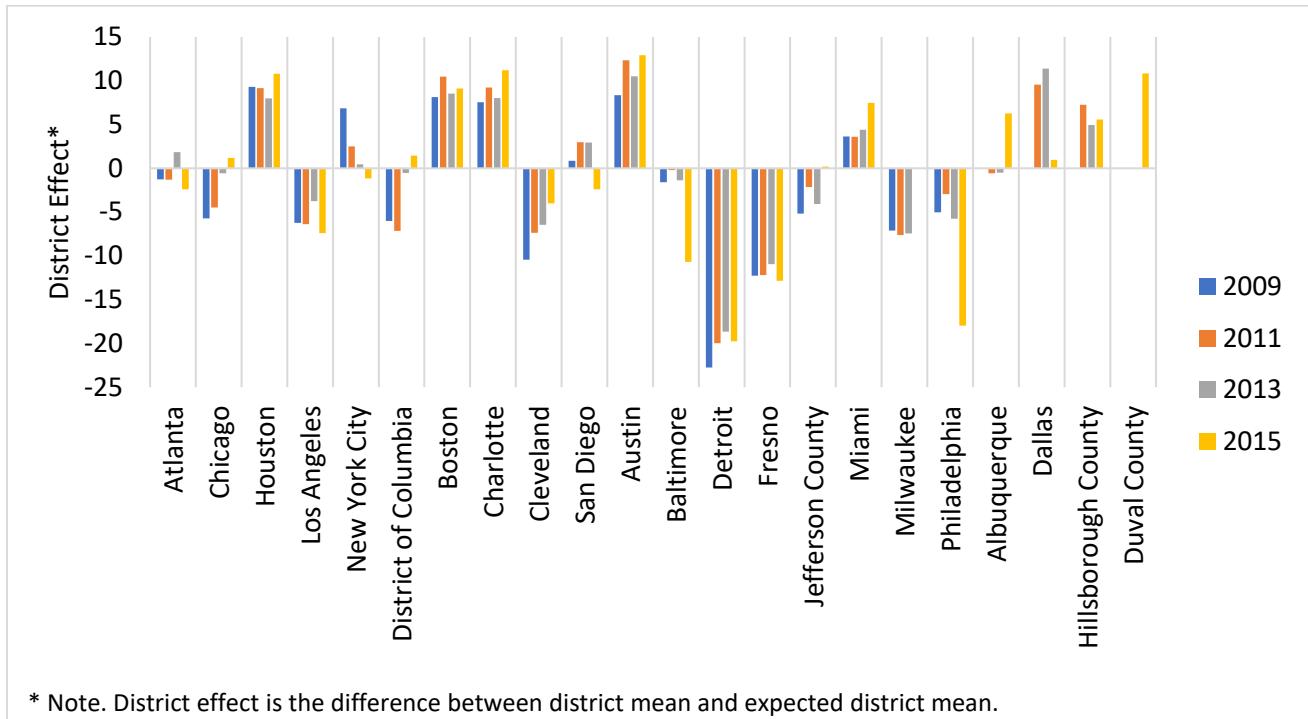
Exhibit 15. Trends in District Effects in Grade Eight Mathematics by City, 2009 to 2015

* Note. District effect is the difference between district mean and expected district mean.
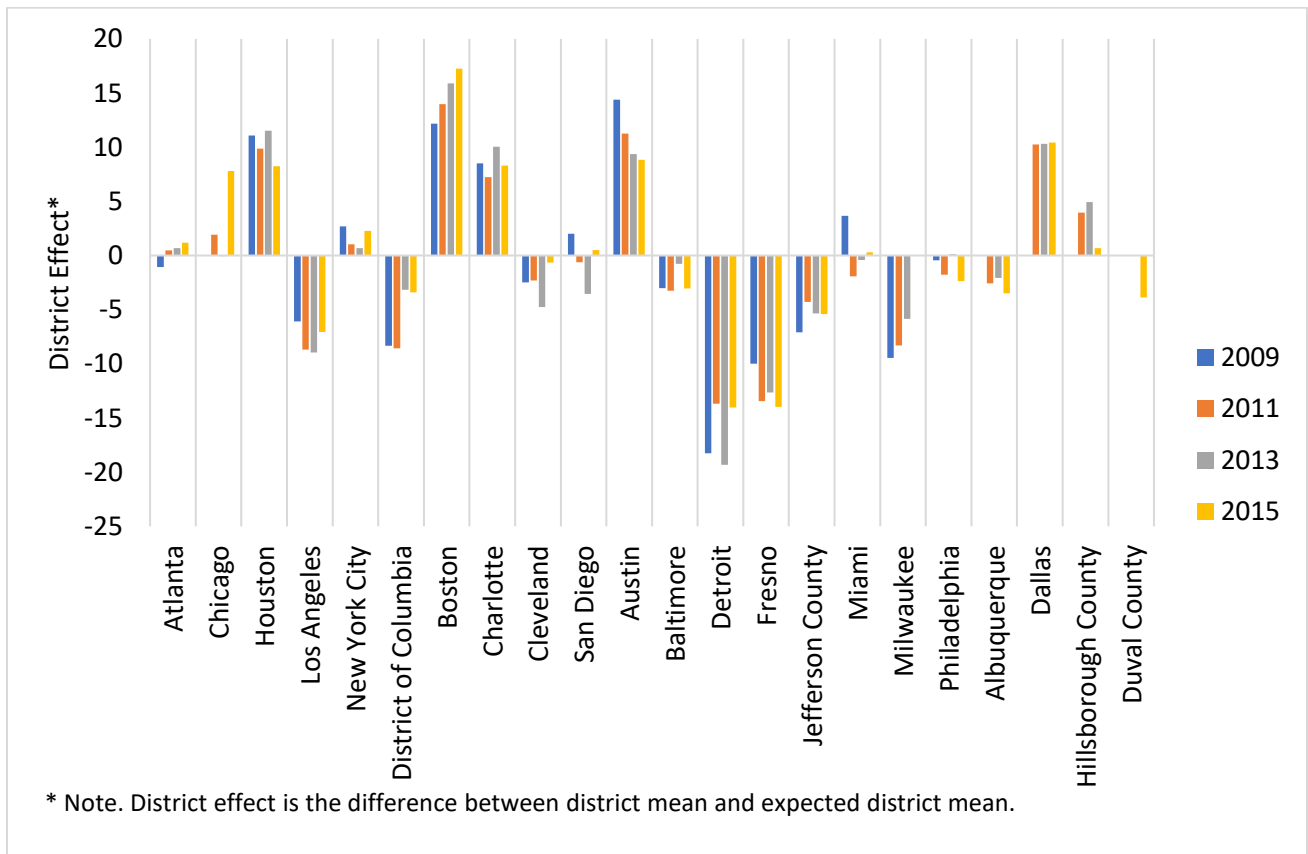
(c) Influence of Abject Poverty

An initial review of results after adjusting for relevant background variables indicated that those variables might not adequately control for poverty. The question emerged about whether the Free & Reduced-Price Lunch-eligibility measure used by NAEP sufficiently differentiated poverty levels or took adequate account of deep or abject poverty. The National School Lunch Act in 1946 created the modern school lunch program though the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and about 7.1 million children were participating in it by the end of its first year, 1946-47. By 1970, 22 million children were participating, and by 1980 the figure was nearly 27 million. In 2012, more than 31.6 million children were participating in the National School Lunch Program.

The program provides free meals to eligible children in households with income at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, and reduced-price meals to eligible children in households with income above 130 percent and at or below 185 percent of poverty. Unfortunately, as the number of participating students rose and the income categories remained the same, the lunch-eligibility data became less and less able to differentiate the very poor from the poor and near-poor.

The distinction between levels of poverty becomes important as we look at which districts are most able to overcome the effects of poverty and other barriers—and conversely, which ones have a more difficult challenge. Exhibit 16 shows the difference in abject poverty across districts. Later in this analysis, one will see that, despite progress, districts like Detroit, Cleveland, Fresno, and others with high levels of abject poverty have a more difficult time rising above statistical expectations.

Using free and reduced-priced lunch as a proxy for poverty has been an acceptable and frequently used measure in many research studies, but it has flaws. In fact, the measure has become increasingly challenging because of the new Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The CEP is a meal service option for schools and school districts in low-income areas. A key provision of the *Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act* (HHFKA, Public Law 111-296; December 13, 2010), CEP allows the highest-poverty schools to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students, without the burden of collecting household applications. Instead, schools that adopt CEP are reimbursed using a formula (1.6 times direct certification) based on the percentage of students participating in other means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

As a result, a school that may have 85 percent of its students eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch will serve 100 percent of students. Obviously, the change has been important for ensuring that students have adequate nutrition, but the new provision has been problematic for researchers trying to measure poverty or use it in their analyses. The changes, for instance, have affected the ability to maintain trend lines in poverty levels and obtain accurate counts of students actually in poverty. Researchers have tried to use a combination of direct certification, census poverty data using geocodes, and prior information to determine a best metric, but the attempts have not always been fully successful.

Finally, poverty thresholds in the federal free and reduced-price lunch data do not vary by geography or economic cost-of-living factors, although other adjustments can be made. They also do not account for students who are at or below the 100 percent poverty threshold. And poverty rates are compounded in cities where the cost of living varies (e.g., New York City vs. Des Moines).

The table below (Exhibit 16) shows income levels for TUDA districts according to bands of income below $50,000 annually—using Census income data for 2015. For the purposes of this analysis, abject poverty is annual income below $10,000. We also use that measure in combination with annual income below $50,000. Unfortunately, the Census data cannot be juxtaposed against all the NAEP variables used in this study.

Exhibit 16. Percentage of Households by Income Level in TUDA Districts, 2015

	Less than $10,000	$10,000 to $14,999	$15,000 to $24,999	$25,000 to $34,999	$35,000 to $49,999	Total Percent of Families
Detroit City School District	21.7	10.2	16.9	12.7	13.6	75.1
Cleveland Municipal School District	20.5	10.6	17.1	12.5	13.5	74.2
Fresno Unified School District	11.5	9.4	16.0	13.4	14.5	64.8
Milwaukee School District	12.2	8.7	15.1	12.9	14.5	63.4
Philadelphia City School District	14.2	7.9	13.0	11.6	13.6	60.3
Fort Worth Independent School District	9.9	7.1	13.3	12.2	14.0	56.5
Baltimore City Public Schools	13.1	7.5	11.6	11.1	13.0	56.3
Dallas Independent School District	9.6	6.5	13.1	12.2	14.9	56.3
Miami-Dade County School District	10.6	6.8	13.3	11.1	14.1	55.9
Guilford County Schools	8.1	5.8	12.3	12.2	15.0	53.4
Shelby County School District	9.7	6.2	12.7	11.1	13.2	52.9
Houston Independent School District	9.1	6.4	12.8	10.8	13.3	52.4
Duval County School District	8.7	5.6	10.9	11.6	15.1	51.9
Albuquerque Public Schools	9.1	5.8	12.3	11.2	13.4	51.8
Atlanta City School District	12.8	6.3	11.1	9.4	12.0	51.6
Jefferson County School District	8.5	6.0	11.3	10.8	14.6	51.2
Chicago Public School District 299	11.1	5.9	11.6	10.0	12.4	51.0
Los Angeles Unified School District	7.9	6.9	12.0	10.5	12.8	50.1
Hillsborough County School District	7.7	5.4	11.3	10.6	14.3	49.3
Clark County School District	6.7	4.6	10.4	11.4	15.2	48.3
New York City	10.4	6.1	10.5	8.9	11.4	47.3

	Less than $10,000	$10,000 to $14,999	$15,000 to $24,999	$25,000 to $34,999	$35,000 to $49,999	Total Percent of Families
Denver County School District 1	8.4	5.2	9.6	10.1	13.4	46.7
Boston School District	12.0	7.3	9.3	7.2	10.2	46.0
Austin Independent School District	7.9	4.5	9.3	9.6	13.6	44.9
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	6.4	4.4	9.4	10.3	13.7	44.2
San Diego City Unified School District	6.3	4.9	9.0	8.5	12.2	40.9
District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)	10.2	4.2	7.4	6.7	9.6	38.1
Hawaii Department of Education	5.7	3.4	7.3	7.3	11.6	35.3

What is clear from the data is that TUDA districts with NAEP scores in reading and math below expectations in 2015 in all four subject-grade combinations (reading, math, grade 4, grade 8) also had unusually high poverty rates. See Exhibit 17. This suggests that districts with particularly low-income levels and high concentrations of such poverty are much less likely to produce a positive district effect in reading and math performance.

Exhibit 17. TUDA Districts with Negative District Effects in Four Areas and Their Abject Poverty Levels, 2015

	District Effect in Grade 4 Reading	District Effect in Grade 8 Reading	District Effect in Grade 4 Math	District Effect in Grade 8 Math	Percent of Families below $10,000	Percent of Families below $50,000
Detroit	-18.25	-6.79	-19.76	-14.04	21.7	75.1
Cleveland	-6.17	-2.26	-4.00	-0.64	20.5	74.2
Fresno	-10.21	-11.76	-12.84	-13.99	11.5	64.8
Milwaukee*	-7.72	-6.82	-7.43	-5.86	12.2	63.4
Philadelphia	-12.60	-5.79	-17.95	-2.37	14.2	60.3
Baltimore	-9.13	-3.34	-10.71	-3.04	13.1	56.3
Los Angeles	-6.13	-3.61	-7.40	-7.06	7.9	50.1

*District Effects data for 2013

By and large, this effect appears to apply to districts with populations where at least 10 percent have incomes below $10,000 annually and at least 30 percent have incomes below $50,000. All districts in Exhibit 17, except Los Angeles, have these characteristics. At the same time, there are districts with both demographic conditions that have at least one or more positive district effects. In fact, Dallas, Miami-Dade County, and Chicago have four positive district

effects--reading and math in both fourth and eighth grades. And Atlanta has two. Interestingly, Chicago has gone from below the zero line to above it in two areas between 2009 and 2015—fourth grade reading and fourth grade math.

(d) Comparing Large City School Trends with Others

This section examines how large city school districts participating in TUDA performed compared to other types of schools. Results of the data analysis are shown in Exhibits 18 through 21. Exhibit 18 shows changes in district effects for Large City schools (Not Charter) compared to their Large City (Charter) and Not Large City (Charter and Not a Charter) peers by subject and grade. The results show three things. First, in fourth grade reading on NAEP, Large City (Not Charter) public schools demonstrated a nominally positive district effect in 2015, meaning that the aggregate of large urban schools across the nation was adding value academically in reading in grade four over and above what might be expected statistically. Second, Large City public schools nominally increased their district effect between 2009 and 2015 in grade four reading. And third, Large City (Not Charter) public schools produced a larger district effect than Large City (Charter) or non-large city public schools (Charter and Not Charter) nationally—or non-public schools in 2009, 2011, and 2013.

In Exhibit 19, the district effects of Large City (Not Charter) public schools were compared to Large City (Charter), Not Large City (Charter and Not Charter), and the aggregate of non-public or private schools in 2009, 2011, and 2013. (There were no estimates of private school performance in 2015 for NAEP because of small sample sizes.) The results of the analysis show two things. One, Large City (Not Charter) public schools had a nominally positive district effect in 2015. Two, Large City (Not Charter) increased the size of their district effect between 2009 and 2015, going from nominally negative to nominally positive. Three, Large City and Not Large City (Charter) schools had the highest district effects in 2015 and showed substantial improvement over 2009. Schools outside the large cities generally reflected their demographic characteristics and did not show appreciable improvement. On the other hand, non-public schools showed a generally positive effect in grade 8 reading in 2013, but trends moved nominally downward.

In Exhibit 20, we look at the district effects of Large City (Not Charter) public schools and other types of schools in grade 4 math after adjusting for demographic differences in 2009 through 2015. In general, the data show three things. First, Large City (Not Charter) public schools showed a positive district effect in 2015. Second, Large City (Not Charter) public schools improved substantially between 2009 and 2015. Third, Large City (Not Charter) public schools had a larger district effect than any other type of school that year.

Finally, in Exhibit 21, we compare Large City (Not Charter) public schools with other types of schools in eighth grade math. Here, the analysis shows three things. One, Large City (Not Charter) public schools had a nominally positive district effect in 2015. Two, the Large City (Not Charter) district effect improved between 2009 and 2015. And three, Large City (Charter) schools had the highest district effects in eighth grade math and had improved those effects substantially between 2009 and 2015. Public schools outside the large cities—both charter and non-charter—appeared to show lower district effects than schools in the large cities. By and large, non-public schools did not produce positive effects between 2009 and 2013.

In summary, the analysis shows that Large City (Not Charter) public schools had at least nominally positive district effects in 2015 in all four grade-subject combinations (i.e., reading and math, grade four and grade eight). These schools were the only ones among the comparison groups to show this pattern. The results also showed that the district effects of Large City (Not Charter) public schools uniformly improved at least nominally in all four grade-subject combinations between 2009 and 2015. Large City (Charters) showed the largest gains in all four tested areas, although remaining in negative territory in some areas. The results also showed that Large City (Not Charter) public schools generally produced larger district effects in grade 4 reading and math in 2015 than did charter schools, while Large City (Charter) schools generally produced larger effects in grade eight reading and math in 2015.

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Exhibit 18. Trends in District Effects in Grade Four Reading on NAEP by School Type, 2009 to 2015
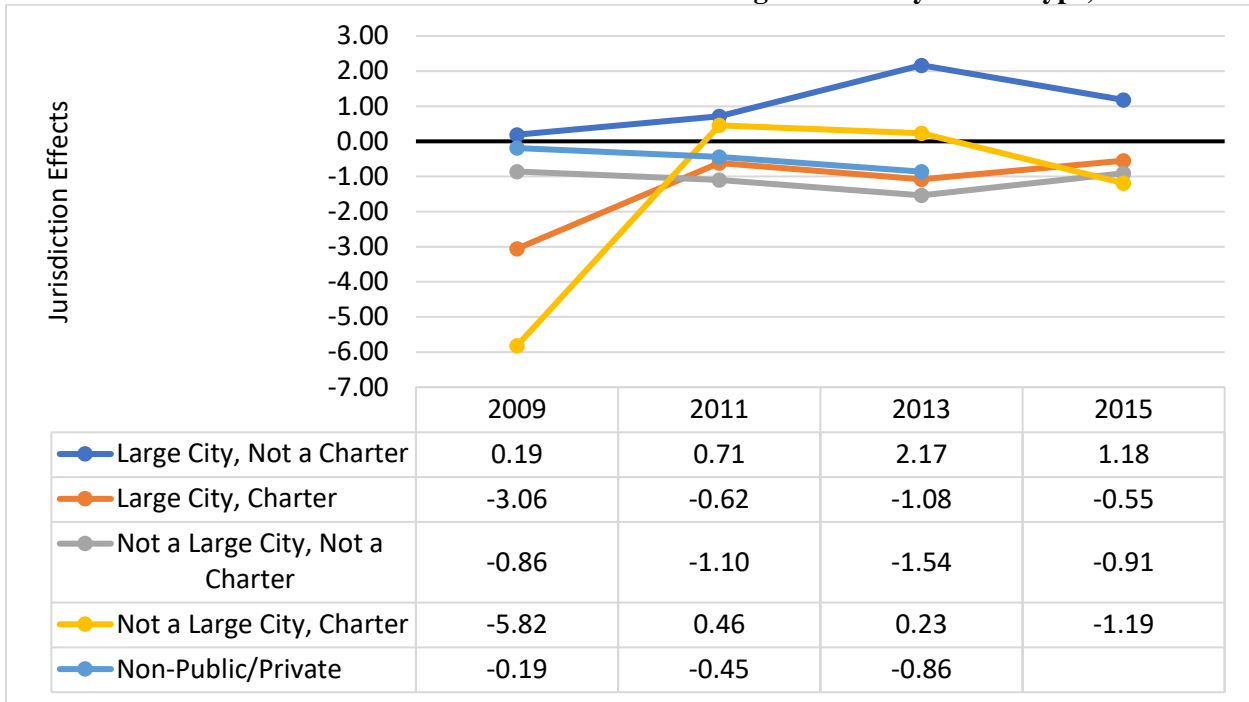
	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City, Not a Charter	0.19	0.71	2.17	1.18
Large City, Charter	-3.06	-0.62	-1.08	-0.55
Not a Large City, Not a Charter	-0.86	-1.10	-1.54	-0.91
Not a Large City, Charter	-5.82	0.46	0.23	-1.19
Non-Public/Private	-0.19	-0.45	-0.86	

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Exhibit 19. Trends in District Effects in Grade Eight Reading on NAEP by School Type, 2009 to 2015
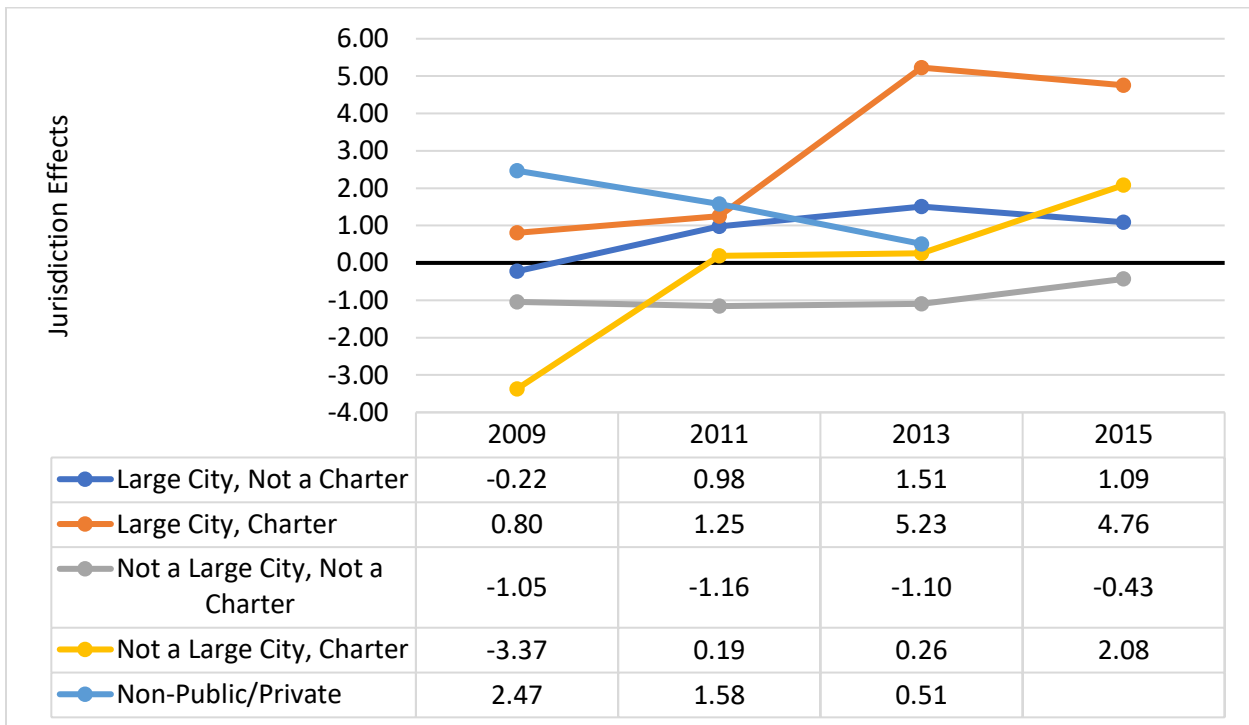
	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City, Not a Charter	-0.22	0.98	1.51	1.09
Large City, Charter	0.80	1.25	5.23	4.76
Not a Large City, Not a Charter	-1.05	-1.16	-1.10	-0.43
Not a Large City, Charter	-3.37	0.19	0.26	2.08
Non-Public/Private	2.47	1.58	0.51	

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Exhibit 20. Trends in District Effects in Grade Four Math on NAEP by School Type, 2009 to 2015
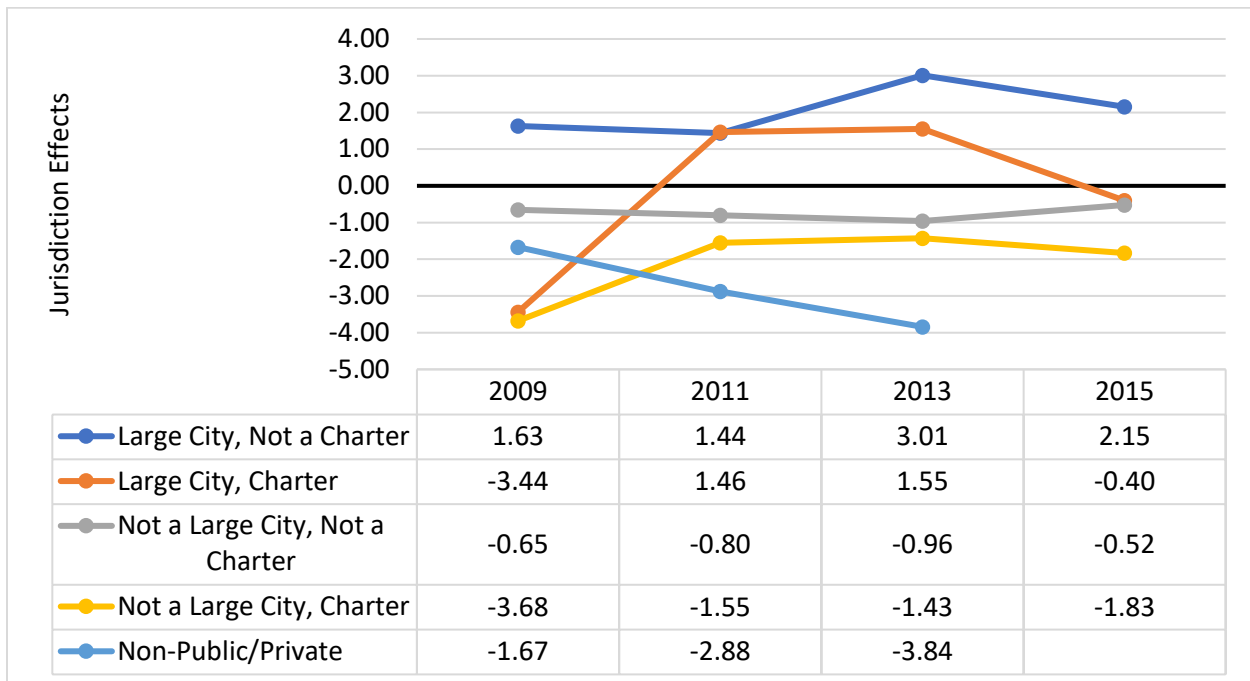
	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City, Not a Charter	1.63	1.44	3.01	2.15
Large City, Charter	-3.44	1.46	1.55	-0.40
Not a Large City, Not a Charter	-0.65	-0.80	-0.96	-0.52
Not a Large City, Charter	-3.68	-1.55	-1.43	-1.83
Non-Public/Private	-1.67	-2.88	-3.84	

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Exhibit 21. Trends in District Effects in Grade Eight Math on NAEP by School Type, 2009 to 2015
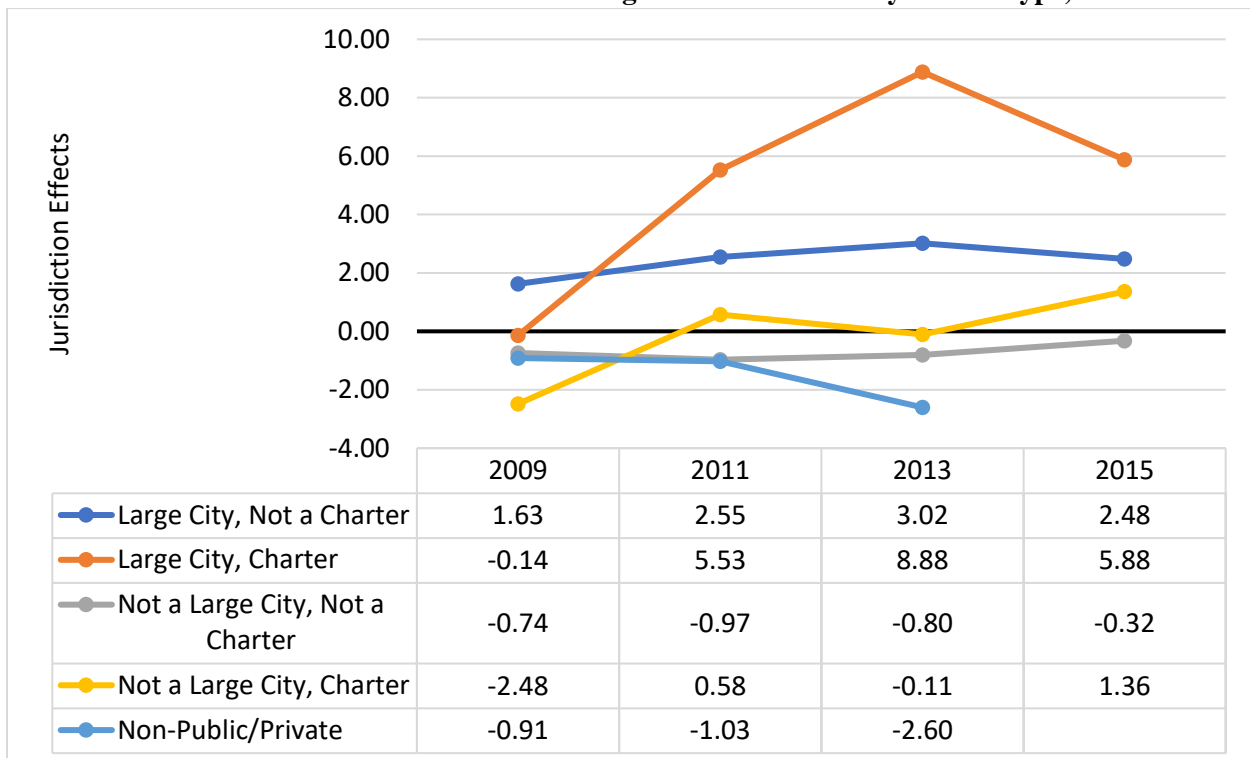
	2009	2011	2013	2015
Large City, Not a Charter	1.63	2.55	3.02	2.48
Large City, Charter	-0.14	5.53	8.88	5.88
Not a Large City, Not a Charter	-0.74	-0.97	-0.80	-0.32
Not a Large City, Charter	-2.48	0.58	-0.11	1.36
Non-Public/Private	-0.91	-1.03	-2.60	

‡ Includes district-authorized charters, charters authorized by others, and independent charters

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings from this report suggest several conclusions. One, any analysis of NAEP—or other student achievement results—that does not take into consideration the effects of poverty, race, ELL status, disability status, literacy materials in the home, and family education levels is likely to produce incomplete results and an only partial understanding of student attainment. The background variables used in this analysis explain nearly one-third of the differences in student achievement scores on NAEP.

Two, the data suggest that efforts to account for the effects of poverty using free or reduced-price lunch may fall short of capturing the full impact of abject and concentrated poverty on student outcomes. Districts with large percentages of students living in households with annual incomes below $10,000 and $50,000 face a more difficult set of challenges than other urban school systems in producing a "value-added" effect that is higher than statistical expectations. One could see this from the reading and math results in Detroit, Cleveland, Fresno, Milwaukee, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. In addition, other studies show consistently that high poverty levels are strongly associated with individual schools being identified as either focus or priority schools under federal statutes.

Still, some of these districts, like Cleveland, produced improvements in the effects they were producing, even though they remained below statistical expectations. At the same time, there were urban school districts with high abject poverty levels that demonstrated positive district effects, i.e., Dallas, Miami-Dade County, and Chicago. And there were districts that demonstrated the ability in the short period between 2009 and 2015 to go from a negative effect to a positive effect in at least some areas, e.g., the District of Columbia and Chicago.

Three, several TUDA districts demonstrated consistently that they were overcoming the influence of identified student background characteristics on achievement. Boston, Austin, Charlotte, Dallas, Hillsborough, and Miami-Dade were among the districts that consistently out-performed expected levels. Interestingly, districts like Boston and the District of Columbia have high percentages of students living in households with annual incomes below $10,000 but lower numbers with incomes below $50,000—and they show impressive results.

The second phase of this project will involve looking in greater detail at many of these districts to better understand why and how achievement levels look like they do and what helped them get better. The Council of the Great City Schools has done this twice before with studies in 2002 and 2011 on why some urban school systems improved faster than others.[6]

Four, the data are clear that Large City schools—in the aggregate—are producing results on NAEP that are above statistical expectations. This appears to be the case in all four subject-grade combinations— reading, math, fourth grade, and eighth grade. Moreover, the data are clear that urban public schools—in the aggregate—have improved their ability to out-perform statistical expectations over time. District effects produced by Large City public schools improved substantially between 2009 and 2015. At the same time, it appears that charter schools in Large Cities and Not Large Cities improved somewhat faster in all four tested areas than not-charters in either setting, but one needs to keep in mind that we were unable to separate which charters were district authorized and which ones were not.

Five, we wanted to put the changes in urban school performance in context, because we were unclear about whether the results that urban schools were producing were better or worse than those of others. Consequently, we adjusted the NAEP outcomes produced by Large City (Charter), Not Large City, and Non-public/private schools by the same variables—in the same ways—that we adjusted Large City (Not

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[6] Snipes, J. et.al. 2002. *Foundations for Success: Case Studies of How Urban School Systems Improve Student Achievement*. Washington, D.C.: MDRC for the Council of the Great City Schools, September 2002. Casserly, M. *et. al*. 2011. *Pieces of the Puzzle: Factors in the Improvement of Urban School Districts on the National Assessment of Educational Progress*. Washington, D.C.: Council of the Great City Schools, Fall 2011.

Charter) results. With the restricted-use NAEP data set, we could produce district effects for public schools nationally (Not Large City) after subtracting out the Large Cities. The results showed generally that public schools nationally did not produce so large a district effect as did Large City schools after adjusting for the demographic characteristics of each. In other words, urban public schools produced a larger effect than did the typical public school nationally. Does this mean that urban public schools have higher results than the average public school across the nation? No. The typical public school across the nation has higher NAEP scores than do urban public schools. But the results do suggest that urban public schools do a better job of overcoming the effects of poverty, language, discrimination, disability, and differences in family education than the average school does. Put another way, urban public schools appear to produce greater instructional torque than does the typical public school.

The analysis also attempted to answer the same kind of question vis-à-vis charter schools. The point was not to see which kind of school produced better effects, although that is the subject of major interest, but to place the effects of district schools in large cities in context. The results here were unsatisfying because NAEP data are not coded in such a way as to differentiate district charters from independent charters. The best we could do was to produce separate effects for charters inside and outside large cities.

In general, the preliminary data seem to suggest that district schools that are not charters produce a greater effect at the fourth grade in reading and math, while the charters produce a greater effect in both subjects in the eighth grade. It is worth remembering, however, that the differences between district schools and charter schools on parental education levels and percentages of ELLs were stark. The analysis adjusted for these differences at the eighth-grade level but could not do so at the fourth because NAEP does not collect data on the variable in that grade. Because this variable has not been widely used in studies of the differences between charter schools and district schools, we recommend that more attention be devoted to it in future research.

Finally, we analyzed NAEP results with non-public or private schools. The completeness of the analysis was compromised, however, by the fact that participation by non-public schools in NAEP in 2015 was too low to yield estimates in either reading or math. Consequently, our analysis was restricted to 2009, 2011, and 2013. These data indicated that non-public schools did not have higher performance than urban public schools after adjusting for demographic differences. This does not mean that private schools had lower NAEP scores; they had higher scores. But it does mean that, after adjusting for demographic differences, they did not have better results than urban public schools.

This latter finding has implications for the ongoing debate about private school vouchers, which are typically awarded to public school students who have some of the same demographic characteristics that are studied in this report. It may be that studies of the academic effects of vouchers are producing uneven or negative results because many of these schools are not as well equipped to address issues of poverty and language, which are not so prevalent in these schools as other schools. It is a hypothesis that is worth researchers testing.

The findings in this preliminary report are consistent with recent research that suggests there are very few differences between school types (large city, public, private and charter schools) after controlling for differences in student characteristics. Over the last decade, large city school districts have narrowed the achievement gap with the nation at large, but what is new here is that urban public schools are doing a better job of overcoming the effects poverty, English language proficiency, and other factors that often limit student outcomes. To be sure, urban public schools have not overcome them entirely; otherwise, results across differing types of schools would be similar without the adjustments. There is a great deal of work to be done, but urban public schools are doing a better job of opening the windows of opportunity rather than simply mirroring the inequities that students so often face.

TUDA

October 5, 2017

Superintendent Tommy Chang
Boston Public Schools
Bruce C. Bolling Building
2300 Washington Street, 5th Floor
Roxbury, MA 02119

Dear Superintendent Chang:

On behalf of the National Assessment Governing Board, we are writing to determine whether your school district wishes to continue participating in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The TUDA was authorized by Congress to determine the feasibility of reporting urban district results as a regular component of NAEP. Your district's participation in TUDA is strictly voluntary and without charge.

The next administration of TUDA is scheduled for 2019. It will be conducted in association with the national and state administration of NAEP from approximately late January 2019 through early March 2019. The subjects to be assessed are reading and mathematics at grades 4 and 8. To assure representative sampling and minimize burden, some additional schools will be selected from each TUDA-participating school district to augment those already selected for the state-level NAEP program.

We are writing to you now because operational planning for the 2019 TUDA begins in December 2017 and the Governing Board must make decisions about participants in time for that planning.

The NAEP assessments are administered by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Each assessment session takes up to 120 minutes for answering test questions and responding to survey questions. A range of accommodations is offered to students with disabilities and English language learners.

Continuation of the TUDA program has been endorsed by the Council of the Great City Schools. We thank you for your participation in TUDA in the past and hope your school district will participate again. **Please sign and return the enclosed form by Friday, November 3, 2017 to let us know your decision.**

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Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Casserly, Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools (202-393-2427; MCasserly@cgcs.org), Lily Clark, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, National Assessment Governing Board (202-357-0392; Lily.Clark@ed.gov), or Gina Broxterman, Program Director, State and District Operations, National Center for Education Statistics (202-245-7791, Gina.Broxterman@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

William J. Bushaw
Executive Director
National Assessment
Governing Board

Peggy G. Carr
Acting Commissioner
National Center for
Education Statistics

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the
Great City Schools

Enclosure

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PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
2019 TRIAL URBAN DISTRICT ASSESSMENT:
MATHEMATICS AND READING AT GRADES 4 AND 8

FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF: _____

Please mark the appropriate box below to indicate your decision:

[ ] The school district agrees to participate in the 2019 Trial Urban District Assessment of the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The assessments will be conducted in mathematics and reading at grades 4 and 8.

[ ] The school district will not participate in the 2019 Trial Urban District Assessment of the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

_____   _____
Signature of District Superintendent or Designee   Date

_____   _____
Print Name   Title

_____

Address

_____

_____   _____
Telephone Number   Email Address

Please sign and return this form by Friday, November 3, 2017.

Signed letters may be scanned and submitted electronically (via email to both: lily.clark@ed.gov and gina.broxterman@ed.gov), or by mailing the signed original to:
> Lily Clark
> National Assessment Governing Board
> 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 825
> Washington, DC 20002-4233

TASK FORCE ON MALES OF COLOR

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Males of Color

2017-2018

Achievement Task Force Goal

TBD

Task Force Chairs

Michael Hinojosa, Dallas Superintendent
William Hite, Philadelphia Superintendent

MALES OF COLOR REPORT

Excellence for All:
Creating Environments for Success for Males of Color in the Great City Schools

MALES of COLOR
Council of the Great City Schools

Moses Palacios

Ashley Ison

Ray Hart

Renata Lyons

Michael Casserly

Table of Contents

Introduction

In the Spring of 2017, the Council gathered school district practitioners at the Males of Color Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., for an extensive discussion on building and implementing programs to improve the academic outcomes of young men and boys of color. School districts, which have already begun implementing initiatives, shared their progress, while other districts in the beginning stages of planning an initiative learned from colleagues. The conference touched on areas spanning the schooling continuum such as early childhood learning, accessing rigorous curriculum, college access and persistence, social and emotional learning, communication and leadership strategies, and legal considerations.

This report is a summary of those discussions paired with research-based strategies for boosting the outcomes of males of color. Urban schools are in the best position to change how society values males of color and invests in their success.

The scope of the conference reflected the degree of the educational crisis facing males of color. In large urban school districts, males of color are consistently the lowest performing student group on annual state assessments and the most harshly disciplined. Young men and boys of color also face negative stereotypes and implicit biases, often from teachers and school staff. In the Council's 2012 report on solutions to improving the outcomes of males of color, *A Call for Change: Providing Solutions for Black Male Achievement*,[1] Pedro Noguera aptly stated the danger in normalizing these trends:

> Throughout American society these patterns have become so common, widespread, and entrenched that a recitation of the dismal statistics no longer generates surprise or even alarm. The Black and Latino male problem has been normalized and like other unpleasant social conditions… there is a widespread sense that it will always be with us (p. 8).

This report seeks to counter that normalizing and contribute to the ongoing dialogue of raising our expectations for males of color and provide a resource for school districts seeking to build or recalibrate their initiatives to improve the academic outcomes of young men and boys of color. Throughout this report there are exemplars of current initiatives across the nation's big cities as well as promising practices in various areas.

Our hope is that this report will serve as a catalyst for school districts to build and strengthen programs for young men and boys of color. The urgency of the moment should not be lost to the perceived normalcy of the problem. We have a responsibility to millions of students who want to succeed and only need the opportunity.

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1   Lewis, S., Casserly, M., Simon, C., Uzzell, R., & Palacios, M. (December, 2012). *A Call for Change: Providing Solutions for Black Male Achievement.* Council of the Great City Schools. https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/88/A%20Call%20For%20Change_FinaleBook.pdf

Ensuring Access to and Readiness for Rigorous Curriculum

Introduction

A student's academic trajectory is essentially defined by a culmination of experiences and opportunities in the classroom. Beginning as early as pre-kindergarten, the expectations students are held to are reflected in the academic rigor and quality of support available to students. For young men and boys of color, who persistently encounter low academic expectations, the culmination of their academic experience often leaves them with gaps in foundational knowledge in reading and math. This essentially shuts the door on advanced courses in high school and valuable opportunities after high school. Among those students who decide to enroll in postsecondary education or job training, many often require remedial courses that do not count towards a degree. In fact, research shows that between 40 and 60 percent of first-time college students require remedial education each year.[2] Consequently, students who enroll in remedial courses are less likely to graduate with a postsecondary degree. Moreover, African American (56 percent) and Latino (45 percent) students are more likely than their White peers (35 percent) to enroll in remedial courses.[3]

This section explores how to ensure that males of color have access to rigorous and engaging curriculum beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout high school. In the summer of 2017, the Council's *Supporting Excellence* report on developing, implementing, and sustaining a high-quality curriculum defined a curriculum as:

> the central guide for teachers and all instructional personnel about what is essential to teach and how to teach it throughout the district so that every child has access to rigorous academic experiences and instructional support in meeting academic standards.

> A district curriculum goes beyond a mere listing of standards, although it is based on the college-and-career readiness standards adopted by the state. However, it incorporates the additions the school system has made to more clearly translate the content knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skills students are expected to learn. The district's philosophy of what learning is essential, how students learn, and how to gauge student progress is central to the development of the curriculum. The curriculum itself explicitly indicates what the district requires (holds tightly) in every classroom, and acknowledge where schools and teachers have autonomy.[4]

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2   The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (2010). *Beyond the rhetoric: Improving college readiness through coherent state policy.* Retrieved from http://www.highereducation.org/reports/college_readiness/CollegeReadiness.pdf

3   Complete College America. *Corequisite remediation: Spanning the completion divide.* Retrieved from http://completecollege.org/spanningthedivide/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CCA-SpanningTheDivide-ExecutiveSummary.pdf

4   Council of the Great City Schools (2017). *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum.* Retrieved from https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Curriculum%20Framework%20First%20Edition%20Final.pdf

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Furthermore, the report outlines the goals of what any curriculum should include:

- To prepare students for college and careers,
- To support teachers in delivering effective instruction, and
- To ensure access for all students to rigorous and meaningful educational experiences in every school and classroom throughout the district.

Building on these insights, the Council collected feedback from school districts during the Males of Color Policy Conference that included strategies to bolster student engagement by reviewing how district curriculum can adapt to student learning needs. These strategies are presented below and address the following areas:

- Develop and implement a rigorous curriculum that supports high academic expectations for students,
- Ensure that the curriculum includes culturally and socially relevant content to boost student engagement,
- Increase access to high-quality opportunities from pre-kindergarten through high school,
- Leverage data from early-warning indicators to identify students in need of additional academic support,
- Revamp hiring practices to recruit teachers from diverse racial, gender, and linguistic backgrounds, and
- Develop strategies for continuous professional development that emphasizes cultural awareness and alternatives to exclusionary discipline practices.

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Develop a high-quality curriculum that is built on high academic expectations for all students, including males of color.	■ Set a unifying vision for high-quality school and classroom practice that is rooted in college-and-career-readiness standards. ■ Embed high academic expectations in your district by conducting in-depth curriculum reviews and working in conjunction with school and district leadership teams. This involves creating concrete academic expectations for each grade level and subject area that reflect high expectations for all students. As the Council's guidance on developing a high-quality curriculum states, "the curriculum should create the floor, not the ceiling, for learning at every grade level and in every course." ■ Develop a culture of shared accountability across schools, departments, and staff for the success of all students, including males of color. ■ In districts with high rates of student mobility, ensure that curriculum expectations are clearly communicated districtwide to reduce the disruption to students' education when moving to a new school.
Increase access to quality early childhood education for young men and boys of color.	■ Skills gaps by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and English fluency are already present when students enter Kindergarten.[5] While these gaps can be explained by factors beyond the control of schools, such as a child's home environment and access to early childhood education, they have been proven to be significant mitigating factors on later academic success. Expanding enrollment—and perhaps more critically—increasing the quality of early childhood education could help significantly decrease racial achievement gaps. For example, attending an early childhood education program has a significant positive affect on English acquisition for children of Hispanic immigrants, especially those from low-income families.[6] Districts should move toward universal Pre-K. Evaluations of school-provided universal early childhood programs have shown positive outcomes for students across a span of identities.[7] Carefully evaluate the effectiveness of these and other programs in your school district to ensure they are supporting your efforts to close achievement gaps. ■ Engage parents and families in their children's reading and literacy activities (e.g., teaching the alphabet, reading to children, telling stories, singing to children, etc.). Schools should encourage low-income families, in particular, to take advantage of public resources, such as libraries and museums, to expose their children to a wider variety of literary materials.[8]

5   Garcia, E. (2015). *Inequalities at the starting gate: Cognitive and noncognitive skills gaps between 2010-2011 kindergarten classmates.* Economic Policy Institute. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED560407.pdf

6   Bumgarner, E. & Lin, M. (2014). Hispanic immigrant children's English language acquisition: The role of socioeconomic status and early care arrangement. *Early Education and Development*, 25(4), 515-529. doi: 10.1080/10409289.2013.822230

7   Gormley Jr., W. T., Gayer, T. , Phillophs, D. & Dawson, B. (2005). The Effects of universal pre-k on cognitive development. *Developmental Psychology*, 41(6):872-884. doi: 10.1037/0012-1649.41.6.872

8   Chen, J., Pisani, L., White, S., & Soroui, J. (2012). Parental engagement in early childhood education at home. *Reading Psychology,* 33(6), 497-524.

Improve the quality and timeliness of targeted interventions for struggling students.	■ Use data from early warning indicator systems to ensure that your district is identifying males of color who may be falling behind academically and promptly intervene when they need additional support. ■ A strong Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model should be in place and strong classroom-based Tier 1 instruction should be available to all students. ■ Implement multilevel and comprehensive interventions that address various issues with a marriage of academic interventions and social emotional supports, including student empowerment strategies.[9] ■ Review district procedures for placing students in special education.
Raise readiness and participation of males of color in advanced courses in middle and high school.	■ In 2016, the Council analyzed data from the College Board that measured how many males of color were ready for Advanced Placement (AP) courses based on their performance on the PSAT. Then the Council compared the number of students who were prepared for advanced placement to the number of students enrolled in advanced placement. The results showed that 4.7 percent of Black male students and 7.1 percent of Hispanic male students in Council districts were ready for AP courses (compared to roughly 30 percent of their White male counterparts). Even fewer males of color enrolled in advanced placement courses. This highlights two leverage points for change: preparing middle school students for advanced course-taking in high school; and counseling qualified students into advanced courses. ■ The low number of males of color in advanced courses is also a matter of access to AP and *International Baccalaureate* courses at the school. Students in low-income urban contexts have more limited AP and advanced coursework options.[10] Districts should set annual targets for increasing access to advanced courses in schools serving low-income students.

9   Rowley, L. L., & Bowman, P. J. (2009). Risk, protection, and achievement disparities among African American males: Cross-generation theory, research, and comprehensive intervention. *The Journal of Negro Education* 78(3), 305-320.

10 Solórzano, D. G. & Ornelas, A. (2002). A critical race analysis of advanced placement classes: A case of educational inequality. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 1(4), 215-219 ; Handwerk, P., Tognata, N., Coley, R. K. Gitomer, D. H. (2008) *Access to Success: Patterns of Advanced Placement Participation in U.S. High Schools.* Educational Testing Services. https://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-ACCESS.pdf

Develop culturally and socially relevant curriculum that boosts the academic engagement of males of color.	▪ As districts develop and implement a districtwide curriculum that is shaped by a clear vision of learning and instruction, determining how much autonomy, and in which areas, schools will have is an important consideration. One of these considerations could involve tailoring the curriculum to embrace cultural and socially relevant themes that reflect the diversity of the student body at a particular school. A few themes could include: – Reconstructing *traditional* narratives of racial and ethnic peoples, – Positive depictions of manhood and coming of age, and – Exploring current social issues that affect students daily. ▪ Creating a list of books and materials that is culturally relevant and depict males of color in a positive light is also beneficial. Young men and boys of color routinely see negative portrayals of men of color that perpetuate negative stereotypes. These portrayals embed unconscious expectations that can affect how males of color see themselves and their role in society. Furthermore, notions of manhood and masculinity are profoundly shaped by the examples of men of color that students see. In essence, culturally relevant materials recognize and embrace students' cultural heritage/background and will enhance student engagement with academic content and help build strong ethnic identity.
Develop practices to recruit teachers from diverse backgrounds, and develop current teachers to meet the needs of males of color in the classroom.	▪ Retool recruiting practices to hire culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse teachers and men of color into the teaching profession. Emerging research shows that teachers of color are warmly perceived by students of all races.[11] Moreover, some research shows that positive teacher interactions lead black male students to consider teaching as a profession.[12] ▪ Develop new teacher induction and continuous professional development that is led by experienced urban teachers. ▪ Work with local universities to adapt teacher training to meet the needs of students in low-income schools, including males of color. Partnerships with local universities can also provide alternative licenses and certification for currently employed teachers. ▪ Create incentives for teaching in low-income and low performing schools. This should be a priority particularly in hard to staff areas such as STEM subjects and advanced placement courses. These incentives need not be salary based. For example, employee benefits such as volume-pricing incentives between the district and local businesses may serve to encourage recruitment efforts.

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11 Cherng, H.S. & Halpin, P. (2016). The importance of minority teachers: Student perceptions of minority versus white teachers. *Educational Researcher*, 45(7), 407-420.

12 Goings, R.B., & Bianco, M. (2016). It's hard To Be Who You Don't See: An Exploration of High School Student's Perspectives on Becoming Teachers. *The Urban Review*, 48(4), 628.

Oakland Unified School District's Office of African American Male Achievement

In 2010, the Oakland Unified School District decided to rethink how the district was meeting the needs of African American males. After analyzing their student data, the district realized that despite its efforts the outcomes for African American males had not changed. As a result, Oakland USD made a commitment that, "African American male students are extraordinary and deserve a school system that meets their unique and dynamic needs." Since then, the district has worked toward systems change and implemented various programs to uplift African American males through mentoring, leadership opportunities, and access to rigorous and culturally relevant curriculum.

A few of their featured programs include:

- *The Manhood Development Program – an academic mentoring program that offers elective classes led by African American male teachers. The courses strive to strengthen students' racial and ethnic identity with the goal of increasing attendance, graduation rates, and literacy.*
- *Student Leadership Council – Creates networks of African American male students in leadership positions at schools across the district. Students support each other and participate in local and national leadership activities.*
- *Khepera Pathway – A college and career academic pathway that focuses on entrepreneurship, social innovation, and civic engagement.*

To learn more about Oakland USD's Office of African American Male Achievement and their initiatives, visit them at www.ousd.org/Page/12225

Creating Access and Continuous Support Systems to Postsecondary and Career Opportunities for Males of Color

Introduction

Preparing young boys and men of color to succeed in postsecondary settings, whether it's graduating from college or advancing in the workforce, is one of the core missions of a school system and one that is ripe for innovation. A national effort to expand access to postsecondary opportunities has resulted in all-time highs in the college enrollment rates of Black and Hispanic males. However, while the college-going rates of Black and Hispanic males between the ages of 18 and 24 has substantially increased since 2000, their graduation rates at 4-year postsecondary institutions continue to trail that of their White peers by large margins.[13]

More recently, districts have adopted strategies to increase the chances of student success by reducing the need for remedial classes in college and helping students manage the financial stress of paying for college. For students choosing to enter career and technical fields, school districts are fostering innovative partnerships with businesses and local colleges and universities to provide early exposure to careers and give students a head start in earning industry certifications.

This section explores the challenges and potential strategies in various areas related to creating access to and continuous support systems for college and career opportunities for males of color. Whether a student decides to pursue a two- or four-year degree program, certification program, or enter directly into the workforce, the strategies presented here are intended to support students in whatever path they choose after high school. Many of the challenges and solutions discussed here are informed by feedback from Council districts on implementing programs for young men and boys of color. These areas include:

- Early exposure to postsecondary and career options,
- Access to rigorous coursework that aligns to students' academic and career goals,
- Building innovative community and business partnerships,
- Navigating the college admissions process,
- Financial aid literacy, and
- Strategies for persisting in college and long-term success.

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13   McFarland, J., Hussar, B., de Brey, C. Snyder, T., Wang, X., Wilkinson-Flicker, S...Hinz, S.(2017). *Condition of Education 2017*, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Providing young men and boys of color guidance in middle and high school to help navigate course selection and chart a path after high school. For many prospective first-generation college students, planning for college can feel overwhelming, particularly when planning can start as early as middle school. Students may not have the social capital at home to guide them through the various decisions they will need to make plan for college.	Schools should be prepared to guide students by: ■ Investing in high school counselors focused on college readiness whose role includes three core responsibilities to help students: 1) pursue the most challenging curriculum that results in enhanced postsecondary options; 2) identify and satisfy requirements for college access; and 3) navigate the financial aid, college choice, and admissions process.[14] Compared to private schools, low-income public schools have much higher student/counselor ratios and assume a wider range of responsibilities in addition to college counseling and ensuring students' academic preparation for postsecondary options.[15] ■ Districts should emphasize increasing access to college preparatory programs. These programs can include dual enrollment and extended 13th year high school programs, financial literacy programs, and college counseling. Approximately three-fourths of low-income students do not complete a college preparatory course, but those who do are more likely to enroll in 4-year postsecondary schools.[16] Ideally, college preparatory programs should be built in partnership with local and state higher education institutions to align academic expectations to meet the needs of students and communities. ■ Speaking with and listening to students to understand their goals, challenges, and perspectives should be a major emphasis of school personnel. Young men and boys of color bring perspectives and experiences that are not often discussed openly with school staff. Their experiences may include challenges in their lives that can shape their perceptions of postsecondary options and their plans after high school. In fact, many low-income students of color do not follow traditional postsecondary pathways and are more likely to encounter interruptions in their postsecondary education due to home factors, financial hardship, or child care situations.[17] School staff should create welcoming school environments and have intentional conversations with students to understand their personal goals, motivations, and reservations about pursuing postsecondary opportunities. This should allow school staff to guide students toward the best options based on their strengths, goals, and family and financial circumstances. ■ All of this should be undergirded by an asset-based approach to counseling that recognizes students' strengths to inform their postsecondary and career plans. Beginning in middle school, programs should include hands-on opportunities to learn about various careers, guidance in selecting courses, and planning for life after high school.

14   National Association for College Admissions Counseling (1990). *Statement on Precollege Guidance and the Role of the School Counselor.* Retrieved from www.nacacnet.org/about/Governance/Policies/Documents/RoleofSchlCounsNEW.pdf

15   National Association for College Admission Counseling (2015). *State of College Admission.* Retrieved from www.nacacnet.org/globalassets/documents/publications/research/soca_chapter4.pdf

16   Oseguera, L. (2012). *High school coursework and postsecondary education trajectories: Disparities between youth who grew up in and out of poverty.* Retrieved from www.pathways.gseis.ucla.edu/publica-tions/201201_OsegueraRB_online.pdf

17   Pathways to Postsecondary Success (2013). *Maximizing Opportunities for Youth in Poverty.* Retrieved from www.pathways.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/PathwaysReport.pdf

| Ensuring equity in advanced courses, dual enrollment, or other academic and career opportunities in middle and high school. As noted before, males of color have the lowest rates of participation in advanced courses, such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate. This is due, in part, to academic unpreparedness or insufficient counseling in selecting courses but also to a lack of access to schools that offer advanced courses. | Districts can address these issues by:

■ Creating education pathways and academies in high-poverty schools that low-income learners can more easily access. Doing so requires a districtwide commitment that all students, particularly students of color, are prepared for rigorous coursework and are on track to take advanced coursework (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, etc.,) in high school. Ensure these academies are not developed for students outside the local community but target low income participants. For example, nationally, White male 12TH graders were four times more likely than Black males and three times more likely than Hispanic males to have taken a math course beyond Algebra II.[18] In effect, the pathway to rigorous coursework in math is closed to many students before entering high school.

■ Noting that the pathway can be opened through rigorous, targeted interventions to support students when enrolled in more challenging courses. Larger numbers of students can be successful, for example, in eighth grade Algebra I with the proper supports inside and outside of the classroom.

■ Ensuring that high-poverty schools are staffed with teachers certified to teach advanced courses.

■ Increasing the numbers of students enrolling in advanced coursework. As stated before, the Council's analysis of Advanced Placement participation data from the College Board shows that only a small percentage of males of color are academically prepared for advanced coursework and even fewer enroll in AP classes.

■ Reducing the need for remedial courses in college by ensuring that students have regular access to rigorous coursework that builds critical thinking skills. |
| Developing a curriculum that is inclusive of Career and Technical Education and prepares students for regional opportunities in economic development in a diverse range of industries. | Increasingly, college preparatory programs and school districts are partnering with local community colleges and businesses to attract students to industries important to local economies. These partnerships can inform curriculum that allows students to focus more on Career and Technical Education. These types of programs, coupled with career and postsecondary counseling, can HELP students to develop a long-term plan for academic and/or career success. |

18 National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2015). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Helping students navigate the financial aid process and reduce the price shock of postsecondary education. Paying for college can be a daunting task for many low-income and first-generation students.	Schools can offer guidance by: ■ Increasing students' financial aid literacy. Helping students understand and plan for the cost of college and reduce financial stress can improve their chances of college graduation.[19] Key areas of financial literacy include: budgeting for the cost of college, the basics of finding scholarships and borrowing money to pay for college, and the process of repaying student loans. ■ Providing intentional financial aid guidance to help students navigate the process of paying for college. While an abundance of information exists on financial aid, helping students and families navigate through the financial aid process has been shown to increase the likelihood of low-income students enrolling in a postsecondary institution.[20] Many students are deterred by the yearly price of attending college but the net cost of a postsecondary education—the cost of college minus all grants and scholarships—is typically a much lower figure. There are various types of federal, state, and non-federal sources of financial aid and tax benefits that students will need help sorting through to cover expenses.[21] ■ Helping students to complete the FAFSA form to become eligible for federal student aid. This is a critical step in the financial aid process and requires parental involvement to complete. For students who may be undocumented, providing guidance to alternative ways to pay for college—either through private scholarships, institutional aid, or work-study programs—will be essential. ■ Instituting college and financial aid guidance for students after high school graduation to reduce the number of students who are accepted to a college but do not enroll in the Fall – known as summer melt—is also important.[22] Some charter schools offer alumni access to counselors to support students after high school graduation to ensure students don't miss critical financial aid deadlines and tasks—something that all schools could do. Using data, these initiatives can predict the students in need of additional support and provide targeted outreach.[23]
Ensuring that students not only have greater access to postsecondary education but also are able to graduate.	Teaching strategies for persisting in college and long-term success. Transitioning from high school to a less structured college setting often represents a steep learning curve for students. Enhancing students' resiliency and self-advocacy skills are important aspects of being able to navigate unfamiliar settings on college campuses or in the workplace.

19 Britt, S. L., Ammerman, D. A., Barrett, S. F., & Jones, S. (2017). Student Loans, Financial Stress, and College Student Retention. *Journal of Student Financial Aid, 47*(1), 3.

20 Scott-Clayton, J. (2015). The role of financial aid in promoting college access and success: Research evidence and proposals for reform. *Journal of Student Financial Aid, 45*(3), 3.

21 U.S. Department of Education, (2017). 2017-2018 counselors and mentors handbook on federal student aid. Available at: https://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/resources/counselors-handbook-2017-18.pdf

22 Castleman, B.L, Page, L.C., & Schooley, K. (2014). The forgotten summer: Does the offer of college counseling after high school mitigate summer melt among college-attending, low-income college graduates? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 33*(2), 320-344.

23 Kuester, B., Stepner, M., Westerlund, M., Anand, A., & Fritzler, A. (2015). *College persistence: Helping students beyond high school graduation.* Retrieved from https://dssg.uchicago.edu/2015/09/22/college-persistence-helping-students-beyond-high-school-graduation/

Dallas Independent School District's Collegiate Academies

In 2016, the Dallas Independent School District initiated a set of innovative collegiate academies in partnership with higher education, industry, and community leaders designed to increase college access and persistence among first-generation college students and those students who have been historically underrepresented in college. Among the initial academies was P-TECH, a 4-6 year technology focused career pathway that allows high school students to earn up to 60 college credit hours and/or industry-certification tuition-free at local community colleges. Through industry partners, students enrolled in P-TECH have access to mentoring and internship opportunities to ensure they have the skills and job experience required for in-demand jobs in the technology sector. Furthermore, the college credits students earn are transferrable to partnering 4-year colleges and universities so that students get a head start on earning a 4-year degree and reduce the financial burden of higher education.

This model for partnerships between K-12 school systems, institutions of higher education, community organizations, and industry-leading companies supports cohorts of students throughout high school. Beginning in the ninth grade, collegiate academies allow students to earn up to 60 tuition-free credit hours toward an Associate's or four-year degree, saving students and families thousands of dollars in college expenses. Curriculum and course offerings are cross-walked between the school district and community colleges to ensure students are academically supported throughout the program. Transportation is also provided to students between their home school and community college campuses. Each college academy is aligned to an industry pathway such as health sciences, information technology, cyber security, culinary arts, animal sciences, and law enforcement.

Dallas ISD plans to add 10 collegiate academies for the 2017-18 school year. To learn more about Dallas ISD's collegiate academies, visit www.dallasisd.org/collegiateacademies.

School Culture: Discipline, Social Emotional Learning, and Cultural Competence

Introduction

Schools shape and reinforce students' academic, emotional, and social identity through the substance and quality of interactions with peers and school staff. School culture largely dictates these interactions and, if ignored, can perpetuate negative perceptions of certain groups of students. Young men and boys of color are perpetually faced with low academic expectations and harsh disciplinary practices that are informed, often unconsciously, by implicit negative stereotypes and biases toward males of color.

For example, students of color are disproportionately disciplined compared to their white peers.[24] The suspension rate for Black students is three times that for white students. Boys of color with disabilities have the highest suspension rates overall. Additionally, Black students are also overrepresented in "referrals to law enforcement," fueling the school-to-prison pipeline.[25] Exposure to harsh disciplinary systems further compounds the disadvantages males of color face by decreasing the likelihood of high academic performance, and increasing the chances of student retention and attrition.[26] However, in recent years there has been a nascent interest in the role that school culture plays in mitigating these factors.

Schools with a coherent, student-centered culture that prioritizes equitable opportunity, academic growth, and strong positive relationships can enact great change. Although positive school culture will benefit all students, districts and schools must be attuned to the unique needs of males of color. Here, we address three core attributes of school culture that supports diverse learners:

- Discipline
- Social emotional learning
- Cultural competence

Each component, while distinct, supports and depends upon the others. When employed incorrectly or insufficiently, these factors can negatively impact student academic and personal identities. However, if intentionally addressed by educators well-versed in the research literature and best practices, they can help to foster a positive culture that supports and inspires males of color and all other students. In the table below, we outline the challenges and several studies or best practices emanating from our conference and discussions with practitioners that address the challenges related to these three elements.

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24 U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2014). Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Snapshot (School Discipline). Retrieved from http://ocrdata.ed.gov/Downloads/CRDC-School-Discipline-Snapshot.pdf

25 Ibid.

26 Raush, M. K. & Skiba, R. J. (2005). The academic cost of discipline: The relationship between Suspension/Expulsion and Student Achievement. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Academic-Cost-of-School-Discipline.pdf

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
Working with teachers and school staff to address implicit and explicit biases that affect their expectations and understandings of young men and boys of color. Although young boys and men of color do not misbehave more than their white peers, they are punished more frequently and severely.[27] This disparate treatment occurs in schools nationwide, regardless of students' socioeconomic background or school demographics. Educators' preconceived notions and stereotypes of—or biases toward—males of color is a major contributor to policies and practices that result in higher disciplinary rates.[28] These biases fall into two main categories: ■ Implicit – unconscious stereotypes and associations that affect our actions, understandings, and decisions. Everyone has these biases that manifest as either positive or negative stereotypes. These biases are triggered involuntarily and without awareness or control. ■ Explicit – conscious beliefs and principles which someone may choose to disclose publicly.[29]	Implicit biases can be changed and modified through various forms of professional development and debiasing techniques, including: ■ Cultural Competence: a process where individuals openly and positively engage with other cultures to build deeper knowledge and openness towards diversity.[30] Culturally competent educators understand the necessity and value of cultural differences and diversity, support intercultural exchange, and help build culturally inclusive environments.[31] Cultural competence positively influences educators' relationships with students and families, teaching practice, and disciplinary strategies.[32] For example, once educators can strengthen their understanding of cultural competency, they can begin to address their implicit biases toward different groups of students[33] and begin to develop culturally relevant curriculum for students.[34] ■ Debiasing: an act of self-reflection, where an individual identifies and acknowledges their biases, identifies when they are "activated," and challenges them when they occur.[35] Professionals in other fields, such as police officers, judges, and lawyers are already incorporating debiasing into their professional development.[36] Likewise, debiasing or anti-bias training can help teachers identify and correct how their personal biases impact students.[37] Research in the field of debiasing has identified promising strategies for correcting subconscious and conscious prejudices. Such strategies include taking the Implicit Association Test to discover which biases one unconsciously possesses, counter-stereotypic training, exposure to diverse communities and counter narratives to stereotypes, empathy training, and engaging with diverse communities that are the target of biases.[38]

27 Huang, F. L. (2016). Do Black students misbehave more? Investigating the differential involvement hypothesis and out-of-school suspensions. *The Journal of Educational Research.* doi: 10.1080/00220671.2016.1253538

28 Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. (2000). *The color of discipline.* The Indiana Education Policy Center. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~equity/docs/ColorOfDiscipline.pdf

29 Staats, C., Capatosto, K., Wright, R., & Jackson, V. (2016). *State of the science: Implicit bias review.* Kirwan Institute. Retrieved from http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/implicit-bias-2016.pdf

30 Berardo, K. & Deardorff, D. K. (Eds.). (2012). *Building cultural competence: Innovative activities and models.* Retrieved from https://ebookcentral.proquest.com

31 Ford, D. Y. & Whiting, G. W. (2007). *Another perspective on cultural competence: Preparing students for an increasingly diverse society.* Gifted Child Today 30(2):52-55.

Revise school policies to move away from an overreliance on exclusionary discipline strategies, such as detentions, suspensions, and expulsions.

Exclusionary discipline strategies, in the most extreme example referred to as zero tolerance or "no excuses" policies, are often employed by schools and rarely benefit students. There is limited research evidence to indicate that the use of exclusionary discipline deters future student misbehaviors, improves school climate, or improves the coherence of school disciplinary systems.[39] However, research does indicate that exclusionary discipline increases the likelihood of student interactions with the juvenile justice system, contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline.[40] Additionally, out-of-school suspensions result in students receiving less instructional time and negatively impacts students' academic achievement.[41]

While schools and districts can and should choose to eliminate or limit the use of zero tolerance and exclusionary discipline policies, alternative disciplinary strategies must take their place. Certain strategies, when applied coherently across entire school/district communities, can create positive, supportive disciplinary systems that support males of color and all students. These include:

- School-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS) break the cycle of harsh discipline through prevention and ongoing student support. SWPBIS is a multi-tiered system of evidence-based practices, which create positive, non-punitive classroom management and disciplinary systems, and reduce the use of suspensions and help students' behavioral management.

- Restorative justice, used in response to student misbehavior, functions as an alternative to suspensions and expulsions. Restorative justice focuses on the perpetrator-victim relationship by highlighting individual accountability for wrongdoing and creating a pathway towards redemptive healing. There are many iterations of restorative justice with differing configurations reflecting the unique needs of a community and school district's culture. When implemented effectively, restorative justice produces school climates that are perceived as more equitable, fair, and safe. Additionally, restorative justice can promote the voices and experiences of students and their families, strengthening community-school bonds.

32   National Educators Association (2008). *Promoting educators' cultural competence to better serve culturally diverse students: An NEA policy brief.* Retrieved from http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB13_CulturalCompetence08.pdf

33   Colombo, M. W. (2007). Developing cultural competence: Mainstream teachers and professional development. *Multicultural Perspectives 9*(2), 10-16.

34   Landa, M. S. & Stephens, G. (2017). Promoting cultural competence in preservice teacher education through children's literature: An exemplary case study. *Issues in Teacher Education 26*(1), 53-71.

35   Wald, J. (2014). *Can "de-biasing" strategies help to reduce racial disparities in school discipline?* Institute for Race & Justice, Harvard University. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Implicit-Bias_031214.pdf

36   American Bar Association (2016). *Implicit bias and de-biasing strategies: A workshop for judges and lawyers.* American Bar Association 2016 Annual Meeting. Retrieved from https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/events/criminal_justice/2016/annual16_jointbias.authcheckdam.pdf

37   Mayfield, V. (2017). The burden of inequity—and what schools can do about it. *Phi Delta Kappan 98*(5), 8-11. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0031721717690358

38   Staats, C. (2015). Understanding implicit bias: What educators should know. *American Educator* (Winter 2015-2016). American Federation of Teachers. Retrieved from https://www.aft.org/ae/winter2015-2016/staats; Staats, 2015; and Wald, 2014.

39   American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force (2008). *Are zero tolerance policies effective in the schools? American Psychological Association, 63*(9), 852-862. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.63.9.852.

40   Advancement Project (2000). Opportunities suspended: The devastating consequences of zero tolerance and school discipline. The Advancement Project, the Civil Rights Project, and Harvard University. Retrieved from https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/school-discipline/opportunities-suspended-the-devastating-consequences-of-zero-tolerance-and-school-discipline-policies/crp-opportunities-suspended-zero-tolerance-2000.pdf; Heitzeg, N. A. (2009). *Education or incarceration: Zero tolerance policies and the school to prison pipeline.* Forum on Public Policy. Retrieved from http://forumonpublicpolicy.com/summer09/issuesineducation.html

41   Rausch, M.K. & Skiba, R.J. (2005) *The academic cost of discipline: The relationship between suspensions/expulsion and school achievement.* Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Indiana University. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Academic-Cost-of-School-Discipline.pdf

Creating school environments that are attuned to the various forms of environmental and circumstantial trauma that young men and boys of color encounter in their daily lives in and outside of school.

The trauma experienced by young men and boys of color takes many forms and can reverberate across various aspects of personal identity and experience, such as race, poverty, education, and manhood. The psychological and physical trauma experienced by these students can significantly hinder their willingness and ability to perform well in school.[42]

Some strategies that schools can employ to help students constructively manage trauma include:

- Implementing district-wide trauma informed practices. Although trauma-informed care is relatively new to public education, mental health and social service practitioners, as well as some schools and districts, have laid the groundwork for practices and strategies that support affected students, including males of color. The practice begins with a system-wide awareness and commitment to trauma-informed care.[43] Implementation may include a combination of general and targeted supports such as positive interpersonal interactions with peers and educators; culturally responsive classroom management and pedagogy; appropriate individualized interventions, meditation, and student empowerment.[44] When organizations adopt a trauma-informed approach they support survivors of trauma by avoiding re-traumatization, promoting healing and spurring academic achievement, and mitigating negative experiences in the classroom and outside of school.[45]

- Introducing social and emotional learning (SEL) to help students work through trauma and related issues. Through SEL instruction, educators can help students leverage their social and emotional skills to self-monitor and persist academically in the classroom, resulting in increased student academic performance (e.g., GPA and standardized test scores) and decreased behavioral issues (e.g., suspensions, attendance, and graduation).[46] Also, helping educators build their own social emotional skills can increase educator quality. SEL professional development can increase teachers' ability to build positive student-teacher relationships, employ appropriate and fair classroom management and discipline, as well as instructing students in SEL skills.[47] SEL is often linked with high-need student groups, including males of color, who may need more instruction in SEL. It can also operate as a classroom management strategy and a positive alternative to strict disciplinary strategies

42 Schwartz, J. M. (2012). *A new normal: Young men of color, trauma and engagement in learning*. Adult Education Research Conference. Retrieved from http://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2012/papers/41

43 Cavanaugh, B. (2016). Trauma-informed classrooms and schools. *Beyond Behavior 25*(2), 41-46.

44 Cavanaugh, 2016; McInerney, M. & McKlindon, A. (2014). *Unlocking the door to learning: Trauma-informed classrooms & transformational schools*. Education Law Center. Retrieved from http://www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Trauma-Informed-in-Schools-Classrooms-FINAL-December2014-2.pdf ; Capatosto, K. (2015). *From punitive to restorative: Advantages of using trauma-informed practices in schools*. Kirwan Institute: Ohio State University. Retrieved from http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ki-punative-to-restorative.pdf

45 McInerney & McKlindon, 2014.

46 Kendziora, K. and Yoder, N. (2016). *When Districts Support and Integrate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)*. American Institutes of Research. Retrieved from http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/When-Districts-Support-and-Integrate-SEL-October-2016.pdf

47 Jones, S. M., Bouffard, S. M., & Weissbourd, R. (2013). Educators' social and emotional skills vital to learning. *Phi Delta Kappan 94*(8), 62-65.

Proactively include parent and community voices and perspectives in discussions of discipline and culture.	From the perspective of a family and a community, the act of disciplining a student is a delicate balance of power dynamics between parents and school staff. Creating positive disciplinary systems requires the involvement of parents and the broader community to build a positive behavior and school climate.[48] Community engagement and parent involvement moves educational goals beyond impacting a single student, to changing the conditions of a collective community.[49] Incorporating parents and families in restorative justice practices reinforces school expectations and supports students.[50] Furthermore, exposing teachers to students' families and communities can aid in reducing educator bias and prejudice against them.[51]

48   Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2002). Improving student behavior and school discipline with family and community involvement. *Education and Urban Society 35*(1), 4-26. doi: 10.1177/001312402237212

49   Schutz, A. (2006). Home is a prison in the global city: The tragic failure of school-based community engagement strategies. *Review of Educational Research, 76*(4), 691-743.

50   Garcia, 2014.

51   Colombo, 2007.

Jefferson County Public Schools' Department of Diversity, Equity, and Poverty Programs

Over the last four years, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) has intentionally focused on improving the academic outcomes for boys of color. After signing the Males of Color Pledge in 2014, the Diversity, Equity, Poverty Department, a unique department in JCPS, led a coalition of central office departments to ensure that boys of color were a priority in their work. The intentional focus on males of color has evoked a community level of awareness and support that has brought significant changes to the district, which include:

- *Changes to the student code of conduct to remove the infraction of deliberate disruption under which a disproportionate number of suspensions were subjectively given to boys of color.*

- *In a school district that is now comprised of more non-white students than white students, JCPS schools started challenging the lack of participation of students of color in Gifted and Talented programs. JCPS began a sweeping communications campaign to inform students and parents of underserved populations that they could request that their child participate in gifted classes. This effort, coupled with increasing the number of teachers certified in Gifted and Talented and piloting different means of assessing giftedness, led to an increase in males of color accessing Gifted and Talented programs and more rigorous curriculum.*

- *District-wide Equity Institutes that focus on reaching and teaching males of color. To date, the Equity Institutes have touted some of the highest participation levels of similar institutes in the region.*

- *Developed STEAM programs geared specifically for males of color that introduces students to computer coding, music, design, poetry, producing, and art.*

In addition, JCPS has approved the creation of a middle school geared toward meeting the academic needs of males of color that will open in 2018. The school, which will be open to students from across the district, will feature an Afro-Latino centric curriculum to promote cultural competency and create an environment where young boys of color can thrive academically. The district is also slated to review school system policies to highlight inequities and inform the creation of an Equity and Race Policy that will add another layer of support for students and families of color.

To learn more about Jefferson County's Public School Diversity, Equity, Poverty Department and their initiatives to support young boys and men of color, visit https://www.jefferson.kyschools.us/department/diversity-equity-and-poverty-programs-division.

Planning Effective Leadership and Communication Strategies for Males of Color Programs

Introduction

The notion of investing in boys and men of color is politically charged and rife with legacies of systemic discrimination through generations of families from various social, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Deciding to address issues of race and gender in an education context can carry political risk. However, as school districts already know, the risk of political pushback is outweighed by the risk that inaction poses to students being educated in our nation's urban public schools. A school district's ability to implement and sustain an initiative for males of color will require district leaders to navigate local politics and create community ownership for this type of initiative. Developing a leadership and communications framework that informs the messaging, public engagement, and advocacy activities for the district is a critical tool in building public support and creating consistent messaging for the initiative that is aligned to the district's overall academic priorities.

This section will present factors to consider in developing a coherent and persuasive leadership and communications framework.[52] A leadership and communications framework should take various factors into consideration, including local political and social context, localized levers of influence, alignment of equity issues with academic priorities, and, finally, anticipating public pushback to the greatest extent possible. Many school districts seeking to implement programs for boys and men of color have also faced questions over the legality of such programs given federal laws barring racial and gender discrimination, which this guide addresses in the following section.

For purposes of this section, we propose that the goals of developing a leadership and communications framework are to:

- Sustain a long-term initiative focused on improving the academic outcomes of young boys and men of color,
- Align issues of equity with the district's academic priorities,
- Cultivate a broad network of support for the initiative, and
- Prioritize the needs of students and the local community.

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52 Many of the strategies presented in this section are informed by the Council's guide "Communicating the Common Core State Standards: A Resource for Superintendents, School Board Members, and Public Relations Executives." Available at https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/ Centricity/Domain/87/FINAL%20Communicating%20Common%20Core%2011.13.pdf

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Build a compelling case to invest in young men and boys of color.	Ultimately, an initiative that is focused on young men and boys of color is about creating real and meaningful pathways to academic opportunity. Equity is built on the idea of driving additional investments—males of color need additional support and attention to overcome academic and social hurdles. Although school district practitioners may know this intuitively, building public support among elected officials and members of the community will require using evidence and data to demonstrate the need for initiatives that support males of color. The types of data that districts could use include, but are not limited to: ■ Achievement on interim and summative assessments at various grade levels ■ Participation in advanced coursework (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, etc.,) ■ Graduation rates ■ Disproportionality in suspensions and expulsion rates compared to their white, female, or more affluent peers ■ Postsecondary enrollment rates ■ Percent of ninth-grade students with a B average GPA or more ■ Student mobility, etc. The data that a district chooses to use to build the rationale for an initiative on males of color should be coupled with a detailed plan for the immediate rollout of the initiative and measurable short-term and long-term goals that include improving identified outcomes.

373

| Identify the target audience at all levels of the school district and the community to build a broad coalition of partners to support initiatives for males of color. | Public school districts are layered organizations that have constituents inside and outside of the school system. Each layer will have a target audience for which district leadership should keep in mind when planning a leadership and communications strategy. The various layers in a district include: school-level staff, district-level staff, and city/county/business-level partners. The target audiences at each level include:

School/District level

■ Teachers and principals
■ Parents
■ Students
■ School board
■ Non-instructional school staff
■ Central office administrators

City/County level

■ Elected officials
■ Business community
■ Higher education institutions
■ Religious institutions
■ Non-profit organizations
■ Teachers' associations
■ News media |

Excellence for All: Creating Environments for Success for Males of Color in the Great City Schools   21

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School/District level

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- Central office administrators

City/County level

- Elected officials
- Business community
- Higher education institutions
- Religious institutions
- Non-profit organizations
- Teachers' associations
- News media

Develop primary and secondary messages that align issues of equity with the district's academic priorities.	Members of the community will want to know how an initiative for young boys and men of color fits with the academic priorities of the school district. Developing a set of targeted messages for various stakeholders will be important. Two types of messages districts may need to craft are primary and secondary messages: ■ Primary messages are short and deliver a quick and compelling message. ■ Secondary messages may contain more detailed information and are targeted to specific groups in more traditional media formats. There are a few guidelines that school and district leaders might follow when crafting messages: ■ Keep messages short and simple. ■ Don't be afraid to repeat messages. Consistency and repetition can create an effective and enduring message. ■ Tailor messages and the level of detail for each target audience (school staff and central office administrators want detailed information while parents and reporters may want broad, high-level, information). All communication should be translated into the major languages spoken in the district.
Leverage different messengers to spread the word and create broader community ownership of the initiative.	Teachers, parents, and non-instructional staff can serve as auxiliary messengers for the district. Often, teachers and school staff are the first sources of information for parents. It is also common that parents rely on the opinions of teachers and other parents in making choices about their children's education. Cultivating a wide network of messengers ensures not only that multiple stakeholders are informed about an initiative but also helps spread the word to families about taking advantage of new opportunities for their children. Local businesses and universities can also help to spread the word about your district's initiative and provide opportunities for unique partnerships and collaborations. Likewise, community-based organizations and non-profits, especially organizations that work directly with communities of color, can help in reaching diverse families.

Engage the community and solicit feedback.	Community engagement requires thoughtful outreach that reflects the intricacies of local communities. Developing printed materials and messaging is only one component of meaningful community engagement and should be coupled with community town halls to solicit community feedback on initiatives for males of color.
Identify concerns and misinformation. Prepare to respond to these and other challenges to the initiative immediately.	Initiatives that focus on disadvantaged students attract attention and, often, criticisms as well. Districts should be proactive about addressing areas of concern and misinformation before they appear in media or other venues. This strategy can serve to build public support for the initiative as well as mitigate against prolonged public confrontations that can risk alienating supporters of the initiative. Districts have often faced questions about the legal grounds on which public funds can be used for programs for specific racial or gender student groups. This topic will be discussed more in-depth in the next section.

District of Columbia's Empowering Males of Color Initiative

In 2015, the District of Columbia's public-school system announced an effort to dedicate monetary resources to addressing the unique needs of Black and Latino males. The initiative was grounded in a theory of action that indicated that the district would engage students and families; improve and expand research-based strategies with an emphasis on equity; and innovate - and challenge- policies that consistently made an impact on the academic achievement and development of males of color. The goal of the initiative was to ensure that males of color received structured support in the form of mentoring, character development, internships, and specialized courses.

Since the initiative's announcement, DCPS has created the following programs in support of its goals:

- *Innovation grants – a multi-year initiative to develop programming specifically addressing the needs of Black and Latino male students and educators.*
- *Male Educators of Color Collaborative – a fellowship for male teachers of color that provides professional development and national networking to community organizations and districts across the country.*
- *Leading Men Fellowship – a structured opportunity for recent DCPS graduates who are young men of color to work in classrooms and receive support to pursue a degree in education. The program is part of a district-wide commitment to recruit more males of color in to the teaching profession and support current male of color teachers.*
- *EMOC 1000 – an initiative to partner with community organizations to create one-to-one mentorship opportunities for males of color throughout the city.*
- *Ron Brown College Preparatory High School – DCPS opened the city's first all-male college preparatory school that prepares students for college and careers with the goal of attaining a 100 percent graduation rate.*

Moreover, DCPS has announced the creation of a companion initiative for young women of color called Reign: Empowering Young Women as Leaders. This initiative will aim to create safe spaces for young women of color to develop as leaders and provide teachers with professional development on racial and gender equity issues.

For more on the DCPS initiative, visit their website at http://www.emocdc.org/
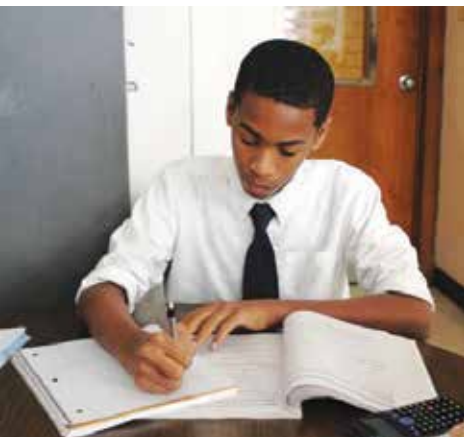
Legal Issues Related to Implementing Programs for Males of Color

The history of education in the United States might characterized by a constant negotiation between civil rights and limited resources. Since the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which ruled that segregated schools violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, there has been a conscious recognition by the federal government that certain groups of people face systemic discrimination and weak access to equal opportunities along the lines of race, gender, and nationality. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Education Amendments of 1972 codified these protections for students based on race and gender, respectively.

While these protections are meant to prevent discrimination, they can also be used to deter programs that are designed to alleviate the effects of discrimination or provide support to groups like young men and boys of color. Furthermore, some of these initiatives have been challenged in courts on the grounds that specific student groups are granted preferential treatment, therefore, not all students are equally protected under the law.[53] However, there are important precedents and judicial standards that allow for public institutions, such as public schools, to create programs to support specific student groups with the use of public money. As school districts plan initiatives to support males of color, it would be prudent to include the district's legal counsel at the onset to ensure that proper legal thresholds are met.

This section will explore two specific laws that directly relate to race- and gender-based initiatives:[54]

- **Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program receiving federal assistance.
- **Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any program receiving federal assistance.

The table below notes similarities in legal definitions in both laws and where they overlap. This section also adds to the strategies outlined in the previous sections on how to build a compelling interest in creating intervention programs to support young men and boys of color. Like topics already covered in this guide, using data is important to highlight concerns and create the justification for the programs.

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53   See *Regents of the University of California vs. Bakke* (1978), *Gratz vs. Bollinger* (2003), *Grutter vs. Bollinger* (2003), *Fischer vs. The University of Texas* (2016).

54   This section is based on the conference presentation, *Legal Issues, Effective Leadership, and Communication Strategies in Designing Initiatives for Males of Color* available at https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/259/Legal%20Issues%20Effective%20Leadership%20and%20Communication%20Strategies.pdf

TITLE IV OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Impact: The law compels schools to prevent and address discrimination on the basis of race, color, or nationality. Applies to all elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities that receive federal financial assistance. This includes all school programs and activities.

Legal standard to comply with the law	Strategy to meet standard

Strict Scrutiny: A form of judicial review that courts use to determine the legality of certain actions taken regarding race, color, or national origin. To follow strict scrutiny, race-based actions must further a "compelling government interest" that is "narrowly tailored" to achieve that interest.
 	
■ *Compelling government interest* for the purposes of implementing programs for males of color can be to:
  – Remedy the effects of past discrimination
  – Promote the benefits of racial diversity and avoid the potential harms of racial isolation.
 	
■ *Narrowly tailored:* any race-based initiative must be specifically designed to fulfill only the intended goals of the initiative. To meet this standard, districts need to show serious consideration of race-neutral alternatives that will achieve the desired outcome of the initiative (i.e., socio-economic status and academic achievement).
 	
Violations of Title IV must show intentional discrimination or disparate impact/effect.
 	
■ Intentional discrimination: similarly situated persons are treated differently based on race, color, or nationality. Must show awareness of a complainant's race, color, or national origin. In addition, must show that any actions were motivated, at least in part, because of a complainant's race, color, or national origin.
 	
■ Disparate impact/effect: Must show that a practice or procedure has a disparate impact based on race, color, or national origin. This policy must *lack a substantive justification.*
	Leverage data to illustrate a compelling government interest for creating a program geared toward males of color. For instance:
	
	■ In most large urban school districts, males of color are the lowest performing group of students on annual state assessments and interim benchmark assessments. It is in the interest of school districts to ensure that all students can meet challenging academic standards.
	
	■ Review data on resource comparability and disciplinary practices to highlight racial disparities in areas such as teacher quality, school funding, and suspension rates.
	
	■ Consider using data from other sectors, including postsecondary education, labor, and the criminal justice system. Such data can include college retention rates, remedial course-taking, incarceration rates, and the skills and training required by various industries in a rapidly evolving economy.
	
	Creating an initiative that is narrowly tailored will look differently across cities depending on student demographics. In some school districts where males of color and students from low-income families comprise nearly half of the student body, these data can show that race-neutral efforts would not achieve the desired outcomes to improve the academic outcomes of males of color. As districts consider various approaches to meeting this standard, there are a few points to keep in mind:
	
	■ Analyze district data to compare the effect of using other race-neutral classifications would have on meeting the goal of boosting the academic achievement of males of color. If there is an acceptable race-neutral alternative, districts should consider using that standard instead.
	
	■ Periodically review the need for race-neutral alternatives in your district.
	
	■ Programs or initiatives that are geared toward young men and boys of color can have open enrollment policies that allow all students to participate in the program.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972

Impact: Prohibits discrimination based on sex or gender in any federally funded education program or activity. This applies to elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, and any education or training program. Girls and boys are protected under the law, which compels schools to investigate and address any sex-based discrimination in areas such as athletics, sexual violence, and instructional settings.

Legal standard to comply with the law	Strategy to meet standard

Intermediate scrutiny: A form of judicial review to determine the legality of certain actions taken in regard to sex. These actions must serve an important governmental objective and must be substantially related to the achievement of those objectives.
 	
■ *Important governmental objective* is a similar but broader category of possible government objectives than "compelling interest" under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (see above). Can include, but is not limited to:
  – Social needs
  – Academic needs
  – School climate and culture
 	
■ *Substantially related* sex-based actions require an "exceedingly persuasive justification" that a particular set of actions achieve the stated governmental objective advocated by the district.[55]
 	
Violations to Title IX must cause disparate impacts/effects similar to Title VI in regard to race-based actions:
 	
■ Disparate impact/effect: procedure or practice that has disparate impact on individuals of a particular gender.
	Creating an *important governmental objective* will rely on illustrating how educational settings or curriculum offerings geared toward males of color meet social and educational needs not met in traditional education offerings. A few points to keep in mind:
	
	■ Analyze and present data on a wide range of indicators to establish an important governmental objective. Due to the broad nature of this standard, it may include social as well as educational needs of students that are not met by traditional or coed settings. Indicators can include student achievement, school climate surveys, disciplinary rates, and postsecondary indicators. School districts should present disaggregated data by race and gender for each indicator.
	
	■ In the broader societal context, it may also be helpful to present the government's interest in ensuring that males of color are prepared to access meaningful academic opportunities that promote gainful employment later in life and increase contributions to local and state tax bases and civic engagement (e.g., voting).
	
	Showing that an initiative for males of color is substantially related to *important governmental* objectives will largely depend on the objectives of the initiative undertaken by the district. However, general tips to follow are:
	
	■ Identify the educational achievement or benefit the district seeks to improve by providing educational opportunities for males of color. This requires highlighting an educational or social need that is not being met by traditional learning environments or curriculum offerings.
	
	■ Do not rely on overly broad generalizations about different talents, capacities, or preferences of either sex.
	
	■ Use evidence to justify all actions and highlight how it relates to the *important governmental objectives* outlined by the district.
	
	■ Ensure that student participation in district initiatives is voluntary.
	
	■ Provide a parallel program for young girls and women of color that is geared toward meeting specific social and educational goals.
	
	■ Conduct periodic evaluations to determine if initiatives for males of color comply with Title IX, and if not, modify to ensure compliance.

55 See United States v. Virginia, 518 U.S. 515 (1996).

There are differences between the compliance requirements in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, but there are common strategies to ensure your district remains in good legal standing. Implementing a program for young men and boys of color falls under both laws and therefore districts should ensure they are following both.[56] Strategies that ensure compliance with both laws include:

- Disaggregate data by race and gender for all indicators used to build a compelling interest (or important governmental interest under Title IX).
- Build initiatives for young men and boys of color around concrete and well-defined goals and objectives.
- Ensure that participation in district programs is voluntary and open to all students.
- Periodically review the need for race and sex-based initiatives in your district.

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56   See the Council's webinar "Implementing the 'Pledge' Consistent with Federal Civil Rights Law" November 18, 2015.

New York State's My Brother's Keeper Initiative

In 2016, New York became the first state in the country to formally adopt the goals of My Brother's Keeper advanced by President Barack Obama's administration. In addition to national goals set forth by the White House, New York State committed to the following:

- *Ensuring equitable access to high quality schools and programs*
- *Expanding prevention, early warning, and intervention services*
- *Using differentiated approaches based on need and culture*
- *Responding to structural and institutional racism*
- *Making comprehensive and coordinated support services widely available*
- *Engaging families and communities in a trusted and respectful way*

In pursuit of these commitments, the state budgeted money to support school districts in four main areas: recruiting and retaining teachers who reflect the diversity of students across the state; career-to-cradle programs; strengthening involvement of families and communities, and creating and expanding school models that improve outcomes for males of color.[57]

To learn more about the initiative and browse through related resources, visit www.nysed.gov/mbk/schools/my-brothers-keeper

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57   New York State Department of Education (2016). Guidance Document: Emerging Practices for Schools and Communities. Available at: http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/MLK%20Brief-FINAL%2012-5-16.pdf

Special Thank You

First and foremost, we would like to thank all the school districts who contributed to this report through your participation in the Males of Color Policy Conference and your continued input throughout the years.

We also thank The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for supporting the Council of the Great City Schools' work to improve the academic outcomes of young men and boys of color.

About the Males of Color Initiative

In October 2010, the Council of the Great City Schools released a major report on the academic status of African American males, A Call for Change: The Social and Educational Factors Contributing to the Outcomes of Black Males in Urban Schools. The report was the first phase of the Council's ongoing efforts to recommit the energies of the nation's urban public-school systems to improving the quality of education for African American, Latino, Native American and other males of color nationwide. The report, along with efforts by other groups and individuals, was instrumental in calling attention to the issues facing boys and young men of color.

Since that time, the Council has moved beyond analysis of data and worked to identify solutions and spearhead systemic change in urban districts across the country. The Council's website www.malesofcolor.org has been established as a resource for various stakeholders, including school districts, administrators, teachers and the community at large to improve the academic outcomes of males of color. The website provides reports, data, events, and other resources to support the work of districts and program administrators.
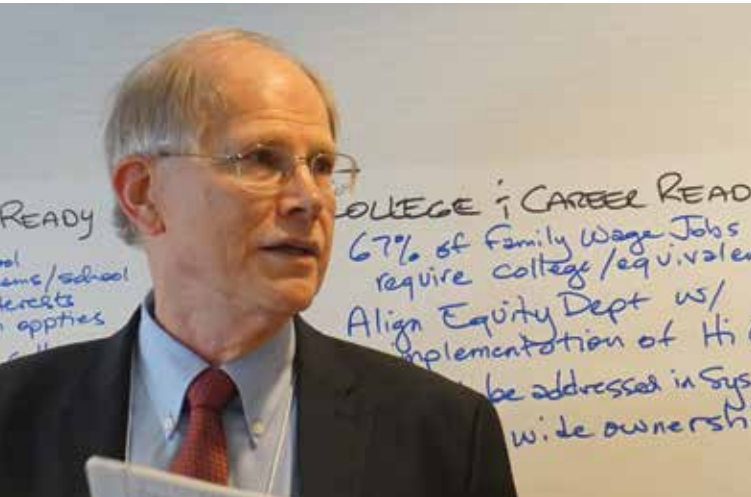
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Council of the Great City Schools

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MALES OF COLOR TASK FORCE MEETING
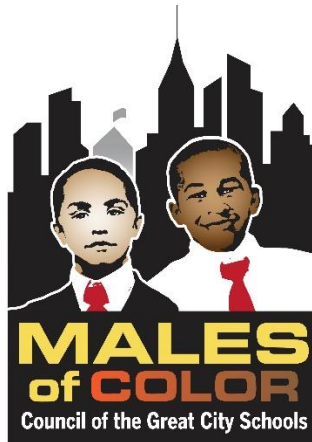
Males of Color Task Force Meeting

Chairs: **William R. Hite, Jr., Superintendent, School District of Philadelphia**
Michael Hinojosa, Superintendent, Dallas Independent School District

Agenda
Wednesday, October 18, 2017
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

- **Introduction**
- **Establishing the Goals and Objectives of the Task Force**
- **Excellence for All: Creating Environments of Success for Males of Color in the Great City Schools**
- **Education Trends for Males of Color in the Great Cities – Results from the Academic Key Performance Indicators, 2017**
- **District Progress on "A Pledge By America's Great City Schools" to Impact the Outcomes for Males of Color**
- **Announcements and Updates**

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development

2017-2018

Task Force Goals

To assist urban public school systems in teaching all students to the highest academic standards and in closing identifiable gaps in the achievement of students by race.

To improve the quality of professional development for teachers and principals in urban public education.

To alleviate the shortage of certified teachers and principals in urban schools.

To improve the recruitment and skills of urban school principals.

Task Force Chairs

Paul Cruz, Austin Superintendent
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board
Deborah Shanley, Lehman College of Education Dean

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Academic Department Overview

October 2017

Overall Academic Department Goals/Priorities

The goal of the academic department is to support the work of urban educators to improve student achievement for all students in our member districts. The department collaborates with researchers to determine district systems and resources that correlate with improved student achievement. These results inform our recommendations to instructional leaders.

We use publications and videos to share high-leverage information, as well as provide on-site strategic support teams, webinars, job-alike conferences to facilitate networking and collaboration among our members.

Major efforts this year focus on supporting our members with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and college- and career-readiness standards. This includes providing written guidance for developing and implementing high-quality curriculum documents to support school staff in elevating teaching and learning to align to college- and career-readiness standards, guidance for assessing the level of implementation of the standards throughout the district, and increasing the functionality of academic key performance indicators. We also provide technical assistance to requesting districts.

Current Activities/Projects

➢ *Implementing Excellence and Equity Grant*

Overview

With funding from a $1.6 million two-year grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation received in November of 2015, the Council works to advance district capacity to implement college- and career-readiness standards, ensuring that all urban students have access to high-quality instructional materials, interventions, and programming.

Assessing the Quality of District Curriculum

The Academics team led the development of *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum* with principles that are appropriate for all college- and career-readiness standards. This framework provides instructional leaders and staff with criteria for what a high-quality curriculum entails. Developed through combined efforts of Council staff together with school, district academic leaders, and other experts, this first edition guide includes annotated samples and exemplars from districts around the country. It also provides actionable recommendations for developing, implementing, and continuously improving a district curriculum, ensuring that it reflects shared instructional beliefs and

high expectations for all students, and that it clarifies the instructional work in every school throughout the district. The Council will provide professional development on using the tool and guide districts in determining implications for curriculum development and refinement, implementation, teaching and learning, and student achievement.

Technical Assistance to Southern Cities

The grant also funds technical assistance to a number of Southern city school systems. This regional work began with a meeting during the July 2017 Academic, Information Technology, and Research Directors' conference. Participants engaged in a discussion on the leading challenges these districts face in addressing achievement gaps and in implementing college- and career-readiness standards for all students. The information provided during the discussion was then used to plan a pre-conference for October 17, 2017. The preconference shared successful strategies leading to greater gains in literacy and mathematic and meaningful use of school improvement plans. Sessions featured presentations from Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Dallas and Des Moines with open discussions facilitated by Council staff and retired superintendent Carol Johnson.

➢ *Academic Key Performance Indicators*

Overview

The Council with a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation developed academic key performance indicators (KPIs) in a process similar to the one used to develop operational KPIs. Three sub-committees met to engage members in drafting KPIs for general education, special education, and English language learners.

Update

Using feedback from the Achievement and Professional Development Task Force, indicators were selected for their predictive ability and linkage to progress measures for the Minority Male Initiative pledge taken from a list of 200 potential KPIs.

During SY 2016-17, the indicators were refined and became part of the annual KPI data collection and reporting. This now enables districts to compare their performance with similar urban districts and to network to address shared challenges.

➢ *Implementing the Common Core State Standards and College- and Career-Readiness Standards*

Overview

The Council has long advocated for shared standards across states and has received several grants to assist our members in implementing high quality K-12 standards in mathematics, English language arts and literacy, and science. Through grant funding and with the assistance of working groups, advisory committees and networking opportunities, the Council has developed important tools for its members in the implementation of common core and college-and career-readiness standards. These tools include:

Indicators of Success

With Gates Foundation funding, the Council convened a cross-functional working group to discuss and inform the development of indicators districts might use to track their progress on implementation of college- and career-readiness standards. After considerable feedback, this document has been published and is available on the Council's website under the title *Indicators of Success: A Guide for Assessing District Level Implementation of College and Career-Readiness Standards*.

Indicators are divided into seven sections, including: vision and goal setting, resource allocation, parent and community outreach, curriculum and instruction, professional development, assessment, and student data. Each section provides a core set of leading questions, along with descriptions of what it might look like to be "on track" or "off track" in these areas and possible sources of evidence districts could use to determine where they fall on the continuum. Members report that this document has played a key role in their planning and monitoring of standards implementation.

➤ *Principal Supervisor (PSI) Initiative*

With funding from the Wallace Foundation, project staff completed a third round of follow-up visits to PSI districts in April 2017. The visits included: Baltimore City Public Schools (January 23-24); Broward County Public Schools (February 7-8); Cleveland Public Schools (February 9-10); District of Columbia Public Schools (March 6-7); Tulsa Public Schools (April 4-5); Long Beach Unified School District (April 12-13); Minneapolis Public Schools (April 18-19); and Des Moines Public Schools (April 20-21). For the first time, many of these rounds included representatives from PSI districts on the site visit teams to facilitate on-going networking between and among these districts to enhance and expand their reform efforts.

➤ *Balanced Literacy and Foundational Skills: Joint Project with Student Achievement Partners*

With funding from the Schusterman Foundation, the Council and Student Achievement Partners collaborated with member districts to provide support that ensures students in balanced literacy programs develop the foundational reading skills, knowledge, and vocabulary required to read grade-level complex text.

During SY 2017-18, the Metropolitan Nashville Public School district is piloting an augmented balanced literacy pilot in kindergarten and grade one in ten schools. The goal of this pilot is to adjust their current content and instructional practices to incorporate research-based content, focused on strengthening foundational skills, and building knowledge and vocabulary through Read-Alouds during the literacy block. Milwaukee Public Schools, Seattle Public Schools, and San Antonio Independent School District are observing the training and participating in learning walks to determine if they want to incorporate this approach in their districts.

> *Grade-Level Instructional Materials Tool-- Quality Review (GIMET-QR)*

The Hewlett Foundation provided funding for CGCS to work with district academic leaders and national experts in content, special education, and English language learning to develop and publish grade-by-grade rubrics consistent with textbook adoption procedures used in urban districts. These rubrics, called the *Grade-Level Instructional Materials Tool-Quality Review (GIMET-QR)*, amplify selected non-negotiable areas and alignment criteria so that districts can discriminate which sets of materials best fit their needs for English language arts and mathematics.

Additionally, they help districts determine priority support areas in implementing the adopted classroom materials. Moreover, each rubric dovetails with the set of requirements for English language learners seen in other CGCS publications (*A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners* and *A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners)* concurrently developed and published under the leadership of Gabriela Uro. Both frameworks are available on the Council's website.

The GIMET-QR tools can be found on the Council's website, as well as on www.commoncoreworks.org under *Quick Links.* While GIMET-QR was designed to support textbook materials adoption, feedback from Council members using the tool indicates that there are additional uses:

1) to assess alignment and identify gaps/omissions in current instructional materials;
2) to assess alignment of district scope and sequence, and the rigor and quality of instructional tasks and assessments; and
3) to provide professional development that builds capacity and a shared understanding of the CCSS in ELA/Literacy and/or Mathematics.

> *Common Core Website*

The Council launched www.commoncoreworks.org, a website where districts and organizations may share high quality materials.

> *Building Awareness and Capacity of Urban Schools*

The academic department focuses strategically on projects that will benefit our members as they move forward with common core and college- and career-readiness standards to improve student achievement. We have worked directly with the writers of the common core to ensure a shared understanding of the intent of the standards and the instructional and curricular shifts that they require. Now, we focus on enhancing the knowledge base of district curriculum leaders to inform their implementation planning and action steps for all college- and career-readiness standards including major implementation systems, professional development, assessments, instructional resources, and student work products.

English Language Arts

Professional Development Opportunities

Districts interested in any of the following professional learning opportunities can contact the Council's Director of Language Arts and Literacy, Robin Hall (rhall@cgcs.org).

- The Council conducts two-day writing conferences including a component to address writing in mathematics. The literacy component focuses on students' use of knowledge gained from a series of texts on a specific topic in order to produce effective argumentative compositions. The conference presents practical approaches for teaching argumentative writing that can be expanded to other content areas.

- The Text-Set Project is a professional learning opportunity that involves coaching and support in selecting the books and articles that could form a solid text set, learning how to sequence the texts effectively, and how to support students in building knowledge about the world, words, and language structure as they read the texts for themselves. Text sets are comprised of annotated bibliographies and suggested sequencing of texts to provide a coherent learning experience for students. This is accompanied by teacher instructions and supports, as well as a variety of suggested tasks for ensuring students have learned from what they have read. These sets reviewed by experts are currently available on Edmodo. The Text Set group has grown to over 2100 members.

- For grades K-2, the Read-Aloud Project (RAP); participating districts bring teams of curriculum, English language learning specialists, and Special Education staff for two days of training and then take ownership for writing text-dependent questions to go with chapter and picture books they select. There are more than 150 RAP lessons that have been vetted and posted on Edmodo. The RAP group has grown to over 5400 members.

Additional Free Online Resources

- The Council together with Student Achievement Partners launched several projects to assist districts in locating useful materials and updating current materials to meet the instructional shifts required by common core and college and career readiness standards.

  o For grades 3-5, The Basal Alignment Project Group has grown to over 40,500 members with over 350 revisions to the questions currently published for textbook readings posted on Edmodo.
  o For grades 6-10, The Anthology Alignment Project group has over 9,700 members with approximately 200 AAP revisions posted.

Urban Library Council

- The Council of the Great City Schools and the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) facilitated a special literacy focus group breakfast in July 2016 to share ideas and guidance on strategies for improving reading proficiency among low-income K-3 grade students, as well as experiences working with public libraries to support early reading skills. The key points made in the discussion have been used in a ULC call-to-action report, released in June 2017.

Mathematics and Science

- The Council partnered with a University of Chicago team from the Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education to provide feedback on a toolbox for K-12 teachers, administrators, and district leaders. This toolbox, located at http://www.leadcs.org, helps urban districts make decisions about improving computer science education at scale.

  The Council collaborated with the team from the University of Chicago to hold a pre-conference on October 18, 2016, that was funded by the National Science Foundation to encourage computer science education in member districts. The chief academic officers, district mathematics, and computer science curriculum leaders met with leaders in the field to discuss options for developing and leading effective computer science programs. This included considering how implementation of computer science fits within college and career readiness, with its emphasis on ELA and mathematics, as well as strategically considering how to excite all students so that they have an understanding of what they can learn through computer science (i.e., gaming, creating apps). The grant subsidized travel costs for attendees. As a result of this preconference, the Council and the University of Chicago team will host three webinars with the first beginning on October 2, 2017 to support member districts in increasing access and opportunities in computer science for students in K-12. Each webinar will allow district leaders to network and collaborate to strategically build and improve upon existing computer science programs whether in STEM and or STEAM.

- Under the leadership of the CGCS Bilingual team, the academic department supported the development of a new tool for materials selection, *A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction: Examining the Interdependence of Language and Mathematical Understanding*. The tool is to be used by publishers of mathematics materials to create the type of instructional content that will enable our districts to successfully address the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities while implementing college and career-readiness standards in mathematics. Under the leadership of Gabriella Uro, the Framework will inform the work of a Joint Procurement Project, to use the Council's joint purchasing power as an alliance to more effectively influence the market to produce higher quality materials for English language learners. This project will include convening a Materials Working Group,

composed of district practitioners and experts in mathematics and English language acquisition. The Working group will provide concrete feedback to selected vendors to improve their proposed materials.

➢ *Curriculum and Research Directors' Conference*

The 2017 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference for Curriculum Leaders, Principal Supervisors, Research and Assessment Directors Conference took place in Pittsburgh, PA, July 11-14, 2017. District leaders were encouraged to send teams to share in discussions and information around the theme: *Connecting the Dots: Collaborating to Solve Organizational Issues for Student Success*. We built upon previous work on improving collaboration across district departments and roles. The Academic sessions focused upon the features of quality district curriculum, key areas that are often missing from reading programs, new CGCS online professional development modules to address struggling readers, developing a strong kindergarten through grade twelve computer science program, promising materials in ELA and mathematics that are aligned to college-and career-readiness standards, and the interdependence of language and mathematics.

The 2018 Curriculum and Research Directors meeting will take place from June 25-27. A team of Council members will provide input on the issues they want the conference to address.

➢ *Academic Strategic Support Teams*

Several districts requested strategic support team visits to answer specific questions raised by their superintendents for an objective analysis of their academic program. In 2016-17, Council teams reviewed extensive district documents and were onsite to meet with appropriate personnel to assess and compile findings and make recommendations for Minneapolis, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Pittsburgh Public Schools, and Kansas City Public Schools.

CATALOG OF TOOLS

Catalog of Instructional Tools to Help Schools And School Districts Implement College- and Career-Readiness Standards

By the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools developed the following tools to help its urban school systems and others implement college- and career-readiness standards. Many of these materials can also be found on the Council website, **www.commoncoreworks.org.**

Basics about the Standards
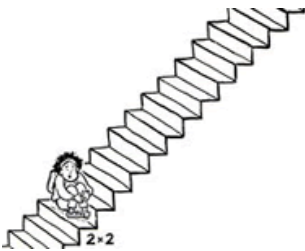
Staircase. Two three-minute videos (one in English and one in Spanish) that explain the Common Core. This is particularly good for presentations to community and parent groups. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/Page/380

Conversation. Two three-minute videos (one in English and one in Spanish) that explain how the Common Core State Standards will help students achieve at high levels and help them learn what they need to know to get to graduation and beyond. (2015)

http://www.cgcs.org/Page/467

Communicating the Standards
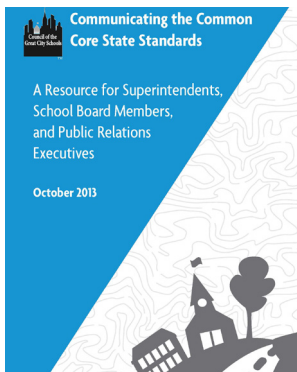
Communicating the Common Core State Standards: A Resource for Superintendents, School Board Members, and Public Relations Executives. A resource guide that helps district leaders devise and execute comprehensive communication plans to strengthen public awareness about and support for college- and career-readiness standards. (2013)

http://bit.ly/2wi5tu6

Staircase. Two 30-second Public Service Announcements (one in English and one in Spanish) to increase public awareness regarding Common Core standards for English Language Arts. Also, two 30-second Public Service Announcements (one in English and one in Spanish) to increase public awareness regarding Common Core standards for Mathematics. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/Page/380

Conversation. Two 30-second Public Service Announcements (one in English and one in Spanish) that explain how the Common Core State Standards will help students achieve at high levels and help them learn what they need to know to get to graduation and beyond. (2015)

http://www.cgcs.org/Page/467

Developing and Aligning Standards-based District Curriculum
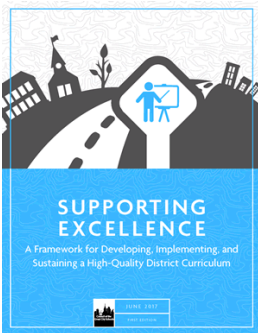
Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum. A framework that provides instructional leaders and staff with a core set of criteria for what a high-quality curriculum entails. This guide includes annotated samples and exemplars from districts around the country. It also provides actionable recommendations for developing, implementing, and continuously improving a district curriculum, ensuring that it reflects shared instructional beliefs and common, high expectations for all students, and that it focuses the instructional work in every school. (2017)

http://bit.ly/2sYOYAS

Selecting and Using Standards-based Instructional Materials

The Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review (GIMET-QR), (English Language Arts). A set of grade-by-grade rubrics and a companion document that define the key features for reviewers to consider in examining the quality of instructional materials in English Language Arts K-12. In addition, the tools are useful in helping teachers decide where and how adopted classroom materials could be supplemented. The documents align with similar tools developed by the Council for English language learners. See below. (2015)

http://www.cgcs.org/Page/474

The Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool–Quality Review (GIMET-QR), (Mathematics). A set of grade-level rubrics and a companion document that define the key features for reviewers to consider in examining the quality of instructional materials in mathematics K-8. The key features include examples and guiding statements from the Illustrative Mathematics progression documents to clarify the criteria. (2015)

http://www.cgcs.org/Page/475

- *Basal Alignment Project.* Classroom tools for adapting basal texts to the rigor of the Common Core in English language arts and literacy (scroll down to the bottom for directions on signing into EdModo).

  https://www.cgcs.org/domain/112

- *Read Aloud Project.* The Read Aloud Project offers lessons for K–2 read aloud books that have been adapted to meet college- and career-ready standards. Hundreds of teachers worked collaboratively to develop these materials. Each lesson was authored, edited, and reviewed by a team of expert educators. These lessons emphasize key aspects of college- and career-ready standards, including quality sequenced text-dependent questions, improved speaking, listening and writing tasks, and a focus on academic vocabulary. The professional development resources explain how to identify and create text-dependent and text-specific questions that deepen student understanding.

  http://achievethecore.org/page/944/read-aloud-project

- *Text Set Project: Building Knowledge and Vocabulary.* This professional learning opportunity is for teachers, those who support teachers, librarians, and media specialists to build understanding and experience with Common Core State Standards- aligned instruction and materials. The professional development includes materials, activities, and discussions to enable participants to begin creating and using Expert Packs (text sets) to support students in building knowledge, vocabulary and the capacity to read independently.

  http://achievethecore.org/page/1099/text-set-project-building-knowledge-and-vocabulary

- *Fraction Progression:* Classroom tools and videos for teaching fractions across grades three through six, developed in collaboration with Illustrative Mathematics and Achieve.

  https://www.cgcs.org//site/Default.aspx?PageID=338

- *LEADCS:* An electronic toolbox that includes research and additional vetted materials that member districts can use to make decisions about bringing computer science for all students to scale. This website was designed in partnership with the University of Chicago team at the Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education.

  https://www.cgcs.org/domain/290

Professional Development on the Standards

From the Page to the Classroom—ELA. A 45-minute professional development video for central office and school-based staff and teachers on the shifts in the Common Core in English Language Arts and literacy. The video can be stopped and restarted at various spots to allow for discussion. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/domain/127

From the Page to the Classroom—Math. A 45-minute professional development video for central office and school-based staff and teachers on the shifts in the Common Core in mathematics. The video can be stopped and restarted at various spots to allow for discussion. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/Page/345

Implementing High Standards with Diverse Students
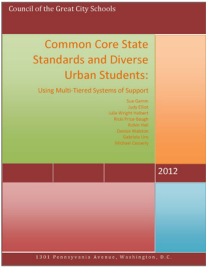
Common Core State Standards and Diverse Urban School Students: Using Multi-tiered Systems of Support. A white paper outlining the key components of an integrated, multi-tiered system of supports and interventions needed by districts in the implementation of the Common Core with diverse urban students. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/domain/146
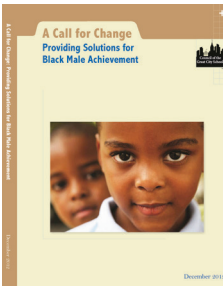
A Call for Change: Providing Solutions for Black Male Achievement. A book-form compendium of strategies by leading researchers and advocates on improving academic outcomes for African American boys and young men. Areas addressed include public policy, expectations and standards, early childhood, gifted and talented programming, literacy development, mathematics, college- and career- readiness, mental health and safety, partnerships and mentoring, and community involvement. (2012)
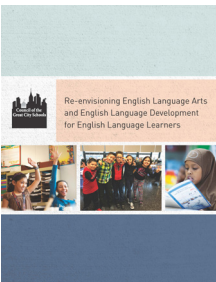
https://tinyurl.com/yap8zll8

Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners. A framework for acquiring English and attaining content mastery across the grades in an era when new college- and career-readiness standards require more reading in all subject areas. (2014, 2017)
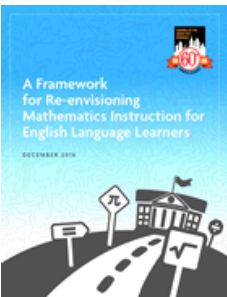
http://tinyurl.com/yasg9xc4

A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners. A guide for looking at the interdependence of language and mathematics to assist students with the use of academic language in acquiring a deep conceptual understanding of mathematics and applying mathematics in real world problems. (2016)

http://tinyurl.com/y7flpyoz

■ *Butterfly Video:* A 10-minute video of a New York City kindergarten ELL classroom illustrating Lily Wong Fillmore's technique for ensuring that all students can access complex text using academic vocabulary and build confidence in the use of complex sentences as they study the metamorphosis of butterflies.

https://vimeo.com/47315992

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Assessing District Implementation of the Standards

Indicators of Success: A Guide for Assessing District Level Implementation of College and Career-Readiness Standards. A set of indicators districts might use to track their implementation of college- and career-readiness standards. Indicators are divided into seven sections, including: vision and goal setting, resource allocation, parent and community outreach, curriculum and instruction, professional development, assessment, and student data. Each section provides descriptions of what "on track" or "off track" might look like, along with examples of evidence to look at in determining effective implementation. (2016)

http://tinyurl.com/hh6kesd

Calendar of Questions. A series of questions about ongoing Common Core implementation a arranged by month, focusing on particular aspects of implementation for staff roles at various levels of the district, as well as milestones for parents and students. (2013)

http://cgcs.org/Page/409

Implementing Standards-based Assessments
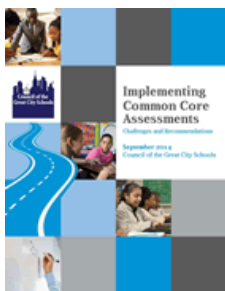
Implementing the Common Core Assessments: Challenges and Recommendations. A summary of the PARCC and SBAC assessments, challenges in implementing large scale on-line assessment, and recommendations for successfully implementing them. (2014)

https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/Implementing%20 Common%20Core%20Assessments-2014.pdf
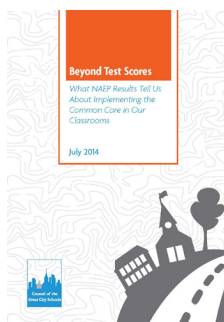
Beyond Test Scores: What NAEP Results Tell Us About Implementing the Common Core in Our Classrooms. An analysis of results on four sample NAEP items—two in mathematics and two in ELA— that are most like the ones students will be seeing in their classwork and on the new common core-aligned assessments. In this booklet, the Council shows how students did on these questions, discusses what may have been missing from their instruction, and outlines what changes to curriculum and instruction might help districts and schools advance student achievement. It also poses a series of questions that district leaders should be asking themselves about curriculum, professional development, and other instructional supports. (2014)

https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/Beyond Test Score_ July 2014.pdf

Resources for Parents about the Standards

A series of parent roadmaps to the Common Core in English Language Arts and literacy, grades K-12 in English and grades K-8 in Spanish. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/Page/330 (English)
https://www.cgcs.org/domain/148 (Spanish)

A series of parent roadmaps to the Common Core in mathematics, grades K-12 in English and K-8 in Spanish. (2012)

https://www.cgcs.org/Page/366 (English)
https://www.cgcs.org/Page/367 (Spanish)

Coming Soon!

The Great City Schools Professional Learning Platform. A series of 10 video-based courses for school administrators and teachers who are working to enhance the literacy skills of struggling readers. (2017)

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK PROJECT

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE

A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

Council of the Great City Schools

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 70 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, instructional support, leadership, management, technical assistance, 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 education for urban youth.

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Supporting Excellence

A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

JUNE 2017

Council of the Great City Schools

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We'd like to thank the members of our advisory team for lending their considerable instructional expertise and insight to this project. The advisory team included:

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PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES, AND PRECONDITIONS

Overview

In the ongoing effort to improve instructional standards in our nation's urban public schools, the Council of the Great City Schools has released resources to help districts determine the quality and alignment of instructional materials at each grade level; to ensure that materials for English language learners are rigorous and aligned to district standards; to help districts provide targeted professional development for teachers, principals, and district staff; to assist districts in their outreach to parents, the media, and the community; to coordinate the adoption and implementation efforts of various central office departments and stakeholder groups; and to self-assess their progress in implementing college- and career-readiness standards systemwide. Districts, for their part, have worked to develop lessons and units that reflect new, more rigorous college- and career-readiness standards. However, there has been little guidance up to this point on what a strong, standards-aligned curriculum should look like.

In the summer of 2016, the Council of the Great City Schools gathered a team of school and district academic leaders, along with representatives from Student Achievement Partners (SAP), to develop a curriculum reference tool that lays out the criteria for developing a coherent curriculum aligned to district- and state-defined college- and career-readiness standards and capable of guiding instruction in the district.

Over the course of the two-day meeting, the team discussed the key elements that guide a district's instructional program, and what components need to be present for a district to build a shared understanding of district expectations for student learning. The discussion was interactive and fluid, and resulted in the development of a definition of curriculum that was both functional and forward-thinking. We stressed the need for a common definition that each team member could support and advocate.

The teams also met in smaller groups to discuss key components of a quality curriculum and to address issues of implementation.

Based on these discussions, as well as the experience and expertise Council staff have developed over the years working with scores of academic departments in large urban districts, this guide aims to present instructional leaders and staff with a core set of criteria for what a high-quality curriculum entails. This guide includes annotated samples and exemplars from districts around

the country. It also provides actionable recommendations for developing, implementing, and continuously improving upon a district curriculum, ensuring that it reflects shared instructional beliefs and common, high expectations for all students, and that it focuses the instructional work in every school throughout the district.

This framework is grounded in college- and career-readiness standards, but it does not repeat them except to provide clarity in the examples. The framework assumes the content taught using the curriculum will build background knowledge in core subjects, but this framework does not identify specific content. The document also does not advocate a particular format for designing curriculum. Based on the level of expertise and current content knowledge of teachers, as well as student achievement, the district would need to determine the grain size (the level of detail needed to explain district expectations) for its curriculum guidance. Some districts may choose to provide an explanation of standards or include units of study, lesson plans, and/or pacing guides to support teachers in delivering effective instruction.

Defining Curriculum

In order to provide structure to this exploration and guide for developing and implementing a high-quality curriculum, the project advisory team developed the following definition:

> *A district curriculum is the central guide for teachers and all instructional personnel about what is essential to teach and how deeply to teach it throughout the district so that every child has access to rigorous academic experiences and instructional support in meeting academic standards. It also provides guidance for all instructional staff who support and supervise teaching and student learning.*

> *A district curriculum goes beyond a mere listing of standards, although it is based on the college- and career-readiness standards adopted from the state. However, it incorporates the additions the school system has made to more clearly translate the content knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skills students are expected to learn. The district's philosophy of what learning is essential, how students learn, and how to gauge student progress is central to the development of the curriculum. The curriculum itself explicitly indicates what the district requires (holds tightly) in every classroom, and acknowledges where schools and teachers have autonomy.*

> *The district curriculum is not a textbook or a set of materials. An effective curriculum does, however, identify and connect educators to resources that the district requires, and provides guidance in the selection and use of classroom resources. The curriculum considers the time required to teach the essential content to all students. Feedback from users is incorporated in the development, revision, and implementation of the district curriculum to leverage teacher expertise and to ensure continuous reflection and refinement of the district's instructional principles and expectations.*

The Purpose of a Quality Curriculum

The main purposes of developing a high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum are:

- To prepare students for college and careers

- To support teachers in delivering effective instruction

- To ensure access for all students to rigorous and meaningful educational experiences in every school and classroom throughout the district

The lack of a clear curriculum leaves teachers and administrators to individually determine what the district expects, and leads to a variety of interpretations that may or may not be aligned with district expectations. This is especially detrimental in urban settings, where high staff turnover requires structures and mechanisms for maintaining the continuity of expectations. Moreover, high student mobility in urban centers presents the challenge of ensuring that students do not miss key concepts by transferring from one school to another in the district. Given the diversity of students and learning needs in our urban classrooms, there is also the need for clarity around how to differentiate instruction while still maintaining a high level of rigor and access to core content and standards for all students.

Preconditions for Supporting a High-Quality Curriculum

A number of political, technical, and organizational preconditions are needed to support the development and implementation of a high-quality curriculum. In particular, a high-quality curriculum has the best chance of improving instruction systemwide if:

- The district has consistently communicated a strong, unifying vision for high-quality school and classroom practice that is founded on college- and career-readiness standards and high expectations for all students.

- The district has set clear, measurable goals for the academic attainment of all students.

- The district has a comprehensive professional development plan in place and communicates the message that not only teachers, but a wide variety of central office and school-based leaders and staff are expected to develop the content knowledge and skills necessary to implement district college- and career-readiness standards.

- The district ensures that both internally- and externally-provided professional development is consistent with the district's instructional vision, aligned to college- and career-readiness standards, and prioritized and logically organized to address teacher needs.

- The district continuously works to build a culture of shared accountability for student achievement across central office departments, staff, and schools.

An additional consideration is the need for a thoughtful, internally consistent approach to instructional management and oversight. Some districts are highly centralized in their control of curriculum and instruction, while others give schools a high degree of autonomy in these areas. Districts need to explicitly consider why and how their particular approach to school oversight is likely to improve instruction and advance academic achievement based on staff capacity and student performance. The most effective approach is one that tailors the level of central oversight to the needs of schools, based on where schools and the district are on the continuum of progress. In particular, if a district has low levels of achievement, a high degree of school-based instructional decision making is unlikely to provide the guidance and consistency necessary to improve school performance. Moreover, in those districts where schools earn greater autonomy through high achievement, this should not mean that such schools are free to determine instructional standards. The district should still lay out what skills and knowledge they expect students to have, and high-performing schools should be given the latitude to build on these curricular expectations.

Finally, regardless of the management approach of a district there must be checkpoints and measures for gauging whether the school system is on the right path in its instructional reform efforts. These measures should consist of a diverse set of indicators of student achievement and access to rigorous, grade-level content. Moreover, the district should ensure that all summative, formative, criterion-based assessments, as well as the systematic evaluation of student work, are aligned to the content and rigor of college- and career-readiness standards.

Principles for Design and Implementation

In developing and adopting curricula, districts often face many of the same challenges. These challenges range from the strategic to the tactical. For instance, a curriculum is unlikely to be implemented with integrity across a school system if district leaders have not communicated why it is essential for all students or its importance as a driving force behind instructional improvement. Districts must also ensure that teachers and instructional leaders share an accurate understanding of instructional expectations. At the same time, implementation can also be derailed if curricular materials are not aligned to the standards and easy to use, or if there are problems in the pace of instruction presented or in the distribution of materials or guidance. It is therefore helpful to start with a shared understanding of the principles of what a quality curriculum entails, and how it should be introduced and implemented in schools throughout the district.

- Curricular expectations should be embedded in the district's philosophy of what learning is essential, how students learn, and how to gauge student progress.

- Curriculum guidance should explicitly indicate what instructional decisions and mandates are to be made at the district level (i.e., what the district "holds tightly"), and where schools and teachers have autonomy in making decisions about what and how to teach. Curriculum guidance should also clearly identify and link to any specific resources that the district requires to be used in a particular grade level or grade span.

- A quality curriculum plans a coherent instructional experience within and across grade levels from pre-kindergarten through high school that systematically builds student readiness for college and/or careers.

- A quality curriculum provides support for the best teaching and identifies appropriate annotated resources so that students have access to excellence every day.

- A quality curriculum incorporates culturally responsive texts and resources that respect and celebrate the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of students.

- The curriculum serves as the central guidance for all instructional staff who support and supervise teaching and student learning, as well as the selection of both required and optional classroom resources.

- The scope and sequence of the curriculum should specify what content knowledge and skills should be taught, and at approximately what point during a school year, so that students who transfer between schools have a coherent learning experience.

- The curriculum should create the floor, not the ceiling, for learning at every grade level and in every course. In this way, the curriculum can support and challenge the full range of learners, from struggling students to gifted and talented students.

- The curriculum should articulate the depth at which students need to learn, demonstrate their understanding of, and apply a given concept.

- The curriculum should realistically consider the time required to address essential content with all students.

- Curricular documents should be developed in a way that ensures broad-based access and ease of use, with deliberately chosen and clearly identified delivery models.

- Expectations should be presented in ways that reflect natural coherence within and across content areas and across grade levels.

- The curriculum should illustrate exciting learning opportunities so that students love school as they learn challenging content, skills, and concepts.

- The curriculum should explicitly identify best practices for delivering content at key points in the curriculum, particularly for concepts and skills that have traditionally proven challenging for district students.

- Curricular documents should recognize concepts and skills where large numbers of students are likely to have learning gaps, and should provide suggested guidance that will help students fill those gaps while simultaneously accessing grade-level material.

- Quality curriculum documents should explicitly indicate when and how to use assessments, including formative assessments, to determine whether students are making progress in attaining a particular standard or set of standards.

- The curriculum development process should incorporate feedback from users and leverage teacher expertise.

SEVEN KEY FEATURES OF A STRONG, STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

So what do these defining principals of a high-quality curriculum look like in practice? In this section, we will provide concrete examples of district curricula that illustrate a set of seven key features of quality and alignment. In particular, we aim to illustrate how and when:

1 A district's curriculum documents reflect the district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement.

2 A district's curriculum documents are clear about what must be taught and at what depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level.

3 A curriculum builds instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college- and career-readiness standards for each grade.

4 A curriculum explicitly articulates standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points during the school year.

5 A curriculum contains scaffolds or other supports that address gaps in student knowledge and the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.

6 A curriculum includes written links to adopted textbooks or computer-based products to indicate where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations.

7 A curriculum provides suggestions for the best ways to measure whether students have met specific learning expectations.

The district's curriculum documents reflect the district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement.

Why is this important?

A school district can maximize learning when teachers and administrators readily see how their work is connected with the district's beliefs and vision for student learning and achievement, as well as respect for the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students. If the district communicates the vision and expectation that all students will meet district standards and graduate ready for college and careers, but the curriculum guidance reflects low expectations for the types of classroom reading materials that are to be used and suggested activities and questions, then staff are receiving mixed messages. Prior to designing new curriculum guidance, curriculum writers need to carefully review the district's beliefs and vision and set criteria their guidance should reflect.

If the district has unwittingly been condoning low expectations, the curriculum needs to not only reflect higher expectations, but also provide guidance in how to advance students who have not been challenged in prior grades so they can make the necessary progress in their academic language, reading levels, and reasoning skills. If the district believes that students learn best in a particular way, then curriculum examples should reflect those approaches.

What does it look like?

The introduction to a curriculum document should specifically reference the district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement, and indicate how the curriculum guidance is directly linked to those ideals. Prior to publishing the document, each suggested activity and exemplar of student work should be checked to see that they align with and support those statements. The document should also provide support to instructional staff to attain those goals.

Example, English Language Arts

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has developed Cornerstone Units and anchor assignments for each grade level and subject. The district's published objective is to provide all of their students with a world-class education, and to deliver on this promise DCPS focuses on rigorous academic content, developing highly effective teachers, engaging families, and motivating students. These units reflect the district's beliefs and vision that "deep learning happens when students are able to understand and retain information by participating in interesting and meaningful activities" (that are anchored to academic standards).

In English Language Arts, for example, DCPS units in grade two provide students with multiple opportunities to engage in rich, rigorous text. Combined with ample opportunities to discuss text, students are supported and encouraged to become experts in the content. During the course of the unit, students will read, write, research, take part in activities, and discuss. Second grade teachers will

read aloud the majority of the texts in the beginning of the school year to increase student access to the texts. As the year progresses, however, students are expected to develop greater proficiency and independence in reading complex texts. The guidelines of the Cornerstone Unit make it clear that students should always be given opportunities to work with and in the text through annotation and discussions. A portion of the unit is shown in the following sample.

Figure 1. Sample District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Cornerstone Unit: *Plants Everywhere*

UNIT FOCUS	READING, WRITING, AND RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	
In this unit, students will learn that:	**Knowledge**	**Skills**
■ Living things depend on their surroundings to get what they need, including food, water, shelter, and a favorable temperature. ■ Plants depend on air, water, minerals (in the soil) and light to grow. Different plants survive better in different settings because they have varied needs for water, minerals, and sunlight. Duration (25 Days) Classrooms should use the first week of school to set up classroom procedures, expectations, etc. This gives students opportunities to practice accountable talk, responding to text, etc. DCPS units will provide students with multiple opportunities to engage in rich, rigorous text. Combined with ample opportunities to discuss text, students will aim to become experts in the content. During the course of the unit, students will read, write, research, take part in activities, and discuss.	Students will know... ■ Text structures used in informational text: compare and contrast, sequence, cause and effect, description, problem/solution (Q & A) ■ Text features of informational/expository text ■ Thought process and language of compare and contrast ■ Main idea, key details, summary ■ Strategies to determine word meaning (context clues, prefixes, root words, compound words, dictionaries) ■ Irregular plural nouns ■ Reflexive pronouns ■ Collective nouns ■ Expected procedures for engaging in collaborative conversations	Students will be skilled at... ■ Using multiple resources to locate information ■ Recognizing text structures and the author's purpose of a text ■ Identifying sequential steps in informational text ■ Describing the connection between a series of scientific ideas and concepts ■ Summarizing text by reporting main ideas and identifying key details ■ Using evidence to make logical inferences about text when engaging in collaborative conversations, and in writing ■ Using illustrations, captions, and headings to clarify a text or gain more information ■ Choosing flexibly from an array of strategies to determine word meanings ■ Describing how words, phrases, and images add meaning to a text ■ Gathering and organizing relevant information about a topic

	MAKING MEANING WITH CONTENT	
Second grade teachers will read aloud the majority of the texts in the beginning of the school year to increase student access to the texts. As the year progresses, the load of the work of reading text should be shifted to students. Students should always be given opportunities to work with and in the text through annotation and discussions.	**Lines of Inquiry** Students will keep considering... ■ What are the parts of a plant? ■ How do a plant's parts work together to help the plant survive and reproduce? ■ What is the relationship between the life cycle of a plant and other living things?	**Understanding** Students will understand that... ■ Plants need water, air, and sunlight in order to survive ■ Plants have a life cycle ■ Plants depend on people, pollinators, and the environment for survival
UNIT VOCABULARY	**WRITING FOCUS**	
	To evaluate student writing, teachers should use the DCPS PARCC-aligned rubric, and students should have access to the DCPS student-friendly checklists.	
Content Vocabulary Relationship, cycle, energy, process, nutrients **Academic Vocabulary (from standards)** demonstrate, describe, fiction, identify, text	The three modes of writing are: Narrative Writing, Informational Writing, and Opinion Writing. These are briefly introduced. This series of lessons will mainly focus on introducing the writing process through informative writing. Student will write an informative/explanatory piece in which they: ■ Introduce a topic ■ Supply facts and information ■ Provide a concluding statement	

Example, Mathematics

Similarly, the Cornerstone Units in mathematics are designed to engage students in understanding and applying mathematics. The Standards for Mathematical Practice become visible as students apply their mathematical understanding by engaging in real-world problems where the solution process is not easily defined. For example, a third grade Cornerstone Unit, *Area Architects*, requires that students play the role of architects redesigning national landmark structures for clients. They redesign the room sizes in the structure to meet client needs while preserving the total floor area. Students create new floor plans and justify their design mathematically and in terms of meeting the client's requirements. The unit, *Area Architects*, comes directly from *Eureka Math*, Grade 3, Module 4 – Lessons 15 and 16, and includes italicized text created by the Cornerstone developer. A portion of the unit is shown in the following sample.

Figure 2. Sample District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Cornerstone Unit: *Area Architects*

PLACEMENT IN THE UNIT

Before the Cornerstone – Prior to this Cornerstone, students have engaged in fourteen lessons focused on area. Students have:

- Understood area as an attribute of plane figures (Lesson 1)
- Decomposed and recomposed shapes to compare areas (Lesson 2)
- Modeled tiling with centimeter and inch unit squares as a strategy to measure area (Lesson 3)
- Related side lengths with the number of tiles on a side (Lesson 4)
- Formed rectangles by tiling with unit squares to make arrays (Lesson 5)
- Drawn rows and columns to determine the area of a rectangle given an incomplete array (Lesson 6)
- Interpreted area models to form rectangular arrays (Lesson 7)
- Found the area of a rectangle through multiplication of the side lengths (Lesson 8)

The unit includes a description of the standards and learning experiences that occurred prior to the unit and what all students are expected to understand and experience during the Cornerstone Unit. This allows the teacher to address unfinished learning while also introducing challenging concepts so that all students are able to access a world-class education for their grade level.

The unit is designed for three days and includes student discussions, creating and connecting multiple representations, and prompts requiring students to compare and contrast their findings. It is a district expectation that all students develop a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts rather than seeing them in isolation. In this case, they are linking the concept of multiplication and area to a real-life experience.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS TIME LINE

PROJECT TIMELINE		
Day 1	**Day 2**	**Day 3**
Analyze a floor plan by using side lengths to determine the area of each room and the area of the entire house.	Design a new floor plan; keep the area the same, but manipulate the side lengths to change the shape of each room.	Evaluate peers' floor plans. Did they maintain the correct area? How do their side lengths make their floor plan different from yours?

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

The suggestions for multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression are meant to make the lessons accessible to all learners. All suggestions are embedded into the natural flow of the lessons and are bolded for emphasis. Some of the suggestions come directly from the *Eureka Math* lessons and are noted as such. Teachers may add alternative ways to make the lessons more accessible based on student needs.

The district has intentionally designed units of study that embrace the district vision of rigorous content, engaging students, and strategically considering the needs of special populations so that they have access to the grade-level Cornerstone Unit. This particular unit includes opportunities for students to express their reasoning and use multiple representations (including pictures, diagrams, and math symbols of their thinking) for models that may have multiple solutions. The unit also requires that teachers honor the language of their students as well as help students transition to using increasingly sophisticated academic language. There are public displays and discussions where all students are expected to justify their reasoning and critique the reasoning of their peers.

The district's curriculum documents are clear about what must be taught *and* at what depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level.

Why is this important?

Curriculum leaders have the advantage of examining the pre-kindergarten through grade twelve curriculum from a broad perspective. They know what has come before and can see into the horizon about where a particular objective is positioned. Based on walk-throughs, student work, and student achievement data, they can also identify which aspects of a learning objective need to be amended or need greater emphasis.

It is the duty of curriculum leaders to support teachers and administrators by translating this overarching vision into a coherent, systemic set of learning expectations by grade level and subject so instructional staff can devote their energies to helping students learn essential knowledge and skills. Clarifying district expectations for student learning creates the basis for building shared understanding of where to focus teaching efforts. This common ground enables all students in every classroom and in every school to have access to the concepts, knowledge, and skills they need to meet district expectations and be prepared for ever more complex learning in higher grade levels and courses.

Without such clarity, individual teachers and school planning teams may misinterpret broad statements, creating a range of well-meaning goals that result in some students working on low-level assignments and missing the opportunity to learn the rigorous content and skills the district intended. This can create and expand gaps in student learning—gaps that become increasingly evident as students move into higher grade levels. Indeed, problems in student achievement in Algebra I, for example, might be traced to incomplete or unclear coursework and instruction in elementary school concepts that teachers could have taught, but did not realize that they needed to.

Finding the right level of granularity to ensure that district curricular expectations are clear is a district decision that must be made based on the content expertise and skill level of the end users. A district with high teacher turnover rates, for instance, may choose a smaller grain size than those with a stable, knowledgeable teaching force.

What does this look like?

A majority of the district curricula reviewed for this guide provided a list of the standards to be taught at each grade level, without providing any guidance as to the precise content or the depth of knowledge and rigor with which to teach these concepts. Instead, the district curriculum should clarify in detail what it expects teachers to teach and students to learn. So in order to illustrate how a district could provide clarity not only around what needs to be taught, but at what depth, we have developed the following sample unit overview based on a template from a member district and using information posted on the Edmodo website in the Basal Alignment Project Group.

To illustrate this key feature, we start by describing a key grade four English language arts standard (comparing the points of view of different narrators, including the difference between first-and third-person narrations) and how instructional rigor and student understanding should build over the course of the year. Importantly, this overview also explicitly addresses the prior learning that the unit will build on and how to make connections to this foundational knowledge. In order to assist teachers as they work with students to make meaning of this new content, the overview then addresses steps to take and things to consider before teaching, during teaching, and after teaching (assessment considerations). This document also lays out the connections to the overall goal of college-and career-readiness for all students.

However, it is important to note that the level of detail and guidance provided here assumes a fair amount of expertise in the standards. For example, when we refer to the use of "text-dependent questions" we are assuming that teachers are skilled in the concept and use of this instructional practice. A district that has not provided substantial professional development in the instructional shifts called for by college- and career-readiness standards may want to consider providing an even more detailed description or pairing the unit overview with more explicit guidance on this concept.

Example, English Language Arts

Figure 3. Sample Grade Four English Language Arts Unit Overview

CCSS RL 4.6 Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Instructional Notes

This standard can be addressed as a natural complement to other standards and an extension of learning from prior grades.

In grade four, students are expected to refer to explicit details when explaining the meaning of what they have read or when they are making inferences based on information from the text.

As they progress through this school year, students will respond to a range of questions that require them to use their knowledge and skills in finding key ideas and details in order to analyze the author's language as a vehicle for conveying meaning in increasingly challenging texts.

This year students not only answer questions and complete tasks that will require them to compare and contrast points of view, they must also note the difference between first- and third-person narrations in literary texts. (CCSS RL 4.6)

These statements make it clear what must be taught at this grade level and how the concept is developed from prior grade levels.

Using prior knowledge to make explicit connections to new learning

In grade three, students learned how to distinguish their own point of view in a text from that of the narrator or those of characters. (CCSS RL. 3.6) Students also learned that point of view is how the author feels about a particular topic (for/against, pro/con).

This summary of grade three work helps to clarify the depth expected from grade four instruction and learning.

Acquisition and Applications

Knowledge

Students will build their awareness of how author's use of language and writing structures impact the reader and reveal the author's point of view about a character or topic.

Students will know that different narrators can present the same events in different ways

- First-person narrator describes his/her own thoughts and feelings and may take part in or retell an event as if he or she was a participant

- First-person narration uses I, me, my, and we (Note: Show students the difference between when a narrator is speaking versus when a character's words in dialogue use the pronoun "I". (e.g., *I was so surprised to see the wonderful gift before me.* Versus, *Tom said, "I was so surprised to see the wonderful gift before me."*)

Skills

Students in grade four will be able to:

- Recognize the author's point of view by attending to what the characters say and do and the word choices the author makes

- Recognize the author's viewpoint revealed in the information he/she chooses to provide or omit and the word choices the author makes

- Recall that comparisons are based on similarities and contrasts are based on differences

Here the district lays out a systemic set of grade four learning expectations and the essential knowledge and skills they expect students to develop at this grade level.

These bulleted notes alert teachers to areas where students commonly experience confusion. This guide for learning will prevent future misconceptions.

Instructional Notes, cont.	Knowledge, cont.	Skills, cont.
Now, the fourth grade teacher is building on this prior learning and expanding the concept of point of view to include first- and third-person narration. Also, the students' ability to distinguish their own points of view from that of the author is further extended to learning how to compare and contrast points of view from different stories. Reaching proficiency, use for this standard is not an isolated step, but requires a series of instructional experiences that include all of the strands—reading, writing, speaking and listening and language—in the teaching and learning process. Using read-alouds to model and provide examples of how to analyze first- and third-person narrations and use them as springboards to comparing points of view—using text-dependent questions that draw students back to the text—will provide the practice and scaffolding needed for all students to reach proficiency of this standard. Graphic organizers can also be used to help students organize and structure their thoughts and evidence from the text to support their responses.	■ Third-person narrator describes how other characters think and feel and does not take part in an event ■ Third-person narration uses he, she, they, him or her ■ Understand the effect of the author's choice to write in first person or third person narration	■ Distinguish and cite examples of how the author's selection of first or third person narrative impacted the student as a reader, to show that they understand the advantages and disadvantages of the writer's choice. ■ Use accurate vocabulary and academic language in summaries or other writing assignments to compare and contrast points of view in the texts under discussion ■ Evaluate the use of accurate vocabulary in summaries or other writing assignments students write to compare and contrast points of view in the texts under discussion ■ Use evidence from the text for how the character thinks and feels as the story progresses. ■ Use small groups for peer editing before revision and final drafts. ■ Write a story from the view point of one of the characters in the texts.

	Helping Students Make Meaning
	Before Teaching
	■ Select two texts on a particular topic or theme that share similar big ideas and understandings—one with first-person narration and the other with third person narration.
	■ Note stopping points in the texts that are key for determining author's point of view and create text-dependent questions that will require students to provide evidence from the text to support their responses.
This builds shared understanding of where to focus teaching efforts.	Text-dependent questions for reaching proficiency in this content standard require students to:
	■ Determine the point of view of the author (for/against, pro/con, first and third person) and provide examples from the text that support their conclusion:
	● Provide key details from the texts that support comparisons
	● Recognize key details from the texts that support contrast
	During Teaching
It would be useful for the district to provide access to samples showing the level of student work that would meet these expectations.	■ Provide models of comparisons and contrasts of points of view in student work or other instructional materials
	■ Provide opportunities for multiple readings of both texts separately through structured reading and discussion of student responses to text-dependent questions. (A variety of methods can include: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, small group, etc.)
	■ Expect students to make comparisons. Structure discussions and writing opportunities so that students meet this content standard.
	■ Use graphic organizers or other visuals to structure/record discussions regarding comparison and contrast of the author's point of view in both texts (i.e., A Venn diagram or table can be constructed easily and provides reinforcement for content learning.)
This requires connections and extensions, high cognitive demand, and complex reasoning.	■ Provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their level of understanding and achievement of the standard (i.e., create a grid with multiple columns and rows to create side by side comparisons of multiple texts on the same topic, event or experience noting similarities and differences in points of view; compare communication in different forms such as contrasting a dramatic performance with a print version of the same story and variants in points of view)

Example, Mathematics

In this curriculum excerpt in mathematics, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) has incorporated public domain materials from Illustrative Mathematics, as well as the CGCS Parent Roadmaps and Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (GIMET-QR). They have customized this information to provide their K-2 teachers with an overview of the progression of addition and subtraction problems according to the expectations of the standards and district expectations. The district intentionally shows teachers the progression of standards and the growing sophistication in the problem types from kindergarten to grade two for operations and algebraic thinking. Providing teachers with concrete examples of the types of problems students are to experience is much more helpful than a general statement such as "Add and subtract two single-digit numbers." In a given grade level, the teacher can check to see that students are practicing with all the required forms single-digit addition and subtraction can take. This is how the district attempts to show at what depth these concepts need to be taught to reflect college- and career- readiness standards for this grade level.

This example also fits well with Feature 3 that deals with coherence across grade levels. This illustrates that a district can address the seven features of a quality curriculum without having to develop separate sections within their curriculum documents. In the example below, the light red reflects proficiency expectations for kindergarten while the light blue and yellow refer to proficiencies for grades one and two respectively. However, this does not preclude students exploring different variations in the K-2 continuum.

Figure 4. Baltimore City Public Schools Grades K-2 Unit Addressing Operations and Algebraic Thinking

	Result Unknown	Change Unknown	Start Unknown
Add to (join)	Two bunnies sat on the grass. Three more bunnies hopped there. How many bunnies are on the grass now? 2 + 3 = ?	Two bunnies were sitting on the grass. Some more bunnies hopped there. Then there were five bunnies. How many bunnies hopped over to the first two? 2 + ? = 5	Some bunnies were sitting on the grass. Three more bunnies hopped there. Then there were five bunnies. How many bunnies were on the grass before? ? + 3 = 5
Take from (separate)	Five apples were on the table. I ate two apples. How many apples are on the table now? 5 - 2 = ?	Five apples were on the table. I ate some apples. Then there were three apples. How many apples did I eat? 5 - ? = 3	Some apples were on the table. I ate two apples. Then there were three apples. How many apples were on the table before? ? - 2 = 3

This level of detail is important so that students aren't merely assigned 5 + 2 = □ or 5 – 2 = □. Practice with these two types of problems is not sufficient. Teachers can clearly see the different variations of a problem. In the later grades a persistent problem is that students fixate on finding an answer - either adding or subtracting because they see two numbers- and seldom reading to understand the quantities in relation to the context of the problem. Taking time to investigate the similarities and differences between each problem variation provides teachers with a rationale for having students focus upon linking language and mathematics.

	Total Unknown	Addend Unknown	Both Addends Unknown
Put Together/ Take Apart (Part-Part-Whole)	Three red apples and two green apples are on the table. How many apples are on the table? 3 + 2 = ?	Five apples are on the table. Three are red and the rest are green. How many apples are green? 3 + ? = 5, 5 - 3 = ?	Grandma has five flowers. How many can she put in her red vase and how many in her blue vase? 5 = 0 + 5, 5 = 5 + 0 5 = 1 + 4, 5 = 4 + 1 5 = 2 + 3, 5 = 3 + 2
	Difference Unknown	Bigger Unknown	Smaller Unknown
Compare	("How many more?"): Lucy has two apples. Julie has five apples. How many more apples does Julie have than Lucy? ("How many fewer?"): Lucy has two apples. Julie has five apples. How many fewer apples does Lucy have than Julie? 2 + ? = 5, 5 - 2 = ?	(Version with "more"): Julie has three more apples than Lucy. Lucy has two apples. How many apples does Julie have? (Version with "fewer" suggests wrong operation): Lucy has 3 fewer apples than Julie. Lucy has two apples. How many apples does Julie have? 2 + 3 = ?, 3 + 2 = ?	(Version with "fewer"): Lucy has 3 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have? (Version with "more" suggests wrong operation): Julie has three more apples than Lucy. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have? 5 - 3 = ?, ? + 3 = 5

This section shaded in light red illustrates the four kindergarten problem subtypes. Grade one and grade two students work with all subtypes and variants.

The yellow-shaded section problems are the four difficult subtypes or variants that students should work with in grade one but need not develop proficiency until grade two.

Adapted from Box 2–4 of Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood, National Research Council (2009, pp. 32, 33).

The curriculum builds instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college- and career-readiness standards for each grade.

Why is this important?

Instructional coherence within a grade level is important so that students are able to make connections between concepts, knowledge, and ideas. It is through coherence within a grade level that students develop a strong foundation that will enable them to both acquire the depth of knowledge needed to meet grade-level expectations and to progress through ever more sophisticated learning. Seeing how concepts and learning are interconnected builds students' content knowledge, skills, and perseverance.

Instructional coherence across grade levels, meanwhile, means attending to how concepts and skills are developed over time. It begins by considering what students should know and be able to do to be college- and career-ready, and then determining how students will acquire and develop knowledge and skills throughout their K-12 experience.

Since the responsibility of the curriculum is to support the teacher, a quality curriculum should alert teachers to typical student misconceptions and incomplete learning that has been seen in student performance in previous years. At the same time, the curriculum should also provide teachers with guidance for supporting and further enhancing learning opportunities for gifted and talented students. This will save teachers time and research, and will maximize the likelihood of students performing at grade level and beyond.

What does this look like?

Within a grade level, the curriculum should show explicit links between multiple clusters, standards, concepts, or skills to support teachers in making these connections in the classroom. For example, in mathematics the curriculum may explicitly inform the teacher that when working with multiplication of a two-digit and a one-digit number, they should connect it to finding areas of a rectangle. In English language arts, guidance for preparing students to write an opinion piece should include sufficient texts and questions on a given topic in order to provide an opportunity for students to explicitly connect their developing writing skills to the ability to cite evidence from multiple texts.

To build coherence across grade levels, some districts include notations on each grade-level curriculum guide to indicate what learning students had the previous year and where that learning will progress in subsequent grade levels. Additionally, districts have also provided teachers with information about typical misconceptions and common learning gaps, and how to address those issues while simultaneously working on grade-level concepts and skills. In Denver Public Schools, for example, the Algebra I curriculum includes an overview of students'

prior learning as well as subsequent learning in the "unit learning trajectory," clarifying how current learning is situated in the overall Algebra I curriculum. The district clearly identifies strategies that may work for getting an answer but that do not help students understand how to solve equations (and later, inequalities).

This example attends to coherence across grades (explicitly indicating the standards addressing proportions in grades seven and eight) as well as coherence within the algebra course. Intentionally communicating how students should begin solving equations with proportions allows students to begin their focus on "look for and make use of structure," so that they see how applying and solving proportions links to solving equations algebraically, which appears in later units. ("Look for and make use of structure" is one of the standards for mathematical practice).

Example, Mathematics

Figure 5. Section from Denver Public Schools Algebra I Unit

Unit of Study	1: Proportional Reasoning	Length of Unit: 10 days (August 22–September 2, 2016)
Unit Learning Trajectory	■ Students focus on solving equations with proportions. Because cross-multiplication works only in limited situations, avoid teaching cross multiplication as a strategy to solve proportions and focus instead on multiplying both sides of equations by the same number. This method supports the concept of equations as balances so students make meaning of the process of solving equations. Unit 2 continues work on solving equations; fluency with solving equations can be expected at the end of Unit 2. ■ Students' work with proportions then moves into dimensional analysis. Students extend their previous work in eighth grade with two types of proportions: direct variation and inverse variation. As students write and graph equations to model direct and inverse variations, ensure that they can describe the graphs of each.	
Focus Essential Learning Goals/ Standards	■ Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and the origin in graphs and data displays. (Year-long Standard: CCSS N-Q.A.1) ■ Define appropriate quantities for the purpose of descriptive modeling. (Year-long Standard: CCSS N-Q.A.2) ■ Reason quantitatively and use units to solve problems. (ELG.MA.HS.N.3) ■ Create equations in two or more variables to represent relationships between quantities; graph equations on coordinate axes with labels and scales. (Year-long Standard: CCSS A-CED.A.2)	
Standards	***Content Standards*** **Quantities (N-Q)** **Reason quantitatively and use units to solve problems. (Supporting) [ELG.MA.HS.N.3]** CCSS N-Q.A.3: Choose a level of accuracy appropriate to limitations on measurement when reporting quantities. ***Standards for Mathematical Practice*** 2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively. 6. Attend to precision.	
Fluency Recommendations	N/A	

Note that the curriculum is continuously linked back to standards.

Generalizations (Conceptual Understanding)	Guiding Questions to Build Conceptual Understanding	
My students **Understand** that...	Factual	Conceptual
■ Proportional relationships can be modeled with equations of the form y = kx or y = k/x (A-CED.A.2)	■ What is a proportional relationship? ■ How do we know when proportional relationships involve direct variations or inverse variations?	■ Why are proportional relationships important?
■ Precision with units is key to dimensional analysis. (N-Q.A.1)	■ What is dimensional analysis? ■ How is dimensional analysis used in science?	■ How is dimensional analysis related to precision? ■ How do ratios connect with dimensional analysis?

Misconceptions	■ Students think all in/out tables operate the same as direct variation tables. ■ Students do not realize the importance of unit conversions along with computation when solving problems involving measurements. ■ Students express answers to a greater degree of precision than required when using calculating devices' display of eight to 10 decimal places.

Instructional coherence is created by considering standards and student learning along a progression. Sometimes this progression occurs evenly where students are able to make explicit connections between and among varied concepts. However, for some students who over-generalize, the learning progression appears uneven or has gaps. Denver addresses this concern by making explicit some of the over-generalizations that teachers attend to and eliminate during the various instructional segments.

Example, English Language Arts

The English Language Arts resource below has been adapted from EngageNY. Notice how it assists teachers' understanding and supports instruction of this College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard in grade seven while illustrating instructional coherence across grade levels. The unit activities have been omitted from this example in order to focus on how teachers can easily see where the grade seven learning fits coherently into the development of the standards across grade levels.

Figure 6: Excerpt from Grade Seven Instructional Unit, Adapted from EngageNY

VERTICAL PROGRESSION

Students will have recurring instructional experiences with reading literature and informational texts from various genres to study how authors present various viewpoints of events, people, places, and time periods in fictional and nonfictional accounts. Each instructional experience will add more depth of knowledge for students as they grapple with the authors' viewpoints in texts and why they choose to present information based on facts, embellishments, biases or a combination of any of these approaches in order to impact the reader's response to the ideas presented in the text. The culmination of these kinds of analyses will enable students to be adept and discerning readers and thinkers who can recognize bias and subjective perspectives and draw conclusions based on sound and reasonable evidence.

Anchor Standard R.CCR.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.		
Grade Six	**Grade Seven**	Grade Eight
CCSS RL.6.9 – Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	**Standard: CCSS RL.7.9 – Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.**	CCSS RL.8.9 – Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Showing vertical coherence where the grade seven standard fits.

STUDENT-FRIENDLY LEARNING TARGETS

Knowledge Targets	Reasoning Targets
I can define fact and opinion.	I can compare a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character with an actual historical account.
I can define story elements of portrayal of time, place, character, period, and historical account.	I can contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character with an actual historical account.
	I can determine the differences between the fictional and historical accounts.
	I can explain how authors of fiction use history within their story.
	I can determine how authors of fiction alter history with their accounts.

Instructional Synopsis:

Students will read varied accounts about court-ordered desegregation in the 1960's to evaluate the use of historical research in fiction. Comparing and contrasting viewpoints of court-ordered desegregation from different perspectives as represented in the fictional accounts and how it has been represented in real world, historical accounts will be the primary focus of instruction. Readings will include, but are not limited to:

- Coles, R. (1995). *The Story of Ruby Bridges*
- Bridges, R. (1999). *Through my Eyes*
- Morrison, T. (2004). *Remember: The Journey to School Integration*

Questions to Focus Learning

- *Why do authors use historical accounts in their stories, and how can those accounts be altered to shape events in fiction?*
- *In what ways do authors affect and alter history based on their fictional portrayals of historical accounts?*

The curriculum explicitly articulates standards-aligned expectations for all learners, by grade levels, for student work at different points during the school year.

Why is this important?

Even when a curriculum guidance document explains what each standard means at a grade level, standards are by their very nature so broad that they cannot be completely taught in a single unit. They are developed in multiple units of instruction over time. Each time the concept is revisited, more complexity is added and student performance is enhanced. A quality curriculum provides clear indicators of what student performances are likely to be at various points within the school year. Thus, it is important for teachers and administrators to know what is expected early in the year versus later in the year to know where to focus instruction and to determine how well students are progressing.

What does this look like?

Some districts may choose to use annotated exemplars of actual student work illustrating the level of performance the district expects at different points in the school year. Some districts attempt to use rubrics or pacing guides to describe expectations, but often these are broadly written and interpretations can vary widely unless professional development makes time across the school year for teachers to calibrate their use throughout the district. When the central office is aware of common areas of under-performance, they should supply suggested next steps to boost student performance while continuing to move forward in the curriculum, or establish means for teachers to share ideas that have successfully addressed those areas.

A curriculum department should prioritize areas for concentrated focus in light of competing priorities from all content areas. Working together, departments should agree on a timeline for professional development and support to move academic skills and achievement higher. This is necessary to keep from bombarding teachers and administrators with new programs and techniques without time to master any of them. It also means having a plan for ensuring that teachers successfully implement the areas of focus and that pre-determined goals for student advancement are attained. Additionally, the district needs to ensure that any teacher new to the grade level or new to the district in coming years, or those that may have missed initial training, all gain a solid knowledge of the curriculum.

To illustrate how a district might clarify standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points during the school year, a grade four mathematics unit provides teachers with examples of how student learning progresses throughout the year for standards relating the concepts of place value and multiplication of whole numbers. This document explicitly lays out the learning transition from using viable strategies based on place value to employing the standard algorithm with proficiency to show how student learning should develop. A portion of the unit is shown in the following sample.

Figure 7: Sample Grade Four Mathematics Unit

Number and Operations in Base-Ten: At grade four, students generalize their place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers and use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic. As a result, students extend their work in the base-ten system to adding and subtracting using the standard algorithm to meet grade four fluency expectations (CCSS 4.NBT.4).

Rationale:	Use prior knowledge to make explicit connections to new learning Instructional Notes

Rationale: At the beginning of the year students in grade four reinforce place value understanding and teachers include experiences so that students are able to recognize and generalize that the value of each place is 10 times the value of the place to the immediate right. Similarly, multiplying by 10 yields a product in which each digit of the multiplicand is shifted one place to the left. During classroom instruction, these observations and generalizations should not merely be conveyed to students. Instead, as a result of the lessons and instructional experiences, students are able to grasp these ideas and generalize these concepts with supportive questioning, probing, and explicitness by the teacher.	In grade three, students used their place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. Students developed an understanding that when moving to the right across the places in a number (e.g., 456), the digits represent smaller units. Students learned how to explain instances of a calculation pattern when multiplying one-digit numbers by multiples of ten (for example, the product 4 x 50 can be represented as 4 groups of 5 tens, which is 20 tens, which is 200. The reasoning relies on the associative property of multiplication: 4 x 50 = 4 x (5 x 10) = (4 x 5) x 10 = 20 x 10 = 200. Additionally, students developed proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 and they achieve fluency with strategies and algorithms that are based on place value, properties of operations, and the relationship between addition and subtraction.
	
	At the beginning of grade four, some students will refine their computational strategies **as they develop proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 using the standard algorithm.** For example, in grade three students use strategies to find 756 + 378. At the beginning of grade four, some students will use the standard algorithm without any difficulty, while others will still rely on one or more strategies (e.g., some students will remove 4 from 378 and give to 756 to rewrite the problem as 760 + 374 = 1134 while other students will merely add—digits in the hundreds, tens, and ones place to find the sum—adding from left to right (e.g.,
	
	   756
	 + 378
	  1000
	   120
	    14
	  1134
	
	During class discussions, intentional connections must be made between strategies and the standard algorithm. Throughout the school year you will hear students explaining solutions to tasks/problems using these strategies as they gradually make connections to the standard algorithm. This will allow students to develop proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 using the standard algorithm by the end of grade four.

Overarching understandings	Instructional Notes (continued)
The structure of the base-ten system involves repeated bundling by 10 (e.g., 10 tens makes a unit called a hundred. Repeating this process creates new units by bundling groups of ten to create units called thousand, ten thousand, etc.) The value of a digit in a number is dependent on its place in the number. A number can be represented in multiple ways yet maintain its value. An understanding of the base-ten number system promotes computational fluency.	Students begin grade four by multiplying a one-digit number by a four-digit number using strategies, concept of area, and properties of operations (For example, students use an area model to find the product of 6,251 x 4) *(area model diagram: labels across top 6000, 200, 50, 1; left side 4; cells 24,000, 800, 200, 4; right side 4; = 25004)* or use properties of operations (the distributive property) and expanded form 4(6251) = 4(6000+200+50+1). After the initial introduction, students illustrate and explain their calculations based on place-value and properties of operations. Initially, you may see the teacher supporting students as they use expanded form and subdivide rectangles to reflect the relationship between multiplying and finding the area. As students progress during the school year, students will subdivide rectangles as needed to find the area and relate it to finding products. During this time, you will begin seeing students using these strategies to multiply a two-digit number by a two digit number while other students may transition directly to using the standard algorithm. Before the end of the year, students feel comfortable and persevere when comparing and contrasting calculations with the standard algorithm, the distributive property, or other properties of operations.
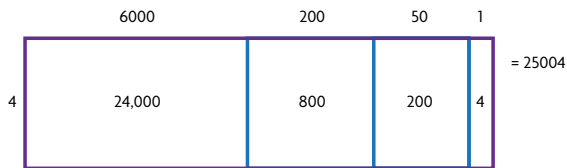
This guidance makes explicit for teachers strategies that students may apply to relate finding products to area at the beginning of the school year. This includes acceptable strategies that allow students to explore multiplication and area conceptually while extending their place value understanding. Teachers are better able to assist students in applying and relating their strategies prior to using the standard algorithm for multiplication.

At the beginning of the year, students will relate the concept of area to multiplication. This alerts teachers to allow students to compare relationships between multiplication, area, and expanded form during this time. Throughout the year, students will compare these strategies to the standard algorithm.

Essential questions	Acquisition and Applications	
	Knowledge	**Skills**
■ How can you systematically represent all numbers using only the ten digits, 0-9? ■ What is the relationship between the places in a base-ten numeral? What happens when one does repeated bundling of groups of 10?	■ Recognize and know that in a multi-digit whole number, a digit in one place represents ten times what it represents in the place to its right ■ Understand base-ten structure to round multi-digit numbers to any place ■ Use understanding of the base-ten system to compare two multi-digit numbers based on meanings of the digits in each place, using >, =, < symbols to record the results of comparisons. ■ Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.	■ Compare and explain the relationships between the value of each place in a number. ■ Read and write multi-digit whole numbers using base-ten numerals, number names, and expanded form. ■ Compare two multi-digit whole numbers based on the meanings in each place using >, =, < and record the result. ■ Fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm. ■ Multiply a whole number of up to four digits by a one-digit whole number, and multiply two two-digit numbers using strategies based on place value and the properties of operations. Illustrate and explain the calculation using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area.

Example, English Language Arts

The example below from the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) provides the unit learning trajectory for tenth grade students. This document includes teacher guidance that provides the focus of vocabulary and language instruction as well as additional steps teachers can use to boost student attainment of essential vocabulary and language standards needed to meet grade-level learning expectations. Additional instructional considerations and resources for differentiation are also referenced in order to build student learning of grade-level standards over time.

Figure 8: Sample Tenth Grade Unit from District of Columbia Public Schools

> Common areas of under-performance and how to support student learning.

Unit 1 Introductory Lesson: Unit 1 Trajectory Handout

Objective: In order to comprehend Unit 1 expectations and big ideas, students will respond to and discuss Unit 1 essential questions.

> While this unit identifies the learning trajectory, it could be even stronger with an indication of how the unit forms the basis of learning throughout the school year.

Unit Learning Trajectory	Students examine the ways in which authors create and structure narratives in a variety of literary non-fiction texts. First, students will read narrative poetry, including Robert Hayden's "Those Winter Sundays," Nikki Giovanni's "Mothers," and Miguel Pinero's "A Lower East Side Poem." Then, for the Unit 1 Cornerstone, students will craft their own narrative poems that both utilize the genre's stylistic techniques and encompass the theme of choices and whether one's choices are more influenced by nature or nurture. Next, students will participate in a close reading of the informational text, "The Science of Success" by David Dobbs. Students will write a brief response distinguishing and explaining the differences between the "nature" and "nurture" theories. Then, students read the anchor text, *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore, and analyze the text structure the author uses to express his ideas about the role of nature or nurture in determining individual success.
Essential Questions	▪ What factors determine and influence individual success? ▪ How does a poet advance his/her point of view about the influences in his/her life? ▪ How does an author's stylistic choices advance his /her point of view or purpose?
Summative Unit Writing Task	Write an argumentative analysis defending a claim on the role of nature or nurture in determining individual success using different author's perspectives presented in multiple nonfiction and informational texts.
Anchor Text	*The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore; Culminating Writing Task: How does Wes Moore use text structure and diction to express his ideas about the role of nature or nurture on determining individual success?

Close Reading Text	"The Science of Success" by David Dobbs. Writing Task: Scientists continue to debate over the determining factor of individual success: "nature" (genes/predisposition) or "nurture" (support system, home life, socioeconomic status). Distinguish and explain the differences between how the "nature" and "nurture" theories determine individual success. Response should be a minimum of 2–3 paragraphs.
Cornerstone Overview	The Life I Choose: Life's success is about the choices we make. Project: Create and present a personal narrative poem.
Unit Test	Students will write an argumentative analysis defending a claim on the role of nature or nurture in determining individual success using different author's perspectives presented in multiple fiction and nonfiction texts.

Note that multiple tasks over time each develop the next writing skill and thought process needed for the culminating writing task.

UNIT VOCABULARY

Teachers: Please teach vocabulary explicitly and implicitly.

Vocabulary should be taught both explicitly and in context. Teachers can access various vocabulary strategies *via* the novel appendices as well as the close reading appendices.

Additional Guidance: Some vocabulary words provided in the novel and close reading appendices appear as they appeared within the text to promote teaching vocabulary in context. Push the students to define and understand the word/phrase as it is being used within the text as well as how it should be used in other situations. Vocabulary in context can be taught as a 'Do Now' to prepare the students for the day or as an 'Exit Ticket' to 'Check for Understanding.' Increasing student vocabulary is essential however, when taught as a standalone lesson, it should not be more than 20% of the lesson. Some vocabulary words, not listed, are included in text-dependent questions or should be added to meet the needs of your students.

This section provides common areas of under-performance and how to support student learning.

UNIT LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Language standards should be taught both explicitly and in context. Depending on the needs of your students, teachers may need to go over mechanics and grammar in order for students to work towards mastery of language standards.

- Grammar and language skills are embedded into the novel guides and close reading modules. Look out for activities that are designed to strengthen students' use of syntax.

- Hochman-style writing exercises are embedded within close reading modules as well as the novel guide. Teachers are encouraged to utilize these language exercises as warm-ups, exit tickets, or checks for understanding throughout the teaching of these texts.

- As students are writing, teachers are encouraged to conference with students and give them specific feedback on how to correct grammatical and mechanical errors. Teachers are encouraged to allow students to revise their written work in order to become stronger writers.

THE CORNERSTONE EXPERIENCE

Summary

The Life I Choose: Success in life is about the choices we make. Are the choices a product of nature or nurture? Students will compose and perform an original narrative poem that includes narrative poetry elements. Students will build knowledge of narrative poetry by analyzing narrative elements, diction, and theme used in poetry exemplars and will use this knowledge to create their own original narrative poems. Students will also analyze poetry presentations to learn about basic public speaking actions. Students will present their poems to their class and a DCPS poetry event.

Key standards

W.9-10.3	R.L.9-10.4	L.9-10.1.b	SL.9-10.4

Student Outcome / Product

Students will create their own original narrative poems. Students will present their poems to their class and a DCPS poetry event.

This document explicitly lays out student learning expectations, from understanding the structure of narratives to demonstrating understanding of nature vs. nurture by writing a narrative poem. Further reading enables students to gain the greater depth of knowledge needed to advance and defend a claim on the role of nature or nurture in determining individual choices using supporting evidence from multiple texts.

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

Additional tasks associated with texts – suggested instructional routines and practices:

- Shared reading
- Active reading strategies (e.g., turn and talk, stop and jot, targeted task, Think-Pair-Share)
- Text-dependent questions that lead to key understandings
- Explicit and implicit academic vocabulary instruction
- Evidence-based oral and/or written responses
- Text-dependent tasks
- Speaking and Listening tasks such as the ones listed here: https://www.literacyta.com/literacy-standards/common-core/speaking/10/english
- Vocabulary with pictures (i.e., on a Concept Chart divided into three columns, word, picture, definition)
- Anchor Charts
- Wait Time
- Feedback (Teacher/Student)
- Student Centered (Students are actively engaged orally throughout the lesson)
- Use of Multiple Intelligences (Inter/Intrapersonal, Musical, Linguistic, Logical/ Mathematical, Spatial, Naturalist, and Body Kinesthetic)
- Gradual Release (https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/improving-teacher-practice)
- Zone of Proximal Development (www.innovativelearning.com>Teaching and Learning>Educational Psychology
- Sentence Stems (I am _____because_____)

Notice that these instructional considerations not only address learning during the course of the unit but can also be used to support grade-level learning over the course of the school year.

This list assumes that the district has developed a shared understanding of how and when to use these strategies to address the progression of learning throughout the school year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDANCE

Overview: These resources allow for differentiation based on content and student interest as well as student learning profile. They allow for multiple points of entry so that all students can work toward mastery of the unit.

DC Public Library Resources:

Databases: http://dclibrary.org/research/databases?subject%5B%5D=168&keywords

Teacher Access: To utilize these resources, the teachers will need to use either their Educator or Personal Library card. The PIN should be the last four digits of the library card.

Student Access: To utilize these resources, the students will need to use either their DC One Card or Personal Library card. The PIN should be the last four digits of the library card or DC One Card.

Britannica High School Version (Middle School Version can be used for students with lower reading level)

Features: Articles, Image, Videos, Dictionary, Magazines, Webs' Best Sites, Primary Sources/E-Books Teacher Resources Options: Cite, Translate, Audio, Email, Print, Create Account

Search terms (Britannica Articles): Choice, Determinism, Free Will, Existentialism, Moral Responsibility,

Search terms (Image Quest): Wes Moore, Resilience

Supplemental Class Text	Author	Text Type	Lexile Level	Source
"When Wes Moore Met Wes Moore"	Wes Moore	Informational Article	970L	http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2012-05-10/entertainment/bs-sm-wes-moore-20120513_1_wes-moore- articles-rhodes-scholarship
"Money Changes the Way We Think and Behave"	Carolyn Gregoire	Informational		Appendix

These suggestions support teachers in implementing the areas of focus so that predetermined goals for student advancement are attained.

Additional guidance is provided for teacher and student access to differentiated resources and materials.

The curriculum contains scaffolds or other supports that address gaps in student knowledge, typical misconceptions, and the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.

Why is this important?

Many students move through grade levels accumulating gaps in conceptual understanding or skills that profoundly impact their continued learning of increasingly complex ideas and texts. A supportive district analyzes student performance data and uses curriculum guidance documents to alert teachers to likely gaps and how to address them. Based on assessment data and samples of student work collected during walk throughs in schools, district staff can determine the learning gaps that are common throughout the school system. They can also identify areas that require additional instructional focus in language, writing, and reasoning skills.

Leaving it up to individual teachers to identify and devise remedies for these issues, on the other hand, results in widely different outcomes. If the gaps are not systematically addressed, students are unlikely to ever catch up. Some teachers may begin reteaching skills from earlier grade levels, thus delaying entry into grade-level work, even though the gap could have been properly addressed during grade-level instruction. It is also not necessary to constantly pull students out of instruction in grade-level work for interventions if general, Tier I classroom instruction is geared to handling common misconceptions in the course of daily instruction.

What does this look like?

Depending on the type of issue, district curriculum guidance may be as simple as a note to the teacher. For more complex issues, examples of activities or even links to videos of classroom techniques can support classroom teachers. Again, a district may not address every possible issue in the first edition of its curriculum guidance as long as there is a plan to deal with priority issues first and make additions in subsequent iterations, with a written timeline for completion.

For example, this sample grade six mathematics unit is used to illustrate how a district curriculum might contain scaffolds or other supports to address gaps in student knowledge, typical misconceptions, and the needs of English Language Learners and students with disabilities to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards. The grade six mathematics unit on expressions and operations provides teachers guidance on typical student misconceptions as well as a description of the Three Read strategy to support deeper proficiency with real-world problems. The sample unit explicitly attends to typical student misconceptions with expressions and equations and includes viable strategies to address student misconceptions and unfinished learning. The unit begins by focusing on the standards that have been addressed during a previous

grade, the standards addressed in the unit, and also includes recommended instructional notes for the teacher. A portion of the unit is shown in the following sample.

Example, Mathematics

Figure 9: Excerpt from a Grade Six Mathematics Curriculum Unit on Expressions and Equations

Unit – Expressions and Equations:
Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers. (CCSS 6.NS)

- This includes understanding that positive and negative numbers are used together to describe quantities having opposite directions or values (e.g., temperature above/below zero, elevation above/below sea level, credits/debits, positive/negative electric charge); use positive and negative numbers to represent quantities in real-world contexts, explaining the meaning of 0 in each situation.

- Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions. (CCSS 6.EE)

- This includes, writing and evaluating numerical expressions involving whole-number exponents. Write, read, and evaluate (algebraic) expressions in which letters stand for numbers.

- Write expressions that record operations with numbers and with letters standing for numbers. For example, express the calculation "Subtract y from 5" as 5 - y.

- Identify parts of an expression using mathematical terms (sum, term, product, factor, quotient, coefficient); view one or more parts of an expression as a single entity. For example, describe the expression 2(8 + 7) as a product of two factors; view (8 + 7) as both a single entity and a sum of two terms.

- Evaluate expressions at specific values of their variables. Include expressions that arise from formulas used in real-world problems. Perform arithmetic operations, including those involving whole number exponents, in the conventional order when there are no parentheses to specify a particular order (Order of Operations). For example, use the formulas $V = s^3$ and $A = 6 s^2$ to find the volume and surface area of a cube with sides of length $s = 1/2$.

- Use variables to represent numbers and write expressions when solving a real-world or mathematical problem; understand that a variable can represent an unknown number, or, depending on the purpose at hand, any number in a specified set.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES TO TEACHERS:

Prior Learning in this Cluster in Grade Five (Expressions and Equations):

Students have been recording and writing numerical expressions since the early grades, such as 2 + 3, 6 - 4, 8•3 + 9•3. In grade five they used whole number exponents to express powers of 10, and now in grade six they start incorporating whole number exponents into numerical expressions.

Additionally, students are expected to translate between and among word phrases, numerical expressions, and algebraic expressions. Make sure your instructional focus includes explorations — not merely a "set of rules" and procedures to follow. Allow the rules to develop from student exploration and discussions.

Typical gaps in student understanding with the orders of operations:

Typical student misconceptions include incorrect interpretations of the orders of operations as well as failing to distinguish between expressions such as: -7^3 and $(-7)^3$. Make sure that you connect students' informal language to help them use the more precise terminology, i.e., base and exponent, and that they are able to compare and contrast each of them.

Instructional strategies for the orders of operations that attend to typical student misconceptions, unfinished learning, and over-generalizations.

Part of this misconception with the order of operations may be an overgeneralization of the typical acronym PEMDAS, which is even found in our adopted textbook. Please only use this acronym if it is student initiated. Be sure to have students pay attention to typical overgeneralizations. Oftentimes, students will incorrectly infer that you always multiply before you divide; or add before you subtract. Thus, they fail to correctly evaluate the following: $12 \div 3 \cdot 4$ as compared to $12 \div (3 \cdot 4)$. This is the same mistake that students make when simplifying $12 - 9 + 3$ as opposed to $12 - (9+3)$. While these examples are simplistic, they reflect typical misconceptions created when students overgeneralize and do not completely understand the orders of operations.

During instruction include activities that require students to compare and contrast solutions as well as explore problems worked incorrectly to determine possible reasons for the error. Additionally, consider including activities that allow students to work with problems or tasks that require rearranging numbers or operators to yield a specific value (i.e., insert parentheses so that $15 - 5 \cdot 3 = 30$ or $2 \cdot 3^2 + 4 \cdot 3 - 1 = 26$).

Instructional scaffolds for ELLs and students with unfinished learning (suggestions developed jointly with the department of English Language Learners and the Special Education)

Often when asking students to represent and solve real-world problems, reading the problem may pose challenges to them. This means they will need support in handling grade-level problems, but it is vital to have them learn to access this level of reading and problem solving. Modeling how to do a close read of a text or even examples in our textbook helps students recognize that a rich text or word problem is more than mere numbers on a page. The **Three Reads**, is a routine that begins in a structured fashion, with the teacher taking the lead in posing good questions as students read and re-read a rich text three times. While it is initially teacher directed, responsibility is gradually turned over to students as they begin using the "three reads" independently. [San Francisco Unified School district offers a wealth of information about The Three Reads (http://www.sfusdmath.org/3-read-protocol.html).]

Explore The Three Reads using an example that reflects the level of work our district expects grade six students to do. Notice with the Three Reads, there is no question stem. Instead, the

questions that will be solved are generated from the discussion occurring in the classroom. This allows all students, especially ELLs and students with disabilities and others, to gain access to the context of the problem, the meaning of the numbers and their relationship to the overall problem.

The Task

The eighth grade class needs to raise money for its end of the year field trip. Team 8A wants to sell popcorn at the Spring Fling Carnival while team 8B wants to sell cotton candy. The cost to rent the popcorn machine is $15.00 and a cotton candy maker rents for $25.00. The cost of additional supplies for the popcorn is $0.05 per bag. The additional cost for the cotton candy is $0.10 per stick. Team 8A will sell the bags of popcorn for $0.50 each and 8B will sell their cotton candy for $0.75 per stick.

1. The teacher begins by reading the problem, the first time, aloud for the students. After the first read, the teacher allows students to work individually or in pairs to discuss what the situation is about. This is followed by a whole class debrief.	2. The teacher reads the problem again while the students read silently. However, this time the teacher indicates that she wants students to focus on the quantities in this situation and how they are related. This is followed by a whole class debrief.	3. Finally, the teacher reads the problem a third time while the students read silently. For the third read, students are asked to consider all the possible mathematical questions we could ask about the situation. This is followed by a whole class debrief and discussion about each problem considered. Finally, students individually or in groups choose a problem to solve, discuss and compare solutions and strategies with the entire class.

Example, English Language Arts

This sample curriculum document is adapted from Boston Public Schools. You will notice that scaffolds are differentiated by WIDA standards, but also include supports such as: connecting to prior knowledge, previewing academic vocabulary, read-aloud strategies, instructional conversations using "juicy sentences" and processing through group work, which are also effective scaffolds for students with disabilities and struggling readers.

Figure 10: Kindergarten ELA Sample Unit Adapted from Boston Public Schools

ANIMALS 2X2	
Essential Question:	How do animals survive and thrive?
Weekly Question:	How do some animals defend themselves?

ANIMALS 2X2	
MA Curriculum Framework for ELA and Literacy:	K.1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
	K.2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
WIDA Standards	Level 1.LR.W/P. General content-related words, Everyday social and instructional words and expressions
	Level 2. LR.W/P. General content words and expressions, including cognates; social and instructional words and expressions across content areas
	Level 3. LR.W/P. Specific content language, including expressions; words and expressions with common collocations and idioms across content areas
MA Content Standards:	K.RI.1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
	K.RL.2. With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
	K.RI.3. With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
	K.RF.1. 1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
	b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.
	K.W.2. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.
MA Content Standards:	K.RI.1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
	K.RL.2. With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
	K.RI.3. With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
	K.RF.1. 1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
	b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.
	K.W.2. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

ANIMALS 2X2				
Motivation/ Connection (Preview):	Motivation: Show visual of stingray. I observe _____. My prediction is _____.		Connection: We have been learning about how animals use camouflage to their advantage. Today we're going to start learning about how animals defend themselves against predators.	
Previewing Academic Vocabulary & Word Play Activity:	1. attack: act it out	2. perceive: color card believe perceive	3. threat: color card danger threat	Other Content Specific Vocabulary (Tier 3): spine
Juicy Sentences/ Instructional Conversations (Content):	**The ray can drive its long, poisonous spine deep into the body of any animal or human that it perceives as a threat.** What is the subject of the sentence? What does it do? Where does it drive its spine? Why does it drive its spine into something else? Do you think it would drive its poisonous spine on purpose?			
Group Work:	A. Phonological Awareness:/St/ consonant blend (e.g., stingray, stinger)	B. Draw and illustrate how the stingray defends itself	C. Explain in 2 or 3 sentences: What is the stingray's defense against predators? Why is it important?	
Writing Task/ Closure (Processing):	Whole-Group: T&T: How does the stingray defend itself?			

This is an example of activating prior knowledge before presenting new content.

Students are getting the kind of vocabulary instruction that will be useful as they progress through the year and subsequent grades in their academic lives.

More explicit focus on *teaching the* multiple meanings of the word "spine" would prevent misconceptions that could occur for all students.

The most meaningful support is provided by teachers engaging students in instructional conversations in which they draw the students' attention to the ways in which meaning relates to words, phrases, and clauses in texts they are working on.

Curriculum includes written links to adopted textbooks or computer-based products to indicate where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations.

Why is this important?

The goal of curriculum guidance is to support teachers in their work. Leaving teachers to search for resources wastes their time and may lead to a high degree of variation in the quality and type of materials students are exposed to. If the district wants to encourage teachers to use their creativity, providing examples of the rigor of texts they are to use or of the problems they are to ask students to solve is necessary.

There is no perfect textbook or set of materials. Nor is any digital resource perfect for every classroom. Districts do have access to tools, such as the Council's Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool, Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners, and Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners, designed to help them assess the quality and degree of alignment to college- and career-readiness standards of various materials. Yet even after ensuring the closest possible match to district standards, districts still need to support teachers by telling them where their materials are effective in reinforcing high-quality, standards-based instruction; where and how the teacher will need to augment the materials; and areas that can be skipped. Additionally, curriculum guidance should draw teachers' attention to misleading statements or misrepresentations within the materials you are referencing.

What does this look like?

Districts need to be specific when referring to a resource. Simply listing it without page numbers or links is an insufficient reference. It is also helpful to include annotations of what teachers will find in each of the resources referenced. This is particularly useful when listing multiple resources so teachers can decide which ones best suit their students' interests while addressing particular standards.

Example, Mathematics

In Boston Public Schools (BPS), the curriculum identifies specific units from both their adopted texts, *Investigations*, and supplemental resources. For example, while BPS teachers are expected to use one of the supplemental resources, *Number Talks*, the curriculum provides guidance on how students over-generalize as well as employ inefficient strategies.

Figure 11: Sample Grade Three Mathematics Unit from Boston Public Schools

Primary Curricular Resource:

Collections and Travel Stories, Grade 3 Investigations U3

Perimeter, Angles, and Area, Grade 3 Investigations U4

Investigations and the Common Core State Standards Guide

Appendix

Estimated Instructional Time: 22 days

September 8, 2015–October 7, 2015

Overarching Questions:

- How might you use what you know about place value to help you add and subtract?
- When adding or subtracting a multiple of 10 or 100, which digits change and why?
- How are addition and subtraction related to each other? Why can you use addition to solve a subtraction problem? How can knowing 12 + 7 = 19 help you think about 19 - 7 = _?
- How does using representations help you understand addition and subtraction?
- What is perimeter and how do we measure it?
- How does knowing the properties and attributes of rectangles help you determine the perimeter of a rectilinear shape?

Instructional Notes: Number and Operations Connecting to Grade 2

> To ensure that the grade three teacher is aware of students' prior learning from grade two, the curriculum explicitly provides that information linked to the standards.

- The school year begins with **Investigations** Unit 3, *Collections and Travel Stories* as the primary curriculum resource. **Investigations** Unit 1, *Trading Stickers, Combining Coins* was taught to your current students in Grade 2 during the 2012–13 SY. Grade 2 students last year also built 1000 books.
- As a result of the shifts with the Common Core, it is expected that students in Grade 2 fluently add and subtract within 100. Students have experiences adding and subtracting within 1,000; fluency within 1,000 is a Grade 3 standard.
- Students in Grade 2 master all of the problem situations and all of their subtypes and language variant (MCF 2011, page 183). The numbers in these problems involve addition and subtraction within 100. They represent these problems with diagrams and/or equations. For problems involving addition and subtraction within 20, more students master Level 3 methods (see **OA Progression** pages 36–39); increasingly for addition problems, students might just know the answer (by end of Grade 2, students know all sums of two-digit numbers from memory CCSS 2.OA.2). For other problems involving numbers to 100, Grade 2 students use their developing place value skills and understandings to find the answer (see the **NBT Progression**). Students work with two-step problems, especially with single-digit addends, but do not work with two-step problems in which both steps involve the most difficult problem subtypes and variants.

The BPS Mathematics Department has provided resources to schools to support the Number Talks routine. However, these are only meant to be resources. The purpose of Number Talks is for each teacher to use the protocol to address the needs of his or her students. *Crafting problems that guide students to focus on mathematical relationships is an essential part of number talks that is used to build mathematical understanding and knowledge. The teacher's goals and purposes for the number talk should determine the numbers and operations that are chosen. Careful planning before the number talk is necessary to design 'just right' problems for students.* (See Number Talks, p. 14.) Teachers are encouraged to design their own Number Talks based upon informal and formal assessment data. For example, at the beginning of the third grade, teachers might want to initially revisit two digit plus two-digit addition and subtraction from previous grades. *Using small numbers serves two purposes: 1) students can focus on the nuances of the strategy instead of the magnitude of the numbers, 2) students are able to build confidence in their mathematical abilities.* (See Number Talks, p. 183.)

Areas to consider when selecting Number Talk Problems (see Number Talks, p. 373):

Over-generalizations. When students are investigating which strategies work with different operations, they often over-generalize and try to apply their generalizations to all operations. An example is when students are convinced that compensation works with addition and then assume it will also work with subtraction, multiplication, or division.

Inefficient strategies. Sometimes students become more focused on a specific strategy and ignore efficiency. If you have given them a problem that lends itself to using landmark numbers or compensation, such as 1999 + 1999, yet the majority of your students solve this either with the standard U.S. algorithm or by breaking it apart by place value, you would want to craft problems to address this issue.

> Curriculum guidance draws teachers to the page number and alerts them to unintended consequences that may occur and the need to address them when they use the supplemental resource, *Number Talks,* with their students.

Evidence from exit cards. Exit cards are an excellent way to keep a pulse on students' understanding and use of strategies. If students struggle with a specific type of problem or operation on their exit cards, this would guide the types of problems and strategies for the next day's number talk.

Examples available as video links:

Kindergarten: **Quick Images: Visualizing Number Combinations:**
https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/visualizing-number-combinations

Grade 3: **Reasoning About Multiplication and Division:**
https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/multiplication-division-in-the-core

Grade 3: **Grade 3 Number Talk:**
http://www.mathsolutions.com/videopage/videos/Final/Classroom_NumberTalk_Gr3.swf

Grade 4: **Reasoning About Division:**
https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/common-core-teaching-division

> Annotating these links and noting the strengths the materials bring would have been helpful as teachers use web-based units or other resources.

Example, Mathematics

In the second math example, the district curriculum provided specific guidance to teachers about using data and graphs from sources other than the basal textbook (i.e., web-based data sources newspapers, magazines, or journals). This includes indicating where the materials are strong, where the basal is insufficient, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations.

Figure 12: Sample Pages from a District Grade Eight Unit on Investigating Patterns of Association in Bivariate Data Including Guidance to the Teacher about Data Displays and Interpretations

In grade eight, students are expected to make inferences based on scatter plots and other data displays. Even though the textbook includes a variety of suggestions for students to make inferences and engage with mathematical modeling problems, most of the data sources are already outdated. You will need to supplement using data and graphs from a variety of primary sources. It is imperative that we help students become wise consumers of data and to question the validity of the same data obtained from different sources. Do choose a variety of data resources so that students can see how different data displays may lead one to a different conclusion. This includes, choosing the appropriate range to accurately reflect the data and consider how modest changes may distort inferences made based on the data. For example, one widely used journal attempted to sway their readers by distorting the scale of the data to foster the belief that global warming and climate change are small concerns. Using the actual data set from NASA, teachers should notice that the actual range or scale for the graph does not accurately reflect the data. It is important that we push students to critically examine data sources and consider implications of the data presented from multiple viewpoints.

Investigate patterns of association in bivariate data.

- Construct and interpret scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to investigate patterns of association between quantities. Describe patterns such as clustering, outliers, positive or negative association, linear association, and nonlinear association.

- Know that straight lines are widely used to model relationships between two quantitative variables. For scatter plots that suggest a linear association, informally fit a straight line, and informally assess the model fit by judging the closeness of the data points to the line.

Global Land-Ocean Temperature Index (Anomaly compared to 1951–1980)

Temperature compared to 1951–1980

Years

Temperature compared to 1951–1980
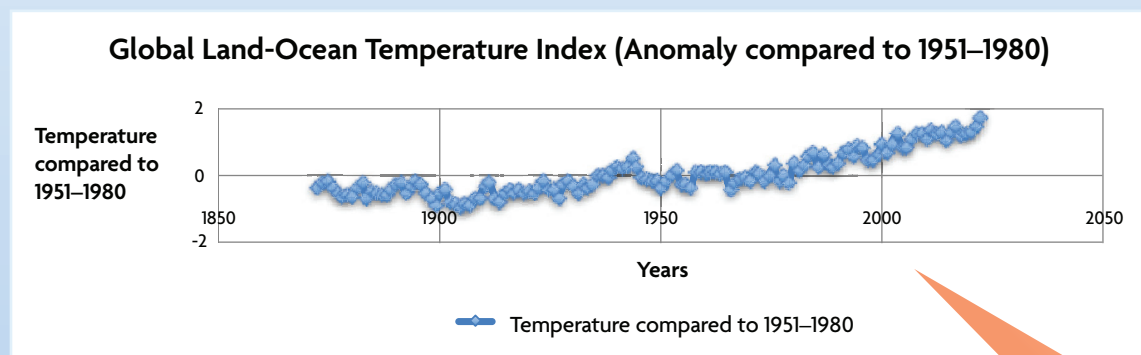
The graph was adapted from a widely-read journal. The initial graph showed changes in temperature from 1880–2015. This display may give the reader the impression that there isn't a significant rise in temperatures.

Global Land-Ocean Temperature Index (Anomaly compared to 1951–1980)

Axis Title

Axis Title

—◆— Temperature compared to 1951–1980
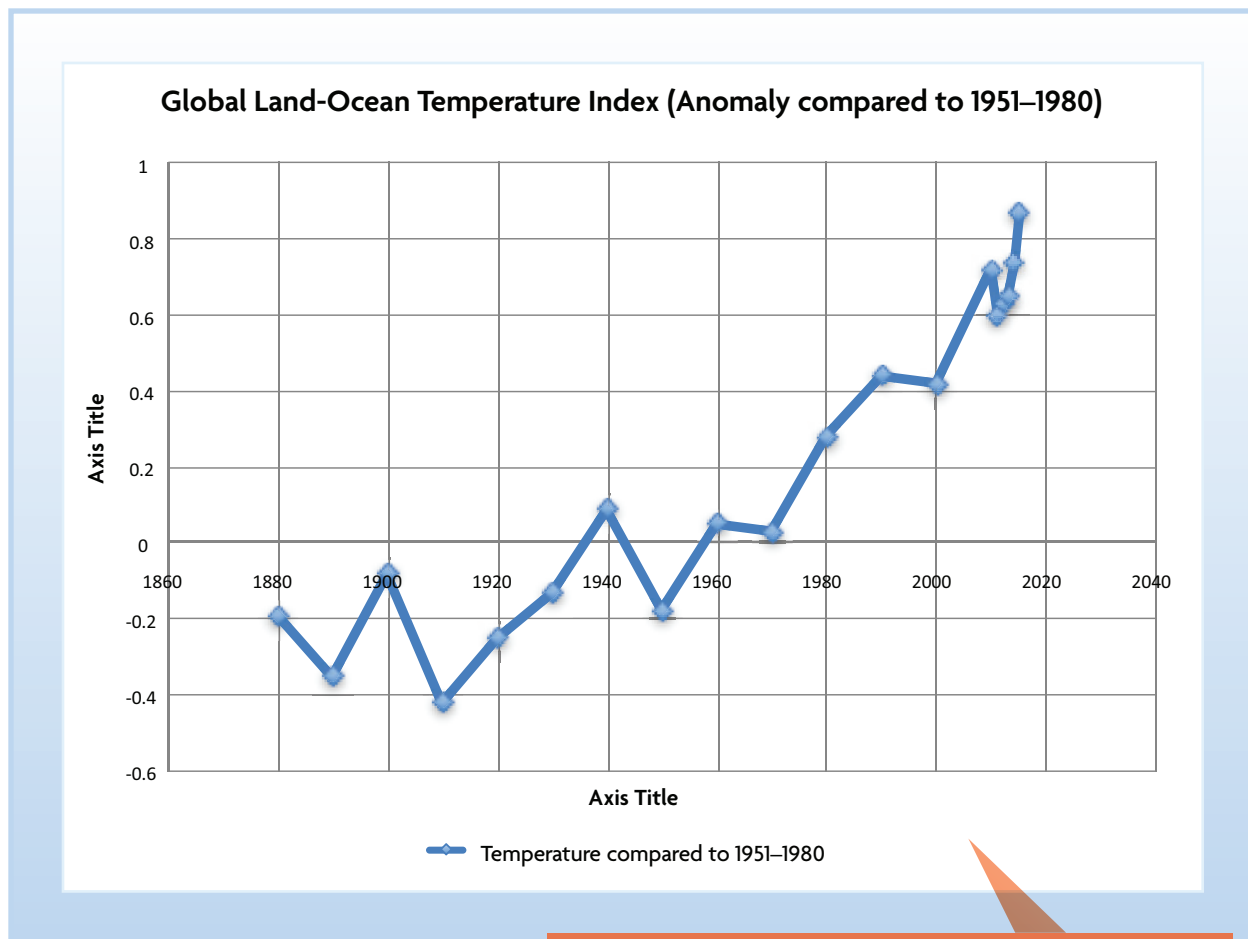
This is the same graph displayed with a different scale (a scale that more accurately reflected the range of the data). Scientists do state that a slight change in temperature should be alarming.

Example, English Language Arts

This is an example from a grade twelve English Language Arts curriculum document that provides an eight-day lesson on argument writing from Columbus City Schools. This curriculum document also provides the purpose and definition of argument writing, as well as how it translates into readiness for college and careers by including links to on-line resources for teachers to use during classroom instruction. In addition to the expectations for learning, this lesson plan provides links to the standards, the content focus and instructional strategies for days 1–4, directions for introducing the prompt, facilitating a writing workshop, and supporting student publication and assessment activities on days 5–8.

Figure 13: Sample Grade Twelve ELA Unit from Columbus City Schools

COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM WRITING

Instructional Resources
- **Effective Persuasion PowerPoint:** http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/696/1
- **Songs:** http://www.woodyguthrie.org/Lyrics/This_Land.htm
  http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/strangefruit/film.html
- **Art Works:** http://artandsocialissues.cmaohio.org/images/pierce_assassinated_pg.jpg;
  http://artandsocialissues.cmaohio.org/images/Olds_No-Unemp_pg.jpg

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Strategies for Diverse Learners)
- Lesson plan about World War II propaganda posters at: http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/argument-persuasion-propaganda-analyzing-829.html
- **ACT Writing Test Prompts:** http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html
  Website example: Educators debate extending high school to five years because of increasing demands on students from employers and colleges to participate in extracurricular activities and community service in addition to having high grades. Some educators support extending high school to five years because they think students need more time to achieve all that is expected of them. Other educators do not support extending high school to five years because they think students would lose interest in school and attendance would drop in the fifth year. In your opinion, should high school be extended to five years? In your essay, take a position on this question. You may write about either one of the two points of view given, or you may present a different point of view on this question. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

- *Logical fallacies* – adaptation of "Love is a Fallacy" by Max Schulman (video 13:44) – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eK_tb7ob8Kg
- *Logos, pathos, ethos* – animated PowerPoint with voice over (5:40) – http://teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=41007

Professional Articles
- "Almost Painless: A Strategy for Writing Argumentation" by Susan Dixon at
  http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/2008-12/Article/vignette1.aspx
- "A Teacher Looks at Persuasive Writing: Two Vantage Points" by Kriston Crombie –
  http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/inperspective/issue/2008-12/Article/vignette2.asp

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CONNECTIONS

Reading	Language	Speaking and Listening
Incorporate Common Core Reading (Literary or Informational Texts) standards as students complete research to build and present knowledge. http://www.corestandards.org	Incorporate Common Core Language standards as students construct writing in terms of writing conventions, knowledge of language, and acquisition and use of vocabulary. http://www.corestandards.org	Incorporate Common Core Speaking and Listening standards as students integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats. http://www.corestandards.org

The curriculum provides suggestions for the best ways to measure whether students have met specific learning expectations.

Why is this important?

Begin with the end in mind to ensure that classroom teaching leads to the desired expectations. When the district is clear about what results students are to accomplish, teachers can focus on getting them there in terms of their academic language; ability to access complex text; writing, listening, and speaking skills; their mastery of key concepts, facts, and procedures; and their use of logic and skills to answer questions and solve problems.

What does this look like?

The district can provide sample tasks or guidance on how to measure student achievement. The classroom suggestions and activities should help prepare students to handle performance tasks and measures. For example, if the goal is to have students write a paper presenting an argument for a position, the classroom work should include broad reading on the topic, notetaking regarding various positions around that topic, the academic language needed to present and argue a position (including building transitions for new paragraphs), etc.

It is also valuable to show or link to samples of student work products that illustrate the level of work the district expects from students and the level of tasks assigned to lead to that work. This illuminates the target teachers should be aiming for. Rubrics can be customized for particular assignments. However, Student Achievement Partners has developed a generic Student Work Analysis rubric that is available free of charge. In it, teachers examine the assignment and what the student work indicates regarding the level of understanding of the text and topic, the level of understanding of the task, and the level of proficiency the student has with the requirements of the targeted standard.

In the following abridged example, notice how assessments are directly linked to the standards and the aligned instruction. The assessments illustrate to teachers the level of work that is expected at the grade level (eighth grade) related to those standards. The two weeks of teaching activities are summarized to give the reader a feel for the unit.

Figure 14. Abridged Guidance from the Basal Alignment Project

Grade-Level Standards:

CCSS W8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS W8.8 Quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS W8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- Apply grade eight Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.")

Synopsis of Instruction:

Students and teacher read the text multiple times while stopping to respond to and discuss text-dependent questions, continually returning to the text. A variety of methods were used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e., whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.).

Students completed an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity with guidance from the teacher in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. They then read multiple texts that present different points of view, and with gradual release, they began compiling their own evidence charts for those materials.

Once students completed the evidence chart, they were directed to look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they were writing and think about the evidence they found. From here, students developed a specific thesis statement, composed a rough draft and completed a final draft for submission to the teacher. (Note: The timeframe varies according to school scheduling and composition of classroom students.)

Student Evidence Chart used to complete the culminating writing task.

Evidence Quote or paraphrase	Page number	Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument
I need such words from you far more than you can need them from me, especially where your superior labors and devotion to the cause of the lately enslaved of our land are known as I know them.		*Douglass feels that Harriet is superior to him because the risks she took for the cause of slavery were far superior than anything that he did.*
Excepting John Brown—of sacred memory—I know of no one who has willingly encountered more perils and hardships to serve our enslaved people than you have.		*John Brown gave his life for the abolitionist cause. Douglass feels that other than losing her life, Tubman has worked harder and faced danger more than anyone.*
It is to me a great pleasure and a great privilege to bear testimony to your character and your works, and to say to those to whom you may come, that I regard you in every way truthful and trustworthy.		*Douglass is happy to share Tubman's dedication, honesty, and hard, dangerous work with anyone.*
"Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way." *"You, on the other hand, have labored in a private way."* *"I have wrought in the day—you in the night."* *"I have had the applause of the crowd and the satisfaction that comes from being approved by the multitude, while the most that you have done has been witnessed by a few trembling, scarred, and footsore bondmen and women, whom you have led out of the house of bondage and the silent stars have been the witnesses of your devotions to freedom and of your heroism."*		*Douglass worked publicly, by day, with much encouragement while Tubman worked privately, at night, with little encouragement.*

CULMINATING WRITING TASK

Prompt: Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman were former slaves who became important leaders in the abolitionist movement. They both made various contributions by working hard and sacrificing their lives for the sake of their cause to free the enslaved people in our country. In an essay, discuss Douglass' opinion of Harriet Tubman and her efforts and risks as compared to the role he played in the abolitionist movement.

SAMPLE STUDENT WRITING, GRADE EIGHT

In the "Letter to Harriet Tubman" Frederick Douglass praises Tubman for the devotion and sacrifices that she made for the abolitionist cause. He acknowledges that she was far superior than he in their quest to free the slaves. According to Douglass, though the cause was the same, the difference between their paths was marked. Though both worked hard and were great leaders, Harriet made many more sacrifices to which Douglass felt privileged to bear testimony.

Douglass feels that Harriet is superior to him because the labors she took for the cause of slavery were far superior than anything he did. First he includes the fact that she worked privately without the knowledge of the general public by stating, "Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way." "You, on the other hand, have labored in a private way." He said that the only ones to witness what Harriet did were "a few trembling, scarred and footsore bondsmen and women."

> Produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate for the task.

He follows with the statement, "I have had the applause of the crowd and the satisfaction that comes from being approved by the multitude, while the most that you have done has been witnessed by a few trembling, scarred, and footsore bondmen and women, whom you have led out of the house of bondage and the silent stars have been the witnesses of your devotions to freedom and of your heroism." This indicates that he realizes that those she saved were the only ones that knew the sacrifices she made.

He realizes the perils she endured while helping the slaves escape by comparing her to abolitionist John Brown, "Excepting John Brown—of sacred memory—I know of no one who has willingly encountered more perils and hardships to serve our enslaved people than you have." John Brown was a white abolitionist who was a martyr for the cause of slavery. This allusion is testimony to his regard to her labors for the cause.

> Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text.

> Quote or paraphrase with explanation.

Though working for the same cause, Douglass is eager to share that Tubman was far superior in her strength, commitment, and bravery than he. In addition, he regarded her as "truthful and trustworthy" in every way.

Example, Mathematics

A strong district curriculum provides suggestions for the best ways to measure whether students have met specific learning expectations. The curriculum should provide sample questions and likely student responses. Sample formative assessments could be included so that teachers have adequate examples of how to assess for understanding and levels of thinking. Open-ended tasks with accompanying exemplars also provide teachers a clear understanding about how to assess student progress through the examination of student work.

Figure 15: Sample Rubric and Student Work from the DCPS Cornerstone Unit: *Area Architects* **(standards and the overview were provided in Figure 2)**

The unit, *Area Architects*, requires that students create new floor plans by redesigning room sizes in the structure to meet client needs while preserving total floor area. Students are expected to create diagrams and representations to illustrate their new floor plans as well justify their design mathematically while ensuring that they meet the clients' recommendations. This Cornerstone Unit provided suggestions to the teacher about the best ways to measure student attainment of the specific learning expectation, includes a rubric, and an annotated sample of student work.

USING THE RUBRIC

All Cornerstone rubrics are designed to provide students with feedback on three categories. Each category is identified and defined below. The rubric also identifies several specific quality indicators that serve as evidence of sophistication, craft, and voice.

Sophistication: Masterful Use of Content

Craft: Precision, technique, care, beauty

Voice: Conviction, style, power

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS TIME LINE

Project Timeline		
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
▪ Analyze a floor plan by using side lengths to determine the area of each room and the area of the entire house.	▪ Design a new floor plan; keep the area the same, but manipulate the side lengths to change the shape of each room.	▪ Evaluate peers' floor plans. Did they maintain the correct area? How do their side lengths make their floor plan different from yours?

Annotated Student Work Sample

Day 1 – Materials

Floor Plan[1]

The rooms in the floor plan below are rectangles or made up of rectangles.

Craft: This student precisely measured each room using a centimeter ruler and recorded each side length.

[1] This floor plan is from Eureka Math, Grade 3 Module 4 Lesson 15.

Grade 3 – Cornerstone 2

Problem Set[5]

Name Student A   Date _____

1. Make a prediction: Which room looks like it has the biggest area?

    I think the living room has the biggest area.

2. Record the areas and show the strategy you used to find each area.

Room	Area	Strategy
Bedroom 1	60 sq cm	$5 \times 12 = 5 \times (10+2)$ $= (5 \times 10) + (5 \times 2)$ $= 50 + 10 = 60$
Bedroom 2	56 sq cm	$8 \times 7 = 56$
Kitchen	42 sq cm	$6 \times 7 = 42$
Hallway	24 sq cm	$3 \times 8 = 24$
Bathroom	25 sq cm	$5 \times 5 = 25$
Dining Room	28 sq cm	$4 \times 7 = 28$
Living Room	88 sq cm	$(6 \times 10) + (4 \times 7)$ $= 60 + 28$ $= 88$

Sophistication: The student used the break apart and distribute strategy to find the area of Bedroom 1.

Sophistication: To find the area of Bedroom 2, Kitchen, Hallway, Bathroom, and Dining Room, the student used multiplication as a strategy to find the area of each room. The student accurately represented his/her problem solving strategy with equations.

Sophistication: The student used the break apart and add strategy to find the area of the living room.

[5] This problem set is from Eureka Math, Grade 3 Module 4 Lesson 15.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As districts embark on the process of developing a high-quality curriculum aligned to college- and career-ready standards, it is crucial to understand the broad context within which a curriculum functions. Figure 16 attempts to provide a holistic view of the interconnected nature of various steps in the process of defining, adopting, implementing, and sustaining the quality of a curriculum.

To begin with, a district's curriculum should be built on its philosophy about the essential learning expectations it holds for students, as well as how students learn and how this learning should be measured or captured. Of course, central to this instructional philosophy, or theory of action for how a district intends to advance student achievement and college and career readiness, are decisions the system has made regarding what instructional oversight it retains at the district level (i.e., what it holds "tightly"), and what decisions it allows to be made at the school or classroom level (i.e., what it holds "loosely"). While there is a natural tension between these two forces of centralization and school-based management, most districts find themselves somewhere in the middle of this management continuum. Even in a highly centralized school system, schools often have their own approaches and learning philosophies. Nonetheless, there are certain essential features that, regardless of school-to-school differences, should serve as a unifying foundation. Learning standards and expectations, for instance, should not vary by school, even if other things do. This provides equity in terms of student learning

Figure 16: Steps in the Development, Implementation, and Ongoing Support of a District Curriculum
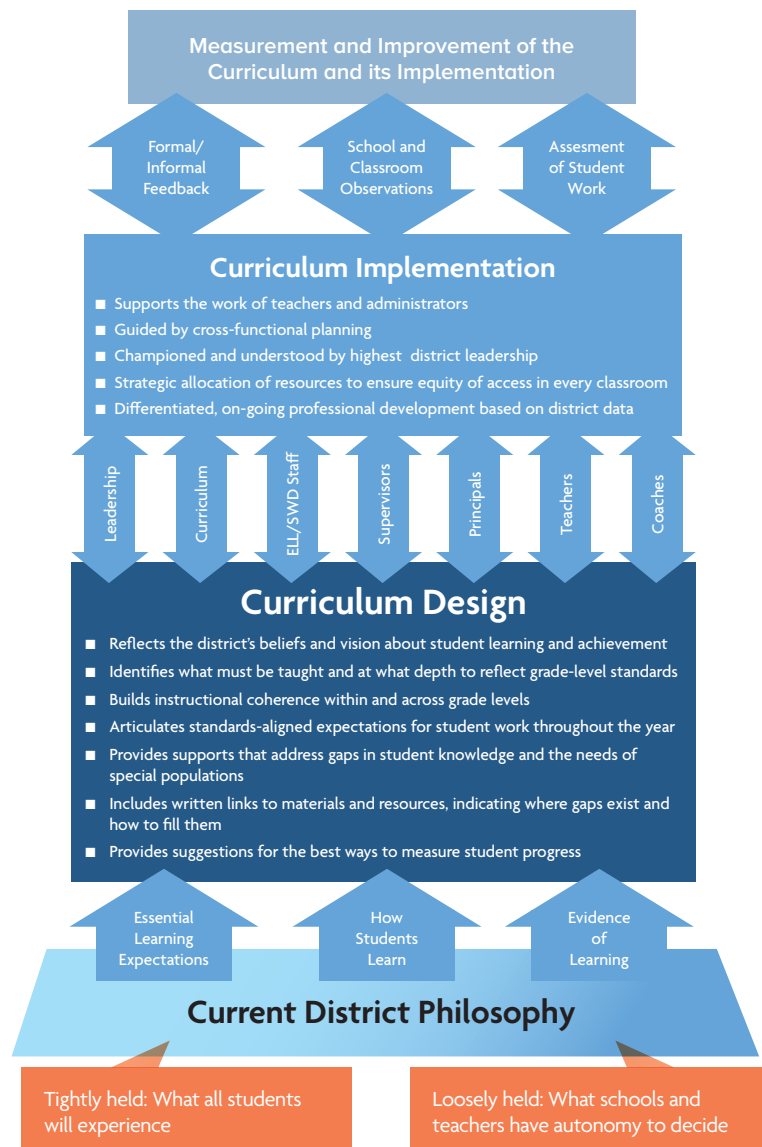
goals no matter where a student attends school, and no matter how frequently students transfer from school to school.

This set of decisions and beliefs that form the foundation for a district curriculum also determines many of the elements that a curriculum must contain, which can be seen listed in the middle box in the diagram. In addition to the central objective of supporting teachers and administrators, ensuring equity of access, and preparing students for college and careers, a strong curriculum must clarify what instructional decisions it holds tightly and loosely and what learning is essential and why. The most effective theory of action is based on an honest assessment of district needs given the level of student and staff performance. Autonomy should never mean that schools are released from ensuring that students meet the learning expected at each grade level and course. Moreover, a curriculum must make a district's learning philosophy concrete by articulating what is central to district instructional work within viable timelines, as well as building a shared understanding of the learning that is to happen within and across grade levels. It is this set of features and criteria that make it a "curriculum" and not just a textbook series—a key distinction that means all the difference between sending out boxes of materials and providing teachers and administrators with meaningful guidance.

Of course, a district's work is far from over once it has developed a curriculum—even one that meets all of these criteria. Implementation is key, and requires focused collaboration and calibration on the part of all district staff. This implementation process needs to begin "at the top"—with the endorsement and support of a district's school board and superintendent. From there, the implementation process should be guided by cross-functional planning, including a diverse set of district instructional leaders, school supervisors, principals, and teachers, and resources should be strategically allocated based on district priorities. Professional development is a key component of implementation, and the successful roll-out of any curriculum will therefore depend on high-quality, ongoing professional learning opportunities based on district data and targeted to meet the diverse needs of teachers, aides, and administrators. For example, principals and supervisors do not need the depth of content and instructional knowledge that teachers do, but they need to understand what key focus areas are, why they are critical, and what that learning looks like. Moreover, there needs to be coherence in what they are observing and looking for in classrooms and the way they gauge the progress students should be making at various points of the year so that they are in a position to provide teachers with quality feedback.

Finally, the diagram shows that, through formal and informal feedback mechanisms, monitoring of implementation in all schools and classrooms, and assessment of student work and progress, the district should continuously work to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented with integrity and is supporting access to rigorous content and high-quality instruction for all students.

Based on this illustration, the following recommendations are grouped into three main categories essential to the process of developing and rolling out a high-quality curriculum aligned to college- and career-readiness standards: planning, implementation, and measurement/improvement. The recommendations in the planning section provide some examples of what a district needs to think about and address in developing curriculum, while the implementation section provides guidance for ensuring that the curriculum is understood and used effectively systemwide. Finally,

the measurement/improvement section provides advice and steps to ensure that the curriculum is continuously refined and improved, and that the district is gauging effectiveness based on clear measures of student achievement and growth.

Planning

- Examine the curriculum to ensure that it can be taught and learned within the actual time available during the school year. Build in time for teaching and re-teaching, school calendar constraints, and benchmark and summative assessments.

- Analyze achievement data and student work to identify areas of weakness and known gaps in performance to ensure that additional guidance and support is provided in curricular documents/resources.

- Determine the level of experience and current content knowledge of teachers across the district in order to provide targeted support and preparation.

- Based on the analysis above, determine the grain size for curriculum guidance. There are two types of considerations: the level of detail needed to explain the meaning of district expectations and whether the scope and sequence will provide guidance on what must be taught within specific time frames (day, week, quarter, semester).

- Ensure ease of use of curricular documents so that teachers do not have to consult multiple sources for guidance on what to teach and best approaches for supporting the development of particular concepts or skills.

- Determine how best to distribute the curriculum, determining whether to create printed or online documents, and whether on-line materials should be alterable or not.

- Carefully vet and select instructional materials that will be used to support implementation of the curriculum using tools such as the Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool, Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners, and Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners.

- Carefully vet and select supplemental materials, programs, and interventions, including materials addressing the needs of special populations. Ensure that these materials are high quality and aligned to college-and career-readiness standards.

- Articulate how college-and career-readiness standards should be linked and applied across subject areas.

- Host focus groups to provide data and feedback on the ease of use and accessibility of sample curricular documents before developing the entire curriculum.

Implementation

- Enlist the superintendent and other district and school-based leaders to help champion the curriculum and underscore the district's expectation that the curriculum will be implemented with integrity in all classrooms. Ensure that these key leaders understand the importance of the curriculum and how it is based on the district's philosophy about what is essential for students to learn, how they learn best, and how their learning will be measured.

- Analyze student performance data and the demands of the curriculum to determine instructional priorities and the content-level demands that will require additional professional development. Establish a data analysis and cross-functional planning team to identify priority topics and provide sufficient lead time for upcoming focus areas in the scope and sequence.

- Create content-based professional development systems that address the cadence or routines of teaching and provide support to teachers in making effective instructional decisions. Ensure the strategic placement of professional development days throughout the school year and employ existing resources and structures (such as professional learning communities, common planning time, and coaches) in order to deliver effective training.

- Based on the resources of time and personnel, prioritize short- and long-term professional development goals differentiated for teachers and administrators based on their respective roles in standards implementation and other factors such as level of experience and prior training.

- Based on an analysis of teacher and student performance data, develop a systematic plan for supporting high needs schools with implementation of the curriculum.

- Ensure that new teachers and administrators receive the just-in-time training they need to support implementation of the curriculum and other district instructional initiatives already underway.

- Ensure that district professional development provides all teachers with the skills necessary to meet the needs of special student groups, such as English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students, so that all students have access to high instructional standards and expectations.

- Provide guidance and training to teachers and administrators on the selection or development of instructional materials (including digital tools) aligned to college- and career-readiness standards.

- Provide guidance and support to schools and teachers in the selection and use of supplemental materials, programs, and interventions for students who are struggling to meet college- and career-readiness standards.

- Track what instructional materials are being used in schools to implement college- and career-readiness standards, and the effectiveness of these materials with various student groups.

Measurement and Improvement

- Regularly reach out across departments and to teachers and administrators to gauge the quality and alignment of the curriculum and its usefulness to end users in supporting student achievement. This can take multiple forms, from regular meetings with users to focus groups, surveys, and online feedback forums.

- Establish a process for refining and improving curriculum based on the feedback collected from teachers and administrators as well as student achievement and student work data.

- Clearly communicate all changes to the curriculum to teachers, administrators, and staff, acknowledging the role of data and feedback in these revisions.

- Provide teachers and administrators with guidance on what to look for in student work, what to look for during walk-throughs, and how to assess student learning to provide evidence that assignments and student work are aligned to grade-specific instructional expectations articulated in the curriculum.

- Build a bank of annotated exemplars of student work in order to provide explicit guidance on what students are expected to learn and produce at each grade level, as well as next steps in addressing unfinished learning.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of professional development in improving instructional practice and increasing college- and career-readiness levels.

- Evaluate how teaching resources are used, and monitor the placement and use of technology to prevent inequities in access to digital resources.

STUDY GUIDE

Part I:
Purpose, Principles, and Preconditions

Defining Curriculum

1. What principles provide the foundation for your district's curriculum?

2. How does your district curriculum differ from a listing of standards or from the adopted textbooks or required classroom resources? Do staff understand those differences?

3. What steps are you taking to more clearly articulate and communicate your district's vision for the role of its curriculum?

The Purpose of a Quality Curriculum

4. How do you ensure consistency in instructional standards and expectations across schools?

5. To what extent is the work of teachers and school-based administrators guided by your district curriculum? How do you know?

Preconditions for Supporting a High-Quality Curriculum

6. As you think about your own district, which preconditions for supporting a high-quality curriculum are present, and which preconditions could be strengthened?

7. Consider data about the level of student performance and the stability and expertise of teachers, administrators, and other instructional staff in your district. In light of those factors, how does your district curriculum offer the level of guidance that instructional staff requires for all students to have access to the level of instruction they need to meet the standards?

Principles for Design and Implementation

8. As you read the principles for design and implementation of a high-quality curriculum, which items does your district's curriculum do well?

9. What areas do you see for improvement?

Part II:
Seven Key Features of a Strong, Standards-Aligned Curriculum

10. Examine each of the seven key features in Part II. How well does
     your curriculum:

     a. Reflect the district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement?

     b. Clarify what must be taught and at what depth?

     c. Illustrate instructional coherence within and across grade levels?

     d. Provide explicit articulation of standards-aligned expectations for student work at
         different points of the school year?

     e. Include scaffolds that address gaps in student knowledge and needs of ELLs and
         students with disabilities?

     f. Cite links to classroom materials indicating where they are strong, where gaps exist,
         and how to fill them to meet district expectations?

     g. Recommend best ways to measure whether students have met specific
         learning expectations?

A Deeper Look at Key Feature 2

11. As you examine Key Feature 2, how would you summarize why it is important for
     the district's curriculum documents to be clear about what must be taught and at
     what depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level
     and course?

12. Carefully examine the sample grade four English language arts unit overview
     (Figure 3) provided on page 14. Pay particular attention to the level of detail used to
     explain what the grade-level expectations are for the grade four standard: *Compare
     and contrast the point of view from which different stores are narrated, including the
     difference between first- and third-person narrations.*

     a. In Figure 3, where would a teacher or supervisor find in the curriculum exactly
         what students need to know about first- and third-person narration?

     b. What else do students need to be able to do in order to show that they can
         determine an author's point of view, according to Figure 3?

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE: A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND SUSTAINING A HIGH-QUALITY DISTRICT CURRICULUM

COUNTEREXAMPLE: Now contrast the level of detail in Figure 3 to the following counterexample (Figure 17). This counterexample is typical of what teachers often receive in districts across the country. In this district, teachers in grade six receive a curriculum map and are expected to create their own approach to a set of standards while addressing essential questions per quarter. Figure 17 only displays the first unit of the quarter.

Figure 17. Counterexample for Key Feature 2: Sample Grade Six Curriculum Map for Quarter 1

Unifying Concepts	Essential Questions	Reading Complex Texts & Texts to Support Writing 3-5 shorts texts; 1 extended text per quarter; Balance between literary and informational texts	Performance Assessments
Q1 **Unifying Concept** Identify through culture	**Q1 Unit 1** How do cultural experiences influence who we are? How do authors convey meaning through words and/ or images?	**Q1 Unit 1** **Extended Text** (autobiography and fiction; see Sixth Grade Unit Plan for how these texts are used in book clubs) *The Circuit* by Francisco Jimenez *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman *Holes* by Louis Sachar **Short Texts** (informational and editorial) "Evolution of a Point Guard" by Howard Beck, *New York Times* "I've Got Your Number" by Robe Imbriano, *New York Times* "Hip-Hop at the Museum?" by Stephanie Harvey & Anne Goudvis, *Toolkit Texts* "Marriage — or Else" by Rod Nordland & Alissa J. Rubin, *Junior Scholastic* Negotiating Asian-American Identity through Portraiture" posted by Saskla DeMelker, PBS Newshour (http://www.pbs.org/newshour/art/blog/2011/10/ negotiating-asian-american-identity-through-portraiture. html) "Eisenhower to Ngo Dinh Diem" (http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/psources/ ps_eisenhower.html)	Beginning of Year (BOY): RI.6.1 and W.9 Performance Task (reading and writing about text with evidence) for Pre-Assessment*+ **Q1 Unit 1** Teacher-created performance assessment Focus on inform and explain Primary Standards Assessed: RI.6.1, RI.6.7; RI.6.10; W.6.2

13a. Where is the listing of the standards for teachers to address in their classroom instruction for this unit?

b. Where are teachers or supervisors to find out what the standards are?

c. How will the teachers in every school know if they have correctly interpreted the content students should know and the depth of understanding the district expects for all students?

14. Look at a sample from your own district's curriculum. Is the level of detail closer to the example in Figure 3 or to the counterexample in Figure 17?

15. What evidence would indicate whether the curriculum support has been sufficient for teachers to understand district expectations for what they need to teach and at what depth?

A Deeper Look at Key Feature 3

16. As you examine Key Feature 3, which addresses building instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college-and career-readiness standards for each grade, pay particular attention to the Algebra 1 section provided on page 20 (Figure 5). Notice how explicitly the district provides teachers with guidance regarding prior student learning about the concepts the current lesson will address. How else does the curriculum guidance in Figure 5 build coherence so that students can make connections in their learning?

COUNTEREXAMPLE: Now contrast the level of detail in Figure 5 to the following counterexample (Figure 18). Too many districts only provide teachers with this level of guidance—a set of standards divided into each quarter. In this sample, the district appears to treat the grade three content as a set of disjointed standards, without any consideration of the inherent connections between standards.

Figure 18. Counterexample for Key Feature 3: Curriculum Guidance for Grade Three Mathematics

First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
Use place value understanding to round to the nearest 10 or 100 Fluently add or subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/	Identify arithmetic patterns (including patterns in the addition table or multiplication table) and explain them using properties of operations. Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range 10-90	Understand a fraction $1/b$ as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size $1/b$. Represent a fraction $1/b$ on a number line diagram by defining	Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving perimeters of polygons, including finding the perimeter given the side lengths, finding an unknown side length and exhibiting rectangles with the same perimeter and different areas or with the same area and different perimeters.

or the relationship between addition and subtraction. Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding. Interpret products of whole numbers, e.g., interpret 5 x 7 as the total number of objects in 5 groups of 7 objects each. Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations, involving equal groups, arrays and measurement quantities. Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide.	(e.g., 9 x 80, 5x 60) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations. Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays, and measurement quantities. Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide. Interpret whole-number quotients of whole numbers, e.g., interpret 56÷8 as the number of objects in each share when 56 objects are partitioned equally into 8 shares, or as a number of shares when 56 objects are partitioned into equal shares of 8 objects each. Determine the unknown whole number in a multiplication or division equation relating three whole numbers. For example, determine the unknown number that makes the equation true in each of the equations 8 x_? = 48, 5 = ? ÷ 3 and 6 x 6 = ?	the interval from 0 to 1 as the whole partitioning into *b* equal parts. Represent a fraction *a/b* on a number line diagram by marking off a lengths 1/b from 0. Recognize that the resulting interval has size *a/b* and that its endpoint locates the number *a/b* on the number line. Recognize that each part has size 1/b and that the endpoint of the part based at 0 locates the number 1/b on the number line. Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays and measurement quantities, e.g., by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem Understand a fraction as a number on the number line; represent fractions on a number line diagram.	Recognize area as an attribute of plane figures and understand concepts of area measurement. A plane figure which can be covered without gaps or overlaps by *n* unit squares is said to have an area of *n* square units. A square with side length 1 unit, called "a square unit," is said to have "one square unit" of area, and can be used to measure area. Measure areas by counting unit squares. Relate area to the operations of multiplication and division. Find the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths by tiling it, and show that the area is the same as would be found by multiplying the side lengths. Multiply side lengths to find areas of rectangles with whole-number side lengths in the context of solving real world and mathematical problems, and represent whole-number products as rectangular areas in mathematical reasoning. Use tiling to show in a concrete case that the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths a and *b+c* is the sum of *a* x b and *a* x c. Use area models to represent the distributive property in mathematical reasoning.

			Recognize area as additive. Find areas of rectilinear figures by decomposing them into non-overlapping rectangles and adding the areas of non-overlapping parts, applying this technique to solve real-world problems. Partition shapes into parts with equal areas. Express the area of each part as a fraction of the whole.

17. Looking at the number and type of expectations in each quarter, how well do you think the district has spaced out learning objectives, and how realistic is this timeline?

18. As you examine the four quarters, how are teachers expected to make connections for students within the grade level?

19. Are teachers provided with sufficient guidance and data on the the background students have had in previous years on a given concept or skill?

20. As you examine your district's curriculum, what have you used to ensure that concepts and skills are built in a logical manner? For example, in mathematics, have you used sources such as the Progression Documents from Illustrative Mathematics? (See example at https://www.cgcs.org/domain/120).

21. Think about the diagram provided on page 50 (Figure 16). Which sections are ones that you feel are strong areas within your school district?

22. Which areas could be the focus of next steps for improving your district's curriculum, strengthening its implementation, or evaluating its effectiveness? To leverage your work, prioritize what you can do well with the staff and budget available. Take into consideration where student achievement data and student work samples reveal the greatest needs and the content area concepts and skills where teachers need the greatest support.

Planning

23. As you begin making revisions to your current curriculum, consider the following:

    a. How will you ensure that the district curriculum can be taught and learned within the actual time available during the school year?

    b. How can you adjust the pacing to more accurately reflect the actual time available during the school year?

    c. How can you allow time for students to learn the grade-level standards as well as to address the needs of students who may have unfinished learning?

24. Given the level of student achievement and the expertise of your teachers and instructional support personnel, what is the appropriate grain size for the curriculum guidance you need to provide?

25. As you analyze your student achievement data and student work, as well as feedback from teachers about curriculum implementation, how can you provide additional guidance to address areas of weakness and known gaps in student performance? How can this be done without inadvertently creating a document that lacks focus or does not allow time for students to learn the grade level standards?

26. In writing curriculum guidance, how will you act on the feedback and support you receive from other central office departments, principal supervisors and specialized offices, such as English language learners and students with disabilities?

27. How can you utilize feedback and data about the ease of use and accessibility of current curriculum documents before any revisions are made to the curriculum?

28. How did you determine whether the ELA and mathematics materials you have adopted for school use are culturally responsive and aligned to the rigor of the college-and career-readiness standards? How will you provide guidance for any areas that aren't sufficiently addressed in the materials or resources?

29. What tools did you employ (such as the Council of the Great City Schools' Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool—Quality Review, and English Language Development 2.0) to determine the alignment of the materials?

Implementation

30. How will you enlist the superintendent and other district and school-based leaders to help champion the curriculum and underscore the district's expectation that the curriculum be implemented with integrity in all classrooms? What support will be needed throughout the revision and implementation process? What are some of the budgetary implications and what impact will the budget have on curriculum revisions and implementation?

31. In considering district professional development,

    a. How will you design the district's professional development plan to address the knowledge and skills that teachers will need to implement the curriculum with integrity?

    b. How will you utilize existing structures to provide adequate time to address priority areas?

    c. What discipline-specific professional development is needed to enhance teacher's content knowledge as well as to address the cadence or routines of teaching so that teachers are able to make more effective instructional decisions?

    d. How will you clarify and communicate the rationale for specific areas in the curriculum based on the analysis of student performance data?

    e. How will you design professional development to help teachers leverage cross-disciplinary support?

    f. How will professional development incorporate the needs of special student groups, including gifted and talented students as well as students with unfinished learning?

Measurement and Improvement

32. How will you regularly reach out across departments and to teachers and administrators to gauge the quality and alignment of the curriculum and its usability for end users?

33. After the current revisions, how will you continuously update and improve the curriculum based on feedback collected from teachers and administrators and from student achievement data? How will you clearly communicate these revisions, in a timely manner, to teachers and administrators?

34. How will you know whether concepts specified in the curriculum are being taught at the appropriate level of depth? What guidance is provided so that teachers are able to assess the degree of student understanding?

35. What tools can be used during classroom walk-throughs to provide feedback to teachers about the evidence of student learning as well as to explicitly identify gaps in student understanding?

36. How can you incorporate exemplars of student work into the curriculum? Throughout the school year, how can you and your curriculum team begin building a bank of annotated exemplars of student work so that teachers and administrators have evidence of quality student work and how it should progress from the beginning to the end of the school year?

37. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development designed to improve teacher practice as well as discipline-specific content knowledge? How can you ensure that all schools have access to the same quality professional development so that inequities do not exist?

38. How well do your standardized tests align to the content and depth of the district's curriculum and standards? How do you know?

URBAN SCHOOL LIBRARIES REPORT

Public Partners for Early Literacy:
Library-School Partnerships Closing Opportunity Gaps

Public Partners for Early Literacy:
Library-School Partnerships Closing Opportunity Gaps

The Urban Libraries Council (ULC) is the premier membership organization of North America's leading public library systems. ULC is deeply invested in identifying and advancing the ways in which public libraries contribute to improving education outcomes for all learners. With the help of its members, ULC publishes briefs and reports, presents webinars and workshops, convenes key local and national leaders, and initiates projects that advance libraries' work in education and lifelong learning, among other critical areas. Visit www.urbanlibraries.org to learn more.

The Council of the Great City Schools brings together the nation's largest urban public school systems in a coalition dedicated to the improvement of education for children in the inner cities. The Council and its member school districts work to help our school children meet the highest standards and become successful and productive members of society. Visit www.cgcs.org to learn more.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. Visit www.imls.gov to learn more.

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a collaborative effort by foundations, nonprofit partners, business leaders, government agencies, states, and communities across the nation to ensure that more children in low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career, and active citizenship. The Campaign focuses on an important predictor of school success and high school graduation—grade-level reading by the end of third grade. Visit www.gradelevelreading.net to learn more.

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Education

ABOUT

This call-to-action publication results from a National Forum on Closing the Opportunity Gap for Early Readers, led by the Urban Libraries Council in partnership with the Council of the Great City Schools, and made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (Grant Number: LG-83-16-0068-16). With the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading involved as a strategic advisor, the national forum focused on identifying areas of opportunity, gaps in knowledge, and strategic library-school-community partnerships that lead to increased access to public library learning opportunities for low-income, at-risk, K-3rd grade students to improve their reading proficiency. The initiative included a national field scan and a convening of 24 expert stakeholders, including city and county library leaders; school district leaders; and early literacy, family learning, and community school network leaders. The convening agenda and list of participants are provided in the appendices to this report.

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I. A CALL TO ACTION

Despite widespread agreement on the importance of grade-level reading proficiency as a key to academic, economic, and life success, many children are still failing to reach the essential third-grade reading benchmark. The risk is particularly acute for low-income children. Only 18 percent of low-income fourth-graders scored at or above proficient on the 2015 National Assessment of Education Progress, up only one percentage point from 2013.[1]

Community anchor institutions must do more to help low-income children become proficient readers and avoid the bleak prognosis suggested by grade-level reading data.[2]

Public libraries are vital resources in children's learning journeys, bringing a wealth of expertise and resources that provide a lifeline for struggling young readers. When public libraries and school systems intentionally collaborate, they are able to deliver seamless and supportive learning experiences for children most in need of assistance to achieve reading proficiency.

Public Partners for Early Literacy calls upon leaders of public library systems and school systems to strategically, proactively, and thoughtfully work together to expand access to library literacy resources that increase the chances of more low-income K-3rd graders becoming proficient readers. Based on knowledge gained from a field scan and a discussion of thought leaders, the report provides a framework for strengthening and leveraging library-school-community partnerships that help all children become proficient in reading, which will enable them to enjoy the promise of a bright and successful future.

II. WHY A NATIONAL FORUM ON CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP?

Recognizing both the urgency of the need and the potential impact of library-school partnerships, the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) initiated a partnership with the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), to convene a National Forum on Closing the Opportunity Gap for Early Readers.

The forum provided a first-time opportunity to weave together three strands of current practice related to grade-level reading proficiency:

The urgency of focusing on kindergarten through third grade as pivotal years for helping struggling readers become proficient before they enter the fourth grade, when they transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

The work of libraries as education leaders with unique capacities to support low-income young readers in ways that complement and enhance traditional classroom learning.

The benefits of schools and libraries working together in a more seamless and intentional way to help at-risk students achieve the critical third-grade reading benchmark.

On December 1-2, 2016, a group of thought leaders representing public school systems, public libraries, and national education networks convened in Washington, DC, to share perspectives on issues related to improving the reading proficiency of low-income K-3rd grade students, including:

▸ How schools identify students most in need of reading support

▸ Library programs designed to meet the needs of struggling readers

▸ What schools and libraries need from each other to achieve their shared goal of improving reading proficiency

▸ Strategies for building and sustaining strong school-library partnerships to help struggling low-income readers

- ▸ Challenges libraries face in reaching and engaging struggling readers

- ▸ Areas for further research, discussion, and action

To inform the discussion of these issues and the continuing work, ULC and CGCS conducted a national field scan to identify promising programs, partnership approaches, and challenges in improving reading among K-3rd grade low-income students. The field scan consisted of a focus group of CGCS school district leaders and a survey of ULC member libraries.

The national forum was also informed by the Leaders Library Card Challenge, an initiative led by ULC in partnership with IMLS. Launched in 2015 by President Obama as part of his ConnectED Initiative, the Leaders Library Card Challenge grew out of a belief that more intentional collaboration among chief elected officials, school superintendents, and library executives could improve education outcomes for all students, begin to close opportunity and achievement gaps, and create a framework for an integrated approach to education—starting by ensuring that all school children have library cards and know how to use them to access library learning resources.

Forum Assumptions

The following assumptions guided the work of the National Forum on Closing the Opportunity Gap for Early Readers and development of this call-to-action paper.

- ▸ **Third-grade reading proficiency really matters:** Research shows that third-grade reading proficiency is the most important predictor of high school graduation. Children who cannot read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school or fail to graduate, which can lead to a lifetime of social and economic disadvantages.[3]

- ▸ **Kindergarten through third grade are make-or-break years for low-income readers who are struggling:** Since many children from low-income families start kindergarten about six months behind their middle-class peers,[4] kindergarten through third grade is a critical time for making up ground and building reading skills to be ready for fourth grade.[5] Several states have enacted automatic retention policies that hold back children who don't achieve reading proficiency by the end of third grade. There's no time to lose in the work toward third-grade reading proficiency, and schools need the support of community partners that provide complementary literacy activities. Making the most of the 7,800 hours children spend out of school each year, compared to 900 hours in school, is essential to improving reading proficiency for all K-3rd grade students—particularly for struggling low-income readers.[6]

- ▸ **Low-income children face a tough road to academic success:** In a 2013 article, Prudence Carter described three different paths to academic success based on income levels. Children from the wealthiest families "board an elevator that speeds them to academic success," while children from middle-class families take "smoothly operating escalators toward academic achievement goals," Carter wrote. In contrast, children from poor or lower-income families "stare up a steep stairwell, often with broken steps and no hand rails."[7] Children from low-income communities face disadvantages that contribute to poor education outcomes, including parents with limited reading or English language skills and limited time to address their children's learning needs; absence of books at home; and day-to-day life challenges such as lack of reliable transportation and insecurities in food, housing, and health care.

- ▸ **Public libraries address both the academic and social needs of low-income early readers and their families:** From early childhood education through two-generation and adult learning, libraries are essential education institutions and leaders in community-based education. They help level the playing field for low-income children and their families by providing learning opportunities and resources such as technology tools that are otherwise not available. Perhaps most important, libraries have significant flexibility in responding to the unique needs of struggling, low-income readers by providing vital services such as meals and health resources that help overcome daily life obstacles and put improved reading proficiency in reach.

▸ **Public libraries continue to face challenges in reaching and engaging low-income children:** A 2013 IMLS analysis found that only 36 percent of low-income kindergarten children visited libraries during that critical learning year, and three out of five first-graders living at or below the poverty line did not have library cards.[8] More recently, 26 percent of the libraries who responded to the ULC field scan survey reported that low-income families are not regular library users and nearly 75 percent of respondents said transportation from low-income neighborhoods to the library is a significant barrier to engaging children in need. Libraries recognize that connecting low-income children with valuable library learning resources requires more proactive outreach, including working with teachers to identify children who need reading assistance and bringing library programs and resources to where children and their families spend time, such as schools, daycare and community centers, parks, and playgrounds.

▸ **When libraries and schools work together, struggling readers and their families benefit:** Working together, libraries and schools can ensure that all K-3rd readers have access to valuable library learning resources and literacy activities to increase their chances of entering fourth grade as proficient readers. In addition, intentional library-school partnerships provide a more seamless connection between classroom and library learning for young readers and their families.

Building on these assumptions and the wisdom of the forum participants, this report provides a starting point for strengthening library-school partnerships to make the most of the critical kindergarten through third-grade learning years.

"Just because a child is having a problem with reading does not mean they don't have the intellectual capacity to learn reading. They just need the right support to enable them to gain those literacy skills."

−**Robin Hall**, Director of Language Arts and Literacy, Council of the Great Schools

BY THE NUMBERS: SPOTLIGHT ON THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

▸ One in six children who are not reading proficiently by third grade fail to graduate from high school on time.

▸ Poor children who are not reading proficiently by third grade are three times more likely to drop out or fail to graduate from high school than those who have never been poor.

▸ More than a third of children whose families are poor, who live in a high-poverty neighborhood, and who have poor reading skills in their early grade levels fail to finish high school.

▸ Only 21 percent of poor children aged 3-6 years were able to recognize all 26 letters of the alphabet compared with 35 percent of children in the same age group living above poverty.

▸ Black and Hispanic children who are not reading proficiently in third grade are twice as likely as White children not to graduate from high school.

▸ Only 18 percent of low-income fourth-graders nationwide scored at or above proficient level on the 2015 NAEP scores.

▸ One in four children from low-income families enters kindergarten not ready to learn.

▸ More than three in five first-graders (62 percent) living below the poverty level did not have library cards, and only 36 percent of children with the lowest socioeconomic status visited libraries in their kindergarten year.[9]

III. PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUPPORTING IMPROVED READING PROFICIENCY

Libraries bring a wealth of assets and expertise to meet community education needs. Their status as safe, trusted community hubs makes them particularly valuable resources for low-income students who need extra support to reach the critical third-grade reading benchmark. In addition, libraries look and feel different from schools, which can be a significant asset for some children who aren't successful in the classroom. When libraries leverage their flexible and comfortable environment and provide human resources (e.g., volunteers, tutors, coaches) to support reading improvement, struggling young students have the chance to make great gains.

"The biggest predictor of on-time high school graduation is whether children are reading proficiently by the end of third grade. Our challenge as library leaders is to find approaches and momentum that will turn kids into lifelong readers early in their learning lives."

—**Marie Jarry**, Director, Youth and Family Services, Hartford Public Library

"There's a value to being different from schools, particularly for students who are struggling in the classroom."

— **Jane Eastwood**, Director, Saint Paul Public Library

Five key library education assets identified by ULC in its Leadership Brief: Partners for Education[10]

1. Because of their position as **safe, trusted, inclusive community hubs,** libraries are in touch with the changing education needs of the community.

2. Libraries are the only education institutions that **connect with individual learning needs from birth through senior years.**

3. Libraries know how to **use diverse education formats,** from one-on-one coaching to building high-tech skills. They keep abreast of changing learning models without abandoning approaches that are timeless.

4. Nobody does **personalized and customized learning** better than libraries. They meet individuals where they are and help them continue their learning progress.

5. Libraries are adept at **building partnerships to support education goals.** Libraries seek out and thrive on partnerships that broaden impact.

Six Ways Libraries Help Low-Income Children Become More Proficient Readers

More than 82 percent of libraries that responded to the ULC field scan survey reported that they offer programs specifically for struggling, low-income readers. These programs and services draw on the library's unique education assets and status as a community anchor institution to support improved reading proficiency for the most at-risk children and to help low-income families make productive use of out-of-school time and connect to valuable community resources that support improved education outcomes.

Libraries are supporting reading improvement among low-income K-3rd graders by:

1. Providing High-Quality Summer Learning Opportunities

Summer learning is one of the most important ways libraries support struggling young readers. A Johns Hopkins University study found that up to two-thirds of the ninth-grade achievement gap could be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities in elementary school.[11] Similarly, research from the University of

Tennessee concluded that summer reading loss is the "basis for almost all of the rich/poor reading gap," and eliminating that period of learning loss would have a significant impact on narrowing the achievement gap.[12]

To ensure that children most in need of support participate in summer learning, libraries get referrals from teachers and schools and do outreach in specific neighborhoods. Libraries also offer summer learning activities at locations where low-income children already spend time, such as childcare facilities, public housing sites, and Title I schools serving high populations of low-income students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

> "Public libraries are anchors of our communities and serve everyone, particularly low-income and traditionally underserved populations. By leveraging their resources and partnerships, libraries provide diverse summer learning programs and free meals while equipping parents to be their child's best first teacher. Libraries are full partners in the education system, complementing classroom curriculum and offering customized learning opportunities that both engage learners and achieve real results in improving reading achievement."
>
> —**Susan Benton**, President and CEO, Urban Libraries Council

- ▸ **Richland Public Library's** Project Summer Slide is a four-week, four-day-a-week summer camp for rising first- through third-grade children held at a local elementary school that is also a summer food service site. Teachers lead literacy activities three days a week, and the library coordinates one-on-one tutoring and literacy enrichment on the fourth day.

- ▸ **New Haven Free Public Library** works with schools in their branch neighborhoods to identify struggling K-3rd grade readers to enroll in their READy for the Grade summer learning program. With support from the New Alliance Foundation, the library provides twice-a-week group tutoring sessions and once-a-week family nights with dinner and individual tutoring during a seven-week program.

- ▸ **Santa Clara County Library District's** Power School is a six-week summer learning program offered at a school with a high concentration of low-income students. The program provides STEM-based learning and literacy activities to promote creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills in support of the Common Core curriculum.

- ▸ **Virginia Beach Public Library's** Summer Slide Partnership Program focuses on bringing library learning activities, STEM, and literacy programming into Title I schools within the Virginia Beach City Public Schools District.

2. Supporting Family Learning

Children who are exposed to books, stories, and reading early in life and have parents and caregivers who are involved in their learning are more prepared to start school and more likely to graduate and achieve long-term success. Libraries have embraced the power of two-generation learning that fosters stronger family bonds, equips parents to support their children's reading proficiency, encourages family engagement in school curriculum and activities, and helps build an at-home culture of reading. Research and experience have shown that "families with a rich reading culture—books and lots of talking about books—are more likely to raise successful readers."[13]

- ▸ **Houston Public Library's** Family Learning Involvement Program (FLIP) provides self-paced learning kits to at-risk families consisting of a book, a handout for parents with tips to make reading the book interactive and fun, and materials to extend the reading experience into hands-on activity. Kits are offered in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese. FLIP kits are distributed at parks; public housing; grocery stores; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinics; and other locations that low-income families frequent. Parents reported that the FLIP kits helped them better understand their children's reading needs and gave them ideas on how to support their child's reading development and learning. Nearly 90 percent of families who used the FLIP kits reported that their children were reading more often.

- ▸ **San Mateo County Libraries** offers two-generation learning opportunities in underserved communities focusing on helping children meet the third-grade reading benchmark. In partnership with the National

Center for Families Learning (NCFL), the library engages Spanish-speaking families in weekly two-generation learning experiences to build English language skills, improve reading ability, and increase family leadership and community engagement.

3. **Bringing Books and Learning Resources to Children, Families, and Schools**

Children from low-income families are less likely to have books in their homes than their more affluent classmates, which leaves little room for choice about what to read during out-of-school time. Independent reading of self-selected books contributes to improved confidence, enjoyment, and proficiency. Significant reductions in or even elimination of school libraries because of tight budgets has exacerbated the book gap for children from low-income families. Public libraries are helping to address these gaps by ensuring that all children have library cards, providing books to children to build home libraries, and supplementing school libraries.

▸ **Hartford Public Library** opened branches in several public schools to serve students and the general public during regular library hours. Two branches located within local K-8 schools support library services for those schools as well as the high school and other nearby middle and elementary schools. Because most public schools in Hartford no longer have school libraries, branch libraries in schools fill an important student resource gap while also serving the public.

▸ **Pima County Public Library's** Reading Seed Kinder program combines twice-a-week one-on-one reading sessions for 67 kindergarten students at one elementary school with distribution of free books. The goals of the program are to improve reading skills, nurture a love of reading, and build home libraries.

▸ Communities participating in the **Leaders Library Card Challenge** are working collaboratively to ensure that all K-12 students have library cards, are familiar with the resources available to them at their public libraries, and regularly use those resources. When teachers know that every student, regardless of socioeconomic status, has a library card, they are able to use library resources in the classroom, increase awareness of what the library offers, and make the library part of the learning process both in the classroom and after school. During the first year of the challenge, 60 participating communities issued new library cards to more than one million children. Many of those cards were newly issued electronic cards, giving students 24/7 access to library resources using their student IDs.

4. **Delivering Personalized Learning**

A 2014 Education Week article highlighted the growing importance of personalized learning to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population and the power of technology to support that goal.[14] Public libraries are experts in personalized learning, which is particularly effective in helping struggling readers who haven't succeeded in traditional classroom settings. Libraries leverage their program flexibility to meet each student's learning needs, using one-on-one tutoring, technology resources, and small-group read-aloud sessions that focus on the fundamentals of literacy development—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension.

▸ **Cuyahoga County Public Library's** 1-2-3 Read program provides afterschool one-on-one and small group literacy development for 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-grade students who are identified by their school district as at risk of not meeting the Ohio Third-Grade Reading Guarantee, the state's required benchmark for fourth-grade promotion. Children participate in two 75-minute sessions each week during the academic year. Cuyahoga's approach uses books, technology, learning tools, and multiple assessments to track progress and make adjustments along the way.

▸ **Montgomery County Public Library's** Reading Buddies program pairs students identified by teachers as needing extra reading help with trained high school tutors. To encourage attendance, school and library staff work together to schedule convenient weekly two-hour reading sessions and provide round-trip bus

transportation from the school to the library. The program engages young readers from schools with high populations of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. A snack is provided at the beginning of the session, and readers and their buddies select books to take home at the end of the session with guidance from children's librarians.

▸ **New York Public Library's** Literacy Leaders trains highschool students who need credits to graduate on time to become literacy tutors for struggling first- and second-graders. The tutors and young readers work together using the "RazKids" reading technology and engage in one-on-one reading sessions and large group read-alouds to strengthen reading fundamentals.

5. Nurturing a Love of Reading

When children read because they love to, not just because they have to, they are likely to become stronger readers. Nurturing reading enjoyment as a path to improved proficiency is where libraries excel. They incorporate games, incentives, rewards, and celebrations into many of their learning programs to keep children involved and engaged in their reading progress.

Educators and researchers have stressed that engaged readers are strategic, motivated, knowledge-driven, and socially interactive,[15] which builds reading confidence, competence, and comprehension over time. Library literacy programs provide a foundation for engaged reading by creating an environment that makes reading a more enjoyable activity, which is particularly important for struggling children who are often anxious and fearful about reading tasks.

▸ **Multnomah County Library's** Books 2 U is an in-classroom program that delivers inspiration and books directly to classrooms where children are at great risk for low literacy. The program enlivens classrooms in the lowest-performing schools with "booktalks"—high energy presentations that introduce characters and stories so enticing that children can't wait to get their hands on books to read outside the sessions.

> "We encourage kids to love reading, and we inspire them to become lifelong readers."
>
> **– Paula Kiely**, Chief Librarian, Milwaukee Public LIbrary

▸ **Saint Paul Public Library's** Reading Together nurtures children's pleasure and engagement in reading as a pathway to improved proficiency. The program connects struggling young readers with trained volunteer mentors for weekly, one-on-one coaching sessions in the library's safe, comfortable environment to work on grade-level reading skills. To participate, students must be in grades 1 through 5, read just below grade level, and have a teacher's signature verifying their need for reading assistance. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old, be proficient in reading and writing, and have an interest in helping children succeed.

▸ **Prince George's County Memorial Library System's** Boys Read program combines a reading-aloud program with a football game to create an enjoyable experience for struggling young readers. At weekly sessions led by a male librarian, young boys take turns reading aloud from their favorite titles and positively encourage each other. Student enthusiasm and return participation are two indicators of program success.

▸ **Free Public Library of Philadelphia** delivers book nooks to community gathering places such as barbershops, laundromats, and supermarkets to ensure that books are easily accessible in everyday places and to create fun read-together zones in locations where struggling readers and their families gather for other life activities.

6. Serving as an essential community convener

In addition to providing programs and services that directly support reading improvement for struggling, low-income children, libraries also serve an important leadership role in supporting reading achievement by convening community resources and connecting families and their children with local opportunities for learning and engagement, particularly during the summer. As community anchor institutions, libraries also help parents and childcare providers be more successful by offering trainings on how to conduct read-aloud sessions and other literacy development activities. Libraries also publish directories of summer learning opportunities throughout the community and build a community infrastructure to support reading and learning for low-income families.

▸ **Richmond Public Library** partners with community-based summer recreation programs to ensure that children in these programs have regular access to learning and enrichment activities. Library services include providing books and lesson plans so site teachers can offer daily reading programs, weekly coaching visits by library staff, pre- and post-assessments on word recognition and comprehension, and daily opportunities for children to select books at their reading level for independent or buddy reading.

▸ **Cedar Rapids Public Library** is enhancing the base of literacy programs that serve low-income children in the community through key partnerships with the local YMCA and the Kids on Course University. The collaborative program supports local work with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading.

▸ **Broward County Library's** Summer Learning Program links services throughout the community, serving as the main summer resource for the county's public, charter, and private schools; community organizations; camps; and home and family-care programs. The library trains community staff from December to May, runs the community-wide summer learning program that includes tracking learning activities and incentives for all programs, and shares aggregate data with schools and other partners to measure progress and improve outcomes.

Obstacles to Greater Impact

Libraries are helping to improve the reading proficiency of low-income children, drawing on their experience working with children, knowledge of children's literature, safe and welcoming environment, deep community connections, range of learning resources, and flexibility to respond to diverse needs. However, they face several obstacles to even greater impact. The most frequently mentioned obstacles are (1) reaching children most in need of assistance, (2) building staff expertise to teach reading, and (3) demonstrating that library programs contribute to improved reading proficiency. Strong library-school partnerships offer solutions to each of these challenges.

1. **Reaching children most in need of reading assistance.**

A focused, proactive, and persistent outreach approach—more than flyers, presentations, and open invitations—is needed for libraries to reach struggling readers during the critical K-3rd grade learning window. The following partnership approaches have proven to be successful in meeting this challenge:

▸ **School connections and referrals.** When teachers, principals, reading specialists, and other school personnel are familiar with library literacy programs, they are better able to inform parents of struggling young readers about what's available at the library and refer them to specific programs and resources to support their children's path to reading proficiency.

▸ **Dedicated outreach staff.** Some libraries have dedicated outreach and community engagement staff whose purpose is to connect with schools, families, and struggling readers to understand their needs and help them overcome obstacles to participation. Outreach staff focus particularly on connecting with Title I schools, public housing residences, daycare and community centers, and homeless shelters.

▸ **Library programming in the community.** To reach low-income readers, libraries bring their programs and resources to children and their families in locations and at times that work best for them. Because lack of transportation is a major obstacle to library use by low-income families, making schools, community centers, and other accessible locations a home base for library literacy programs and resources increases the chance of active and sustained participation.

2. **Building staff skill and expertise to teach reading**

While public libraries typically have one or more children's librarians on staff who are experts in children's literature, there is limited expertise among librarians on how to teach reading and develop literacy skills for struggling young readers. This limitation may impact the kinds of reading programs libraries are able to offer for low-income K-3rd

grade children. In fact, some libraries that responded to the ULC field scan survey said they do not offer any literacy programming exclusively for struggling low-income readers because they are not confident they have programming or staff expertise to meet their particular reading needs. Resources that libraries say would help them better serve low-income K-3rd grade students include:

▸ Increased understanding of new approaches to literacy development and the expectations for grade-level reading proficiency

▸ Training and professional development for library staff who work directly with struggling readers

▸ Joint professional development with school literacy experts to align approaches and increase understanding of current school practice and literacy research

▸ Hiring staff with education experience and expertise including people with classroom teaching experience

3.   Demonstrating improved reading proficiency for participants in library programs.

Although libraries regularly use parent surveys and interviews with program participants to gather anecdotal evidence of improved reading confidence and enjoyment, additional data and evidence is needed to demonstrate gains in reading achievement. The greatest potential for demonstrating how participation in library literacy programs improves reading proficiency comes from correlating library program participation with reading assessment results. This level of comparison and correlation requires data sharing between school districts and libraries, which can pose policy and technical challenges. Carefully crafted data-sharing agreements that provide policy guidance on protecting student privacy and outline technical responsibilities and procedures have helped libraries and schools make progress on data sharing to provide a foundation for measuring the impact of library literacy programs.

"Libraries are an untapped resource – ready, willing, and able to be partners with school districts to improve literacy for K-3rd grade students."

—**Ruth Maegli**, Chief Academic Officer, Milwaukee Public Schools

IV. MAXIMIZING IMPACT: LIBRARY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS FOR EARLY LITERACY SUCCESS

Partnerships between library and school systems support a comprehensive and seamless approach to helping struggling children become proficient readers. When school and library staff are in sync, children and parents/caregivers have more opportunity to make good use of out-of-school time to complement classroom work. In addition, strategic alignment between public libraries and school districts maximizes productive work to support at-risk students and minimizes redundancies and incompatible approaches.

Perhaps most important, close collaboration between schools and libraries can help struggling readers stay the course on their learning journeys as they experience the network of support from community anchor institutions.

Successful school-library partnerships are built on:

▸ Mutual respect and trust between key players in both the library and school systems

▸ An explicit commitment between the library director and school superintendent to work together around specifically defined goals

▸ Understanding of how each system works—how they are different and how they can complement each other

▸ Clear definition of roles and expectations in a formal agreement or memorandum of understanding to ensure that the commitment to work together continues even if personnel changes

▸ Shared language among library and school partners to facilitate understanding and collaboration

▸ Flexibility to adapt to changing needs, expectations, external pressures, and new challenges

▸ An open mind and a "get-it-done" attitude.[16]

LESSONS FROM THE LEADERS LIBRARY CARD CHALLENGE

Key lessons about library-school partnerships that have emerged from the continuing work of the Leaders Library Card Challenge include:

▸ High-level collaboration involving the school superintendent and library director contributes to sustained attention to the learning needs of all children regardless of socioeconomic status.

▸ While a handshake and an ad-hoc commitment to work together is a good start, education partnerships thrive when there is a formal structure that defines specific roles and responsibilities to ensure that the collaboration extends beyond the leaders who shook hands.

▸ Even with a formal agreement, regular leader-to-leader and staff-to-staff communication is essential to sustain the relationship, focus on specific needs, respond to emerging challenges, and monitor progress.

▸ Establishing parameters and processes for data sharing remains a challenge best addressed in formal agreements that define the scope and purpose of shared data, responsibilities for providing and maintaining the agreed-upon data, and guidelines for maintaining the privacy of student records.

▸ Patience and perseverance are essential when building new partnerships. While all participating communities started with commitment letters signed by top leaders, moving from a letter to productive action took anywhere from several months to more than a year.

Spotlights on Library-School Partnerships

Library-school partnerships to improve education outcomes take different forms depending on leadership priorities, community needs, and stakeholder interests. The following spotlights provide examples of several approaches to education partnerships.

Charlotte Mecklenburg, North Carolina

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (CML) and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) have worked together over the past three years to build a partnership that started with a goal of ensuring that all public-school students have access to library resources using their student ID number as a library card number. To facilitate collaboration, CML and CMS created a series of formal agreements that defined and sharpened the working relationship over time, emphasizing the importance of communication, cooperation, and collaboration on all levels, at both organizations—from the library CEO and school superintendent to library staff at 20 branches and school staff at 170 schools.

> We have moved from a cordial relationship between the library and school system, to a working partnership, to a one-year Memorandum of Understanding, to a five-year MOU. It is not an accident that our partnership is where it is today.
>
> – **Lee Keesler,** Chief Executive Officer, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

Key Players in the Library-School Partnership

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library		Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
Library CEO	⟷	CMS Superintendent
Library Director		Chief Academic Officer
Associate Director	⟷	Director of Virtual Learning & Media Services
Educational Partnerships Manager		Asst. Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Family Engagement
Educational Partnerships Manager		Principals
Children's Services Coordinator	⟷	Media Coordinators
Teen Services Coordinator		Curriculum Coordinators
Outreach Manager		
Library Staff at 20 Library Locations and Outreach Services	⟷	School Staff at 170 Schools

The first CML-CMS Memorandum of Understanding in January 2014 created a framework for sharing aggregate test data and established a new Educational Partnerships Manager position at the library that has proven valuable in building, refining, and sustaining the working relationship. For example, the partnership manager met with instructional leadership teams from all schools to coordinate curriculum support through the library's new digital branch.

Hartford, Connecticut

Hartford Public Library and Hartford Public Schools created a multidimensional partnership to improve education opportunities and outcomes for all students through a coherent system of resources, programming, and services. Named Boundless, the partnership is built around three action strategies:

- **Zone collaboration strategy** to create connections between branch libraries and surrounding schools to improve access to services

- **Partnership communication strategy** to increase awareness of library and school programs and resources among all community stakeholders and build regular communication channels to support constant improvement

- **Technology, resource, and access strategy** to leverage tools, systems, and resources to improve services and access to meet community learning needs.

Boundless began with a pilot program connecting one library branch with schools located in that "zone." The pilot provided insight into how the public library and public school systems could collaborate more effectively to deepen learning opportunities for all children. Despite several leadership changes, the partnership infrastructure has provided a framework for continued collaboration.

To support reading proficiency, Boundless focuses on school readiness, library access for all children, programs for children and families, and special interventions to meet the needs of struggling K-3rd grade readers.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Read by 4th is a citywide effort managed by the Free Library of Philadelphia with a goal of doubling the number of children reading at grade level by 2020. As Philadelphia's Campaign for Grade-Level Reading initiative, the *Read by 4th* coalition includes 90 partners and ongoing outreach to identify new partners and resources.

Program strategies include:

1. Engaging parents in supporting their children's early language and reading skills

2. Promoting summer reading to prevent learning loss

3. Addressing barriers to active and regular school attendance

4. Ensuring students have access to expert reading instruction and quality resources

As the *Read by 4th* convener, the library is able to identify and address gaps. For example, the library identified mid-to-late August as a great time to launch its new *Back-to-School Jumpstart Camp*, giving children a late-summer boost before returning to school.

V. TAKING ACTION TOGETHER: STRATEGIES FOR LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS

Working together, libraries and schools can do more to increase the reading proficiency of struggling low-income young students. The following action strategies provide a framework for libraries and schools to strengthen their joint efforts to close the opportunity gap for low-income young readers.

1. Make the literacy needs of struggling, low-income K-3rd grade readers a priority for library programming

Libraries have a unique set of capacities and connections that make them ideal resources to overcome obstacles to reading success among low-income K-3rd grade students. When schools know that literacy programs for K-3rd grade readers are a library priority, they will be better able to match struggling readers with out-of-school opportunities at the library. Libraries can implement this action strategy by:

▸ Building staff capacity to teach reading, working in partnership with school literacy experts

▸ Rethinking how literacy programs for early readers are designed and delivered to address the specific needs of this audience

▸ Designing and offering literacy programs exclusively for struggling low-income, K-3rd grade readers

▸ Working directly with schools to identify struggling readers and tailoring programs to meet their specific needs

▸ Being a visible community leader on closing the opportunity gap for K-3rd grade readers

2. Provide literacy services outside the library, where children and families spend time

For struggling low-income young readers, bringing library programs, services, and resources to where they spend time with their families makes participation easier and increases the likelihood of sustained engagement. Strategies for building outward connections to provide literacy services outside the library include:

▸ Creating library outreach teams either by redesigning positions and work expectations or hiring dedicated outreach staff

▸ Working regularly with community organizations serving this audience such as public housing authorities, health clinics, daycare and community centers, and Boys and Girls Clubs to connect kids with library learning resources

▸ Collaborating with schools on parent outreach and engagement to demonstrate that the library and school are working together to improve their children's reading proficiency, including periodically hosting joint informational sessions for parents at the library where parents can access technology and other useful resources.

▸ Connecting with local education networks, such as the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, to leverage complementary resources and support shared goals.

3. Include community resources for families as part of library K-3rd grade literacy programs

Through the library, parents can take advantage of a clearinghouse of resources to support their family well-being while children participate in tutoring and reading activities. Libraries also offer opportunities for parents to connect with other parents, build social capital with each other, and become more familiar with and engaged in

> "We can't do this work alone. The impetus for bringing libraries and schools together in urban areas is to get both pulling in the same direction to improve reading proficiency for all children."
>
> —**Michael Casserly**, Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools

school learning, which will enable them to better support their children's reading progress. Building a strong public library-public school partnership can help establish a family social services safety net to mitigate obstacles that prevent participation in literacy programs. Approaches to connecting community resources for families with literacy programs for children include:

▸ Serving meals or snacks to both children and their parents in conjunction with learning sessions

▸ Providing transportation from a convenient and familiar location, such as the neighborhood school parking lot to programs at library branches

▸ Scheduling meetings or briefings on community resources/nonprofits that support family well-being (e.g., day care opportunities, affordable housing, job support, health clinics) while children are participating in literacy programs

▸ Conducting parenting sessions in conjunction with reading programs

4. Create consistent reading terminology and resources between schools and libraries

Aligning school and library reading approaches, terminology, and resources contributes to a seamless connection for parents and caregivers who are trying to support their children's progress toward grade-level reading proficiency. Creating successful connections between library resources and school curriculum requires:

▸ Understanding of school approaches to teaching and assessing children's reading proficiency and the definitions of K-3rd grade reading levels

▸ Sharing of school curriculum and activities to help libraries coordinate programming and organize collections to support children at different reading levels

▸ Providing continuous library-school communications and ensuring alignment so that library resources complement classroom work and support reading progress during out-of-school time

When library staff understand the system used by schools to identify reading levels for young learners, they can organize complementary book collections, advise parents in choosing books based on the system, and help children select books that interest them and support their reading proficiency levels. For example, to make the school-library reading connection easy for parents and young readers, the New Haven Public Library created a chart and a labeling system for selected K-3rd grade books based on the Fountas and Pinnell assessment system used by New Haven Public Schools.

> When there is a shared language and shared understanding between libraries and schools about literacy training, libraries can be translators for parents.
>
> – **Jenny Bogoni,** Executive Director, Read By 4th, Free Library of Philadelphia

5. Ensure partnership sustainability

Experience and evidence show that library-school partnerships that start with a leadership level commitment to work together on a specific goal produce the best results. For participants in the Leaders Library Card Challenge, the focus on ensuring that all K-12 students had access to library resources provided a specific shared goal that sparked new partnerships that have grown beyond library cards. Some library and school leaders have found that starting small—collaborative work in one school or with one age group such as K-3rd grade struggling readers—is the most productive way to develop and test working relations, identify and resolve obstacles along the way, and learn from a pilot experience to provide a foundation for system-wide collaboration.

Initial action steps for creating or strengthening the school-library partnership to support struggling K-3rd grade readers include:

▸ Share this report with school and library leaders

▸ Convene key school and library leaders to discuss the report's research, implications of this call to action within the context of the school district, and opportunities to collaborate to address the needs of struggling low-income K-3rd grade readers

▸ Identify obstacles that may have interfered with partnership success in the past and develop solutions

▸ Explore creation of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to define general parameters for an enhanced school-library partnership recognizing that the components of the partnership will evolve over time

▸ Agree on at least one action step to launch the collaborative effort and designate lead library and school staff to get the ball rolling

▸ Take the first step!

VI. THE PATH FORWARD: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND ACTION

This report provides a framework for strengthening library-school partnerships to increase opportunities for more low-income children to become proficient readers by the end of third grade, building on the individual efforts of libraries and schools. This report also initiated a much-needed conversation on the opportunities and challenges related to building and sustaining productive partnerships that lead to real learning outcomes. There is more work to be done to achieve greater impact. Recommended areas for further research and action include:

1. Develop a strategic guide for building sustainable library-school partnerships that moves from anecdotes and examples to recommended models and process maps including:

   ▸ Essential components of partnership agreements

   ▸ Glossary of shared language around education and learning

   ▸ Communication processes

   ▸ Key roles and responsibilities

2. Identify, document, and publish best practices and models for:

   ▸ *Library staffing structures* that support external partnerships and collaborative programs for reaching and engaging struggling low-income K-3rd grade readers, including the skills and training needed to advance this work in public libraries

   ▸ *Outreach strategies* that lead to increased engagement in library literacy services by the most disadvantaged children, focusing specifically on how schools and libraries can align their outreach efforts

   ▸ *Quantitative and qualitative performance measures and systems* for demonstrating improved reading proficiency of student participants in library literacy programs

3. Explore models for and approaches to public libraries supporting and/or serving as school libraries in districts where budget cuts or shifting priorities have reduced or eliminated school libraries.

4. Investigate how library roles in supporting grade-level reading proficiency, partnership building, and outreach capacity can be better woven into library science graduate programs.

5. Explore how library participation in early literacy networks such as the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading supports their partnerships with schools and collaborative programming to improve the reading proficiency of low-income struggling readers in K-3rd grade.

CONCLUSION

Fighting the good fight for kids means taking every step possible to ensure that all children, regardless of socioeconomic status, have a good chance of entering fourth grade as proficient readers. When libraries and schools align their expertise and literacy work with kindergarten through third-grade low-income children, the goal of ensuring that all children achieve the third-grade reading benchmark is within reach. The examples in this report highlight the progressive work of libraries to support improved reading proficiency for low-income children and the possibilities that emerge from sustained library-school collaboration. The recommendations and call to action provide a path forward to continued progress on this urgent need.

"We should reflect periodically on how we are doing compared to 20 years ago, pat ourselves on the back as we make progress, and keep fighting the good fight for our kids."

– **Brian Schultz**, Chief Academic Officer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

The challenges are significant, but not insurmountable. And there's no time to waste.

VII. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Forum Agenda

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2016

Welcome and Plans for Our Time Together

Introductions

ULC Field Scan Review: Programs, Partnerships, and Key Challenges

How Struggling K-3 Readers Are Identified and What They Most Need to Improve

▸ Milwaukee Public Schools

Key Challenges for Libraries Reaching and Serving Low-income, Struggling Readers

▸ Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

Wrap-up, Key Takeaways, and Reflections

Networking Dinner

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2016

Day 1 Recap, Reflections, and Plans for Today

Library-School Partnerships and Collaborative Early Reading Programs

▸ St. Paul, Minn.

▸ Philadelphia, Penn.

▸ Hartford, Conn.

Successes and Challenges: Partnering to Improve K-3rd Reading Achievement

Lunch

Action Steps and Recommended Strategies

Wrap-up, Key Takeaways, and Final Recommendations

APPENDIX B: Forum Participants

Christine Becker
Consultant
Urban Libraries Council

Jenny Bogoni
Executive Director, Read! By 4th
Free Library of Philadelphia

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Jane Eastwood
Director
Saint Paul Public Library

Robin Hall
Director of Language Arts and Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools

Keanne Henry
Vice President
AARP Foundation Experience Corps

Rodney Johnson
Director, Early Literacy
School District of Philadelphia

Paula Kiely
City Librarian
Milwaukee Public Library

Hans Ott
Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Saint Paul Public Schools

Mary Kingston Roche
Director of Public Policy
Coalition for Community Schools

Emily Samose
Director, Education and Learning Initiatives
Urban Libraries Council

Jennifer Smith
Senior Director, Curriculum and Instruction
Milwaukee Public Schools

Susan Benton
President & CEO
Urban Libraries Council

Tim Carrigan
Senior Program Officer, Library Services
Institute of Museum and Library Services

Joshua Cramer
Vice President
National Center for Families Learning

Ron Fairchild
Director, Network Community Support Center
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Parker Hamilton
Director
Montgomery County Public Libraries

Marie Jarry
Director, Youth and Family Services
Hartford Public Library

Lee Keesler
Chief Executive Officer
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

Ruth Maegli
Chief Academic Officer
Milwaukee Public Schools

Michelle Puhlick
Executive Director of Policy and Innovation
Hartford Public Schools

Ramiro Salazar
Library Director
San Antonio Public Library

Brian Schultz
Chief Academic Officer
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Michell Yorkman
Special Projects Manager
Council of the Great City Schools

VIII. NOTES

[1] National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), "The Nation's Report Card, 2015." The Nation's Report Card, https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2015/#reading?grade=4.

[2] See particularly Donald Hernandez, Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation Rates (Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Karl L. Alexander, Doris R. Entwisle, and Linda Steffel Olson. "Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap," American Sociological Review 72, no.2 (2007), 167-180. doi:10.1177/000312240707200202.

[5] National Conference of State Legislatures. Third Grade Retention Legislation, http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/third-grade-reading-legislation.aspx.

[6] Jim Trelease, The Read-Aloud Handbook (Seventh edition) (New York: Penguin Group, 2013).

[7] Prudence Carter, It's the Opportunity Gap, Stupid (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, May 15, 2013), https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/blog/entry/793.

[8] Deanne W. Swan et al., Public Libraries in the United States Survey: Fiscal Year 2011 (IMLS-2014-PLS-01) (Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services, 2014).

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[10] Leadership Brief: Partners for Education (Washington, DC: Urban Libraries Council, 2015)

[11] Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson, "Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap."

[12] Richard L. Allington and Anne McGill-Franzen, Summer Reading Loss is the Basis of Almost all the Rich/Poor Reading Gap (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee, 2016).

[13] Lois Bridges, The Joy and Power of Reading: A Summary of Research and Expert Opinion (New York: Scholastic Inc, 2015), www.scholastic.com/worldofpossible/sites/default/files/Research_Compendium_0.pdf.

[14] Cavanagh, Sean, "What is 'Personalized Learning'? Educators Seek Clarity," Education Week (October 20, 2014).

[15] For more information about engaged reading, see University of Maryland, Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (College Park, MD: University of Maryland), www.cori.umd.edu/research-projects/reading-engagaement-project/overview.php.

[16] Compiled from the National Forum on Closing the Opportunity Gap for Early Readers discussion and field scan and Stepping Up to the ConnectED Library Challenge: A Call to Action (Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services, 2016).

KANSAS CITY REPORT

Review of the Kansas City (MO) Public Schools:

ACADEMICS AND OPERATIONS

2017

CONTENTS

EXHIBITS

Introduction

Review of the Kansas City (MO) Public Schools: Academics and Operations
By the
Council of the Great City Schools

The nation's urban public schools are home to some of the most interesting and effective reforms in the nation. They are also the country's centerpieces for reform and improvement. Still, many urban school districts continue to struggle with how to spur student achievement and regain public confidence. And it is no secret that some urban schools have student outcomes that are lower than they should be. But many people across the nation are unaware that many urban school systems have made substantial gains in student achievement over the last 10 to 15 years.

The ingredients for urban school system reform and improvement are the subject of enormous public debate, partisan bickering, and philosophical squabbling. At the same time, there is actually strong and consistent research that outlines how some urban school systems improve and what differentiates urban school districts that have made improvements from those that have not. In short, the answers are often found in the school system's governing system and leadership, how clearly and how long the district makes student achievement the focus of its effort, how cohesive and rigorous its instructional program is, what strategies the school system pursues to boost the capacity of its people, how well it attends to improving its lowest- performing schools and students, and how well it uses its data to inform progress and decide where to intervene.

Like other urban school systems, Kansas City (MO) is struggling to be one of the districts that show real advances. The district has produced some real progress over the years, only to see its gains washed away with the turnover of its leadership. The school board has worked hard over the years to improve the way it governs the system and, in fact, has done so in a way that it is often looked to now as a model in that regard. It has also hired a new and energetic superintendent who is determined to make real headway in district performance and appears committed to staying for the long term.

Both the school board and the new superintendent understand that the district is at a crossroads and that a brighter future for the schools and the city may be found along the tougher path forward. That road will not be paved with headline-grabbing structural changes; instead, it will be lined with the work that attends to better and higher quality instruction and finer-grained operational work.

The district's new leaders also realize that the school system has been at this juncture before, and that the public, while committed to its public schools, live in the Show-Me state, where its confidence will need to be re-earned with real results. This report lays out a blueprint for how those results could be realized.

A. Origins and Purpose of the Project

I. Origin and Goals of the Project

The Board of Education and new Superintendent of the Kansas City (MO) Public Schools asked the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) to provide a high-level review of the school district's instructional program, financial operations, human resource operations, transportation services, and food services.[1] Specifically, the Council was requested to:

- Assess the district's instructional program for its ability to improve academic outcomes for students.

- Review the district's major financial operations to see if there were opportunities for improvement.

- Review the district's human resource operations to see if there were opportunities for improvement.

- Review the district's transportation services, including its out-sourcing practices, and determine if there were opportunities for improvement.

- Review the district's food services to see if there were opportunities for improvement.

- Develop recommendations that would help the Kansas City (MO) Public Schools improve student outcomes and optimize its operations to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness.

In response to this request, the Council assembled Strategic Support Teams (the teams) of senior executives with extensive instructional, management, and operational experience from the organization's staff and other major city school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals (whose brief biographical sketches appear in Appendix B):

Instructional Team

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Ricki Price-Baugh
Director of Academic Achievement
Council of the Great City Schools

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[1] The Council has conducted some 300 instructional, organizational, management, and operational reviews in over 50 big-city school districts over the last 15 years. The reports generated by these reviews are often critical, but they also have been the foundation for improving the performance of many urban school systems nationally. In other cases, the reports are complimentary and form the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate. (Appendix G lists the reviews that the Council has conducted.)

Robin Hall
Director of Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools

Denise Walston
Director of Mathematics
Council of the Great City Schools

Ray Hart
Director of Research
Council of the Great City Schools

Finance Operations Team

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

David Koch, Principal Investigator
Chief Administrative Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Pam Capretta
Executive Director of Finance/Facilities
Pittsburgh Public Schools

Kenneth Gotsch
Chief Financial Officer (Retired)
Seattle Public Schools

Nicholas Lenhardt
Controller
Des Moines Public Schools

Judy Marte
Chief Financial Officer
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

John McDonough
Chief Finance Officer and Interim Superintendent (Retired)
Boston Public Schools

Human Resource Operations Team

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

David Koch, Principal Investigator
Chief Administrative Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Dawn Huckaby
Chief Human Resources Officer
Washoe County (Reno) School District

Deborah Ignagni
Deputy Chief Human Resource Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Karen Rudys
Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Albuquerque Public Schools

Charles Wakefield
Chief Human Resources Officer
Omaha Public Schools

Transportation Team

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

David Palmer, Principal Investigator
Deputy Director of Transportation (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

James Beekman
General Manager, Transportation
Hillsborough County Public Schools

Tom Burr
Transportation Director
St. Paul Public Schools

Nathan Graf
General Manager, Transportation Services
Houston Independent School District

Shirley Morris
Director, Transportation Department
Fort Worth Independent School District

Reginald Ruben
Director, Transportation Services
Fresno Unified School District

Food Services Team

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

David Koch, Principal Investigator
Chief Administrative Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Audene Chung
Senior Administrator, Nutrition Services
Houston Independent School District

Tina Barkstrom
School Nutrition Administrator
Milwaukee Public Schools

Wayne T. Grasela
Senior Vice President, Division of Food Services
School District of Philadelphia

Theresa Hafner
Executive Director, Food and Nutrition Services
Denver Public Schools

Gary Petill
Director, Food Services Department
San Diego Unified School District

The teams conducted fieldwork for the project during a series of four-day site visits to Kansas City. The human resources team was in Kansas City from October 2 through 5, 2016; the transportation team was there October 11-14, 2016; the food services team, October 25-28, 2016; the financial operations team, November 1-4, 2016; and the instructional team, December 4-7, 2016.[2]

On the first day of the site visits, the teams typically met with the superintendent and a senior staff member to better understand their expectations and objectives for the reviews and to

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[2] All findings and recommendations are current as of the site-visit date of the respective team unless otherwise noted.

make last-minute adjustments to the agenda. The teams used the next two full days of their site visits to conduct interviews with key staff members and examine documents and data. The complete lists of individuals interviewed and materials reviewed are presented in Appendices C and D.[3] The final day of the visits was devoted to synthesizing and refining each team's findings and recommendations.

The Council sent the draft of this document to each of the teams for their review in order to ensure that the reports accurately reflected their findings and to obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations. The final draft report was also reviewed by staff in each operating area. This consolidated report contains the recommendations designed by the teams to help the district's leadership identify opportunities for strengthening the instructional and operational effectiveness of the Kansas City (MO) school system.

This approach of providing technical assistance, peer reviews, and support to urban school districts to improve student achievement and operational effectiveness is unique to the Council of the Great City Schools and its members, and the process has proven to be effective over the years for a number of reasons.

First, the approach allows the superintendent and staff to work directly with talented, experienced practitioners from other major urban school systems that have established track records of performance and improvement. No one can claim that these individuals do not know what working in a large school system like Kansas City means.

Second, the recommendations developed by these peer teams have validity because the individuals who developed them have faced many of the same problems now encountered by the school system requesting a Council review. Team members are aware of the challenges faced by urban schools, and their strategies have been tested under the most rigorous conditions.

Third, using senior urban school managers from other cities is faster and less expensive than retaining a large management consulting firm. It does not take team members long to determine what is going on in a district. This rapid learning curve permits reviews that are faster and less expensive than could be secured from experts who are not so well versed on how urban school systems work.

Fourth, the reports generated from this process are often more hard-hitting and pointed than what school systems often get when hiring a consulting business that may pull its punches because of the desire for repeat business. For the Council, this work is not a business (and most members of the team are not compensated); it is a mission to help improve public education in the country's major urban school systems.

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[3] The Council's reports are based on interviews with district staff and others, a review of documents, observations of operations, and professional judgment. The teams conducting the interviews must rely on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming but cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by interviewees.

Finally, the teams comprise a pool of expertise that a school system such as Kansas City (MO) can call upon to implement recommendations or develop alternative plans and strategies. The Council would be pleased to put this team and others at the disposal of the new superintendent as he works to carry out recommendations and pursue other reforms.

II. Contents of This Report

This report is made up of several chapters. This, the first chapter (A), is an introduction and describes the origin and goals of the project, lays out the process involved, and presents the individuals who participated. The second chapter (B) presents a brief overview of the Kansas City (MO) school district and its demographics. The third chapter (C) summarizes the teams' analyses of student achievement trends and other student outcomes in Kansas City. Chapter four (D) presents broad data on the district's staffing levels. Chapter 5 (E) lays out the broad findings on the district's instructional programming and a series of corresponding recommendations for improvement. Chapter six (F) presents the findings and recommendations in the area of financial operations. The seventh chapter (G) summarizes the observations and proposals in the area of human resource operations. The eighth chapter (H) is devoted to the findings and recommendations in the area of student transportation. The ninth chapter (I) presents the team's findings and proposals in the area of food services. And the final chapter (J) presents a synopsis of the team's overall observations, synthesizes results, and presents next steps.

The appendices of the report include the following:

- Attachment A. Comparisons of the Kansas City Public Schools with other major urban school systems on pre-school enrollment, absenteeism rates, ninth-grade course failure rates, suspension rates, AP course participation, and graduation rates.

- Attachment B. Biographical sketches of members of the Strategic Support Teams who participated in this project.

- Attachment C. A list of individuals the Strategic Support Teams interviewed--either individually or in groups--during their site visits.

- Attachment D. A list of documents and materials reviewed by the Strategic Support Teams.

- Attachment E. Sample working agendas of some teams.

- Attachment F. Recommendations on transportation from previous Council and MGT of America reports.

- Attachment G. A list of the Strategic Support Teams the Council of the Great City Schools has fielded over the last 18 years.

B. About Kansas City (MO) Public Schools

Introduction

The Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS), the 12th largest school system in Missouri, serves some 15,394 students in pre-K through grade 12 and operates 35 schools. The school district's enrollment has been in decline since about 1999, when over 38,000 students were enrolled. KCPS encompasses a geographic area covering over 67 square miles. The system has also lost about 5,000 students since 2009, mostly African American students.

The district employs nearly 2,100 people,[4] including 1,130 teachers,[5] and it had an operating budget of $227.5 million in 2016-17 (including grants and child nutrition revenues). In earlier years, the Missouri Board of Education voted to withdraw the district's accreditation status. In August 2014, the State Board of Education granted provisional accreditation status to KCPS in recognition of the gains made by KCPS students.

In late 2016, the district received the requisite points (98) needed to be considered for full accreditation.

KCPS is governed by a nine-member Board of Education, all of whom are elected. The board appoints the Superintendent of Schools, who is responsible for the instructional program of the district and the effective operation of the school system. The superintendent is also responsible for the efficient management of the district's approved budget.

The school system's vision states that *KCPS envisions its schools as places where every student will develop deep understanding of the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue higher education, obtain family-supporting employment, contribute to the civic well-being of the community, and have the opportunity for a rewarding and fulfilling life.*

KCPS offers a variety of learning experiences, including gifted and talented (GT) and career and technical education (CTE). The district has—

- Twenty-four elementary schools
- Two middle schools
- Six high schools
- Three special schools

Students enrolled in KCPS are diverse, both racially and socioeconomically. Over half (56.6 percent) of the district's students are African American. Hispanic students constitute the next largest racial/ethnic group and total over a quarter (28.0 percent) of district enrollment.

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[4] KCPS By the Numbers (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.kcpublicschools.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=171.
[5] Common Core of Data, U. S. Department of Education. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubagency.asp.

White students constitute about a tenth of the district's enrollment (9.2 percent) and Asian American students account for about 4 percent. The enrollment of English Language Learners (ELLs) is nearly one fourth of the student population (23.9 percent).

KCPS no longer officially reports free and reduced price lunch counts, because the district uses the federal community eligibility factor in determining school lunch status, but nearly all district students would be considered low income.

The school district is also considerably different demographically than its state. White students comprise 72.3 percent of Missouri's statewide enrollment. The enrollment of African Americans is around 16 percent, and Hispanic enrollment is 5.8 percent. Asian students make up 1.8 percent of the state's enrollment, while American Indians and Native Hawaiians combined represent less than one percent of all students (see Exhibit 1).

Three percent of students statewide are ELLs; but the percentage of socioeconomically disadvantaged students could not be accurately calculated based on school lunch eligibility figures.

Exhibit 1. Missouri and Kansas City Public School K12 Enrollment, SY 2015-16

	% of Missouri Enrollment	% of KCPS Enrollment	KCPS % Share State Enrollment
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.3%	1.2%
Asian	1.8%	4.0%	3.5%
Black/African American	16%	56.6%	5.8%
Hispanic	5.8%	28.0%	7.9%
Multi-Racial	3.2%	1.8%	0.9%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.2%	1.6%
White	72.3%	9.2%	0.2%
ELL	3.3%	23.9%	11.3%
Low Income[6]	N/A	N/A	N/A
K12 Total	884,897	14,581	1.6%

Source: Missouri Department of Education. (2016). District Demographic Data. Retrieved from
https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/quickfacts/Pages/District-and-School-Information.aspx

To be sure, enrollment in KCPS is notably more diverse than the state, with higher portions of poor students than Missouri statewide (see Exhibit 2). For instance, while African American students make up over half of all KCPS students, they consist of 16 percent of the state's enrollment.

Statewide, the enrollment of White students is almost eight times the percentage of White students enrolled in KCPS, while the Hispanic percentage in Kansas City is almost five times the percentage of Hispanic students statewide.

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[6] The district uses the community eligibility factor when determining school lunch status, and the results are not an accurate reflection of historical free or reduced lunch eligibility. State estimates for lunch status were suppressed for Kansas City and a number of other school districts statewide and could not be calculated.

Exhibit 2. Kansas City Public School K12 Enrollment by Race, SY 2015-16
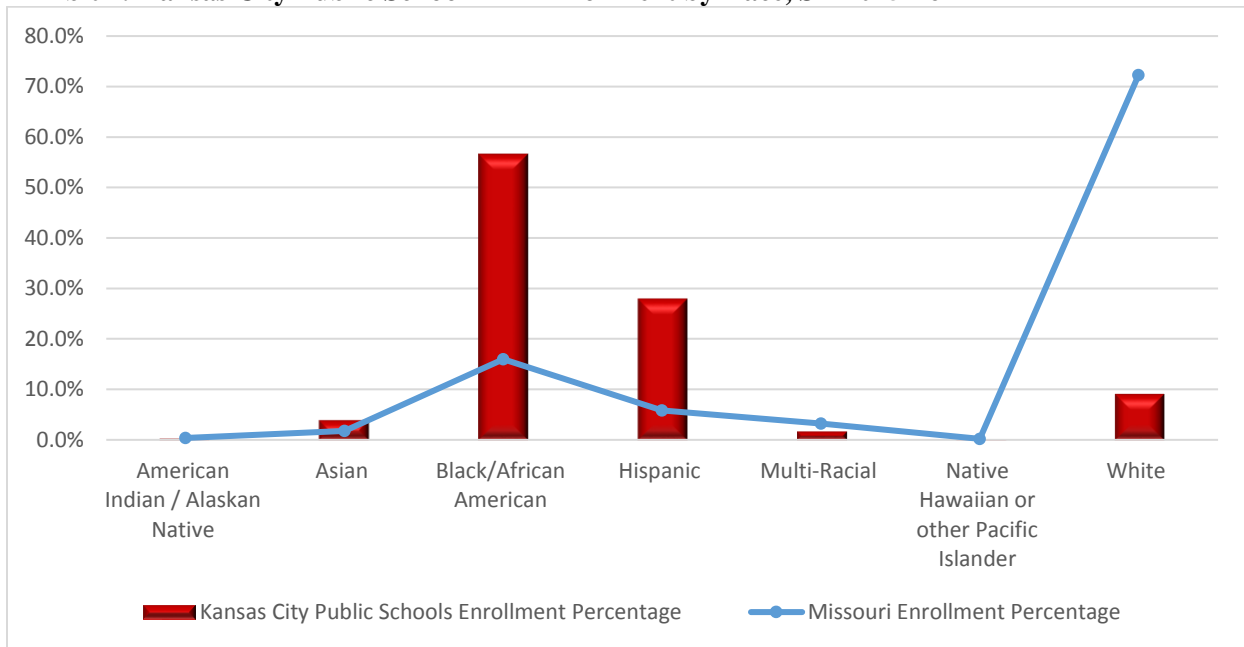
In addition, several demographic characteristics differentiate Kansas City and the Kansas City (MO) Public Schools. While over a quarter (28.9 percent) of Kansas City's overall population is African American, the percentage of students in KCPS who are African American is almost twice as large (56.6 percent).

The opposite trend is seen among White residents and White students. The share of White students enrolled in KCPS (9.2 percent) is considerably smaller than the share of White residents of the city (59.7 percent). Finally, the Hispanic enrollment in KCPS (28 percent) is almost three times the Hispanic population of Kansas City (10 percent). (See Exhibit 3.)

Exhibit 3. Demographics of the City of Kansas City and the Kansas City Public Schools, 2015

	City of Kansas City	Kansas City Public Schools
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.3%
Asian	2.6%	4.0%
Black/African American	28.9%	56.6%
Hispanic/Latino	10.0%	28.0%
Multi-Racial	3.5%	1.8%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.2%
White	59.7%	9.2%
Families with children under 18 living in poverty	24.1%	37.8%

Source: Missouri Department of Education, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year and 5-Year Estimates, and U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

The poverty rate in Kansas City proper (24.1 percent) is also well below that in KCPS, which hovers around 38 percent. Poverty is not evenly distributed by group, however. Nationally, nearly half (46.7 percent) of African American families live below the poverty line. Native

American families also face substantial socioeconomic challenges, with 42.3 percent of these families below the poverty line. Approximately a third (34.7 percent) of Hispanic families nationally face similar circumstances.

At the other end of the spectrum, Asian American and White families have the lowest poverty rates nationally. The poverty rate is 18.8 percent in Asian families and 15.5 percent for White families.

The disparities are similar in Kansas City, where the Census poverty rate is 28.5 percent among African Americans, 25.6 percent for Hispanics is 25.6 percent, and 27.9 percent for Native Americans. Approximately one family in four in Kansas City lives in poverty, and the effects are stark in the Kansas City Public Schools.

Finally, the school district maintains a metric of student stability, i.e., how likely students are to remain in a school over the course of the school year. Overall, student stability in the KCPS has increased in six out of seven secondary schools and 16 out of 24 elementary schools since SY2011.

Student Achievement and Other Outcomes

The following section presents an analysis of student academic performance in the Kansas City (MO) Public Schools using the state's Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) exams. In addition, this chapter compares the Kansas City Public Schools with other major urban school systems on a series of academic key performance indicators.

Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)

- The overall communication arts performance of Kansas City's students in grades three through eight was substantially below statewide averages in 2015-16. In general, communication arts scores among Kansas City students in these grades on the MAP ranged from 27.0 percent proficient or above in eighth grade to 35.4 percent proficient or above in fourth and fifth grades, compared to statewide averages ranging from 58.1 percent proficient or above in seventh grade to 63.2 percent in fourth grade. End-of-course performance in English II (EOC), however, was higher for both the district (53.7 percent) and the state (79.2 percent). (See Exhibit 4.)

Exhibit 4. Percentage of Kansas City and State Students Who Are Proficient or Above by Grade in Communication Arts, 2015-16
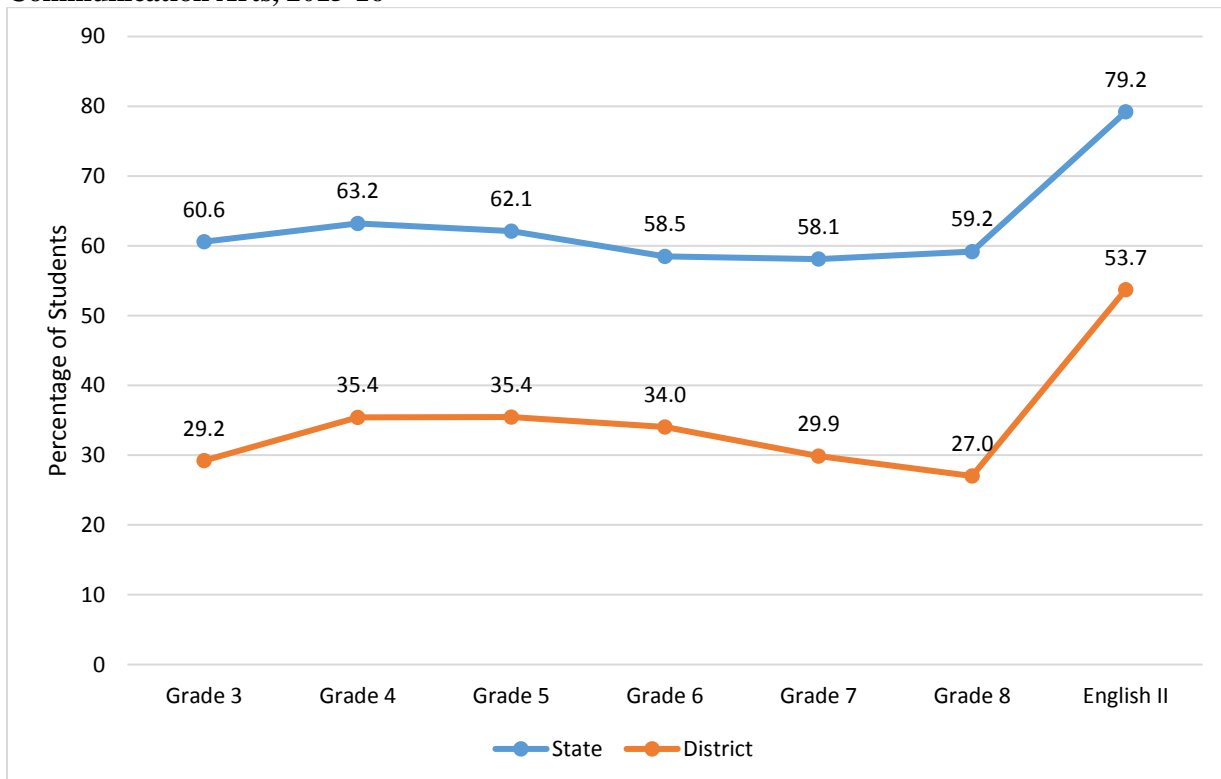
- The overall math performance of Kansas City students in grades three through eight was also substantially below statewide averages in 2015-16. In general, math scores among Kansas City third- through eighth-grade students on the MAP ranged from 4.5 percent proficient or above in eighth grade to 24.0 percent proficient or above in fifth grade,

compared to statewide averages ranging from 28.3 percent proficient or above in eighth grade to 52.5 percent in fourth grade. Algebra I and Algebra II scores showed similar patterns. (See Exhibit 5.)

- A pattern of steadily declining scores across grades in both the state and the district appears to be the result of how the state vertically calibrated its math test—not necessarily the result of declining performance. However, the gap between the state and the district in math appears to be greatest in grades three, four, and Algebra II, compared to other grade levels.

Exhibit 5. Percentage of Kansas City and State Students who Are Proficient or Above by Grade in Math, 2015-16
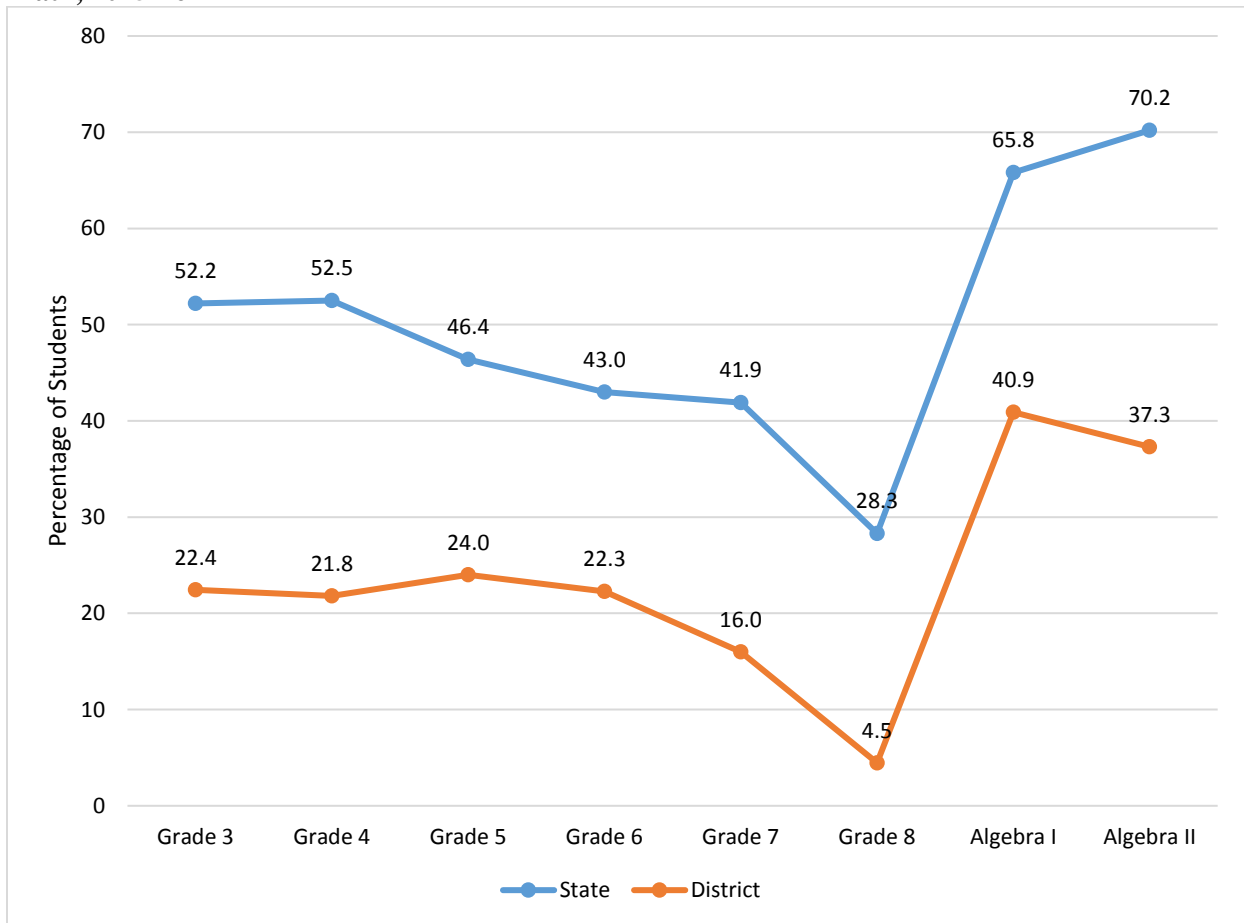
- The state changed its communication arts test between 2013-14 and 2014-15, making direct comparisons difficult. The change generally resulted in higher percentages of students scoring at or above proficiency on the new test than the old test. (Exhibit 6.) Communication arts scores between 2011-12 and 2013-14 were relatively consistent across all grade levels, but the new test showed increasing scores in grades 3, 4, 5, 7, and English II—and consistent scores in grades 6 and 8. Whether one uses the old or the new test, one has to conclude that overall communication arts performance on the MAP in Kansas City (MO) improved slightly in 2016 for the first time in a number of years.

Exhibit 6. Kansas City Communication Arts: Percentage of Scores at or Above Proficient on MAP by Grade, 2011-12 to 2015-16

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	English I	Engish II
2012 (Old)	18.4	25.7	25.3	26.5	28.0	28.3	37.1	46.5
2013 (Old)	23.1	28.6	27.6	26.5	27.8	28.4	37.0	46.3
2014 (Old)	16.1	23.7	25.5	26.3	25.7	24.6	44.0	55.4
2015 (New)	26.8	31.0	33.8	34.1	27.8	26.8		47.5
2016 (New)	29.2	35.4	35.4	34.0	29.9	27.0		53.7
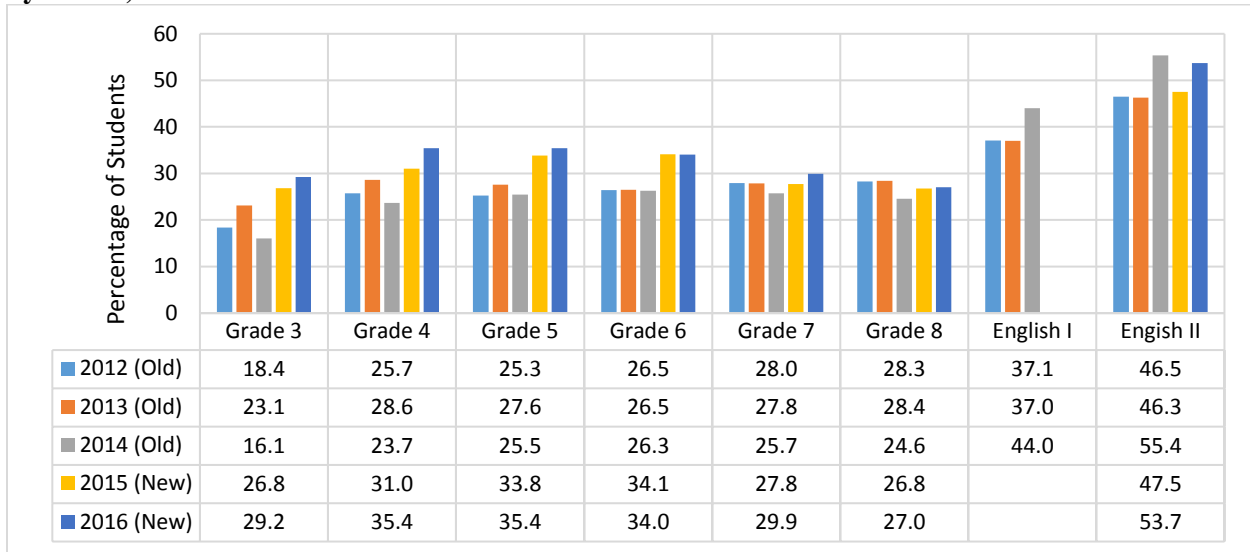
- The state also changed its math test between 2013-14 and 2014-15. The change resulted in lower percentages of students scoring at or above proficiency on the new test than on the old test, with only Algebra I and Algebra II as the exceptions. (See Exhibit 7.) In general, the old test showed declining scores between 2011-12 and 2013-14 in grades 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 and increasing scores in grades 6 and Algebra I. Conversely, between 2014-15 and 2015-16, using the new test, math scores increased somewhat in grades 5, 6, and 7 and decreased somewhat in grades 3, 4, 8, Algebra I, and Algebra II. The graph shows the same declining performance levels from one grade to another with the new test as was evidenced in Exhibit 5 for both the state and the district.

Exhibit 7. Kansas City Math: Percentage of Scores at or Above Proficient on MAP by Grade, 2011-12 to 2015-16

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Algebra I	Algebra II
2012 (Old)	30.3	32.1	31.8	31.6	30.5	24.3	25.7	17.9
2013 (Old)	30.5	30.5	33.6	32.2	25.1	11.5	32.6	
2014 (Old)	27.4	26.2	26.5	34.9	28.0	12.9	33.3	
2015 (New)	26.6	22.8	17.3	16.6	11.3	5.8	41.7	38.6
2016 (New)	22.4	21.8	24.0	22.3	16.0	4.5	40.9	37.3

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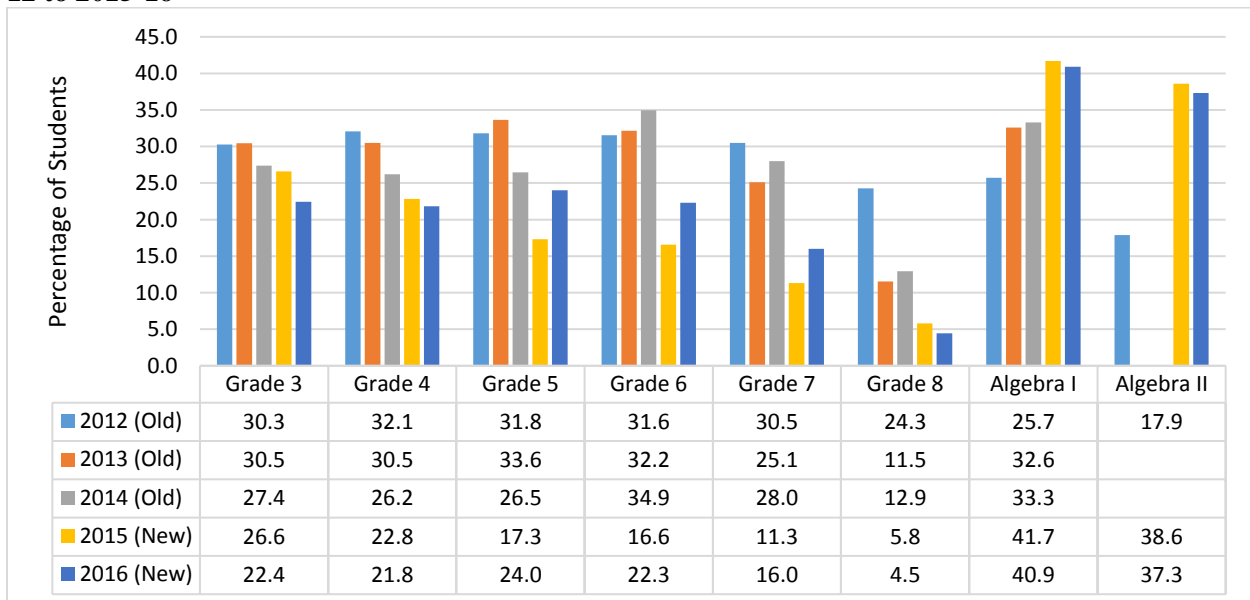
- The Council also examined communication arts and math cohort data on the MAP. Exhibits 8 and 9 show percentages of scores at or above proficient in communication arts and math among third graders in 2011-12, who were fourth graders in 2012-13, fifth graders in 2013-14, sixth graders in 2014-15, and seventh graders in 2015-16. The analysis also looked at a second cohort of students who were in fourth grade in 2011-12, then fifth grade in 2012-13, sixth grade in 2013-14, seventh grade in 2014-15, and eighth grade in 2015-16. Both Kansas City cohorts were compared to identical cohorts statewide. In general, both state and Kansas City cohorts showed communication arts proficiency levels that were relatively consistent as students moved from one grade to another, which may be partially due to how the test was calibrated. Finally, the gap between the district and the state was consistently at least 20.9 percentage points.

Exhibit 8. Trends in Kansas City and State Communication Arts: Percentage of Scores at or Above Proficient for Two Student Cohorts, 2011-12 to 2015-16
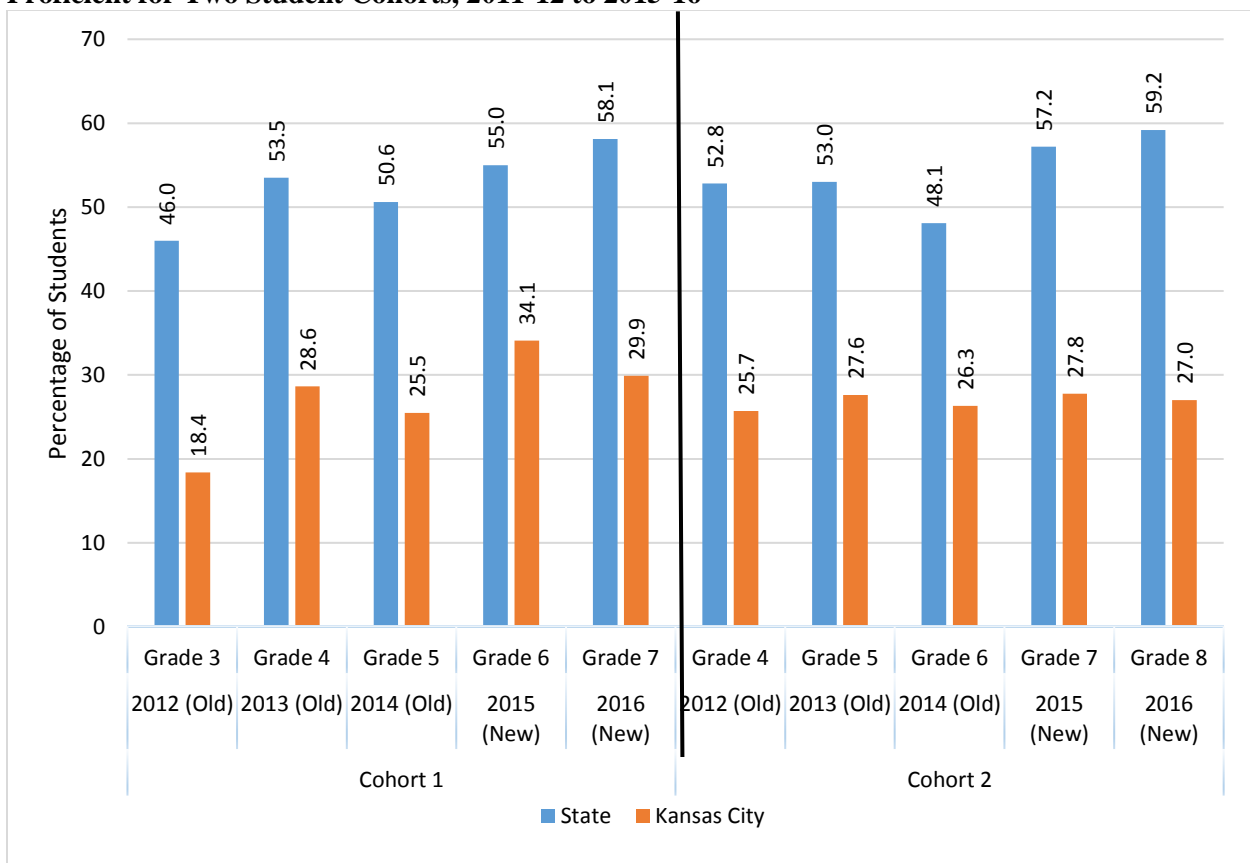
- A similar pattern could be found when looking at math scores of the same two cohorts. Both statewide and Kansas City proficiency levels declined, as we saw earlier. The gap between the district and the state across both cohorts varied slightly from one grade level to another, and the gap generally remained at least 20 percentage points across all comparisons except Cohort 2 – Grade 4 (19.1 percent).

Exhibit 9. Trends in Kansas City and State Math: Percentage of Scores at or Above Proficient for Two Student Cohorts, 2011-12 to 2015-16
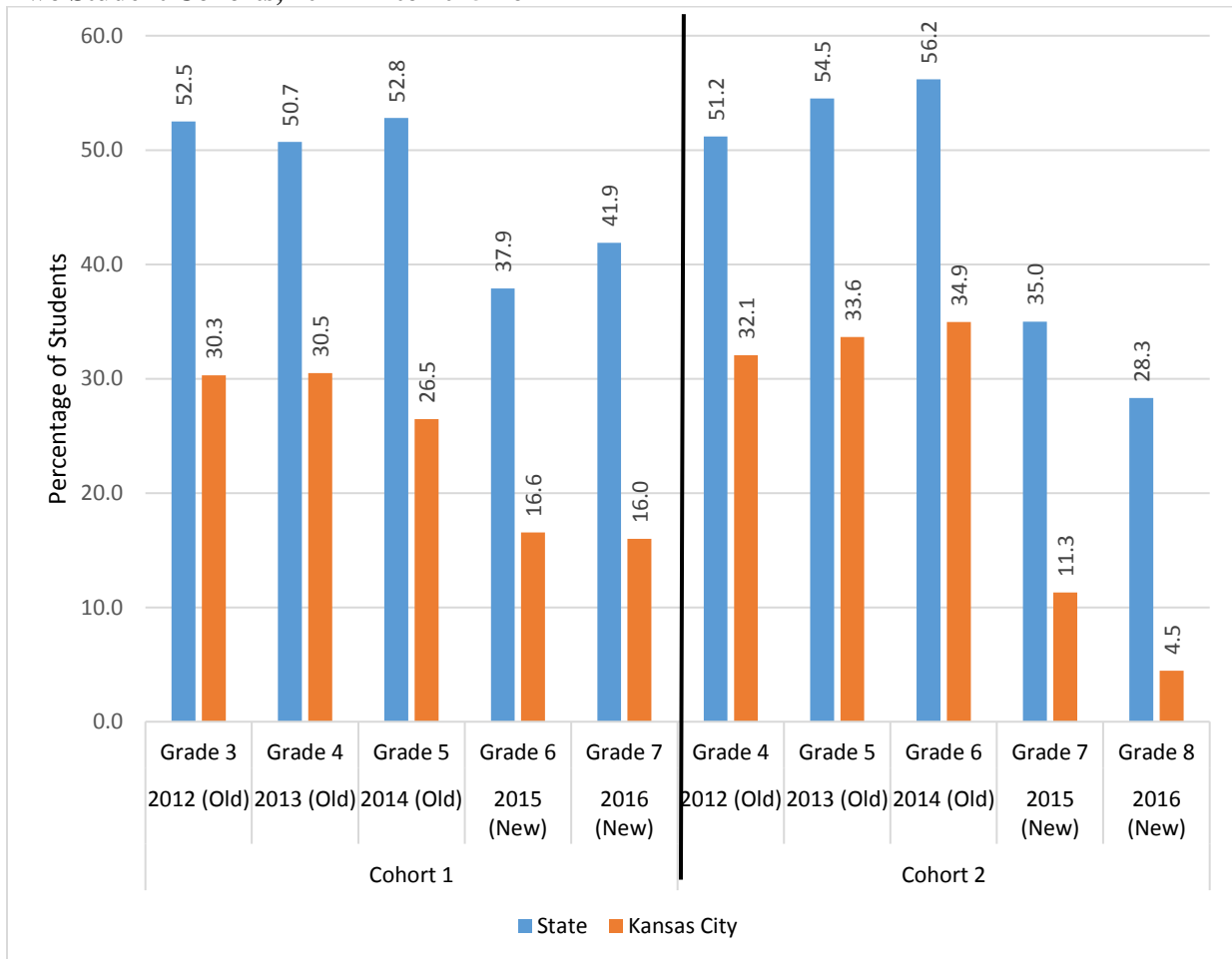
- Finally, the Council examined Kansas City's MAP results by major racial/ethnic group to see how even the progress was. Unfortunately, because the state changed its tests over the last few years, the team had to normalize or standardize the test scores over the two versions of the test. Doing so allows the reader to view progress of African American, White, and Hispanic students; English Language learners (ELL); students receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL); and students with disabilities against statewide average progress. For instance, Exhibit 10 shows that, between 2012 and 2016, White fourth graders and students with disabilities in Kansas City made modest progress in communication arts against the statewide average (0.00 on the graph); all other student groups made little to no progress. Exhibit 11 shows that every racial/ethnic group of eighth graders in Kansas City lost ground in communication arts against the statewide average (0.00), and only students with disabilities remained consistent during the time period. Exhibit 12 shows that every group of Kansas City fourth graders declined in math, and Exhibit 13 shows that the only progress in math relative to the state average was made by eighth graders with disabilities.

Exhibit 10. Standardized Communication Arts Trends among Kansas City African American, Hispanic, and White 4th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
White	-0.32	-0.39	-0.24	-0.34	-0.22
Black	-0.84	-0.89	-0.85	-0.89	-0.87
Hispanic	-0.57	-0.55	-0.56	-0.52	-0.56
FRPL	-0.73	-0.74	-0.71	-0.72	-0.71
ELLS	-0.63	-0.67	-0.72	-0.61	-0.63
Students w/ Disabilities	-1.79	-1.71	-1.73	-1.50	-1.62
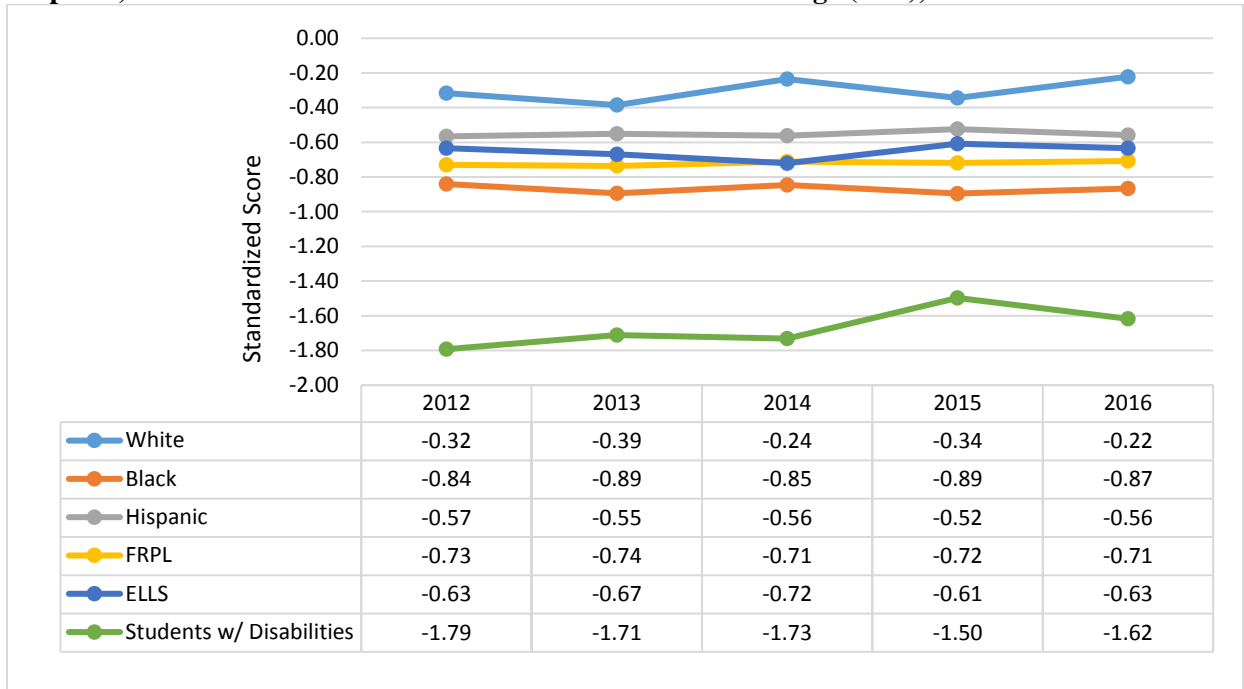
Exhibit 11. Standardized Communication Arts Trends among Kansas City African American, Hispanic, and White 8th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
White	-0.34	-0.12	-0.37	-0.37	-0.48
Black	-0.83	-0.92	-1.10	-1.05	-1.18
Hispanic	-0.66	-0.51	-0.67	-0.66	-0.67
FRPL	-0.68	-0.77	-1.09	-1.02	-1.17
ELLS	-1.10	-1.00	-1.15	-1.06	-1.38
Students w/ Disabilities	-2.02	-2.19	-2.13	-1.87	-2.02
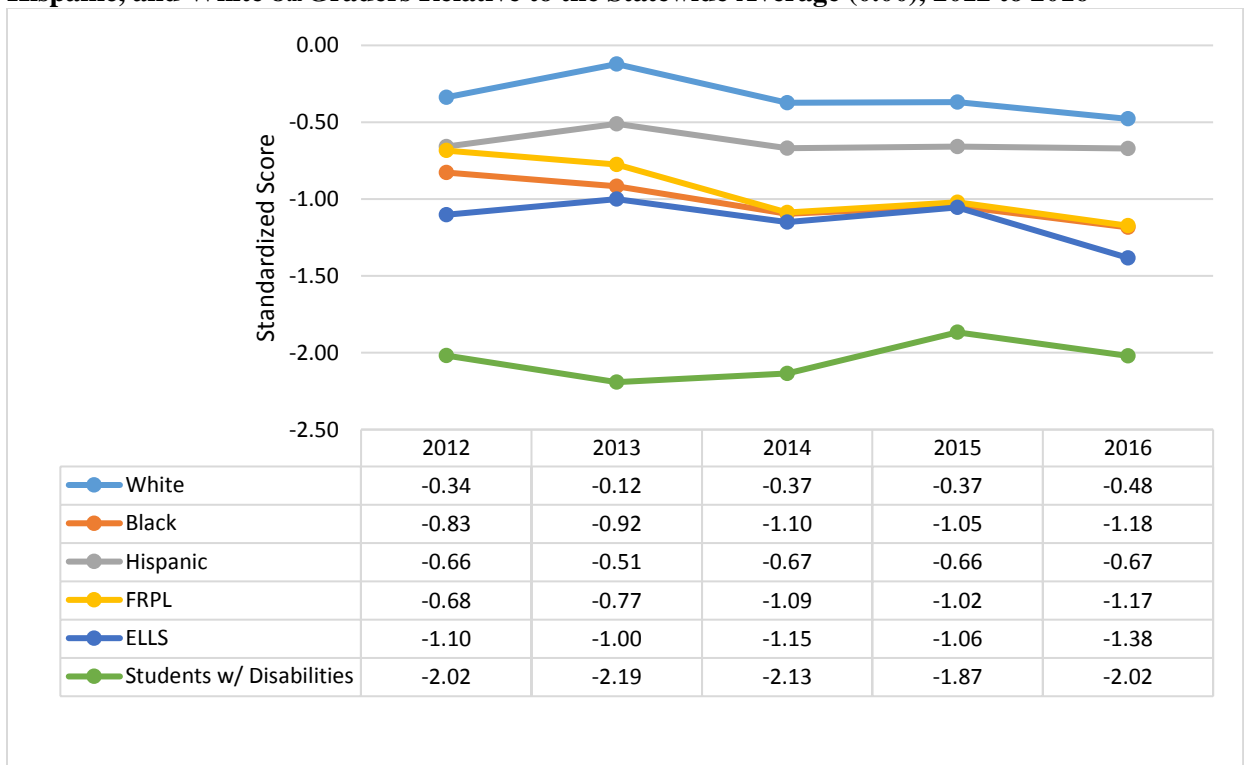
Exhibit 12. Standardized Math Trends among Kansas City African American, Hispanic, and White 4th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
White	-0.12	-0.38	-0.21	-0.45	-0.36
Black	-0.81	-0.89	-0.84	-0.92	-0.95
Hispanic	-0.17	-0.24	-0.23	-0.42	-0.59
FRPL	-0.57	-0.59	-0.56	-0.66	-0.75
ELL	-0.38	-0.32	-0.37	-0.45	-0.64
Students w/ Disabilities	-1.42	-1.49	-1.58	-1.35	-1.54
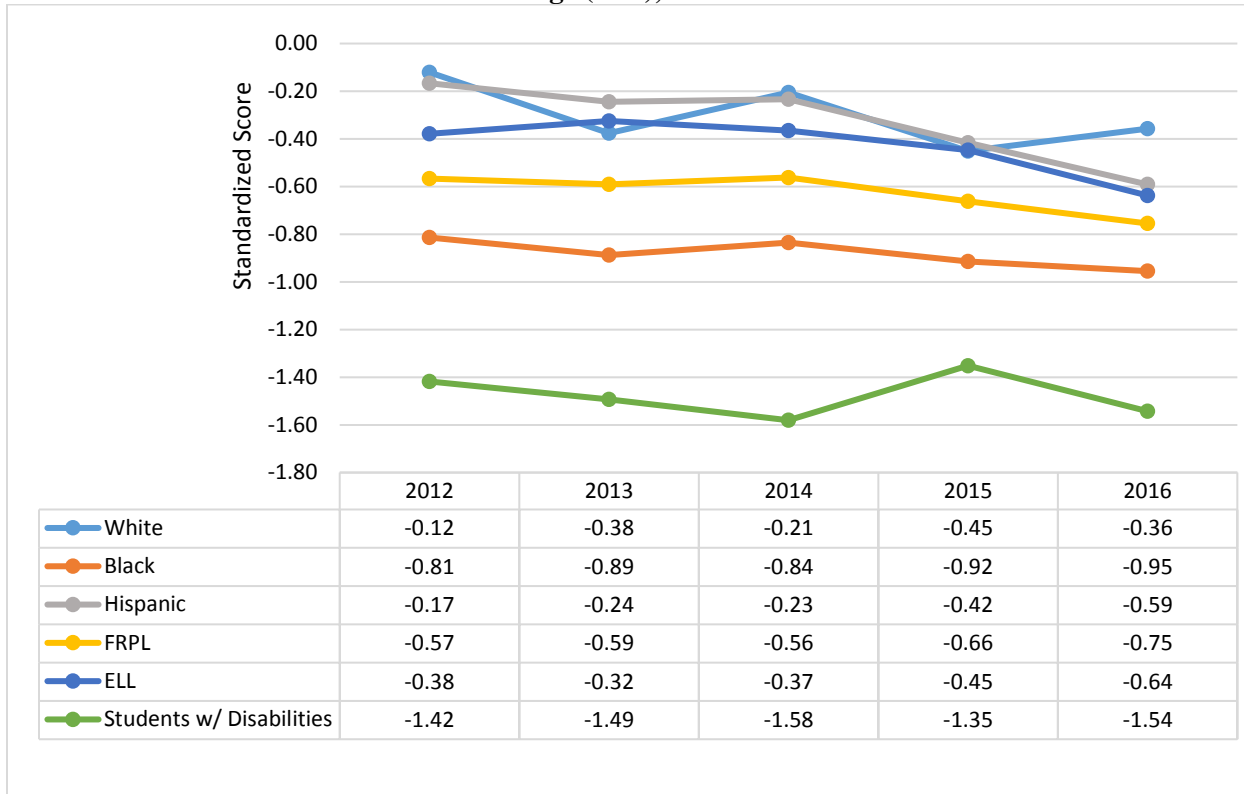
Exhibit 13. Standardized Math Trends among Kansas City African American, Hispanic, and White 8th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
White	-0.62	-0.78	-0.45	-0.52	-0.69
Black	-1.02	-1.06	-1.21	-0.91	-1.13
Hispanic	-0.61	-0.79	-0.56	-0.58	-0.79
FRPL	-0.76	-0.89	-0.95	-0.77	-0.99
ELL	-0.92	-1.26	-0.88	-0.71	-1.00
Students w/ Disabilities	-1.73	-1.63	-2.08	-1.33	-1.50
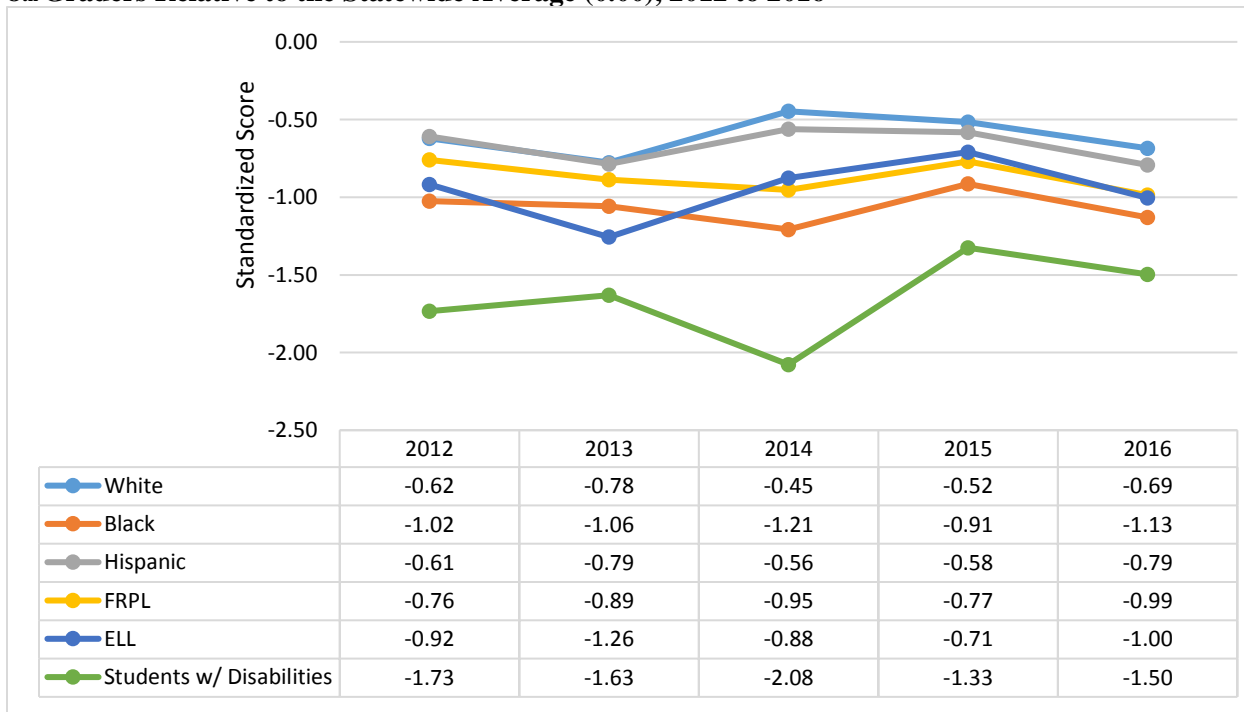
Student Attendance and Absenteeism

- Approximately 24 percent of third graders in the district were absent from school for between five and nine days during the 2014-15 school year. (See Exhibit A-1). In addition, some 23 percent of third graders were absent between 10 and 19 days that school year, and 10 percent of third graders were absent for 20 days or more. This means that some 57 percent of third graders were absent from school for five days or more that school year. This rate places Kansas City among the urban school districts with relatively high third-grade absentee rates. Rates ranged from 32 percent to 80 percent.

- The generally high rates of third-grade absenteeism in Kansas City continued into the sixth grade. About 22 percent of sixth graders in the district were absent from school for between five and nine days during the 2014-15 school year. (See Exhibit A-2) In addition, some 23 percent of sixth graders were absent between 10-19 days that school year, and 14 percent were absent for 20 days or more. This means that some 59 percent of sixth graders were absent from school for five days or more that school year. This rate placed Kansas City among the urban school districts with high sixth-grade absentee rates, which ranged from 19 percent to 75 percent.

- The pattern continued among ninth graders, but the absenteeism rate was not so high compared with other cities as in grades three and six. (See Exhibit A-4) With this ninth-grade group, some 20 percent of ninth graders were absent between five and nine days during the 2014-15 school year. In addition, some 23 percent of ninth graders were absent between 10 and 19 days, and 21 percent were absent for 20 days or more. This means that 64 percent of ninth graders were absent from school for five days or more that school year. The range among other urban school districts was between 6 percent and 96 percent.

Suspensions

- Nine percent of Kansas City's students were suspended out-of-school for between one and five days during the 2014-15 school year, 4 percent were suspended between six and 10 days, 2 percent were suspended between 11 and 19 days, and another 2 percent were suspended for 20 days or more. This was the third highest suspension rate of all reporting Council districts. (See Exhibit A-5.)

- The suspension rate was the equivalent of having every 100 students miss approximately 143 instructional days over the course of the school year—or the equivalent of 1.4 instructional days missed due to suspension for every student in the school system. (See Exhibit A-6.)

Course-Taking

- About 51 percent of district ninth graders in 2014-15 failed one or more core courses. This rate was considerably higher than most other major urban school systems, where the percentage of ninth graders failing those core courses ranged from a low of 3 percent to a high of 59 percent. (See Exhibit A-7.)

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- Only about 11 percent of Kansas City's students in grades nine to 12 took at least one Advanced Placement (AP) course in 2014-15. Among other major city school systems the percentages ranged from 8 percent to 44 percent. The median was 24 percent. Kansas City had the third lowest AP course participation rate among all reporting Council districts. (See Exhibit A-8.)

- In addition, only 13 percent of those participating in AP courses scored three or higher on the AP exams. This was the second lowest rate among all reporting Council districts, where AP test passing rates ranged from 8 percent to 71 percent. (See Exhibit A-9.)

- At the same time, some 10 percent of students in grades 9-12 were enrolled in some type of college-credit-earning course, which was one of the higher rates among major city school systems. (See Exhibit A-11.) Lincoln College Preparatory Academy awarded five International Baccalaureate diplomas in SY2015.

- Some 16 percent of Kansas City's ninth graders in 2014-15 had successfully completed an Algebra I course (or Integrated Math 1 course) by the end of their eighth grade year. In addition, about 34 percent of ninth graders that year had completed an Algebra I course (or Integrated Math course 1) by the end of their ninth grade year. In other words, only 50 percent of Kansas City's students had completed Algebra I or Integrated Math by the end of their ninth grade year. This rate was the second lowest among all reporting Council districts, where percentages ranged from about 48 percent to 94 percent. (Exhibit A-10)

College and Career Readiness

- The average ACT composite score in the district was 16.6 in 2016, about the same level as in 2012 (16.5).

- The average composite ACT scores in every high school in the district, except Lincoln College Prep, were too low for students to gain entrance to a competitive college or university.

Graduation Rates

- Some 65 percent of Kansas City students graduated in 2014-15 after having been in grades 9-12 for four years. (See Exhibit A-12). This rate was lower than most other major urban school systems, whose graduation rates ranged from 59 percent to 89 percent. The rate is also lower than might have been predicted from the district's ninth grade Algebra I completion rate. (See Exhibit A-13).

- Four-year graduation rates were highest among Asian American students (82.7 percent) and lowest among White students. Female students generally graduated at much higher rates than did male students.

D. Districtwide Staffing Levels

As part of its review, the Council analyzed the broad staffing levels in the Kansas City (MO) school district and compared them with the overall staffing levels of other Great City School districts. The team used National Center for Educational Statistics data from 2013-14 (the most recent available with national comparisons) to assess the system's overall staffing numbers.

In general, the Council team found the district's overall staffing ratios (FTEs) to be generally comparable to those in other urban school districts in the 2013-14 school year –if not slightly higher than average.

- Kansas City had approximately 6.43 students per total staff member (in FTEs) compared to the Great City School median of 8.11 students per total staff member. In other words, the district had about the same number of or somewhat more total staff for its enrollment than other major urban school districts had the same year. (See Exhibit 14.)

- Kansas City had approximately the same or slightly lower proportions of total staff members who were teachers as the median Great City School district, 48.01 percent vs. 51.06 percent, respectively. (See Exhibit 15.)

- Kansas City had fewer students per teacher (in FTEs) than the median Great City School district, 13.40 vs. 16.06, respectively. In other words, the district had a greater number of teachers for its enrollment than did other major urban school systems the same year. (See Exhibit 16.)

- Kansas City had far more students per total administrator (in FTEs) compared to the median Great City School district, 113.66 vs. 74.73. In other words, the district had fewer total administrators for its enrollment than did other major urban school systems the same year. (See Exhibit 17.)

- Kansas City had far more students per school-based administrator (in FTEs) than the median Great City School, 227.31 vs. 114.42, respectively. In other words, the district had fewer school-based administrators for its enrollment than did other major urban school systems the same year. (See Exhibit 18.)

- Kansas City had about the same number of students per district-level administrator (in FTEs) as the median Great City School district, 227.31 vs. 212.23, respectively. In other words, the district had about the same number of district-level administrators for its enrollment as did other major urban school districts. (See Exhibit 19.)

- Kansas City appears to have somewhat more guidance and other support staff for its enrollment than do other major city school systems. This could be due to the high poverty levels and needs for wrap-around services in the district.

Exhibit 14. Students per Total School Staff in Kansas City Compared to the Great City School Median.
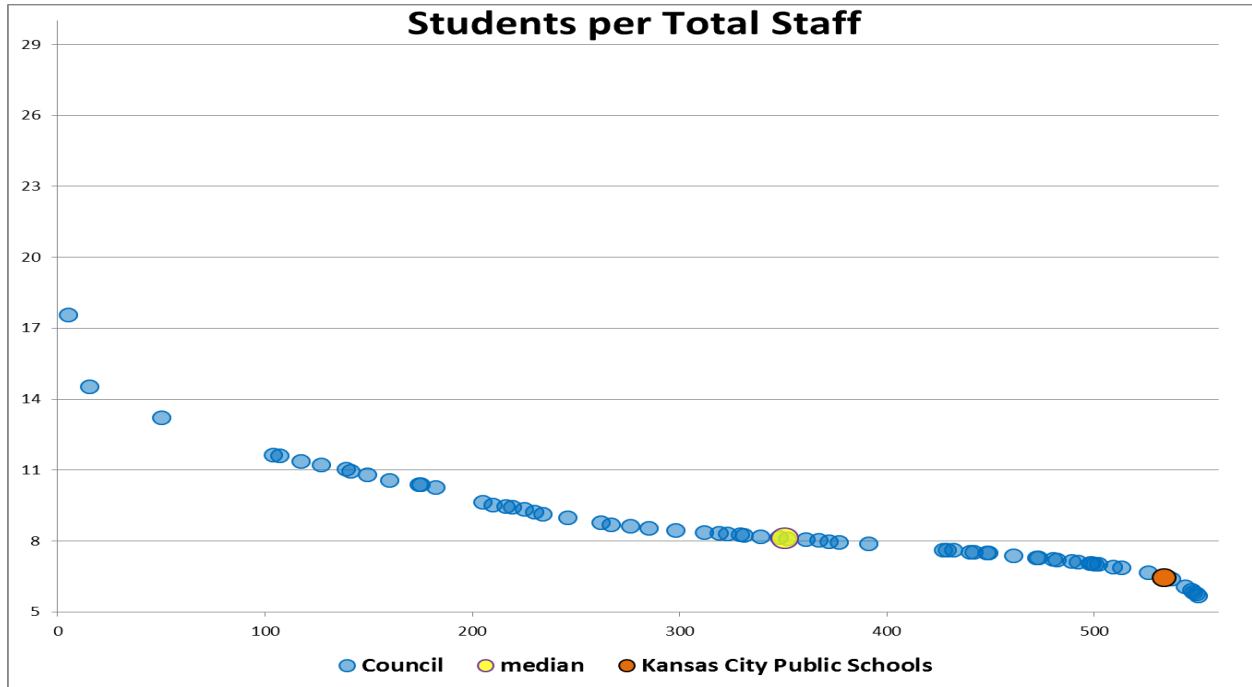
Y-axis=number of students to total staff; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Kansas City had 6.43 students per staff member; the median for the Great City Schools was 8.11 students per total staff member.

Exhibit 15. Percentage of Total Kansas City Staff Who Were Teachers Compared to the Great City School Median.
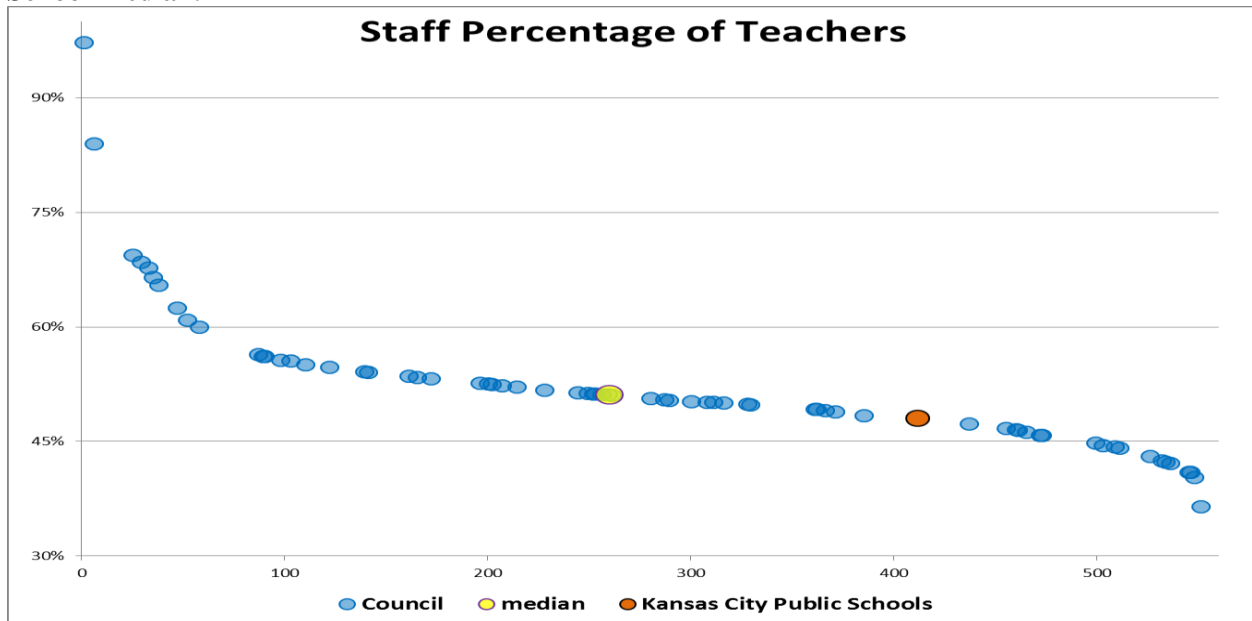
Y-axis=percentage of total staff who were teachers; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Kansas City's percentage of all staff who were teachers was 48.01 percent; the median for the Great City School districts was 51.06 percent.

Exhibit 16. Students per Teacher in Kansas City Compared to the Great City School Median
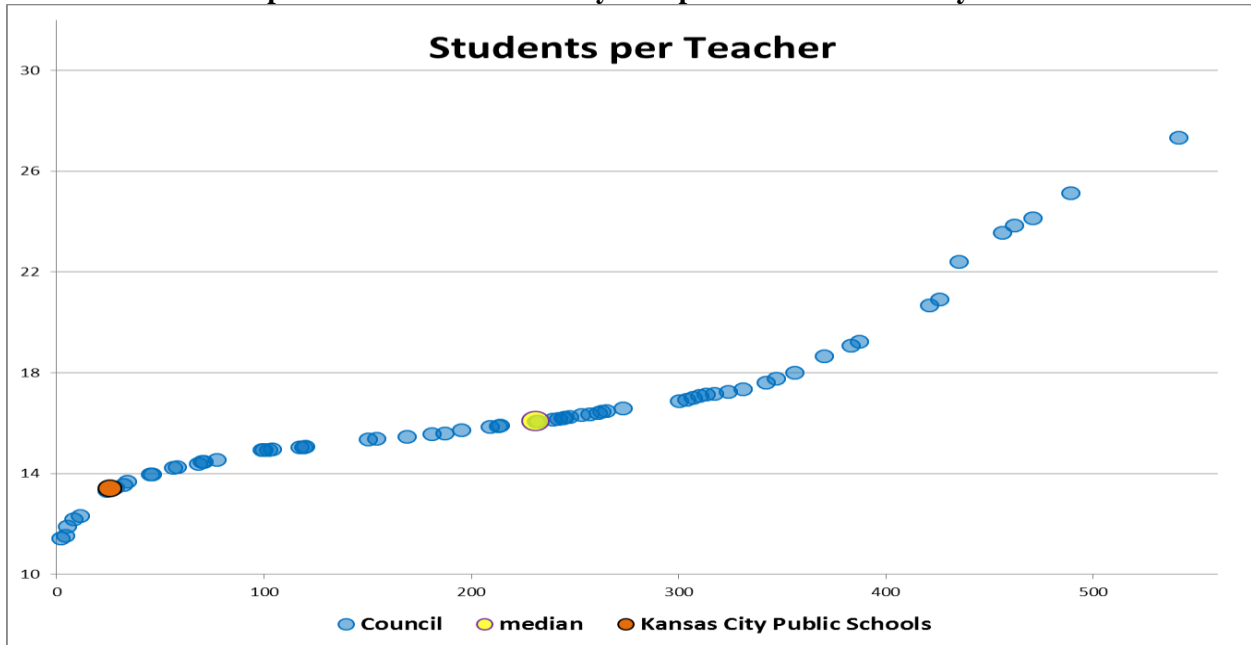
Y-axis=number of students to teachers; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Kansas City had 13.40 students per teacher; the median for the Great City Schools was 16.06 students per teacher.

Exhibit 17. Students per Total Administrative Staff in Kansas City Compared to the Great City School Median
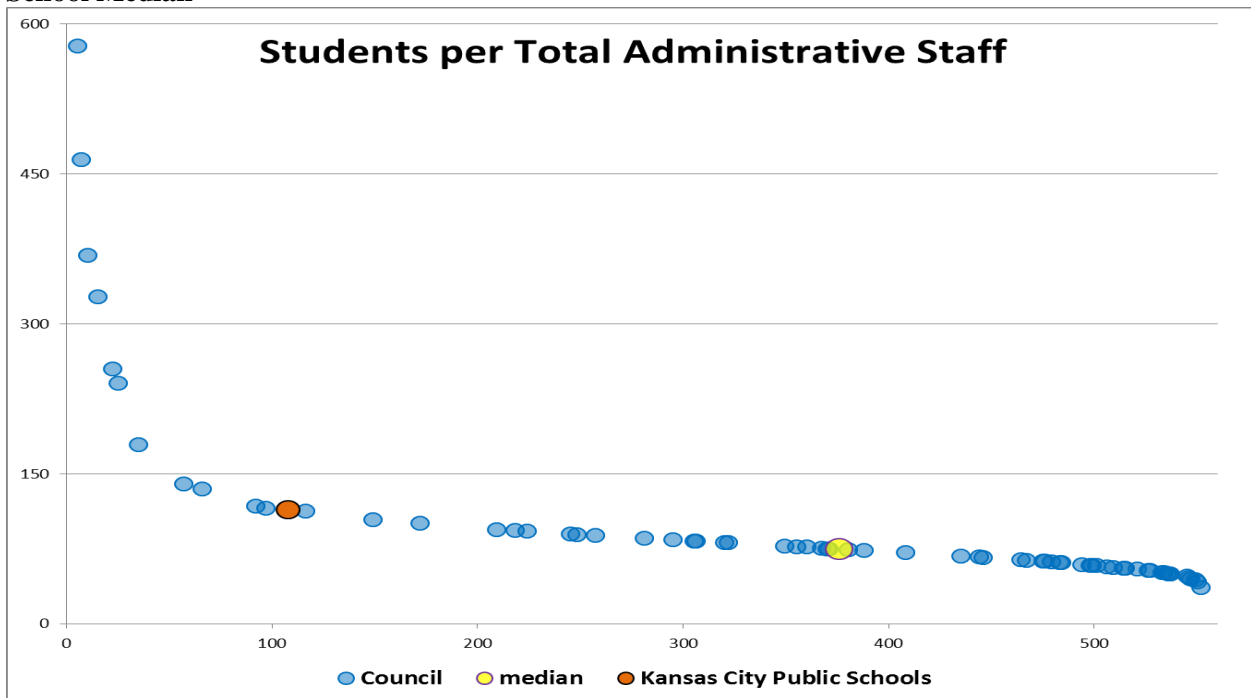
Y-axis=number of students per administrator; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Kansas City had 113.66 students per administrator; the median for the Great City Schools was 74.73 students per administrator.

Exhibit 18. Students per School-based Administrative Staff in Kansas City Compared to the Great City School Median
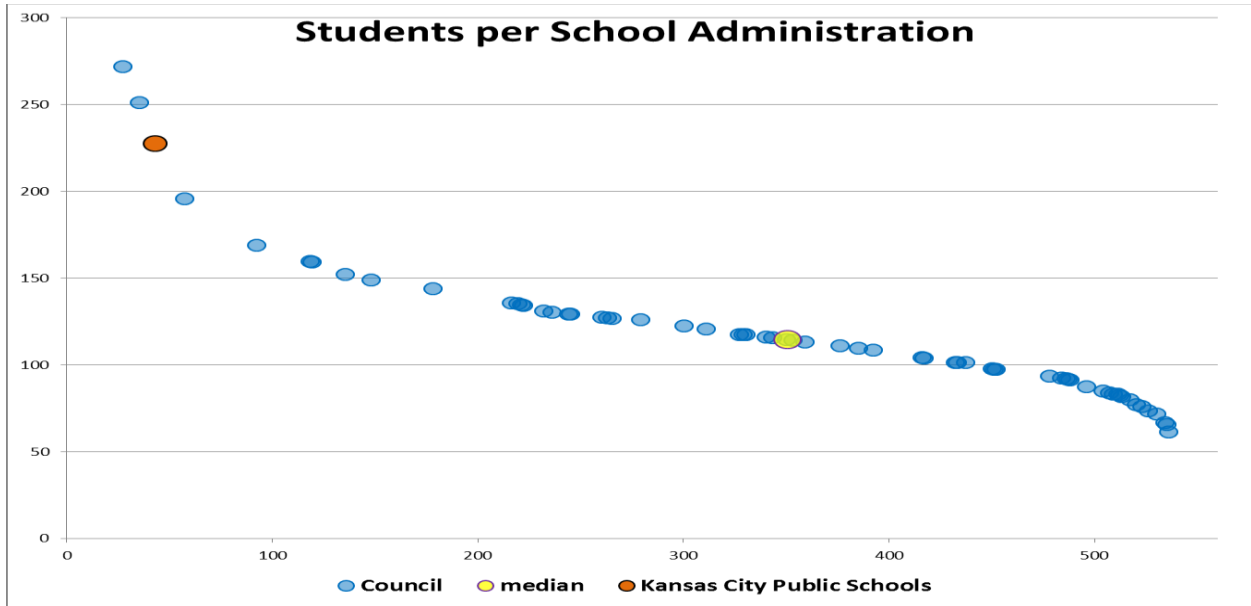
Y-axis=number of students per school-based administrator; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Kansas City had 227.32 students per school-based administrator; the median for the Great City Schools was 114.42 students per school-based administrator.

Exhibit 19. Students per District-level Administrative Staff in Kansas City Compared to the Great City School Median
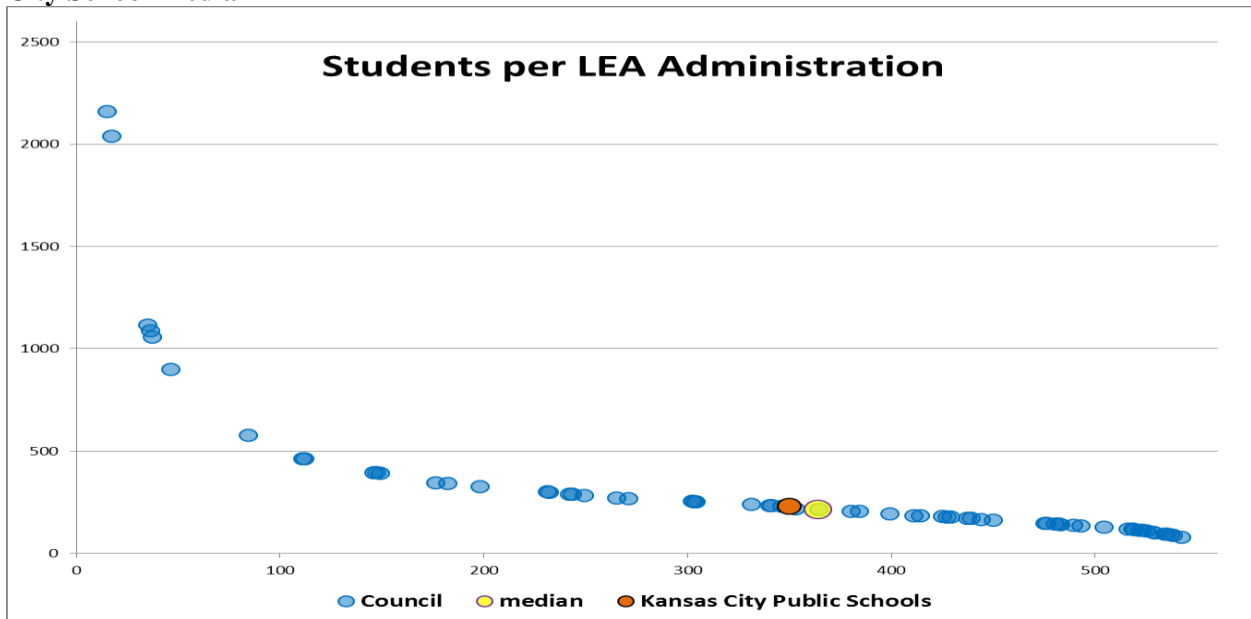
Y-axis=number of students per district-level administrator; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Kansas City had 227.31 students per district-level administrator; the median for the Great City Schools was 212.23 students per district-level administrator

E. Curriculum and Instruction

This chapter presents the findings and recommendations of the Council's instruction team. The academic team made its site visit to Kansas City from December 4 through 7, 2016. The chapter includes sections on commendations, general organizational and leadership issues, instructional programming, professional development, English language learners, special education, accountability, data and assessments, and discipline and behavior. There are corresponding recommendations for each section.

Exhibit 20 below shows the district's overall organizational chart and the 11 direct reports to the superintendent, including the chief academic and accountability officer.

Exhibit 20. KCPS Organizational Chart[7]

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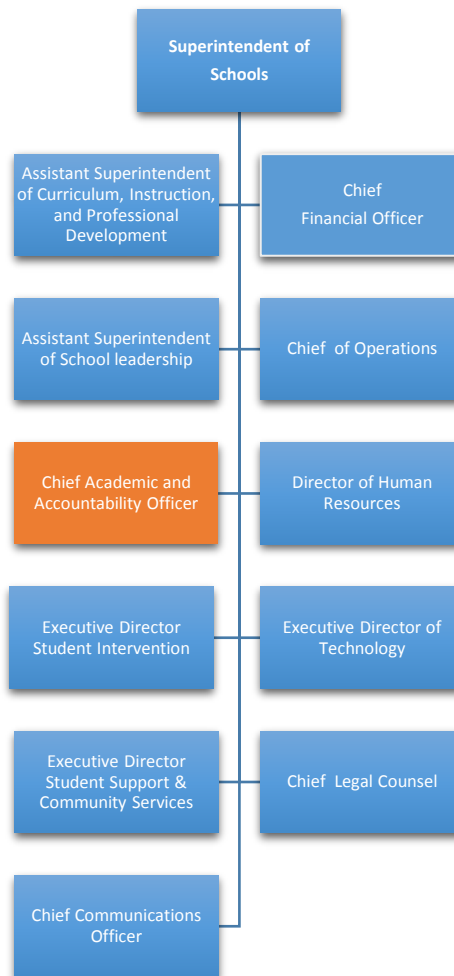
[7] This was the organizational structure that was described to the Council's team in its Fall 2016 meetings.

Exhibit 21 below shows the organization of the academic department. The chief academic and accountability officer (CAAO), a direct report to the superintendent, heads the organization, which has three departments. Each department is headed by a director.

Exhibit 21. Chief Academic and Accountability Office[8]
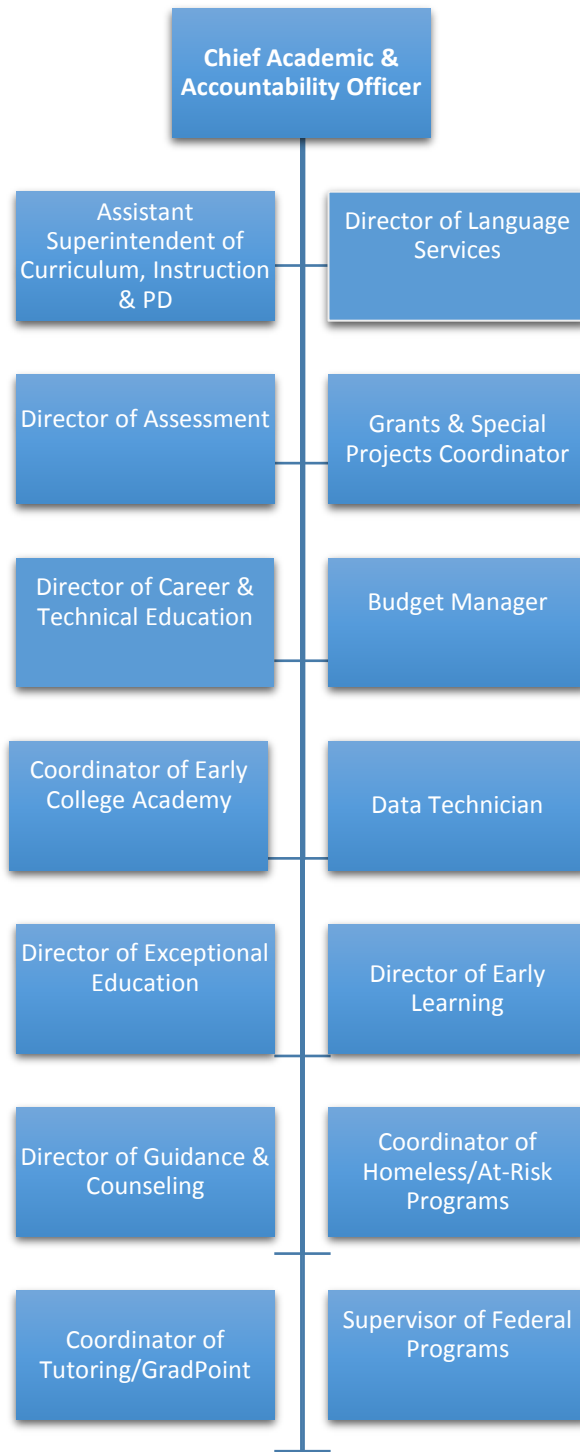
[8] This was the organizational structure that was given to the Council's team in its Fall 2016 meetings.

General Conclusion of the Curriculum and Instruction Review

The overall conclusion of the Council's Strategic Support Team is that ***KCPS lacks the quality of instructional programming, the ability to enhance personnel capacity, and the data systems to substantially improve student achievement at a faster rate.***

Findings and Observations

Commendations

- The school district has recently achieved sufficient points to be considered for accreditation from the state after several years of not being fully accredited.

- Policy governance has been instituted by the school board to combat the high turnover of superintendents and improve overall school board effectiveness.

- The school board has begun requesting regular monitoring reports on such topics as student performance, service-learning participation, student suspensions, etc.

- The school district under the new superintendent is about to engage in a strategic planning process. The previous plan was drafted in 2009.

- The district has a number of "signature" schools that offer specialized programs to attract parents and students to the school system: Border Star Montessori, Carver Dual Language School, Foreign Language Academy, Harold Holliday Montessori, African-Centered College Preparatory Academy, Lincoln College Preparatory Academy, and Paseo Academy of Fine and Performing Arts. The district has set explicit goals for increasing its enrollment in these and other schools.

- The dropout rate has declined among major racial groups.

- The district contracts with Jewish Vocational Services for translation services and cultural training.

- The school district's principal cadre shows promise, and the superintendent could build on their commitment and energy to move reforms forward.

- The summer school serves 7,135 students, and 6,706 were reported as being present at least one day. Program success was measured by meals served, bus miles driven, students present for at least one day, and by a pre- and post-assessment of student achievement.

General Organizational and Leadership Issues

- The district has recently received enough points to be considered for accreditation from the state. However, the district's status appears to be fragile and is subject to reversal if broader academic improvement is not realized and sustained.

- Social studies was the district's first academic content area to hit STATUS level, which denotes consistent progress. The district also attained STATUS level on several college- and career-ready (CCR) criteria. Twelve of the district's schools were fully accredited in 2016; 16 were provisionally accredited; and three were not accredited. Overall, the district was farthest behind in APR points (annual performance report) in areas of broad academic achievement and subgroup achievement.

- It was not clear what the district's overall theory of action was for improving student achievement, i.e., it was not clear what the district holds tight and what schools are free to do on their own.

- The district's overall instructional program was weak and incapable of improving student achievement much more as it is currently configured. (More on this in the instructional programming section.)

- Many individuals interviewed by the Council's instructional team voiced very low expectations for student achievement. Many interviewees expressed satisfaction with the district's overall performance, progress, and status in gaining enough points to be considered for accreditation by the state. A number of staff expressed contentment with student achievement levels when it was high relative to other schools in the district, even in cases where proficiency was barely at 50 percent.

- Interviewees often responded in guarded fashion to Council team questions and did not appear to have connected with peers in more successful and effective urban school districts across the country. The district's central-office staff often exhibited a sense of insularity and unfamiliarity with best practices elsewhere in the nation.

- The chief academic and accountability officer (CAAO) has an unusually large span of control. Those reporting to the CAAO also have uneven titles and scope of responsibilities, i.e., assistant superintendent, directors, coordinator, manager, technician, and supervisor.

- Having the director of assessment report to the CAAO presents a potential conflict of interest.

Instructional Programming

(a) Personnel

- The overall expertise of central office instructional leadership and staff was weak, and expectations for what students will do in their classrooms was very low.

- Principals do not see principal supervisors as instructional leaders. Principals report that they do not turn to their supervisors for instructional leadership or guidance.

- Principal supervisors are responsible for about 12 schools apiece, a reasonable span of control for this position, but they also have major operational responsibilities. They have no staff other than secretaries.

- Principal supervisors are seen as having little power to help principals with instructional challenges. Instead, they are viewed as most useful for operational questions, rather than instructional ones.

- The district does not have an aspiring principal or principal pipeline program but is considering implementing one with TNTP in collaboration with the Kaufman Foundation.

- Secondary principals do not have the opportunity to meet regularly with elementary principals, which makes vertical instructional challenges more difficult to resolve.

- The district appears to have cut its coaches when it lost Title I funds, rather than rethinking how else they might redeploy Title I funding to keep and improve the coaches.

- Principals reported to the team that instructional coaches were more effective than content leads in improving instruction, since content leads teach full time and may not have the expertise to support teachers at every grade. The Council team was also told that content leads cannot always follow up with embedded professional development. However, the team was also informed that only 10 Title I schools chose to pay for generalist coaches, and these coaches were often used more for classroom management purposes rather than instructional content or quality.

- Principals reported that the allocation of assistant principals should not be based solely on the size of the school but on the composition and needs of the schools

- Curriculum coordinators are charged with extensive responsibilities for developing curriculum, spending considerable time in schools, responding to principal and district requests, planning benchmark tests, and providing professional development.

- Principals and teachers reported the need for substantially more counselors, mental health support, social workers, etc.—for both students and adults.

(b) Curriculum, Materials, and Instruction

- Curriculum documents in grades K-6 are more focused on classroom processes, routines, and structures than on content and rigor.

- Neither classroom teachers nor lead teachers interviewed by the Council's team reported that they relied on the district's curriculum materials to drive instruction. More individuals reported that the multiple assessments used in the district were more powerful influences on instruction than the curriculum materials.

- The district curriculum's "I CAN" statements do not always align with the depth and rigor required by the standards. The district asserts that it took the I CAN statements from the Achieve the Core, which may be the case (although Achieve the Core did not write the I CAN statements on its website), but the fact is that the I CAN statements that were inserted into the district's instructional units did not consistently align with the appropriate standards, tasks, and instructional activities. In addition to the I CAN statements on the Achieve the Core website, Achieve the Core presents sample lessons that include the standards themselves, instructional goals, enduring understandings, and essential questions that gives the teacher a deeper understanding of what is expected—a context that Kansas City's units do not include.

  In general, "I CAN" statements are useful as a tool for students to know the content that they are learning as well as a tool for self-assessment. However, a district curriculum should not be relegated solely to "I CAN" statements, because they do not promote connections across standards and they minimize the depth and rigor required by the standards. As indicated, in Kansas City, the "I CAN statements are not always tightly aligned to the depth and rigor required by the standard. For example, a third grade math unit reviewed by the team had this "I CAN" statement listed in the KCPS curriculum, "I can add or subtract numbers within 1000." The actual standard states, "*Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.*" The "I CAN" statement does not indicate that there is a fluency expectation for grade three, nor that students are to perform these operations using strategies and algorithms to reflect and reinforce one's knowledge and understanding of place value. Without greater detail, teachers may inadvertently limit their teaching to the algorithm for adding and subtracting numbers within 1000. They might also fail to develop both the conceptual and procedural understanding that is necessary to support student learning. This failure can eventually lead to gaps in a student's foundational knowledge and may ultimately impede student performance in mathematics as concepts become more complex.

  In addition, a KCPS secondary ELA unit reviewed by the team used the "I CAN" statement, "I can use close reading to unlock complex text," as a learning target. However, this learning target is not a standard. It is a strategy that might be used to help students achieve any number of standards. For example, close reading can be used to "draw conclusions, infer, and analyze by citing textual evidence to support what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text." (Missouri Learning Standards: R1A, R2A, B, C) Without more specific guidance, teachers might focus on the process of using close reading rather than teaching the grade level content at the appropriate depth and rigor required by the standard.

- Curriculum documents do not provide recommendations for scaffolding or differentiation. The list of strategies does not provide sufficient guidance to teachers on when or how to use them.

- None of the curriculum documents specify the level of depth of understanding that concepts need to be taught to. The district has a rubric by which to examine student work, but it is too generic to provide much guidance to teachers and could be interpreted any number of ways by users.

- Principal supervisors do not have exemplars of what the district expects in terms of student work products throughout the year. They appear to accept the wide variability in what they see in their schools.

- Schools are devising their own curriculum maps due to inadequate curriculum materials provided by the central office. District curriculum leaders did not appear to know why schools were choosing to abandon or augment district initiatives. It was clear that curriculum leaders do not have adequate feedback loops to determine why schools were choosing to abandon or augment district initiatives, nor did they have feedback mechanisms to deal with the fact that school-based staff did not believe the materials they received from the central office were adequate to meet their instructional needs.

- In addition, school-based staff reported to the Council team that the pacing guides were too crowded, i.e., materials did not explicitly take into account testing days and other non-teaching days. In other words, the guides do not clearly indicate available teaching time, and interviewees reported that there was not sufficient time to teach all the concepts specified.

- Teachers have become so procedurally oriented that students do not gain a conceptual understanding of math and ELA content. Pacing guides are written in a way that reinforces procedural instruction rather than developing content knowledge and conceptual understanding.

- Interviewees report that the district does not have a well-articulated system of academic interventions when students fall behind. The district has a 30-minute RTI period in some schools but no broad strategy for maximizing its effectiveness or bolstering Tier I instruction.

- The district has competing instructional models at play, i.e., Madeline Hunter vs. Marzano vs. Ainsworth, that probably cause confusion about instructional expectations. The central office espouses the Marzano model, but staff in other departments and teachers at individual schools indicated that they used other approaches. Regardless of whether the district selects a single model or an amalgamation of models, the district needs a shared vision to serve as a focal point for the work at every level of the district. The competing models cause confusion about what is expected.

- Information from school walk-throughs is not routinely shared with the central office to inform broader districtwide instructional strategies and initiatives.

- The district has developed a rubric for examining student work, but it is very vague and could be interpreted any number of ways by users.

- There are inadequate mechanisms by which teachers either identify gaps in student understanding and few systemic way for teachers to address those gaps. While the district employs reading inventories and has some materials available to address gaps in student understanding, the curriculum could support its teachers more fully by alerting teachers to look for common gaps in student understanding at the outset, pointing to typical student misconceptions in student understanding, and providing appropriate strategies or processes for teachers to use to address those gaps. In the example below excerpted from Kansas City materials, strategies are named but not described. Teachers are to determine for themselves where students need assistance, but there is no guidance about typical misconceptions or gaps that students might experience.

Addressing Content

Practice and Deepen New Knowledge

Model/demonstrate
Guided practice/Independent practice
Small group interaction
Use drawings/models

The teacher will present the Visual Learning/Digital Path section.

The teacher will determine which students need additional help (use the Differentiated Instruction lesson) and which students can work at learning centers or on an approved math website after they have completed their assignment.

In addition, this third grade unit in mathematics does not include sufficient detail to support teachers in addressing unfinished student learning concretely nor does it indicate typical student misconceptions. This column with its lack of detail repeats throughout the third grade unit.

- The district does not appear to have a strong or adequate strategy for its turn-around schools. (See school improvement plan section.)

(c) English Language Arts/Literacy

- The ELA curriculum documents are based on skills and strategies rather than standards. Standards in the document are presented in a way that isolates them from their context and undermines their coherence.

- In the fifth grade unit 3 document reviewed by the team: Tracing the Resiliency in American History, guidance to teachers is a simple listing of—

    + teaching points and guiding questions,

- literacy skills/strategies with corresponding "I CAN" statements
- principles of accountable talk
- summative unit writing project
- Formative and summative assessments
- The Missouri Learning Standards (CCSS) Assessed for Mastery
- Tier I, II and III academic vocabulary
- Unit Text Suggestions

Without clear guidance about how all of these components connect and why they are important to the overall instructional process, teachers are left to make their own decisions about how to operationalize the unit. This lack of specificity will lead to considerable variability in instruction, lack of coherence in the delivery of content, and a high probability of unfinished student learning at the end of the unit.

- The district is considering the adoption of Readers/Writers Workshop without fully considering its alignment to the common core. The district is piloting the workshop in one school, but a full evaluation of the pilot does not exist.

- Also, Readers/Writers Workshop is being considered without identifying when professional development will be provided; yet the program requires extensive professional development in order to have any chance of success.

- The process for transitioning from Pearson's *Reading Street* to Readers/Writers Workshop has not been clearly articulated or well thought out. In addition, teachers and principals reported to the Council team that they pull items from the Pearson Item Bank to develop practice tests for standards taught during instruction. A choice of Pearson Text Selections was provided in all of the ELA units reviewed and the item bank associated with the Pearson reading selections was used for assessment purposes.

- Discussions of academic vocabulary were isolated from the narrative context of the words.

- There is little evidence of literacy across the curriculum, even though staff asserted that they were pursuing this practice.

(d) Mathematics

- The district's curriculum documents in math are not fully aligned to the state's standards, and neither are the math assessments or instructional materials. Instead, the district's math curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards—Math, which are somewhat different. In addition, the curriculum does not provide sufficient guidance to teachers on the content and rigor of the standards. The new Missouri Standards for mathematics were approved in April 2016. The Missouri website states that these standards are to be used in 2016-17 even though they will not be assessed until SY 2018. (Grade Level Expectations) is 2016-17. (https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/curr-mls-standards-math-k-5-sboe-2016.pdf.

The district should use SY17 to provide supporting details and written guidance about changes that may appear in the curriculum, what students will learn, and what they are expected to do during SY17. It is imperative that teachers be provided guidance and clarity in their curriculum documents to help inform them about any changes in the grade-level placement of specific content standards, where content is situated within the learning progression, and subtle distinctions between the Missouri Standards and CCSSM.

For the Missouri Standards for mathematics, 3.RA.D is the comparable cluster heading for CCSSM 3.08.D

CCSSM	Missouri Standards
***Solve problems involving the four operations, and identify and explain patterns in arithmetic* (3.0A.D)**	**Use the four operations to solve word problems (3.RA.D)**
• Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding (3.0A.D.8)	• Write and solve two-step problems involving variables using any of the four operations (3.RA.D.9). Interpret the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding (3.RA.D.10).

While the differences between these two related standards are subtle, the district will need to provide guidance and clarity about the depth of content and the level of rigor required so that teachers are clear about what students are expected to know and do. For example, consider whether students will use the four operations to solve the two-step word problems above, or merely solve two-step problems. Second, the curriculum should be clear about distinctions in what students would do to assess the reasonableness of an answer rather than interpret the reasonableness of answers.

Moreover, items in the Kansas City benchmark assessments did not reflect the level of rigor required for the grade level. To illustrate this, examine the third grade benchmark test example from Kansas City used to assess the grade three CCSSM Standard 3.NBT.A.2, *(Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.)* The assessment item seen below actually is an expectation for grade one rather than grade three, which is how the district the labels it. Therefore, the benchmark assessment has set the districtwide expectation too low.

Question:

Which number sentence can be used to find how many buttons in all?
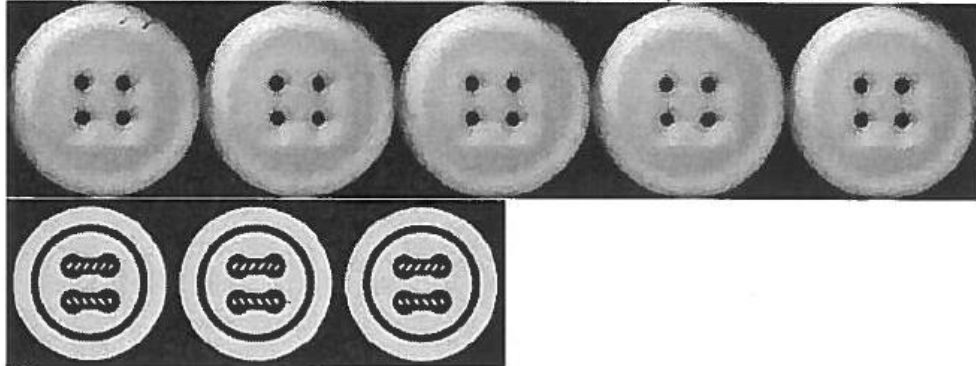
*A. 5+3=8

B. 6+3=9

C. 6+4=10

D. 6+5=11

- The math standards are written procedurally in the district curriculum documents that the team was given. (The district's math team has started to rewrite the curriculum.)

- The "math: scope and sequence of units and quarterly learning objectives" documents present standards discretely, making it harder for teachers to create coherence within and across grades.

- There are limited numbers of math courses above the level of pre-calculus and Algebra II in each district high school. In fact, there appear to be no AP math courses offered at any high school in the district, and no high school offers more than four AP courses. Lincoln is an IB school.

- Only 50 percent of district students have successfully completed Algebra I by the end of ninth grade.

(e) School Improvement Plans[9]

- The school district requires schools to complete an accountability plan and a school-wide Title I plan. The sections of the schoolwide Title I plan and the accountability plan (goals, strategies, etc.) appear reasonable.

- Some plans include a strategy for using the district curriculum and pacing guide. And most plans contained a needs assessment with multiple data sources.

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[9] The team examined school improvement and accountability plans for East, Garfield, Gladstone, Hartman, James, and Trailwoods.

- The team questioned whether the school improvement plans had been revised to reflect college- and career-readiness goals. One of the plans had a footer that used the date 9/26/16 as well as the date 9/26/12.

- Plans appeared to be compliance oriented and not designed to actively guide the work of schools. In other words, many plans lacked actual strategies for how they were going to improve student achievement.

  o There appeared to be an emphasis on completing the plan rather than conducting a thoughtful, reflective, iterative process that addressed school needs.

  o In many instances, the action steps were process-focused without specific or explicit connections to how these steps would raise student achievement.

- It was not clear to the team why the schools needed both an accountability plan and a separate schoolwide Title I plan.

- The needs assessment section in the plans the team reviewed reflected extremely low student performance. The stated goals allowed for a gain of one year of growth in student achievement for reading and mathematics on the MAP test in order to be deemed successful. But, improving student achievement appears to focus on remediation rather than accelerating student achievement and may actually result in wider achievement gaps.

- Even when strategies are mentioned in the plans, they were often disconnected from the deeper purpose of helping students reach grade-level performance. For example, the emphasis on planning instruction for guided reading lacked any connection to developing access to grade-level complex text. Instructionally, teachers could mistake compliance with guided reading for its actual purpose of getting students the knowledge and skills they need to read at grade level.

- Even though schools indicated that student performance in mathematics had decreased from 2015 to 2016, there was no specific strategy in the plans to improve math performance other than those that mentioned interventions (i.e., Study Island or the addition of an intervention block of 75 minutes). The lack of focus on what teachers can do during classroom instruction to fill in gaps in knowledge and skills will likely keep students from accessing grade-level content. Interventions alone will not bring students to grade level.

- Some plans indicated that school schedules were changed to block scheduling (double blocking in ELA and math, adding a remediation period). This led the team to ask what courses students were losing (science, art, social studies, PE, etc.). These courses also contribute to building reading and mathematics skill and understanding. There was no apparent attention given to lesson-plan design, instructional modifications, or assessment strategies to take advantage of the features of a block schedule. Additionally, there were no measures of how the effectiveness of the intervention time would be evaluated and no criteria for when and how to use the interventions.

- While the use of the curriculum was mentioned in some plans, there was no explanation of how teachers should use the curriculum during their PLCs or grade level planning time to address learning gaps or to accelerate student learning.

- Title I school improvement plans are approved by the CAAO and the Title I director—generally a good practice.

- The district's academic plan describes the strategy for supporting low-performing schools and students. In general, that plan includes a focus on adding literacy labs in six elementary schools; the introduction of City Year in two of the district's lowest performing high schools; a 1:1 laptop for all students in grades 1-12; professional development aligned to district curriculum and state standards; additional AP and dual credit opportunities; the implementation of RTI strategies using the STAR assessment; the introduction of High Schools that Work (HSTW) and Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG); wrap-around services; a closer focus on attendance; data consultations at each school; and district-level curriculum coordinators. In the opinion of the team, these strategies alone would not be enough to turn around some of the district's lowest- performing schools.

(f) Early Childhood Education

- Staff reported to the Council team that its best pre-K results come from its Montessori program but that many of the children who participate in the program then enroll in kindergarten in charter and private schools. The district has an explicit plan for recruiting more pre-K pupils into its schools that includes direct parent outreach, grocery store and community outreach, parent tours, promotional materials, and other efforts. (The plan appears to be very well thought out.)

- Pre-K-has a tracking system in place to know whether students perform better by grade 3. In general, the results suggest a modestly positive effect of pre-school participation by kindergarten, but the effect appears to be driven mostly by four schools Banneker Elementary, Gladstone Elementary, Hartman Elementary, and Paige Elementary). The effect of pre-K participation in math was weaker and very uneven by kindergarten. Overall, math results appeared to be driven by four schools: Banneker Elementary, Gladstone Elementary, Cook Elementary, Longfellow Elementary, and King Elementary. The Council team did not see any analysis of why some pre-K programs were producing better effects than others.

- The district administers the DRDP to gauge kindergarten readiness, and the American Regional Council holds the data on the district.

- The size of the district's pre-k class is about 53 percent of its kindergarten class, which is about the norm if not slightly better than the average urban school district. (Exhibit A-14)

(g) Gifted and Talented Programming

- The district identifies students for gifted programs by screening all third graders with the Naglieri, and by parent and teacher referral—generally a good practice.

- Data provided by the school systems indicated that some 698 students were enrolled in gifted and talented programs, about 5 percent of district enrollment. Some 261 (37.4 percent) of these were enrolled at Lincoln College Prep, but most schools had at least some students participating in a gifted program.

- About 66 ELLs districtwide were enrolled in a gifted and talented program, as were 244 African American students (35 percent of program participants), 279 Hispanics (40 percent), and 117 White students (16.8 percent).

(h) Technology

- The 1:1 initiative appears to have been rushed, and there is no plan or professional development on the use of the technology or how to integrate it into instruction. It was also not clear what problem the initiative was designed to solve. There is no evaluation of the program. And no replacement or maintenance plan was described to the team.

- The district does not allow elementary students to take home their new 1:1 devices leaving students without access to textbook materials. Only high school students may take their devices home.

- The district tracks the amount of usage of various electronic instructional tools, e.g., Study Island, Imagine Learning, Big Brain, but has not evaluated their effects.

Professional Development and Capacity Building

- The school system does have a professional development plan that spans a number of years and is up to date. It spells out goals, components, training for certified, non-certified staff and administrators, and evaluations. Its framework is generally grounded in work done by Robert Marzano. The plan has four main goals: Provide professional learning focused on (a) classroom practices that promote student achievement; (b) developing a deep understanding of the curriculum in all content areas and a process for continuous review and revision of learning targets; (c) assessment to promote continuous learning, to inform students, parents, and educators about student achievement, and to determine intervention needs; and (d) providing a supportive and safe learning environment conducive to student learning.

- The district has three days of professional development before the beginning of the school year and three days at the end of the school years for teacher leaders; all other teachers receive two days of professional development for the year.

- The district has an induction program for new and beginning teachers to provide a mentor and provide support on curriculum content, classroom management, and available

resources. New teachers are categorized as new (to the district) or beginning (new to teaching). They receive three to four days of orientation prior to the start of the school year and then one day per quarter pulled out for professional development. The professional development sessions include classroom management and building a new community but only four 90 minute sessions on content for the year (one each quarter). The district's induction efforts can last as long as five years.

- The district provides little formal professional development for the ten instructional coaches that are funded at the school level out of Title I.

- The district has instituted the position of content lead in every building. In addition to teaching full time, each content lead provides 75 minutes of professional development every Wednesday to other teachers and also establishes model classrooms for peers to visit. According to people interviewed, the quality of content leads appears to vary widely. Content leads report that they are mostly asked to help with classroom behavior, rather than supporting teachers with instructional content.

- The content leads are supported with an external grant that may be about to expire. New funding has not been identified to continue the program. These content leads receive a $5000 stipend funded out of a grant, but the grant that funded the additional stipend (math/science grant) was not approved for renewal.

- It would seem difficult for a content lead or teacher leader to teach a full day and have time to help others. Many principals reported that they would rather have full-time coaches.

- The district's professional development system is largely a menu-driven set of options from which teachers and staff choose courses to satisfy CEUs (continuing education units) with little connection to the district's academic priorities or student needs. A district's professional development plan should align and connect to district goals and priorities seamlessly. Professional development should include consistent follow-up and feedback, and should address teacher's knowledge of content as well as effective practices for teaching the content. It should include time for active learning and job-embedded options. Rather than single sessions, professional development should be structured to allow ample time for teachers and staff to internalize and reflect upon their practice. Effective professional development should not be built around the accumulation of hours to gain steps on a salary scale.

- The Council team reviewed the professional development plan submitted for Professional Development Department Offerings for 2015, 2016, and 2017. From the review, we found a largely menu-driven set of options per content area for which teachers and staff may choose. This menu included disconnected sessions that ranged in duration from 45 minutes to 2.5 hours. Similarly, the individual content sessions did not appear to be connected to a larger vision of professional development for the content areas. For example, the professional development in mathematics included a 2.5-hour summer session on "Number Talks for grades K-2" and "Number Talks for grades 3-5". However, during the school year, these sessions were not repeated nor were opportunities provided where teachers

could collaborate and deepen their understanding of how to use "Number Talks" to support students in understanding place value, operations, and fractions. During 2015-16 for English Language Arts, the professional development provided a mere 45 minutes each to cover such key topics as "Teaching Students Decoding", "Teaching Students Academic Vocabulary", and "Teaching Students Comprehension". Sessions may have had a cursory evaluation, but there were no data on or evaluations of how the sessions affected actual classroom practice or student achievement.

- Professional development is not differentiated by teacher expertise or years of experience and does not attend to identified needs of teachers or administrators.

- Professional development is not evaluated for either how well it is implemented or what effect it has on student outcomes. (A new teacher evaluation form provided to the team had participants rating the overall preparation, style, methods and rapport of the professional development instructor; the usefulness of the ideas in the workshop; and suggestions for improvement.) The effects of professional learning communities (PLCs) and coaching are also not evaluated for their impact on classroom practice.

- The district tracks participation in professional development with its My Learning Plan, but there is no analysis of the effects of the professional development program.

- The district takes attendance on teachers participating in voluntary professional development but has no systematic tracking of the impact of professional development teachers choose to attend. Teachers are given CEUs in order to increase attendance at the sessions. Fifteen CEUs are required to move up one step on the pay scale (250 hours). In other words, the district is accruing increasing personnel costs without knowing whether the professional development produced any results.

- Principals indicated to the Council team that they do not receive systemic or adequate professional development, although some participate in the SAM program.

- Principals have PLCs once a month, but they report that they spend most of their time on attendance, discipline, and evaluation rather than understanding district expectations regarding standards and student work or how to improve instruction.

- Professional development for new principals (the Leadership Summit) entailed one week but only one day on the curriculum. Principals reported that they needed more professional development time on the curriculum and instructional expectations.

- The district cannot require teachers to meet beyond what is allowed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

- In general, the district's professional development system—other than its lead teacher mechanism—is not strong enough to increase the capacity of teachers and staff to improve student achievement. The district does not have a convincing way of building the capacity of its teachers and staff.

English Language Learners

- About 24 percent of the district's enrollment is ELL, a higher level than even the average urban school district across the country. (The percentage increases to about 28 percent when recently exited ELLs are included.) Some 4,781 students in the district speak a primary language other than English; some 3,712 of these receive ESL services.

- The top five languages spoken by students in the district include Spanish (72 percent), Somali (6.7 percent), other (6.6 percent), Vietnamese (3.4 percent), and Burmese (3.0 percent). The district also enrolls some 164 unaccompanied minors, most of whom are SIFE.

- The district uses WIDA's ACCESS test to measure English proficiency. The district currently has 474 ELLs at Level 1 (lowest), 542 students at level 2, 907 at Level 3, 889 at level 4, and 746 at level 5 (highest). Some 265 students were assessed as proficient. The Council teams see this pattern in other districts as well.

- An analysis by the district of AMAO-2 WIDA data under the prior NCLB system shows that the district had low English language acquisition skills among students in grades K-2 and 6-8.

AMAO 2- MET
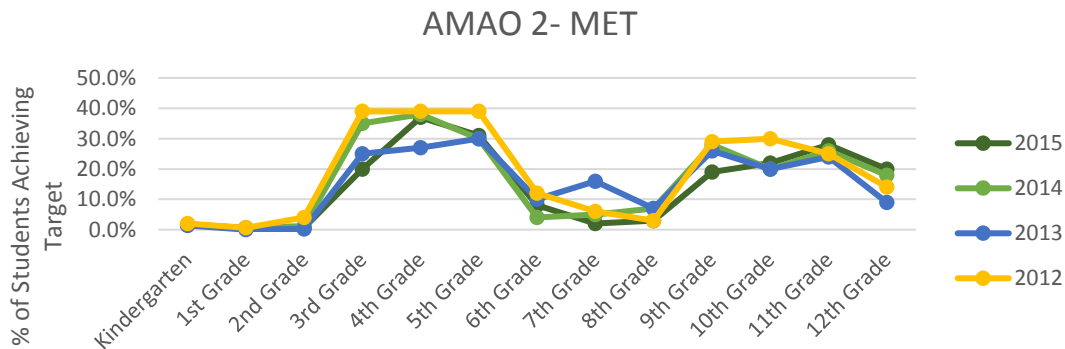
Part of the reason for this pattern may be due to the age and developmental level of the younger students and the increasing difficulty of the later-grades ACCESS test, but some could be due to the age of newcomer students and to the strength of the language programs at these grades. The district should further analyze these data.

- The district's NWEA data do suggest that exited ELLs in grades K-8 tend to make more progress in reading and math than non-ELLS—also consistent with other districts and national trends.

- In its most recent auditing report, the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) found the district in compliance with all Title III requirements.

- It appeared from Title III budget documents that the program had a carryover of some $300,000, but the documents were not clear about whether the funds were being repurposed elsewhere. It also appeared that not all Title III funds allocated for materials were actually spent.

- The language services department includes 12 central office staff of which five are home school liaisons, four are resource teachers, and one is an assessment specialist. A total of 94 certified and classified staff are based in schools. The district appears to make generous use of paraprofessionals to serve ELLs. The department also provides translation services to a wide array of district operations.

- The language services department performs a number of services throughout the district. The functions are summarized in Exhibit 22 below.

Exhibit 22. Functions Performed by the Language Services Office

Resource/ Support	Descriptions	Audience	Provided By/Funding Source
Co-teaching	Piloting in 3 elementary schools for 2016-2017 school year; 4 modules with a focus on language acquisition and co-teaching principles	ESL and elementary classroom teachers 2016-2017 pilot at Whittier, Garfield and Rogers	ESL Resource Teachers Title III
Educating English Language Learners (E2L2)	5 modules spread out over 5 months; content covers culture, language acquisition, academic language and differentiation	School teams consisting of ESL, classroom teachers and administrators Previous teams have attended from Wheatley, Whittier, FLA, Garfield, James, Trailwoods, Rogers, and Carver	ESL Resource Teacher and ESL Assessment Specialist Title III Operating funds
Engage ALL (SIOP-Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)	3-day training focusing on language acquisition and instructional support to develop language and content mastery	Classroom teachers, instructional coaches Target ESL schools	ESL Resource Teachers National Professional Development grant funds until 2017
Low-literacy strategies/reading in the content areas	Focus on how to address reading for secondary students with low to no native language literacy	Secondary ESL teachers, particularly sheltered science, math and social studies at NEMS and East	New Americans ESL Resource Teacher Title III Kauffman grant
Student Shadowing	Protocol for observing and quantifying long-term ELL classroom engagement with a follow-up focus on identifying instructional strategies to increase	Observation initially done by middle/high school leadership teams alongside a district team Target schools NEMS and NEHS	ESL Resource Teachers Title III

	engagement based on observations and data		
Lesson Modeling, Coaching, Feedback, Data Analysis	Available upon request by teacher or administrator; for individuals, teams or grade levels	Open to all	ESL Resource Teachers and ESL Assessment Specialist Title III
Interpreting and translating	12 in-district languages available to do face-to-face interpreting or short translations for schools and teachers with the goal of increasing and supporting the home-school connection for second language families; additional languages are available at school sites through use of ESL paraprofessionals	Hearings Office Early Childhood Public Relations Repurposing Department Office of Student Support Transportation Department Child Nutrition All school sites Community agencies as requested (i.e., Jewish Vocational Service, Della Lamb)	Home-School Liaisons Title III Operating funds (ESL paraprofessionals) Refugee Impact Grant
Community outreach	Conduct home visits, help connect KCPS families with community resources, immigration support	All second language families and referrals from schools/staff	Home-School Liaisons Interpreters Supplemental Migrant/Refugee/LEP Social Worker Title III Refugee Impact Grant Title I-C
Parent Education	Parenting classes in multiple languages to address discipline and acceptable cultural practices, the American school system, attendance, graduation. Parent education and information classes on topics such as inclement weather, enrollment, vaccinations, transportation, as well literacy and academics and how to support in the home	All languages are invited with particular attention to new arrivals	Supplemental Migrant/Refugee/LEP Social Worker Home-School Liaisons Interpreters Title III Refugee Impact Grant Title I-C

Student support	Interpreting and translating, academic support in the form of in class assistance, grade/credit monitoring, support groups and counseling	Any ELL, with particular attention to migrant, refugee and immigrant students	Supplemental Migrant/Refugee/LEP Social Worker Home-School Liaisons Interpreters ESL Paraprofessionals Title III Refugee Impact Grant Title I-C Operating funds (paraprofessionals)

- The director of ELL is not on the superintendent's cabinet, and ELL program needs are sometimes not considered at the outset of the district's instructional strategizing, according to multiple staff the Council team interviewed.

- Judging from the Council team's interviews, there did not appear to be any deliberate mechanism for collaboration between content coordinators and the ELL department to intentionally address language development among the district's English language learners.

- Teachers were sometimes reported to put ELLs on computers when they didn't know what else to do with them.

- The district lacks a systemwide strategy for implementing co-teaching models for ELLs and students with disabilities in general education classes. Some co-teachers were reported to lack content knowledge.

Special Education

- There appears to be little coordination between special education staff and general education staff on curriculum development, professional development, or implementation of either.

- Staff interviewed by the Council team described a districtwide culture that resisted mainstreaming of special education students in general education classrooms. There appeared to be no culture of inclusion in the district for ELLs or SPED students.

- The district does not do extensive co-teaching in classrooms with students with disabilities at the elementary school level. The district does no substantial professional development to prepare teachers to co-teach or to implement a co-teaching model or work with co-teachers.

- The district may have a disproportionate placement of students in special education by race, but the disproportionality is in the direction of White students, with some disabilities. (See more below.)

- The special education office does its own professional development of special education teachers, but does not provide professional development on special education for general education teachers

a. Disability Rates

- KCPS enrolls some 2,146[10] students with IEPs, who are three through 21 years of age. This number includes students in separate schools (inside and outside of the district). The number accounts for 13.78[1] percent of the 15,568[11] students enrolled in the district. Among school-aged students (K-12), the district enrolls some 1,970 students with disabilities, which amounts to 13.51 percent of the district's 14,581 students. This percentage is comparable to the 13.1 percent average across 71 urban school districts on which we have data.[12] Percentages in other districts ranged from 8 percent to 22 percent, indicating that KCPS was normal in the numbers of students identified as having a disability. The KCPS figure is only slightly higher than the 12.9 percent national figure, which has decreased since 2004-05, when it was 13.8 percent.[13]

Exhibit 23. Percentage of Students by Disability Category, Compared to State and Nation

	SLD	S/L	ED	OHI	ID	Autism	Other
KCPS	34.3%	18.3%	7.5%	14.9%	11.4%	7.8%	5.8%
State	27.5%	23.6%	5.9%	21.0%	8.5%	9.3%	4.2%
Nation	40.0%	18.0%	6.0%	13.0%	7.0%	8.0%	8.0%
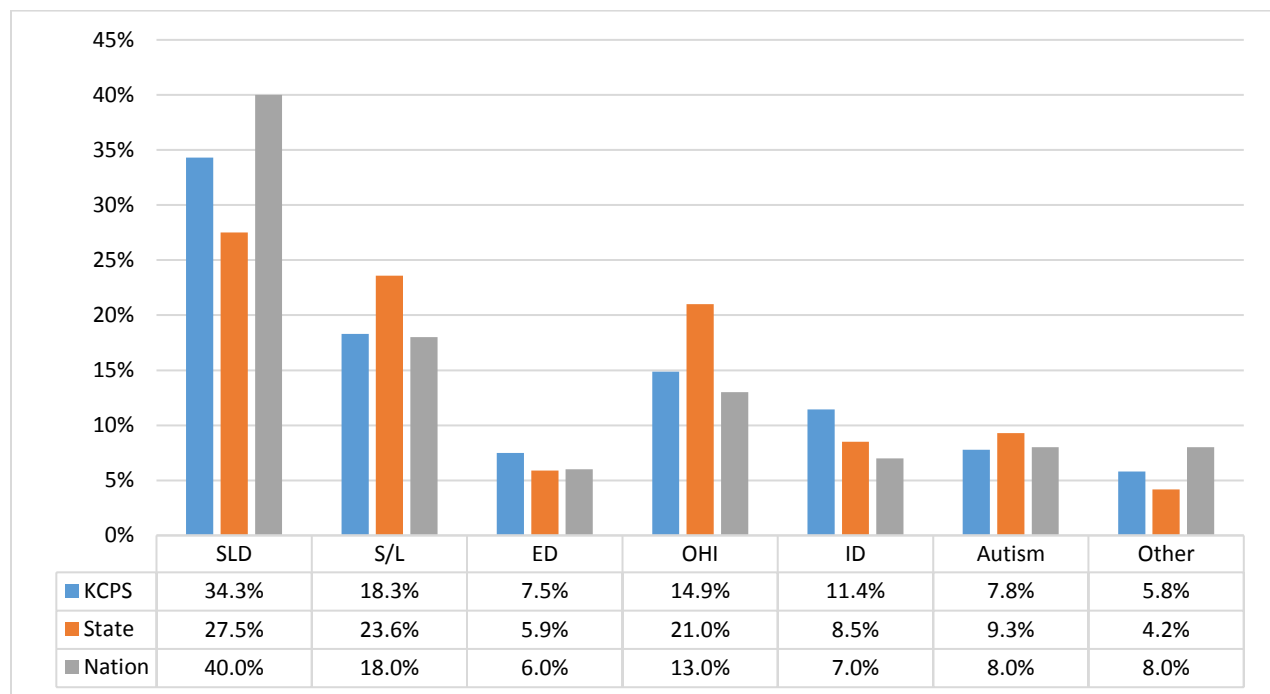
[10] Retrieved from Missouri Department of Education, Special Education Data Category at https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/quickfacts/Pages/Special-Education.aspx.
[11] KCPS By the Numbers (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.kcpublicschools.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=171.
[12] Most data were provided by school districts that responded to a survey conducted by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative; the Council team or members of the team obtained the remaining data during district reviews.
[13] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2013* (NCES 2015-011), Chapter 2. The rates are based on 2011-12 data based on students 3 through 21 years of age. http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=64.

- KCPS's students with IEPs are identified as having particular disabilities at proportions that are comparable to state and national levels.[14] (See Exhibit 23 above.) The greatest disparity between KCPS and state and national averages is in the areas of intellectual disabilities, where KCPS's 11.4 percent is somewhat higher than the state's 8.5 percent and the nation's 7 percent; and emotional disturbance, where KCPS's 7.5 percent is somewhat higher than the state's 5.9 percent and the nation's 6 percent. In all other categories, KCPS percentages lie between the state's and the nation's.

- The district's overall average of students with IEPs is 13.5 percent, but the figure varies by grade. (Exhibit 24 below.) Following a low of 8.3 percent in kindergarten, the percentage increases to 10.9 percent (first grade), 13.3 percent (third grade), 14 percent (fourth grade), and a high of 20 percent in fifth and sixth grades. In seventh grade, the percentage drops to 17.3 percent, and is steady between grades eight to ten at 14 or 15 percent. In the eleventh and twelfth grades, the percentage drops to about 12 percent despite the fact that many students with IEPs continue to receive postsecondary transition services and activities past the age of 18 years, a pattern that is often seen in other major urban school systems.

Exhibit 24. Kansas City Students with IEPs by Grade

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of SwD	116	158	186	208	187	223	183	154	128	191	128	101	107
Total Enrollment	1404	1444	1395	1355	1337	1117	913	892	916	1287	842	796	883
Percentage of SwD	8.3%	10.9%	13.3%	15.4%	14.0%	20.0%	20.0%	17.3%	14.0%	14.8%	15.2%	12.7%	12.1%
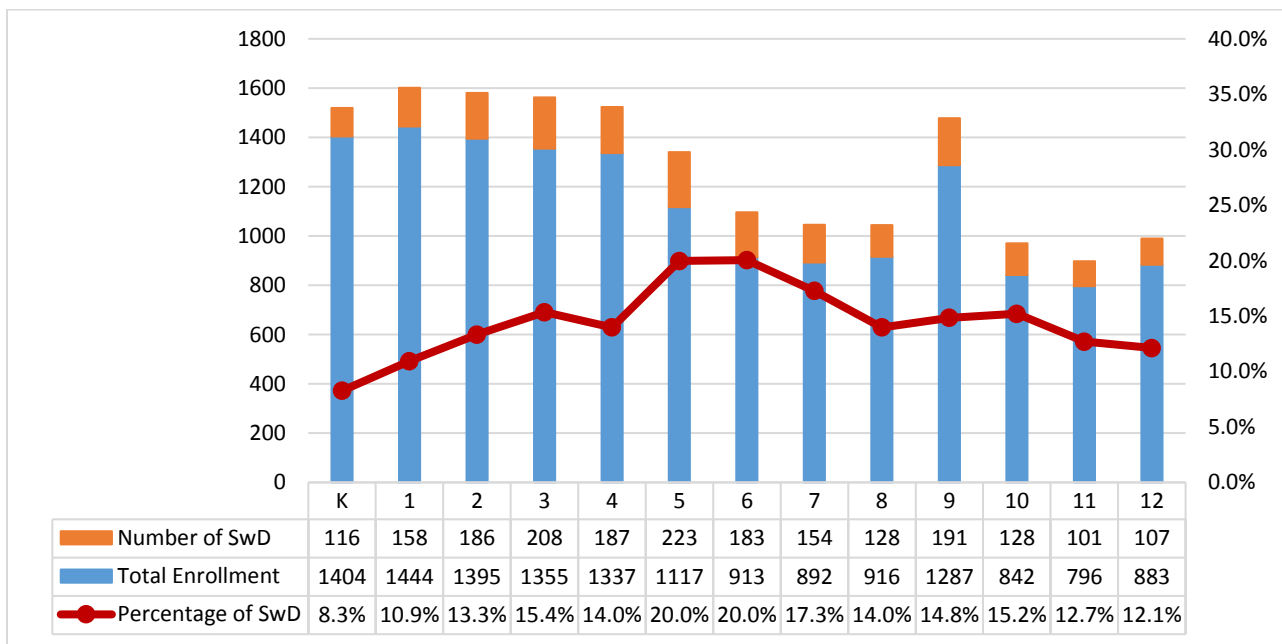
b. Risk of Over-identification

- There are 1,243 African American students in special education, out of the total school population of 8,246 African American students in the district.

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[14] National and state data are based on the U.S. Department of Education's 2014 IDEA Part B Child Count and Educational Environment database, retrieved from 2014-15 USDE IDEA Section 618 State Level Data Files, retrieved at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/state-level-data-files/index.html#bccee. Unless otherwise stated, all KCPS data were provided by the district to the Council's team.

- State performance plans often use a weighted risk ratio to measure disproportionality by race. School districts having a racial/ethnic student group with a weighted risk ratio of at least 3.0 for two or more consecutive years are required to conduct a self-review of their compliance with policies, procedures, and practices. The state's weighted risk ratio analysis is based on a minimum of 40 students with disabilities in a particular racial category.[15] Exhibit 25 shows students by the most prevalent race/ethnic and ELL subgroups, most common disability areas, and their relevant risk ratios. These data show that White students are 3.0 times more likely than students in other racial/ethnic groups to be identified as having an emotional disturbance. These students are also 2.03 times more likely to be identified as having an "other health impairment." No disproportionality exists for other student groups and disability categories (identified as a ratio of 2.0 or greater).

- ELL students are less likely than students who are not ELLs to be identified as having a disability. Exhibit 25 also shows the risk ratio for all ELLs with IEPs and for ELLs with a disability by category where there are at least 10 ELL students. Only in the speech/language category are ELLs more likely than students who are not ELLs to be identified (1.88 risk ratio). ELLs were much less likely than students who are not ELLs to be identified as having any other disabilities.

Exhibit 25. Race/Ethnicity Risk Ratios by Most Common Disability Categories

	Total IEP Child Count (5K-21)	Intellectual Disability	Emotional Disturbance	Specific Learning Disability	Other Health Impairment	Autism	Speech/ Language Impairment
African American	1.31	1.36	1.66	1.48	1.80	1.44	0.78
Hispanic	0.69	0.60		0.78	0.34	0.39	1.35
White	1.44	1.51	3.00	0.95	2.03	1.60	1.30
ELL	0.66	0.27	0.15	0.52	0.23	0.25	1.88
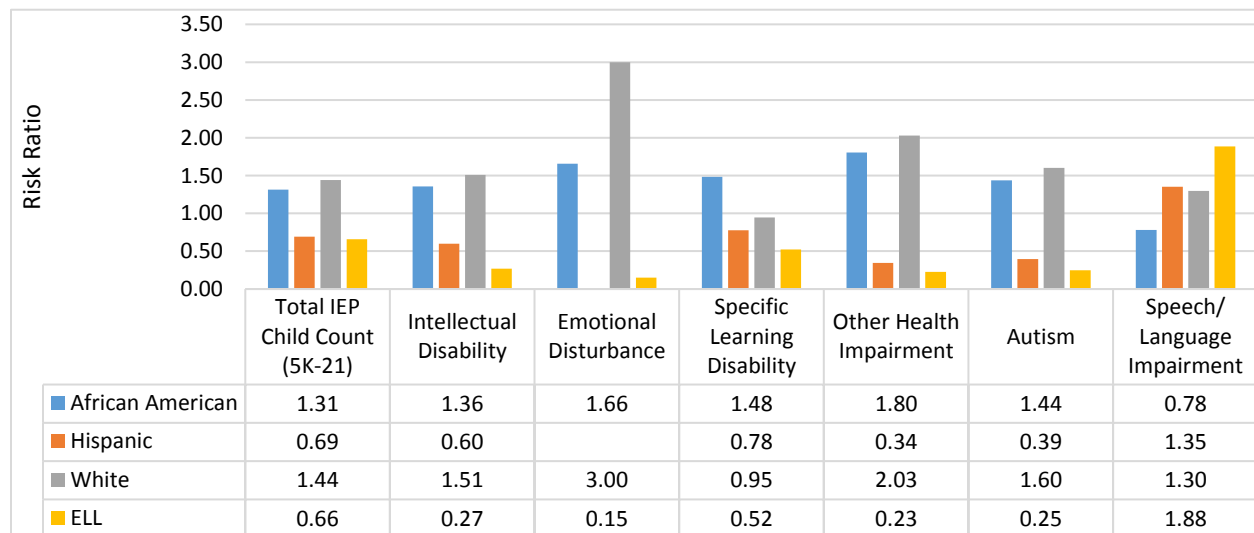
c. Achievement of Students with Disabilities

- One of the indicators in Missouri's State Performance Plan (SPP) involves the achievement of young children with IEPs in three areas: (1) appropriate behavior, (2) acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and (3) positive social/emotional skills. In each of these three

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[15] In 2010-11, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that states do not use standard calculations or definitions to define disproportionality, and there are large differences between state measures. The U.S. Department of Education has issued a draft regulation that requires states to use a reasonable risk ratio measurement with a minimum cell size of 10. A final regulation may be issued prior to the end of President Obama's administration, but it is unclear what the next administration will do with it.

areas, calculations are made in the following two ways: (1) percentage of children who entered an early childhood (EC) program below developmental expectations for their age but who had substantially increased developmentally by age six when they exited the program, and (2) percentage of children who were functioning within expectations by age six or had attained those expectations by the time they exited the EC program. Exhibit 26 shows that KCPS's young children with IEPs did not exceed state targets in three of the achievement outcome areas assessed by SPP. In positive social-emotional skills, the expectations were not met either for the rate of growth of children entering EC below expectations (difference of 0.3 percentage points) or for the children functioning within expectations by age six or upon exit of EC (difference of 0.1 percentage points). For acquisition/use of knowledge/skills and performing within age expectations by age six or upon exit of EC, the difference between the district and the target was 10.1 percentage points.[16]

Exhibit 26. Achievement Outcomes for Kansas City/State Students with IEPs Ages Three to Five, 2014-15

	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations
	Appropriate Behavior		Acquisition/Use of Knowledge/Skills		Positive Social/Emotional Skills	
District	94.8%	57.7%	97.4%	26.9%	92.4%	44.9%
Target	90.7%	53.0%	93.8%	37.0%	92.7%	45.0%
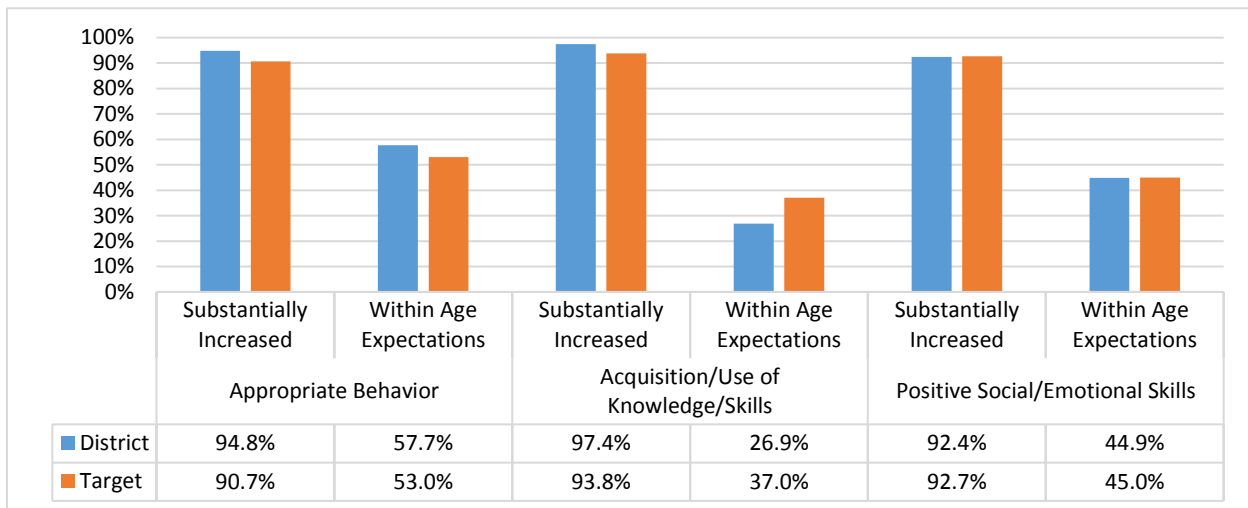
- Overall, a higher percentage of students with disabilities scored proficient or above on statewide communication arts assessments in sixth grade than in other grades. Exhibit 27 shows that 15.7 percent of all students with disabilities in grades three to eight scored at least proficient, and rates ranged between 10.7 percent (eighth grade) to 18.8 percent (sixth grade). When compared with 2015, the rates decreased by 0.5 percentage points overall and ranged from a 6.0 percentage point increase (sixth grade) to an 8.3 percentage point decrease (eighth grade). The rates for all students in grades three to eight with proficient/above scores are more than twice as high as for students with IEPs, with an overall rate of 32.0 percent. The rates range from 35.5 percent (fifth grade) to 27.0 percent (eighth grade).

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[16] Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Special Education District Profile. Retrieved from https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/guidedinquiry/Special%20Education/Special%20Education%20Profile%20Report%20-%20Public.aspx?rp:SchoolYear=2016&rp:DistrictCode=048078.

Exhibit 27. Percentage of Communication Arts Proficient/Above Scores for Students with IEPs and Changes between 2015 and 2016

	3 to 8	3	4	5	6	7	8
Students with Disabilities	15.7%	15.9%	16.8%	16.3%	18.8%	13.6%	10.7%
All Students	32.0%	29.2%	35.4%	35.5%	34.0%	29.9%	27.0%
SwD 2015 to 2016 Change	0.5%	1.2%	-0.8%	-1.1%	6.0%		-8.3%
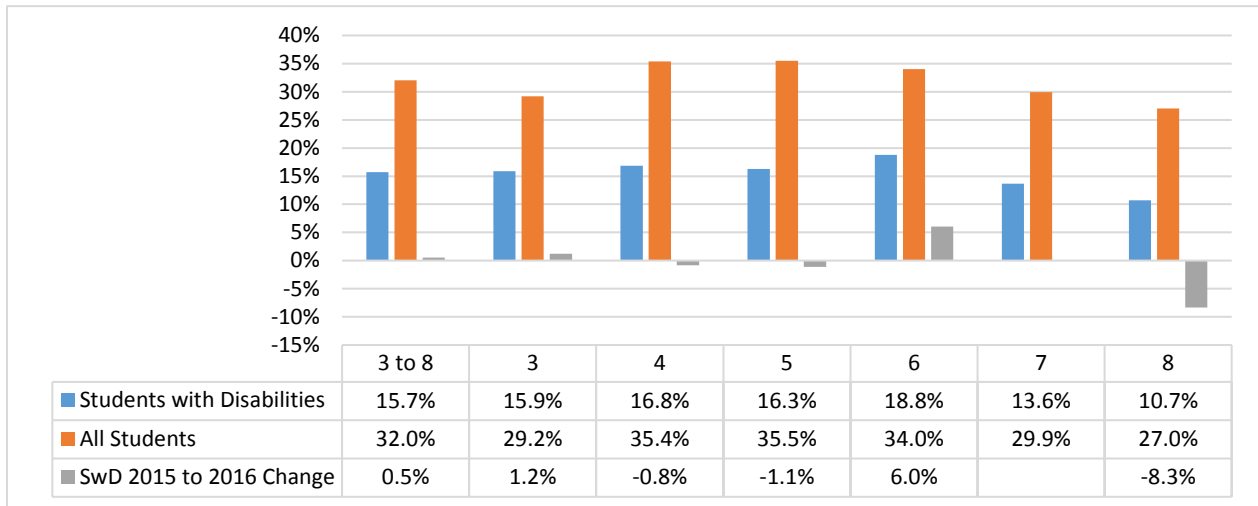
- A higher percentage of students with disabilities scored proficient or above on the math assessments in third grade than in other grades. Exhibit 28 shows that 9.2 percent of all students with disabilities scored at least proficient, and rates ranged between 8.7 percent (fourth grade) to 11.7 percent (third grade). When compared to 2015, the rates decreased by a 0.3 percentage point overall and ranged from a 1.1 percentage point increase (fifth grade) to a 3.0 percentage point decrease (third grade). The percentage of all students with proficient/above scores was 19.7 percent, and rates ranged between 4.5 percent (eighth grade) to 24.0 percent (fifth grade). The increasing gap may be due to the lack of training on interventions and supports in general education. Rates for students with disabilities are not reported for seventh or eighth grades because too few students with disabilities were proficient at those grade levels.

Exhibit 28. Percentage of Math Proficient/Above Scores for Students with IEPs and Changes between 2015 and 2016

	3 to 8	3	4	5	6	7	8
Students with Disabilities	9.2%	11.7%	8.7%	11.2%	10.3%		
All Students	19.7%	22.4%	21.8%	24.0%	22.3%	16.0%	4.5%
SwD 2015 to 2016 Change	-0.3%	-3.0%	-2.8%	1.1%	0.1%		
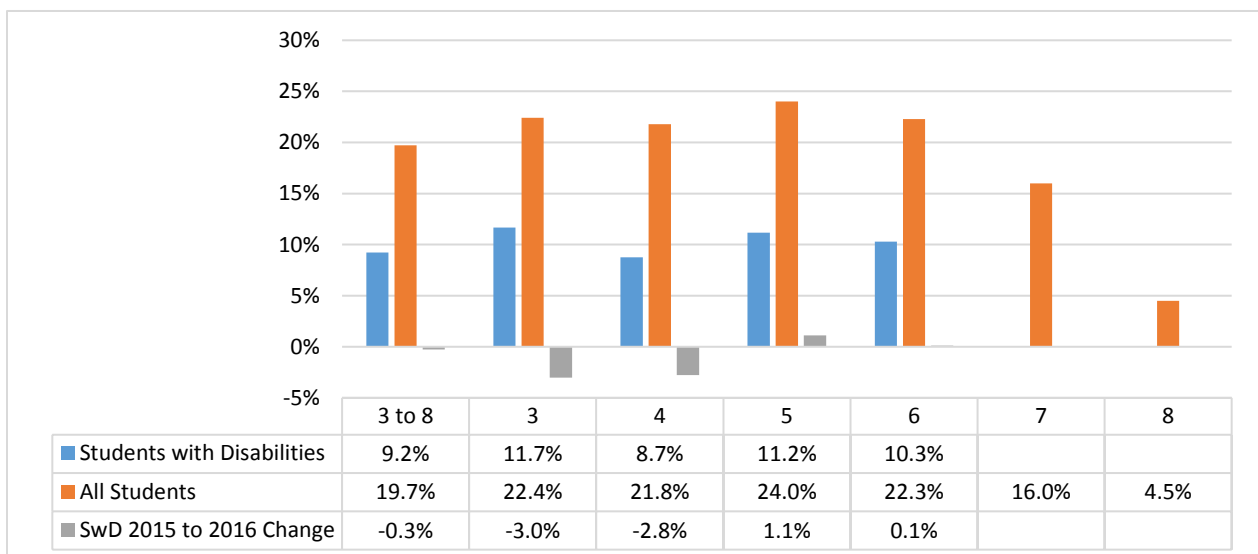
d. Graduation and Dropouts of Students with Disabilities

- KCPS's *four-year* graduation rate is 59.6 percent among students with IEPs and 68.9 percent for all students. Both groups of students have rates that are lower than the state's percentages for students with IEPs (77.6 percent) and all students generally (89.0 percent). KCPS's *five-year* graduation percentages are higher than the four-year rates for both student groups. KCPS's graduation rate was 61.7 percent among students with IEPs, which was lower than the state's 82.6 percent rate. Also, KCPS's 72.1 percent rate for all students was lower than the state's 90.3 percent rate for all students.[17] (See Exhibit 29.)

- The annual dropout rate for all students with IEPs was 4.4 percent, compared to the state's rate of 2.3 percent.

Exhibit 29. Percentage of Kansas City/State Students with IEPs Who Graduated

	KCPS - 4 Years	State - 4 Years	KCPS - 5 Years	State - 5 Years
All Students	68.9%	89.0%	72.1%	90.3%
Students with IEPs	59.6%	77.6%	61.7%	82.6%
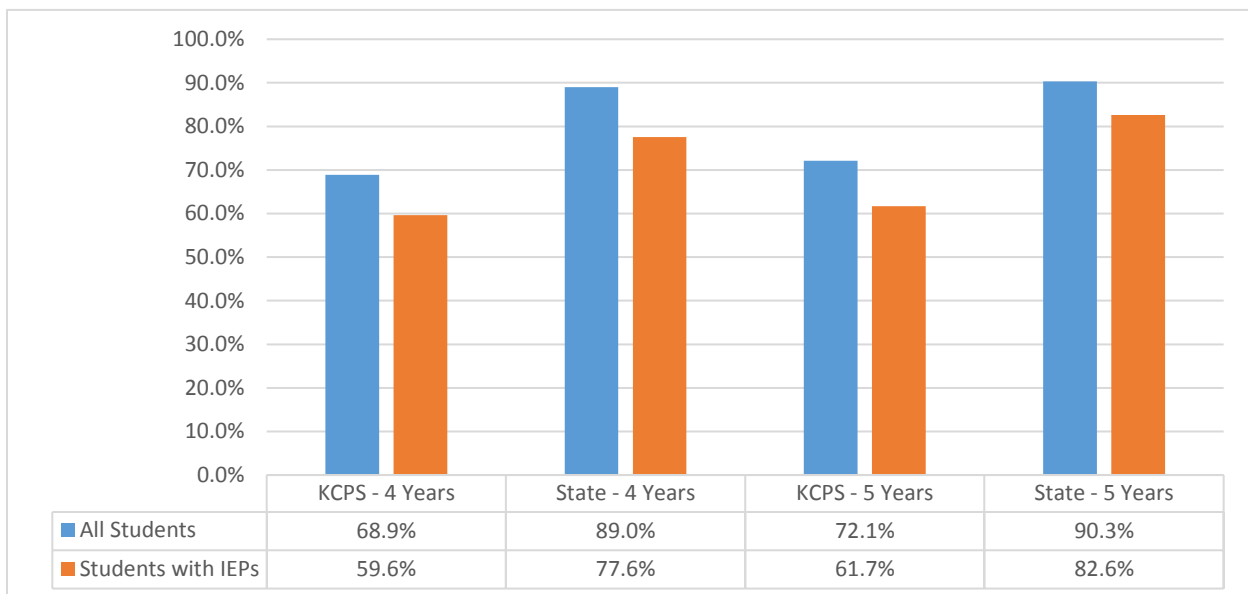
e. Educational Settings

- A lower percentage (20.5 percent) of district children with IEPs ages three to five years received the majority of their services in early childhood programs than the state's percentage (25.8 percent), the state's target (31.0 percent), and the nation's percentage (43 percent). (See Exhibit 30.) At the same time, the district educated a higher percentage of young children in separate classes, separate schools, or residential facilities (40.9 percent) compared to the state (34.7 percent), the state target (30.0 percent), and the national average (24 percent).[18]

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[17] Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Special Education District Profile. Retrieved from https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/guidedinquiry/Special%20Education/Special%20Education%20Profile%20Report%20-%20Public.aspx?rp:SchoolYear=2016&rp:DistrictCode=048078

[18] All district and state data for educational settings is based on the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Special Education District and State Profiles. Retrieved from https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/guidedinquiry/Special%20Education/Special%20Education%20Profile%20Report%20-

Exhibit 30. Percentage of Young Children with IEPs (Ages 3 to 5) by Educational Environment

	In regular EC program receiving majority of services in that program	Attending separate special class, separate school, or residential facility
KCPS	20.5%	40.9%
State	25.8%	34.7%
State Target	31.0%	30.0%
Nation	43.0%	24.0%
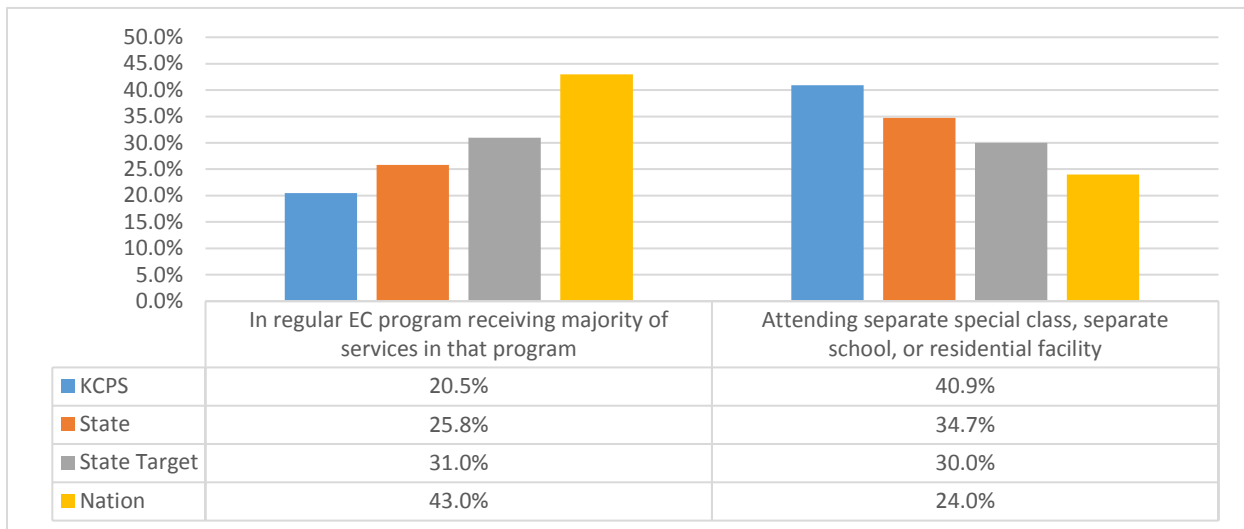
- The district's pattern of educating young children in general education settings at rates below the state and nation continued with school-aged students.[19] KCPS educates 54.5 percent of its students inclusively (80 percent or more of the time in general education classes), about the same as the state (58.4 percent); but both figures are lower than the nation's (61.1 percent). The district educates 20.4 percent of its students in separate classes most of the day (less than 40 percent in general education), a higher figure than both the state's (8.7 percent) and the nation's (14.0 percent). Furthermore, a higher percentage of district students are educated in separate schools (7.1 percent) compared to the state and nation (3.5 percent and 3.3 percent, respectively). (See Exhibit 31.)

Exhibit 31. Percentage of Students by Educational Environment

	80% or More in General Education	40-79% in General Education	Less Than 40% in General Education	Separate Schools
District	54.5%	16.9%	20.4%	7.1%
State	58.4%	27.1%	8.7%	3.5%
Nation	61.1%	18.2%	14.0%	3.3%
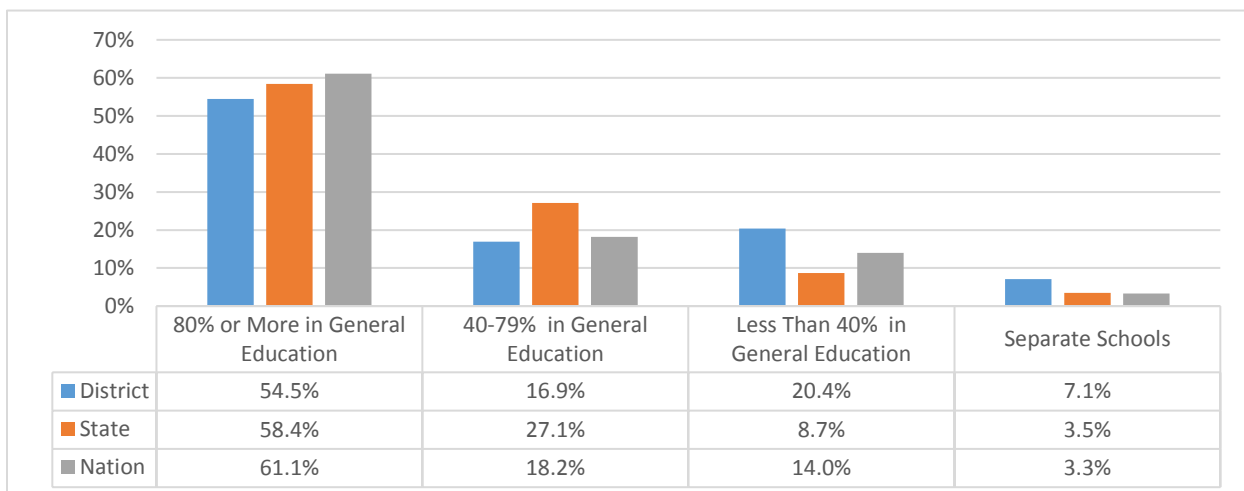
%20Public.aspx?rp:SchoolYear=2016&rp:DistrictCode=048078. National data are based on USDE's 36th Annual Report to Congress (Fall 2012 data).

[19] National data was retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/partbspap/2013/tn-acc-stateprofile-11-12.pdf.

- Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), it is expected that only one percent of all students in grades not otherwise taking statewide assessments will take an alternate assessment. It is estimated that this alternative assessment is appropriate for some 207 students with a significant cognitive disability. Based on data provided by KCPS, 776 students are educated in separate classes most of the school day, and another 171 are educated in separate schools inside and outside the district. With this in mind, care should be taken to ensure that students who take the MAP receive instruction aligned with the Missouri Standards, even when they are being educated in separate classes and schools.

- The percentage of district students educated in more restrictive settings is fairly consistent from kindergarten to twelfth grade. For example, students educated in self-contained placements (less than 40 percent in regular classes) ranged from 13 percent in eighth grade to 27 percent in third grade. A high percentage (73 percent) of first grade students with IEPs are in regular classes at least 80 percent of the time. This figure drops significantly to only about half of all students with IEPs and fluctuates thereafter (between 45 and 64 percent). While only three percent of first graders are educated in separate classes or in separate schools, this figure increases to between 10 and 16 percent in the middle grades and high school. (See Exhibit 32.)

Exhibit 32. Percentage of Students by Grade and by Educational Environment

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Separate School	8%	3%	4%	5%	4%	7%	10%	8%	12%	10%	16%	6%	20%
Regular class < 40% of time	20%	18%	16%	27%	20%	23%	23%	21%	13%	17%	18%	17%	20%
Regular class 40% to 79% of time	17%	5%	16%	14%	19%	20%	16%	22%	28%	28%	16%	13%	16%
Regular class at least 80% of time	54%	73%	63%	53%	57%	48%	50%	49%	45%	45%	50%	64%	45%
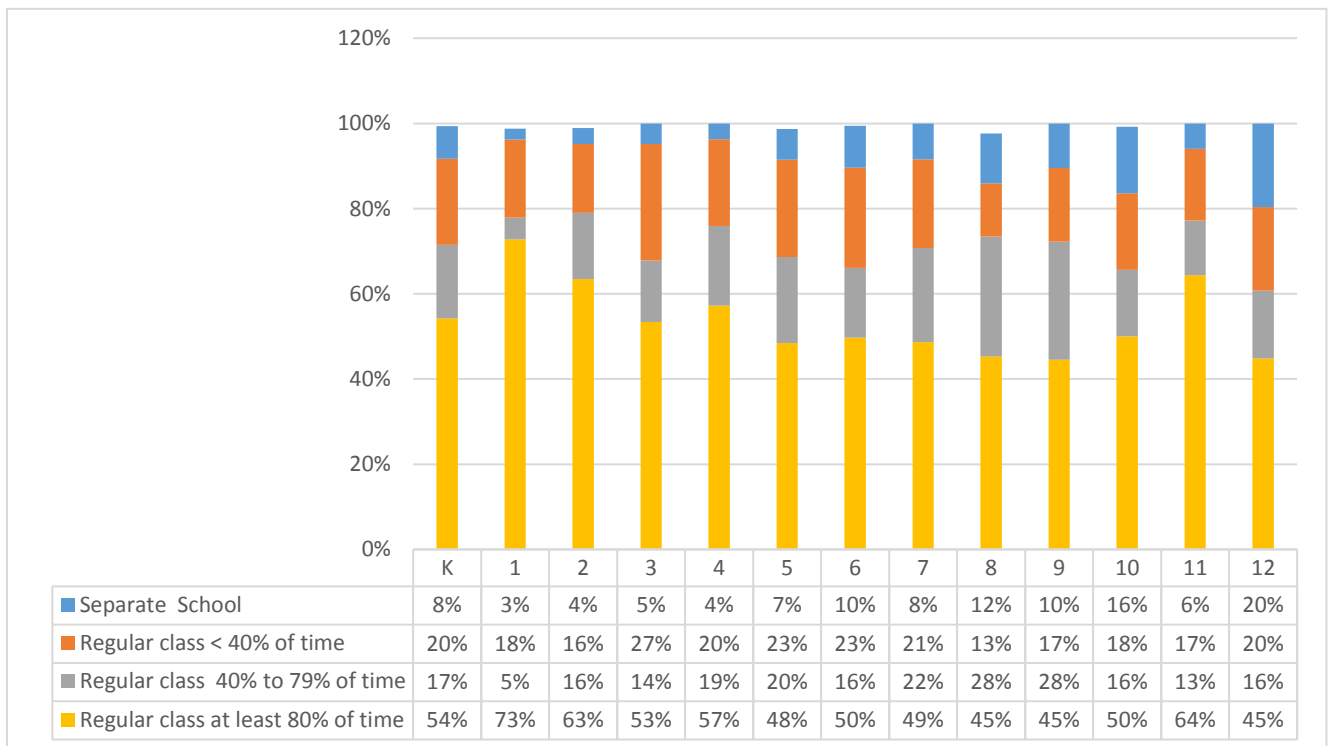
- Exhibit 33 shows the percentages of students in the district, state, and nation in the most common disability categories.[20] The percentage of KCPS students in inclusive settings (in regular classes at least 80 percent of the time) or in separate classes most of the time or in

[20] Retrieved national data from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/static-tables/index.html.

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separate schools is comparable to the state and nation, except students with Other Health Impairments. The exhibit shows the three disability categories that have the highest proportions of KCPS students educated inclusively (specific learning disability, other health impairment, and speech/language impairment). The category of OHI also has high percentages of students educated in separate classes or schools most of the time.

- o *SLD.* In the area of SLD, the district's 71 percent rate of students educated inclusively is one percentage point higher than the nation's. KCPS's 5 percent rate of students educated in self-contained classes (less than 40 percent of time in regular classes) is three percentage points higher than the state's figure and one point lower than the nation's.

- o *OHI.* In the area of OHI, the district's 46 percent rate of students educated inclusively is seven percentage points lower than the state's figure and 21 points lower than the nation's. KCPS's figure of 20 percent of students educated in self-contained classes is 13 percentage points higher than the state's and 10 points higher than the nation's.

- o *S/L.* In the area of S/L, a greater percentage of KCPS students are educated inclusively. The district's 84 percent rate was two percentage points higher than the state's and six points lower than the nation's.

Exhibit 33. Educational Environment for Students with SLD, OHI, and S/L

	Specific Learning Disability			Other Health Impairment			Speech/Language Impairment		
	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation
Separate School	2%	0%	1%	11%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Regular class < 40% of time	5%	2%	6%	20%	7%	10%	7%	1%	4%
Regular class 40% to 79% of time	22%	28%	23%	22%	35%	21%	7%	13%	5%
Regular class at least 80% of time	71%	68%	70%	46%	53%	67%	84%	82%	90%
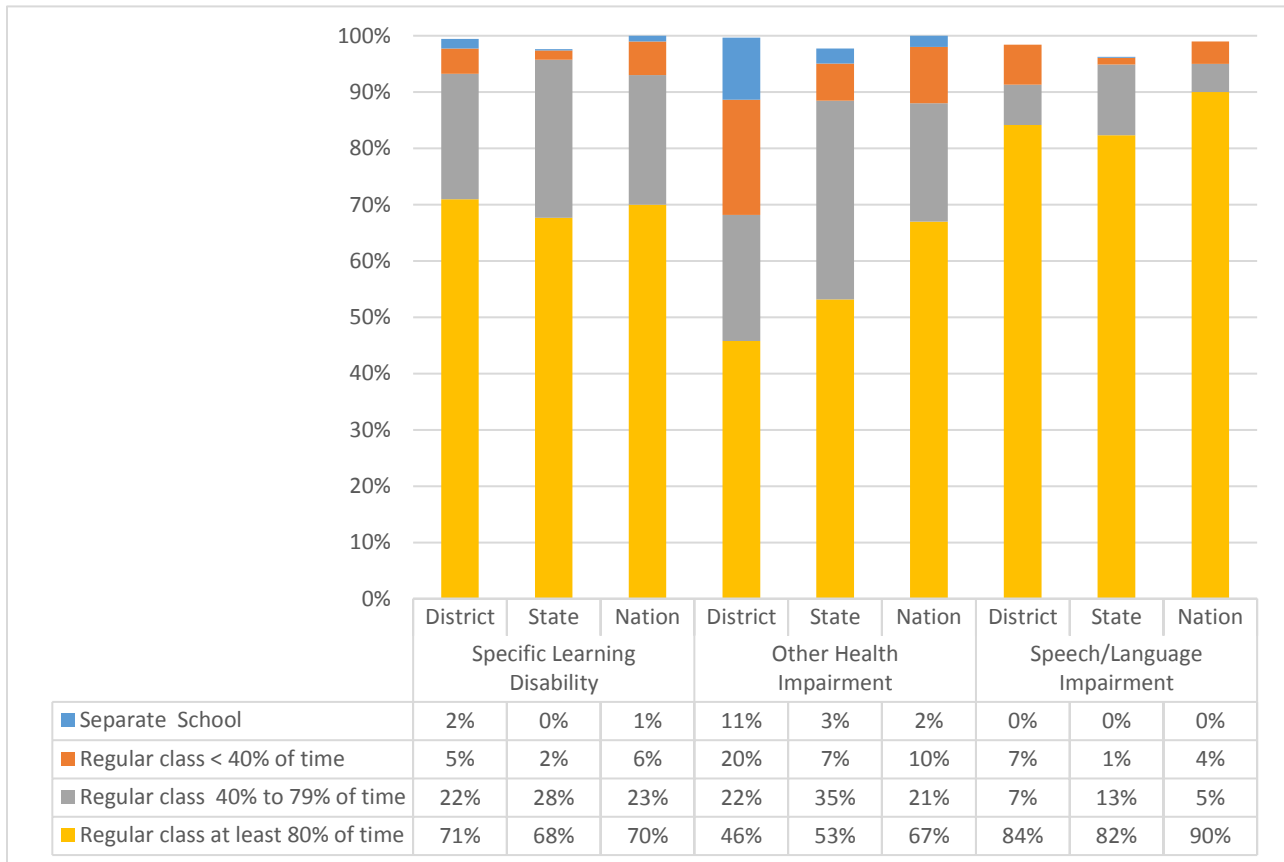
- Exhibit 34 shows the three disability categories with the highest rates of students spending most of their time in separate classes or separate schools (emotional disturbance, autism, and intellectual disability).

  o *ED.* In the area of ED, the district's rate of 35 percent of students educated inclusively is 10 percentage points lower than the state's figure and 13 points lower than the nation's. KCPS's rate of 34 percent of students educated in separate schools is 21 percentage points higher than the state's and 19 points higher than the nation's. This data may suggest that the district has a culture of placing ED students with disabilities in separate schools.

  o *Autism.* In the area of autism, the district's rate of 25 percent of students educated inclusively was 11 percentage points lower than the state's rate and 17 points lower than the nation's. KCPS's figure of 20 percent of students educated in separate schools was 12 percentage points higher than the state's and 14 points higher than the nation's.

  o *ID.* In the area of intellectual disabilities, the district's rate of six percent of students educated inclusively is two percentage points lower than the state's figure and 12 points lower than the nation's. KCPS's figure of nine percent of students educated in separate schools is equal to the state's rate and eight percentage points higher than the nation's.

Exhibit 34. Educational Environments for Students with ED, Autism, and ID

	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation
	Emotional Disturbance			Autism			Intellectual Disability		
■ Separate School	34%	13%	15%	20%	8%	6%	9%	9%	1%
■ Regular class < 40% of time	15%	13%	19%	44%	23%	34%	63%	35%	53%
■ Regular class 40% to 79% of time	15%	27%	18%	9%	32%	19%	22%	47%	28%
■ Regular class at least 80% of time	35%	45%	48%	25%	36%	42%	6%	8%	18%
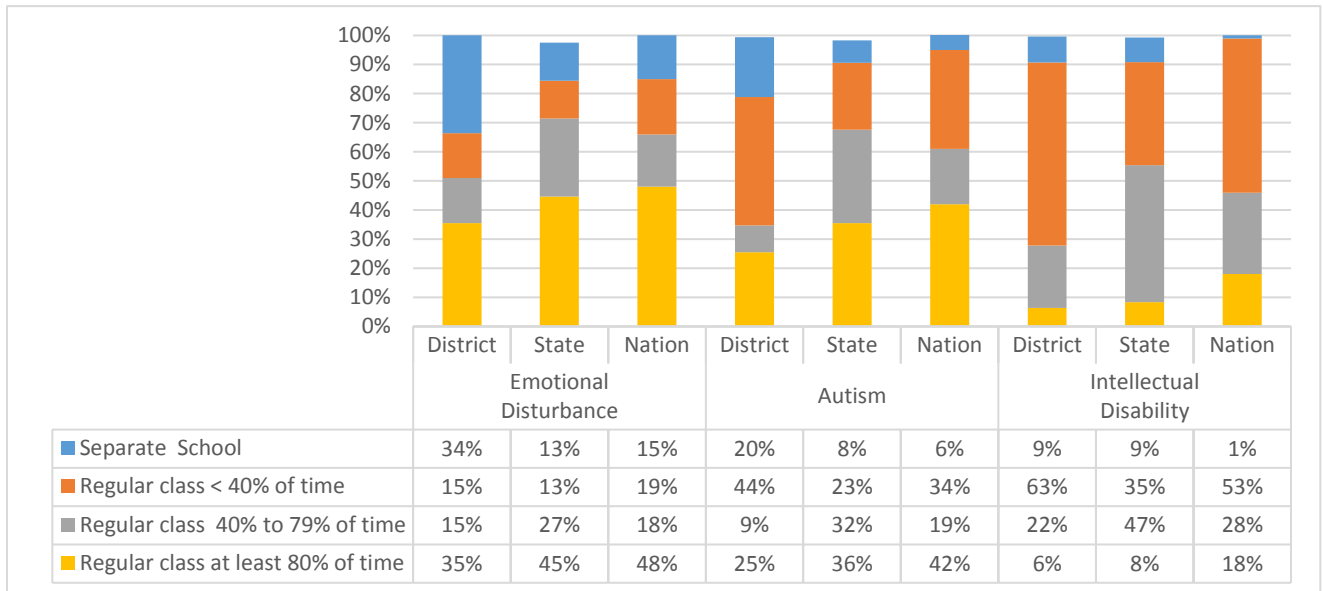
- Using the risk ratio methodology shown earlier, Exhibit 35 shows the likelihood that students from each racial/ethnic group would be educated in the designated educational environment compared to students in all other racial/ethnic groups. A risk ratio of "1" reflects no risk. Higher numbers reflect a greater risk or likelihood of placement in a particular setting. These data show that White students are more than three times (3.14) as likely to be educated in a separate school compared to their peers. Other risk ratios range

from 0.19 to 1.82. These risks are below any level that is generally considered to be significant, e.g., a risk of 2 or 3.

Exhibit 35. Educational Environment Risk Ratios by Race/Ethnicity

	African American	Hispanic	White
■ Separate School	1.40	0.19	3.14
■ Regular class < 40% of time	1.30	0.70	1.37
■ Regular class 40% to 79% of time	1.82	0.52	1.25
■ Regular class at least 80% of time	1.22	0.79	1.34
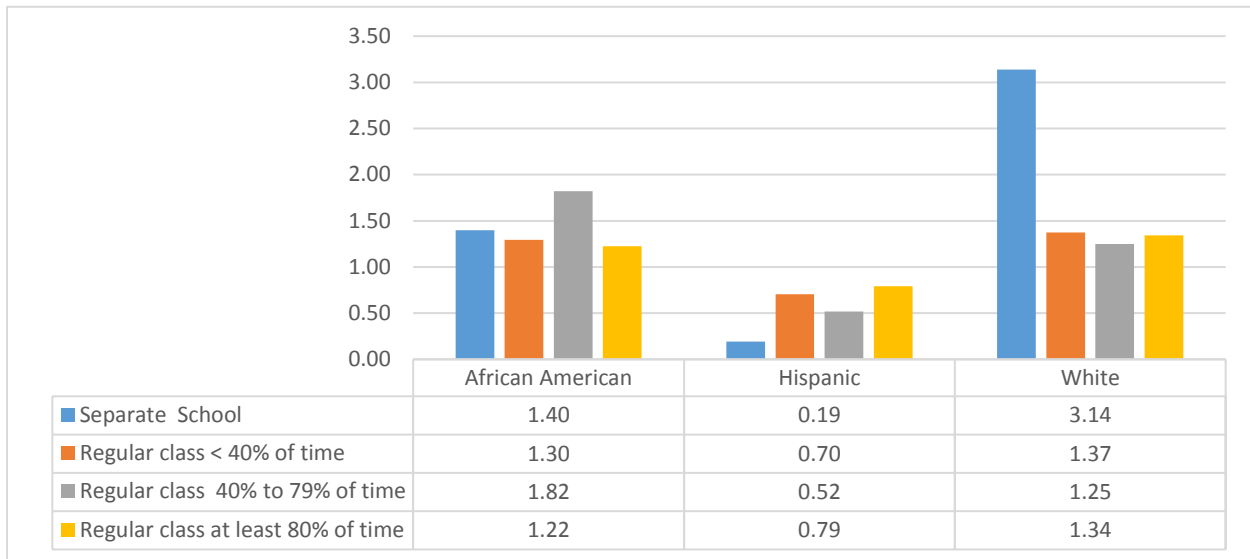
f.   Suspensions and Discipline of Students with Disabilities

- In 2015-16, a relatively small number of students received an out-of-school suspension (OSS) overall, and even fewer had an OSS of 10 days or more. As shown in Exhibit 36, the risk ratio of out-of–schools suspensions for students with disabilities compared to their non-IEP peers are all below 2.0.[21] Moreover, the district risk ratios in each of the suspension categories are lower than the state's ratios.

Exhibit 36. Out-of-School Suspension Risk Ratios for Students with IEPs
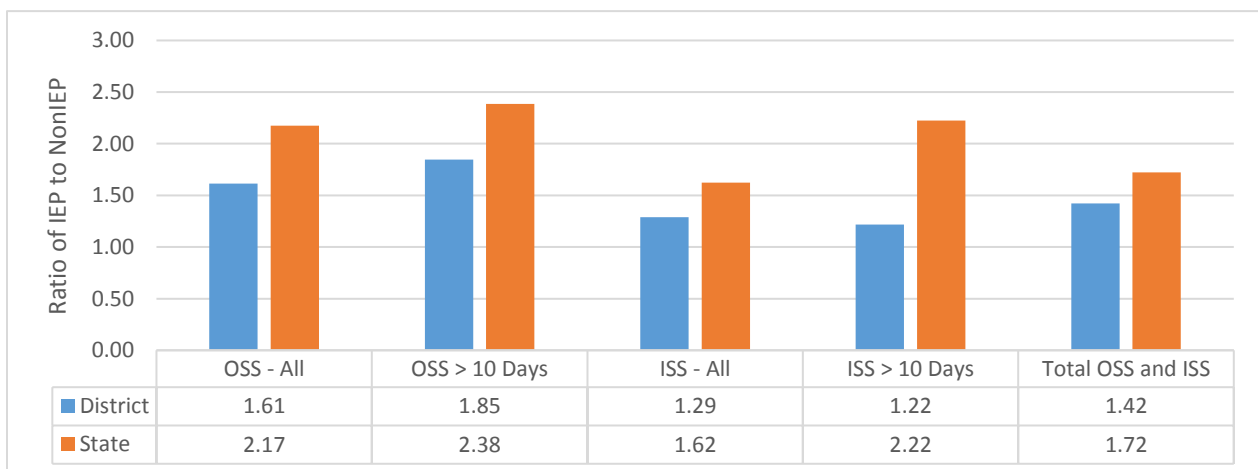
	OSS - All	OSS > 10 Days	ISS - All	ISS > 10 Days	Total OSS and ISS
■ District	1.61	1.85	1.29	1.22	1.42
■ State	2.17	2.38	1.62	2.22	1.72

[21] Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Special Education District Profile. Retrieved from https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/guidedinquiry/Special%20Education/Special%20Education%20Profile%20Report%20-%20Public.aspx?rp:SchoolYear=2016&rp:DistrictCode=048078

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- Exhibit 37 shows that African American students with IEPs are 2.65 times more likely than other students to receive an OSS of ten days or more.[14] Risk ratios for other racial/ethnic groups were not reported due to the small number of students from other groups suspended for 10 days or more. Again, the figure for African American students with IEPs was well below the state rate overall.

Exhibit 37. Out-of-School Suspension Risk Ratios for Students with IEPs by Race/Ethnicity

	OSS > 10 Days African American
District	2.65
State	6.7
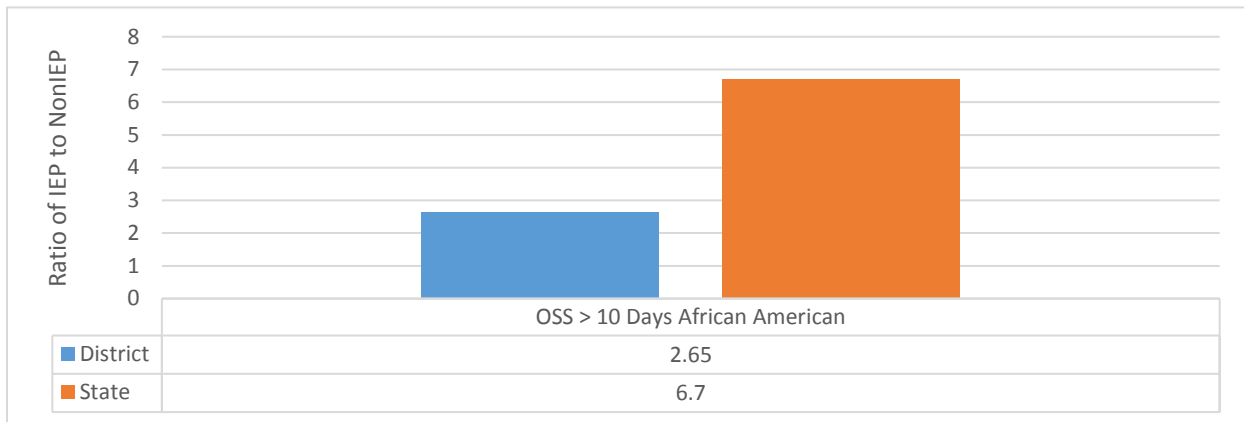
Accountability

- The district's system by which it holds staff and teachers responsible for student outcomes was very weak.

- Teachers are evaluated on a series of standards and indicators that are summarized below.

	Standards	Indicators
Standard 1	Content knowledge aligned with appropriate instruction	Content knowledge and academic language
		Student engagement in subject matter
		Disciplinary research and inquiry methodologies
		Interdisciplinary instruction
		Diverse social and cultural perspective
Standard 2	Student Learning, Growth, and Development	Cognitive, social, emotional and physical development
		Student goals
		Theory of learning
		Differentiated lesson design
		Prior experiences, multiple intelligences, strengths, and needs
		Language, culture, family, and knowledge of community values

Standard 3	Curriculum Implementation	Implementation of curriculum standards
		Lessons for diverse learners
		Instructional goals and differentiated instructional strategies
Standard 4	Critical Thinking	Instructional strategies leading to student engagement in problem-solving and critical thinking
		Appropriate use of instructional resources to enhance student learning
		Cooperative, small group, and independent learning
Standard 5	Positive Classroom Environment	Classroom management techniques
		Management of time, space, transitions, and activities
		Classroom, school, and community culture
Standard 6	Effective Communication	Verbal and nonverbal communication
		Sensitivity to culture, gender, intellectual, and physical differences
		Learner expression in speaking, writing, and other media
		Technology and media communication tools
Standard 7	Student Assessment and Data Analysis	Effective use of assessments
		Assessment data to improve learning
		Student-led assessment strategies
		Effect of instruction on individual/class learning
		Communication of student progress and maintaining records
		Collaborative data analysis
Standard 8	Professionalism	Self-assessment and improvement
		Professional learning
		Professional rights, responsibilities, and ethical practices
		Follows policies and procedures
Standard 9	Professional Collaboration	Induction and collegial activities
		Collaborating to meet student needs
		Cooperative partnerships in support of student learning

- Teachers are rated as emerging, developing, proficient, or proficient plus. The process involves a pre-evaluation review, individual support plans, Student Growth Objectives, a

pre-classroom observation conference, a formal observation, a summative scoring, and a review of results.

- The team was told that the district allows teachers to choose which of several assessments to use to measure the student growth component of their evaluations. Students who do not have at least 10 percent attendance can be eliminated from the teacher evaluation assessments, as can be students with disabilities and ELL, for whom the teacher is not responsible for teaching the content for the Student Growth Objectives.[22]

- Principals reported that evaluation scores were inconsistently applied to their evaluations.

	Standards	Indicators
Standard 1	Vision, Mission, and Goals	Develop, articulate, and implement a vision
Standard 2	Teaching and Learning	Promote positive school culture
		Provide an effective instructional program
Standard 3	Management and Organizational Systems	Manage the organizational structure
		Manage personnel
		Manage resources
Standard 4	Collaboration with Families and Community	Collaborate with families and other community members
		Mobilize community resources
Standard 5	Ethics and Integrity	Exercise personal and professional responsibility

- Principals are scored as unsatisfactory, needs improvement, developing, proficient, or distinguished.

- Central office staff are evaluated using a self-assessment form (the Employee CIS Self-Assessment) that apparently is being revised. Areas of self-assessment include: accomplishment and development actions over the last 12 months, success attributes and behaviors, strengths and needs, action steps, and potential next moves.

- The team saw little evidence that personnel were explicitly evaluated on such things as student discipline rates, achievement gaps, graduation rates, attendance, or the like.

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[22] The summative evaluation is based on student growth on two Student Growth Objectives. Exceptional growth means 57 percent or more students achieved the growth goal; acceptable growth means 41 to 56 percent of students achieved it; minimal growth means 26 to 41 percent of students achieved it; and insufficient growth means that 25 percent or fewer students met the growth goal.

Data and Assessments

- In general, the district does not have the data it needs to inform improvements in classroom practice or to provide administrators the information they need to help improve student outcomes.

- The district does not have program goals against which to evaluate effectiveness.

- The district does not have a true research and evaluation unit, although it has assessment staff who report to the CAAO. The department has a director of assessment, two assessment coordinators, a research assistant, and a core data analyst.

- The state has revised standards and changed tests multiple times in recent years, making it difficult for the district to create instructional coherence or accurately track performance.

- The district appears to place a great deal of emphasis on testing as a lever to improve student achievement (e.g., NWEA, STAR, Alpha Kids, QRI, Achievement Series—the ELA and math quarterlies, ACT practice tests, FLA, state test—the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP), EOCs, SGOs, ACCESS, 21st Century Skills Assessment, and various program-embedded assessments). Some tests were redundant, and it was not always clear why the district was administering them.

- The use of multiple assessments may be resulting in confusion over what needs to be taught. Teachers are responsible for reconciling or triangulating multiple test results and figuring out what to do in response to disparate student performance on them.

- The Achievement Series math test items are pulled from Pearson's item bank, and are almost all one-step, multiple choice items and do not adequately align with the complexity or rigor of the standards. The district's grade three quarterly math benchmark assessment consisted exclusively of one-step multiple-choice items.

- The district administers both pre-test and post-test quarterly benchmark exams. The pre- and post-test results on NWEA generally show that between 40 and 50 percent of students in each tested grade meet growth targets, but the targets do not appear to be well calibrated against the state test's proficiency levels—meaning that there may be the appearance of improvement but a pattern where students in the district are actually falling farther behind state expectations.

- The district has interpreted "significant progress" to mean one year of progress on the NWEA exam, even if students are performing below grade level and need to grow more than one year to catch up.

- To analyze whether progress on NWEA was likely to get students to proficiency on the state test or result in further progress on accreditation, the Council used the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Assessment results from the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years to develop fall, winter, and spring target scores associated with a passing score on

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the MAP assessment. Those target scores were then compared to the district mean NWEA scores for their respective grades and years. The data targets used in this analysis link the NWEA scores to expectations based on the Missouri state assessment rather than NWEA norms.[23] Exhibit 38 illustrates that the math and reading norms for expected proficiency are progressively higher based on the state assessment than on the NWEA assessment. Consequently, setting expectations for growth or proficiency based on NWEA would leave the district well short of proficiency on the state assessment, and students would fall farther behind as they proceeded from one grade level to the next.

Exhibit 38. Math and Reading Norms for Expected Proficiency Based on State and NWEA Assessments, Grades Three through Seven

	Math		Reading	
Grade	Proficiency Target	NWEA Norm	Proficiency Target	NWEA Norm
3	194.3	190.0	189.7	188.0
4	208.6	202.0	197.5	198.0
5	216.6	211.0	204.3	206.0
6	221.5	218.0	209.5	211.0
7	232.9	223.0	217.0	214.0
8	252.8	226.0	219.3	217.0

- Exhibit 39 graphs the differences between the target scores and the district performance in mathematics. In 2014-15, third grade students began the year 10.74 scale score points below the NWEA target for expected proficiency on the spring MAP assessment. By spring, these students were 11.3 scale score points below expected proficiency on the spring MAP assessment. At the other grade levels, similar trends were observed; however, students in subsequent grade levels begin the school year with a greater gap between mean performance and expectations. During the same year, seventh and eighth grade students closed the gap between mean performance and expectations as the school year progressed (from 27.73 to 26.38 and from 46.58 to 37.7 points below expectations, respectively). Similar patterns were observed for the 2015-16 school year.

- It has been noted in this report that the district has set a number of goals for students meeting NWEA growth targets during the course of the year. The data previously shown indicates that students are meeting growth targets, but they are not closing the achievement gap between their performance and expected proficiency levels. Moreover, between grade three and grade eight, as students progress from one grade level to the next, they begin the year farther behind expectations. In other words, expected growth on NWEA is not sufficient to close the gap on the state's definition of proficiency, making it harder for the district to see measurable gains on the state test and add more accreditation points.

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[23] NWEA 2015 Comparative Data to Inform Instructional Decisions. Fall Norms Retrieved from
https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2015/09/MAP-2015-Comparative-Data-to-Inform-Instruction-Decisions.pdf

Exhibit 39. Difference Between NWEA Target Math Scores and the District Mean Scores on NWEA for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 Fall, Winter, and Spring Administrations.

	Fall 1415	Winter 1415	Spring	1516	Winter 1516	Spring 1516
Grade 3	-10.74	-10.26	-11.30	-14.00	-13.86	-14.64
Grade 4	-13.94	-12.65	-13.77	-16.57	-14.56	-15.68
Grade 5	-23.68	-21.84	-22.97	-17.76	-16.54	-17.11
Grade 6	-22.74	-20.46	-21.10	-17.24	-16.20	-16.90
Grade 7	-27.73	-26.24	-26.38	-22.39	-23.68	-24.94
Grade 8	-46.58	-40.01	-37.70	-43.28	-43.24	-39.43
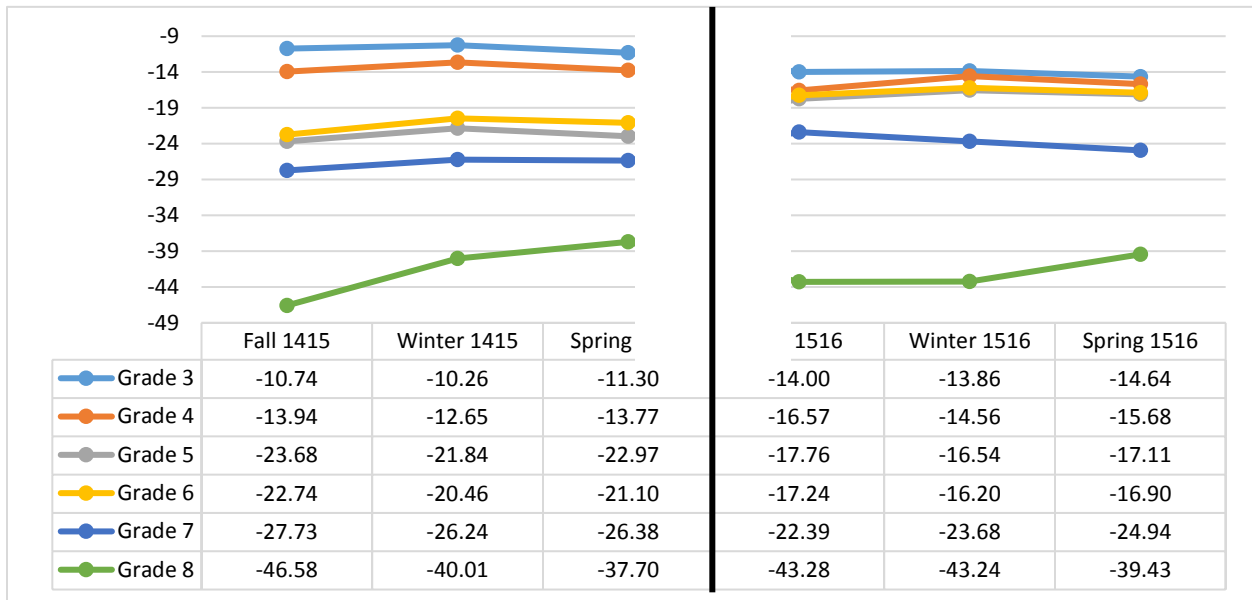
- Exhibit 40 graphs the differences between the target scores and the district performance in reading. In 2014-15, third grade students began the year 13.98 scale score points below the NWEA target for expected proficiency on the spring MAP assessment. By the spring, these students were 13.52 scale score points below expected proficiency on the spring MAP assessment. The trends in reading were similar to the trends in mathematics.

Exhibit 40. Difference Between NWEA Target Reading Scores and the District Mean Scores on NWEA for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 Fall, Winter, and Spring Administrations.

	Fall 1415	Winter 1415	Spring 1415	Fall 1516	Winter 1516	Spring 1516
Grade 3	-13.98	-13.52	-13.52	-12.39	-12.16	-12.52
Grade 4	-11.78	-11.17	-11.10	-9.84	-9.96	-10.09
Grade 5	-10.24	-10.83	-10.53	-10.62	-10.40	-10.28
Grade 6	-11.43	-10.11	-10.73	-10.43	-10.30	-10.09
Grade 7	-16.16	-14.03	-13.36	-15.13	-14.78	-12.84
Grade 8	-14.79	-15.07	-14.39	-16.06	-15.16	-13.09

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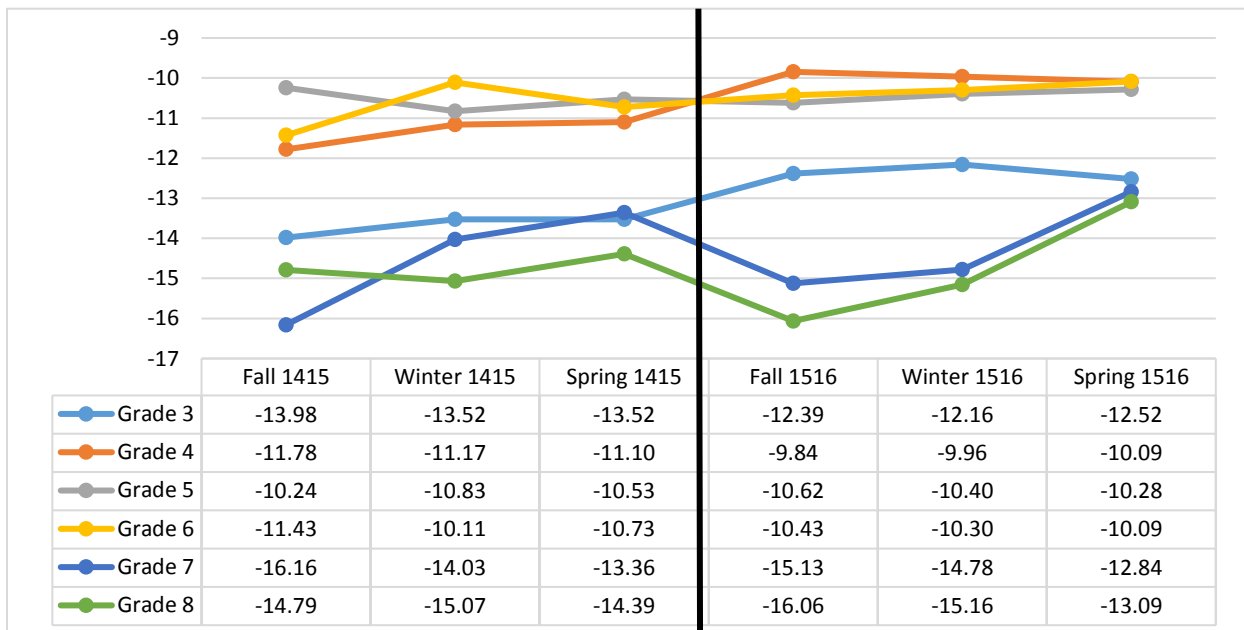
Discipline and Behavior

- Discipline infractions and out-of-school suspension rates were unusually high compared with other major urban school systems, especially in seventh, eighth and ninth grades—and even higher among males of color.

- District surveys of elementary school students generally show that some 90 percent feel safe at school, an improvement from 82 percent in SY2011.

- Student reports of feeling safe at the high schools are reported on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. Results by school range from 3.17 (SY2015) at SWECC to 4.06 at Lincoln.

- There is a districtwide PBIS program, but it does not appear to be as effective as it could be. The team saw no explicit evaluation of the program.

- There is a general decline in student enrollment over the years, but the district shows a large bulge in ninth grade enrollment, probably because of the numbers of students who have not earned enough high school credits to move forward. Enrollment in 2016 in grade 8 was 916 students, grade 9 was 1,287, and grade 10 was 842 students.

Recommendations

General Organizational and Leadership

1. Charge the superintendent with making the case for change and improvement in the district and articulating the danger to the district's accreditation status of maintaining the academic status quo. Use examples of other major urban districts with similar populations that have made significant gains.

2. Build ownership for change among district stakeholders, including principals and teachers, along with key external stakeholders and business leaders as the district develops a new strategic plan for improvement.

3. Have the school board and superintendent voice loudly and repeatedly their high expectations for the achievement of all students in the school system and their expectation that staff will also demand high standards for student work and the central office will provide guidance on how it might be done.

4. Articulate a clear theory of action for district improvement that spells out what the district should hold tight and what the schools have flexibility to do.

5. Build a communications strategy that calls attention to the needed reforms but also features what the district under the new superintendent has done in response to concerns that teachers, parents, principals, and others have raised.

6. Examine other major urban school systems across the country that have substantially improved student achievement and learn what they have done to improve.

7. Charge all senior staff with working together collaboratively on academic improvement systemwide and hold them accountable for doing so.

8. Articulate a clear vision for what learning is essential and how to gauge student progress. (See Charlotte-Mecklenburg, DC, Boston, Des Moines, and Long Beach).

9. Create an actual department of research and evaluation, and have its director report to the superintendent or a chief of staff to the superintendent rather than to the CAAO.

Instructional Programming

Personnel

10. Reassign and realign senior instructional staff as necessary to ensure high quality instructional leadership in the school district.

11. Charge academic staff with working collaboratively with ELL and SPED units to ensure their ongoing inclusion in the development of all curriculum guidance and the selection of all instructional materials.

12. Reorient the work of the principal supervisors to focus more on instructional leadership. Provide the instructional professional development necessary for them to fulfill that role, and coordinate more closely with CIPD. (See work in Broward County, Long Beach, and Des Moines.)

13. Establish regular mechanisms by which principals meet with each other across grade spans to conduct and review instructional strategies and plan for greater instructional articulation.

14. Consider redeploying staff resources to provide a designated staff lead in the areas of social studies and science.

15. Consider redeploying Title I funds to support a districtwide cadre of reading and math instructional coaches for all eligible schools, and support their training using Title I or Title II funds.

16. Approach local universities for their assistance in improving the pipeline of talent in critical personnel shortage areas.

Curriculum, Materials, and Instruction

17. Fully align curriculum documents and instructional units grade by grade to the Missouri Learning Standards, and set district expectations to clarify the meaning of each standard in order to focus instruction on essential learning, so that all students will receive powerful

instruction to meet college and career readiness standards. It is the responsibility of the CIPD department to provide the guidance and support necessary to enable teachers to meet the needs of all students. General instruction, scaffolding and support, and recommended materials, along with interventions, should be built into all guidance documents.[24]

18. Define and communicate a districtwide MTSS system with both academic and behavioral components that includes the following features:

   o A districtwide MTSS leadership team.
   o Written expectations for an MTSS framework in both academics and behavior (Tier I, Tier II, Tier III instruction, Restorative Justice, PBIS, etc.).
   o Universal design for learning (UDL) principles that are integrated into the MTSS framework (to the extent possible). Consider sending a team to the Harvard University UDL program.
   o A plan for researching the use of systemwide universal screeners appropriate at various grade levels and with differing levels of language acquisition.
   o A map of resources/gaps that would identify district intervention needs and plan for filling gaps with research-based academic and behavior interventions.
   o A plan for providing significant professional development to implement MTSS with fidelity.
   o Data supports that integrate academics and behavior.

19. Begin incorporating the use of Student Achievement Partners' IMET tools and the Council's GIMET and ELD 2.0 criteria into the vetting and selection of all districtwide instructional materials to ensure their compatibility with college- and career-readiness standards.

20. Develop a process by which school staff provide feedback on all new curriculum documents, strategies, and materials so that central office documents provide the proper level of detail that principals and teachers need and find useful.

English Language Arts/Literacy

21. Begin requiring the daily use of complex texts in classrooms during whole-group instruction. Provide short-term professional development for principals and weekly guidance for teachers on the use of complex texts, including how to ensure that all students reading below grade level have access to grade-level texts. Begin with read-alouds, and ask questions of students that compel them to return to the texts to answer those text-dependent questions and build understanding (not recall). Charge CIPD with sharing key characteristics of complex texts and how to select them. Provide sample high-level questions to pose to students based on the complex reading. Consider how to scale the tactic over time to larger numbers of teachers, students, and other subjects. (Collect testimonials from teachers on how the exercises worked, post them on the district's website, and incorporate them into later professional development.)

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[24] Consider using any one of the Council's instructional, materials, and curriculum tools.

Involve the union. (This process would help with the change management process because it would serve as a warm-up to the adoption of a modified Readers/Writers Workshop program.)

Remember that Readers/Writers Workshop is an instructional framework and is designed to establish classroom routines and instructional approaches that allow teachers to employ small-group instruction based on reading levels. It is important to note that rigorous practice with grade-level texts for extended periods of time must be incorporated into this model if students are to make significant gains in their reading proficiency. The Missouri Learning Standards need to be clustered in a way that includes all features of the standards, including key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, research, and range of text complexity. Ensure that CIPD designs units and lesson plans that provide explicit guidance on how to teach the standards, not just list the standards. Guidance should include exemplars of student work showing differing levels of proficiency and depth of knowledge and the quality of instruction that was necessary to produce it. This work should be deeply embedded in the district's professional development and might involve help from the Council and SAP on how to do it. (Use GIMET to determine where the Workshop model needs augmenting in order to meet all standards.)

Mathematics

22. Similar to English Language Arts/Literacy, implement a parallel short-term strategy with math on the use of performance tasks that involve multiple steps and require students to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others as they justify and defend solutions.

23. Develop a structured process to support students in comprehending rich mathematics tasks. Use a process where teachers and students use close reading of a complex word problem or task, which focuses students' attention on the meaning and structure of the task rather than on trying to find an answer or solution. Initially, students and teachers should read a complex word problem closely—three times—to understand the context of the problem as well as to uncover linguistic and mathematical clues to the problem. The teacher frames guiding questions to compel students to frequently revisit the task and grapple with the words and meaning contained in the problem. (This allows all students to gain access to the problem without the teacher overly simplifying or paraphrasing the text for groups of students). This is done in whole and small groups while the teacher gradually withdraws support over time so that students are able to solve these performance tasks independently. Charge CIPD with developing or identifying exemplars and initial training (see examples from San Francisco Unified on the Three Reads).

24. If the district retains its use of Envisions, then its revised curriculum and pacing guides will need to indicate how the text can create greater coherence within and across grades. (See the coherence map on Achievethecore.org.) Where there are deficits in Envision, according to EdReports, the district curriculum guidance should:

   o Build student understanding by linking concepts within and across grades.
   o Identify gaps in students' knowledge by tracing standards back to their logical pre-requisites.

- Support teachers in visualizing and understanding how supporting standards relate to the major work of the grade.

25. Consider requiring four years of math for high school graduation. Create additional math course options above the pre-calculus level at all district high schools. Partner with local universities to provide a calculus-for-teachers course to build capacity of teachers who could then become AP certified. Expand the number of AP math courses in district high schools, beginning with AP calculus or AP computer science principles.

26. Celebrate short-term successes as the district builds them and bolsters the skills of its principals and teachers to take on the work.

School Improvement Plans

27. Consider consolidating the school improvement plans and the accountability plans into a single document. Ensure that individual school goals roll up to districtwide goals and priorities,

28. Consider adding two additional columns to the school improvement plan templates, one focused on *Expected Outcomes* and the other on *Evidence of Success or Status*.

29. Develop a process where principal supervisors and CIPD routinely review the school improvement plans with school teams throughout the school year. This review should allow for discussion of the impact of strategies for improving student achievement—rather than on the plan's compliance.

Early Childhood Education

30. Develop proactive strategies for increasing the numbers of students who participate in pre-K and who then enroll in Kansas City Public Schools (i.e., sharing with parents what the children will be provided in a quality kindergarten experience and how it will be done. Provide samples of newsletters, lesson plans, and work samples that illustrate quality of teaching and learning.)

31. Ensure that students in the early grades are receiving foundational reading instruction (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency) that will enable to them to read with accuracy and fluency to support the comprehension of texts.

Gifted and Talented Programming

32. Establish a plan for increasing the number of certified Advanced Placement teachers and teachers with gifted and talented endorsements in elementary and middle school in order to substantially increase the opportunity for students to access Advanced Placement courses.

33. Revamp K-12 programming to build in honor's courses to prepare students to successfully complete honors and AP courses

Technology

34. Provide a 1:1 laptop for every student in 1st through 12 grades—augmented with a program that supports standards implementation with home-school connections that reinforce learning and provides practice for gaining proficiency.

Professional Development and Capacity Building

35. Rethink and completely overhaul the district's strategy for building the capacity, expertise, and talent of its people. Rebuild a coordinated professional development system for the district's content leaders, PLCs, principal supervisors, principals, teachers, and coaches around effectively addressing the district's academic priorities and students' instructional needs.

    Differentiate the district's professional development around student needs, prior training, years of experience, grade level, etc. Ensure that training for principal supervisors, principals, and teachers is aligned and accessible to all instructional personnel.

36. Articulate "non-negotiables" into the district's professional development system to clarify what everyone will have to participate in in order to rebuild the instructional capacity of the teaching force. Simultaneously, ensure that these experiences are of the highest quality so that the time spent in them is perceived as useful and effective.

37. Build a districtwide professional development system that will not only strengthen the capacity of current staff but will define a pipeline of talent across personnel levels in the system. (Look at the pipeline systems in Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Long Beach.)

38. Design ongoing and regular professional development for principals around (1) deepening their understanding of state standards, curriculum content, and assessments, and (2) coaching on how they can assist their teachers in raising the rigor of instruction and the quality of student work.

39. Build a system for regularly evaluating how well professional development is implemented and whether it has any effects on student outcomes.

40. Consider asking the Council of the Great City Schools and Student Achievement Partners to conduct professional development and give technical assistance to central office staff to begin implementing these reforms.

English Language Learners

41. Include the Director of ELLs as part of the superintendent's cabinet to ensure that ELL program needs are considered at the outset of the district's systemic planning.

42. Design and implement a districtwide instructional strategy and program for ELLs built around the twin goals of acquiring English proficiency and mastering content standards. The program should presume a shared responsibility of both general education and ESL staff. Build the

strategy around the precepts laid out in the Council's publication, *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners* (ELD 2.0). The framework calls for two critical components: Focused Language Study (FLS) and Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE).

43. Conduct a comprehensive needs analysis of newcomer students—numbers and needs. Then, determine the necessity for additional services and instructional programs, and identify schools that would require specific professional development in this area.

44. Incorporate ELL data in the district's emerging data dashboard system or data warehouse to allow the central office to monitor the achievement of ELLs across the district.

45. Provide professional development for general and ESL teachers and school leaders on how to use ELL data to make instructional decisions.

46. Charge the ELL office and a new research office with tracking, analyzing, and reporting on ELL enrollments by ELP levels, time in program, services received, and content achievement, etc.

Special Education

47. Create a single point of entry systemwide and at the school level for determining whether students have a suspected disability. Include relevant teachers and behavioral/related services staff in the process.

48. Review local operating standards for determining eligibility to ensure that they are clear, user friendly, and accessible to all stakeholders, with supportive documents and forms.

49. Expect collaboration from the staff in curriculum and instruction, ELL, and Special Education units in determining eligibility.

50. Analyze staffing data (SPED teachers, psychologists, speech/language, etc.) to assess appropriate ratios of staff compared to other urban school districts across the county.

51. Establish a process for defining how schools will differentiate instruction for students with disabilities in general education classes—along with targeted professional development to support the effort.

52. Consider the feasibility of redeploying parts of school psychologists' time to provide mental health services for students, using Medicaid to support mental health services, and partnering with community mental health agencies on school sites to address trauma and social/ emotional needs.

Accountability

53. Develop an accountability system for central office staff that ensures staff responsibility for progress on the district's academic goals and priorities and provides incentives to collaborate in cross-functional teams for jointly addressing major district challenges, e.g., the overhaul of professional development, the strengthening of Tier I instruction, and a revamping of data systems.

54. In the short-term, delay revamping the district's evaluation procedures for teachers and school-based staff until curriculum reforms take hold. At that point, the district should overhaul its personnel evaluation procedures to put greater and more concrete emphasis on improving student results, building teacher and principal capacity, and bolstering the quality of instruction.

55. Establish a calendar of regular program evaluations. Build an evaluation component into all initiatives.

56. Begin building a data analytic system to provide central office staff and school-based staff with better and more granular information on where students are struggling academically and where they are making progress. This system should use assessment and other data, but it should include differing kinds of analysis of that data to better inform instructional practice. This work ought to be a joint effort between the research office and the office of the chief academic officer and should include analysis of how various student groups are performing and why.

57. Conduct explicit evaluations of the district's various electronic instructional tools, e.g., Study Island, Imagine Learning, and Big Brain, and their impact on student achievement—not solely based on usage counts.

Data and Assessments

58. Gauge the redundancy of current assessments (e.g., STAR and NWEA), and eliminate overlapping tests.

59. Eliminate mandatory use of pre-tests in the Achievement Series in math and ELA.

60. Review the alignment of assessment items on the Achievement Series against the state standards by grade level and time of year.

61. Eliminate use of STAR for ELA testing. Begin developing parent-friendly reports on other assessments to communicate student progress.

62. Eliminate the third NWEA assessment next year since the district will have the state test results, which could be used to predict results from the first two administrations.

63. Ensure that the purposes of district-mandated assessments are clear at both district and school levels.

Discipline and Behavior

64. Implement a districtwide PBIS program that provides protocols for minimizing any loss of instructional time due to suspensions. This plan should explicitly address—

    o Early childhood suspensions
    o Disproportionality
    o Long-term suspensions
    o Short-term (1-3 day) suspensions

F. Financial Operations

The financial team conducted its fieldwork for the financial review during a four-day site visit to Kansas City, from November 1 through 4, 2016. This chapter presents the findings and recommendations of the team in the following areas: commendations, organization, leadership and management, and operations. Please note that the footnotes contained herein are an integral part of this report.

Exhibit 41 below shows the district's overall organizational chart and the 11 direct reports to the superintendent, including the chief financial officer.

Exhibit 41. KCPS Organization Chart (As revised 9/9/2016)

Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by KCPS.

Exhibit 42 below shows the organization of the business and finance group. The chief financial officer (CFO), a direct report to the superintendent, heads the organization, which is comprised of three departments, as listed below. Each department is headed by a director.

- Business Services. This department includes budget development and management, procurement, the management of school bookkeepers, and financial training.

- Finance and Benefits. This department includes the treasury function, accounts payable, fixed asset management, employee health and medical benefits administration, and the wellness program.

- Repurposing Initiative. This unit is responsible for the administration of the district's program to repurpose closed school facilities.

Exhibit 42. Business and Finance Organization Chart
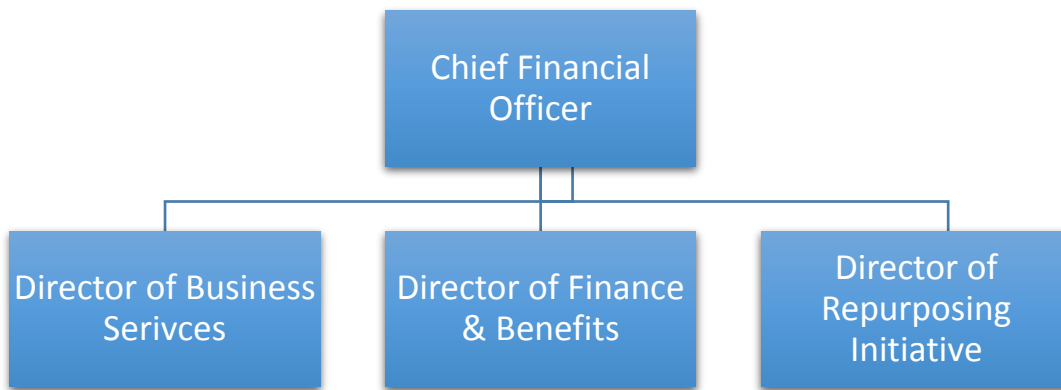
Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by KCPS

As of June 30, 2015 (the most recent Comprehensive Annual Financial Report [CAFR] posted on the district's website), the district's General Fund had an ending balance of $57.8 million from actual revenues of $211.3 million and actual expenditures of $218.7 million in fiscal year 2014-15. Exhibit 43 below shows the beginning balances, revenues, expenditures, net gains (losses), and ending balances in the General Fund for the most recently reported three fiscal years.

Exhibit 43. General Fund Balances, Revenues, Expenditures, Net Operating Gain (Loss) and Transfers For School Years 2012-13 Through 2014-15 (in millions)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Beginning Fund Balance	$63.8	$65.6	$73.2
Total Revenue	200.8	210.1	211.3
Total Expenditures	193.1	203.1	218.7
Net Operating Gain (Loss)	7.7	7.0	(7.4)
Transfers In (Out)	(5.9)	.6	(8.0)
Ending Fund Balance	$65.6	$73.2	$57.8

Source: Prepared by CGCS from information contained in KCPS CAFRs

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General Conclusion of the Business and Finance Review

The overall conclusion of the Council's Strategic Support Team is that, ***over the past five years, the district has achieved greater financial stability and a solid fiscal grounding; yet there is additional progress that the district could make.***

Findings and Observations

Commendations

- The district has enjoyed General Fund ending balances of 34 percent, 36 percent, and 26 percent of expenditures for the three fiscal years 2012-13 to 2014-15 (see Exhibit 43 above), which has significantly contributed to the organization's fiscal stability.

- The district has been successful in reducing its external audit findings in the past four audits (FY 2012 through FY 2015).

- The Repurposing Initiative Department has instituted an urban planning approach, with excellent community involvement, in the decision-making processes for the disposal of excess properties.

- The district conducts an annual physical inventory of its fixed assets (furniture, fixtures, and equipment) using an outside contractor.

- The establishment of the bookkeeper position to directly assist schools has been helpful in supporting principals in executing their business and financial responsibilities.

- The team observed that many individuals in the various departments and units of the district's business and finance organization were skilled and dedicated, and that pockets of excellence were present.

- The district has negotiated a defined contribution plan for its employee health and medical benefits program, which limits the district's exposure to increasing costs in this area.

- The Master Plan portion of the district's annual budget is commendable, since it determines the strategic investments that should be applied to achieve the district's goals.

- All new principals must meet with the financial trainer prior to getting log-on credentials for the district's computer systems, ensuring a reasonable understanding of the capabilities and responsibilities of various applications.

Organization

- The district has no internal audit function or School Board Audit Committee.

- A number of functions and organizational units are misaligned or misplaced, preventing optimal efficiency and effectiveness. For example--

- Payroll is under the Human Resources Department rather than under the CFO.

- Payroll and Accounts Payable are not under a single controller of disbursements.

- Risk Management and Benefits Management report to two different chief-level positions.

- Mail delivery drivers are under Purchasing rather than Operations.

- Responsibility for attendance-accounting monitoring, a significant driver of district revenue, is in the instructional division rather than under the CFO.

- The team did not see that there has been any effort to right-size units within the business and finance group. There have been staff reductions over the last several years, but down-sizing and right-sizing are not the same things.

- The official organizational charts presented to the team for review contained disputed reporting relationships.

- Staffing levels in the business and finance organization appear to be generous based on other urban schools systems of comparable size, while salary levels appeared to be reasonable.

Leadership and Management

- The district does not have a succession plan to deal with potential retirements in mission-critical business, financial, and operations executive positions. The team found evidence of this in instances where incumbents in leadership roles lacked the appropriate experience or skill sets for their assignments.

- Neither the business and finance group nor any of its three departments have developed strategic business plans with goals and objectives, timelines, targets, performance measures (KPIs), benchmarks, and accountabilities.

- Neither the business and finance group nor any of its various departments and units are data-driven organizations. For example, the team saw no--

  - tracking of basic performance metrics or productivity data for any unit;

  - analysis of the cost to the district of the current high personnel turnover rates;

  - sustainability analysis of overall compensation costs;

  - spending analysis of the district's non-salary expenditures by vendor, object of expenditure, method of procurement, average transaction amount, and average transaction cost[25]; or

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[25] The district does develop data and reports relating to its spending with minority- and women-owned businesses.

- o use of basic analytical tools to test assumptions, explore alternatives, validate decisions, or direct operations.

- The team identified several major issues with the district's budget development and management processes. For example--

  - o The team was told by multiple school principals and several senior staff that they have only limited engagement in the development of the annual budget. In addition, some principals reported to the team that they sometimes receive their allocations with limited input. The process was described by multiple interviewees as not transparent or collaborative.

  - o There appears to be no formal evaluation of instructional programs in the budget development process.

  - o The team was told that a new transportation policy, which reduced walk distances and increased costs, was funded from the facilities department budget, which one would assume affected its operations.

  - o The team was told by senior management and staff that the district does not anticipate position vacancies and does not budget for salary lapses, which could result in over-budgeting of expenditures in major salary accounts.

  - o There is little transparency in the methods and formulas that determine school-site resource allocations for basic staffing, special education (SPED) funding, English Language Learner (ELL) allocations, or custodial allotments.

  - o The team heard that the budgets for utilities are not based on actual experience or realistic projections.

  - o The ERP system is still being implemented and was only partly used in the budget development process alongside manual procedures.

- o The superintendent and the Board of Education are not provided the highest quality financial information that would be considered necessary to make informed decisions. For example, the interim financial reports lack useful management information because they fail to provide an analysis of major revenue and expenditure accounts comparing the adopted budgets to *projected* results.

- The team noted a number of acute weaknesses in internal controls. For example, in addition to the lack of an internal audit function (noted above):

  - o There is little to no active management of enterprise–wide contracts, including—

    - ▪ the substitute teacher contract,

    - ▪ the student transportation management contract, and

- the school bus-fleet operations contracts.

  o The position-control system has material gaps, permitting such errors as placing multiple employees into the same position and paying employees who are not assigned to a position.

  o The team determined that there are several points of inappropriate access to the purchasing unit's vendor files, including access by accounts-payable personnel.

  o The district has not conducted an employee-dependent eligibility audit in at least four years.

  o It was reported that purchase orders are created after goods have been received in order to process payments.

  o Budget personnel could provide no assurances that the counts used for attendance reports were accurate.

  o The district has had the same external auditor for the past eight years and does not appear to have a rotation policy for the selection of its auditor.

  o The district has not conducted an enterprise-wide risk assessment.

- The team saw no evidence that consideration and approval of grants was strategic or that grants are subject to a review for program compatibility or sustainability.

- The team found several concerns with information technology policies and systems in the district. For example--

  o There is no IT governance structure to determine systems priorities and resource allocations.

  o It does not appear that the district's ERP has been fully implemented.

  o There is no automated time and attendance system.

  o Report-writing capabilities have not been adequately developed in ERP-user departments.

- The business and finance group does not appear to value outside certifications or accreditations of qualifications. This formed part of the evidence that the team used to conclude that the district was very insular. (Other teams found the same.) For example—

  o The district has not applied for the Governmental Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting or the Association of School Business Officials International's (ASBO) Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its CAFR.

- None of the personnel performing procurement functions have professional certifications.[26]

- The team noted several instances of poor communication, both internally and externally. For example--

  - Communications between the business and finance group and the HR Department was described by interviewees as "challenging."

  - There was a general dearth of regularly scheduled *staff* meetings—except for weekly managers meetings--within the business and finance group.

  - There are no customer surveys to determine adequacy of service levels, satisfaction levels, or areas for improvement.

  - The business and finance group does not benefit from using outside advisory groups to the extent it could, such as --

    - a citizen's budget review committee,

    - a principals' business and budget advisory group,

    - outside professional advisors on an Investment Committee, or

    - a grant oversight committee.

Operations

- The board has established a broad set of recently updated (2013) governance policies; however, the district's administration has not adequately followed up with specific procedures and documented processes to support these policies. For example--

  - There is no administrative guidance related to financial policies, such as the size of the ending balance, investment procedures, or budget processes.

  - The procurement procedures manual or handbook does not fully support the recently updated governance policies established by the board of education.

- The team saw no evidence that there has been an in-depth process review that could lead to automated systems improvements. For example--

  - It appears that people are thrown at problems rather than determining the process improvements that could resolve an issue.

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[26] Several professional procurement organizations offer certification programs, including the Certified Public Procurement Officer (CPPO) and Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB) programs.

o The district manually processes low dollar value purchase orders, rather than utilizing its P-Card capabilities, and P-cards are not managed as part of a strategic supply chain administrative system.

o Procurement processes are so cumbersome that every bid solicitation requires a face-to-face meeting between purchasing staff and the district's legal staff.

- It was reported to the team that external auditors helped prepare the financial statements contained in the district's CAFR in 2016, which may be inappropriate—depending on what was done (as the auditor is expressing an opinion on the financial statements that they prepare).

Recommendations

The Council's Strategic Support Team has developed the following recommendations in an effort to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, leadership and management, and operations of the business and finance functions of Kansas City Public Schools.

1. Reorganize the business and finance group into a functional organization, as follows:

   a. Create a treasury function reporting directly to the CFO responsible for cash-flow projections, investments, and debt management.

   b. Establish a controller's office responsible for all cash disbursements (including payroll and accounts payable), general ledger, financial reporting, grant accounting, and the accounting for fixed assets.

   c. Construct a budget development and management function that includes building and maintaining the annual budget, position control, training of school personnel on the use of business systems, and managing and monitoring pupil attendance systems.

   d. Institute a procurement unit that is driven by strategic supply-chain management, effective utilization of P-Card resources, and documented standardized procedures.

   e. Set up an employee benefits unit to manage the district's health insurance and wellness programs.

   Exhibit 44 below shows a proposed sample business and finance organizational chart by function.

Exhibit 44. Sample Business and Finance Organization Chart by Function
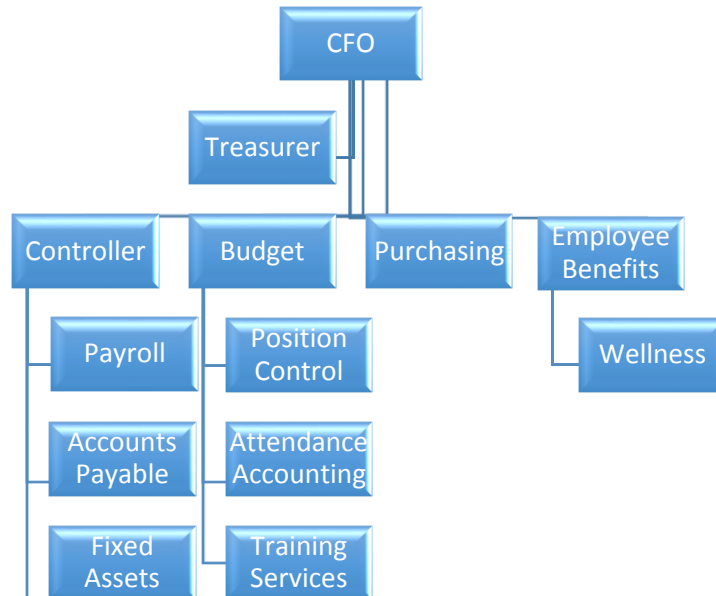
2. Examine the staffing levels and workloads of each unit in the new business and finance group to ensure that it is right-sized, that is has defined all roles and clearly assigned responsibilities, and that each function has qualified people with the applicable skill-sets and appropriate experience for the assignment.

3. With the participation of staff and other stakeholders, develop strategic multi-year business plans for the business and finance group and each of its subunits that are specifically linked to the district's strategic vision and contain measurable goals, objectives, timelines, KPIs, and accountabilities.

4. Establish an internal audit function under the guidance of an audit committee consisting of both School Board members and community members with financial and auditing experience.

5. Develop succession planning for mission-critical executive positions in business, financial, and operations areas.

6. Turn the business and finance unit into a data-driven organization that relies on fact-based and analysis-centric justifications for decisions, including the use of such tools and techniques as–

   a. Basic budget, finance, accounting, investment, purchasing, expenditure, and benefits statistics, metrics, and management information.

   b. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks to measure and compare performance and effectiveness (see the Council's extensive array of KPIs).

   c. Application of return-on-investment (ROI), disaggregated spend analysis, business case justification, and other analytical methodologies to support decision-making.

7. Enhance the budget development and management processes with---

a. More inclusive involvement of senior management and school principals in the development of budget priorities.

   b. Rigorous evaluation of continuing programs in the ongoing budget.

   c. Greater transparency in the formulae and methods used for allocating budgeted resources.

   d. Budgeting for salary lapse (unfilled positions) to free-up additional resources.

   e. Development of a strategic budget plan that would include the gradual spending down of the district's ending balances to more reasonable levels.

8. Improve interim financial reporting by including updated projected revenues and expenditures compared to projected outcomes.

9. Conduct a comprehensive review of internal controls within the business and finance areas, including these steps:

   a. Conduct an enterprise-wide risk assessment.

   b. Adopt an anti-fraud policy.

   c. Establish active management and accountability for enterprise-wide contracts.

   d. Establish a viable position-control system.

   e. Secure access to the district's vendor files.

   f. Conduct a dependent-eligibility audit.

   g. Rotate the external auditor.

10. Establish a pre-approval review process for grants to ensure they are compatible with current programs and are sustainable in the future.

11. Enhance the information technology operations by establishing policies and processes for--

    a. an IT governance structure to help establish priorities and resource allocations,

    b. more comprehensive implementation of the district's ERP (including an automated time and attendance system), and

    c. development of greater report writing and query capabilities in user departments.

12. Consider adopting GFOA and ASBO budgeting and reporting standards and applying for their certificates of excellence.

13. Develop and execute a business and finance communication plan that provides for the following:

a. The dissemination of School Board policies and administrative procedures relating to budget development, payroll, benefits, purchasing, attendance accounting, and other business and finance functions.

b. Regular all-hands meetings with business and finance staff to share information and identify issues.

c. Establishment of a citizen's budget review committee.

d. An investment committee that includes outside treasury professionals and corporate finance experts.

e. Surveys of employee concerns and satisfaction levels.

f. Collection of inquiry data and posting of FAQs on the district's website.

14. Create a body of documented administrative procedures and processes that provide updated support for School Board policies.

15. Establish an ongoing process-improvement program that encourages new ideas and innovation.

16. Expand the use of the P-Card program to eventually eliminate the processing of low-value purchase orders.

G. Human Resource Operations

The Council team conducted its fieldwork for the human resources review during a four-day site visit to Kansas City, October 2-5, 2016. This chapter presents the team's specific findings and observations. They are organized into four general areas: Commendations, Organization, Leadership and Management, and Operations. The footnotes contained herein are an integral part of this report.

Exhibit 45 below shows the overall district organization and the 11 direct reports to the superintendent, including the Director of Human Resources.

Exhibit 45. KCPS Organizational Chart (Revised 9/9/2016)

Exhibit 46 below displays the organization of the Human Resources (HR) Department. The director of HR has an assistant director and five additional reports.

Exhibit 46. Human Resources Organizational Chart (Revised 9/9/2016)
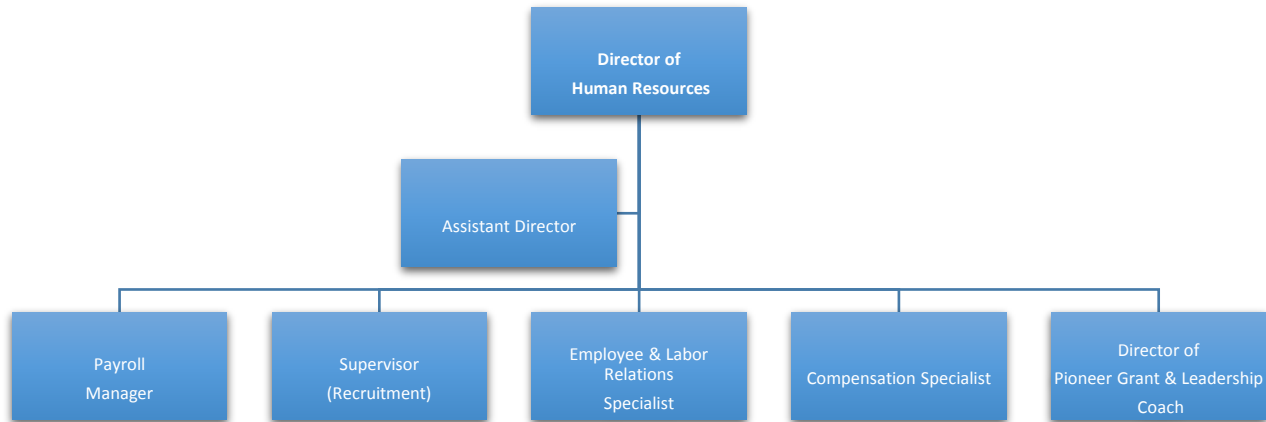
The Human Resources budget for 2016-17, as described in the district's *FY17 Comprehensive Budget,* included 14 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) and a total budget of $1,810,693.[27]

General Conclusion of the Human Resources Review

The overall conclusion of the Council's Strategic Support Team is that ***KCPS faces a critical teacher shortage because a large proportion of its workforce is approaching retirement, but the district is unable to recruit and retain new teachers and has few real plans to address the problem.***

Findings and Observations

Commendations

- The director of HR is now a member of the superintendent's executive leadership team and, therefore, is consulted on many significant issues and decisions with districtwide impact.

- Stakeholders report that the staff of the HR Department is friendly and helpful and that HR services have improved over the past year.

- The team was told that 100 percent of employees are on automated payroll deposit and that pay-stub information is available on-line.

- The legal department reported a reduction in the number of employees on leave pending disciplinary actions, as well as a reduction in the length of such leaves.

- The district has negotiated a defined contribution to its sponsored health and medical programs, limiting future exposure to increases in the cost of these benefits.

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[27] *Approved FY17 Comprehensive Budget, May 25, 2016, page 87, program #014*

- The district reports an exit interview completion rate[28] of 39.2 percent compared to a median of 14.0 percent rate among other reporting Council school districts.[29]

Organization

- The HR department appears to be sufficiently staffed, compared to other urban school districts of comparable size. However, much of its work seems to be transactional in nature rather than providing strategic support and resources to schools.

- The HR department is not organized around the three key functions of on-boarding (including recruitment and placement), employee services (including organizational and professional development), and exiting (including transitional and retirement counseling) that define best practices in other major urban school systems.

- The inclusion of payroll in the HR organization constitutes an internal control weakness by having the pay-rate setting and pay-processing functions within the same department.

- Job duties of personnel in HR are not clear to customers, and there appear to be few distinctions between the roles of the director and the assistant director of HR.

- The distinction was unclear between the role of the employee and labor relations specialist in HR and the activities of the legal department.

- The team was unable to evaluate the quality of HR job descriptions because they were not provided in a timely manner.[30]

- Disciplinary matters and ADAAA accommodation functions are performed by the same person, which could create the appearance that an accommodation is a disciplinary action.

- The district's risk management efforts and functions are dispersed throughout the organization (including legal, finance, and various operating departments) with inadequate coordination or oversight to ensure a comprehensive enterprise-wide risk mitigation approach and strategy.[31]

Leadership and Management
- Turnover at the top levels of management (including the superintendent and the director of HR) has hindered the district's ability to set a cohesive direction and has contributed significantly to some of the situations described in these findings.

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[28] Total number of exit interviews completed, divided by the total number of annual employee separations (including retirement, resignation and termination) in the district.
[29] *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools*, Results from Fiscal Year 2014-15, CGCS, October 2016.
[30] The Council requested certain HR information from the district in advance of the site visit, but the information was not provided before the team arrived. Emails requesting information were sent to the district on September 19 and 25.
[31] For additional information on Enterprise Risk Management, see the Council's report "Enterprise Risk Management for Public School Districts" (2016).

- KCPS faces a critical teacher shortage because a large proportion of its workforce is approaching retirement, the district is unable to recruit and retain new teachers, and it has no real plan to address the problem. For example--

  o The team was able to determine that 27 percent of teachers are at the top of their respective salary schedules, which indicates tenure with the district of 20 years or more, and that many of these teachers are near retirement eligibility.[32]

  o KCPS self-reported teacher retention data [33] indicates that--

    - Only 54 percent of new teachers remain with the district after one year, compared to a Council median of 76 percent.

    - Only 27 percent of new teachers remain after two years, compared to a Council median of 68 percent.

    - Only 8 percent of new teachers remain after three years, compared to a Council median of 60 percent.

    - Only 6 percent of new teachers remain after four years, compared to a Council median of 54 percent.

    - Only 6 percent of new teachers remain after five years, compared to a Council median of 48 percent.

  o The district hires approximately 200 new teachers per year. Applying the above retention rates, only 12 of these new hires would still be with the district after four years.

- There does not appear to be an understanding of HR's role in the broader organization, and there does not seem to be a sense of urgency in its work. For example--

  o The professional development function is not an integral part of HR, and the professional development that does exist appears to be dispersed throughout the district.

  o HR does not have an organizational development function.

  o There are no service-level standards within the district; employee productivity is not measured; and there is no attempt to distinguish or identify efforts that add value to the enterprise.

  o HR does not appear to be involved in systemic succession planning for mission-critical positions across the district. Having personnel who are second in command in major departments attending cabinet meetings is a step in the right direction, but it does not constitute an adequate succession plan per se.

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[32] Data on teaching staff by age was not available to further support this analysis.
[33] *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools*, Results from Fiscal Year 2014-15, CGCS, October 2016.

- HR staff reported that they receive three to four disputes each day, but the unit does not appear to identify the underlying causes of these disputes beyond those involving employment-relations issues. (After the team's site visit, the Department reported that it had done some employment-relations training at one school and in the child nutrition, IT, and facilities units.)

- Some individuals in leadership roles do not seem to have the requisite experience or skill sets, while others appear to be underutilized, and HR employees in general are not empowered to make decisions or changes. For example--

  - There appear to be tasks, responsibilities, and decisions that reside with HR leadership that should be delegated.

  - HR has contracted for a compensation study that could have been completed by in-house staff.

- Neither the HR department nor the individual units within the organization have business plans with goals, objectives, benchmarks, milestones and accountabilities that are aligned with the district's overall strategic vision.

- There is no recruitment plan for hard-to-staff positions, and there is no action plan to develop internal and external pipelines for teacher candidates.

- The Human Resources function is not data-driven. For example –

  - Data are not used to actuate decisions.

  - Basic HR statistical and management information is not readily available or regularly analyzed. This information includes--

    - vacancy rates by job classification and location,

    - turnover rates by job classification and location,

    - absentee rates by location and job classification,

    - substitute usage and cost by job type and location, and

    - recruitment data (e.g., number of applicants by field, location, source, gender, ethnicity, and education level).

  - Metrics, such as the Council's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), are not used to measure and compare the performance and effectiveness of HR or its subunits with other major urban school districts.

- The team saw no evidence of cross-training of HR employees or of career pathway opportunities.

- HR customers are dissatisfied with the quality of the teacher-candidate pool. For example–

  o Some customers believe that the pre-screening processes and background checks for new employees are not well performed or are not rigorous enough.

  o The team was advised that KCPS's starting salaries are at the median in the Kansas City metropolitan area, but they need to be more competitive to attract and retain higher quality teachers.

  o Some customers believe that HR is not proactive and does not venture out of the immediate area to recruit new teachers.

- The district has not built on its relationship with the teachers' union to create a more robust mentorship program for new teachers and has not worked with labor groups to develop processes to resolve grievances at a lower level in the district's organization. (The district is not alone among other urban school systems on this issue.)

- HR's internal and external communications are inadequate. For example –

  o There is no HR communication plan to inform employees of HR services or district personnel policies.

  o Communications between HR and other departments and divisions appear to be limited.

  o HR has not regularly worked with the unions to develop processes to resolve grievances systemically.

  o Embedded organizational silos within HR impede communications, and staff meetings are infrequent.

- The district has no project-management office or project-management methodology, and projects and initiatives do not have specific executive sponsors.

- There is no evaluation system for classified employees that incorporates agreed-upon performance expectations and contains linkage to professional growth strategies.

Operations

- The office environment in HR is not conducive to the discussion of sensitive personnel issues and does not appear to secure confidential employee information.

- HR technology support is not integrated and does not provide the management tools to effectively automate workflow. For example –

  o Three new HR applications have been implemented in the past year (an applicant tracking system, an evaluations system, and a new HRIS system); however, these systems are not integrated with one another.

- There is no automated time and attendance system.

- Specific responsibilities for data integrity have not been assigned in HR.

- There are no user-driven report-generation utilities to develop management information.

- Employee exit surveys are not automated.

- There appear to be no consistent or automated systems for initiating requests or approvals for filling positions. (It was reported to the team that if a position becomes vacant it is closed.)

- There are duplications of effort and redundant paper trails.

- There appeared to be a general lack of documented HR procedures and processes, along with a lack of handbooks for supervisors or employees.

- HR is known as a paper-intensive operation and suffers from a reputation for losing files and documents.

- The HR director has no authority or management control over the substitute teacher system, although coordination of this system is listed in the director's job description.

- The team was unable to determine if payments for substitute teacher services are validated by independent usage reports from schools or if substitute usage is correlated with teacher absences.

- HR is the collection point for required annual classified employee evaluations, but it does not monitor or enforce the requirement.

- Changes in employment status, work location, or assignment are said to result in payroll errors.

Recommendations

With the overall goals of improving the HR department's organization, leadership and management, and operations and enhancing HR's strategic value to the district, the Council team offers the following recommendations:

1. Reorganize the Human Resources Department according to basic functions: on-boarding (i.e., recruiting, vetting, and placement of new employees), employee services (i.e., labor relations, employee assistance, and organizational development), and retention services (i.e., professional growth, evaluations, and separation processing). Responsibilities for payroll processing should be reassigned to the CFO. Exhibit 47 below shows a sample organization chart by function.

Exhibit 47. Sample Human Resources Functional Organizational Chart
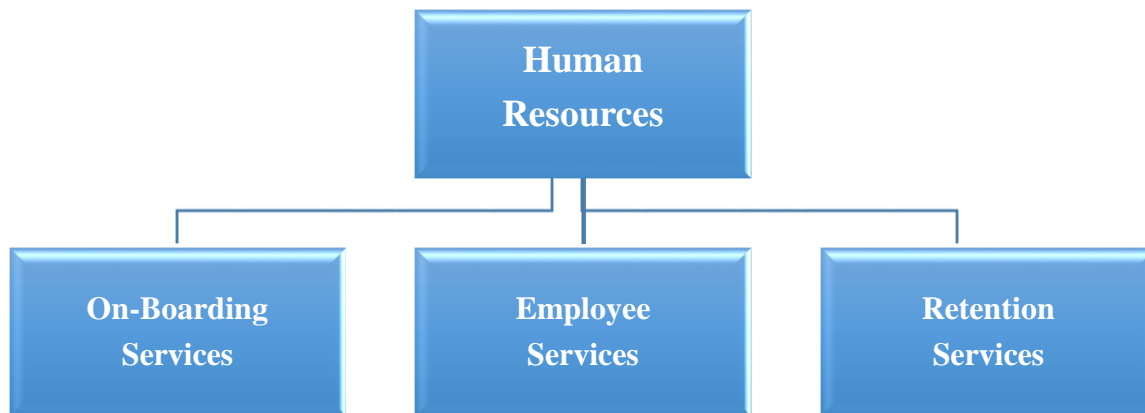
2. Examine staffing levels and workloads of each unit in the new Human Resources Department to ensure that each unit is right-sized, establishes uniform titles, defines all roles, clearly assigns responsibilities, and ensures that HR functions have qualified people, with applicable skill sets in the appropriate positions.

3. With the participation of staff and other stakeholders, develop strategic business plans for the HR Department and each of its subunits that are specifically linked to the district's strategic vision and contain measurable goals, objectives, timelines, and accountabilities.

4. Working with stakeholders, create a workforce needs assessment and a recruitment, selection, placement, and retention master plan that includes--

   a. A personnel cycle calendar that provides an annual workforce forecasting process, the early identification of needs and allocations, and the timely authorization for issuance of new employment contracts.

   b. A marketing program to attract potential candidates to Kansas City.

   c. Clearly defined procedures and processes for the recruitment, selection, and placement of all staff.

   d. Specific strategies and tactics for filling hard-to-staff positions.

   e. Pipeline programs with local university partners to recruit future teachers.

   f. Examination of starting salary levels compared with others to determine competitiveness.

   g. Processes for reporting recruiting and hiring results to stakeholder groups.

h. Efforts for improving the retention of new teachers, including enhanced orientation and intensified mentorship programs.

5. Establish Human Resources as a strategic partner in the management of the district by recognizing HR's broader role in organizational and professional development and also by taking the following steps:

   a. Design and implement a districtwide professional development plan that engages all employees (certificated and classified) and includes--

      i. comprehensive orientation and job specific on-boarding for new hires,

      ii. ongoing professional development to enhance job skills and promotional opportunities for continuing employees, and

      iii. a process for analyzing and correlating employee evaluation data with school performance to provide direction for professional development programs.

   b. Provide organizational development services that result in the establishment of departmental service-level standards and employee productivity measures.

   c. Establish succession planning for mission-critical positions.

   d. Recognize and address issues in the district's culture that give rise to interpersonal relationship disputes that distract from the district's mission and consume scarce resources.

6. Create a data-driven organization that relies upon fact-based and analysis-centric justifications for decisions, including the use of tools and techniques, such as –

   a. Basic HR statistics, metrics, and management information, including disaggregated turnover rates, absentee rates, substitute usage, vacancy rates, and recruitment data.

   b. Salary surveys to measure competitiveness and equity.

   c. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks to measure and compare performance and effectiveness with other major urban school systems.

7. Develop and execute an HR communications plan that provides for –

   a. The dissemination in a clear and user-friendly manner of federal and state laws, School Board policies, and administrative procedures relating to staffing formulas, recruitment, salary schedules, leave programs, required training, promotional opportunities, and employee benefits.

   b. Regular meetings with school principals to address their concerns.

   c. Regular all-hands meetings with HR staff to share information and identify issues.

    d. Labor-management meetings to resolve or mitigate issues systemically before they become grievances.

    e. Surveys of employee concerns and satisfaction levels.

    f. Collection of inquiry data and posting of FAQs on the HR website.

8. Establish standardized classified-employee evaluation instruments and processes to incorporate expectations, performance measures, and professional growth strategies, and train supervisors on the effective use of evaluations.

9. Conduct workflow mapping of HR systems to document processes, identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and develop procedures manuals and handbooks.

10. Develop cross-training and career pathway opportunities for HR employees.

11. Reconfigure the HR workplace to make it more conducive to sensitive personnel discussions, and create a secure environment for confidential employee records.

12. Ensure there are adequate internal controls over usage of and payment for substitute teacher services.

13. Continue the effort to establish an enterprise-wide fully integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that incorporates

    a. automated interfaces between the applicant tracking system, HRIS, the teacher evaluation system, and the ERP system,

    b. an automated time and attendance system,

    c. processes to ensure the integrity of each application's data.

    d. efficient and documented work flows, and

    e. user-driven report generation utilities to develop management information.

14. Establish an enterprise-wide Risk Management Office under the superintendent or COO, and consolidate workers' compensation, self-insured employee benefits programs, and all other risk management and insurance functions.

15. Explore the development of an enterprise-wide Project Management Office (PMO) charged with coordinating, monitoring, and reporting on all initiatives and district-level projects using a standardized project management and reporting methodology.

H. Transportation

This chapter presents the team's specific findings and observations on transportation. In addition, the team reviewed documents provided by the district prior to a four-day site visit to Kansas City, October 11-14, 2016. The footnotes contained herein are an integral part of this report.

Exhibit 48 below shows the overall district organization and the 11 direct reports to the Superintendent.

Exhibit 48. KCPS Organizational Chart (Revised 9/9/2016)
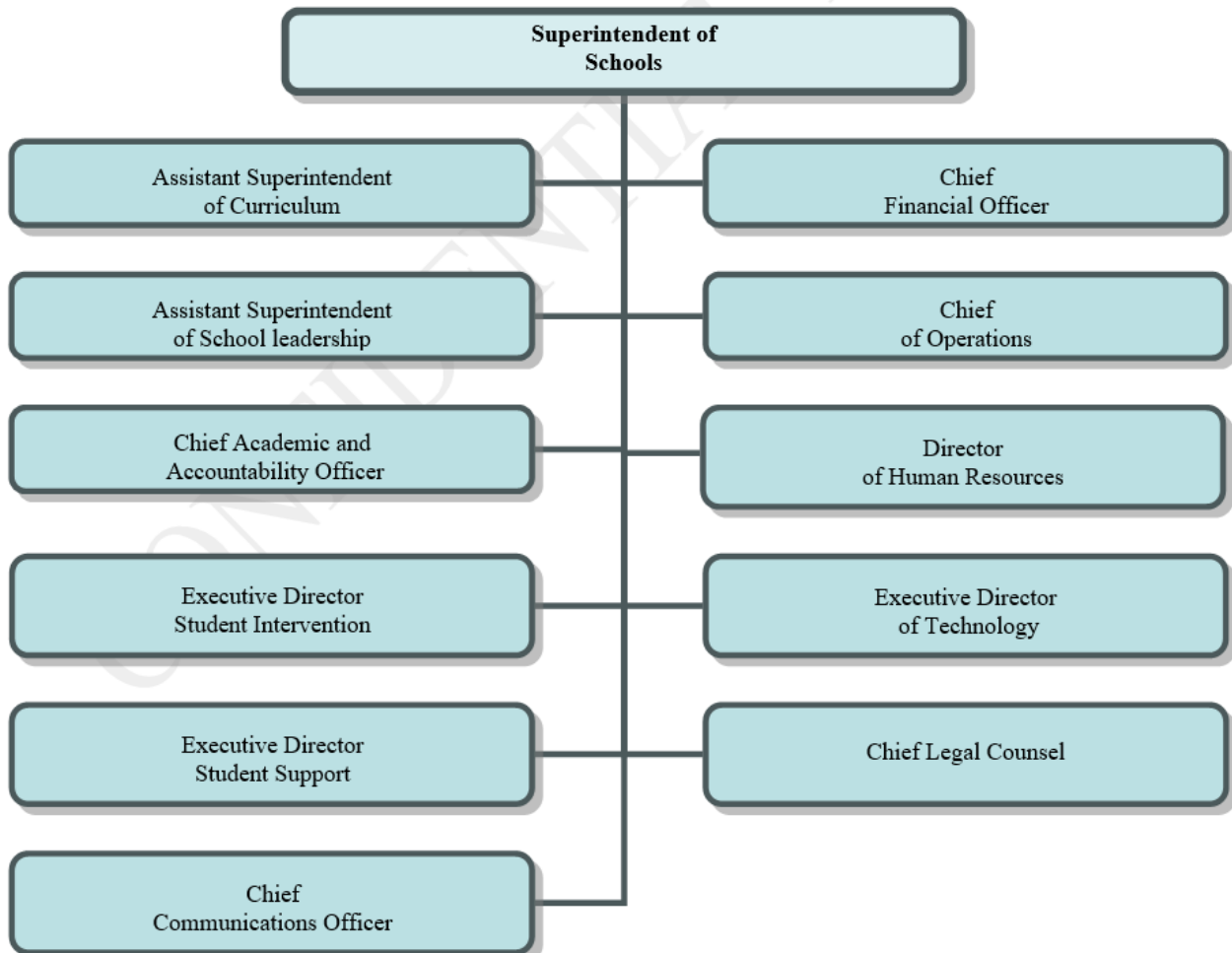
Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by KCPS

The chief operations officer (COO), who is a direct report to the superintendent, has responsibility for facility services (three zones), construction services, safety and security, child nutrition services, energy management, risk management, and student transportation.[34] The chief operations officer's organization is shown below in Exhibit 49.

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[34] Transportation service is entirely contracted out.

Exhibit 49. KCPS Chief Operations Officer Organizational Chart
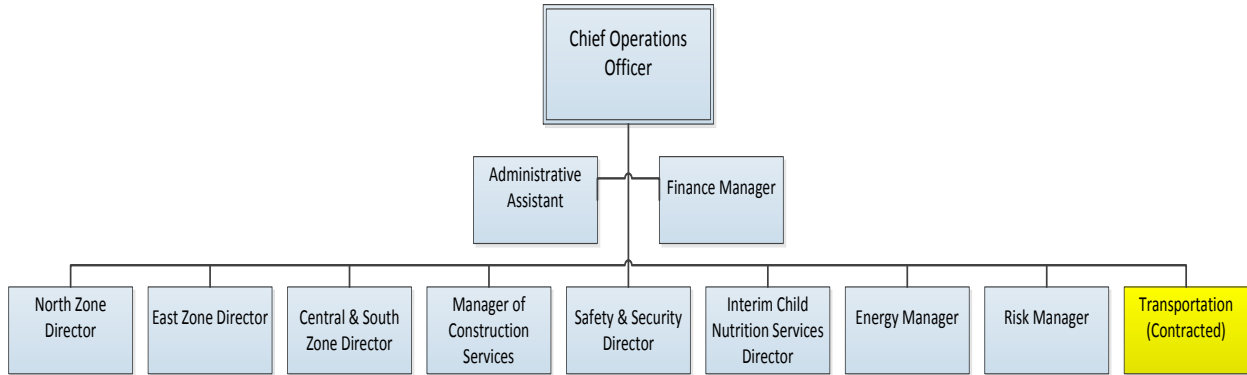
Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by KCPS

Student Transportation Services

In 1999, KCPS made a business decision to outsource to the TransPar Group, LLC (TransPar)[35] the day-to-day management and oversight of the district's transportation operations. TransPar has been under contract with KCPS continuously since 1999. TransPar's responsibilities include the day-to-day oversight of the district's current school bus service provider, First Student, Inc. The TransPar and First Student contracts are managed by the COO. Exhibit 50 below shows TransPar's organizational structure relative to KCPS.

Exhibit 50. TransPar KCPS Organizational Chart
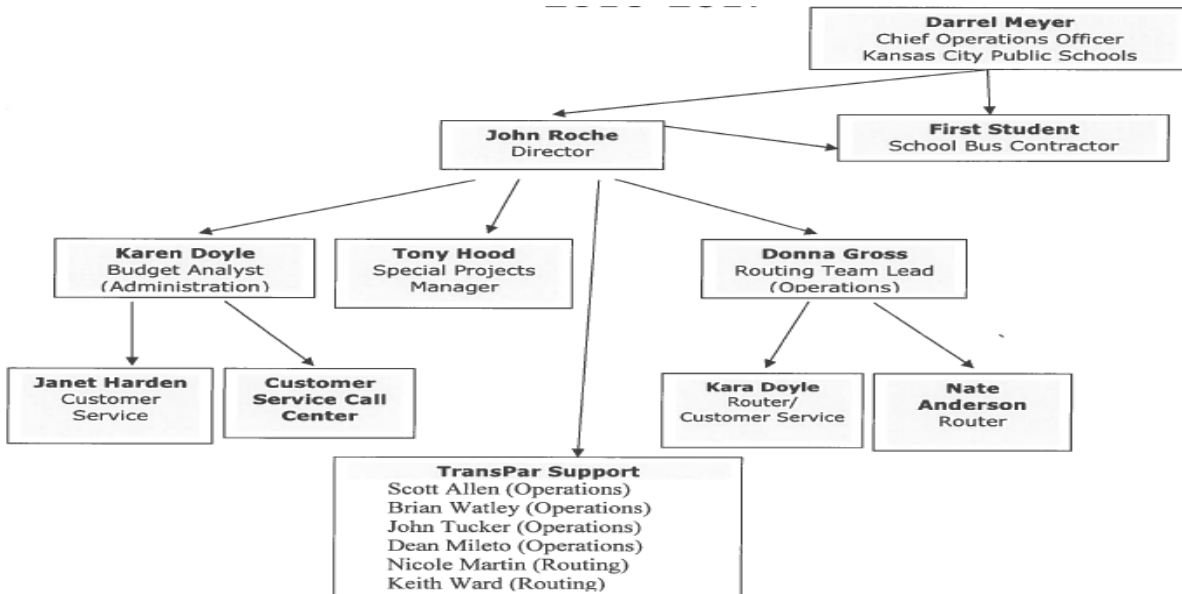
Source: TransPar Group, LLC

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[35] Per the current TransPar contract with KCPS, TransPar will be receive $563,352 for services provided in the 2016-17 school year.

The approved FY17 transportation budget is $15,874,147, which is 6.98 percent of the district's general budget. Exhibit 51 below compares transportation budget allocations to actual expenses for the past five fiscal years.

Exhibit 51. Transportation Allocated Budget vs. Actual Expense[36]

Fiscal Year	Budget	Actual
2011-12	$14,059,807	$13,439,837
2012-13	13,231,363	13,147,406
2013-14	12,648,572	12,534,077
2014-15	13,515,437	13,389,533
2015-16	14,168,566	13,744,926
2016-17	15,874,147	

Source: KCPS Budget Web Page

TransPar is responsible for the daily transportation of over 12,000 students[37] (78.06 percent of total district enrollment) who are currently transported on 177 contractor-operated buses and 53 contracted taxicabs to 35 schools and centers and to private agencies. School buses traveled over 3,000,000[38] miles in FY16 picking up and dropping off students at approximately 3,560 stops. The district also provides designated KCPS students with summer transportation services to selected schools and private agencies,[39] and field and athletic trips--all processed by TransPar.

General Conclusion of the Transportation Review

The overall conclusion of the Council's Strategic Support Team is that the ***KCPS transportation program is plagued by a number of governance, management, and operational problems of long standing.***

Findings and Observations

The findings of the Council's Strategic Support Team are organized into four general areas: Commendations, Leadership and Management, Organization, and Operations. These findings are followed by a set of related recommendations for the district.

Commendations

- KCPS—with guidance from TransPar—has been proactive in pursuing Medicaid reimbursement for qualifying services. To date, KCPS has been reimbursed in excess of $700,000.

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[36] KCPS budget web page: http://kcpublicschools.org/Page/4675
[37] TransPar
[38] Ibid.
[39] For summer 2016, TransPar reported that 2,275 students were transported to nine KCPS schools and eight private agencies on 74 buses and 29 cabs.

- Former KCPS employees that currently work for TransPar exhibit a high level of commitment and expertise.

- School-site administrators have an excellent online resource available, the *KCPS School Transportation Administrator's Handbook,*[40] which guides site administrators through the KCPS student transportation process.

- All principals responding to the annual service survey indicated that they have safe bus loading/unloading areas.[41]

Leadership and Management

- Recommendations from two prior KCPS transportation reviews were not fully implemented.[42] One review was conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools (2006) and the other by MGT of America, Inc. (2015). Exhibit 52 below summarizes[43] recommendations from these studies, and the status of each.

Exhibit 52. Status of Previous Transportation Recommendations[44]

CGCS 2006 Recommendations	Status	MGT 2015 Recommendations	Status
Manage the transportation program proactively	Not Implemented	Establish specific bus stop locations for each route and direct students to these stops	Implemented
Improve contracting procedures	Not Implemented	Eliminate/reduce walking distance policy requirement	Implemented
Reduce transportation requirements through better school utilization	Not Implemented	Upgrade routing software	Implemented
Provide student and routing information to bus operators	Not Fully Implemented	Review district transportation policies and contracts.	Reviewed Annually
Review alternatives to school bus transportation	Not Implemented	Increase the number of three-tiered routes	Not Fully Implemented
Review and reduce the number of bus attendants	Not Implemented	Revise school bell times	Reviewed Annually
Improve pupil data	Not Fully Implemented	Review the use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tools	Not Implemented
		Review school attendance zones and boundaries	Not Implemented

Source: CGCS 2006 Review and MGT 2015 Review

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[40] Available online at:
http://www.kcpublicschools.org/cms/lib6/MO01001840/Centricity/domain/4/transportation/KCPS2015-16
SchoolTransportationAdministratorsHandbook101816.pdf.
[41] TransPar, *Principals' Survey for Transportation Services,* 2016.
[42] These reviews included other KCPS disciplines in addition to student transportation.
[43] Attachment F contains the full text of the recommendations noted above.
[44] Council of the Great City Schools, *Review of the Instructional Program and Operations of the Kansas City (Missouri) School District*, 2006; and MGT of America, Inc., *Kansas City Public Schools Final Master Plan Report*, June 5, 2015.

- The late release of the last school bus RFP resulted in only one (the current) vendor's responding. (RFPs should be released six months or so prior to the start of the contract.) Other potential bidders told KCPS that the bid award came too late to acquire requisite buses and property. [45]

- The KCPS transportation eligibility policy requires significantly less distance than Missouri State statutes require. As a result –

  o More students are transported to their resident school than is required by state statutes. However --

    ▪ Students who reside less than one mile from their resident school are not state funded[46]

    ▪ Currently, 2,529 transported students[47] reside less than one mile from their resident school. Exhibit 53 below illustrates eligibility requirements.

Exhibit 53. Eligibility for Transportation

Student Attends Resident School	All Grade Levels
State Eligibility Requirements	3.5 miles
2016-17 KCPS Eligibility Requirements	0.5 miles
Previous KCPS Eligibility Requirements	1.5 miles

Source: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and KCPS Transportation Eligibility Requirements

- In addition to the shortage of drivers, the 2016-17 startup was plagued by numerous other problems, for several reasons:

  o The late implementation of new routing software and the lack of training for staff using it.

  o Significant changes to existing route construction that were needed to accommodate the new KCPS transportation eligibility requirements and additional students that resulted from the changes.

  o The decrease in the walk-to-stop distance from six blocks to two blocks.

  o The lack of communications to stakeholders about impending changes in the delivery of transportation services

  o The late delivery of routing information to First Student.

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[45] Responding on behalf of the district, the vendor (TransPar) indicated that the lack of responses was also due to the shortage of drivers in the metro area, but driver shortages are a national problem that does not prevent multiple companies from responding to RFPs in other cities.

[46] Source: https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/fas-TransportationOverview-11-9-15.pdf.

[47] Source: TransPar.

- There was a lack of communication, information, and collaboration between First Student, TransPar, principals, and parents. For example--

  o Affected parents were not informed that a new service provider, Daye Transportation, would be transporting their children. As a result, many parents refused to allow their children to ride Daye Transportation buses.

  o Principals interviewed feel that they are on their own in handling transportation- related matters and that they lack administrative support in their effort to resolve transportation issues. Further, they were surprised that--

    ▪ Daye Transportation would be providing services to their school;

    ▪ new routing software, which could have a negative impact on service the first few days of school, was being implemented; and

    - TransPar employees oversee day-to-day transportation operations, not KCPS employees.

  o Transportation does not have direct access to the KCPS *School Messenger*[48] communication system to quickly notify parents of route delays.

- The KCPS contract with TransPar lacks written performance standards, penalties, or incentives. As a result –

  o The team questions the continued benefit of having an outside contractor manage the district's transportation operations.

  o There is minimal KCPS oversight of the contract, and the team was unable to verify that all deliverables and staffing levels were met.

  o A "revolving door" of on-site TransPar leadership has led to a lack of continuity in managing the contract. For example, there have been at least four different on-site TransPar General Managers to administer the KCPS contract in the past two years.

- Even though First Student has failed to meet all contractual requirements this school year,

  o no liquidated damages have yet to be assessed, and

  o the cost of taxicabs needed to transport KCPS students due to the First Student driver shortage has not been deducted from amounts owed to First Student.

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[48] School Messenger is a mass communication program that provides notifications to recipients *via* text message, email, voice, social media, or any combination thereof. Typical notifications regarding transportation could include route delays, emergencies, severe weather, substitute buses, and other related information.

- The district *may* be in violation of *least restrictive environment* requirements[49] under IDEA due to the large percent of students with IEPs who were coded as needing door-to-door transportation and were not riding with regular education students.[50] (Additional review is suggested to ensure compliance.)

- Implementation, at the start of this school year, of the new routing software, Versatrans,[51] was poorly executed. For example--

  o Routing staff lacked appropriate hands-on training on the new software prior to implementation.

  o The new Jackson County routing map required extensive correction in order to produce viable routing.

  o The best practice of extensive "stress testing" of all functions[52] prior to going live was ignored.

  o The routes delivered to First Student prior to the start of school were several days late and lacked afternoon routing detail.[53]

  o Students needed to be rerouted in September 2016 because more than 1,500 students had been dropped from transportation rosters since the start of school.

  o Fewer runs[54] were able to be paired/tiered.[55]

  o Siblings attending the same school were assigned to different buses.[56]

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[49] Pursuant to the U.S. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the least restrictive environment [LRE] is a principle that governs the education of students with disabilities and other special needs. LRE means that a student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate. These students should have access to the general education curriculum, extracurricular activities, or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access.

[50] The vendor indicated after the site visit that approximately 890 students with IEPs were assigned transportation and that some 88 percent of these students were coded by the Exceptional Education Department as needing door-to-door transportation. Some 180 students were riding with regular education students and 690 were assigned to dedicated routes.

[51] Versatrans is one of several school bus routing software systems used in the school bus industry. TransPar procured this software at no additional cost to the district.

[52] Successful transitions to new routing software historically require, at a minimum, map and travel times cleanup, stop cleanup, student assignment testing, route simulation, and parallel systems testing. This process generally takes 12-18 months prior to going live.

[53] The team was told by First Student that afternoon routing was received just prior to our site visit.

[54] A bus run is one component of a bus route. A bus route is comprised of multiple bus runs, such as one, two, or three runs in the morning transporting students to school, and one, two, or three runs in the afternoon returning students to their home or home areas.

[55] For example, if bus #1 bus picks up students and delivers them to school that starts at 7:30 a.m. and then picks different students and delivers them to a different school that starts at 8:45 a.m., the bus has completed two runs/tiers. Placing multiple runs together on the same bus/route reduces the total number of buses and expense.

[56] Source: Interviews with principals.

- First Student staff continued to be unable to print route sheets at their facility,[57] and they lacked read-only access to the routing software.

- The team noted a lack of district-initiated communications and collaboration between TransPar and First Student. For example –

  - The team was told that it has been at least three years since representatives from KCPS, TransPar, and First Student have sat at the same table to discuss and resolve transportation related issues.

  - TransPar and First Student point to each other as the cause of transportation problems.

  - First Student management believes they have no path to redress concerns other than through TransPar.

Organization

- KCPS lacks a centralized contract monitoring and compliance office needed for internal control and management of contracted services. As a result –

  - There is inconsistent contract enforcement and vendor evaluation. For example, the team found few instances where current transportation vendors were formally evaluated.

  - The team was told that KCPS lacks a clear procedure to deal with contract issues.

  - There is no process in place to ensure that contractors' insurance and performance bonds are up to date.

  - Critical timelines are not enforced. For example, the current school bus vendor reported that they have never received the new school year routes on or before the date contractually required.

Operations

- An error implementing the intended walk-to-stop distance to two-blocks resulted in many students walking a maximum of one-block to a stop. Exhibit 54 below illustrates the increase in the number of transported students and stops because of eligibility and walk-to-stop distance changes.

- The high on-time service performance rates reported by TransPar's *Progress in Motion* is inconsistent with TransPar principal surveys.[58] For example --

  - The last *Progress in Motion* annual report stated that school buses were on time 99.84 percent of the time in 2015-16, and 99.75 percent in 2014-15. The last principal surveys

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[57] At the time of the team's site visit on October 13, 2016, First Student was still unable to print route sheets.
[58] TransPar, *Principals' Survey for Transportation Services,* 2016, and TransPar, *Progress in Motion*, 2015-16 Annual Report.

for the same time periods, however, report that only 53 percent of principals responding were satisfied to very satisfied with on-time performance, which was up from 45 percent in 2015

o Only 27 percent of principals responding were satisfied or very satisfied with on-time performance of taxicabs, which was up from 20 percent in 2015.

Exhibit 54. Transported Students and Stops[59]

Program	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017
Regular ED	9,126	9,159	11,114
Students with Disabilities	677	748	426
Others	72	81	69
Early ED	141	131	112
Subtotal on Buses	10,016	10,119	11,721
Alternate Mode Vehicle	428	345	295
Total Students	10,444	10,464	12,016
Total Buses	146	156	177
Total Stops	3,193	3,564	4,802

Source: TransPar

- Principals expressed high levels of frustration about transportation operations. Principals told the team that --

  o When they call the transportation (TransPar) office for assistance in the afternoon, the calls often go unanswered. To evaluate this concern--

     At 4:15 p.m. on Thursday, October 13, 2016, the team speaker-phoned the published transportation telephone number (816-418-8825), and a recorded message stated that the transportation office was closed and to call back during normal business hours[60]

  o Principals have been directed not to call First Student directly but to call only the "transportation number" for problem resolution.

  o Delays in processing new students for transportation and late arriving buses are causing students to miss breakfast and/or instructional time. As a result –

     The loss of instructional time is negatively affecting KCPS's ability to meet the Missouri School Improvement Program attendance target of 90 percent of students in attendance at least 90 percent of the time[61]

  o Buses return late from field trips, delaying on-time bus departures, and causing student management problems in the afternoon.

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[59] TransPar was unable to explain reasons for the significant reduction of SWD in FY2017.
[60] A number of KCPS schools dismiss at 4:00 p.m.
[61] https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/MSIP-5-Performance-Standard-Appendix-A.pdf

- o Student route information provided to schools at the start of the school year was confusing, and in some cases, in a different format than previously received[62]

- o There appear to be fewer bus monitors present than in previous years.

- o There is inadequate bus loading time to ensure students are on the correct bus prior to afternoon departure.

- o When asked to rate overall transportation service, using a scale of 1-10 (10 being high), principals interviewed rated the service between 0 and 6.

- The team heard several concerns about the use of taxicabs to transport students. These concerns included--

  - o Inappropriate driver conduct toward students.

  - o Incidents between students riding in the same taxicab.

  - o Students participating in athletics being transported by taxicab.

  - o Multiple taxicabs "hovering" around school loading zones in the afternoon creating unsafe conditions.

  - o A lack of clear guidelines and support for the use of taxicabs.

  - o The cost of taxicab service, which in September 2016 was $114,523 for 973 cabs (average daily taxicab usage: 46 taxicabs per day).[63]

- The team was told that not all First Student buses were equipped with working radios or GPS units, a comment that First Student disputed. However, during the team's site visit to First Student, the team observed fire extinguishers on buses that appear to be expired. Exhibit 55 below provides examples.

- The KCPS cost per transported student and the KCPS cost per bus are considerably higher when compared to the median costs of other major urban school districts reported in the Council's 2014-15 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Report.[64] Exhibit 56 below illustrates these cost comparisons.

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[62] Several principals commented that the route list they received for their school appeared to contain routing information for all 12,000 traveling students.
[63] Source: TransPar
[64] The Council's *Managing for Results* report is a Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project that identifies performance measures, key indicators, and best practices that can guide the improvement of non-instructional operations in urban school districts across the nation.

Exhibit 55. Expired Fire Extinguishers

Source: CGCS Team Site Visit

Exhibit 56. Transportation Costs[65]

Fiscal Year	# Students Transported	Number of Buses	CGCS Median Cost per Student	KCPS Cost per Student	CGCS Median Cost per Bus	KCPS Cost per Bus
2011-12	8,358	183	$1,072	$1,608	$58,240	$73,442
2012-13	10,299	160	1,009	1,277	57,466	82,171
2013-14	10,127	150	1,123	1,238	58,727	83,561
2014-15	10,444	146	962	1,282	56,360	91,709
2015-16	10,464	156	NA	1,314	NA	88,109
2016-17	12,016	177		1,321		89,684

Source: Interviews, TransPar, and CGCS 2014-2015 KPI Report

- Although KCPS utilizes a three-tier[66] bell schedule system, the tiers are not organized to maximize routing efficiency and decrease cost. For example--

    o Currently, 53 routes/buses[67] service only one tier (extremely inefficient), 60 routes/buses service two tiers, and 64 routes/buses service three tiers (highest efficiency)

    o The CGCS 2014-15 KPI survey median for *Daily Runs per Bus* was 4.23. KCPS reported 2.28 *Daily Runs per Bus* in 2014-15.

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[65] Includes all students transported by bus or taxicab.

[66] Three (3) separate staggered school starting times with the goal of buses/routes in the morning performing three (3) runs each, and in the afternoon performing three (3) runs, each accommodating all transported students.

[67] This is up from 27 in FY16.

- There is inconsistent information from school site staff and First Student regarding student discipline. For example –

  o First Student reported that most schools do not respond to disciplinary referrals sent to schools *via* email.[68]

  o Principals indicated they do not receive referral notifications from First Student related to student management issues.

  o As a result of this disconnect--

    - student safety is jeopardized,
    - there is increased risk and liability,
    - driver morale is impacted,
    - driver attrition increases, and
    - buses will continue to depart late from school in the afternoon.

- Fifty-three percent (53 percent) of SWD runs have six (6) or fewer students assigned to the bus. Twenty percent (20 percent) of general education (non-SWD) student runs have 20 or fewer students assigned.[69] Exhibit 57 below shows the number of students assigned to runs.

Exhibit 57. Students Assigned to Runs
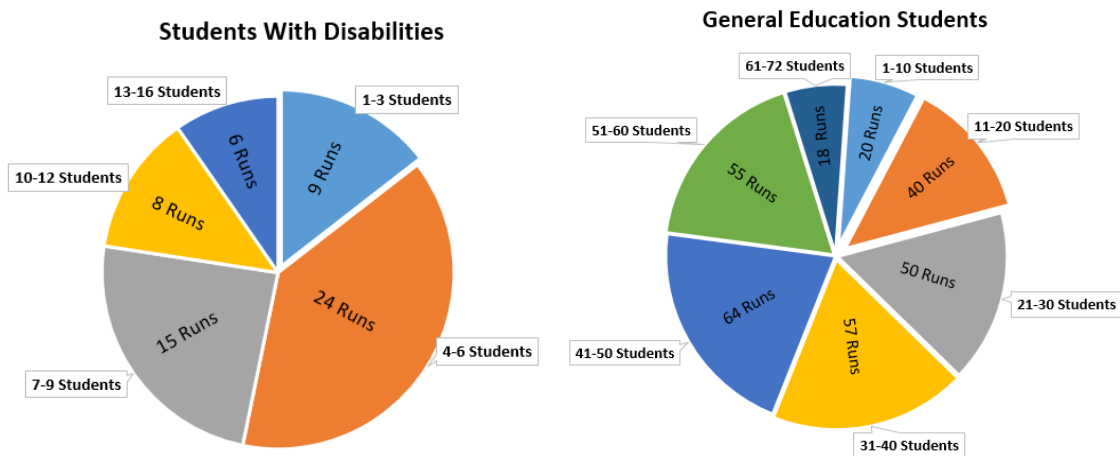
Source: TransPar

Recommendations

1. Convene--with a sense of urgency--ongoing meetings with appropriate department heads to review, prioritize, and implement previous recommendations shown in Exhibit 5. Based on findings described in this current review, the team considers the Council's 2006

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[68] First Student reported approximately 2,000 student-incident referrals were emailed to principals, of which only 50 percent were responded to.

[69] The vendor (TransPar) asserts that the reason for the low ridership on some buses is due to the large number of choice schools and programs.

recommendations and those by MGT as important now as they were then. Use these recommendations as "road maps" to develop business plans, cost/benefit analyses, and timelines and assign project owners to move the recommendations forward.

2. Evaluate the benefit of returning management—and possibly day-to-day operations—of the district's transportation services back in-house. Prepare an impact analysis that includes goals, staffing levels, costs, and a realistic transition timeline for administrative consideration.

3. Develop a timeline for internal review and release of transportation-related RFPs to ensure that contracts are awarded at least six (6) months prior to the date the contract begins.

4. Create a committee comprised of leaders from transportation and the Exceptional Education Department to confer on issues of mutual concern. At a minimum, these discussions should include--

   a. Establishing when a transportation representative should be present at an IEP[70] meeting to determine specialized equipment or services a student might require.

   b. Identifying opportunities to ensure a *least restrictive environment* whenever possible by—

      i. identifying students who can be integrated on buses with their non-disabled peers and

      ii. designing runs that will safely accommodate both corner and curb-to-curb stops.

5. Convene a team of stakeholders, including key instructional staff, special education staff, transportation staff, and a consultant that specializes in bell-time optimization to identify changes necessary to maximize three-tier bell schedule efficiencies and route planning strategies. The finished plan should--

   a. align schools so that an equal number of buses are scheduled on each of the three bell tiers,

   b. allow reasonable travel time between tiers and appropriate bus loading and unloading times at schools,

   c. allow tier assignment changes or exchanges, and

   d. allow for the inclusion of early release schedules.

6. Require all routers to be thoroughly trained on all functions of the routing software prior to routing students for summer and fall 2017 sessions. After receiving this training, routers should–

   a. Thoroughly "stress test" routing software in a testing environment in order to identify and resolve problem areas prior to the start of the 2017-18 routing process.

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[70] An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written education plan designed to meet a child's learning needs.

b. Evaluate the impact of the two-block walk-to-stop routing error by identifying the number of stops and students involved and associated costs, and seek district administrative direction for inclusion or exclusion of these stops for the next school year.

7. Ensure that all permits are up-to-date. Continue leveraging existing GPS technology on buses to monitor on-time performance to ensure that transportation is assisting KCPS in meeting or exceeding the Missouri School Improvement Program attendance target of 90 percent of the students in attendance 90 percent of the time.

8. Identify opportunities to improve student safety and reduce risk and liability by –

    a. Enhancing appropriate and timely responses to student discipline issues that occur on buses and in bus loading zones, and ensuring that students are held accountable for violations of the disciplinary code.

    b. Requiring all drivers of KCPS students and operations staff to receive ongoing training on KCPS policies and to be held accountable for required responses to bus/taxicab accidents, breakdowns, buses/taxicabs running late, unauthorized individuals attempting to board buses/taxicabs, smoking on the bus/taxicab, reported weapons on the bus/taxicab, and all other student safety-related situations.

9. Review annually KCPS transportation-eligibility requirements and fiscally quantify the encroachment on the district's General Fund of transporting students who reside less than one (1) mile from their resident school. Seek yearly approval from the district's administration to continue this level of service.

10. Begin a comprehensive review of all routing processes to identify opportunities to improve routing outcomes.[71] KCPS should--

    a. Establish an annual interdepartmental routing timeline committee that will develop appropriate and acceptable deadlines for the submission of data and completion of tasks. This committee should be comprised of key staff from the departments of information technology, exceptional education, and transportation and other departments deemed appropriate. The committee should ensure the following:

        i. Routing staff have sufficient time to prepare summer and fall routes that are efficient and cost-effective.

        ii. The timeline includes contractor meetings, and contractors have adequate time for recruiting/hiring/training of drivers and monitors and reviewing contractor backgrounds and driving records, as well as for dry run(s), and vehicle maintenance in preparation for the start of the school year

        iii. Contractors receive routes on time and can review routing, suggest pairings, and provide feedback prior to the opening of school.

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[71] The vendor (TransPar) asserts that this effort is underway.

     iv. Student routing information provided to schools prior to the opening of school is received in a timely manner and presented in a clear and logical format.

  b. Use—to the greatest extent possible—the previous school year's ending routing configuration as the starting point for next year's routing.

  c. Consider transporting students into two nearby schools on the same bus, such as a middle school and a nearby high school, simultaneously. (Make sure that safety considerations are taken into account.)

  d. Maximize the use of allowable ride times, earliest pickup times, and seating capacity to minimize the number of buses required.

  e. Design a strategy for improving the monitoring of actual ridership throughout the school year with the goal of aggressively identifying stops, runs, and, ultimately, buses that could be consolidated or eliminated.

11. Expand the use of *School Messenger* and allow transportation to notify parents, school site administrators, and, as appropriate, students, of route delays and other critical transportation-related information on a timely basis.[72]

12. Strengthen contract administration by creating a KCPS central office function whose primary responsibility is to monitor district contract management, deliverables, compliance, and best practices. This office should be responsible for--

  a. making contract oversight and enforcement a districtwide priority;

  b. developing training for key staff on best practices in contract administration;

  c. designing and monitoring performance indicators to ensure vendor compliance to all terms, conditions, and damage clauses agreed to by the parties; and

  d. ensuring that *Vendor Performance Evaluations* are written and issued on a regular basis, maintained in a centralized location, and used as a factor in allowing vendors to bid on future contracts.

13. Improve district oversight of communications between TransPar and First Student, with regularly scheduled meetings that rotate between KCPS offices and First Student's offices. Require the presence of key operations staff at these meetings. Agenda items should be submitted by both teams with the following goals--

  a. Improve the communications among students, parents, school site administrators, TransPar, and First Student.

  b. Expand the office hours of transportation service staff to ensure that callers receive prompt and courteous assistance any time buses are on the road.

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[72] The vendor (TransPar) indicates that this recommendation has now been implemented.

    c. Identify opportunities to deliver the highest possible level of service to KCPS students by

        i. Sharing resources, including, but not limited to –

            a) Allowing First Student read-only access to KCPS routing[73]

            b) Sharing GPS summary data with TransPar[74]

            c) The timely exchange of relevant information

            d) The timely notification of route modifications to parents and schools.

       ii. Require a transportation presence at principals' meetings to address concerns and reassure site administrators of transportation's commitment to providing quality transportation service and support.

      iii. Continue to meet with parents and school staff to address and resolve problem areas.

14. Conduct—with appropriate KCPS and legal staff at the table—an in-depth review and analysis of the existing service contracts with TransPar and First Student. This process should involve these actions:

    a. Review transportation-related contracts utilized in similar-sized or larger school districts throughout the country to note "best practice" contract language that ought to be incorporated into future KCPS contracts. (The Council can provide sample contracts.)

    b. Identify and strengthen existing contract language that is ambiguous or difficult to enforce, lacks performance standards and consequences for failure to perform, or lacks language regarding the confidentiality of student information.

    c. Review or add, as appropriate, liquidated damages and performance incentive language in contracts.

    d. Review current contracts to identify opportunities to apply liquidated damages that were not appropriately enforced, including other reimbursements to which KCPS is contractually entitled.

    e. Identify opportunities to contract for smaller buses to reduce dependency on taxicabs.

15. Perform—as is allowed in the current First Student contract—an immediate inspection of all KCPS buses and driver records to ensure updated compliance with –

    a. Vehicle maintenance and inspection requirements.

    b. Driver background, training, and testing requirements.

    c. Proper equipment or signage requirements on/in buses, including, but not limited to--

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[73] The vendor (TransPar) indicates that this part of the recommendation has been implemented.
[74] The vendor (TransPar) indicates that this part of the recommendation has been implemented.

i. empty bus signage;

ii. working two-way radios, GPS units, and digital cameras;

iii. working air conditioning on selected SWD buses;

iv. working seat belts on SWD buses; and

v. fire extinguishers, first aid kits, three-triangle reflectors, and body fluid cleanup kit compliance.[75]

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[75] The vendor (TransPar) indicates that the state conducts inspections and that First Student will earn awards for the results. The team did not believe that this negates the recommendation.

I. Food Services

The team conducted its fieldwork for the food services review during a four-day site visit to Kansas City, October 25-28, 2016. This chapter presents the team's specific findings and observations. They are organized into four general areas: commendations, leadership and management, organization, and operations. These findings and observations are followed by the recommendations of the team. The footnotes contained herein are an integral part of this report.

The Child Nutrition Services Department

The district is qualified under the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)[76] to provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner at no cost to all enrolled students without the burden of collecting household applications. The district's enrollment is approximately 15,000 students in 35 schools, centers, and programs.

In the district's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), the Child Nutrition Services Fund is used to account for the operation and administration of school cafeterias. As of June 30, 2015 (the most recent CAFR posted to the district's website), the Child Nutrition Services program had an ending balance of $2.9 million from actual revenues of $12.1 million, actual expenditures of $10.7 million, and $1.1 million in transfers-out in the 2014-15 fiscal year. Exhibit 58 below shows the revenues, expenditures, net income, and balances in the program for the most recently reported three fiscal years.

Exhibit 58. Child Nutrition Services Fund Balances, Revenues, Expenditures, Net Operating Income and Transfers for School Years 2012-13 thru 2014-15 (in millions)

	2012-13	20103-14	2014-15
Beginning Fund Balance	$1.1	$1.9	$2.6
Total Revenue	10.6	11.0	12.1
Total Expenditures	9.7	10.4	10.7
Net Operating Income	.8	.7	1.5
Transfers out	0	0	1.1
Ending Fund Balance	1.1	2.6	$2.9

Source: Prepared by CGCS from information contained in KCPS CAFRs.

The Child Nutrition Service Department is headed by an interim director, who reports to the chief operating officer (COO).[77] The administrative organization of the department is shown below in Exhibit 59.

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[76] A provision of The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA), Public Law 111-296, December 13, 2010.

[77] Gwen Childs was hired as Director on November 11, 2016, following the team's site visit.

Exhibit 59. Child Nutrition Services Organization Chart (Revised 10/12/16)
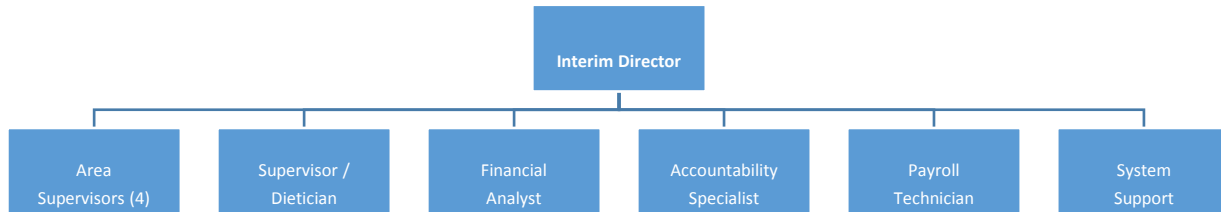
Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the KCPS Child Nutrition Services Department

The interim director's direct reports include the following –

- Four area supervisors – Each of the area supervisors is responsible for five to 10 school-site cafeterias, including the supervision of cafeteria managers and other food service personnel. The area supervisor with nine schools carries the informal title of "chef" and coordinates the district's satellite and catering operations. Two of the other area supervisors manage nine elementary schools each, and the fourth area supervisor (vacant) manages 10 secondary schools.

- Supervisor/dietitian – The incumbent, a registered dietitian, oversees two schools and is responsible for the development of regular and special menus and feeding in special programs, such as Head Start.

- Financial analyst – This position, vacant at the time of the site visit, is responsible for financial and management reporting for the food service enterprise.

- Payroll technician – This position oversees payroll activities for food service employees.

- System support – This position is responsible for the operation of all food service hardware and software systems, including the POS (point-of-sales) and back-of-the-house (accounting) applications.

General Conclusion of the Food Services Review

The overall conclusion of the Council's Strategic Support Team is that *KCPS has established a culture that makes the comprehensive student meals program a priority.*

Findings and Observations

Commendations
- School administrators interviewed by the team and those encountered during school-site visits were extraordinarily supportive of the food service program.[78]

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[78] The team visited six school-site cafeterias in addition to interviewing a focus group of randomly selected principals.

- Based on the limited financial information made available to the team, it appears that the Food Service program enjoys a healthy fund balance and increasing revenues and net income (see Exhibit 58 above).

- The district has achieved high participation rates in its food service programs. For example-

  o KCPS reported a districtwide breakfast participation rate of 63.4 percent compared to the median among reporting Council districts of 34.8 percent.[79]

  o KCPS reported the highest districtwide lunch participation rate of 87.5% among all reporting Council districts (compared to the median among reporting CGCS districts of 64.7 percent).[80]

- The team had the following positive observations about school-cafeteria operations based on its school-site visits[81]--

  o Cafeteria employees seemed to be hardworking, competent, and dedicated.

  o Food services staff seemed passionate about their work and articulated a clear understanding of the importance of their impact on students.

  o Cafeterias and kitchens were clean, and food service equipment appeared to be in good working condition.

  o Cafeteria employees wore attractive standardized uniforms, which were clean and orderly.

  o Food service and other school personnel were polite and dealt with students in a professional manner.

  o The operations of cafeteria-service lines were well organized.

  o Meal participation is fostered by arriving students being guided directly to the school cafeterias for breakfast and by closed campuses at all schools for lunch.

- The interim director indicated that she meets regularly with union representatives to promote communication.

Leadership and Management

- Turnover at the top levels of management (including the superintendent and the director of Child Nutrition Services) and the failure to fill other critical vacancies have hindered the department's ability to set a cohesive direction. The turnover has also contributed to some of the situations described below. At the time when the team made its site visit--

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[79] *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools*, Results from Fiscal Year 2014-15, CGCS, October 2016.
[80] Ibid.
[81] The school-site cafeterias visited by the team included three elementary, one middle school, and two high school academies.

- The interim director of Child Nutrition Services had been in a temporary assignment for some time. (She was previously the Assistant Director of CNS; and was appointed to fill the director position on November 11, 2016.)

- The financial analyst position was vacant, which reportedly has resulted in many management reports not being prepared. The position was posted after the team's site visit.

- The position of area supervisor over secondary food services operations was vacant, resulting in 10 cafeteria managers reporting directly to the interim director.

- The team noted that neither of these vacancies nor the interim position had been posted by the Human Resources Department at the time of its site visit. (The team understands that the financial and area supervisor positions have now been posted, but no viable candidates have applied for the latter.)

- The Child Nutrition Services Department lacked an organizational vision because the interim director was not strategically focused. This may, in part, be a result of the vacancies noted above in the positions of secondary area supervisor and the financial analyst. (The position was filled after the team' site visit, which presents the unit with the opportunity to improve vision and focus moving forward.)

- The department has no business plan with measurable goals, objectives, benchmarks, milestones, and accountabilities.[82]

- The central office staff of the food service program was not working as a team under the previous Director, and tension among staff members appeared to impede the efficiency and effectiveness of central operations.

- The Child Nutrition Services Department's management is not data driven, and it does not use analytical tools to guide decision making. For example –

  - The department does not have adequate dashboard metrics or financial reporting because central management, area supervisors, school-site cafeteria managers, and school principals do not have individual cafeteria monthly profit and loss statements, and disaggregated participation data are not readily available. This was due, in part, to the lack of a financial manager.

  - The assumption by food service management that increased *a la carte* sales in schools is a path to greater profitability is not supported by any cost analysis that considers resulting losses in reimbursable meals. (After the site visit, CNS staff indicated that moving towards more *a la carte* meals in secondary schools was in response to requests

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[82] The team was provided an undated meeting agenda that contained several stated "measures for success" and challenges; however, the Department does not have the ability to measure many of the items listed and does not have any specific plans for how to achieve these measures. None of the other staff interviewed were aware of the existence of these measures.

from students and parents, particularly those at Lincoln Prep. Either way, the move could be a money losing effort without a clear and objective cost analysis.)

- o The department has not developed a business case for having a central kitchen with satellite serving locations, a warehouse and distribution operation, or the provision of catering services. (After the site visit, CNS staff indicated that the decision was based on wanting to provide higher quality food from site-level kitchens. Still, the department has not prepared a business case for either a central kitchen or site-based kitchens.)

- o The department has not conducted a local salary comparability study to determine the reasonableness of its wage and benefits levels, and salary increases are dictated by factors other than comparability, fiscal capability, and enterprise sustainability. (After the site visit, CNS indicated that it receives a salary study from a local industry group, but this does not adequately address the team's finding.)

- o While it was reported that some school locations have excessively high staff turnover rates, the team found that CNS did not routinely review and act on the data kept by HR. In addition, the team's review of the HR department found it to be inadequately data-driven. (See finding on page 90.)

- o The team saw no evidence that ongoing repair vs. replacement analyses are conducted on whether cafeteria equipment should be repaired or replaced prior to the fact. The district may doing this analysis when it encounters a piece of broken equipment, but it does not do the analysis in a proactive way.

- There was a pervasive lack of planning within the Child Nutrition Services Department. For example, in addition to the lack of a business plan noted above, the department has no—

  - o nutrition education plan for the schools;

  - o marketing plan to increase meal participation by using social media, school open houses, community engagement, or promotion of services offered; (After the team's site visit, the district held its *first* student food tasting event with the assistance of the communications office, IT, and food vendors.)

  - o plan or approach to expanding the vendor base to achieve greater procurement opportunities;

  - o succession planning or cross training for positions requiring higher levels of technical knowledge; (Similar situations are seen in other urban school districts.)

  - o ongoing comprehensive process-improvement program to encourage innovation.

- There were no performance standards in place for school-site operations relating to profitability, participation, or food quality.

- The department lacks effective internal and external communication structures. For example –

  o Central office departments do not seem to have any formal interconnectivity.

  o Units within the Child Nutrition Services Department operated in organizational silos. This may change under a new Director, but it will require time and diligence.

  o Area supervisors have not proactively engage with or solicited feedback from principals in the past. (The district reports that since the site visit the new CNS director is requiring supervisors to have quarterly meetings with principals in their zones, but this practice did not exist when the team made its site visit.)

  o Child Nutrition Services, as a department, has not actively engaged with the community it serves in the past.

  o The department does not appear to be pro-active in promoting its positive accomplishments.

- The team saw no evidence that the department uses regular districtwide surveys or focus groups of students to gather information on preferences and suggestions for improvements. Furthermore, there was no indication that formal systemwide plate-waste studies are regularly conducted or that direct feedback is received from students in any formalized way systemwide.

- CNS staff members are evaluated using standardized forms provided by HR, but the forms do not include established, quantifiable goals, and area supervisors do not consult with school principals on cafeteria manager evaluations.

Organization

- The food service organization, as a whole, appears generously staffed, although there are areas of critical shortage. For example –

  o The number of schools per area supervisor (five to 10, as described in the background narrative) appears to be lower than other comparable large urban school systems.

  o The critical lack of financial expertise and analytical abilities has put the department at risk.

- The department is not organized by function to optimize effectiveness; nor does it have clear lines of responsibility, authority, and accountability. For example –

  o Food service operations, including food production, meal service, and reporting, are not integrated into a single responsible unit.

  o Food-service business services, including finance, payroll, technology, and equipment repair and replacement, were not effectively coordinated as a single support unit.

- Implementation of standard safety and sanitation procedures is not housed under the CNS dietician, which is considered best practice..

Operations

- The team had the following observations of school cafeteria operations, based on its limited number of site visits:

  - Menus on the department's website, the mobile app, and posted in cafeteria kitchens did not match actual meals being served to students**.**

  - The team did not observe menus regularly posted in languages other than English, and menus did not appear to cater to a diverse student population. (The team took photographs of sample school menus.)

  - The team saw potential inaccuracies in the counting of meals, such as--

    - students bypassing the POS register and not entering their student identification number and

    - students being counted in the POS system when they did not have all the required meal components.

  - The team did not consistently observe "offer versus serve," which allows students to decline some of the food items offered, with the goal of reducing food waste, and permits students to choose foods they want to eat.

  - The team noticed inconsistency in the application of food safety and sanitation practices, as evidenced by

    - items heated in the warmer for extended periods of time,

    - lack of hair nets on some cafeteria staff, and

    - lack of temperature logs for chilling and heating equipment.

  - Recipes were either not in use or not being followed.

  - Portions sizes were not monitored to be age appropriate.

  - Principals appeared to be unaware of the USDA restrictions on competitive food sales for fundraisers.

- The team saw no indication that systemwide standard operating procedures were transparent, as evidenced by—

  - the absence of posted safety and sanitation guidelines, (The district indicated that SOP notebooks were kept in the manager's office at each school—not a best practice in transparency.)

- o the lack of staff knowledge about how to manage special diets at school sites, and

- o area supervisors not having consistent practices in the review of labor hours or food orders from area supervisor to area supervisor.

- The department does not utilize an automated time and attendance reporting system.

- There appears to be a lack of financial policies governing food-service operations; the actual total cost of the food service program is not apparent. For example –

  - o The team saw no evidence of written accounting policies regarding direct or indirect charges to the food service program.

  - o The cost of custodial services, trash pickup, utilities, payroll processing, or accounts payable processing are not charged back to CNS. The team considers CNS as an enterprise program where these services should be charged back to CNS.

- In the judgement of the team, a disproportionate emphasis appears to be placed on the catering program, which is not the department's core function and has questionable financial viability.

- The department has not explored the potential opportunities of providing food services to charter schools or the expansion of summer meal programs to parks, libraries, and community centers.

- The team noted several potential weaknesses in internal controls, such as:

  - o Food service cash receipts were transported by inter-office mail in unlocked bags, and there were no sign-offs at some hand-off points—although the department asserts that funds can be tracked through the POS system. The team was not confident in the security of cash transfers.

  - o Monthly food and supply inventory counts at school sites are not reconciled to purchases and meals served. (The district indicated after the site visit that it tracks food and supply items, but it did not specify whether it reconciled inventory counts, purchases, or meals served.)

Recommendations

The Council's Strategic Support Team has developed the following recommendations in an effort to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's food service program, its organization, leadership and management, and operations.

1. Reorganize the Child Nutrition Services Department to optimize effectiveness, sharpen its focus, and promote clear lines of responsibility, authority, and accountability. Exhibit 60 below illustrates a sample functional organization for the department.[83]

Exhibit 60. Sample Child Nutrition Services Organization by Function
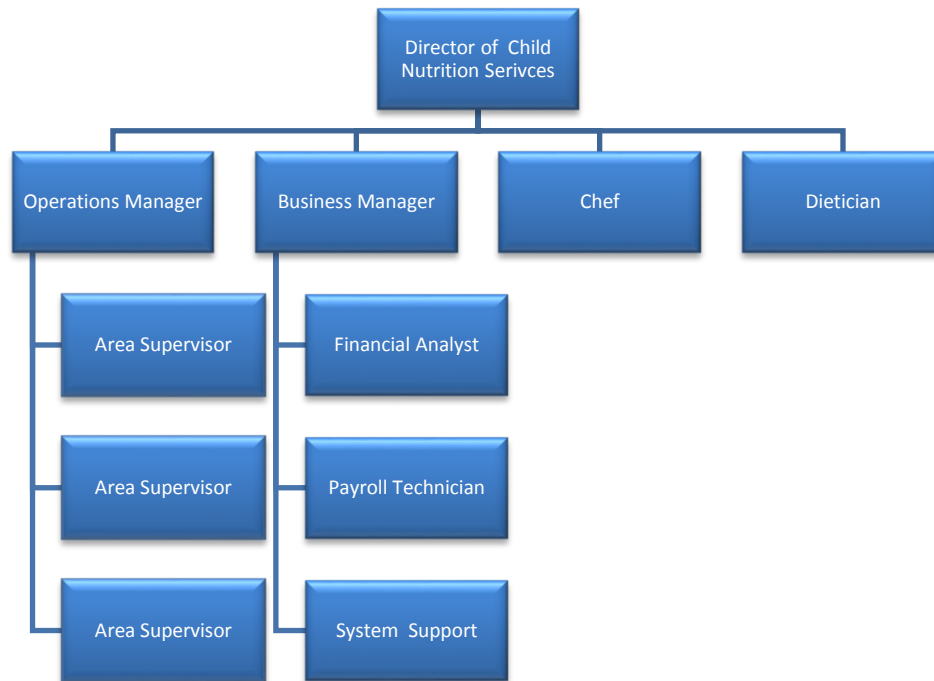
Prepared by CGCS

Highlights of this proposed functional organization include ---

a. A director of child nutrition services, who would be responsible for the development of the direction and vision of the organization and the development of accountability plans for each of the managers listed below.

b. An operations manager with responsibilities for all school-site cafeteria operations and reporting. The manager would be supported by three area supervisors: one for the 10 secondary schools and two elementary school supervisors with about 12 schools each.

c. A business manager responsible for all financial, analytical, payroll, and systems (POS and accounting applications) support.

d. A chef responsible for menu development, new products and recipes, plate and menu costing, food preparation training, and product specifications.

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[83] This sample organization is not intended to be inclusive of all food service potential activities but is intended to set an organizational tone for further development and tailoring to the specific requirements of KCPS.

e. A dietitian responsible for ensuring menu compliance with nutritional and portion standards, developing standard operating procedures, implementing a marketing plan, and developing special-diet menus.

2. Establish job requirements for the redefined management positions above, particularly the director, the operations manager, and business manager.

3. Evaluate personnel within the department and determine whose skills match the requirements of management in the new organization and which positions would need to be filled expeditiously from outside the current organization.

4. Develop a strategic vision for the food service organization, and establish an operational business plan that includes measurable goals, objectives, activities, timelines, performance indicators, benchmarks, and accountabilities.

5. Create a data-driven organization that relies upon fact-based and analysis-centric justifications for decisions, including the use of tools and techniques such as--

   a. Basic food service statistics, dashboard metrics, and management information, including disaggregated meal participation rates (by school and by service[84]), meals per labor hour (by service, by school, and by supervisory area), disaggregated cost per meal (by school and service, breaking out labor, food, and supply costs), and reimbursement rates by service.

   b. Basic profit and loss statements for each school cafeteria and program.

   c. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks to measure and compare performance and effectiveness with other major urban school systems.

   d. Basic personnel information, including disaggregated absentee and vacancy rates by site, along with related substitute usage.

   e. Formal and regular salary surveys to measure competitiveness and equity of compensation.

   f. A meals-per-labor-hour staffing formula that adjusts staff hours at regular intervals, based on actual meals served.

   g. A menu-driven process that determines and controls food and labor costs, equipment requirements, and the overall viability of the program.

   h. Feasibility analyses for--

      i. a central kitchen to produce pre-packaged meals or partially pre-manufactured bulk ingredients and

      ii. a central warehouse to store and distribute food, supplies, and equipment,

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[84] "By service" defined here as breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack service.

i. The use of return on investment (ROI) and business-case justifications to review proposed program expansions.

j. The application of proactive repair vs. replacement analyses to drive regular equipment acquisition decisions.

6. Create a proactive culture of planning and execution, including--

a. The development of nutrition education plans for schools.

b. A marketing plan focused on increasing participation by emphasizing nutritious and attractive meals and utilizing social media.

c. A plan to enhance procurement opportunities by expanding the department's vendor base through vendor outreach and pre-bid vendor meetings.

d. A comprehensive training and staff development plan that includes an in-depth new employee orientation, the opportunity for current employees to enhance their skills, and functional cross-training to ensure uninterrupted continuity of technical skills in the department.

e. A capital improvement plan, coordinated with the district's Facilities Department, to include a plant assessment of each school cafeteria.

f. An ongoing departmental process improvement program to encourage innovation.

7. Establish performance standards for school-site operations relating to profitability, participation, and food quality.

8. Establish an external communications structure that might include--

a. Interaction and feedback from school and central administrators on cafeteria issues.

b. A forum to gather information and ideas from community, advocacy, and parent groups regarding the program and their satisfaction with it.

c. The use of formal and regular surveys and focus groups to gather student preferences and suggestions.

d. A regular department publication to communicate its accomplishments in nutrition and program operations to students, school staff, parents, and the community.

9. Establish an internal communications structure that includes regular staff meetings. (See Sample Child Nutrition Services Department Communications Matrix in Exhibit 61 below.)

Exhibit 61. Sample Department Communications Matrix

Annually	Quarterly	Bi-Monthly	Weekly
Department All-Employee Meeting	**Department Central Staff Meeting**	**Department Leadership Team Meeting**	**Direct Report Meetings**
Purpose: Provide team-building, mandatory training, and common vision.	**Purpose:** Provide central staff with team-building, interdepartmental updates, introduction of new staff, and review safety and emergency procedures.	**Purpose:** Provide department supervisory staff the opportunity to share information on department projects, status reports, priority issues and problems, and personnel updates.	**Purpose:** Identify concerns and issues that affect unit and department and require support or action plans.
Who attends: All Child Nutrition Service Department staff	**Who attends:** All food service central office staff and area supervisors	**Who attends:** Director, managers, chef, and dietician	**Who attends:** Managers and area supervisors/direct reports

Prepared by CGCS.

10. Develop and implement personnel evaluation practices based on systemwide measurable goals and performance metrics, and include input from school principals on school cafeteria manager evaluations.

11. Improve the management of school-site cafeterias as follows:

    a. Ensure that published menus are actually served on the days advertised.

    b. Develop and publish multilingual menus as appropriate to service-area communities.

    c. Monitor POS processes and procedures to ensure accurate meal counts and compliance with applicable rules and regulations.

    d. Implement "offer vs. serve" options to students.

    e. Monitor food safety and sanitation practices and their compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

    f. Ensure adherence to adopted recipes and portion sizes.

    g. Inform school-site administrators of USDA restrictions regarding competitive food sales.

12. Develop and publish standard operating procedures that cover all aspects of cafeteria operations, including safety, sanitation, production protocols and records, special diets, portion sizes, and management of labor hours and food orders.

13. Develop and document food service financial policies, including the identification of direct and indirect charges that will be made to the program.

14. Enhance food-service financial procedures and processes to ensure that adequate internal controls are in place, particularly in the areas of cash handling, inventory control, and accounts payable processing.

15. Implement an automated time and attendance system that is electronically linked to the payroll system.

16. Explore opportunities to provide food services to charter schools and expand the summer feeding program.

J. Synopsis and Discussion

The Kansas City (MO) Public Schools has struggled for a good many years to improve and to regain the public's confidence. Three recent developments will help move the school system along toward that goal. The first is that the school district gained enough points to be considered for state accreditation. This was an important development, but the district and the public should know that the system's foothold on accreditation is very fragile. The school system could easily slip back into a provisional status or worse with the change of only a few measures. Second, the school board has worked hard over the years to improve the way it governed the system. In fact, many of its operations serve as best practices for other major urban school systems across the country. Third, the school board recently hired a talented, energetic, and determined superintendent who is committed to staying in the city and improving the public schools.

The school system also has a number of other important assets. It has many talented and highly skilled people, who unfortunately have not always received the support or direction they needed to be as effective as they could be. But their expertise was often amply displayed as the Council of the Great City Schools' teams conducted their interviews and made their site visits. The district has also put into place a number of promising practices. The new superintendent is about to embark on a much-needed strategic planning process. The district has a good number of talented school principals around whom he can take the next steps in improving student achievement.

In addition, the school system is in much better financial condition than it was when the Council conducted a similar review some 10 years ago. The district has sizable fund balances—may be too large--and it has substantially reduced audit exceptions over the years. It has a better handle on its fixed assets than in the past, and it has gained better control of its benefits programs. It has also seen some improvements in human resource operations and payroll systems. There have also been some improvements in Medicaid claiming to reimburse the district for transporting students with disabilities. Finally the food services provided by the district have shown significant improvements and many strengths.

At the same time, the district is facing significant challenges, some of which could place its accreditation at risk if not addressed. These challenges exist on both the academic and the operational sides of the house.

First, in academics, it is clear to the Council's team that the school system has substantial room for improvement. It was painfully clear to the Council team that the school system's instructional program is unusually weak. Its materials are not clear, its instructional models used from school-to-school are sometimes inconsistent. In fact, most district materials devote more space to articulating various routines and procedures it wants teachers to follow than to emphasizing the standards or what should be taught. And there is little in the school system's curriculum documents to indicate depth of understanding at which students are to master various concepts. In many cases, the schools simply devise their own materials and tools because of their lack of confidence in what the district has developed. The district also lacks a strategy for turning around its lowest-performing schools or helping English language learners acquire English.

In addition, the district has no mechanism by which it can boost the instructional capacity of its staff and teachers. Its professional development systems are incoherent and weak; they are not evaluated for effectiveness or built around the academic needs of the district's students. Most

of the professional development offered by the district appears geared more toward providing continuing education credits to staff than boosting their instructional capacity.

It was also clear to the Council's team that the district's use of tests to boost student performance was counterproductive. The amount of redundancy in the tests also wasted time, and few of the results were adequately used to inform classroom practice. Moreover, it does not appear that anything in the district is evaluated for its effects on student learning. Finally, it was clear that the district is unwittingly looking at the wrong targets as it assesses the growth and progress that it is making.

The combination of a weak instructional program, the inability of the system to enhance the capacity of its teachers and staff, and its poor use of data make it unlikely that the district as a whole will see the kind of substantial improvements the public wants without significant changes.

The result of current practice is a student body that is poorly prepared for the future. Achievement levels have shown only small improvements over the last several years. Course-taking patterns are weak, suspension rates are high, absenteeism is high, and graduation rates are low.

On the operational side of the house, significant progress has been made in strengthening the district's finances. Still, the budget-development process is not very strong, significant internal control issues remain, and the position control system has major gaps. In the area of human resources, the district is facing major personnel shortages but lacks a convincing plan or strategy for dealing with them.

Unfortunately, the district's transportation systems are about as weak as when the Council reviewed them a decade ago. Clearly, too little has been done to improve an operation that the public sees every day and counts on to get its children to school on time. Major reforms continue to be needed in this area. In the area of food services, the Council teams found much that the school system could feel good about, but there were also significant opportunities for improvement.

Overall, the Council's teams were struck by the general sense of insularity in the district. It did not appear that the school system was looking outside of itself much to take advantage of best practices in other major urban school systems. Much of the report that the Council has crafted for the school system borrows heavily from those best practices to lay out a major blueprint for improving the school system under its new superintendent.

The organization stands ready to help the district and its leadership at every turn as it works to improve. There is simply no reason why the school district can't be making significantly more progress for its children.

SACRAMENTO REPORT

IMPROVING

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

IN THE

SACRAMENTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Submitted to the Board of Education
of the
Sacramento City Unified School District
by the
Strategic Support Team
of the
Council of the Great City Schools**

Spring 2017

Table of Contents

José L. Banda, the superintendent of Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD), asked the Council of the Great City Schools (the Council) to review the district's services for students with disabilities and provide recommendations to improve performance and narrow the achievement gap between these students and their nondisabled peers. It was clear to the Council's team that the superintendent and his staff had a strong desire to improve student outcomes in this area. This report was designed to help SCUSD achieve its goal and to maximize the district's capacity to educate all students effectively.

The Work of the Strategic Support Team

To conduct its work, the Council assembled a team of experts who have successfully administered and operated special education programs in other major urban school districts across the country. These individuals also have firsthand expertise with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and are well versed in best practices in the administration and operation of special education programming.

The Council's Strategic Support Team (referred to throughout this report as the Council team or the team) visited the district on November 16-18, 2016. During this period, the Council team pursued its charge by conducting interviews and focus groups with district staff members and California Department of Education personnel, the Community Advisory Council executive committee, representatives from the SCTA and SEIU, and many others. (A list of those interviewed is presented in the appendices of this report.) In addition, the team reviewed numerous documents and reports, analyzed data, and developed initial recommendations and proposals before finalizing this report. (See the appendices for a list of documents reviewed.) On the final afternoon of its site visit, the team briefed the superintendent on the team's observations and preliminary recommendations.

This approach of providing technical assistance to urban school districts by using senior managers from other urban school systems is unique to the Council and its members. The organization finds it to be an effective approach for a number of reasons.

First, it allows the superintendent and staff members to work with a diverse set of talented, successful practitioners from around the country. The teams provide a pool of expertise that superintendents and staff can call on for advice as they implement the recommendations, face new challenges, and develop alternative solutions.

Second, the recommendations from urban school peers have power because the individuals who develop them have faced many of the same challenges encountered by the district requesting the review. No one can say that these individuals do not know what working in an urban school system is like or that their proposals have not been tested under the most rigorous conditions.

Third, using senior urban school managers from other urban school communities is faster and less expensive than retaining large management consulting firms that may have little to no

programmatic experience. The learning curve is rapid, and it would be difficult for any school system to buy on the open market the level of expertise offered by the Council's teams.

Members of the Strategic Support Team for this project were:

Dr. Judy Elliot Former Chief Academic Officer Los Angeles Unified School District	**Sowmya Kumar** Former Assistant Superintendent Office of Special Education Houston Independent School District
Sue Gamm, Esq. Former Chief Specialized Services Officer Chicago Public Schools	**Julie Wright Halbert, Esq**. Legislative Counsel Council of the Great City Schools
Dr. Neil Guthrie Assistant Superintendent Student Support Services Wichita Public Schools	

Methodology and Organization of Findings

The findings in this report are based on information from multiple sources, including documents provided by SCUSD and other organizations; electronic student data provided by SCUSD; group and individual interviews; documents; and legal sources, including federal and state requirements and guidance documents. No one is personally referred to or quoted in the report, although school district position titles are referenced when necessary for contextual reasons.

Chapter 2 of this report provides background information about the district. Chapter 3 presents the Council Team's findings and recommendations. These findings and recommendations focus specifically on areas that the superintendent and district leadership asked the Council's team to address. These include the achievement of students with disabilities, including pathways to graduation; instructional supports and their relationship to student placements; organizational effectiveness; school leadership and oversight of special education; and use of fiscal resources.

A discussion of these areas is divided into four broad sections.
- I.   Multi-tiered System of Supports
- II. Special Education Demographics and Eligibility for Services
- III. Teaching and Learning for Students with IEPs
- IV. Support for Teaching and Learning for Students with IEPs

The findings and recommendations sections of the report contain a summary of relevant information, along with descriptions of the district's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and recommendations for change. Chapter 4 lists all recommendations for easy reference, and

provides a matrix showing various components or features of the recommendations. Finally, Chapter 5 presents a synopsis of the report and discusses the team's overarching conclusions.

The appendices include the following information:

- Appendix A compares special education student percentages and staffing ratios in 68 major school systems across the country.

- Appendix B lists the district's special education department's current and proposed organization.

- Appendix C lists documents reviewed by the team.

- Appendix D lists individuals the team interviewed individually or in groups, and presents the team's draft working agenda.

- Appendix E presents brief biographical sketches of team members.

- Appendix F presents a description of the Council of the Great City Schools and a list of Strategic Support Teams that the organization has fielded over the last 18 years.

CHAPTER 2. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

TIME magazine's issue of August 25, 2002, highlighted Sacramento in an article entitled "America's Most Diverse City."[1] The article described the city as one in which "everyone's a minority—including whites." According to the *TIME* article, Sacramento's diversity is due in part to affordable real estate for middle-class households and innovative housing programs for low-income families. Also, the presence of state government agencies and college campuses located throughout the city provides a stable source of employment.

Of the city's inhabitants, 34.7 percent are white, 26.4 percent are Hispanic, 13.9 percent are African American, 18.3 percent are Asian, and 6.7 percent are smaller racial/ethnic groups.[2] SCUSD's demographics are also diverse, but the district has a higher composition of Hispanic students (37 percent) and a smaller composition of white students (18 percent) than the city. The composition of students who are Asian (17 percent), African American (18 percent), and smaller groups (10 percent) are more comparable to the city's composition. In addition, some 13.9 percent of all district students receive special education instruction. Furthermore, English learners (EL) comprise 18.6 percent of the total student enrollment while 38 percent of the district's students do not speak English at home. Some 28.7 percent of all ELs receive special education services. Overall, residents within SCUSD speak more than 40 languages.[3]

Established in 1854, SCUSD is one of the oldest school districts in the western part of the nation. With over 43,000 students, it is the state's 11th largest school district. The district directly educates students on roughly 77 campuses, and has some 6,000 students in 16 independent charter schools.[4] In 2010-11, the district earned a California Distinguished School award, and California Achievement Awards for two schools. Also, SCUSD is home to the only public Waldorf-inspired high school in the U.S.

Like many other members of the Council of the Great City Schools, SCUSD is in a state that has adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In addition, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) system is based on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments (Smarter Balance) in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics in grades three through eight and in grade eleven. An alternative ELA and math assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities, which is based on alternative achievement standards derived from the CCSS, has been field-tested. Additional assessments are provided in science. Finally, Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS) for reading/language arts in grades two through 11, which are optional, are for Spanish-speaking ELs who either receive instruction in their primary language or have been enrolled in a U.S. school for less than 12 months.

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[1] Retrieved from https://mail.aol.com/webmail-std/en-us/suite. The research was conducted for TIME by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.
[2] Data from the US Census Bureau, updated April 18, 2015, retrieved from http://statisticalatlas.com/place/California/Sacramento/Race-and-Ethnicity#overview.
[3] EL data provided by SCUSD, and other data retrieved from the district's website at http://www.scusd.edu/about-us.
[4] Retrieved from http://www.scusd.edu/charter-schools.

SCUSD offers a wide variety of choices for its students. Some of these options are described below.

- *Child Development and Preschool Programs.* Early care and education is provided to some 3,000 typically developing infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and those with disabilities. Program options and approaches include center-based and home-based services, full-day/part-day preschool, infant/toddler playgroups, and before/after school-age care.

- *Early Kinder (Transitional Kindergarten) Programs.* Children who are five years of age between September 2nd and December 2nd have the option of enrolling in a two-year kindergarten program, which gives children an additional year of preparation so they enter kindergarten with stronger academic, social, and emotional skills needed for future success in school.

- *Basic Schools.* Two schools with admissions criteria and lottery entry provide successful traditional and new methods of instruction, which together emphasize rigorous academic achievement and good study habits.

- *STEAM Schools.* Two schools have a focus on science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. By integrating the arts into core subjects, students learn to be more creative, more innovative, and better problem solvers as they plan and construct complex projects across disciplines.

- *Waldorf Schools.* With an educational approach developed at the beginning of the 20th century, SCUSD's Waldorf schools take a "head, heart, and hands" approach to learning, addressing each child as an individual with innate talents and abilities. The district has two elementary schools, and the first Waldorf-inspired high school in the country.

This chapter presents the Council team's findings in four areas: the multi-tiered system of supports; special education demographics and eligibility for services; teaching and learning for students with IEPs; and support for teaching and learning for students with IEPs. Each section summarizes the team's findings and describes areas of strength, opportunities for improvement, and recommendations for improving SCUSD special education services.

I. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

As discussed in the Council of the Great City Schools document, *Common Core State Standards and Diverse Urban Students*, a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)[5] is meant to improve educational outcomes for all students. It focuses on prevention and on the early identification of students who may benefit from instructional interventions that remove barriers to learning or who might benefit from acceleration. And it is intended to include all students, including those who are gifted.

In a functioning MTSS framework, schools have systems in place to identify the needs of all students, as well as systems to monitor and evaluate progress throughout the school year, using multiple data measures (e.g., district assessments, attendance, suspension, grades, number of office referrals, etc.). Data are analyzed, and differentiated instruction and intervention are delivered. Teachers and leaders regularly review and monitor student progress to determine trends and identify instructional adjustments needed for remediation, intervention, and acceleration.

When a student fails to make adequate progress toward the academic standards after robust core instruction has been delivered and monitored, interventions are then put into place and their effects are tracked. Without this system in place, it is unlikely that schools will have the documentation necessary to determine whether the underachievement was due to inappropriate instruction and intervention or something else. In these cases there can be little confidence that students have been given the instruction, targeted interventions, and supports they needed. Nevertheless, when teachers and parents observe students who are struggling to learn and behave appropriately, there is a predictable desire to seek additional supports and/or legally protected special education services.

It is imperative that districts and schools have processes in place to help educators determine why a student is not performing or when they might need acceleration. When implemented as intended, the MTSS framework focuses on rigorous core instruction and provides strategic and targeted interventions that are available without regard to any particular disability status. When well implemented, MTSS leads to better student engagement and lowered disciplinary referrals, as well as fewer students requiring special education services. The framework can also help reduce the disproportionate placement of students from various

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[5] The MTSS framework reflects the merger of RTI, which typically focuses on academic achievement, and systems used to focus on improving positive student behavior. The term is used in the remaining portion of this report and includes RTI, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), or other systems for supporting positive student behavior.

racial/ethnic groups and those with developing levels of English proficiency who may fall into the ranks of those requiring at risk or special education services.

In recognition of MTSS as an appropriate systemwide framework for supporting student achievement and positive behavior, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)[6] includes MTSS as a permissible use of Title I funds. The Act defines MTSS as "a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students' needs, with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision-making."

This section focuses on the California Department of Education's (CDE) guidance on MTSS, and the extent to which SCUSD has implemented this framework to support student achievement/positive student behavior and to guide action when student progress is not evident, including referrals for special education services.

State Guidance for MTSS

According to the March 2015 report issued by California's Statewide Task Force on Special Education, *One System: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students*, as knowledge of MTSS grows, the benefits to all students, especially those with disabilities, becomes more evident. "Alignment of resources, professional learning, training, resources, leadership, and curriculum all uniquely benefit the special education environment to meet the individual goals for every student."[7]

According to CDE's webpage, which provides information on MTSS, the framework is integrated and comprehensive, focusing on CCSS, core instruction, differentiated learning, student-centered learning, individualized student needs, and the alignment of systems necessary for all students' academic, behavioral, and social success.[8] The framework incorporates response to instruction and intervention (RTI^2) processes and supports special education, Title I, and Title III supports for English language learners (ELs), American-Indian students, and those in gifted and talented programs. CDE views MTSS as having the potential to provide intentional design/redesign of services/supports to quickly identify and match the needs of all students.

CDE describes MTSS as having a scope that is broader than the agency's initial description of RTI^2 since it:

- Focuses on aligning the entire system of initiatives, supports, and resources.

- Promotes district participation in identifying and supporting systems for aligning resources.

- Systematically supports all students, including gifted students and high achievers.

- Enables a paradigm shift in student support by setting higher expectations for all students through the intentional design and redesign of integrated services, rather than the selection of a random components of RTI and intensive interventions.

- Endorses Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies so all students have opportunities

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[6] The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was reauthorized in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

[7] California's Statewide Task Force on Special Education, *One System: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students,* page 6, retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/application-to-students-with-disabilities.pdf.

[8] CDE webpage for MTSS, retrieved at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/mtsscomprti2.asp.

for learning through differentiated content, processes, and products.

- Integrates instructional and intervention support so that systemic changes are sustainable and based on CCSS-aligned classroom instruction.

- Challenges all school staff to change the way they have traditionally worked across all school settings.

Core Components of MTSS Framework

CDE describes the framework for MTSS, including RTI[2], as having the following core components.[9]

- *Systemic and sustainable change.* MTSS principles promote continuous improvement at all levels of the system (district, school site, and grade/course levels). Collaborative restructuring efforts are made to align RTI[2] and CCSS, as well as identify key initiatives; collect, analyze, and review data; and implement supports and strategies that can sustain effective processes.

- *Problem-solving systems approach*. Collaborative teams use a 'problem-solving systems' method to identify learning issues, develop interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in a multi-tiered system of service delivery.

- *High-quality, differentiated classroom instruction and research-based interventions.* All students receive high-quality, standards-based, culturally and linguistically relevant instruction in their general education classrooms by highly qualified teachers, who have high academic and behavioral expectations and use differentiated instructional strategies, such as UDL. When monitoring efforts indicate a lack of student progress, an appropriate research-based intervention is implemented. The interventions are designed to enhance the intensity of a students' instructional experience.

- *Positive behavioral support.* District and school personnel collaboratively select and implement schoolwide, classroom, and research-based positive-behavior supports for achieving important social and academic outcomes. A strong focus on integrating instructional and intervention strategies supports systemic changes with strong, predictable, and consistent classroom management structures across the entire system.

- *Integrated data system.* District and site staff collaborate on creating an integrated data system that includes assessments, such as state tests, universal screening devices, diagnostics, progress-monitoring tools, and teacher observations to inform decisions about where and how to place tiered support, as well as data from parent surveys.

- *Fidelity of program implementation.* Student success requires the faithful implementation of MTSS and the effective delivery of instruction and content specific to the learning and/or behavioral needs of students.

- *Staff development and collaboration.* All school staff are trained on assessments, data analysis, programs, and research-based instructional practices, along with positive behavioral supports. Building-level, grade-level, or interdisciplinary teams use a collaborative approach

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[9] Also see CDE webpage for RTI[2], retrieved at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/rticorecomponents.asp.

to analyze student data and work together on the development, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention process.

- *Parent/ family involvement.* The involvement and active participation of parents/families at all stages of the instructional and intervention process are essential to improving the educational outcomes for their students. Parents/families are told about the progress of their students, and their input is valued in the decision-making process.

- *Specific Learning Disability determination.* Moreover**, t**he RTI[2] approach may be an important component in determining whether a student has a specific learning disability. As part of determining eligibility for special education, the data from the RTI[2] process may be used to ensure that a student has received research-based instruction and interventions.

Although CDE's website provides a variety of resources useful for district implementation of MTSS, the state educational agency (unlike others, such as the Tennessee Department of Education and the Florida Department of Education) has not required its school districts to implement MTSS. Several districts have published information on their use of MTSS that SCUSD might find helpful. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) published a board policy setting forth expectations for all schools on MTSS implementation and practices.[10] Also, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) incorporates the use of MTSS and RTI[2] as critical elements of its strategic plan.[11]

Sacramento City MTSS Practices

The district's development and use of the MTSS framework is in its infancy. Several years ago, an approach to implementing Response to Intervention (RTI), which addresses academic components of MTSS, was developed by a small group of individuals. While some schools have implemented MTSS to varying degrees, there is no consistency across the system in how core MTSS components described in CDE's framework are implemented.

The district's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan Implementation in the area of College, Career, and Life Ready Graduates calls for the expansion and improvement of interventions and academic supports for all students in order to close the achievement gap by:

- Building systems that lead to positive outcomes for students of color, low income students, English learners, foster care and homeless youth, students with disabilities, and all underperforming demographic groups.

- Expanding access to preschool and early kindergarten

- Implementing MTSS in order to provide a broad set of solutions for struggling students, and to reduce disproportional representation of subgroups in special education.

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[10] April 7, 2014 board policy (BUL-6269.0), retrieved from
http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUSD/FLDR_ORGANIZATIONS/FLDR_SPECIAL_EDUCATION/BUL-
6269.0%20MULTI%20TIERED%20BEHAVIOR%20SUPPORT%20SWD%20W%20ATTACHMENTS.PDF.
[11] Retrieved from http://www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/strategic-plans-and-projects.html.

- Offer more options for personalized learning including, but not limited to, tutoring, independent study, and credit recovery.

The chief academic officer is leading an inclusive cross-functional team of people, including relevant directors, principals, technology and finance representatives, etc., to develop a systemic MTSS framework. The district has contracted with the Orange County Office of Education to provide professional learning, and it is in a cohort of districts that are in the process of developing MTSS. The goal is to have a written plan for MTSS implementation by April 2017, which will then be taken to the Board of Education for approval.[12]

Academic Multi-Tiered Support

According to district representatives, SCUSD has engaged in a process of developing CCSS-aligned curriculum maps for English Language Arts (ELA) and math to guide what students should know, understand, and be able to do. The writing team has partnered with staff from various departments to outline differentiated supports for students with disabilities, English learners, and gifted and talented students. The maps are electronic and will be revised and updated on an annual basis. Communication about this and other curriculum-related information is shared with the district's academic team leaders, who meet on a monthly basis. To involve principals and to enable them to champion this work at their schools, the principals regularly attend professional learning sessions and periodically are accompanied by a team of their teachers. The goal is for these teams to collaboratively bring their knowledge back to school sites. Instructional rounds are used to provide feedback regarding the extent to which information is becoming embedded in teaching and learning. These processes are intended to increase the rigor of instruction required by the common core standards, and the pursuit of academic discourse to promote communication based on a common language and understanding.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

UDL is an evidence-based approach that is designed to meet the needs of students with a wide range of abilities, learning styles, learning preferences, and educational backgrounds, and includes those with low academic achievement, disabilities, and limited English proficiency. By applying the principles of UDL, students with varying abilities are able to access education and training. UDL supports educational practice that:

- Provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and

- Reduces barriers to instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient.[13]

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[12] Subsequent to the Council team's on-site visit, the Superintendent placed this committee on hold to allow for an analysis of the composition of the committee, the timeline for development of the plan, and the need for external technical assistance and support.

[13] See the National Center on Universal Design for Learning, retrieved at http://www.udlcenter.org/. UDL is referenced in the 2016 Every Student Succeeds Act, the U.S. Department of Education's National Educational 2010 Technology Plan, the 2008 High Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), and the 2006 National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS). Retrieved at http://www.udlcenter.org/advocacy/referencestoUDL.

Last summer, five district staff members attended a Harvard's Graduate School of Education course, Universal Design for Learning: Leading Inclusive Education for All Students. Staff members representing curriculum and instruction (C/I) were from English language arts, math, and special education. Inclusive learning specialists, including those working with English learners, have provided training on UDL for schools, and at a centralized location for interested personnel. Special education personnel are working to embed UDL in the context of professional learning sessions, which have focused on Academic Discourse and Quality tasks. As discussed above, these sessions are used to enable principals and teachers from each school to try out instructional strategies in classrooms and share practices with peers.

The small group of district personnel who are providing training on UDL would like to expand their base to all curricular areas and training specialists. One challenge to UDL implementation is related to the involvement of all instructional technology (IT) personnel and the need for UDL activities to interface with the district's various technology tools. There are also concerns that special educators alone are expected to carry the initiative forward. A districtwide coordination and implementation strategy for these components would establish a universal foundation for the use of this evidence-based practice.

Academic Strategic and Intensive Interventions

Currently, SCUSD does not have increasingly intensive interventions and support available systemwide for students. Schools eligible to use Title I funds have academic and behavior resources such as those described in the section below. Under the Every School Succeeds Act (ESSA), the district now has more flexibility for determining how it provides supplemental education services. The district's plan for Title I (Alternative Supports Program) outlines how schools will provide supports to students who are not achieving academically. Although these services only impact students in schools that are P1 years 2 and above, the district views this outline as an initial step in the provision of evidenced-based interventions and supports. The activities will expand to other schools in 2017-18, if feasible.

Many schools that do not have access to Title I funds struggle to find effective ways to address the academic needs of students falling behind. For example, a school that had funds last year for an intervention teacher was having difficulty maintaining the same level of support as before. As a general rule, strategic and intensive interventions at these schools depend on the creativity of individual principals and teachers.

SCTA Concerns

According to Sacramento City Teachers Association (SCTA) representatives, while they indicate they support the concept of MTSS, they do not support its implementation without a well thought out plan that has supports and resources provided. The district is expecting that an SCTA proposal will be forthcoming during contract negotiations. While there is merit to some issues raised by the SCTA, we know of no other major urban school district where union concerns explicitly and significantly delayed development and implementation of MTSS.

Social/Emotional Multi-Tiered Support

In 2011, SCUSD was a charter member of the Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI) partnership between the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the American Institutes for Research (AIR), and initially eight large school districts across the country.[14] In addition, the district's work on SEL is being funded by a three-year, $750,000 implementation grant from the NoVo Foundation. According to information posted on CASEL's website about SCUSD's implementation:[15]

> A dedicated team supports all schools to build and sustain systemic SEL implementation and integration. Using the CASEL school guide, the district has trained 60 percent of its 75 schools on SEL schoolwide implementation. Most of these schools have developed SEL leadership structures and a clear vision and purpose, and are using a curriculum to teach SEL skills. They also are integrating SEL into their school culture and climate. The district aims to expand SEL teaching and practice to the remaining 40 percent of schools and deepen professional learning for all stakeholders.

In a study conducted for CASEL, the CDI's independent evaluator determined that, since implementation, SCUSD:

- Elementary school attendance increased in all years of CDI implementation.

- SEL implementation was significantly associated with reductions in elementary school suspensions.

- Suspension rates declined about 92 percent during the two years that high-implementation schools focused on restorative practices.[16]

Board Policy

Some focus group participants indicated that the district did not have a school board policy on social emotional learning and that work in this area was school specific. SCUSD's board policy on discipline (BP 5144, revised June 45 2014), however, is based on a foundation of social-emotional learning and restorative justice within a multi-tiered system of supports for core elements. It says--

> Before consequences are given, students must first be supported in learning the skills necessary to enhance a positive school climate and avoid negative behavior. To that end, consistent and clear guidelines will be utilized to avoid disparate application and treatment, promote equity, and encourage individualized and customized responses to student behavior. … Discipline practices should eliminate disparities in applying discipline by assuring equitable interventions and consequences across all schools and for all students, with special attention to those who have been disproportionately impacted. It is the intent of this policy to

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[14] Retrieved from http://whttp://www.casel.org/partner-districts/sacramento-city-unified-school-district/ ww.casel.org/partner-districts/sacramento-city-unified-school-district/.

[15] Retrieved from http://www.casel.org/partner-districts/sacramento-city-unified-school-district/.

[16] Retrieved from http://www.casel.org/cdi-results/.

minimize the excessive use of willful defiance as a reason to impose in-school and off-campus removals that often lead to poor educational outcomes, and encourage schools to use alternative means of correction such as participation in programs that are *restorative with positive behavior supports that include tiered interventions and other forms of correction that focuses on keeping students in school and learning*. (Emphasis added.)[17]

The board policy also requires the superintendent or designee to give the school board an annual plan designed to ensure that all district employees are provided mandatory professional development in the areas of:

- School-wide positive behavior interventions & supports (PBIS),

- Restorative practices and social and emotional learning,

- Implicit bias, and

- Cultural proficiency.

Schools are free to implement their own student discipline protocols consistent with the board policy as long as they are not in conflict with restorative justice practices.

SPARK Initiative

The Equity Office has taken the lead in developing a comprehensive plan for the district's **SPARK** initiative that serves as the first MTSS tier, which incorporates the following social emotional learning, PBIS, and restorative practices components:

- **S***ocial Emotional Learning* designed to better academic performance, improved attitudes and behaviors, and reduced emotional distress**;**

- **P***ositive Relationships* through positive school climates;

- **A***nalysis of Data* by all staff to regularly inform and improve learning opportunities for all students;

- **R***estorative Practices.* All staff will empower students to create restorative relationships with each other and will embody and model those principles themselves.

- **K***indness***.** All staff will treat each student with respect and kindness every day.

As a part of the SPARK initiative, a subset of district schools received professional learning in the areas of PBIS and restorative practices. Also, the Equity Office and Curriculum Office have partnered to integrate SEL into the district's curriculum maps and professional learning.

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[17] Retrieved from http://gamutonline.net/DisplayPolicy/277866/.

SCTA Concerns

According to SCTA representatives, union members first became aware of SPARK when the initiative's activities were shared with the board of education.[18] Union officials indicate that they support activities associated with SPARK, including worthwhile alternatives to suspension. However, they have significant concerns that the district has not put into place a comprehensive structure, including human and material resources, that is necessary to support successful implementation. As an example, they cite the 2014 board policy that did not produce anticipated outcomes because it was not accompanied by an effective infrastructure. Focus group participants indicated that because PBIS was introduced without sufficient support, its spotty implementation was exacerbated by high staff turnover and little accountability for ensuring that new staff were adequately trained. Based on the union's concerns, the district halted central office SPARK activities,[19] and only some schools are implementing various components based on prior training and current resources. Although both the district and SCTA informed the Council's team of their desire to resolve these issues, there had not been much progress toward resolution when the team visited.

Social/Emotional Strategic and Intensive Interventions

Some 24 schools use Title I or other grants to fund student support centers. Under this model, a designated staff member coordinates external and school-based resources to support student's social/emotional needs. The schools operate their centers anywhere from an everyday activity to a one-day-per-week model. Center resources vary by school, and there is no formal relationship between each school's psychologists, social workers, and other support staff who could be leveraged to address students' social/emotional and mental health issues. Any coordination of these staff is dependent on the school site and the principal's leadership and commitment.

A common theme among focus group participants involved the extensive need to support the growing and more intensive mental health needs of students, which are not limited to those with identified disabilities. The district does not appear to have a structure for Tier 1 and 2 interventions and supports other than the student support centers and attention provided by individual psychologists, social workers, and other staff.

English Learners

SCUSD has held English language development (ELD) summer institutes for teachers of students who are ELs with the use of nine training specialists. One purpose of the institutes is to show teachers how they can embed ELD standards in instruction based on the common core curriculum. This training also supports ELs with disabilities. Some of this work is supported with a grant and assistance by WestEd, a national nonprofit research and service agency. Focus group

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[18] The district, however, indicated that the assistant superintendent for equity met with SCTA on Feb. 19, 2016, and presented the entire SPARK packet for SCTA comment prior to the April 21, 2016 board meeting. The district has dedicated 1.5 million dollars in resources to the Equity Office for training and staff to support SPARK.

[19] The MOU states that only schools practicing SEL, PBIS, or RP at the time of the Board meeting where SPARK was introduced (4/21/16) may continue to do so.

participants indicated that more information and professional development was needed to improve ELD instructional practices.

Data Collection and Usage

Focus group participants and information provided by the district revealed several challenges facing the district with respect to the collection and use of data to inform instruction.

- *Data Dashboard.* SCUSD has developed a data dashboard that is in its beginning stages of implementation. In the near future, the dashboard will post real-time achievement data, student demographics and other information that school and central office staff can access. The dashboard, however, does not enable personnel to use search queries, nor does it have an early warning system that provides alerts for students, such as those with a high number of suspensions, poor attendance, or low academic achievement. Reportedly, an upcoming version of the dashboard will have this capability.

- *Benchmark Assessments.* School or district-wide benchmark assessments are a supplement to classroom assessments and provide consistency across classrooms and grade levels. Typically, teachers administer common benchmark assessments to all students in the same course and grade level in the district at prescribed intervals. Through these uniform benchmark assessments, teachers can evaluate how well their students are doing relative to the selected standards in not only their classrooms but also other grade-level classrooms in the district.[20]

  According to information provided in response to the Council team's request, the district uses Illuminate for its benchmark assessments. Use of this program, however, is based on a pool of items[21] linked to state standards from which teachers self-select for their classroom assessments. Concerns were expressed about the extent to which the benchmark items were relevant, strategically selected, consistent, and sufficiently rigorous.[22]

- *Problem Solving.* Schools inconsistently use student support teams (SSTs), problem solving, and data to inform decision-making, resulting in part from the absence of written protocols and district expectations.

- *Universal Screeners and Progress Monitoring Tools.* The district currently does not have a universal screening tool or progress monitoring tools to initially identify students in need of interventions and to support and measure student progress. There is interest in giving Title I schools access to a common universal screener with Every School Succeeds Act (ESSA) funds.

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[20] California Department of Education, retrieved from http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/ch2/comnbnchmrkassess.aspx.
[21] The Benchmarks are pre-built assessments from a pool of items. These were developed centrally in collaboration with SCTA and a team of teachers. Teachers also have the option of creating classroom level assessments in Illuminate using an item bank.
[22] The district informed the Council team that in November it entered into an MOU with SCTA that suspended benchamrk testing and established a committee to develop a system for monitoring student progress. The committee began meeting in February and no new assessments or processes for monitoring student progress have been agreed upon to date, April 2017.

- ***School Walk Throughs.*** The district has a common protocol for instructional rounds. The tool is used primarily for coaching, but it is also a data collection tool. The tool is being digitalized to facilitate the use of easy data collection and reporting.

Written Guidance for the Use of MTSS to Identify Students in Need of Special Education Evaluations

Nationwide, the referral of students for special education evaluations is increasingly embedded in the framework of multi-tiered systems of support. This trend is based on growing research showing that there is a difference between identifying students with obvious disabilities, e.g., blind/visual impairments, deaf/hearing impairments, physical disabilities, etc., and those with less obvious and more judgmental disabilities, e.g., specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, etc. For the latter category of disabilities, there are large disparities in incidence rates within and between school districts and states. In addition, disparities are large when considering race/ethnicity and ELL status. In some disability areas, e.g., autism and intellectual disabilities, the disability of students with more significant needs will be more obvious than the disability of students with higher achievement and less significant needs. For example, researchers reviewed data on all 305 school districts in Indiana. They found that disparities increased inversely with the severity of the disability. In other words, the more severe a disability, the more likely students were to be proportionately represented across all races/ethnicities.[23] Conversely, minority students were more likely to be over-represented when more mild disabilities were considered.

Although the SCUSD does not have written guidance for MTSS, the district's special education and multilingual departments both have written guidance, but with differing degrees of specificity, as well as varying requirements for the use of tiered interventions.

Special Education Procedural Handbook References to SSTs and RtI

The district's 2015-16 Special Education Procedural Handbook (Handbook) describes two processes for supporting the appropriate identification of students with disabilities: student support teams (SSTs) and response to intervention (RtI), which has been viewed as the academic component of MTSS.

- ***SSTs*** are described as school-based problem-solving groups to assist teachers, administrators, and school staff with interventions and strategies for dealing with the academic, social/emotional, and behavioral needs of students. Once activated, this proactive process is designed to assist teachers and students by generating additional classroom instructional strategies, classroom accommodations, and/or intervention plans. The team may also act as a resource for additional services or programs (i.e., reading comprehension groups, anger management groups, social skills groups, or 1:1 mental health counseling).

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[23] S.J. Skiba, S.B. Simmons, S. Ritter, K. Kohler, M. Henderson, and T. Wu. "The Context of Minority Disproportionality: Local Perspectives on Special Education Referral – A Status Report (Indiana Education Policy Center, 2003) p. 18, retrieved at http://www.indiana.edu/%7Esafeschl/contextofmindisp.pdf.

One purpose of the SSTs is to reduce the number of inappropriate referrals for special education. This provision references the Board of Education policy (§6164.5) of April 15, 2002, which states:

> The Superintendent or designees shall establish Student Study Teams at each school site to address student needs. The Board expects Student Study Teams to identify the areas in which a student is having learning or behavior problems, and to develop plans or approaches that will enable the student to be successful. The Board expects that Student Study Teams will engage in a problem solving process, which will improve communications between the school and parents, provide support to teachers and monitor the effectiveness of interventions.

> In addition, the Board's Administrative Rule §6164.5 of June 11, 2002 sets forth more specific requirements for the principal or designee at each school for the implementation of SSTs.

- ***Response to Intervention (RtI),*** which the Handbook describes as a "mandated requirement of IDEA 2004,"[24] is an effort to incorporate three tiers of intervention in order to ensure that all students succeed. Each of the three tiers, however, are described in vague terms, but the intensity of instruction/intervention for students is expected to be in direct proportion to their individual needs pursuant to a student's individual intervention plan. The interventions and student supports are to be research-based, and monitored for effectiveness in an ongoing manner. Referencing California law, "a student shall be referred for special education instruction and services only **after** the resources of the **general education program** have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized."[25]

Master Plan for English Learner Programs and Services

SCUSD's Master Plan for English Learner Programs and Services (ELL Master Plan) also describes the SST and RtI processes as they relate to referrals for special education services. The ELL Master Plan establishes that:

> A student may not be referred for special education services unless and until it can be established that if the student has been provided with an effective instructional program and that research-based interventions, which have been implemented with fidelity over a significant period of time, have been confirmed not to work. … The district has adopted a tiered service-delivery model to ensure that English learners received a complete and appropriate range of instructional services and interventions, through the general education program, prior to referral for special education.[26]

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[24] See page 9.
[25] 30 EC 56303
[26] See page 30.

An EL shall be referred for special education instruction and services only after the resources of the general education program have been **utilized and confirmed to** be insufficient or ineffective.[27] (Emphasis added.)

Relationship between SCUSD's MTSS Practices and Special Education Referrals

While the Special Education Procedural Handbook and ELL Master Plan have provided some guidance with respect to SSTs and RtI, these guidance documents are somewhat irrelevant given that SCUSD does not have a comprehensive district framework and the resources and professional learning necessary to support systemic practice with fidelity.

The absence of a comprehensive MTSS framework and implementation is having a demonstrably negative effect on the manner in which students are referred to and identified for special education services. Despite board policy, the SSTs are not consistently and effectively used. While some schools use them as intended, other schools appear to use these teams only as a means to justify a student's special education referral or to delay evaluations. Where strategic and intensive resources sufficient to meet students' academic and social/emotional needs are unavailable, special education is viewed as the only "place" in which a student can receive intervention and support. The next section of this report, which presents various demographic data about students who receive special education services, describes several areas that illustrate this concern.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

The following are areas of strength in the district's disability-prevalence rates and evaluation results.

- *Multi-tiered System of Supports.* The district's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan Implementation includes MTSS, along with other actions, as means to close achievement gaps.

- *Curriculum Maps and Principal Leadership.* SCUSD is using a multi-disciplinary process to develop CCSS-aligned curriculum maps for English Language Arts (ELA) and math to guide what students should know, understand, and be able to do. Principals and teacher teams attend professional learning sessions to collaboratively bring their knowledge back to school sites.

- *Common Protocol.* The district has a common protocol for conducting instructional rounds to support coaching, and collecting data from classroom visits.

- *Universal Design for Learning.* Last summer, five district staff members representing different departments attended Harvard's Graduate School of Education course, Universal Design for Learning: Leading Inclusive Education for All Students, and are providing training on UDL to schools.

- *English Learners.* The district has held English language development (ELD) summer institutes for teachers of students who are ELLs with the use of nine training specialists. This

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[27] See page 31. Note that the EL Master Plan does not correctly cite the California provision, which is referenced correctly in the Special Education Procedural Handbook. Rather than ensuring that general education resources are "utilized and confirmed to be insufficient and ineffective," they must be "considered and, where appropriate, utilized

training also supports ELLs with disabilities.

- **Social/Emotional Support.** The district benefits from its participation in the Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI) partnership with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR). An independent study conducted for CASEL showed positive outcomes for the district. The district has attempted to initiate SPARK, which comprises five components, as Tier 1 universal practices.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following describes opportunities for improvements in the district's disability prevalence rates and student evaluation results.

- **Multi-tiered System of Supports Implementation.** The district's development and use of the MTSS framework is in its infancy. While some schools have implemented MTSS to varying degrees, there is no consistency across the system with respect to the core MTSS components described in CDE's framework.

- **Universal Design for Learning.** Instructional technology (IT) personnel have not been involved in UDL implementation and professional learning activities, which is necessary for UDL to interface with the district's various technology tools. There are concerns that special educators alone are expected to carry the initiative forward.

- **Increasingly Intensive Interventions and Supports.** Currently, SCUSD does not have increasingly intensive academic and social/emotional interventions and support available systemwide for students. Title I schools have more access to supplemental interventions but other schools must rely on their own creative means to address the academic needs of students falling behind.

- **English Learners.** More information and professional development is needed to improve ELD instructional practices.

- **SCTA/District Collaboration.** MTSS implementation has stalled because of SCTA's concerns about the lack of a comprehensive framework that is sufficiently resourced and supported. The issue is being discussed through contract negotiations based on a pending proposal from the SCTA. The SCTA has also halted implementation of the district's SPARK initiative for similar reasons. That program provides five evidence-based practices to support Tier 1 interventions and social/emotional learning. While there is merit to some issues raised by the SCTA, we know of no other school district that has had union concerns significantly delay development and implementation of MTSS.

- **Data Collection and Usage.** The following data-related issues merit attention, including several of which district representatives are aware: a dashboard without early warning capability; benchmark assessments that are not evidence-based and provided at reasonable intervals; a lack of written protocols and practices for data-based problem-solving of student needs; and a lack of access to universal screeners and progress monitoring tools.

- **Relationship of MTSS to Special Education Referrals.** Although the Special Education Procedural Handbook (Handbook) and Master Plan for English Learner Programs and

Services (ELL Master Plan) contain some guidance for referring students for special education evaluations, the district has no overall written protocol for MTSS or for making referral decisions. As a result, these two documents exist in a vacuum without systemic support. Moreover, the Handbook and ELL Master Plan have provisions that are inconsistent with each other, and with state guidance. The absence of professional learning in this area exacerbates this problem, and raises issues about the consistency and reliability of special education evaluation referrals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Systemwide MTSS Framework, Implementation Plan, and Oversight.* As part of the district's theory of action, establish MTSS as the underlying structure for all work designed to improve student outcomes. Based on information from the CDE website and other sources, develop, distribute, and implement a comprehensive vision, framework, and action plan to support MTSS systemwide.[28] This collective work must communicate that MTSS is neither a mechanism for delaying special education evaluations when they warranted nor a process having the singular purpose of justifying such valuations. Rather, the work needs to facilitate a shared sense of urgency among all stakeholders to improve educational outcomes for all students.

    We strongly recommend that the district use a consultant who has experience developing and implementing MTSS in various urban school districts to facilitate collaboration among the central office, schools, the SCTA, and other stakeholders. The use of a consultant with this expertise would enable the district to benefit from other school districts' experiences; help resolve SCTA issues regarding MTSS, including SPARK; and to expedite completion of the MTSS framework and implementation plan.

    a. *District and School-based Leadership MTSS Teams.* Establish leadership teams at the district and school levels to support MTSS planning and oversee implementation activities.

    - *District MTSS Leadership Team.* Ensure that the district MTSS leadership team includes representatives from all relevant stakeholder groups, e.g., area assistant superintendents, central office personnel, principals, all types of teachers (general, special, EL, gifted/talented), related-services personnel, SCTA representatives, etc. Plan a two-day overview and monthly meetings with the MTSS leadership team to continue to develop common language and planning for necessary implementation resources. Invite various advisory groups representing differing interests, such as the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for special education, to give feedback to the leadership team.

    - *School-Based Leadership Teams.* Based on the district's comprehensive MTSS-implementation plan (Recommendation1b below), identify school-based leadership teams (SBLT) at each site for training on and work toward the development of an implementation plan at each site. The SBLT is responsible for the health and wellness of the school and leads the MTSS work to ensure a common understanding of the framework. SBLTs will necessarily have defined responsibilities, such as

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[28] CDE webpage for MTSS, retrieved at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/mtsscomprti2.asp.

learning/applying/modeling the problem-solving process, providing professional learning and technical assistance opportunities for staff, monitoring implementation and needed supports, conducting school-based data days, and the like.

a. *Implementation Plan.* Have the district MTSS leadership team evaluate its current program infrastructure as it develops its MTSS framework and implementation plan, e.g., universal screeners, formative assessments, standard protocols for intervention/support, curricular materials, supplemental and intensive resources, data platforms, use of data, professional learning, budget allocations, etc. Embed universal design for learning (UDL) into the MTSS framework, [29] and incorporate the areas discussed below. As a part of the plan include benchmark and on-going district wide and school-based progress monitoring to support the evaluation of MTSS implementation. When finalized, post the MTSS implementation plan on the district's website along with relevant links to district information/resources, and publicly available resources. Ensure that the district's Strategic Plan intentionally embeds and utilizes the MTSS framework in its goals and activities. Embed relevant aspects of the MTSS framework in the district's Strategic Plan and school-based planning templates.

b. *Map Resources and Analyze Gaps.* As part of a comprehensive planning process, conduct an assessment of current MTSS-related human and material resources provided by the district and independently funded by schools. As part of this process, consider the current roles of school psychologists and speech/language pathologists, and how they may be adjusted/reallocated to support students proactively within general education. Compare these resources to evidence-based resources in use, and plan for filling gaps. Conduct an analysis of currently used resources by schools to assess their return on investment in terms of improved student outcomes. Identify those that are supporting/accelerating student learning and those that are not. Consider having the district sponsor appropriate evidence-based resources from which all schools can choose to implement. As part of this process, consider how additional Title I resources provided to schools could enhance district resources to meet student needs.

b. *Written Expectations.* Establish a school board policy[30] and written expectations for the district's MTSS framework (for academics in addition to social/emotional learning/restorative justice) that is consistent with the district's theory of action. Ensure that the MTSS framework includes all grades, and supports linguistically appropriate and culturally competent instruction. Develop a multi-year implementation plan that includes regular board updates. Address all areas of MTSS described in the current program literature, including expectations for the following:

- Use of MTSS for systemic and sustainable change;

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[29] Consider expanding the district leadership team's knowledge of UDL by having representatives from IT and departments in addition to past participants attend the Harvard University UDL summer program, having the team receive training from district personnel with UDL expertise, etc.

[30] April 7, 2014 board policy (BUL-6269.0), retrieved from April
http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUSD/FLDR_ORGANIZATIONS/FLDR_SPECIAL_EDUCAT
ION/BUL-
6269.0%20MULTI%20TIERED%20BEHAVIOR%20SUPPORT%20SWD%20W%20ATTACHMENTS.PDF.

- High-quality, differentiated classroom instruction and research-based academic and behavior interventions and supports aligned with student needs;

- Evidence-based universal screening, benchmark assessments, and progress monitoring;[31]

- Use of school-based leadership teams and problem-solving methodology;

- Fidelity of implementation;

- Professional learning, technical assistance, and collaboration;

- Parent/family involvement in the MTSS process; and

- Use of MTSS to identify students in need of special education evaluations and to consider in the assessment process. More information about this process is provided as part of the recommendations in Section II, Disability Prevalence Rates and 2014-15 Evaluation Outcomes.

c. *Professional Learning.* Based on the MTSS framework, implementation plan, and written expectations, develop a professional-learning curriculum that is targeted to different audiences, e.g., special education teachers, related-services personnel, paraprofessionals, parents, etc. Provide at least four to five days of training for school-based leadership teams over two consecutive years. Ground training in the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning.[32] Consider how access to training will be supported and budgeted, e.g., through the use of stipends, funds for substitute coverage, incentives for after-school and Saturday training, summer training, etc.

Embed the following components in the district's MTSS implementation plan —

- *Cross-Functional Teams.* Cross-train individuals from different departments to ensure a common language and common understanding of MTSS that can be applied to district offices in order to intentionally align and support the work of schools as they work toward implementation. Maximize their knowledge and skills in MTSS in order to provide direct support, mentoring, coaching, and technical assistance to principals and teachers.

- *Develop the Capacity of High-Quality Trainers.* Develop a plan to develop the capacity of internal staff to deliver data-driven professional development and the critical components of MTSS. Ensure that all trainers are knowledgeable and experienced in data analysis, problem solving, and effective professional development for adult learners.

- *Access to Differentiated Learning.* Ensure that professional learning is engaging and differentiated according to the audience's skills, experience, and need. Have professional learning and technical assistance available to new personnel and those needing additional support.

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[31] See the evaluation tool available on the Center on Response to Intervention website to determine the research-based value of tools being considered.[31]

[32] Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org/standards#.UMvVD7Yt0kU

- *Multiple Formats.* Use multiple formats (e.g., videos, webinars, and narrative text) and presentation approaches (e.g., school-based, small groups).

- *Coaching/Modeling.* Develop a plan for coaching and technical assistance to support principals and school-based leadership teams in practices highlighted in training sessions and materials.

- *School Walk Throughs.* Establish a common, differentiated electronic protocol for conducting instructional rounds, collecting data from classroom visits, and informing teachers of results and observations. It is important that the protocol be aligned with the teaching and learning framework of the district.

- *Exemplary Implementation Models.* Provide a forum where schools can highlight and share best practices, lessons learned, victories, and challenges in implementing MTSS for all students (e.g., gifted, English learners, students with IEPs, students who are twice exceptional). Encourage staff to visit exemplary schools, and set aside time for that to happen.

- *District Website.* Develop and provide a well-informed and resourced interactive web page that includes links to other local and national sites. Highlight schools within the district and share stories about the impact of MTSS on student outcomes using multiple measures.

d. *Data Analysis and Reports.* Establish an early warning system that measures students on track for graduation. Ensure that key performance indicators across elementary, middle and high schools are established, and analysis (e.g., custom reports) are designed to enable the superintendent, administrators, principals, teachers, and related-services personnel to review student growth, identify patterns, solve problems, and make informed decisions.

e. *Monitoring and Accountability.* Evaluate the effectiveness, fidelity, and results of MTSS implementation, and include the following in the assessment –

- *Baseline Data and Fidelity Assessments.* Develop a standard protocol for school-site baseline data on instructional practices and supports using multiple measures (academic, suspension, attendance, etc.), for assessing academic and behavioral outcomes, and for measuring the fidelity of program implementation. For example, consider using evaluation tools and protocols provided at no cost through the federally funded Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports website.[33]

- *Data Checks.* Conduct at least three health and wellness checks per year at the school level to facilitate the monitoring and impact of MTSS implementation. In addition, using data and reports associated with Recommendation 1f, have the superintendent host regular data conversations with administrators and principals on key

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[33] Several tools are available for monitoring fidelity, such as Florida's MTSS school level tool, retrieved at http://floridarti.usf.edu/resources/presentations/2014/nasp/StockslagerCastillo/NASP%202014_School%20Level%20MTSS%20Instrument_Final.pdf; and tools available from the RTI Action Network, retrieved from http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/tieredinstruction/tier1/accurate-decision-making-within-a-multi-tier-system-of-supports-critical-areas-in-tier-1.

performance indicators to discuss results, anomalies, support needed, follow-up activities, and outcomes.

- *Timely Communication and Feedback.* Design feedback loops involving central office, school personnel, parents, and the community to inform current as well as future work. Use this process to provide regular and timely feedback to the district MTSS leadership team about barriers that are beyond the control of local schools or where schools require additional assistance.

II. Disability Prevalence Rates and 2014-15 Evaluation Outcomes

This section presents demographic characteristics of SCUSD students with disabilities who have individualized education programs (IEPs). [34] When available, SCUSD data are compared with students at state and national levels, and with other urban school districts across the country. In addition, data are analyzed by grade, by school, by race/ethnicity, and for students who are also English language learners (ELLs), so readers can fully understand the context in which SCUSD services are provided.

This section also provides information about the results of the district's special education evaluations that were completed during the 2015-16 school year.

District Prevalence Rates

In this subsection, the incidence of SCUSD students receiving special education services is compared to urban school districts across the country and to the nation as a whole. Also, incidence data are disaggregated for pre-K and kindergarten children, and school-age students by disability area, grade, race/ethnicity, and English learner status. [35]

Comparison of SCUSD, Urban Districts, National, and State Special Education Rates

SCUSD enrolls 6,519 students with IEPs who are three through 21 years of age, including those in separate schools (in and out of the district) and charter schools. This number is 13.9 percent of all students enrolled in the district. This figure is somewhat higher than the 13.1 percent average across 72 urban school districts on which we have data. [36] SCUSD ranked 32nd among districts in the percentage of students with disabilities. Percentages ranged from 8 percent to 25 percent among these districts. [37]

Exhibit 2a. Special Education Percentages for the District, Surveyed Districts, National and State

	District	Surveyed Districts	Nation	State
Percentage of All Students	13.9%	13.1%	12.9%	15.20%

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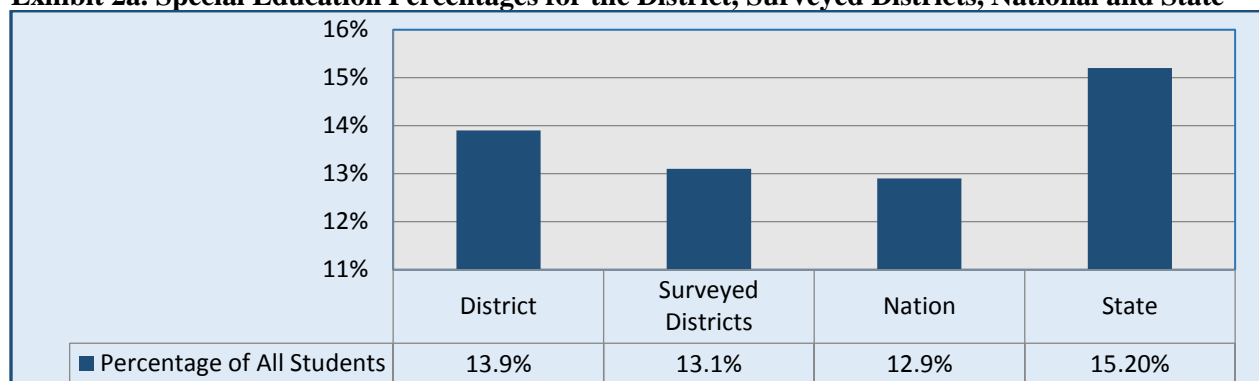
[34] Students with disabilities who have IEPs and receive special education services are also referred to as students with IEPs. These data are limited to students with a disability under the IDEA, and does not include students who are gifted.

[35] Unless otherwise stated, all SCUSD data were provided by the district to the Council's team and are for the 2015-16 school year.

[36] Most data were provided by school districts that responded to a survey conducted by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative; the Council team or members of the team obtained the remaining data during district reviews. The rates by district are provided in Appendix A. Incidence Rates and Staffing Survey Results.

[37] The data covers several years, but in most cases, ratios do not change dramatically from year to year.

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The district's 13.9 percent special education rate is less than the state's 15.2 percentage, but is higher than the 12.9 percent national figure, which has decreased since 2004-05, when it was 13.8 percent.[38]

Special Education Percentages for SCUSD Pre-K and Kindergarten Children

SCUSD enrolls many more children with IEPs in pre-K (636) compared to kindergarten (370). Exhibit 2b shows the percentages of pre-K and kindergarten children with IEPs by disability areas.

- *Speech/Language Impairment (S/L).* In both grades, some 65 percent of these children are identified as having an S/L disability.

- *Autism.* Pre-K and kindergarten students have markedly different autism percentages. Some 25 percent of pre-K children with IEPs are identified as having autism compared to 17 percent in kindergarten.

- *Other Health Impairment (OHI) and Specific Learning Disability (SLD).* For the combined areas of OHI and SLD, only 2 percent of pre-K children with IEPs are identified compared to 9 percent of kindergarteners. This difference is reflected in the increased number of children identified with SLD (2 in pre-K to 14 in kindergarten) and with OHI (13 in pre-K to 21 in kindergarten).

- *Other Areas.* The remaining students have other disabilities.

Exhibit 2b. Percentages of Pre-K and Kindergarten Children with IEP by Disability Area
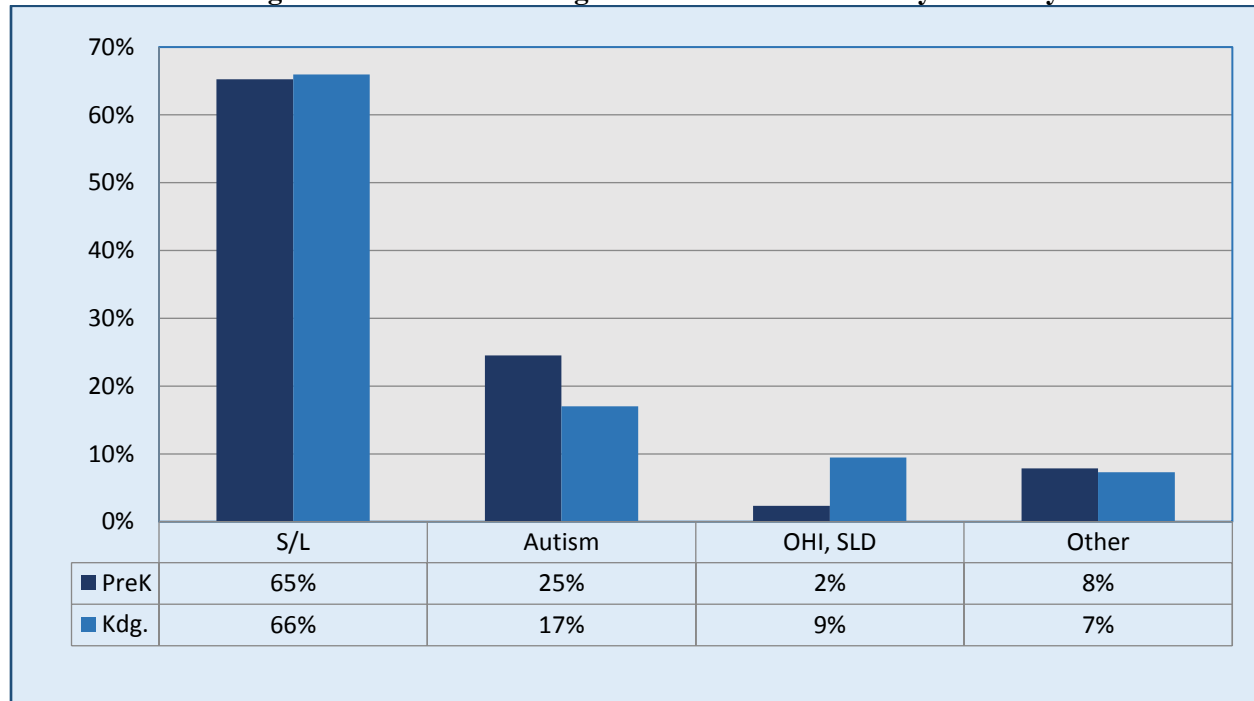
	S/L	Autism	OHI, SLD	Other
PreK	65%	25%	2%	8%
Kdg.	66%	17%	9%	7%

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[38] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2013* (NCES 2015-011), Chapter 2. The rates are based on 2011-12 data based on students 3 through 21 years of age. http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=64.

Disability Prevalence Rates by District, State and Nation

SCUSD students with IEPs are identified as having a particular disability at proportions similar to those at the state level. Notable areas in which the district and state exceed national rates involve specific learning disabilities, speech/language, and autism. (See Exhibit 1b.)

Exhibit 2c. Percentage of Students with IEPs by District, State, and Nation[39]

	SLD	S/L	Autism	OHI	ID	ED
District	44%	20%	13%	11%	5%	5%
State	45%	17%	12%	11%	6%	4%
Nation	40%	14%	8%	13%	7%	6%
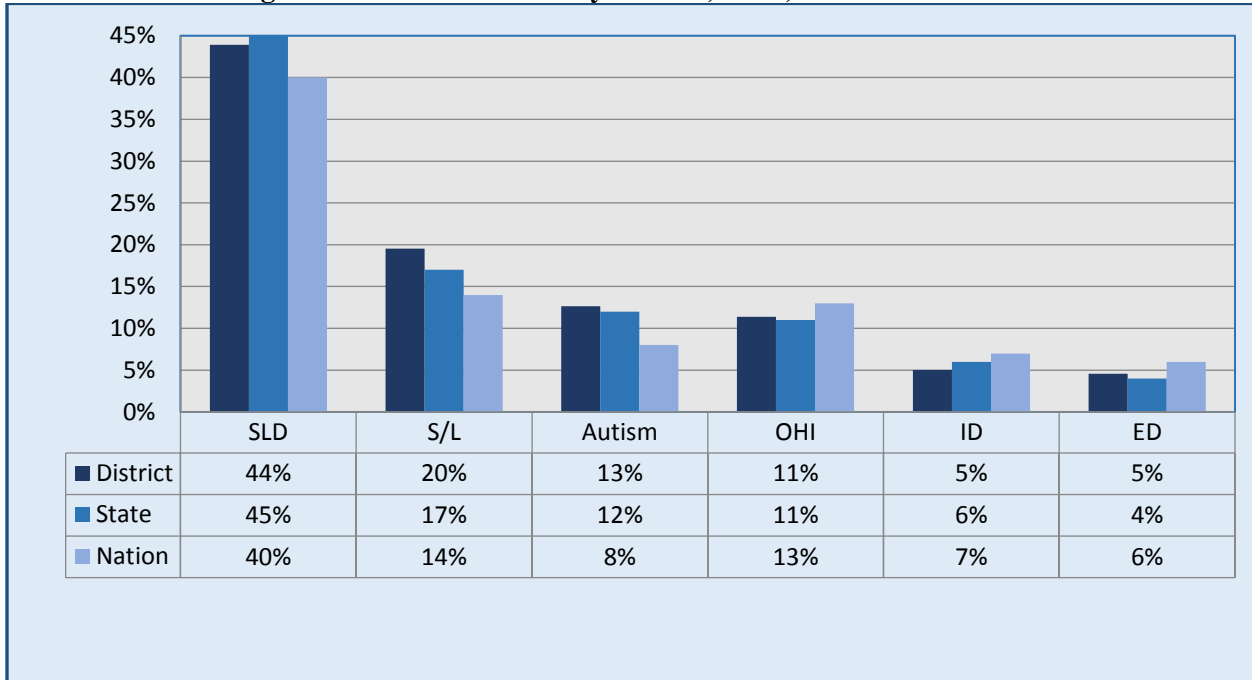
SCUSD Disability Rates by Grade

Exhibit 2d shows the district's overall rate of students with IEPs is 14 percent; however, the disability rates vary by grade. The percentage of children in kindergarten (10 percent) increases steadily to fourth grade (15 percent) where it remains relatively stable through seventh grade (14 percent). Inexplicably, the percentage decreases at eighth grade (12 percent) where it remains somewhat consistent through eleventh grade, and then drops in twelfth grade to a low of four percent.[40] This pattern is not one that is typical among other school districts.

When looking only at students with a specific learning disability, the disability rate increases significantly from kindergarten (4 percent) to tenth grade (58 percent), and then declines somewhat in eleventh grade (52 percent) and significantly in twelfth grade (31 percent). The decrease in twelfth grade may be due to students who have dropped out of school.

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[39] National and state data are based on the U.S. Department of Education's 2014 IDEA Part B Child Count and Educational Environment database, retrieved from 2014-15 USDE IDEA Section 618 State Level Data Files, retrieved at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/state-level-data-files/index.html#bccee. Unless otherwise stated, all SCUSD data were provided by the district to the Council's team.

[40] The chart does not include students with IEPs remaining in school past 12th grade to receive postsecondary education. There are 76 students in this group, which comprise 57 percent with an intellectual disability, 16 percent with autism, and small percentages with other disability areas.

Exhibit 2d. Percentages of SCUSD Students with IEPs by Grade

	Kdg.	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	All
Percent of All Students	10%	11%	13%	14%	15%	15%	15%	14%	12%	12%	11%	12%	4%	14%
SLD % of Students with IEPs	4%	18%	27%	38%	43%	48%	48%	54%	56%	57%	58%	52%	31%	44%
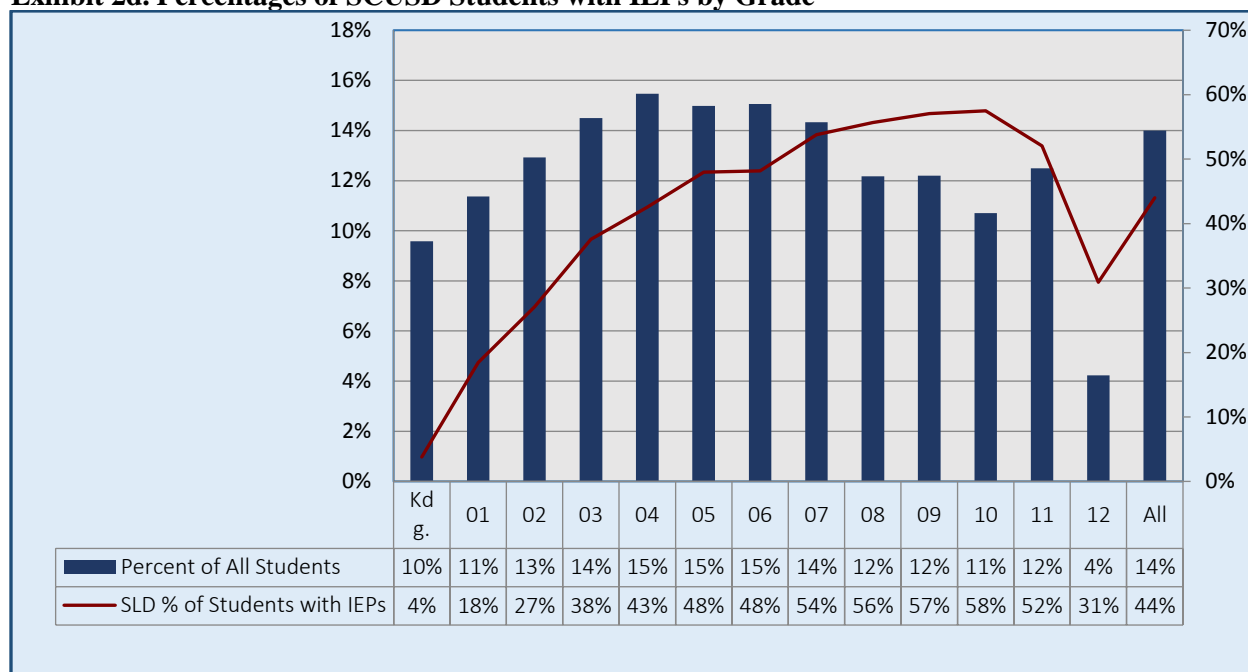
SCUSD Disability Incidence by Race/Ethnicity

This subsection discusses the extent to which SCUSD students from each of the most common racial/ethnic groups are proportionate to each other in being identified as disabled.

Race/Ethnicity Prevalence for Students with IEPs

According to CDE's latest FY 2014 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report of July 1, 2016, the agency uses an E-formula to determine racial/ethnic disproportionality, which according to the report falls under the broad category of composition measures. On December 12, 2015, the United States Department of Education (USDE or ED) issued a final rule that established a uniform national measurement of significant disproportionality. The department developed the risk ratio measure (and alternative risk ratio for small cell numbers), to measure the likelihood that students from one racial/ethnic group compared to other groups have the characteristic being measured. By the 2018-19 school year, states must use this measure and identify the threshold of risk it will use to determine significant disproportionality. [41] In the meantime, SCUSD should take note of any risk ratios for racial/ethnic groups that are 2 or higher, or are under 0.5.

Exhibit 2e shows risk ratios for the most common student racial/ethnic groups. These figures show that African American students are 1.39 more likely and Hispanic students are 1.38 more likely to have an IEP compared to students outside of their racial/ethnic group. Asian students have the lowest risk ratio (0.72). Using a measure of "2," these risks for identification are not disproportionately or unusually high.

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[41] As of the date of this report, the regulation is still in effect; however, further action by Congress or Education Department could change this status.

Exhibit 2e. By Race/Ethnicity, Percentages of All Enrolled Students and of All Students with IEPs

	American Indian	African American	Multiracial	Hispanic	White	Asian
Risk Ratio	1.34	1.39	1.24	1.38	1.05	0.72
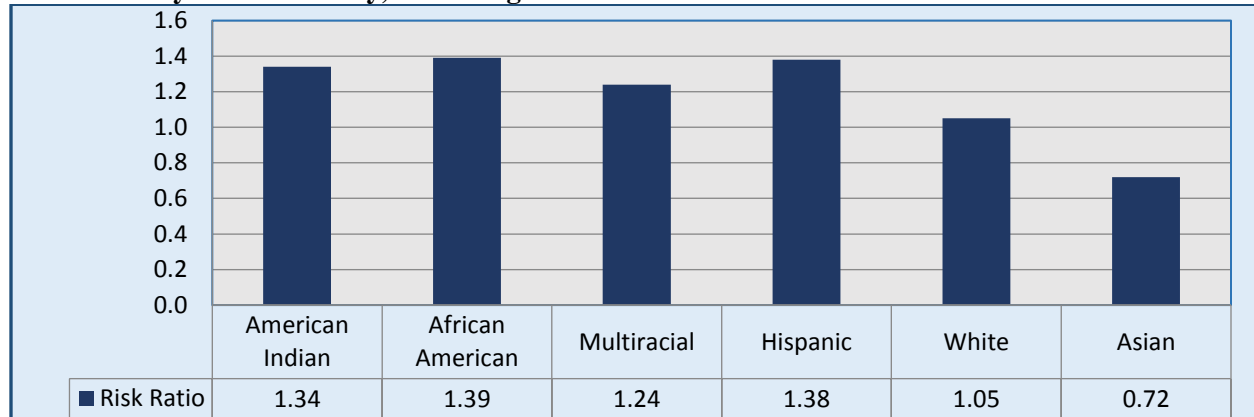
Race/Ethnicity Prevalence by Disability Area

Exhibit 2f shows the risk ratio of students by the most prevalent race/ethnic groups compared to all other groups in the most common disability areas. These data show that the risk for almost all student groups of having a specific disability is less than "2." The exception is for African American students, who are three times more likely than other students to have an emotional disturbance. Several racial/ethnic groups have a risk ratio approaching a "2" for various other disabilities, including:

- *Specific Learning Disability.* The risk ratio for African American students is 1.71.

- *Speech/Language Impairment.* The risk ratio for multiracial students is 1.73.

- *Autism.* The risk ratio for white students is 1.80.

- *Other Health Impairment.* The risk ratio for African American students is 1.86.

Exhibit 2f. Risk Ratios by Race/Ethnicity and Most Common Disabilities

	SLD	S/L	Autism	OHI	ID	ED
AA	1.71	0.83	0.85	1.86	1.36	3.01
Hispanic	1.27	1.04	0.75	0.73	1.11	0.60
White	0.66	1.13	1.80	1.48	0.63	1.45
Multiracial	0.79	1.73	1.45	1.55	1.33	1.06
Asian	0.54	0.77	0.73	0.31	0.77	
Ameri Ind	1.56	0.96				
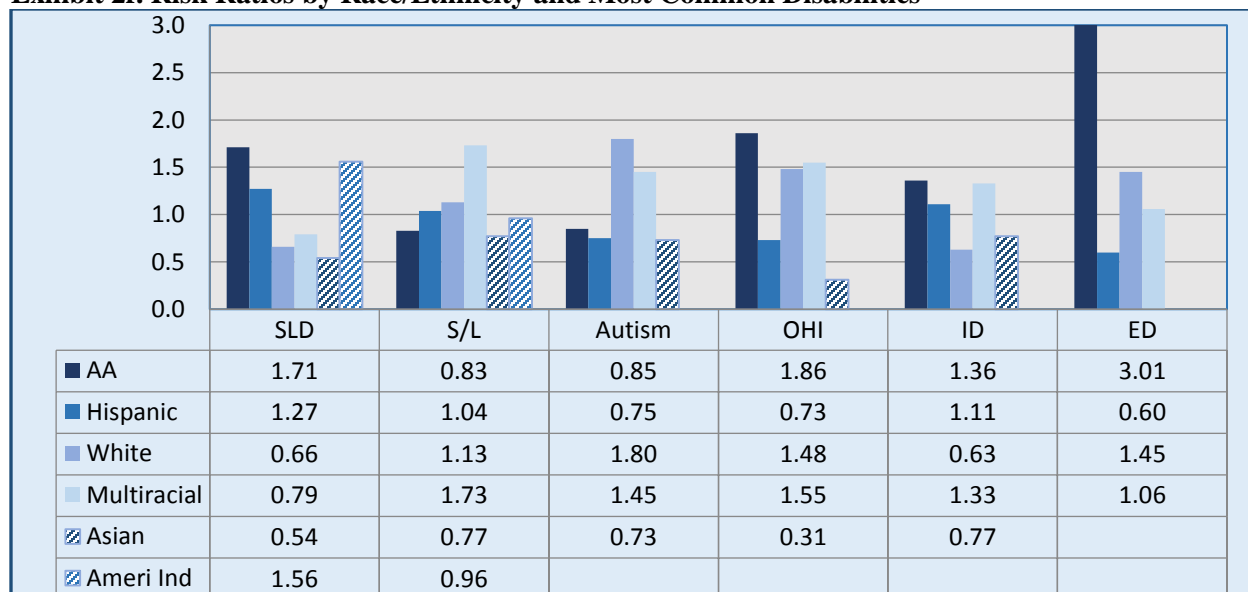
Prior Findings by California Department of Education

According to district representatives, four years ago the California Department of Education (CDE) made a finding of significant disproportionality in the area of emotional disturbance (ED) with respect to the district's identification of white and African American students, and again in 2014-15 with respect to African American students. With this finding, the district was required to use 15 percent of its IDEA funds for coordinated, early intervention services to supplement general education social/emotional supports for students without disabilities.[42] The district reports that it is no longer significantly disproportionate in any area of identification. As discussed above, beginning with the 2018-19 school year CDE must use a risk ratio to measure significant disproportionality. Although the state will have some time to identify the threshold of risk, SCUSD should take note of its high 3.01 ED risk ratio among African American students.

With CDE's first identification of the significant disproportionality, the district's special education department initiated specialized ERMHS teams (discussed below) for students suspected of having ED. According to the district, these teams reduced the number of students identified. At the same time, the district expanded behavioral support services and its implementation of social/emotional learning.

Use of Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) Teams

Focus group participants expressed several concerns about the use of ERMHS teams for students suspected of having an emotional disturbance—along with the use of autism teams.

- These teams have a primary "gate keeping" function for ED and autism eligibility for special education, and there are frequent disagreements between team members and school personnel. Reportedly, some school personnel believe they have to suspend students (where they otherwise might not have) in order to "build" a case that would support eligibility.

- School personnel reach out to the team only after they believe they have intervened with resources within their control, and completed a plethora of screening paperwork. This structure promotes antagonism when team members provide feedback that school efforts are not sufficient, or they do not observe the same level of need as school personnel.

- Team members are not readily available to schools because of the large number of requests for assistance. This circumstance could result in referral and evaluation delays.

- The teams' expertise is not used to support intervention activities or technical assistance and coaching for teachers having students with behavior or social/emotional issues, regardless of whether they qualify for services.

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[42] The U.S. Department of Education's December 12, 2016 final rule allows school districts to use 15 percent of IDEA funds for coordinated, early intervening services for students without disabilities.

District representatives indicate that psychologists will be trained to evaluate students suspected of having ED and autism.[43]

SCUSD Disability English Learners

This subsection discusses the extent to which SCUSD students who are English language learners (ELL) have disability percentages that are proportionate to students who are not ELL. It also includes information about the assessment of ELLs thought to have a disability, as well as communication with parents who are ELLs.

Disparities by Language Status (ELL and Non-ELL)

Overall, 19 percent of all students who are ELLs have an IEP, compared to 13 percent of students who are not ELLs. Using a risk ratio measure, ELLs are 1.48 times more likely than non-ELLs to have an IEP.

As seen in Exhibit 2g, ELLs are 2.37 times more likely than non-ELLs to have an intellectual disability, and 2.12 times more likely to have a specific learning disability. With a risk ratio of 0.32, ELLs are much less likely than non-ELLs to have an emotional disability.

Exhibit 2g. Risk Ratios for ELLs Compared to Non-ELLs by Disability Areas

	ID	S/L	ED	OHI	SLD	Autism	Other
■ Risk Ratio	2.37	1.42	0.32	0.77	2.12	0.93	1.50
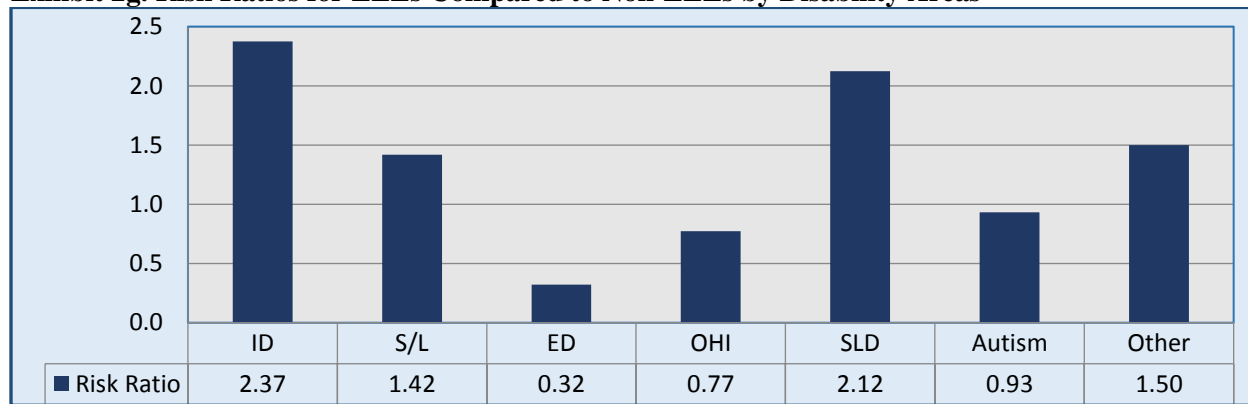
Assessments of ELL Students

Focus group participants and the district provided the following information about assessments for ELL students.

- *Assessments.* According to the ELL Master Plan, whenever possible, assessments will be conducted by trained bilingual personnel and in the student's most proficient language. The Special Education Procedural Handbook, however, follows the federal and state requirements that assessments must be conducted by qualified bilingual personnel in a student's "primary language, unless it is not feasible to do so. Further, the assessment report must address the validity and reliability of the assessments in light of the student's

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[43] Psychologists are trained during their graduate training programs on assessing all areas of suspected disabilities. Professional learning will be offered to staff to improve their ability to evaluate and rule in or rule out ED and autism when student presents with characteristics of both disability areas.

language and interpreted in a language that is accessible to the student's parents."[44] In addition, the evaluation team must include one staff person with certification in ELL instruction.[45]

- ***Bilingual Assessments.*** The district has only two bilingual Spanish psychologist, and the psychologist's caseload is not limited to ELLs who speak Spanish.

- ***Parent Notices.*** According to the ELL Master Plan, where possible, the assessment plan will be communicated to the parent in a language the parent understands. In addition, schools ensure parents are provided notice, where feasible, in the language the parent best understands and that appropriate support is provided to ensure meaningful participation in the IEP development and monitoring process. However, this information does not accurately reflect information relevant to these issues in the Special Education Procedural Handbook. This document specifies that a trained interpreter must be provided at IEP meetings upon parental request.[46] Further, IEP meeting notices are in the parent's primary language, and they inform parents of their right to interpretation services. For all English learners, the IEP and reports are to be translated for ELL parents upon their request.[47]

- ***Interoffice Communication and Professional Learning.*** Reportedly, although ELL personnel at the central office have a positive relationship with special education program specialists and inclusive practices coaches, they do not have an established relationship with such personnel as psychologists and speech/language pathologists. Such interoffice collaboration would benefit the professional development that school psychologists and speech/language pathologists receive periodically about assessments for ELL students. Collaboration also would enable ELL personnel to become better informed about their role in the special education evaluation and IEP process.

Special Education Eligibility and Timeliness

SCUSD provided the Council team with data showing the numbers of students who were referred for an evaluation during the 2015-16 school year, whether they qualified for an IEP, and the results by disability area.

Evaluations Completed and Qualification for IEPs

Exhibit 2h shows the percentages of students with completed evaluations who were eligible for special education services in 2015-16, and the percentage of students with evaluations that were not yet completed. These data show that a much higher percentage of all students referred for a speech/language-only evaluation were evaluated, had evaluations completed, and qualified for services, compared to students with a full team evaluation. The data did not show the extent to which the pending evaluations were timely.

- ***Speech/Language-Only Evaluation.*** Of the 495 students referred for an evaluation for speech/language needs, 95 percent were completed. Of the 470 completed evaluations, 91

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[44] See page 29.
[45] See page 46.
[46] See page 46.
[47] See page 48.

percent were qualified for services. Of the referred students, only five percent were pending at the end of the school year.

- *Full Team Evaluations.* Of the 936 students referred for a full evaluation, 16 percent had evaluations that were not yet completed. Of the 789 completed evaluations, 76 percent qualified for an IEP.

Exhibit 2h. Referrals for Evaluations and Results

	Evaluation Completed	Qualified	Pending
Speech/Language Only	95%	91%	5%
Full-Team Evaluation	84%	76%	16%
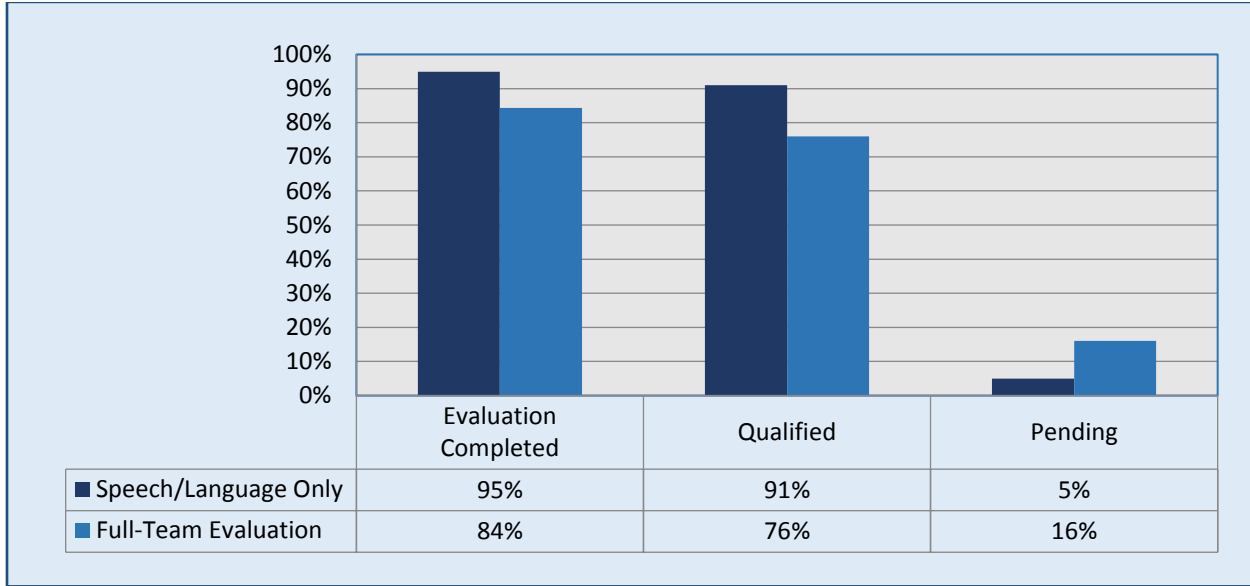
Evaluation Results

Of the 1,025 students who qualified for special education, they comprised the following disability areas: 46 percent had a speech/language impairment; 32 percent had a specific learning disability; 10 percent had other health impairments, 8 percent had autism, and 4 percent had another disability. The large percentage of students with speech/language impairments is most likely due to the influx of young children who enrolled in the district for the first time.

Exhibit 2i. Disabilities of Students Who Qualified for IEPs

	S/L	SLD	OHI	Autism	Other
Qualified Students	46%	32%	10%	8%	4%

667
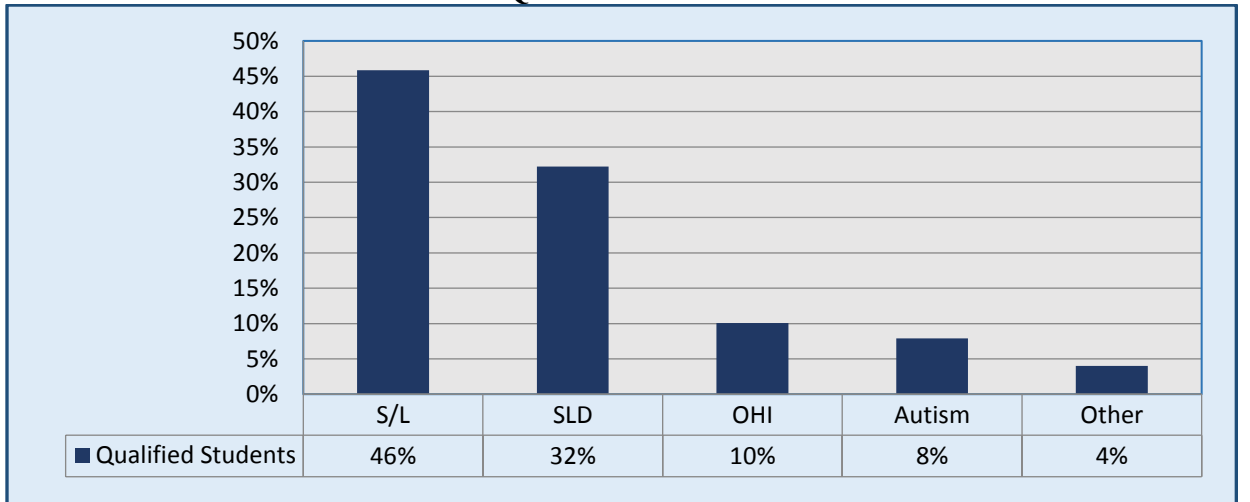
AREAS OF STRENGTH

The following describes areas of strength in the district's identification of students with disabilities.

- *District and State Disability Rates.* SCUSD's 13.9 percent special education rate is somewhat higher than the surveyed district's 13.1 percent rate and the national rate of 12.9 percent, but is lower than the state's 15.2 percentage. The district's students are identified as having a particular disability at proportions similar to state levels.

- *Proportionate Ratio/Ethnic Risk for Special Education.* Data shows that students from all racial/ethnic groups are proportionately identified as needing special education.

- *Progress in Significant Disproportionality for Emotional Disturbance Category.* Using a variety of strategies, including expanding behavioral support services and implementing social/emotional learning, the district effectively addressed the state's 2014-15 finding that African American students were categorized as emotionally disturbed at significantly disproportionate rates. We note, however, that these students continue to be three times more likely than others to be in this category of disability. Although the state does not currently use a risk ratio to measure significant disproportionality, a new U.S. Department of Education regulation requires all states to use this measure by 2018-19.

- *Change in Evaluation Process.* The district reports that psychologists will be trained to evaluate[48] students suspected of having any disability, including emotional disturbance and autism, so that the Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) teams will have more time to provide technical assistance and support.

- *English Learners.* ELLs are 1.48 times more likely than non-ELLs to receive special education. This rate is not considered to be significantly disproportionate.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following areas are opportunities for improvements in the district's identification of students with disabilities.

- *Preschool and Kindergarten Disparate Data.* Unlike other districts with which the Council's team has worked, SCUSD enrolls many more children with IEPs in pre-K (636) than in kindergarten (370). Furthermore, 25 percent of pre-K children have autism, compared to 17 percent of kindergarteners. The reason for this disparity is not readily apparent, but it raises the question as to how the district works to ensure that referrals in pre-school programs are appropriate and are being monitored.

- *Disability by Grade.* The number and percentage of students with IEPs by grade decreases from 14 percent in the seventh grade to 12 percent in the eighth grade, where it remains somewhat consistent through the eleventh grade. The district indicated that these anomalies may be due to an enrollment bubble that is reported to CDE, but further review by the

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[48] The special education department is considering a change in the assessment process from specialized teams to site psychologists being responsible for the full range of assessments. Current stakeholder input is being gathered to guide the department towards a decision for the 2017-2018 school year

Council would be necessary before the team could make an assessment.

- *Significant Racial Disproportionality.* Several racial/ethnic groups are approaching a rate of being twice as likely to be identified for a particular disability, and African American students have the highest risk ratio (1.86) for identification in the "other health impairment" category.

- *Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) Team Practices.* Various concerns were raised about ERMHS team practices, including: serving a gate keeping function for students who may have an emotional disturbance or autism; the relationship between some ERMHS team members and school personnel; students' access to timely evaluations; and school personnel access to ERMHS team expertise.

- *English Learners.* ELLs are 2.37 times more likely than non-ELLs to have an intellectual disability, and 2.12 times more likely to have a specific learning disability. However, the district has only one bilingual Spanish psychologist, and her caseload is not limited to ELLs who speak Spanish. The ELL Master Plan contains requirements for evaluating ELLs, for providing parents written information in their native language, and for providing translation services to parents. This guidance is not always consistent with information in the Special Education Procedural Handbook, which conforms to state requirements. Furthermore, there is a need for greater collaboration between central office ELL staff and psychologists and speech/language pathologists to better inform each other about how to evaluate and address the needs of ELLs requiring special education.

- *Timely Evaluations.* There is a wide disparity between the percentage of students evaluated and qualified to receive special education services to address only a speech/language disability, and those needing special education services based on other disability categories (91 percent and 76 percent, respectively). There was also a large difference between these two groups in the percentage of referred evaluations that were not completed (5 percent and 16 percent, respectively). The data did not show the extent to which the pending evaluations were timely.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. *Special Education Referral, Assessment, and Eligibility.* Improve consistency and appropriateness of referrals, assessments, and eligibility decisions for special education.

   a. *Data Review.* With a multidisciplinary team of individuals inside and outside of the special education department, review Exhibits 2a through 2i and their associated analysis (along with other relevant data), and develop a hypothesis about--

      - Comparatively high number of students with IEPs and with autism in pre-K compared to kindergarten;

      - Pattern of students with IEPs by grade;

      - Likelihood that African American students have an other health impairment compared to other students with IEPs;

      - Likelihood that English learners have an intellectual disability and specific learning disability compared to non-ELLs;

- High percentage (91 percent) of students assessed for speech/language-only services qualify compared to other disabilities (76 percent) who qualify for services; and

- High percentage (16 percent) of pending 2015-16 full evaluations compared to speech/language-only evaluations (5 percent).

b. *Written Expectations.* For any area that the multi-disciplinary team identifies as problematic, review current processes for referral, assessment, and eligibility, and amend those processes to provide more guidance. Ensure that the special education procedural manual and ELL master plan incorporate the additional guidance. Have both documents provide appropriate information regarding translation services for and written notices to parents who are ELL, and ensure that assessments are linguistically and culturally appropriate for ELL students. Specify that personnel who assess students should have access to sufficient and all current assessment tools.

c. *Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) Teams.* With a representative group of special education department personnel and school-based personnel knowledgeable about the ERMHS process, review concerns discussed in this report and revise the process so that the team's expertise can be used more appropriately to support teaching and learning, and schools are more accountable for following written expectations.

d. *Data Analysis and Reports.* Develop user-friendly summary reports for the district's leadership showing data similar to and as appropriate in addition to Exhibits 2a through 2i. As appropriate, share data by area and by school. As part of this process, address the issues that made it difficult for the district to provide the Council team with data aligned with the state's performance plan indicators for special education (i.e., special/residential schools and suspensions), and supplement the data with these reports. Consider how these data are handled and reviewed by district leadership on a regular basis.

e. *Differentiated Professional Learning.* Plan for and provide all relevant district stakeholders with the professional learning they need to implement the recommendations in this section. As part of this process, have special education and ELL department personnel collaborate on the referral and assessment needs of ELL students. (Coordinate this activity with Recommendation 1f.)

f. *Monitoring and Accountability.* Develop a process for ongoing monitoring of expected referral, evaluation, and eligibility practices. Rather than using a traditional record-review model, review files so that school-based personnel are aware of issues and problems, and will better understand the need for follow-up action. Enable staff to observe best practices shown by others and receive coaching that will improve their knowledge and skills. (Coordinate this activity with Recommendation 1g.)

III. Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities

USDE has moved from a compliance-only posture towards special education to a Results-Driven Accountability (RDA) model. This change is based on data showing that the educational outcomes of America's children and youth with disabilities have not improved as expected, despite significant federal efforts to close achievement gaps. The accountability system that existed prior to the new one placed substantial emphasis on procedural compliance, but it often did not consider how requirements affected the learning outcomes of students.[49]

The USDE's Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) vision for RDA was for all accountability components to be aligned to supporting states in improving results for students with disabilities. This approach is consistent with IDEA, which requires that the primary focus of the federal program be on improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities, along with meeting IDEA requirements. RDA fulfills these requirements by focusing both on outcomes for students with disabilities and on the compliance portions of the law.[50]

According to its July 1, 2016 State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR), the state is implementing ED's Results Driven Accountability (RDA) priorities by using all indicators (compliance and performance) to make compliance determinations. California's newly required State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) focuses on the proficiency rates of students with disabilities who are eligible for free and reduced priced meals, foster youth, or English learners.

This section of the report is devoted to results and how SCUSD is supporting teaching and learning for students with IEPs, including young children ages three to five years. This section has the following subsections:

- Education of Young Children Ages Three to Five Years

- Student Achievement on NAEP and Statewide Assessments

- Educational Settings for Students with Disabilities

- Suspension and Expulsion Rates

- Academic Instruction, Interventions, and Supports

- Instruction for Students in SDC Programs

- Professional Learning

Education of Young Children Ages Three to Five Years

This subsection addresses academic outcomes for children with IEPs, their educational settings, and feedback from focus group participants.

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[49] April 5, 2012, RDA Summary, U.S. Department of Education at www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/rda-summary.doc.
[50] *Ibid.*

Achievement Outcomes for Children with IEPs (Three to Five Years of Age)

One of the indicators in California's SPP relates to the achievement of young children with disabilities in three areas: appropriate behavior, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and positive social/emotional skills. In each of these three areas, calculations are made on the percentage of children in the following two areas: (1) children who entered an early childhood program below developmental expectations for their age but who have substantially increased developmentally by age six when they exit a program, and (2) children functioning within expectations by age six or have attained those expectations by the time they exit the program.

For SCUSD students substantially improving their behavior and social/emotional skills and acquiring and using knowledge/skills, the district ranged between 3.3 and 10.7 percentage points below state targets. The district's gap with state targets was larger for students exiting with skills within age expectations, with percentage point differences ranging between 11.9 and 23.4.

Summarized below are the district's performance ratings in three categories for each of the two areas (substantially increased skills and functioning within standards). The percentages of children meeting standards and each of the state's targets are shown in Exhibit 3a.[51]

Substantially Increased Skills

For SCUSD children who entered an early childhood program below developmental expectations for their age but who substantially increased developmentally by age six when they exited the program, the following statistics compare the 2014-15 rates of SCUSD children meeting standards to state targets based on the state's SPP report.

- *Appropriate Behavior to Meet Needs.* 64.2 percent met standards, which was 8.5 percentage points below the state's target.

- *Acquisition/Use of Knowledge/Skills.* 66.7 percent met standards, which was 3.3 percentage points below the state's target.

- *Positive Social/Emotional Skills.* 64.3 percent met standards, which was 10.7 percentage points below the state's target.

Functioning Within Age Expectations

For children who were functioning within expectations by six years of age or had attained those expectations by the time they exited the program, the following data compare the percentages of children in Sacramento meeting the standards in 2014-15 to state performance target percentages for that year. (See Exhibit 3a.)

- *Appropriate Behavior to Meet Needs.* 59.1 percent met standards, which was 23.0 percentage points below the state target.

- *Acquisition/Use of Knowledge/Skills.* 59.1 percent met standards, which was 23.4 percentage points below the state target.

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[51] Retrieved from http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ds/documents/indrptlea1415s.pdf.

- *Positive Social/Emotional Skills.* 67.1 percent met standards, which was 11.9 percentage points below the state target.

Exhibit 3a. 2014-15 Outcomes for District/State Children Three to Five Years of Age with IEPs

	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations
	Appropriate Behavior		Acquisition/Use of Knowledge/Skills		Positive Social/Emotional Skills	
■ District	64.2%	59.1%	66.7%	59.1%	64.3%	67.1%
■ State Target	72.7%	82.1%	70.0%	82.5%	75.0%	79.0%
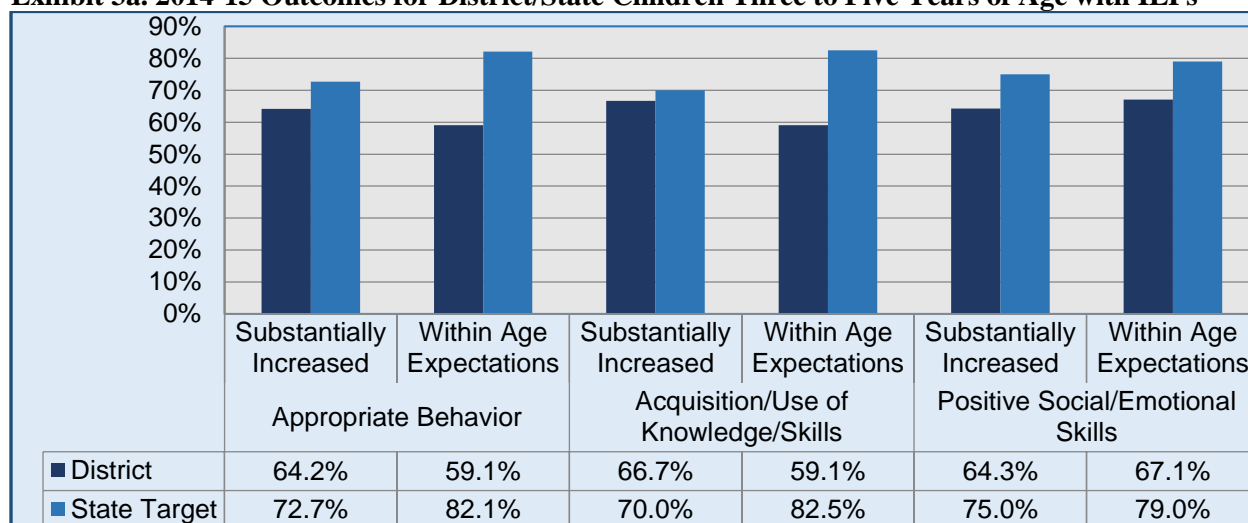
Educational Settings of Young Children Three to Five Years of Age

…[M]ost 3- to 5-year-olds with disabilities learn best when they attend preschools alongside their age-mates without disabilities to the greatest extent possible. These settings provide both language and behavioral models that assist in children's development and help all children learn to be productively engaged with diverse peers.[52]

Studies have shown that when children with disabilities are included in the regular classroom setting, they demonstrate higher levels of social play, are more likely to initiate activities, and show substantial gains in key skills—cognitive skills, motor skills, and self-help skills. Participating in activities with typically developing peers allows children with disabilities to learn through modeling, and this learning helps them prepare for the real world. Researchers have found that typically developing children in inclusive classrooms are better able to accept differences and are more likely to see their classmates achieving despite their disabilities. They are also more aware of the needs of others.[53]

The importance of inclusive education is underscored by a federal requirement, which requires that the extent to which young children (three to five years of age) receive the majority of their services in regular early childhood programs, i.e., inclusively or in separate settings, be included as a state performance-plan indicator.

[52] California's Statewide Task Force on Special Education, One System: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students, March 2015, retrieved from http://www.smcoe.org/assets/files/about-smcoe/superintendents-office/statewide-special-education-task-force/Task%20Force%20Report%205.18.15.pdf.
[53] Ronnie W. Jeter, The Benefits of Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs at http://www.turben.com/article/83/274/The-Benefits-of-Inclusion-in-Early-Childhood-Programs

District Educational Setting Rates

Exhibit 3b shows 2015-16 SCUSD percentages of three- to five-year-old children with disabilities who were educated in various educational settings. One educational setting, in general education less than 80 percent to 40 percent of the time, was not included because the overall figure was only one percent.

- *General Education At Least 80 Percent of the Time.* Overall, 60 percent of all children were educated inclusively with their typical peers. The 80 percent of all children with speech/language impairments educated in this setting was the highest figure for all disability areas.

- *General Education Less Than 40 Percent of the Time.* Some 33 percent of all children were educated most of the day in separate classes apart from their typical peers. By comparison, 75 percent of all students with autism and 67 percent of students representing seven different disability areas were educated in this setting.

- *Separate Schools.* Some 7 percent of all children were educated in a separate school. This figure was much higher (44 percent) for students with autism.

Exhibit 3b. 2015-16 Percentage of Young Children with IEPs (Ages 3 to 5) by Educational Setting

	All Children	S/L	Autism	Other
■ General Ed ≥ 80%	60%	80%	25%	28%
■ General Ed Less than 40%	33%	20%	75%	67%
■ Separate School	7%	0%	44%	3%
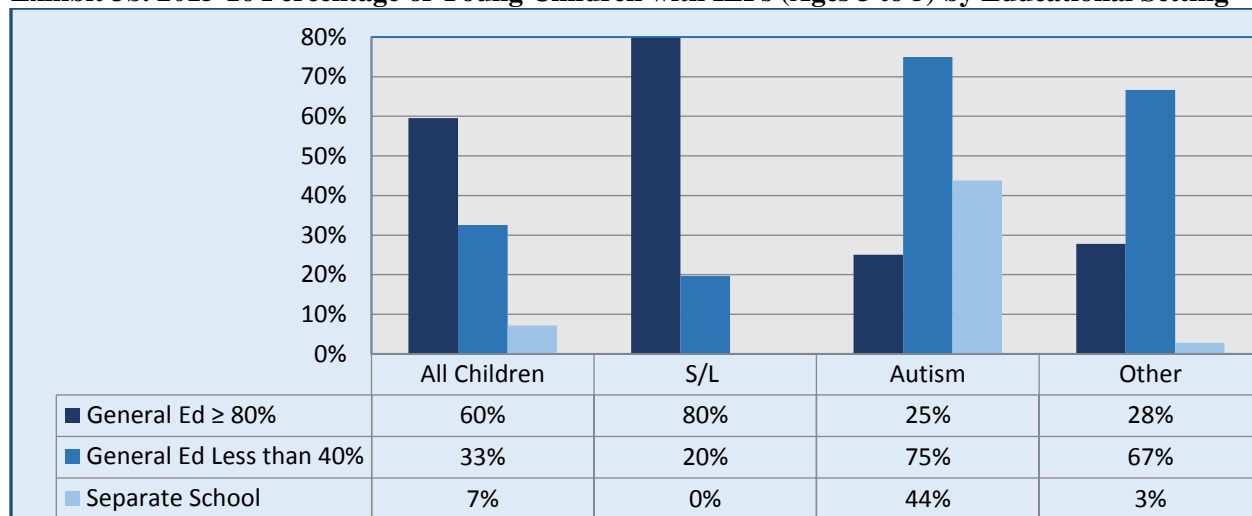
Student Achievement on the NAEP and Statewide Assessments for Grades 3-12

Beginning in 2015, USDE developed a determination rating based on the results driven accountability framework described earlier. Two matrices were used for this purpose, with 50 percent of the ratings based on results and 50 percent based on compliance.[54] The results component are calculated using the following indicators:

- Fourth/eighth graders participating in regular statewide assessments for reading and math

- Fourth/eighth graders scoring at or above basic in reading and math on the National

[54] For a full explanation of ED's methodology, see How the Department Made Determinations under Section 616(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2015: Part B
http://www2.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/partbspap/2015/2015-part-b-how-determinations-made.pdf

Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

- Fourth/eighth graders included in NAEP testing for reading and math

- Students exiting school by graduating with a regular high school diploma

- Students exiting school by dropping out

The information in this subsection discusses the achievement of California students on NAEP, as well as the performance of SCUSD students with disabilities on statewide assessments. In addition, graduation and dropout rates are assessed.

NAEP Achievement Rates for Fourth, Eighth, and Twelfth Grade Students with IEPs

In partnership with the National Assessment Governing Board and the Council of the Great City Schools, the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) was created in 2002 to support improvements in student achievement in the nation's large urban districts. In 2015, 21 urban school districts voluntarily participated in TUDA and are able to track the achievement of their students by subgroup on a single comparable assessment. SCUSD does not participate in TUDA, so district achievement rates on NAEP are not available, but comparing state and national performance for students with disabilities provides a useful benchmark for SCUSD.[55]

Exhibit 3c compares national and California data for students with disabilities who scored at or above basic levels on NAEP in reading and in math at grades four and eight. State data are not yet available for grade 12.

Exhibit 3c. Percentage of Students with IEPs at Basic/Above on NAEP Reading and Math

	Reading			Math		
	4th Grade	8th Grade	12th Grade	4th Grade	8th Grade	12th grade
California	40%	27%		20%	23%	
Nation (Public)	55%	32%	37%	33%	36%	23%
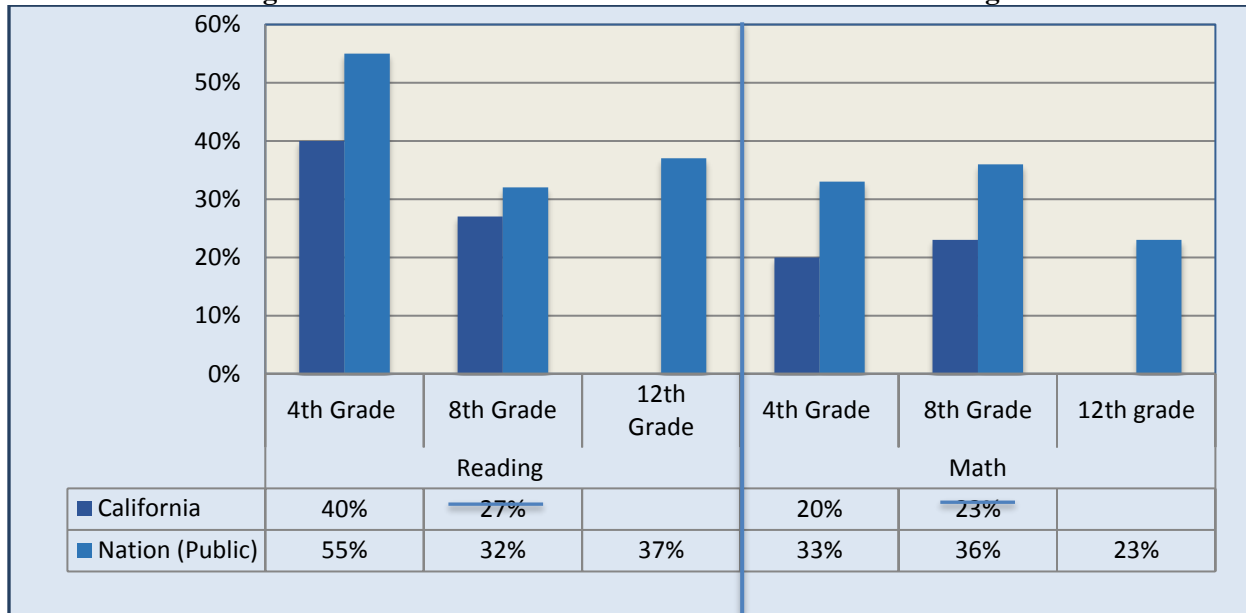
In general, achievement rates on NAEP were lower in California among fourth graders in reading than nationwide.

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[55] The Nation's Report Card, retrieved from http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/.

675

Reading. In California, the percentage of students with disabilities scoring at levels basic/above in reading was 15 percentage points below the national average in fourth grade and 5 percentage points below in eighth grade.

- ***4th Grade.*** The percentage scoring basic/above was 40 percent at the state level and 55 percent at the national level.

- ***8th Grade.*** The percentage scoring basic/above was 27 percent at the state level and 32 percent at the national level.

- ***12th Grade.*** At the national level, 37 percent of students with disabilities scored at the basic/above level.

Math. In California, the percentages of students with disabilities scoring at basic/above levels in both fourth and eighth grades were 13 percentage points below the nation's public school peers.

- ***4th Grade.*** In the state, 20 percent of students with disabilities scored at basic/above levels; the national percentage was 33 percent.

- ***8th Grade.*** In the state, 23 percent of students with disabilities scored at basic/above levels; the national percentage was 36 percent.

- ***12th Grade.*** Only 23 percent of the nation's students scored at the basic/above level.

Statewide Assessments[56]

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System is based on the Smarter Balanced Assessments. Optional interim assessments and a digital library with tools and practices are available to help teachers use formative assessments to improve teaching and learning in all grades.

Statewide English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Assessments

Exhibit 3d shows district and state percentages of students with and without disabilities who scored proficient on statewide ELA and math assessments in 2014-15. In both subject areas, a larger percentage of California students were proficient than were district students with and without IEPs. The achievement gaps were greater in ELA than math.

- ***English Language Arts.*** Some 12.3 percent of the district's students with IEPs were proficient in ELA, which was 2.5 percentage points below the state figure. There was a 28.4 percentage point achievement gap between the district's students with and without IEPs. The state gap was slightly higher (28.7 percentage points).

- ***Math.*** A smaller 10.7 percent of the district's students with IEPs were proficient in math, which was 1.3 percentage points below the state figure. Some 22.1 percentage points separated the achievement of students with and without IEPs; the state gap was slightly smaller (21.7 percentage points).

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[56] Achievement data was not provided by SCUSD. Information for this section was retrieved from the CDE website. The district's data was retrieved from http://ayp.cde.ca.gov/reports/Acnt2015/2015APRDstAYPReport.aspx?cYear=&allCds=3467439&cChoice=AYP14b and the state data was retrieved from http://ayp.cde.ca.gov/reports/acnt2015/2015APRStAYPReport.aspx.

Exhibit 3d. ELA and Math: Proficient Percentages of State/District Students with/ without IEPs

	District		State	
	Students with IEPs	Students without IEPs	Students with IEPs	Students without IEPs
■ ELA	12.3%	40.7%	14.8%	43.5%
■ Math	10.7%	32.8%	12.0%	33.7%
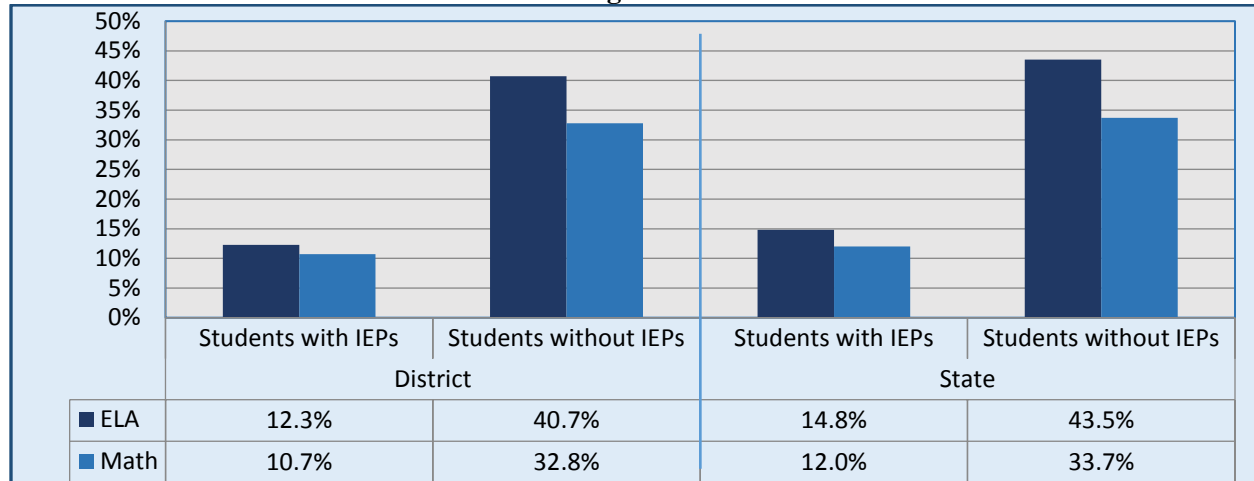
Educational Settings for Students with Disabilities

Research has consistently shown a positive relationship between effective and inclusive instruction and better outcomes for students with disabilities, including higher academic performance, higher likelihood of employment, higher participation rates in postsecondary education, and greater integration into the community. The 10-year National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS 2) described the characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of a nationally representative sample of more than 11,000 youth ages 13 through 16 who were receiving special education services in grade seven or above when the study began in 2001. The study found that, while more time spent in general education classrooms was associated with lower *grades* for students with disabilities compared to their non-disabled peers, students who spent more time in general settings were closer to grade level on standardized math and language *tests* than were students with disabilities who spent more time in separate settings.[57] Research also shows that including students with a range of disabilities in general education classes does not affect the achievement of their non-disabled peers.[58]

Similar results were found in a comprehensive study of school districts in Massachusetts. Students with disabilities who were in full-inclusion settings (spending 80 percent or more of the school day in general education classrooms) appeared to outperform similar students who were not included to the same extent in general education classrooms with their non-disabled peers. On average, these students earned higher scores on the statewide assessment (MCAS), graduated high school at higher rates, and were more likely to remain in their local school districts longer than students who were educated in substantially separate placements (spending less than 40

[57] Review of Special Education in the Houston Independent School District, Thomas Hehir & Associates Boston, Massachusetts, page 25, retrieved at
http://www.houstonisd.org/cms/lib2/TX01001591/Centricity/Domain/7946/HISD__Special_Education_Report_2011_Final.pdf**.**
[58] See A. Kalambouka, P. Farrell, A. Dyson, & I. Kaplan. (2007, December). The impact of placing pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools on the achievement of their peers. *Educational Research, 49*(4), 365–382.

percent of the day in a general education classroom). These findings were consistent across the elementary, middle, and high school years, as well as across subject areas.[59]

The SPP tracks students educated in one of three educational settings and sets targets for each: (1) time in general education 80 percent or more of the day, (2) time in general education less than 40 percent of the day, i.e., in separate classes, or (3) time in separate schools. States are expected to collect data for a fourth educational setting (in general education between 79 percent and 40 percent of the time), but the SPP indicator does not monitor this setting.

The information below describes SCUSD's reporting of these data, and provides data for district educational setting rates compared to state and national averages, rates by grade, by race/ethnicity, and by ELL status.

Comparison of Rates for District, State, and Nation

Data in Exhibit 3e show the composition of SCUSD's students with disabilities in the four educational settings, which are based on indicators established by the USDOE. Data compare SCUSD with California and national rates.[60]

Exhibit 3e. Percentage of Students by Educational Setting

	General Ed ≥ 80%	General Ed 79%-40%	General Ed < 40%	Separate School
District	60%	11%	23%	6.0%
State	54%	20%	22%	3.4%
Nation	61%	18%	14%	3.3%
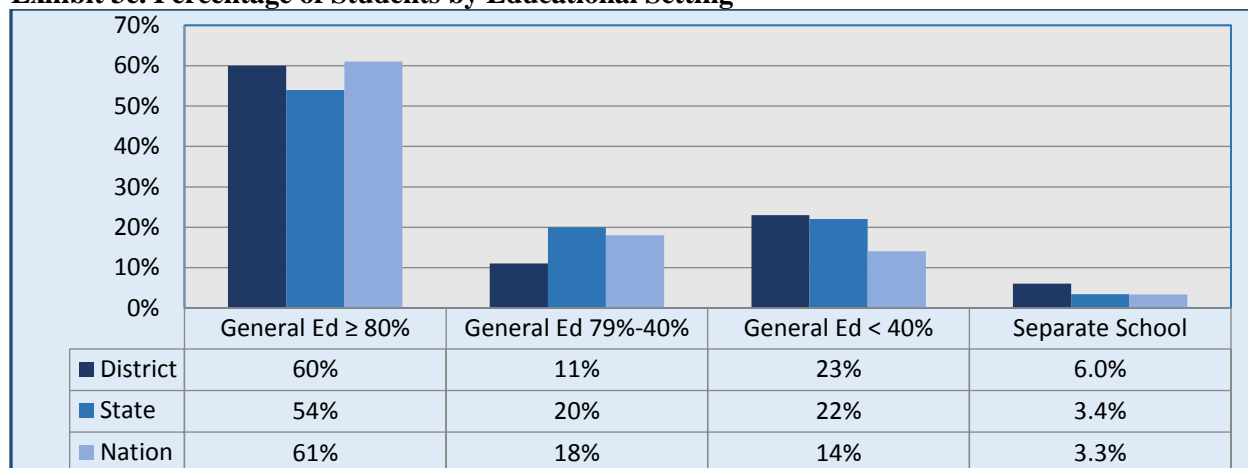
- ***In General Education at Least 80 Percent of the Time.*** The district's 60 percent rate for students in this inclusive setting was 6 percentage points higher than the state's rate and slightly below (1 percentage point) the nation's rate.

- ***In General Education Between 40 and 79 percent of the Time.*** The district's 11 percent rate for this setting was lower than state and national rates (9 points and 7 points lower, respectively).

- ***In General Education Less than 40 Percent of the Time.*** Generally considered to be a self-

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[59] Thomas Hehir & Associates (2014, August) Review of Special Education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: A Synthesis Report, Boston, Massachusetts, retrieved at http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/hehir/2014-09synthesis.pdf

[60] The data are 2015-16 school year numbers that the district provided to the Council team, 2012-13 state and national data was retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/partbspap/2013/tn-acc-stateprofile-11-12.pdf.

contained special education class setting, the district's 23 percent rate was higher than state and national rates (1 point and 9 points lower, respectively).

- *Separate Schools.* The district's 6.0 percent of students with disabilities who attended separate schools, including residential schools (both in and out of the district) was 2.6 percentage points higher than the state level and 2.7 percentage points higher than the national level.

Educational Setting Rates by Grade

As shown by Exhibit 3f, as the grades progress, larger percentages of district students are educated in separate schools, while smaller percentages of students are educated inclusively and in self-contained placements (less than 40 percent in general education).

Exhibit 3f. Percentage of Students by Grade and by Educational Setting

	Pre K	Kdg.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Special School	5%	6%	5%	3%	5%	3%	4%	5%	6%	8%	6%	6%	7%	32%
General Ed < 40%	13%	25%	23%	24%	20%	24%	26%	26%	22%	21%	19%	22%	18%	24%
General Ed 79%-40%	0%	1%	3%	4%	8%	7%	7%	6%	17%	18%	19%	21%	23%	13%
General Ed ≥ 80%	82%	67%	69%	69%	67%	67%	62%	63%	55%	53%	56%	51%	52%	30%
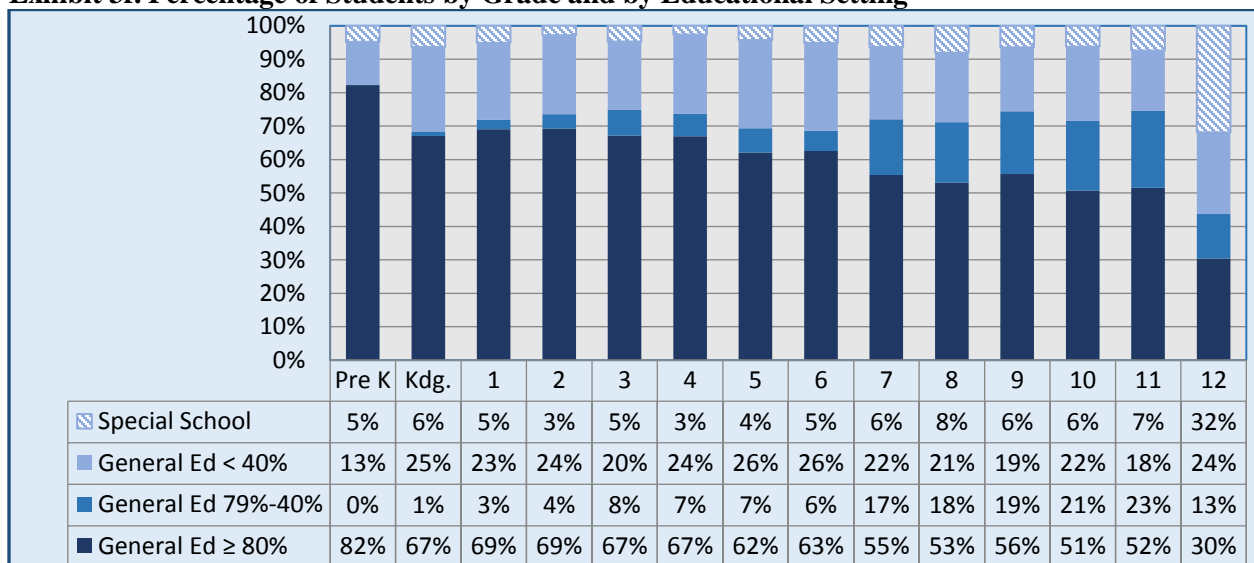
- *In General Education at Least 80 Percent of the Time.* Between kindergarten and fifth grade, percentages of students with IEPs in this setting ranged from 67 percent to 62 percent, but fell in sixth (63 percent), seventh (55 percent), and eighth grades (53 percent). At the high school level, the figures ranged between 56 percent (ninth grade) to 52 percent (eleventh grade).

- *In General Education Between 40 and 79 percent of the Time*. Between kindergarten and sixth grade, percentages ranged from 1 percent (kindergarten) to 8 percent (third grade). The rates increased in seventh (17 percent) and eighth grade (18 percent), and again in high school, from ninth grade (19 percent) through eleventh grade (23 percent).

- *In General Education Less than 40 Percent of the Time.* At the elementary level, the percentages for this self-contained setting ranged between 20 percent (third grade) and 26 percent (sixth grade). The rates decreased steadily beginning at seventh grade (22 percent) through eleventh grade (23 percent) as they increased in two other educational settings (general education between 79 percent and 40 percent, and special schools).

- *Separate Schools.* The percentages of students with disabilities in this most restrictive setting

fluctuated with no apparent pattern with a low of 3 percent (second and fourth grades) and high of 8 percent (eighth grade). The 32 percent rate for twelfth graders is related to students who remain in school past the age of 18 (when most students graduate) to receive postsecondary transition services and activities.

Educational Setting Rates by Most Common Disability Areas

Exhibit 3g and 3h show the percentages of students in SCUSD, the nation, and the state by six major disability areas and by educational setting. In every category of disability, the district educates students in more restrictive environments at higher rates than the nation, and, in most areas, higher than the state.

Emotional Disturbance, Autism, and Intellectual Disabilities

Exhibit 3g. Percentage of Students by ED, Autism and ID, and by Educational Setting

	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation
	Emotional Disturbance			Autism			Intellectual Disability		
Separate School	50%	23%	15%	20%	7%	6%	12%	9%	1%
General Ed < 40%	27%	32%	19%	39%	42%	34%	64%	70%	53%
General Ed 79%-40%	14%	17%	18%	7%	17%	19%	13%	15%	28%
General Ed ≥ 80%	10%	28%	48%	34%	34%	42%	10%	6%	18%
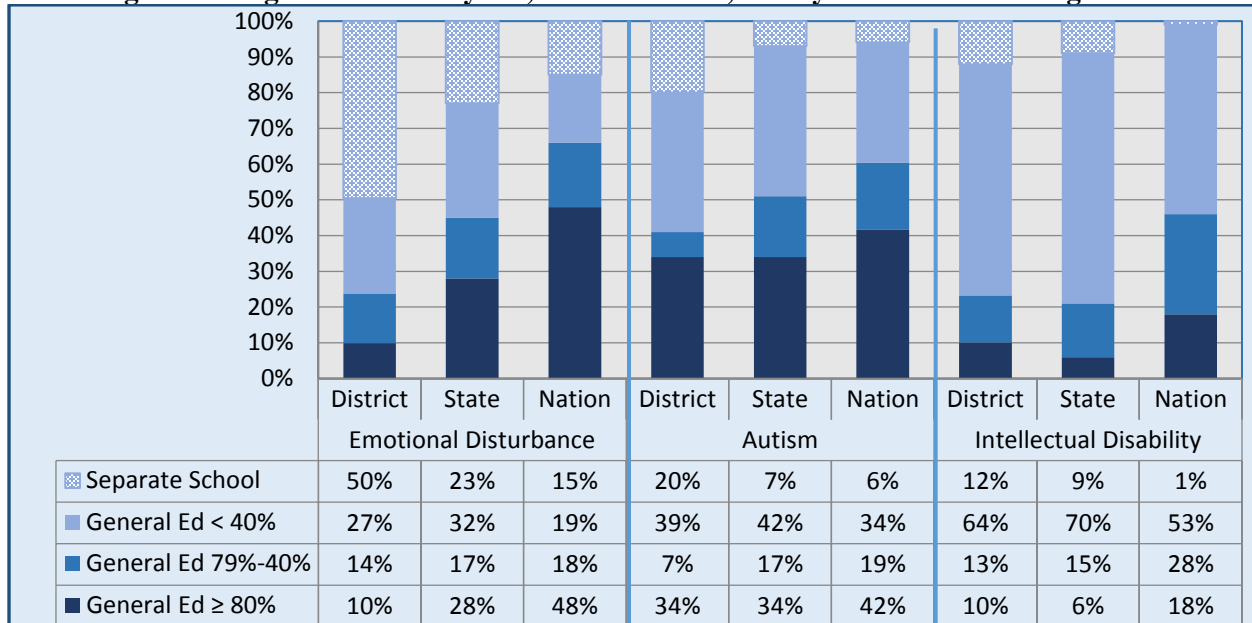
- **ED.** In the area of emotional disturbance, the district's figure of 50 percent of students educated in separate schools was 35 percentage points higher than the nation's and 27 points higher than the state's. Further, for students educated in general education at least 80 percent of the time, the district's figure of 10 percent was lower than the nation's 48 percent and the state's 28 percent.

- **Autism.** In the area of autism, the district's figure of 20 percent of students educated in separate schools was 14 percentage points higher than the nation's and 13 points higher than the state's.

- **ID.** In the area of intellectual disability, the district's figure of 64 percent of students in self-contained settings less than 40 percent of the time was 11 percentage points higher than the nation's but seven points lower than the state's. The district's figure of 12 percent of ID students educated in separate schools was 11 percentage points higher than the nation's and three points higher than the state's.

Exhibit 3h. Percentage of Students by SLD, OHI and SLI, and by Educational Setting

	Specific Learning Disability			Other Health Impairment			Speech/Language Impairment		
	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation
▦ Separate School	0%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
▨ General Ed < 40%	19%	15%	6%	20%	17%	10%	11%	9%	4%
▨ General Ed 79%-40%	15%	28%	23%	10%	22%	21%	3%	6%	5%
▪ General Ed ≥ 80%	66%	57%	70%	67%	59%	67%	86%	84%	90%
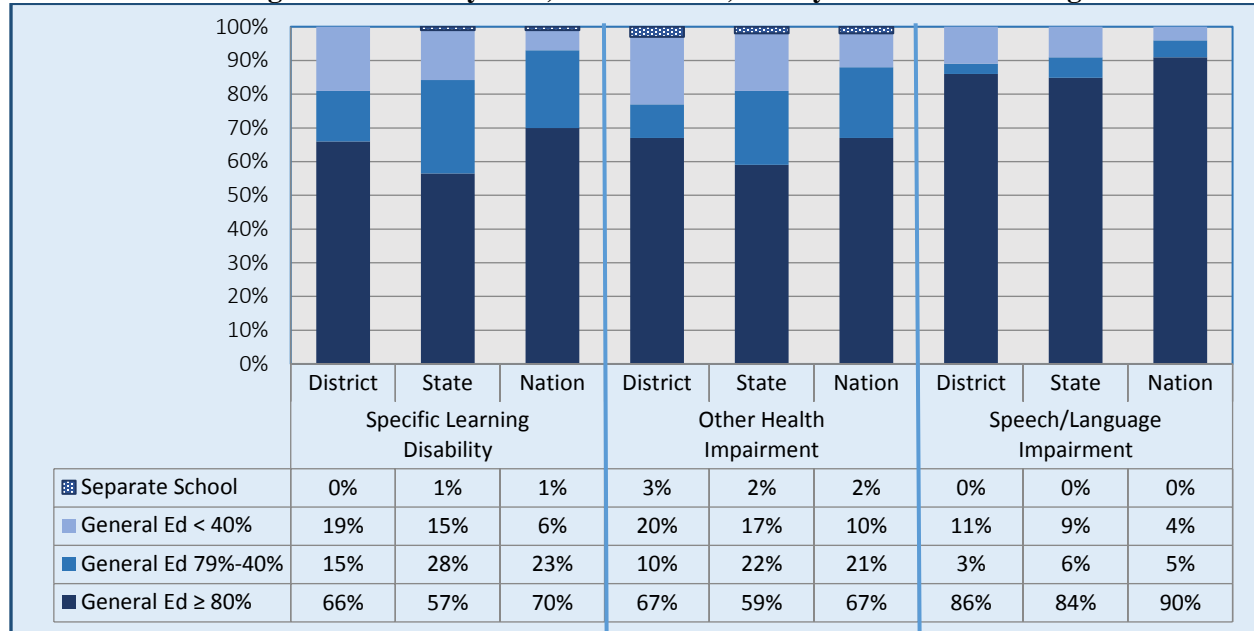
- **SLD.** Nineteen percent of district students with a specific learning disability were educated in general education settings less than 40% of the time—13 percentage points higher than the nation's and 4 points higher than the state's.

- **OHI.** Twenty percent of district students with other health impairments were educated in general education settings less than 40% of the time—10 percentage points higher than the nation's and 3 points higher than the state's. For separate schools, the district's 3 percent figure is higher than the nation and state, both at 2 percent.

- **SLI.** Eleven percent of district students with a speech/language impairment were educated in general education settings less than 40% of the time—7 percentage points higher than the nation's and 2 points higher than the state's.

Educational Setting Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Using a risk ratio, Exhibit 3i shows the likelihood that students from each racial/ethnic group will be educated in the designated educational settings compared to students in all other racial/ethnic groups. A risk ratio of "1" reflects no risk. Higher numbers reflect greater risk or likelihood of placement. These data show that the risk for students from any racial/ethnic group of being placed in a specific educational setting was close to "2," a level that should raise concerns. The highest area of risk was for African American students, who were 1.57 times more likely than other students to be educated in separate schools.

Exhibit 3i. SCUSD Educational Setting Risk Ratios

	Hispanic	African American	White	Asian	Multiracial	Native American
■ General Ed ≥ 80%	1.01	0.90	1.06	1.05	1.05	0.87
■ General Ed 79%-40%	0.98	1.24	0.85	0.85	1.08	
■ General Ed < 40%	1.08	1.02	0.85	1.01	0.93	1.01
▓ Special School	0.64	1.57	1.28	0.80	0.67	
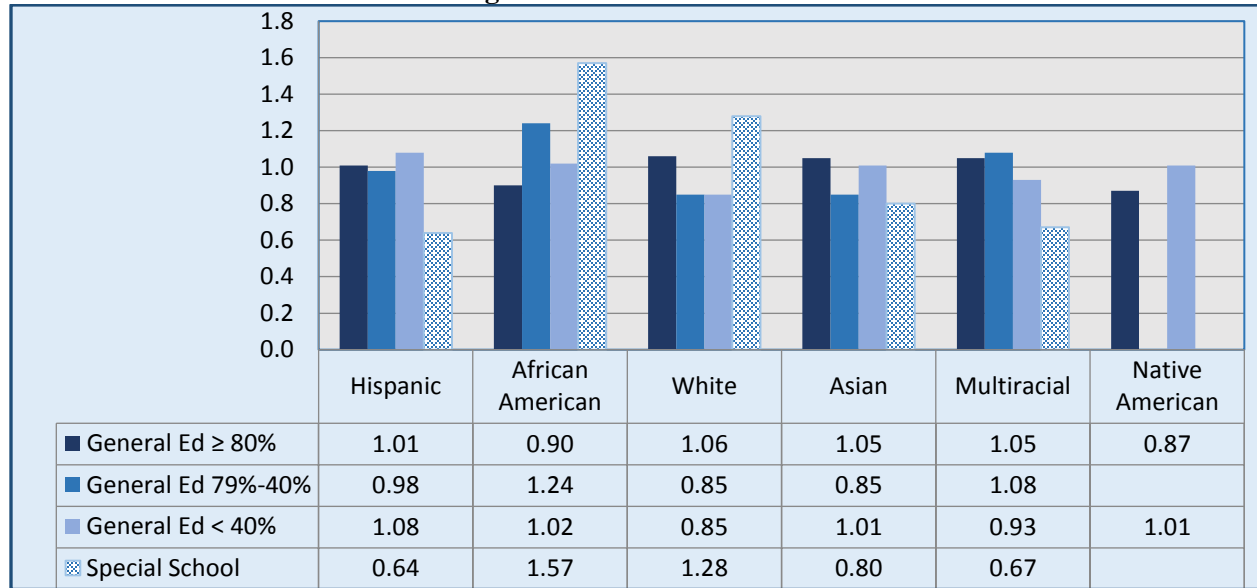
Educational Setting Rates for ELLs

Except for the separate school setting, SCUSD students who were English learners were educated in more restrictive settings more frequently than were students who were not ELLs. (See Exhibit 3j.) The differences, however, were not significant. Some 56 percent of ELLs with IEPs, compared to 62 percent of non-ELLs, were educated in *least* restrictive settings (general education at least 80 percent of the time), and 4 percent of ELLs compared to 6 percent of non-ELs were educated in the *most* restrictive setting (special schools). A larger percent of ELLs (28 percent), compared to non-ELLs (23 percent), were educated in general education less than 40 percent of the time.

Exhibit 3j. Educational Setting Rates for District ELLs/Non-ELLs and ELs in the Nation/State

	General Ed ≥ 80%	General Ed 79%-40%	General Ed < 40%	Special School
■ EL	56%	13%	28%	4%
■ Not EL	62%	10%	23%	6%
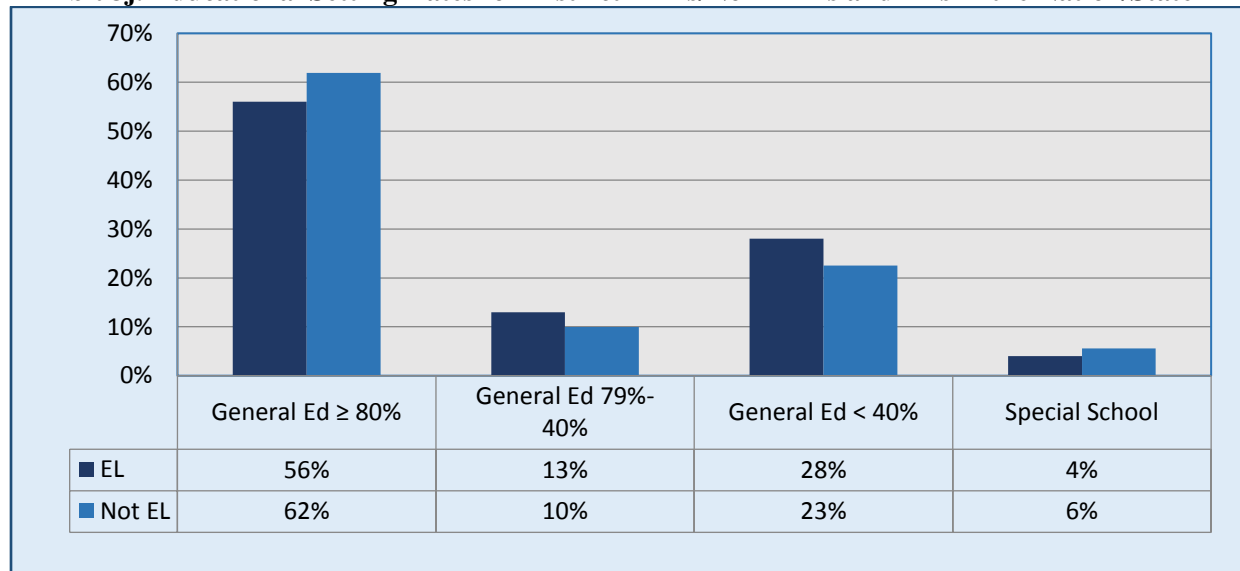
Suspension and Expulsion Rates

Another critical issue that affects the achievement of students with disabilities is the extent to which they are suspended. Indicator 4 of the state performance plan measures out-of-suspensions of more than 10 days for students with and without IEPs, as well as suspensions for students with IEPs by race/ethnicity. Under the newly released USDOE guidelines, significant disproportionality is to be measured (using a risk ratio and alternate risk ratio for small cell numbers) for:

- Out of school suspensions (OSS) of 1-10 days, and more than 10 days;
- In-school suspensions (ISS) of 1-10 days, and more than 10 days;
- Removals to an interim alternative education setting; and
- Removals by a hearing officer.

Out-of-School Suspensions

The information below describes the district's OSSs by grade and by race/ethnicity for students with and without IEPs for periods of 1-10 days and more than 10 days. In every category, students with IEPs were suspended at rates that were higher than for students without IEPs, and the rates increased significantly at seventh grade. Also, African American students with IEPs had suspension rates and risks of suspension far higher than other students with IEPs.

OSSs for 1-10 Days by Grade

Exhibit 3k shows the percentage of students with and without IEPs receiving an out-of-school suspension (OSS) for 1 to 10 days by grade. Overall, 3.2 percent of students with IEPs were suspended, compared to 1.2 percent of students without IEPs. Students with IEPs were 2.5 times more likely than those without IEPs to be suspended. In each grade, students with IEPs were suspended at rates that were much higher than students without IEPs. The suspension rates for both sets of students increased significantly beginning at the seventh grade, when 8.0 percent (from 2.7 percent) of students with IEPs were suspended, compared to 2.5 percent (from 1.1 percent) of those without IEPs.

Exhibit 3k. Percentage of OSS for Students with IEPs and without IEPs (1-10 Days)

	K	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	All
Students with IEPs	0.3%	0.7%	0.8%	1.2%	1.1%	2.3%	2.7%	8.0%	6.1%	7.8%	4.4%	4.9%	2.8%	3.2%
Students without IEPs	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%	1.1%	2.5%	2.5%	3.1%	1.9%	1.2%	0.5%	1.2%
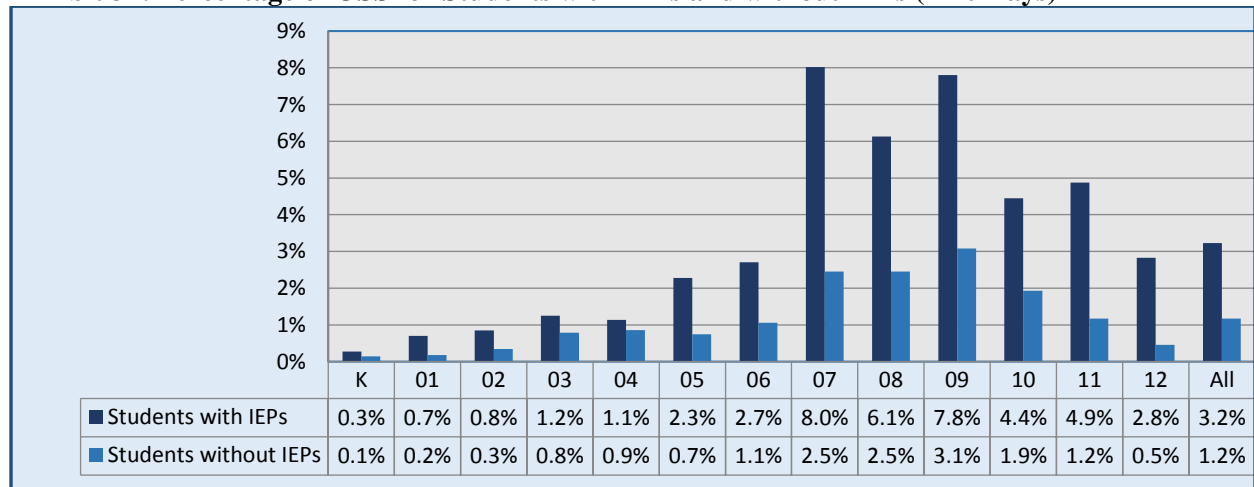
OSSs for More than 10 Days by Grade

As shown on Exhibit 3l, OSSs of more than 10 days were received by 0.9 percent of all students with IEPs, compared to 0.1 percent of students without IEPs, meaning that students with IEPs were 5.05 times more likely than those without IEPs to be suspended for this period of time. The numbers of suspensions escalated for students with IEPs beginning in the seventh grade, when the percentage increased to 2.5 percent (from 0.2 percent) of students with IEPs receiving OSSs, while the figure for those without IEPs only increased to 0.2 percent (from 0.1 percent).

Exhibit 3l. Percentage of OSS for Students with IEPs/without IEPs (Over 10 Days)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Students with IEPs	0%	0%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	2.5%	0.9%	2.4%	1.9%	1.8%	1.4%	0.9%
Students without IEPs	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
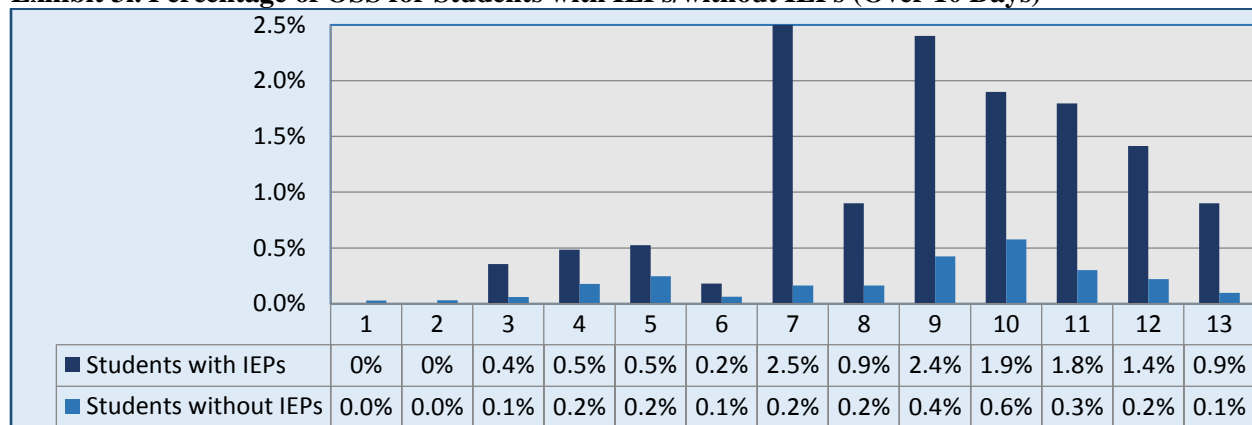
OSSs for 1-10 Days by Race/Ethnicity

Exhibit 3m shows that 17.4 percent of African American students with IEPs received an OSS for 1-10 days, compared to 9.0 percent of African American students without IEPs. African American students with IEPs were 2.8 times more likely than all other students with IEPs to receive an OSS. This disparity was much higher than for any other racial/ethnic group.[61]

Exhibit 3m. Percentage of OSS by Race/Ethnicity for Students with IEPs/without IEPs (1-10 Days)

	AA	Hispanic	White	Asian	Multiple	Native American
Students with IEPs	17.4%	6.8%	6.2%	3.2%	8.4%	9.3%
Students without IEPs	9.0%	3.6%	2.0%	1.2%	3.8%	7.3%
IEP Risk Ratio	2.8	0.70	0.68	0.34	0.98	
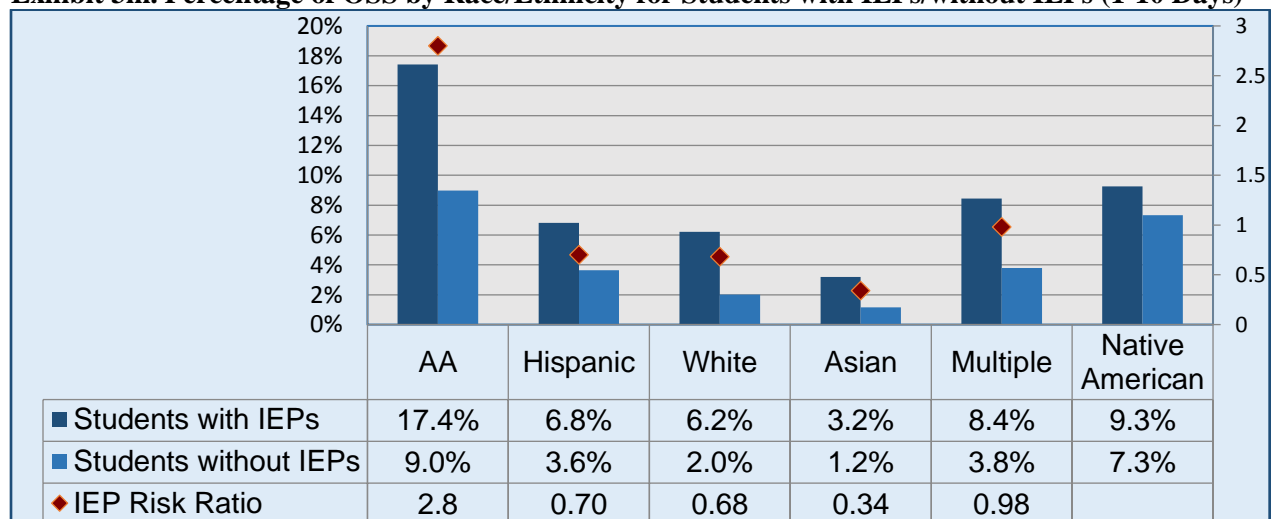
[61] A risk ratio was not calculated for the Native American group because the numbers were too small.

OSSs for More than 10 Days by Race/Ethnicity

In 2014-15, SCUSD was not found by the California Department of Education to have disproportionately high suspension rates based on race or ethnicity. Under the California state performance plan, school districts have disproportionate suspensions when students (three through 21 years of age) from a given racial or ethnic group are suspended out-of-school for more than 10 days at a rate that is higher than the state's for all students.

A denominator of at least 20 and numerator of at least two are required to perform this calculation for a district. According to the state's 2014-15 Special Education Annual Performance Report, the statewide average for suspensions for more than 10 days was 2.43 percent.

As shown by Exhibit 3n, which is based on data provided by SCUSD, 2.05 percent of African American students with IEPs and 0.71 percent of Hispanic students with IEPs were suspended for more than 10 days.[62] African American students with IEPs were 3.99 times more likely to receive an OSS for this period of time, compared to all other students with IEPs. This large risk ratio is large and disconcerting.

Exhibit 3n. Percentage of OSS and Risk Ratios for African American and Hispanic Students (More than 10 Days)

	AA	Hispanic
■ Students with IEPs	2.05%	0.71%
■ Students without IEPs	0.74%	0.10%
◆ IEP Risk Ratio	3.99	0.77
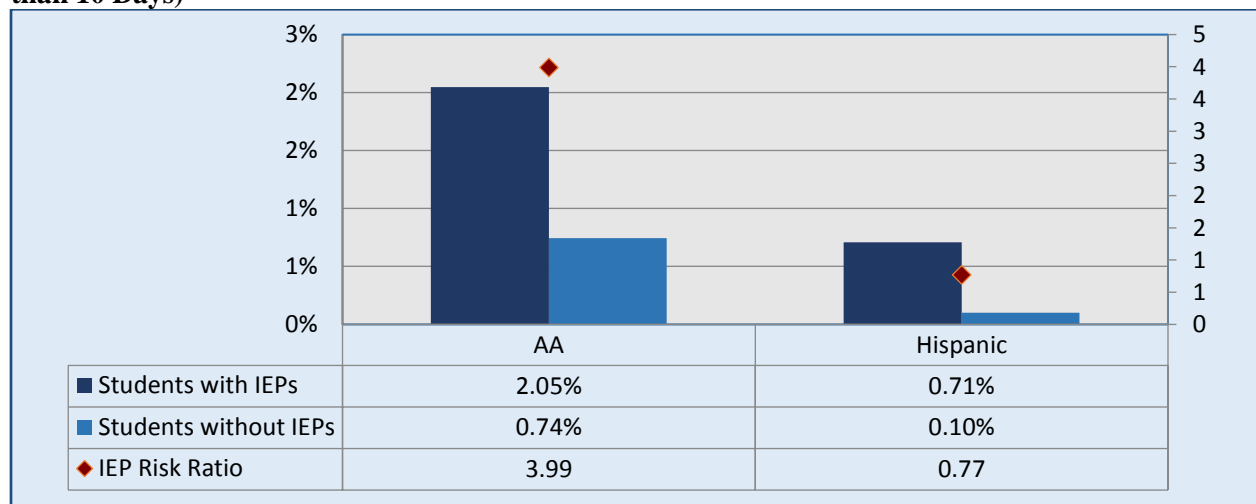
In School Suspensions

The ISS patterns by grade and race/ethnicity mirror the OSS patterns described above.

ISSs for 1-10 Days by Grade

Exhibit 3o shows that 3.2 percent of all students with IEPs received ISSs for 1-10 days, compared to 1.2 percent of students without IEPs. Students with IEPs were 2.76 times more likely than those without IEPs to receive an ISS. At seventh grade, the percentage of ISSs increases significantly, from 2.7 percent to 8.0 percent of students with IEPs suspended for 1-10 days. The percentage of students without IEPs receiving an ISS increased from 1.1 percent to 2.5

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[62] The numbers of students from other racial/ethnic groups did not meet the minimum numbers necessary to report.

percent. The pattern was similar to that of OSSs for both groups of students reported above. Only one student with an IEP received an ISS for more than 10 days.

Exhibit 3o. Percentage of ISS for Students with IEPs/without IEPs (1-10 Days)

	K	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	All
■ Students with IEPs	0.3%	0.7%	0.8%	1.2%	1.1%	2.3%	2.7%	8.0%	6.1%	7.8%	4.4%	4.9%	2.8%	3.2%
■ Students without IEPs	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%	1.1%	2.5%	2.5%	3.1%	1.9%	1.2%	0.5%	1.2%
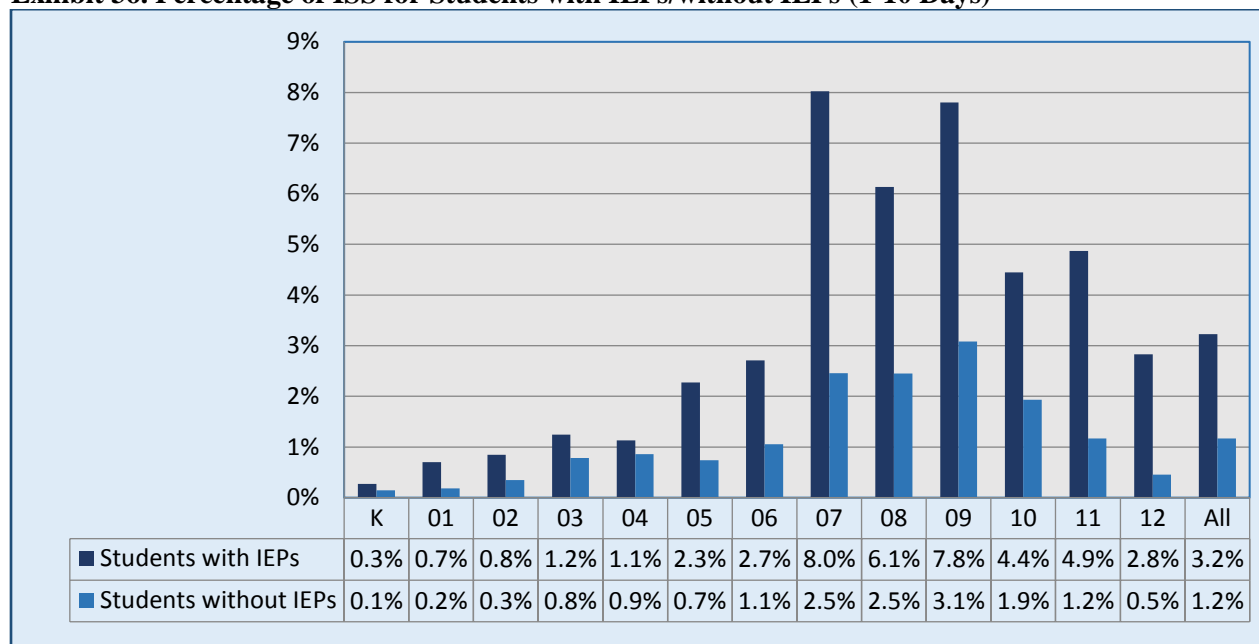
Collective Bargaining Agreement Provision on Safety Conditions

Article 11 of the SCTA and SCUSD Collective Bargaining Agreement has a provision that states, "[b]ehavior which is inimical to a proper and positive learning environment shall be cause for a removal from a classroom." In these circumstances, the teacher must notify the administrator/designed to provide for the student's continuous supervision. (11.1.1) Given the proportionately larger percentages of in-school and out-of-school suspensions received by students with IEPs, including OSSs of more than 10 days, the application of this provision merits scrutiny. Further, as applied to students with disabilities, there could be circumstances when an unconditional removal of a student would not be consistent with relevant IDEA procedures.

Academic Instruction, Intervention, and Supports

A fundamental goal of the common core state standards (CCSS) was to create a culture of high expectations for all students. In a statement on the application of the common core to students with disabilities, the CCSS website includes a statement that reinforces its inclusionary intent:

> Students with disabilities … must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers." These common standards provide historic opportunity to

improve access to rigorous academic content standards for students with disabilities.[63]

The statement emphasizes the supports and accommodations students with disabilities need in order to meet high academic standards and fully demonstrate their conceptual and procedural knowledge and skills in ELA (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and mathematics. These supports and accommodations should ensure that students have full access to the common core's content and allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. These expectations for students with disabilities include the following elements:

- *Instruction and related services* designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities and enable them to access the general education curriculum.

- *Teachers and specialized instructional support personnel* who are prepared and qualified to deliver high-quality, evidence-based, and individualized instruction and support.

- *Instructional supports for learning* that are based on the principles of universal design for learning (UDL), which foster student engagement by presenting information in multiple ways and allowing diverse avenues of action and expression.[64]

- *Instructional accommodations* that reflect changes in materials (e.g., assistive technology) or procedures that do not change or dilute the standards but allow students to learn within the CCSS framework.

The general education curriculum refers to the full range of courses, activities, lessons, and materials routinely used by the general population of a school. Students with disabilities have access to this curriculum when they are actively engaged in learning the content and skills that are being taught to all students. To participate with success in the general curriculum, a student with a disability may need additional supports and services, such as instructional supports for learning, instructional accommodations, scaffolding, assistive technology, and services. Through a universal design for learning (UDL) approach, information is presented in multiple ways, allowing diverse avenues of learning and expression.[65]

When special educators teach students from multiple grades in one self-contained class, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for them to focus on each grade's content standards with any depth or effectiveness. When schools are organized in an inclusive manner, they are better able to support students with various disabilities and enable them to attend the school they would otherwise attend if not disabled, that is, their home school. This model enables more students with disabilities to attend school in their community, supports a more natural proportion of

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[63] Retrieved at http://www.corestandards.org/assets/application-to-students-with-disabilities.pdf.

[64] UDL is defined as "a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that (a) provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and (b) reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient." by Higher Education Opportunity Act (PL 110-135). See the National Center on Universal Design for Learning at http://www.udlcenter.org/.

[65] TDOE Special Education Framework 2014, retrieved from http://www.tennessee.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/sped_framework_implementation_guide.pdf.

students with disabilities at each school, and reduces transportation time and costs. Still, general education instruction must be meaningful for students with disabilities, and their presence in the classroom, alone, is insufficient to make it so.

The March 2015 Statewide Task Force on Special Education reported achievement data for students with disabilities that was similar to the data reported earlier in this report for SCUSD. The Council's findings and recommendations are consistent with the Statewide Task Force recommendations. These proposals were designed for the majority of students who do not have significant intellectual disabilities and could be achieving at the same high standards as their general education peers. They also apply to students with significant intellectual disabilities who may achieve at higher rates than previously realized. Neither of these outcomes will occur, however, without appropriate services and supports. The outcomes are meant to increase the independence, quality of life, and employment opportunities and lifetime earnings for individuals with disabilities compared to their peers without disabilities, and to reduce the school-to-prison pipeline for these students.[66]

> Instead of opening a door to a brighter future, special education for many students is a dead end. Once identified as needing special services, particularly for learning disabilities, students rarely catch up to their peers. Those who do not require separate settings in order to succeed end up spending most of their instructional time apart from general education settings, where instruction is often academically richer and the social interactions more reflective of the world that students will inhabit as adults. Special education too often becomes a place student go, rather than a set of supports to help students succeed.[67]

SCUSD's Movement toward More Inclusive Instruction

According to information provided by the district, there are six inclusive-practices schools in which students with IEPs were educated in general education classes. This initiative began about six years ago with a nationally known consultant but has not expanded due to fiscal restraints. However, district personnel have targeted 11 schools at which they want to expand co-teaching practices. Their goal is to modify the traditional resource program where students are removed from general education classes to receive instruction. Inclusive coaches are assigned to the combined 17 schools, which include the original six inclusive-practices schools and the additional 11 that are using a co-teaching model for some core curriculum classes. The coaches observe instruction, and provide feedback to teachers. Reportedly, the training has gone well; participants have enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate, and parents favor the service delivery.

There was a perception amongst some interviewees that SCUSD's version of inclusion was the same as "co-teaching." [68] This more exclusive co-teaching model negates other approaches that are effective, such as consultation/collaboration, and the grouping of students

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[66] According to the California's Statewide Task Force on Special Education report, "Some researchers have found that upwards of 70 percent of juveniles who are arrested had been identified as needing special education services. This would mean the vast majority of adults in the burgeoning prison system were at one time students with disabilities." Page 4, retrieved from http://www.smcoe.org/assets/files/about-smcoe/superintendents-office/statewide-special-education-task-force/Task%20Force%20Report%205.18.15.pdf.
[67] *Id.*
[68] It should be noted that the district defines inclusive practices to be more than just "co-teaching."

(with and without IEPs) across classes for common tiered-intervention. Still, there does not appear to be a systemwide culture of inclusivity in the district that promotes services based on student needs. Instead, the district relies on a traditional special day class (SDC) structure for students with more significant needs.

Focus group participants provided additional feedback about the district's efforts in this area.

- *Inclusive Practices Viewpoints.* Some focus group members indicated that the district's inclusive-practices schools were doing well, provided excellent examples of effective inclusive practices, and wondered how the practice might be expanded and remain effective. Others expressed concern that the district does not have structures in place to ensure that the inclusive coaches are used effectively in their schools, and that their influence was limited when school leadership does not actively support their activities.

- *Co-Teaching.* There was a strong sense that in some schools co-teachers believed that their caseloads were too high to provide effective supports to their students. For example, two special educators reported that they teach students from kindergarten through sixth grades with conflicting co-teaching class schedules. While it was reported that the district's consultant did not recommend a single model for all schools, there were concerns that there was not a consistent use of the most effective co-teaching models.

- *Student Outcomes.* There was a perception that co-teaching had not improved student outcomes. There were no data[69] to compare the achievement of students with similar characteristics who had been taught with and without co-teaching, or data to determine the extent to which the instructional model was implemented with fidelity.

- *Support for Students.* There were also concerns that students from SDCs who were now in general education classes, especially at the high school level, did not have a single "anchor." Some special educators with large caseloads lacked the time to check in with students—who might have multiple teachers.

- *Common Message.* The school system continues to fight the divide between special and general education, with no clear single message to reinforce a collaborative approach to delivering instruction, enhancing teacher capacity, and meeting student needs.

- *SCTA.* SCTA representatives raised various issues about inclusive practices, e.g., the lack of resource availability and capacity, which were similar to those that the team heard from other focus groups at the central office and school level.

The district understands that the Tentative Agreement with SCTA precludes inclusive-practice schools initiative from being expanded until the SCTA's concerns are addressed. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a clear path for identifying issues and how they could be resolved to SCTA's satisfaction. Union representatives claimed that the union was not against inclusion, but they did have concerns.

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[69] Although the district collected data during the early years of co-teaching, the activity stopped because of teacher workload and data-collection burden. Based on a sample of student work completed in inclusive settings and traditional SDC settings for students with similar characteristics, the district found that students educated in inclusive settings engaged in more rigorous work.

Impact of the Collective Bargaining Agreement's Appendix D and Tentative Agreement

Appendix D of the district's Collective Bargaining Agreement between SCUSD and the SCTA (Agreement) pertains to "Special Education – Student Inclusion." During the team's visit to the district, many focus group members referred to Appendix D as being problematic and interfering with the district's efforts to educate students in a more inclusive and effective manner.

- *Language Replacing Appendix D's Section 1.* SCTA and SCUSD negotiated a Tentative Agreement for the 2014-15 and 15-16 fiscal years, which was executed on September 4, 2014. Number 18 of the Tentative Agreement states:

  The Parties agree to create a new Section 1 under Appendix D understanding and using the following:

  Consistent with Special Education laws and student needs, the District has the discretion to place any special education student in any classroom or setting including general education. The parties agree that the language in Appendix D needs further discussion and understanding to mutually develop quality supports for the special education and the student *inclusion program.* (Italics added.)

  Effective beginning September 2014-15 school year, the Parties agree to establish a workgroup to discuss the negotiable effects of the District's student *inclusion program.* (Italics added.) …. The workgroup will be asked to complete its work as soon as possible in the 2014-15 school year.

As of the Council team's visit, the workgroup had still not yet completed its work, and there was no anticipated completion date. Union representatives indicated that they wanted to renegotiate Appendix D, and to hold discussions with the district about MTSS and inclusive practices. The representatives claimed that they supported these efforts, but wanted to ensure that appropriate training and resources are in place. They were disappointed with what they perceived to be the district's poor communication and non-responsiveness in the negotiations. Management had their own version of events.

Currently, the Tentative Agreement terms modify Section 1 of Appendix D only to the extent that the district has the discretion to place students with disabilities in any classroom or setting, including general education, consistent with special education laws and student needs. Regardless of this provision, several focus group participants indicated that general educators could refuse to educate students with IEPs in their classrooms.

The following provisions of Appendix D are problematic as well:

- *Three Models of Inclusion.* Appendix D describes three types of inclusion with reference to the 1993-94 school year. These models pertain to: 1) one student with a severe disability enrolled in a regular class; 2) whole class collaborative inclusion; and 3) special education class spread among regular education classes.

  - *Acceptance by Regular Education Teacher.* All three models have a specific condition that a regular education teacher must agree to accept or receive "special education

students." (Sections 1.1.4, 1.2.2, and 1.3.2) Presumably, but not explicitly stated in Number 18 of the Tentative Agreement, the teacher's discretion is overridden by the district's placement discretion consistent with special education laws and student needs.

- *One Student with a Severe Disability Enrolled in a Regular Class.* Under this model, a student who is classified as having a severe disability is enrolled in a regular education class. (Section 1) The regular educator is to receive a $50 monthly stipend (presumably for each student), an additional 60 minutes for prep time or a release day each month for training and collaboration. (Sections 1.1-5)

According to focus group participants, the teachers of students with severe disabilities who are fully included in general education classes are generally co-teaching with special educators. The Agreement neither changes the stipend nor adjusts any other general educator benefits when this instructional model, or any other model providing substantial support to the general educator, is used.[70]

- *Whole Class Collaborative Inclusion.* This co-teaching model requires either a regular education class reduction of two students—or 25 percent of the special education class, whichever is greater—and a reduction of the special education class by two students. Again, the provision applies to "regular education teachers who agree to accept special education students…." (Sections 1.2.1-4)

- *Special Education Class Spread among Regular Education Classes.* Students with IEPs will include additional aide time, specialist time, and time of others as determined appropriate. Each regular education classroom must have three students below the regular maximum. (Sections 1.3.1-3)

Presumably, this model pertains to SDCs and is applicable only when all students from an SDC through the IEP process are "spread among regular education classes." This provision could apply to the fully inclusive practices model that was implemented in six schools several years ago. Typically, inclusive practices are not initiated with a full-scale transfer of students from an SDC to regular classes. Such a practice disproportionately impacts the school's regular education classes, while schools without SDCs never would have their regular education classes impacted in this manner.[71] If, based on an IEP, it would be appropriate for a student in an SDC to be educated full time in a regular classroom, the student could return to his/her home school without such an impact.

Difference between "Inclusive Education" and SCUSD's "Inclusion Program"

Inclusive education, in its most basic definition, means that students with disabilities are supported members of chronologically age-appropriate general education classes in their home schools, receiving the specialized instruction

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[70] This concern reflects the ambiguous nature of the definition of severe disability that was never operationally defined and makes the interpretation difficult.

[71] See Exhibit 3p below, which shows that 18 (25 percent) of 72 schools have no SDCs.

delineated by their IEPs within the context of the core curriculum and general class activities.[72]

Inclusive education is neither defined nor implemented as a "program." Rather, inclusive education reflects a vision and practice that enables students with disabilities to receive meaningful differentiated instruction within general education classes and supplemental interventions either inside or outside the general education class. Because each student has different needs, instruction and services must be flexible and not be provided within a fixed programmatic structure.

In two instances, the Tentative Agreement refers to the district's "inclusion program," and Appendix D describes three specific models. The district's current initiative, which includes the original six inclusive-practices schools and 11 additional schools, is based on a co-teaching model, and the movement of students from resource classes and SDCs to general education classes. This narrow approach does not address how schools could support newly identified students with IEPs in general education classes in their home schools (or schools of choice) with flexible services, differentiated core instruction, and necessary interventions. Other strategies, which rely heavily on collaboration and problem solving, in addition to co-teaching could also be used to benefit teaching and learning.

Instruction for Students in SDC Programs

School districts that operate without an MTSS framework often organize special education by programs predicated on a theory of "specialization" for groups of students with a preconceived set of common characteristics. In reality, such programs include students with a large range of achievement and behavior, as well as students with characteristics that fall between program types. In some circumstances, students develop behavioral issues because of the influence of peers. Such specialization can perpetuate the myth that student needs can be addressed fully with correct program matches based upon a prescribed set of characteristics. If a student is not succeeding, then it is presumed to be because he or she is simply in the wrong program, so a new one is sought in order to provide a better fit. In such circumstances, there is pressure to create more specialized and categorical programs rather than creating a broad framework for general-education instruction and behavioral supports based on student need.

Application of 1 Percent Rule for Participation of Students in Alternate Assessment

The California Alternate Assessments are used for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the recently issued implementing regulations, it is expected that no more than 1 percent of all students in grades taking a statewide assessment will participate in an alternate assessment. Although ESSA does not prohibit school districts from having a higher percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take this assessment, states must keep statewide participation at 1 percent unless they get a waiver. To avoid or to support a waiver request, states may ask districts to justify any alternate assessment rates that exceed 1 percent. States and districts cannot use the

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[72] Statewide Special Education Task Force, Conceptual Framework for Special Education Task Force Successful Educational Evidence Based Practices, 2014-2015, page 3, retrieved from http://www.smcoe.org/assets/files/about-smcoe/superintendents-office/statewide-special-education-task-force/EBP%20-%20Final%203.2.15.pdf.

scores from alternative assessments to boost their proficiency rates in math or English by more than 1 percentage point. Note, however, the law has no limit on the number of students who could take these assessments.

For grades in which students are tested, 876 students are educated in separate classes more than 60 percent of the time and 130 are in separate schools, for a total of 1,006 students. Based on data provided by SCUSD, 258 students comprise 1 percent of all students in grades taking a statewide assessment.

These data present two issues. First, the number of students educated most or all of the time in SDCs or separate schools far exceeds the 258 students who are permitted to take an alternate assessment without concern over federal or state monitoring. Second, for those students taking regular assessments, the data raises the questions: 1) to what extent are these students receiving instruction that is based on California's common core standards, and 2) to what extent are they receiving academic and positive behavioral interventions that will enable them to close the gap between their present levels of achievement and grade-level standards? District personnel are conducting a review of the curriculum currently in use for students who take alternate assessments to ensure it is aligned with state standards.

The following subsections describe the district's configuration of SDCs, and provide focus group feedback on various challenges to instruction.

Configuration of Special Day Classes

Based on data provided by the district, 18 of 71 schools (25 percent) do not have SDCs. As shown by Exhibit 3p, 26 percent of elementary schools, 20 percent of K-8 schools, 11 percent of middle schools, and 33 percent of high schools do not host an SDC. District representatives explained that there are many configurations of schools--large and small, multi-grade, etc.— which impact the ability to operate SDC(s) on certain sites.

Exhibit 3p. Number of Schools with and without SDCs and Percentage of Schools without SDCs

	Elementary	K-8	Intermediate/ Middle	High
Schools with Special Programs	34	4	8	8
Schools Without Special Programs	12	1	1	4
Percentage of Schools with No SDC	26%	20%	11%	33%
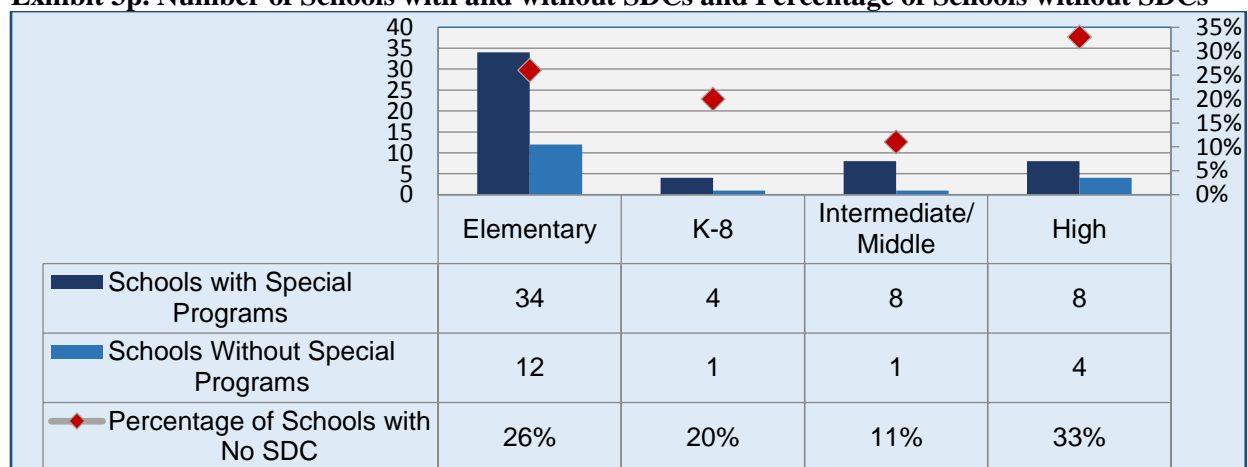
SCUSD's configuration of special day classes (SDC) is organized primarily by eight disability categories. The 63 SDCs that educate students with learning disabilities comprise 43 percent of the 146 SDCs. The remaining seven categories, which apply to students with mild to

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moderate disabilities, and the number of SDCs in each are as follows: communication disability (12),[73] emotional disturbance (20), intellectual disability (23), autism (17), deaf/hard of hearing (5), vision (1), and orthopedic impairment (5). (Exhibit 3q.)

Exhibit 3q. Number of SDCs by Category

	LD	Lang. Emphasis or CD	ED	ID	Autism	Deaf/HH	Vision	OI
					Mild-Moderate: With			
■ Number of SDCs	63	12	20	23	17	5	1	5
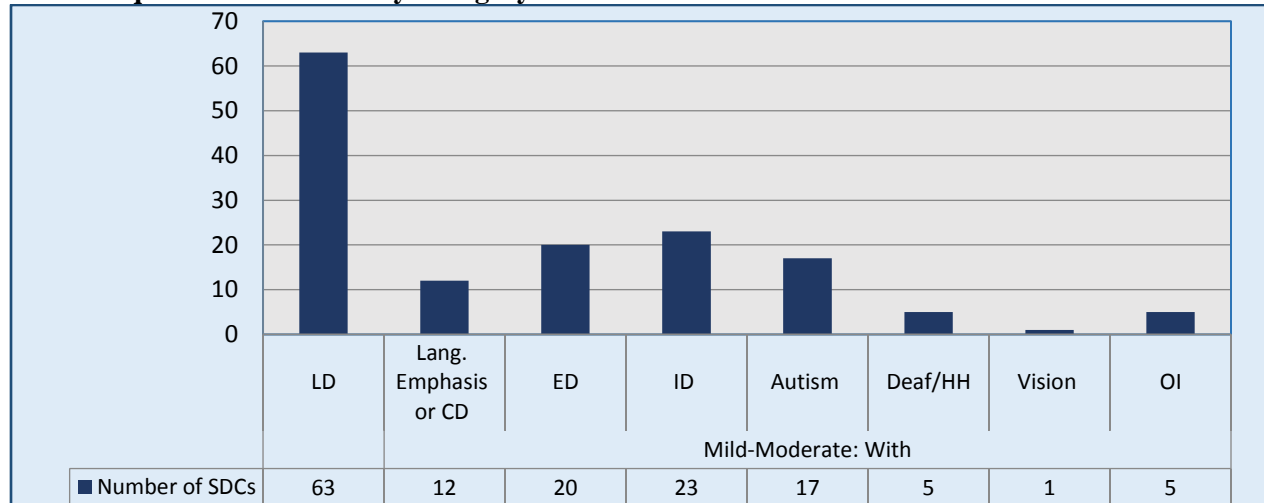
From preschool through intermediate grade/middle school, the number of SDCs steadily increases, and then decreases by 20 classes at the high school level: preschool (14), primary/K-8 (33), intermediate/middle school (65), and high school (45). (Exhibit 3r.)

Exhibit 3r. Number of SDCs by Grade Level

	Preschool	Primary/K-8	Intermediate/ Middle School	High School
■ Number of SDCs	14	33	65	45
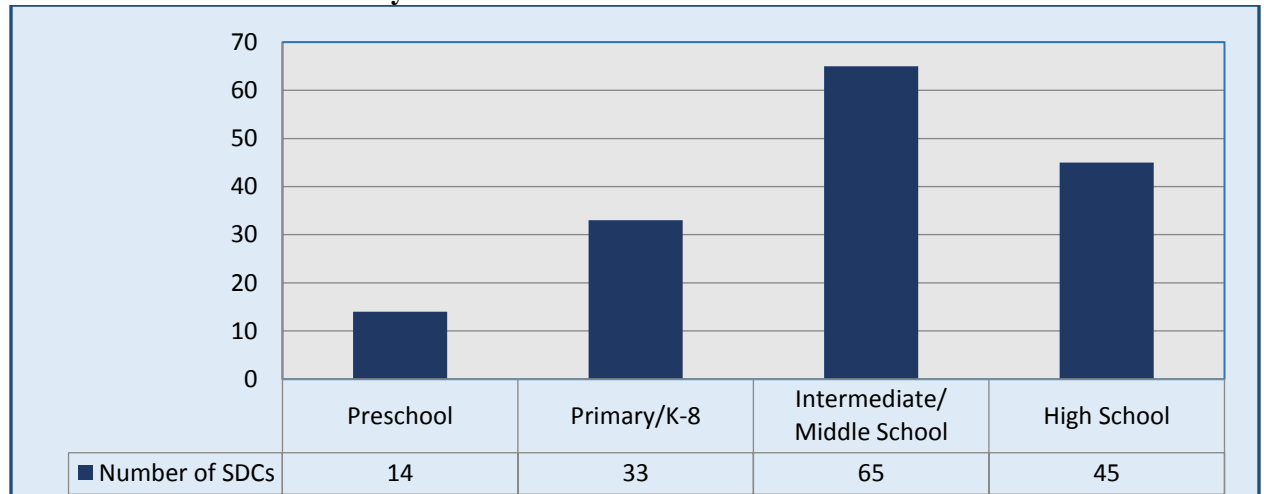
Exhibit 3s shows the number of SDCs by category and grade level. Intellectual disability comprises the only category with more classes at the high school level (9) than at the intermediate/middle school level (8). This circumstance is most likely related to students

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[73] "Communicatively Disabled" SDCs have been taught by speech/language specialists who emphasize the development of language and pragmatics, and social skills. With personnel shortages, classes may be taught by special educators. According to SCUSD, most students in this SDC program has autism and are usually higher functioning, but they cannot tolerate the sensory input of a large classroom, or their behavioral needs require a smaller student to teacher ratio.

remaining in school beyond 18 years of age to receive postsecondary transition services. The largest decline of classes occurs for learning disability (28 to 18), and communication disability (9 to 4). The number of classes for students with emotional disturbance increases significantly from primary to the intermediate/middle school level (1 to 11), and then decreases from intermediate/middle school to high school (11 to 8).

Exhibit 3s. Number of SDCs by Category and Grade Level

Mild-Moderate: With	LD	Lang. Emphasis or CD	ED	ID	Autism	Deaf/HH	Vision	OI
Preschool	5	2	0	1	3	1	1	1
Primary	12	8	1	5	5	1		1
Intermediate/Middle School	28	9	11	8	5	2		2
High School	18	4	8	9	4	1		1
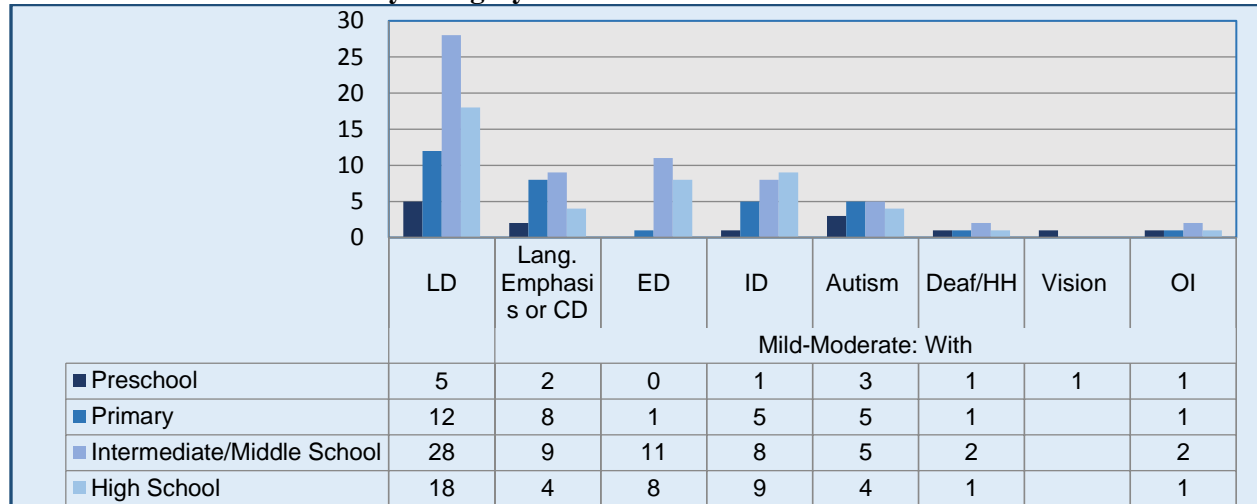
Exhibit 3t shows the number of classes per school and by grade level. The largest figure pertains to the 19 schools with no SDCs. Most schools with SDCs have one (12 schools), two (17 schools), or three (10 schools) classes. Two elementary schools have 5 or 6 classes, and four high schools have 8 to 12 classes.

Exhibit 3t. Number of SDCs per School by Grade Level

Number of SDCs Per School	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	10	11	12
Elementary	12	10	13	6	3	1	1				
K-8	1			3							
Middle School	2		3	1	3						
High School	4	2	1					1	1	1	1
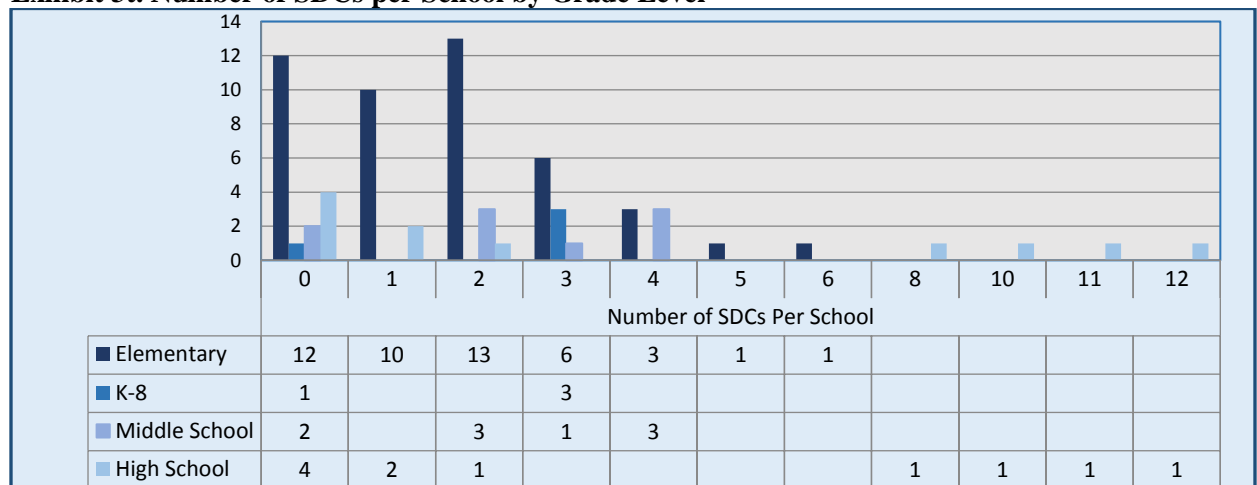
Focus Group Participant Feedback about SDCs

Several systemic concerns were raised by focus group participants about the challenges facing special educators in SDCs. While we met an educator who has been teaching in the same SDC program for over 25 years, there were reports that others leave their SDC positions for a variety of reasons.

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- *Multiple Grades and High Caseloads.* With three grade levels of students in their classes, teachers have difficulty keeping up with the different expectations for all. When an IEP is developed for one child the educator's task may appear to be manageable, but the task becomes challenging with high caseloads. The use of paraeducators does not compensate for this circumstance. Special education teacher vacancies for SDCs, such as two in one school, further exacerbate the situation.

- *Variety of Student Needs.* Although the district has eight different SDC programs, a common theme voiced in focus groups was that there were students in classes whose needs appeared to "not fit" with the needs of other students.

- *Literacy Interventions.* Some 63 SDCs for students with learning disabilities was the largest SDC program, yet there was a dearth of evidence-based interventions specifically designed to improve literacy for students achieving far below their peers in this setting.

Support for Students' Social/Emotional Needs

The mental health needs of students with disabilities have also been a growing issue during the last few years. The law governing the provision of mental health services in California changed a few years ago from a county-based to a school district-based resource, which is now provided through the special education process. SCUSD's education-related mental health service (ERMHS) teams are used to assess students' needs for designated instruction and support (DIS services). According to the district's Special Education Procedural Handbook, DIS service options include:

- *Consultation* to the teacher, student or parent by a behavior intervention specialist, psychologist, and/or social worker;

- *Collaboration* with a student's private mental-health provider;

- *Individual or small group counseling* or family counseling by a psychologist or social worker, or by the district's chosen community agency.

- *Assistance and training* to staff, collection of data, or monitoring of a behavior intervention plan (BIP) or positive behavior support plan by a behavior intervention specialist.

A large number of focus group participants shared anecdotes about students exhibiting severe behaviors and having significant social/emotional needs, and expressed frustration with the ERMHS process. Specifically, the following challenges were noted.

- *Modeling and Coaching.* Behavior intervention specialists do not model interventions or coach teachers. As a result, their suggestions are not viewed as particularly worthwhile, leaving teachers without effective support and resources. This perception may be due to the large number of requests for assessments that the behavior specialists receive.

- *Gatekeeping.* Many perceive that the process for obtaining effective services for students takes too long, and requires exhaustive documentation. In some cases, personnel believed that they had to suspend students they might not have otherwise suspended to document the need for this last step.

- *Assessment Priority.* School psychologists want to provide mental health services and

support, but their obligation to conduct formal assessments prevents them from doing so.

- ***Collaboration with Student Support Services.*** There is minimal interaction between the ERMHS process and student support services personnel who have expertise in addressing these areas of need.

Further affecting the support for students with significant behavioral and mental health challenges is the district's use of private agencies for behavioral and individual aides to supplement district-employed aides. We heard many concerns about paraprofessionals, [74] including their training, retention, and ability to collaborate with staff. More information about paraprofessionals, including how their need is determined, is discussed below. (See section IV. Support for Teaching and Learning.)

Unquestionably, school personnel and parents are frustrated when students exhibit serious behavior and mental health issues that do not appear to be satisfactorily addressed. The answer to this problem, however, does not always require the student's removal from school and placement somewhere else, such as the district's John Morse Therapeutic Center. Individuals with expertise can and should provide information to school personnel, and model and coach teachers to act and talk differently to students to de-escalate and prevent difficult situations. They also need to be able to identify and arrange for additional support, which can be phased out over time. School leadership and personnel also need to be accountable for following up with recommendations when they are properly resourced and supported. This process also needs to be proactive in providing professional learning opportunities and individual support for teachers who are new—especially those who come from other countries and may lack the knowledge and skills to address the behavior and mental health issues of their students. Given the cost of nonpublic day schools (almost $11 million for 357 students in 2015-16), the high cost for the district's own therapeutic center and transportation, an approach that can leverage these funds and apply them to meet student needs effectively within regular schools, preferably at the student's home school, is worth exploring.

To be clear, the team noted that the Morse Center was opened to provide an in-district option for students who would otherwise be placed in nonpublic schools (NPSs). This action has addressed both the high cost of NPSs and improved quality of instruction. Reportedly, the school has a high success rate for transitioning students back to comprehensive campuses in less restrictive settings.

Administrative Review Teams

Two program specialists, a behavior intervention specialist, two psychologists, and a social worker conduct semi-monthly meetings where school site personnel can ask this multi-disciplinary group for suggestions about students with behavioral and academic problems. School-based personnel perceive that this administrative review is necessary prior to IEP meetings for students who may require nonpublic special day schools. In such cases, the team may provide alternative suggestions instead of a special day school, such as the development and implementation of a BIP. Some school-based staff understand that the IEP team determines

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[74] The term paraprofessional is used in a generic manner and includes the various categories of aides used by the district.

student needs; others believe that the team's recommendations must be followed at IEP meetings. This latter misperception, if accurate, needs to be addressed. This miscue is good reason to develop feedback loops to ensure that what staff are hearing is what is intended.

Assistive Technology

According to the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, assistive technology (AT) increases a student's opportunities for education, social interactions, and meaningful employment. It also supports student learning in a least restrictive environment. Assistive technology is a tool designed to help students benefit from the general curriculum and access extracurricular activities in home, school, and work environments.[75]

An educational technology coordinator housed in the curriculum/instruction department supports the integration of technology into the curriculum and classroom instruction. Assistive technology is coordinated within the special education department by a group of AT and speech/language specialists who focus on assessments and the provision of augmented and alternative communication services and devices. Through the district's electronic IEP system, information is collected about student needs, available AT, student observations, etc.

Focus group participants expressed concern about the length of time it takes students to receive AT devices. District representatives reported an influx of AT assessment requests at the end of 2015-16, with demand continuing this year based on the increasing knowledge of school personnel and parents about the benefits of AT. Inclusion and AT specialists have conducted training on UDL to expand knowledge about the use of technology for all students, and there is growing interest in this instructional approach.

Postsecondary Transition Services and Support

In California, school districts are to begin transition planning for students with IEPs when each student is 16 years old. The planning process includes age-appropriate transition assessments, transition services, courses of study that will reasonably enable students to meet postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to students' transitional needs. Transition services and supports prepare students for employment and independent living through a coordinated set of activities that promote movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.

The state performance plan (SPP) for special education includes four indicators on postsecondary transitions for youth with IEPs:

Indicator 1. Percentage graduating from high school with a regular diploma

Indicator 2. Percentage of students with IEPs dropping out of high school

Indicator 13. Percentage of students with IEPs with all required transition components

Indicator 14. Percentage of youth with IEPs who were within one year of leaving high schools:

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[75] http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/iep/.

- Enrolled in higher education;

- Same as above or competitively employed; and

- Same as above or in other postsecondary education or training program.

The information below summarizes SCUSD's progress on each of these indicators and the district's support of postsecondary transition activities and services, including community-based work experiences.

Graduation Rates

Exhibit 3u shows the percentages of students with and without IEPs, who graduated from the district and were still enrolled in school. These data were provided by SCUSD.

- *Graduation Rates.* The graduation rate from 2010-11 to 2014-15 increased by 5.7 percentage points to 80.3 percent for all students, while the rate for students with IEPs decreased by 4.9 percentage points to 57.5 percent. Students with IEPs earned their highest rate in 2012-13, 70 percent.

- *Still Enrolled.* For students with and without IEPs, the percentage of graduated students still enrolled from 2010-11 to 2014-15 increased to 26.6 percent (10.4 percentage points). This increase was larger than for all students (5.7 percentage points). Students with IEPs may remain in school beyond 12th grade to receive postsecondary transition services and activities. Thus, one would expect a larger portion of these students to continue in school compared to other students.

Exhibit 3u. Percentages of District Students with/without IEPs Graduating and Still Enrolled

	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11
Graduated All Students	80.3%	85.0%	85.3%	79.9%	74.6%
Graduated Students with IEPs	57.5%	66.5%	70.0%	63.4%	62.4%
Still Enrolled All Students	10.4%	9.1%	8.5%	8.2%	7.2%
Still Enrolled Students with IEPs	26.6%	22.3%	20.0%	20.2%	16.2%
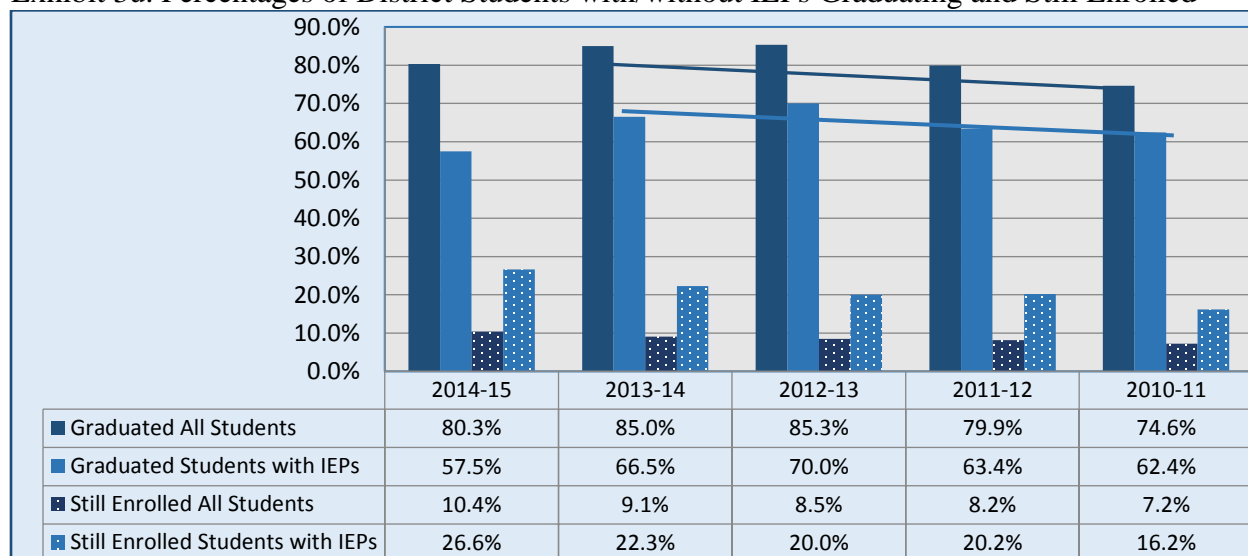
Dropout Rates

Exhibit 3v compares dropout rates for all students and students with IEPs from 2010-11 to 2014-15.

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Exhibit 3v. Percentage of District Students with/without IEPs who Dropped Out of School

	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11
■ All Students	8.9%	5.5%	6.1%	11.5%	18.0%
■ Students with IEPs	12.4%	8.0%	6.2%	14.8%	20.7%
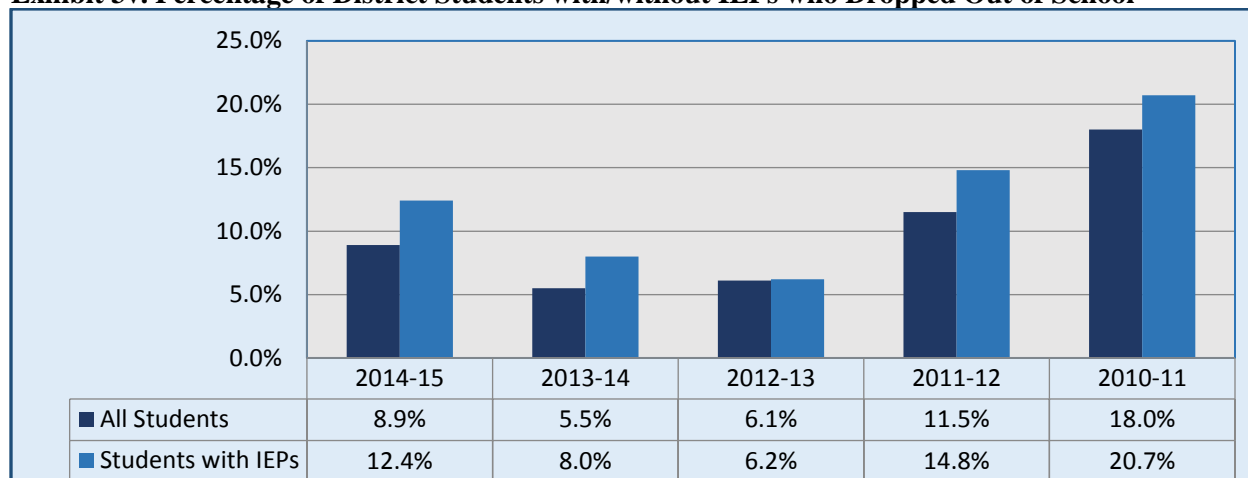
During this period, the dropout rates decreased significantly for all students (9.1 percentage points) and students with IEPs (8.3 percentage points). The 2014-15 rate for students with IEPs (12.4 percent) was only 3.5 percentage points more than the rate for all students (8.9 percent). However, in 2012-13 students with IEPs had their lowest dropout rate (6.2 percent).

IEP Compliance and Post School Experience

Indicator 13 of the SPP measures the percent of students aged 16 and above with an IEP that included all eight coordinated, measureable, annual IEP goals and transition services that reasonably enable the student to meet their postsecondary goals. According to the state's 2014-15 report, of 1,261 youth, 94.8 percent of IEPs met this criterion.[76] The compliance rate for this indicator is 100 percent.

Indicator 14 has targets for the percentage of students with IEPs engaged in various activities within one year of leaving high school. Exhibit 3q compares district outcomes among former student respondents on the SPP targets. These targets include:

- *Enrolled in Higher Education.* Some 45.1 percent of former district students with IEPs met this indicator, compared to the 52.3 percent SPP target.

- *Enrolled in Higher Education or Competitively Employed.* Some 78.7 percent of former district students with IEPs met this indicator, compared to the state's 70 percent rate and the 72.4 percent SPP target.

- *Enrolled in Higher Education, Competitively Employed, or Engaged in Other Postsecondary Education or Training Program*. All of the district's former students with IEPs met this indicator, which exceeded the SPP's target of 81 percent.

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[76] Retrieved from http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ds/documents/indrptlea1415s.pdf.

Exhibit 3q. Percent of Students Engaged in Various Activities One Year after Leaving High School

	A. Enrolled in higher education wtihin one year of leaving high school	B. Same as A or competitvely employed	C. Same as B or in some other postsecondary education or training program
■ District	45.1%	78.7%	100.0%
■ SPP Targets	52.3%	72.4%	81.0%
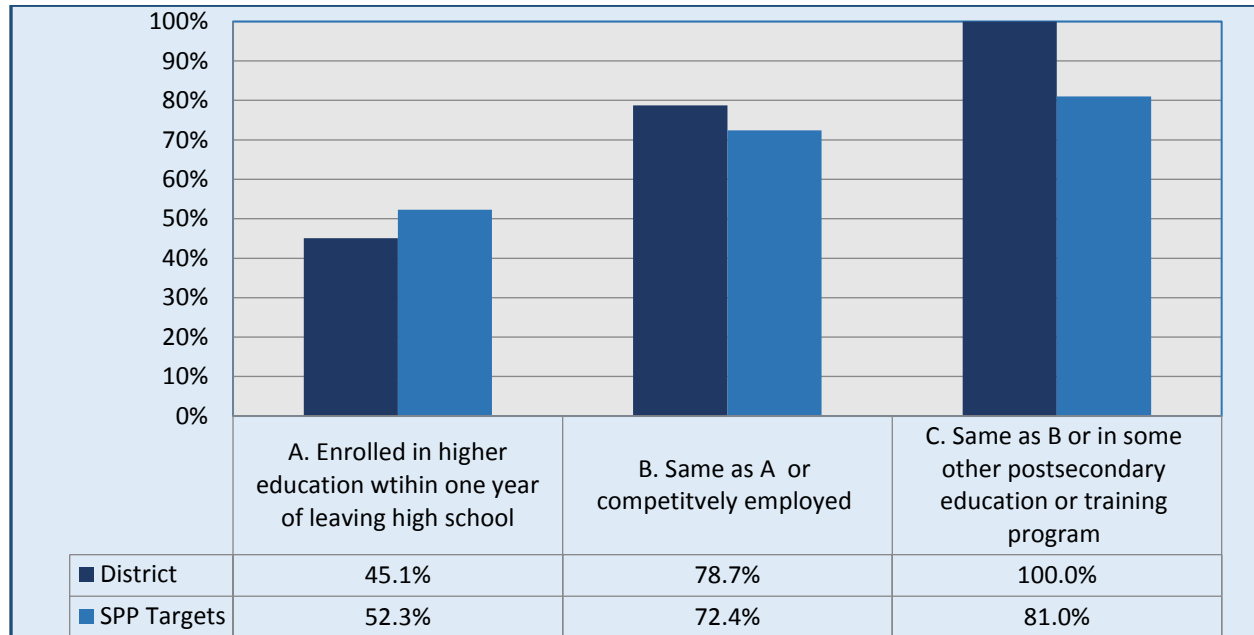
Importance of Community-Based Work Experiences for Students with Disabilities

Based on data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, students with IEPs often have poor postsecondary outcomes in employment, education, and independent living. For instance, based on data from 2009 (the most recent available), 60 percent of survey respondents across disability groups indicated that they were currently in a paid job, and 15 percent indicated that they were attending postsecondary education. Large numbers of students with disabilities who are able either to work or participate in higher education do not participate in these post-school activities.[77] According to an American Institutes for Research study:

> Previous studies have demonstrated that students with disabilities who have work experiences while in high school are more likely to be employed after high school.[78] Often the work experience in which they were enrolled led directly to a postsecondary job for a student. For these students, it is important to have occupationally specific CTE programs, with appropriate instructional and adaptive support services and accommodations, available in high school.[79]

The National Collaboration on Workforce and Disability affirmed this finding by reporting that "[w]hile work experiences are beneficial to all youth, they are particularly valuable for youth with disabilities. For youth with disabilities, one of the most important research findings shows

[77] National Longitudinal Transition Study-2. Retrieved from http://www.nlts2.org/
[78] National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, 2011.
[79] Improving College and Career Readiness for Students with Disabilities American Institutes for Research http://www.ccrscenter.org/sites/default/files/Improving%20College%20and%20Career%20Readiness%20for%20Students%20with%20Disabilities.pdf

that work experience during high school (paid or unpaid) helps them get jobs at higher wages after they graduate."[80] The National Collaboration research showed that quality, work-based learning experiences have the following features:

- Experiences provide exposure to a wide range of work sites in order to help youth make informed choices about career selections.

- Experiences are age and stage appropriate, ranging from site visits and tours to job shadowing, internships (unpaid and paid), and paid work experience.

- Work-site learning is structured and links back to classroom instruction.

- A trained mentor helps structure the learning at the worksite.

- Periodic assessment and feedback is built into the training.

- Youth are fully involved in choosing and structuring their experiences.

- Outcomes are clear and measurable.

According to district representatives, postsecondary transition services and support is considered to be an area of continual growth for the special education department. This work includes the need to improve the quality of transition planning and implementation. SCUSD operates an adult transition program for students who are 18-22 years old with moderate to severe disabilities and have not graduated from high school with a diploma. These students receive community work experiences in a variety of environments in addition to on-campus learning. Staff members who are certified in community-based instruction accompany the students. Also, several postsecondary transition classes are housed at or near universities that are accessible to public transportation.

College/career learning pathways are open to all students, including those with disabilities. Instruction wraps academics around a career focus, and the program provides cross-curricular design across units. The special education department's transition specialist manages the following three state grants to support postsecondary transition services and activities for students with IEPs. The programs have received positive evaluations.

- *WorkAbility* provides for comprehensive pre-employment skills training, employment placement and follow-up for high school students with IEPs making the transition from school to work, independent living, and postsecondary education or training. Approximately 110 students were in paid placements during July. Reportedly, the district has met grant requirements and received positive state evaluations.

- The *Transition Partnership Program (TPP)* helps to connect high school students with disabilities to the state's rehabilitation department and transition to work. State evaluations of this program have also been positive.

- *Work Experience* supports formal vocational/transition assessments and reports for students with IEPs, and training for case managers to effectively engage in transition planning.

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[80] http://www.ncwd-youth.info/work-based-learning

Focus group participants shared the following concerns about the opportunities available to students with disabilities to engage in relevant postsecondary transition activities and community-based work experiences:

- Support from school leadership was needed for special educators to implement and provide training to effectively engage students in postsecondary transition activities.

- Continued funding was necessary to support paid community work experiences. As minimum wage requirements increase, the opportunity for students to be paid for work experiences decreases. This is occurring at the same time that there is a greater demand for students to have community work experiences.[81]

- Training on postsecondary transition is offered to school personnel, but it is not required and depends on personal interest rather than identified need.

Professional Learning

The professional learning association, Learning Forward, has developed its third version of *Standards for Professional Learning* outlining features of professional learning that result in effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results. The standards are based on seven elements listed in Exhibit 3r.[82]

Exhibit 3r. Standards for Professional Learning

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Standards for Professional Learning

Learning Communities. Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Resources. Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

Learning Designs. Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

Outcomes. Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

Leadership. Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.

Data. Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

Implementation. Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

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Professional Learning in SCUSD

Currently, the district has no days set aside for professional learning. All professional learning is linked to a weekly hour for collaboration, which does not appear to be meeting all needs. Although central office personnel reported that professional development is offered, it is

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[81] Retrieved from http://www.rnelsonlawgroup.com/Articles/California-s-Rules-for-Unpaid-Interns-and-Trainees.shtml

[82] As a trainee, however, students may meet state requirements to be paid less than the minimum wage. Retrieved from https://www.learningforward.org/standards#.UMvVD7Yt0kU.

voluntary in nature, as it is conducted afterschool or on Saturdays. Hence, there is widespread concern that necessary information for principals, general education teachers, and special education teachers linked to improved outcomes for students with disabilities, is not being received.

Collaborative Time

Beginning in 2016-17, all schools were required to increase instructional time on four days in order to allow for collaboration on such activities as grade-level and job alike meetings, training, and other collaborative work. Principals develop the professional learning activities collaboratively with teachers, and there are many competing interests for the limited available time. As a result, it is difficult to schedule time for training on the many subjects pertinent to students with disabilities. Generally, priority areas involve compliance, IEP development, co-training for the 17 schools involved in the district's inclusive-schools initiative, and training for new teachers, such as those who recently arrived from the Philippines.

Compensation for Professional Learning

Section 2 of the Agreement requires that the district offer training for school personnel, parents—including those having children with IEPs, and others as appropriate. Also, Section 5 specifies that special education workshops shall be provided for training and professional improvement, and be open to regular educators teaching students with IEPs.

Despite these provisions, professional learning provided by the district outside the regular workday is poorly attended. Furthermore, it was reported that the union discourages teachers from attending uncompensated training. As a result, most professional learning takes place during collaborative time where participation is mutually agreed upon with teachers. In addition, limited funds have prevented the district from providing personnel with compensated professional learning after school or on Saturdays to address district initiatives, instructional strategies, and behavioral supports, as well as training on IEP development.

Focus Group Participant Feedback

Focus group participants shared the following concerns and challenges associated with their ability to provide and access professional learning.

- *Training Conflicts.* With collaborative time scheduled on the same day districtwide, it is difficult for special education program specialists and others to provide all of the training requested across the school system. Also, it is difficult for special educators who cross subject areas and grades to participate in all relevant sessions, as they must rotate from one to another.

- *Job Alike Discussions.* Special educators have no time to meet across schools to discuss common issues and access information based on their common needs. Some have relied on emails to communicate with others.

- *Intern Special Educators.* Many special educators who are interns with no training or experience are struggling in the classroom.

- *Access to Districtwide Training.* Special education coaches no longer provide systemwide

training because teachers are unable to attend due to the shift to site-collaborative time required at each school.

- *General/Special Educator Collaboration.* Collaborative time is not used to enable special and general educators to talk about common students, and it is difficult for them to find other common time for this purpose.

Facilitating Parental and Community Involvement

A large body of research demonstrates the positive effects of parent-professional collaboration on outcomes for students with disabilities.[83] Effective collaboration is often grounded in a strong staff-parent relationship and the combined expertise of parents and professionals in helping students with disabilities meet their goals. Many parents want to fully participate in planning for their child(ren) and supporting changes in services. Nonetheless, collaboration tends to be more difficult when parents are new to the country, when language differences present barriers, and when parents come from poor or low socioeconomic environments.

Generally, support for meaningful parent involvement varies by school. There are 47 school-based parent resource centers, which are established at the discretion of schools. Typically, Title I dollars are used to fund part-time parent liaisons. In addition, the district has parent facilitators who provide training, and predominantly work with parents who are English learners, parent teacher organizations, and the special education Community Advisory Council (CAC).

The CAC for special education is an active group that meets monthly to provide training for parents of students with disabilities in SCUSD. The areas of training are based on a needs assessment that parents fill out at the end of the previous school year. District special education staff members assist the CAC by providing logistical support and training expertise.

The CAC met with the Council's team and discussed concerns related to three major areas that parents would like to have addressed. Many of these concerns relate to those discussed elsewhere in this report**.** These concerns included:

- *Understanding Students.* Parents who have concerns about their child's achievement or behavior, particularly those who are English learners, frequently do not understand the special education process. There is a desire to have teachers explain the process, including how to request a special education evaluation when that is their intent. Parents also want teachers to directly recommend at IEP meetings the specialized instruction, related services, and supplementary aides and supports a student needs rather than asking the parent to do so. The CAC would also like to have a better understanding about students receiving special education, such as their characteristics, where they are educated, the length of time they have

[83] A.T. Henderson, & K. L. Mapp. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement.* Southwest Education Development Laboratory. Cited in Fostering Parent and Professional Collaboration Research Brief, Technical Assistance ALLIANCE for Parent Centers, National Parent Technical Assistance Center at
http://wsm.ezsitedesigner.com/share/scrapbook/47/472535/1.7_Fostering_Parent_and_Professional_Collaboration.pdf.

been educated in SDCs, their movement into less restrictive environments, their educational outcomes, etc. They would like to have this information sorted by grade level, schools, etc.

- *Understanding the Effectiveness of Services Students Are Receiving.* Parents would like to have more information about such education-related issues as: how goals are set, how they are adapted if not achieved, evidence-based practices, assistive technology and training. They would also like to see the leadership at the district, area, and school levels be held accountable for such activities as having IEPs implemented as written and implementing effective evidence-based reading and behavior interventions with trained and knowledgeable personnel. Parents also noted the need for high quality professional development that is based on what teachers and others need to know to effectively teach and provide support to children with disabilities. Furthermore, based on the district's practice of transporting students to other schools to receive special education instruction and services, the distance makes it more difficult for parents to communicate with teachers and participate in their children's education. There is a desire that the money spent on busing be used instead for instruction and support.

- *District Leadership and Capacity.* SCUSD is largely a decentralized system of schools that have broad discretion over important issues, such as professional learning (addressed above). There are few, if any, districtwide expectations relating to the education of students in SDCs, their inclusion in general education classes, and their overall engagement in the culture of a school. These issues are more challenging and critical for older students. While some schools have an approach to education that is inclusive and embraces students with different abilities and talents, others do not have this philosophy. Some schools effectively practice social/emotional learning and positive behavioral supports and others do not, relying on school removals of the child to address problematic behavior. The CAC did, however, express its appreciation for the support parents receive from special education department

Overall Observations

The district's desire to educate students with and without IEPs in inclusive settings is based on sound research and best practice. The inclusive-practice schools initiative has evolved in a system of schools that does not have a shared vision of inclusivity from school-to-school. As a result, the initiative has had several unanticipated consequences

One of the consequences is that some teachers have students that the teachers perceive to require SDCs. By the nature of their full inclusive structure, these schools no longer house SDCs. The current system is not flexible, nor is it adept at providing the resources schools need to meet students' more intensive needs. Instead, the district relies on the traditional method of transferring students to other schools that have the relevant SDC.

The district's continued reliance on SDCs requires most students to travel on buses from their home schools to other schools. When classes are filled within a school's geographic feeder system, students must travel to distant schools. (Parents may visit various SDC options and choose the one they prefer.) These factors contribute to expensive and long transportation routes with funds that could be used for resources to support students at their home schools. (See the Transportation section below under Support for Teaching and Learning.)

Overall, there is broad recognition by district personnel that general and special education must come together to jointly plan and implement activities designed to increase the achievement and improve the behavior of students with disabilities. There is a desire to be more proactive than reactive, to increase access to professional learning, and to share exemplary practices between schools. This work includes the use of evidence-based practices and data to identify exemplary practices with positive outcomes, as well as those that are not succeeding. Success also requires the involvement of parents and district partnership with unions.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

The following are areas of strength in the district's support for teaching and learning of students with disabilities.

- *Early Childhood Educational Settings.* Overall, 60 percent of all children were educated inclusively with their typically-developing peers.

- *School-Aged Educational Settings.* The district's 60 percent rate for students educated in general education at least 80 percent of the time is 6 percentage points higher than the state's rate and slightly below (1 percentage point) the nation's rate. Also, the district's 14 percent rate for students educated outside of general education more than 60 percent of the time is lower than state and national rates.

- *Educational Settings by Race/Ethnicity and EL Status.* Students are educated in settings that are not significantly disproportionate based on race/ethnicity. Except for the separate school setting, SCUSD students who are English learners are educated in more restrictive settings than are students who are not ELs. The differences, however, are not significant.

- *Inclusive Schools Initiative.* The district initiated an inclusive-schools movement, but it has not expanded significantly due to fiscal restraints. Eleven schools have been targeted in addition to the original six inclusive-practices schools to work with coaches to improve educational outcomes.

- *SDC Curriculum Aligned with Common Core.* District personnel are conducting a review of the curriculum currently in use for students who take alternate assessments to ensure that it is aligned with state standards.

- *Assistive Technology.* A group of AT and speech/language specialists focus on assessments and the provision of augmented and alternative communication services and devices. Through the district's electronic IEP system, information is collected about student needs, available AT, student observations, etc. Inclusion and AT specialists have conducted training on UDL to expand knowledge about the technology, and there is growing interest in this instructional approach.

- *Dropout Rates.* Between 2010-11 and 2014-15, dropout rates decreased for both students with IEPs (9.1 percentage points) and for all students (8.3 percentage points). The 2014-15 rate for students with IEPs (12.4 percent) was only 3.5 percentage points higher than the rate among all students (8.9 percent). In 2012-13 students with IEPs had their lowest dropout rate (6.2 percent).

- *Postsecondary Transition Activities and Services.* With 94.8 percent of IEPs meeting

requirements for postsecondary transition activities and services, the district almost met the state's 100 percent compliance target. The district almost met state targets for students enrolled in higher education, being competitively employed, and/or engaged in other postsecondary education or training programs. Students 18 to 22 years of age with moderate to severe disabilities who have not yet graduated from high school with a diploma have various community work experiences. Also, with the support of three state grants, a variety of transition services and activities are provided to students with IEPs.

- *Parental and Community Involvement.* Schools fund 47 school-based parent resource centers, typically with Title I funds that are used for part-time parent liaisons. The district also has parent facilitators who provide training, and predominantly work with parents who are English learners, parent teacher organizations, and the Community Advisory Council (CAC) for special education. The CAC is an active group that meets monthly to provide training for parents of students with disabilities in SCUSD.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following areas are opportunities for improvement in the teaching and learning of students with disabilities.

Children 3 to 5 Years of Age Data

- *Educational Outcomes.* For the state performance plan indicator dealing with students substantially improving their behavior and social/emotional skills and acquiring/using knowledge/skills, the district ranged between 3.3 and 10.7 percentage points below state targets. The district's gap with state targets was larger for students exiting with skills within age expectations, with percentage point differences ranging between 11.9 and 23.4.

- *Educational Settings.* While 7 percent of all children are educated in separate schools, almost half (44 percent) of students with autism are educated in this setting.

School-Aged Students Data

- *Academic Outcomes.* In both ELA and math, a larger percentage of California students with and without IEPs were proficient, compared to district students. The achievement gaps between California and district students were greater for ELA than math.

- *Education More than 60 Percent of Time Outside of General Education.* The district's 23 percent rate for students educated in this setting is higher than state and national rates.

- *Separate School Settings.* The district's 6.0 percent of students with IEPs attending separate schools is 2.6 percentage points higher than the state level and 2.7 percentage points higher than the national level.

- *Educational Settings by Grade.* The percentage of students educated inclusively decreases from pre-K and early grades through middle and high school, while the percentage of students in general education between 79 percent and 40 percent of the time and in separate schools increases.

- *Educational Settings by Disability Category.* In every area, the district educates students in more restrictive settings at rates that are larger than the nation and the state.

- ***OSS by Days.*** For students with out-of-school suspensions for 1-10 days and over 10 days, students with IEPs are suspended at higher rates than students without IEPs, and the rates increase significantly at seventh grade. Also, African American students with IEPs are 2.5 times more likely than all other students with IEPs to receive an OSS for 1-10 days, and they are 3.99 times more likely to be suspended for more than 10 days.

- ***Suspensions by Grade.*** In each grade, students with IEPs receive out-of-school and in-school suspensions at rates that are much higher than students without IEPs. Out-of-school and in-school suspension rates for students with IEPs are highest in seventh through ninth grade. OSSs of more than 10 days peak at seventh and ninth grades.

- ***Graduation Rates.*** Between 2010-11 and 2014-15, the graduation rate for students without IEPs increased by 5.7 percentage, while the rate for students with IEPs decreased by 4.9 percentage points.

Instructional Models and Practices

- ***Inclusive Education.*** Inclusive education is viewed as a "program" rather than a vision and practice that enables students with disabilities to receive meaningful differentiated instruction within general education classes and interventions either inside or outside the general education class. The co-teaching model is viewed as the tool for inclusive practices, which discounts other effective models, such as consultation/collaboration, and the grouping of students with shared needs (with and without IEPs) across classes for tiered interventions. The inclusive-practices schools' model requires students needing an SDC to transfer out of the school to be educated. There does not appear to be a systemwide culture of inclusivity that promotes services based on student needs. Instead, the district relies on a traditional SDC structure for students with more significant needs. There is a lack of training and support that would emphasize the value of inclusive instruction and how to achieve it successfully. Focus group participants shared various concerns about inclusive practices and challenges to becoming more inclusive.

- ***SCTA/District Issues Impacting Inclusive Education.*** The district believes that the inclusive-practice schools initiative cannot be expanded until the union's concerns are addressed, but there does not seem to be a clear path for identifying issues and determining how they could be resolved. SCTA representatives claimed that the union is not against inclusion, but they do have concerns. Furthermore, Appendix D to the Collective Bargaining Agreement contains several problematic provisions that are detailed above and require revision.

- ***Restrictive Educational Settings.*** One percent of students taking state assessments, or some 258 students, may take an alternate assessment without asking for a state waiver. Some students educated inclusively may have a significant cognitive disability, but not all of the 876 students in special classes more than 60 percent of the time, or all of the 136 students in special schools, may be eligible for an alternate assessment. Using these two settings as a guide, only 26 percent of 1,006 students could take an alternate assessment absent a state waiver. Assuming that a significant percentage of these students will take a regular assessment, there are significant questions about the extent to which they are receiving instruction based on the common core curriculum and the intensive interventions they need.

- *SDCs.* Many district schools (24 percent overall and 35 percent of elementary schools) have no SDCs. Although most schools with SDCs have 1, 2 or 3, two elementary schools have 5 or 6 SDCs, and four high schools have 8 to 12 SDCs. Focus group participants shared the many challenges associated with teaching SDCs, and believe the challenges account for the high mobility of SDC teachers and relatively large number of SDC teacher vacancies.

- *Social/Emotional Support.* A large number of focus group participants shared anecdotes about students exhibiting severe behaviors and having significant social/emotional needs, and expressed frustration with the ERMHS process. The district's reliance on private agencies for behavioral and individual aides is another source of frustration.

- *Administrative Review Teams.* There was not a clear understanding about the purpose of the administrative review teams and how their suggestions interact with IEP team decision-making.

- *Assistive Technology.* There are concerns about the length of time it takes for students to receive AT devices.

- *Postsecondary Transition Activities and Services.* Focus group participants provided various concerns about students' access to relevant postsecondary transition activities and community-based work experiences. These included: support from school leadership, continued funding for community work, and training for school personnel.

Professional Learning

Currently, the district has no days set aside for professional learning. All professional learning is linked to a weekly hour for collaboration, which does not appear to be meeting all needs. Hence, there is widespread concern that necessary information for principals, general education teachers, and special education teachers linked to improved outcomes for students with disabilities, is not being received. Focus group participants shared concerns and challenges about their ability to provide and access professional learning.

Parental and Community Involvement

Meeting with the Council's team, CAC representatives shared specific concerns in three major areas: 1) the need for district personnel to understand the needs of students with disabilities and to help parents access services for them; 2) the need for district personnel to understand the effectiveness of services provided to students and be held accountable for evidence-based practices; and 3) expectations for district leadership to increase instructional capacity. Many of these and other concerns were also reported by other focus group participants and have been described throughout this document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. *Academic Achievement and Social/Emotional Well-Being for Students with IEPs.* Review and address relevant data, and follow-up with actions such as the following –

   a. *Data Review.* With a multidisciplinary team of individuals in and outside the special education department, review Exhibits 3a through 3q and their accompanying analysis

(along with other relevant data), and develop hypothesis about problematic patterns, such as:

- Weak educational outcomes for early childhood students with IEPs compared to state targets;

- High percentage of young children with autism educated in separate schools;

- Low educational outcomes on state assessments for students with and without IEPs compared to the state;

- High percentage of students in more restrictive settings by disability area and in separate schools compared to the nation and state;

- Variability of educational setting placements by grade;

- High OSS rates for students with IEPs compared to those without IEPs;

- Disproportionately high OSS rates for African American students;

- Higher in- and out-of-school suspensions for students with IEPs compared to those without IEPs, especially at the seventh through ninth grades; and

- Declining graduation rate for students with IEPs as the graduation rate for students without IEPs was increasing.

b. *Inclusive Education Vision.* Have the extended cabinet establish a clear and defined vision for the value of inclusivity. Embed in that vision language from the common core state standards website and March 2015 statewide task force on special education to clarify the district's support for higher academic outcomes and the social/emotional well-being of students. Highlight the importance of providing students educated in general education classes with the differentiated and scaffolded instruction they need to learn. Emphasize that instruction needs to be linguistically appropriate and culturally relevant, and aligned with common core standards. These expectations will be easier to meet as teachers become more familiar with and base their instruction on the principles of UDL. At the same time, the vision should reinforce the importance of evidence-based academic and positive behavior interventions/supports that increase in intensity with specified student needs.[84] The implementation of this vision will require substantial changes to Appendix D of the SCUSD/SCTA collective bargaining agreement, which portrays inclusive education as occurring in three static models.

c. *Implementation Plan.* Based on the data review and the district's inclusive education vision, have the extended cabinet develop a written multi-year action plan that provides written expectations, professional learning, data analytics, and accountability (as specified below). Upon completion of the overall plan, establish a uniform way for school-based teams to embed local implementation activities into their school-based planning documents. In addition –

- *Resource Specialist Program (RSP) Services.* Develop ways to reduce the current practice of RSP teachers reporting/supporting more than one school and mitigate the

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[84] The suggested activities are not intended to be a blueprint or to be exclusive. They are provided as a basis for discussion and further development.

impact it has on collaborating with general education teachers and providing necessary interventions for students.

- **Resource Allocation.** Review how services are currently configured and how they can be shifted to meet the needs of more students in their neighborhood schools and schools of choice. This shift may reduce reliance on student transportation, and allow savings to be reallocated to instruction and interventions.

- **Regular vs. Alternate Assessments.** Determine how many students in SDCs and separate schools take an alternate assessment, and ascertain the extent to which the number correlates with 1 percent of all students who take the regular state assessment. Also, determine how many students in SDCs and separate schools take a regular state assessment, and address the extent to which they are receiving instruction aligned with common core standards.

- **Special Day Class Structure.** Review focus group comments about SDCs, such as those concerning instruction of students in multiple grades, the impact of teacher vacancies, reliance on paraprofessionals, caseloads, etc. In addition, discuss the equity ramifications associated with schools without SDCs, and their reliance on other schools to provide educational support. Also consider transportation expenses and how these funds could be used differently. Review the specifications for each SDC and clarify criteria for more flexible instructional and service adaptations, program specifications, and the like. Develop protocols for providing rigorous instruction and supports to students in SDCs, including personnel training and quality control processes.

- **Separate Schools.** Review the characteristics of students attending separate schools, and the reasons why the district is unable to meet their needs (especially young children with autism). With stakeholders, define the kinds of high-quality instruction and supports needed to keep students in regular schools or to attract them back to the district. Consider average special school costs per child (in and outside of the district), including transportation costs and how funds could be shifted to support this initiative.

- **Social/Emotional Supports and Interventions.** Review the ERMHS process for providing designated instruction and services (DIS) in order to maximize the use of behavior specialists for purposes of modeling interventions, coaching teachers, and providing effective technical assistance. As discussed below, better leverage the expertise of all staff qualified to provide supports for students' social/emotional needs, such as psychologists and social workers, as well as staff from the John Morse Therapeutic Center.

- **Related Services.** Consider the manner in which related services are provided (e.g., push-in versus pull-out) and the extent to which personnel are able to engage in general education MTSS activities), the extent to which occupational and/or physical therapy is provided at sites away from schools, and how these practices could change to improve their impact.

Feedback. Have the team collect feedback on the draft plan from stakeholders at varying grade levels, special/general education administrators, principals, general/special

education teachers, related-service providers, teacher assistants, CAC, other parent-based and community-based organizations, etc. Continue this feedback loop as the plan is implemented to address concerns.

d. *Written Expectations.* Develop and provide guidance on the implementation of practices designed to promote student achievement and positive behavior, including the following.

- *Differentiated Instruction.* Delineate expectations for the provision of linguistically appropriate and culturally competent instruction aligned with core standards that are differentiated for students with reading and math performance levels significantly below those of their classroom peers.

- *Co-Teaching*. Delineate effective co-teaching models. Do not expand co-teaching until there is data showing achievement gains based on the current instructional co-teaching model. Conduct a data analysis on the impact of service delivery and student performance (e.g., co-teaching vs. RSP).

- *Increasingly Intensive Academic Interventions.* Identify targeted interventions for English language arts and math that will fill instructional gaps for students with disabilities who are behind academically. Describe flexible groupings for students with and without IEPs when there is a need for common interventions. Consider how groupings need to adjust based on changing student needs.

- *English Learners.* Describe models for providing ELLs with IEPs the linguistic support they require when receiving special education and related services.[85]

- *Documentation for ERMHS Services.* Establish expectations for individual schools on the reasonable documentation personnel must gather to show a student's need for ERMHS services. Clarify that the suspension of students should not be the basis for determining a student's need for intervention and support.

- *Administrative Support Teams.* Reconstitute the purpose of the administrative review teams as groups devoted to problem-solving for students with behavioral and academic concerns. Make it clear that their advice does not substitute for the IEP team's consideration, and that students are not to be suspended either in-school or out-of-school to justify service needs. Coordinate this review with student support services.

- *IEP Decision Making.* Provide guidance to IEP teams on determining the extent to which students would benefit from general education classes, and specifying the supports needed to provide instruction based on the core curriculum and evidence-based interventions.

- *Personnel Roles and Staffing.* Identify the number and type of personnel available to support students with disabilities in general education classes and to provide interventions inside or outside of the class. Specify and differentiate their roles. In

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[85] See *Meeting the Needs of English Learners with Disabilities,* which was prepared by a staff member from the Santa Barbara County SELPA, retrieved from http://www.sonomaselpa.org/docs/els-with-disabilities.pdf.

addition, address staffing ratios for students in SDCs and how staffing needs to be adjusted when students need support in order to benefit from general education. (See Recommendation 6a.)

- **Planned Collaboration.** Provide ways to better structuring time to promote more collaboration between general and special educators, various types of paraprofessionals, and related-services personnel in order to discuss instruction and intervention for students they share.

- **Progress Monitoring and Problem Solving.** Monitor the progress of students with disabilities on instruction and interventions, as well as progress on IEP goals.

- **Assistive Technology.** Specify and monitor a reasonable time frame for students to receive AT devices, and consider the resources needed to meet the time frame.

- **Music Therapy.** Provide specific entry and exit criteria for students believed to need music therapy to benefit from special education instruction.

- **Postsecondary Transition Activities and Supports.** Delineate school leadership responsibility for ensuring students with IEPs have access to high quality postsecondary transition activities and supports, and identify funding for community work.

e. *Differentiated Professional Learning and Parent Training.* Embed in the professional learning curriculum mentioned in Recommendation 1e and the content needed to carry out Recommendation 3. In addition, consider –

- How and when personnel will be provided access to training in each critical area;

- How key information will be communicated effectively;

- How information will be used; and

- What additional coaching and supports may be needed.

Review training and information-sharing opportunities for parents and community partners, and identify topics for the 2017-18 school year, including areas mentioned in this report and what data suggest might be needed. As part of this process, consider how professional learning will be provided within the current weekly collaborative time limitations.

f. *Data Analysis and Reports.* In addition to ensuring that activities described in Recommendation 1e include data and analysis of academic instruction and behavior/emotional supports for students with disabilities, consider the following actions–

- **Data Reporting.** Report data using the charts in this report as a guide, expanding upon them to better target patterns and areas of concern.

- **Risk Ratios.** To the extent possible and when appropriate, report disparities on indicators using a risk ratio.

- **Progress Monitoring.** Establish common school-based data collection and reporting

systems to monitor the progress of students with disabilities, both academically and behaviorally. Ensure that benchmark and progress-monitoring data on students taking alternate assessments are included.

To the extent possible, embed data in the dashboard system used for all students.

g. *Monitoring and Accountability.* Expect that all principals are responsible for overseeing special education in their buildings, and that area assistant superintendents hold principals accountable for this responsibility. Embed the following activities in the monitoring and accountability systems described in Recommendation 1g.

- *Baseline Data.* To the extent possible, collect baseline data on the use of interventions with students with IEPs. Include data on educational setting rates, achievement, suspension/expulsion rates, and graduation and dropout rates, and begin evaluating the effects of interventions. In each area, consider collecting and analyzing data by race/ethnicity and gender, and develop risk ratios by indicator/subgroups.

- *Data Collection and Reports.* Review data, data collection issues, and reports that are requested by the superintendent and school board. Begin including baseline data described above, as well as special education state performance plan indicators. Provide regular updates on the status of special education reforms. Develop protocols for reporting data to inform decision-making. Produce templates for user-friendly summary reports showing academic and behavioral interventions and outcomes for students with disabilities. Review necessary changes in programs and interventions based on the data. Plan follow-up activities to collect data that the district does not currently collect and produce reports it currently does not produce.

- *Data Checks.* Include information on students with disabilities in data discussion sessions in order to develop follow-up actions and track outcomes.

- *Fidelity Assessments and Walk-Throughs.* Review current walk-through tools used to monitor instruction and interventions in general education classes, RSP classes, and SDCs to see how students are being taught and engaged, and how consistent instruction is across schools for students with disabilities. Provide guidance such as that called for in Recommendation 3c. Initiate technical assistance, professional development, coaching, and mentoring to improve practices.

- *Timely Communication and Feedback.* Establish a process for timely feedback to the district's MTSS leadership team on barriers to problem-solving activities, particularly when they are beyond the control of local schools. Require the schools to seek assistance in resolving problems.

IV. Support for Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities

This section summarizes SCUSD's supports for teaching and learning for students with disabilities. The information covers interdepartmental collaboration, administration and operation of special education, fiscal issues, and accountability.

Interdepartmental and School Leadership Interaction and Collaboration

Given concerns about student achievement and social/emotional wellness generally, and for students with disabilities in particular, as well as the high costs and legal implications of special education, it is essential that central office staff and school leadership collaborate effectively. When this does not occur, communication and accountability suffers.

Central Office Organization

In addition to the superintendent and deputy superintendent, there are seven chief officers. One chief oversees academics, and the others oversee business, communications, human resources, information, operations, and strategy. Although the district's organizational chart shows all of these chiefs reporting to the interim deputy superintendent, the Council team was informed that they report directly to the superintendent.

Deputy Superintendent Reports

Five assistant superintendents report to the deputy superintendent. One is responsible for equity, and four are area assistant superintendents (AAS). Also, the deputy oversees a director for teacher and leadership development.

- *Equity.* The equity assistant superintendent oversees two directors (one for student hearings/placements, including alternative education, behavior/reentry, attendance, dropout prevention, and reentry; and one for social and emotional learning).

- *AASs.* The AASs each oversee about 17 schools that represent all grade levels. Also, each AAS has several districtwide responsibilities, which are shown in Exhibit 4a below.

Exhibit 4a. AAS Programmatic Responsibilities

Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
School, Family and Community Partnerships Matriculation and Orientation Center	Enrollment Center	Athletics Integrated Support Services - Student Support (10 staff for social/ emotional and 4 staff for learning. - Health - Homeless - Bullying Prevention	Youth Development - Youth Services - Foster Services

Seven staff members report to the chief academic officer (CAO). These individuals oversee: curriculum and instruction (C&I), special education, multilingual literacy, child development, gifted and talented education (GATE), college/career readiness, state and federal programs, and adult education.

Collaboration between Offices and Departments

Several meetings are scheduled regularly for the executive cabinet, extended cabinet, academic team, and networks. Also, informal collaboration between departments occurs episodically.

- *Extended Cabinet Meetings.* The extended cabinet, which includes the assistant superintendents and directors, meets every other week to discuss relevant issues and obtain feedback. During recent meetings, the group reviewed special education data and discussed results. Other discussions have concerned the social/emotional needs of students and how they are being addressed.

- *Deputy Superintendent, AASs, and CAO Meetings.* Periodically, the deputy superintendent, AASs and the CAO meet to discuss areas of concern.

- *Network Team.* Most but not all principals meet within networks that are based on feeder patterns. Lead principals from each network also meet with the deputy superintendent to review relevant issues discussed during network meetings. The deputy superintendent also shares information with the AASs who do not participate in the network meetings.

- *Academic Office Team.* Academic office team meetings include all central office leaders who are involved with teaching/learning and representative members of their staff. In addition to assistant superintendents, directors, and coordinators, special education training specialists and program specialist attend. The team represents staff from the various departments in the academic office including child development, curriculum and instruction, state/federal programs, GATE, career and college readiness, multilingual education, and adult education.

- **Academic Office Principal Meeting**. In an effort to build consistency across the district and work more closely with school personnel, principals attend monthly meeting and include teachers at every third meeting.

- *Cross Department Collaboration.* There is informal collaboration between the leadership of special education and integrated-support services. Also, human resources and special education work together with principals on recruitment fairs.

Effectiveness of SCUSD's Current Organization

Based on the feedback of focus group participants, the central office organization could be improved to maximize support of and collaboration with schools. The district does not appear to have a clear vision and theory of action that is consistently communicated with school personnel. The district is functioning as a system of schools that provides inconsistent teaching

and learning opportunities across schools, rather than a school system built on a foundation of equity and excellence. Schools have a high degree of autonomy without recognized non-negotiables. These circumstances, detailed below, have produced weak shared ownership and accountability for special education.

- *Siloed Teaching & Learning Support.* The following are examples of ways in which personnel supporting teaching and learning are not aligned to schools for maximum effect.

  - *Fragmented Leadership.* AASs are absent from the executive cabinet and are not well connected to the academic office. As a result, the AASs are unable to communicate important information that they glean from their school visits and discussions with their principals. Although the deputy superintendent receives periodic feedback from lead network principals, it does not compare to the type of feedback provided by the daily interaction between AASs and principals. The different reporting lines for the CAO and AASs have limited their interaction and opportunities for joint problem solving and collaboration. There is a desire to have the CAO, as well as the other chiefs, visit schools more frequently to directly observe school and student issues.

  - *Network Principal Structure.* Most principals meet regularly through six informal networks that are generally— but not always—based on elementary, middle and high school feeder patterns. Each network has a lead principal that represents them in a separate meeting that the deputy superintendent leads. The deputy shares information from the lead principal meeting with the AASs who do not participate in the network meetings. This communication process is likely to leave out information AASs would like to have, however. During the team's discussions with principals, some expressed their opinion that the network meeting structure was not effective. They reported that discussions at these meetings are less useful when the network's schools are not fully aligned with feeder patterns, and they would be more beneficial if schools were aligned by grade level.

  - *AAS Bifurcated Responsibilities.* AAS responsibilities are divided between supervision of principals and districtwide programs. This bifurcation reduces the support AASs are able to provide to both principals and programs.

  - *Non-alignment of AASs & Special Education Program Specialists.* The special education program specialists are assigned to schools that do not line up with those for which the AASs have oversight. As a result, program specialists have schools supervised by several AASs, and AASs have schools supported by many program specialists. This structure makes it more difficult for each group to collaborate and address special education issues for schools they have in common. Issues include ensuring effective compliance and problem-solving for stronger special education instruction and supports. Furthermore, it makes it more difficult for program specialists to attend AAS/principal meetings, even if they were invited. (This circumstance is also true in other departments with staff assigned by school area.)

  - *Separate Physical Health Support.* Personnel in two separate departments support the physical health needs of students. The special education director oversees one set for students with IEPs (including individualized nursing care through nonpublic agencies for

some 51 students), and the Area 3 AAS oversees the other set (with a vacant director[86]) for regular school nurses. When feasible, students are supported by the school's regular nurse. Typically, school districts have one administrator who coordinates all physical health needs regardless of a student's disability.

- *Separate Social/Emotional Support*. Personnel who support the social/emotional well-being of students are divided into four separate components. These personnel, along with their respective supervisors, include: the special education director (social workers, psychologists, behavior specialists) the Area 3 AAS (student support services), the Area 4 AAS (youth development), and the equity assistant superintendent (social emotional learning). With the varied mental health needs of students, such fragmentation makes it more difficult for personnel who work in this area to be effective. For example, CASEL related training does not include the special education department's social workers and psychologists, even though this information is relevant to their work.

- *Separate Departmental Administration and Operation of Section 504 and IDEA.* While there is considerable overlap in student requirements under Section 504 and IDEA, they differ in that Section 504 also includes students with disabilities who receive only related services and supplementary aids under IDEA. In spite of the close association between the activities required under these two legal mandates, they are administered separately in different departments (Area 3's health division for Section 504 and the special education department for IDEA). By having the health division oversee Section 504, students who may qualify for academic or social/emotional disabilities may not be sufficiently addressed. Furthermore, this separation has led to having two different teams potentially providing support for the same student when that student may not be eligible for an IEP but may be eligible for a Section 504 plan--even though the participants may be the same.

The cumulative effect of these and other circumstances has led to a lack of coherence in these components, and has diminished the respect school personnel have for the work of the central office. These issues have also contributed to the strong push by schools to maintain their local autonomy.

- *Disjointed District/School Visions and Actions.* Because of the lack of agreed-upon non-negotiables, AASs are less able to hold principals accountable for student outcomes. As discussed above, district and school interests are not always the same. Principals filter information to protect their schools from district mandates they do not fully embrace, and are disinclined to engage central office personnel when it does not meet their individual purposes. Two anecdotes exemplify this finding. First, unlike any other district where the Council's team has conducted a special education review, some principals interviewed strongly objected to having special education program specialists providing more support for teaching/learning in their schools, especially if they could be freed up from their compliance focus. Second, only half of the 18 principals invited chose to show up for our focus group. Of those who participated, the majority represented full inclusion schools. This proportion of attendance was small compared to other SCUSD focus groups, and to other focus groups in other school district reviews.

- *Insufficient Cross-Departmental and School Collaboration.* In addition to the examples of

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[86] This position was vacant at the time of the visit.

cross-departmental collaboration described above, other needs that were cited included:

– More aggressive human resource recruiting and position processing to fill numerous vacant special education positions;

– Regularly scheduled meetings between transportation and special education to address long and costly routes.

– More effective practices at the district's enrollment center to ensure that communication with the special education department is continuously effective, regardless of rotating staff and summer schedules, so that incoming students with IEPs are placed appropriately and in a timely manner.

– More consistent and timely responses from department personnel to schools, e.g., transportation, human resources, and special education.

Generally, personnel from both central office and schools seek professional learning and information, especially those who are new. Conditions such as those described above are associated with what is seen as a constant turnover of leadership (20 of 76 new principals last year, several interim positions at the highest administrative levels, etc. [87]). There is also agreement that the AAS role is more reactive than proactive, and they see themselves as "fire fighters." Other departmental personnel voiced this theme as well. Restructuring within departments does not address these issues. To leverage the knowledge and expertise of SCUSD leaders and staff members we met, personnel need to be aligned in a manner that will maximize their collective efforts.

Administration and Operation of Special Education

Special Education Organizational Structure

Exhibit 4b shows the special education department's personnel and organizational functions under the special education/special education local plan area (SELPA) director and three supervisors. A fourth supervisor position was vacant at the time of the Council's visit, and the duties of this position were transferred to the other three supervisors. As with other central office departments, special education was cut dramatically in 2010, which has made it more difficult for personnel to carry out their responsibilities.

Exhibit 4b. Special Education Department Organization and Functions

Special Education/ SELPA Director	Supervisor 1	Supervisor 2	Supervisor 3
60 direct reports	83 direct reports	74.5 direct reports	29 direct reports
3 supervisors 12 program specialists	50 speech/language pathologists (SLPs) 5 SLP assistants	41 IEP designated instructional paraprofessionals (DIP) (school-based)	11 transition workability program staff 5 occupational therapists & COTAs (OT assistants)

[87] Numbers were current as of the time of the review.

Special Education/ SELPA Director	Supervisor 1	Supervisor 2	Supervisor 3
30 psychologists 12 SELPA support staff 3 inclusive practices coaches 1 budget technician	7 hearing interpreters 5 preschool teachers 8 instruction aides 1 individual instruction specialist (home/hospital) 6 adult transition program 1 office technician	14 behavior intervention specialists and I/As 5 health aides 6 Social Workers 1.0 office technicians II	5 assistive technology staff 4 adapted PE specialists 3 Shriner's Hospital teachers

Additional Supervisor Responsibilities		
Supervisor 1	Supervisor 2	Supervisor 3
Deaf Task Force	Extended school year	
New students with IEPs placement Personnel work re: posting and interviewing for vacant special education positions Job fairs, etc. Paperwork for teachers over their contract limit Staff development	Administrative review team Compliance (with director/ assistant), and special education procedural manual Residential placement Behavior review and pre-expulsion hearings for students with IEPs (with student hearing/placement director) Compensatory education and tutoring County Office of Education programs Special Arts	Monthly CAO meetings Alternate standards curriculum Field trips Special educator induction (with induction coordinator) New teachers not in induction program Nursing services PT and music therapy Special Olympics Surrogate parents (with foster youth services) Department staff appreciation/team building Special education website

Observations about the Organization of the Special Education Department

The special education department's current structure has components that limit its effectiveness. These include:

- *Span of Personnel Oversight.* The special education director and two supervisors have an unrealistically high number of people to supervise. With direct reports numbering 61, 83, and 74.5, respectively, it is not realistic for the director and supervisors to carry out their supervisory responsibilities as expected.

- *Human Resources Work.* Each supervisor carries out a fair amount of work related to human resources, which is excessive because of the high turnover rates of teachers and aides.

- *Schools Aligned with AASs.* As discussed above, program specialists are not assigned to schools in a manner that is aligned with the AASs. Although they were aligned in the past, as their numbers changed, so did their organization.

- *Personnel with Similar Expertise.* Personnel who address physical health and social/emotional health are separate from other personnel supporting students without IEPs but have similar needs.

- *School-based Positions.* Several supervisory functions involve oversight of school-based preschool special educators and instructional aides. Several positions are for two classes at a newly reopened school, and it is anticipated that their supervision will transfer to the principal next school year. The other positions are at sites without a site administrator, so the special education department provides their supervision.

- *Postsecondary Transition.* Each group supporting postsecondary transition activities (6 with the adult transition program and 11 with the transition workability program) reports to different supervisors. In the past, the two groups reported to the same supervisor. But with the current vacant supervisor position, the two postsecondary transitions groups were divided up and now report to two different supervisors. All supervisor assignments will be re-evaluated when the additional supervisor is hired.

Focus Group Feedback about Special Education Department Operation

Focus group participants, including CAC parents, generally expressed positive comments about the special education director. Special education teachers believe the director supports their efforts, and that she is responsive despite her broad responsibilities.

Overall, special education personnel we met appeared to be committed to students, and eager to improve their support to schools. More specific feedback is provided below.

- *Compliance Focus.* Program specialists and other special education personnel are focused primarily on compliance because of their fear of litigation. At the same time, there are concerns about the quality of IEPs, timely access to IEPs by aides, and their implementation. Interviewees, however, reported the lack of structured English language support for students, including students with IEPs and 504 plans.

- *Program Specialists.* Program specialists are each assigned to 8 to 10 schools. They provide advice on special education service delivery, compliance, IEP development, etc. Several concerns emerged with respect to these personnel.

  - *IEP Role.* Program specialists serve as the district's representative in all initial and IEP reevaluations--as well as complicated IEPs. They are encouraged to and want to support teaching/learning, but compliance priorities take most of their time. According to most AASs and principals with whom we spoke, program specialists are not needed at each of these IEP meetings. Their sense was that psychologists had a good understanding of the

eligibility process and student needs, and could chair these meetings without the program specialists.

- – *Gatekeeping Function.* Although the program specialists are viewed as gatekeepers, they bear the school-based burden of maintaining compliance, as most principals do not actively engage in special education.

- *Office Administration.* Central office special education assistants reported a variety of concerns related to inconsistent work ethic and inequitable workloads. Access to staff members' calendars and the opportunity to provide input during departmental staff meetings would improve their work quality, according to assistants. A classification study was conducted for the assistants about a year ago, but the group was unaware of the results.

There was a strong belief among interviewees that most complaints relate to special education, and that program specialists are not always sufficiently responsive. Yet, special education is not widely owned by AASs and principals, except to communicate a need for more teachers or aides, or a compliance problem. Absent a sense of shared responsibility and accountability at the district, area, and school levels, and use of consistent rules, communication, and training, an army of program specialists would probably still be insufficient to meet all expectations and student needs.

School-based Special Education and Related Services Support

This subsection presents data on staff-to-student ratios in special education, i.e., speech/language pathologists, psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists (OTs), and physical therapists (PTs). SCUSD ratios are compared to other urban school districts on which we have data.[88] (All districts did not report data in each area.) These data are based on full time equivalent (FTE) staff members and not on the number of positions *per se*. Also, the Council team presumes that FTE data includes vacant positions.

The data do not give precise comparisons, so results need to be used with caution. District data are not consistently reported (e.g., some districts include contractual personnel and others may exclude them) and data are sometimes affected by varying placement types used by a school district. The data may count all students with IEPs, including those placed in charters, agencies, and nonpublic schools, while other districts will not count these students. Still, these data are the best available and are useful as a *rough guide* to staffing ratios. Appendix B has detailed data on each school district.

Special Educators

The following is information on special education teacher staffing ratios and information provided by district and focus group participants.

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[88] Much of the data were provided by the school districts that responded to a survey conducted by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative; Council team or members of the team collected the remaining data during district reviews.

Special Education Teacher Staffing Ratios

Exhibit 4c shows the district's student-to-special-education teacher ratios, compared to 71 other urban school districts. With 288 full-time-equivalent (FTE) special educators, [89] SCUSD has an average of 22.6 students with IEPs (including those with speech/language impairments) for every special educator.[90] This ratio is much higher than the 14.5 teacher-student average of all districts on which we have data, and ranks SCUSD as 66th among the 71 reporting districts.

Exhibit 4c. Average Number Students for Each Special Educator

Areas of Comparison	Special Education Teachers
Number of SCUSD Staff FTE	288.1
SCUSD Student w/IEP-to-Staff Ratios	22.6:1
All District Average Ratios	14.5:1
Range of All District Ratios	7–37:1
SCUSD Ranking Among Districts[91]	**66th of 71 districts**

Allocation of Positions and Hiring

According to district personnel, special education teachers are allocated based on the projected numbers of students in each relevant service area, e.g., resource, special day by type, and the projected number of students at each site for the following year. Students also have the opportunity to apply for open enrollment, which affects the allocation at some schools. The district's business office sponsors a one-stop staffing event each December or at the beginning of January. At that time, schools are shown their staffing projections. In addition to principals, representatives from the human resources department, the budget office, the AAS's, and the special education director go through staffing projections line-by-line.

Focus group participants raised the following concerns related to hiring decisions and multiple school assignments for resource providers.

- *Hiring.* The Council team received various explanations about who is responsible for selecting school-based special educators. Some interviewees reported that the special education department makes the selections, and others reported that the principal does. A third answer was that the selection is a joint effort between the principal and special education department, but the special education department "decides." This process is different from that of school districts that enable principals to hire their own staff, including special educators—an approach which supports principal accountability for special education services.

- *Resource Teachers.* Reportedly, a larger than usual number of resource teachers have students at more than one school. Of the five such teachers we spoke with, four had students

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[89] The FTE number includes teachers for: resource programs (106.1), SDCs (154), home/hospital (3), inclusion specialists (2), inclusion coaches (3), and deaf/hard of hearing (5).

[90] Although special educators for the most part do not instruct students with a speech/language impairment only, as SLPs are the primary providers, these students were included as students with IEPs for all surveyed districts.

[91] Ranking begins with districts having a low average number of students to one staff person.

enrolled in two different schools. Almost all districts we have reviewed are able to have resource special educators report to one school only. The district's distinction may be related to its reliance on SDCs, which does not enable these teachers to be fully embedded in each school's culture and learning environment.

Vacant Special Education Teacher Positions

A common theme of focus group participants concerned vacant positions, and students who continue to be taught by substitutes or new teachers who lack adequate understanding of teaching and learning. Special education teacher shortages have been an historic issue.

Exhibit 4d shows the number of vacant special education teacher positions at three times, including the number of resource and SDC vacancies. The largest number of vacancies was in January 2016, with 11 resource teachers and 23.5 SDC teachers. By November 2016, SDC teacher vacancies decreased to four, but resource teacher vacancies remained at 10. At the time of the Council's visit in November, at least one of these vacant positions was for a pre-K/kindergarten SDC for young children with autism, which had five IEP designated instruction paraprofessionals (DIPs). Since the Council team's visit, the classroom for young children was staffed with a special education teacher.

Exhibit 4d. Number of Vacant Special Education Positions by Resource and SDC

	1/1/16	9/1/16	11/17/16
■ Resource Program	11	5	10
■ Special Day Class	23.5	5	4
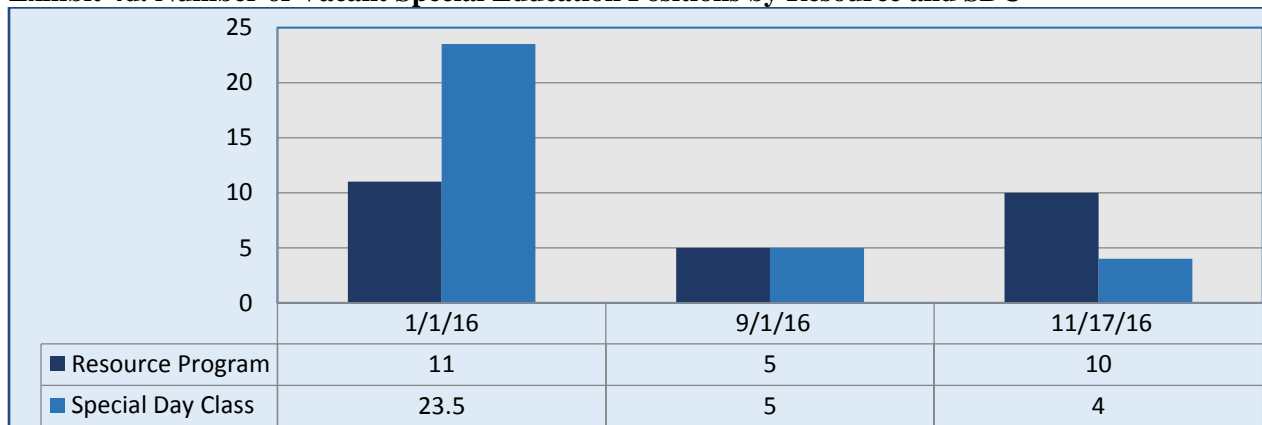
Reportedly, one reason the district has had difficulty filling special education (as well as other) positions pertains to a collective bargaining provision that prevents the district from posting vacant teacher positions outside of the district, and from offering new employment until July 1st of each year. This late delay negatively affects district hires because most other districts around SCUSD start school in early August and have earlier hire dates. The district has initiated several activities to reduce special educator vacancies, but they have fallen short of their goals. These efforts included:

- *Pool of Teachers.* For this school year, the human resources office established a pool of teachers with contracts for 2015-16 without specifying a school location. However, the pool was not sufficient to meet the hiring demand.

- *Philippines Recruitment.* The district aggressively recruited 12 special educators from the Philippines, and worked with a vender to assist the new teachers with cultural support,

housing, etc. Nevertheless, more was needed to enable these new hires to understand the needs of their students, some of which are intensive.

For 2016-17 the district is revitalizing a prior partnership with SAC State University to recruit graduating teachers before other districts can hire them. Also, by using some teacher credential changes applicable to intern programs, the district hopes to have a cohort of 24 new teachers next school year. Other suggestions that were mentioned included the use of a hiring bonus of about $5,000, which has been a strategy successfully employed by other districts.

There are some who question whether human resources' recruitment efforts have been sufficiently aggressive. The absence of a full-time person in human resources to address special education and related services personnel is problematic. From the vantage point of schools and parents, any personnel vacancy in a critical area such as special education is not satisfactory.

Paraeducators

The following is information about paraeducator[92] ratios and information from district and focus group participants.

Paraeducators Staffing Ratios

Exhibit 4e shows the district's student-to-paraeducator ratios, compared to 71 other urban school districts. With 246.2 FTE paraeducators, SCUSD has an average of 26.5 students with IEPs for every paraeducator.[93] This ratio is much higher than the 15.3 paraeducator-student average of all districts on which we have data, and ranks SCUSD as 67th among the 71 reporting districts.

Exhibit 4e. Average Number Students for Each Paraeducator

Areas of Comparison	Paraeducators
Number of SCUSD Staff FTE	246.2
SCUSD IEPs-to-Staff Ratios	26.5:1
All District Average Ratios	15.3:1
Range of All District Ratios	5.26–56:1
SCUSD Ranking Among Districts[94]	**67th of 71 districts**

Paraeducator Vacancies

Exhibit 4f shows that from January 1, 2016 to November 17, 2016, the number of vacant paraeducator positions doubled from 17 to 34. The November vacancy figure represented 14 percent of the 246 paraeducator positions. As with the special educator vacancy situation, the absence of a full workforce negatively affects the education of students with IEPs.

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[92] The term paraeducator is used generically and includes both general instructional aides and IEP designated instruction paraprofessionals (DIPs).

[93] Although special educators for the most part do not instruct students with a speech/language impairment only, as SLPs are the primary providers, these students were included as students with IEPs for all surveyed districts.

[94] Ranking begins with districts having a low average number of students to one staff person.

Exhibit 4f. Number of Vacant Paraeducator Positions

	1/1/16	9/1/16	11/17/16
Number of Positions	17	26	34
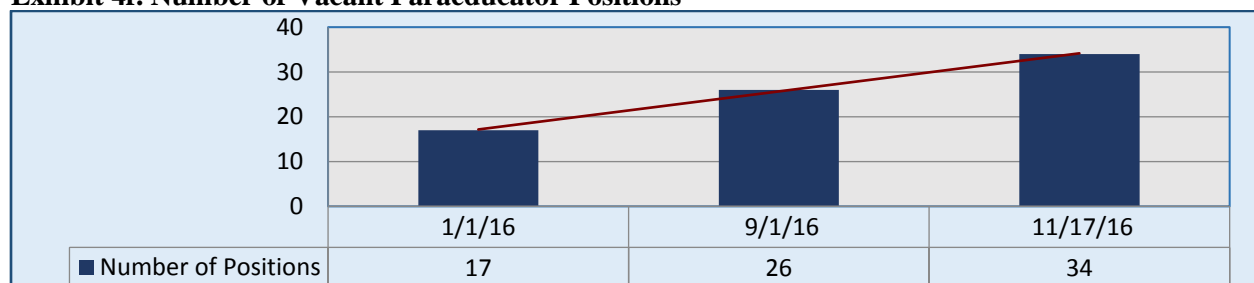
Allocation of Paraeducators

The district has two types of instructional aides: general instructional aides and IEP designated instructional paraprofessionals (DIP). Instructional aides are assigned to special education programs at school sites. The DIPs are assigned to students with IEPs that require an individual or shared aide, and they assist behavior intervention specialists to implement students' behavior intervention plans.

- *General Aides.* Elementary resource-service program (RSPs) teachers each have 2.5 hours of aide time. Middle and high school allocations vary based on student enrollment and number of teachers in the program. Generally, each SDC class has one aide assigned, while an SDC for students with moderate to severe disabilities have two aides. School principals hire these aides.

- *DIPs.* The district's inclusion teachers assess students referred for additional adult support to help students access the curriculum. The assessment results are shared at IEP meetings for the team's review and determination of need. The DIPs working with the behavioral intervention specialists are hired and supervised centrally by the special education department.[95] Most of the district's paraeducators that are centrally employed are DIPs The district supervisor, inclusion specialist, and nonpublic agency staff meet at least monthly to discuss students and the possible fading of support.

Focus Group Participant Feedback

Focus group participants expressed the following concerns about paraeducators.

- *Use of Private Agencies.* The district contracts with three private agencies for some 200 behavioral and individual aides--in addition to district-employed aides. We heard many concerns about paraeducators and their lack of training, poor retention, and restrictions on collaboration with student teachers. Most of these concerns applied to one vendor supplying behavioral aides. The team was told that paraeducators hired through vendors were generally better trained than those hired directly by the district, and that they could be replaced if needed. However, some focus group participants disputed the claim that paraeducators from the vendor were well trained. Paraeducators from another vendor participated in a two-week training program focused on skills and knowledge they needed to work with their students and on their assigned tasks. Furthermore, depending on the agency in question, the

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[95] Most of the district's paraeducators are hired by the site and are general aides.

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paraeducators are not permitted to collaborate with teachers about such areas as the student's daily schedule, and what they need academically. Instead, this activity must be cleared with their supervisor. This requirement appears to interfere with the ongoing communication teachers and paraeducators must have to support their students. Either way, the district does not appear to have a way of differentiating the effectiveness of paraeducators.

- *Multiple Paraprofessionals for the Same Students.* Reportedly, some students have two different paraeducators, one for inclusion and the other for behavior.[96] This arrangement—though rare—appears to be unnecessary, costly, and confusing for teachers and parents.

- *Paraprofessional Role.* Reportedly, some general educators expect the paraeducator to teach an included student themselves, rather than have the paraeducator support the general and/or special educator's instruction.

- *IEP Attendance.* The paraeducators that the special education department supervises is permitted to attend IEP meetings only if the special education supervisor approves the activity. It would be more effective and efficient to have this activity approved by appropriate personnel at the school site.

Related Services Staffing Ratios and Focus Group Participant Feedback

Staffing ratios and other data on related-services personnel are summarized below and detailed in Exhibit 4e.

- *Psychologists.* With 29.7 FTE psychologists, including five interns, there was one psychologist for every 219.5 students with IEPs, compared to the district average of 119 students. SCUSD ranked 47th of the 63 reporting districts in their number of psychologists.

- *Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP).* With 50.8 FTE speech/language pathologists (SLPs), there was one SLP for every 128.3 students with IEPs in SCUSD, compared with the district average of 173 students. SCUSD ranked 53rd of 70 reporting districts in their number of SLPs.

- *Other Related Services.* The district provided small FTE numbers for social workers and nurses employed by the special education department, but it did not include personnel hired on a contractual basis or employed by other departments. Because these data are not complete, staff ratios were not computed to compare to other districts. Also, no data were provided for physical therapists (PT). Data for other districts are available in Appendix A.

Exhibit 4e. Average Number Students for Each Speech/Language Pathologist and Psychologist

Related-Services Areas	Psychologists	SLPs	Social Worker	Nurses	OT	PT
Number of SCUSD Staff FTE	29.7	50.8	8	5	2	NA
SCUSD Students w/IEPs-to-Staff	219.5:1	128.3				
All District Average Ratio	119:1	173:1				
Range of All District Ratios	26–596:1	31–376:1				
SCUSD Ranking	47th of 63	53rd of 70				

[96] District reports this situation would occur very rarely based on a student's indiviudal needs.

Focus Group Participant Feedback

Focus group participants expressed the following concerns about the management of SLPs and psychologists.

- *Speech/Language Pathologists.* SCUSD has had to rely on private agencies to contract for at least 10 SLPs to compensate for positions that the district has been unable to fill. Many SLPs have gone to nonpublic agencies, which enable them to have smaller caseloads and better salaries. Reportedly, SLPs leave the district for reasons such as the following:

    - *Caseloads.* SLPs have caseloads that begin with some 60 students at the beginning of the school year and usually reach 80 or so by the end of the school year. This arrangement leaves the SLPs no time to work with general education students having speech/language issues that could be addressed through an MTSS framework.

    - *Professional Learning.* Rather than discussing strategies for improving instruction during SLP meetings, the focus reportedly is on avoiding litigation.

    - *SLP Assistants.* The special education department currently employs five SLP assistants, which the district uses to enhance support for SLPs.[97]

- *Psychologists.* The following concerns were expressed in the area of school psychology.

    - *Role.* Psychologists primarily are engaged in completing special education assessments, and they have high caseloads. This test-reliant process reflects an outdated model of psychological support. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and district psychologists support a role that enables psychologists to engage in MTSS, which includes the gathering and review of data, problem solving, and providing interventions.

    - *Assessment Tools.* Psychologists lack tools to support valid and nondiscriminatory assessments.

    - *Vacancies.* There are two vacant psychologist positions, and one psychologist is working through a private contract. The five psychology interns do not have much access to training.

- *Occupational and Physical Therapists.* Generally, OT/PT services are provided on site and through clinic-based services depending on student need. However, it is not unusual for occupational and physical therapy to be provided at the site of a private vendor, with parents being reimbursed for the child's transportation. This model does not support coordination with the students' special education, which the therapy is supposed to benefit. In addition, this model is not consistent with research that shows the benefits of school-based occupational therapy, including the use of a consultative model for students receiving special education.[98]

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[97] This footnote refers to SLPAs to support SLPs. In addition, CODAs are used to support occupational therapists.
[98] Occupational Therapy: Effective School-Based Practices within a Policy Context, Prepared for the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education, June 2007, retrieved from http://copsse.education.ufl.edu/docs/OT_CP_081307/1/OT_CP_081307.pdf. Also see, *What's the difference? Clinic-Based Versus School-Based Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy*, retrieved from https://blog.easystand.com/2011/04/clinic-based-versus-school-based-physical-therapy-and-occupational-therapy/.

- *Music Therapists.* IDEA does not specifically list music therapy as a related service; however, that list is not exclusive. The state's Title V regulation does refer to music therapy, which is to be provided by a registered musical therapist. Initially, music therapy was provided to students who lacked mobility and the ability to communicate. The service has expanded to other students regardless of their functioning level. Reportedly, students assessed for this service typically qualify, and there is no exit criteria.

- *Leadership.* Generally, there was concern about the lack of supervision for related services personnel, particularly for individuals who were new to the profession. The SLPs do not currently have a lead provider, but the psychologist has a full caseload and "lead is in name only." The seven behavior intervention specialists (BIS) do not have a lead BIS, which is especially problematic when one is absent and others have to have their schedules adjusted to cover student needs. There were also overarching concerns that related-service providers are not being asked for feedback on their need for materials and workspace, and replies to their emails are not always timely. Lead personnel can be useful to supervisors when they do not have the expertise related to each provider group supervised. However, the leads need to have their caseloads reduced to have sufficient time to carry out their expected responsibilities.

Overall School District Rankings

Exhibit 4f shows the number of districts having smaller staff-to-student ratios, i.e., fewer students with IEPs per staff member in each area, compared with SCUSD and other districts on which we have data. In all areas, the district had much larger ratios compared to most other districts.

- *Special Educators.* Sixty-five of 71 districts (92 percent) have smaller ratios than SCUSD.

- *Paraprofessionals.* Sixty-six of 71 districts (93 percent) have smaller ratios than SCUSD.

- *Speech/Language Pathologists.* Fifty-two of 70 districts (74 percent) have smaller ratios than SCUSD.

- *Psychologists.* Forty-seven of 63 districts (74 percent) have smaller ratios than SCUSD.

Exhibit 4f. SCUSD Ranking and Number of District Survey Respondents

	Special Educators	Paraeducators	S/L Pathologists	Psychologists
Total Districts	71	71	70	63
Number of Districts with Smaller Student-to-Personnel Ratios	65	66	52	47
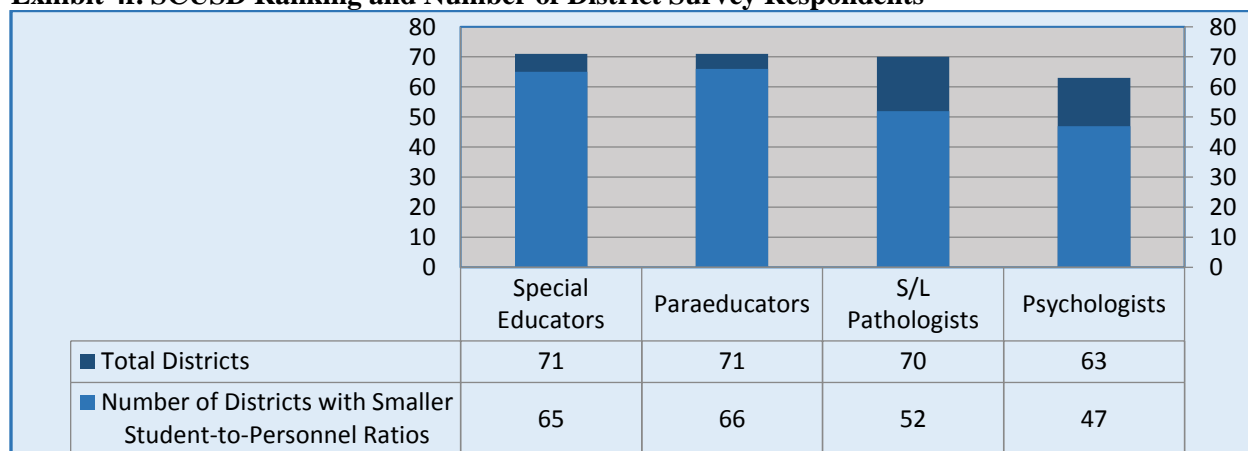
Compliance and Fiscal Issues

Information in this subsection focuses on issues related to compliance, access to information, dispute resolution, fiscal issues, and accountability.

Compliance Support and Access to Information

The following provides information about the district's data efficacy, maintenance of special education records, the electronic IEP system, the procedural handbook, requirements for IEP meeting participation, and the special education webpage.

- *SCUSD Data Efficacy.* The Council's team asked the district to provide data to support the charts, tables, and analysis included in this report. In several areas, the data did not have or did not provide the information requested.

    - *Special School Reporting.* The district was asked to report the number of students with IEPs by each of the educational settings that the state and U.S. Department of Education monitors. (State Performance Plan Indicators 5, 9, and 10). The district's report did not show any figures for students placed by the district in special schools operated by the district or nonpublic agencies.[99] Instead, the educational settings for these students were included in the less restrictive setting of general education less than 40 percent of the time, and between 79 percent and 40 percent of the time.

    - *Suspensions.* Rather than providing suspension data on students with and without IEPs by the number of suspension days in the manner monitored by State Performance Plan Indicator 4, the district reported only suspensions for all students by the reasons for suspensions.

    Not only were these data important for the Council team to assess district practices, they are also important for the district to assess regularly and before it receives its annual state report based on prior year figures. Only after several discussions was the district able to produce relevant data on the topics that were analyzed in this report.

- *Maintenance of Special Education Records.* The district maintains all special education records centrally, even though most of these records are/could be maintained on the district's SEIS system. Furthermore, there is no requirement that schools maintain all special education records for their students. The maintenance of these records at the central office, which requires school office staff to send and special education department staff to manage, is unnecessary and costly. Other school districts, such as the Chicago Public Schools, have not had centralized record filing since the early 1990s.

- *Usage and Access to Electronic IEP System.* Various concerns were expressed about training in and access to the district's electronic IEP record system.

    - *Training.* There is no structured training in place for new personnel or those who need to supplement their knowledge of the district's IEP system and special education procedures. Although webinars are available, there is a desire for direct professional

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[99] Reportedly, this reporting issue has been corrected.

development. Without a good understanding of the IEP system and relevant procedures, noncompliance issues are more likely to arise.

- – *General Educator Access.* Reportedly, general education teachers do not have access to the electronic IEP system--even on a "read only" basis.

- – *SIS.* The student information system does not have a field to denote students who have an IEP or 504 disability. This notice, which other districts include in their systems, provides an alert to unaware teachers that there may be information they require to meet student needs.

- *Special Education Procedural Handbook.* The district's special education procedural handbook, which provides information on special education compliance, is on the special education department's webpage.[100] Although it is a fairly comprehensive document, the document has a PDF format. As a result, it is not web-based with links to important resources and more detailed information, and it is not easily updated.[101] Although the manual is posted online, focus group members (including special education and related services personnel) generally were unaware of its existence.

- *Collective Bargaining Agreement Reference to IEP Meeting Participation.* SCTA/SCUSD Collective Bargaining Agreement's Appendix D contains written information about which individuals are required to attend IEP meetings. Section 4c) of the Appendix pertains to IEP meeting attendance. The section specifies that "[r]egular education teachers shall have the rights, *but are not required*, to attend IEP meetings." (Italics added.)

In 1997, IDEA was reauthorized to require at least one of a student's regular education teachers to participate in the IEP meeting if a student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment.[102] As part of IDEA's reauthorization in 2004, a provision was added to allow an IEP team member to be excused or not participate under specific circumstances.[103] None of these circumstances are based on the regular education teacher's preference or blanket permission not to attend.

- *Department of Special Education Webpage.* The special education department has a webpage that provides the department's mission statement, and links to the following five areas of information:

- – Parent Resources with links to the state's parent notification form and the special education procedural handbook;

- – Community Advisory Committee (CAC) with information for parents;

- – Special education staff with names, phone numbers, and links to send messages;

- – Alternative Dispute Resolution with three ways to resolve disputes without filing complaints or due process hearing requests; and

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[100] Retrieved from http://www.scusd.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/special_education_procedural_handbook.pdf.
[101] See for example, Houston Independent School District's web-based special education document.[101]
[102] 34 C.F.R. §300.321(a)(2)
[103] 34 C.F.R. §300.321(e)

- Local Plan for Special Education.

The department is missing an opportunity to fill its webpage with links to the many publicly available resources that are of interest to district personnel and parents. See, for example, the webpage hosted by the Anchorage School District's special education department.[104]

Dispute Resolution

Data on due process hearing requests over the past four years, and information about the reasons for these requests, are provided below.

Due Process Hearing Requests

Special education litigation has historically ebbed and flowed depending on issues within the community, relationships with sites and central staff, and the impact of similar litigation decisions in other areas of the state. Based on information provided by the district for the last four years (2012-13 through 2015-16), parents filed 52 requests for due process hearings. Of these requests, 30 (58 percent) disputes were mediated, 9 (17 percent) were withdrawn or dismissed, and 11 (21 percent) proceeded to a hearing. Attorneys represented parents in 41 (79 percent) of the cases. The yearly figures are shown in Exhibit 4g. Overall the cases reflected 35 different schools. Three schools each had two requests, two schools each had three requests, and the nonpublic schools had five requests. The team was unable to compare these data with other districts.

Exhibit 4g. Number of Due Process Requests, Parent Attorneys, Mediations, and Hearings Over Four Years

	Requests	Attorney for Parent	Mediated	Withdrawn/Dismissed	Hearings
2012-13	13	11	13	1	0
2013-14	6	4	2	1	3
2014-15	17	14	10	2	3
2015-16	16	12	5	5	5
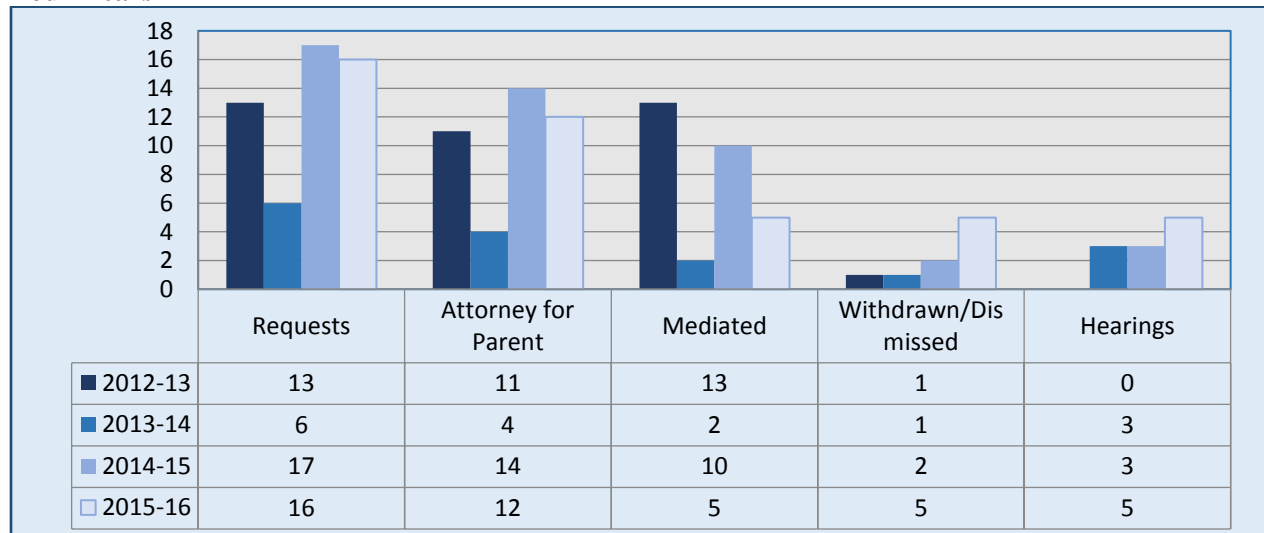
Due Process Associated Costs

Over these four years, the average settlement cost was $61,969. The total settlement costs reached $814,463.00, and legal fees added $296,200. In total, the district's cost was $904,713. Some of these costs may decrease as two cases are being negotiated. Also, legal fees associated

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[104] Retrieved from http://asdk12.org/sped/.

with one case may change because the case is pending in Federal Court. Exhibit 4h shows these costs by year.

In general, cases are lasting longer than before, so costs are going up. This may be due to the fact that there are more procedures now than in the past, and there is an increase in time opposing counsel is calling witnesses and presenting evidence. Moreover, the office of administrative hearings went through a staffing shift in the last few years. There has been substantial turnover in administrative law judges (ALJs), so it is now more common to see judges with little experience in this area. For its part, the special education division has tried out various strategies over the years in terms of training ALJs.

Exhibit 4h. Costs Associated with Due Process Over Four Years

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
■ All Settlement Costs	$170,350	$90,500	$221,213	$332,300
■ All Legal Fees	$35,500	$2,200	$209,000	$49,500
◆ Average Settlement	13,104	$15,083	$13,013	$20,769
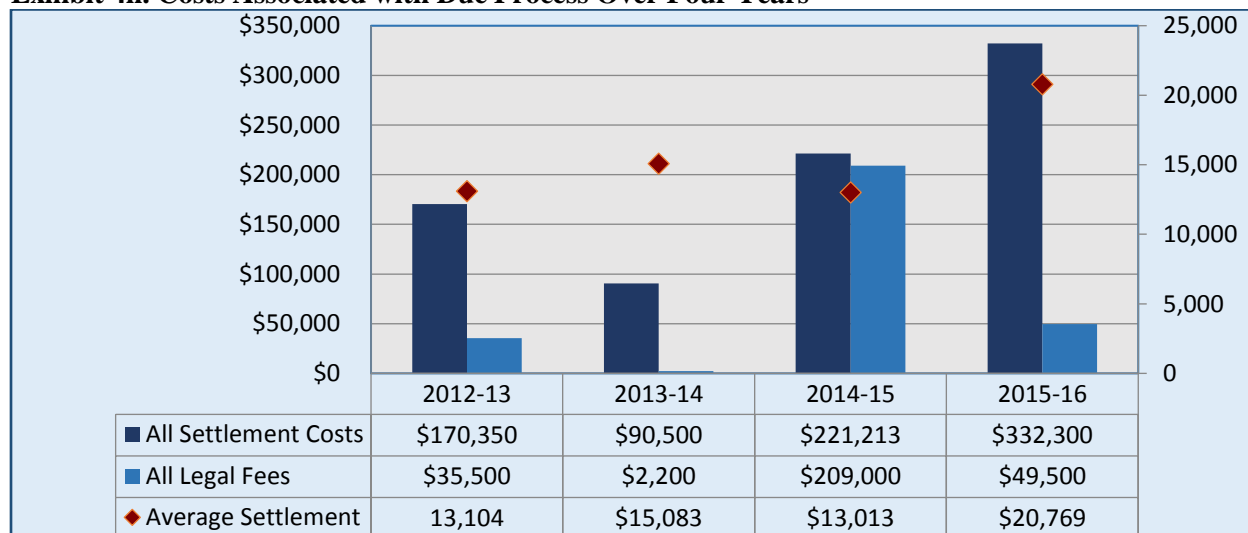
Due Process Hearing Issue Trends

Several major reasons were given to explain the high costs associated with due process.

- ***Shifting of Mental Health Services to Schools.*** Between 1984 and August 2011, county mental health agencies in California funded and provided such mental health services as: individual, group, and family therapy; case management; and services provided in both community-based and residential treatment programs. These decisions were made through an expanded IEP team decision.[105] The California legislature transferred these services to school districts, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year. All funds previously used to pay for these services were transferred to SELPAs and school districts. Although school districts in other states have always provided these services pursuant to students' IEPs, this expectation was new for California school districts. Five due process cases during the past four years led to residential treatment; and associated costs can reach more than $300,000 per child. Prior to 2012-13, SCUSD had no students placed in residential care. One attorney stated that this

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[105] "School Psychologists are the Best Equipped to Deliver Mental Health Services in the Schools," California Association of School Psychologists, retrieved from
http://www.casponline.org/pdfs/pdfs/casp_mental_health_papers.pdf.

basis for due process hearing requests is a trend across the 30 California districts she represents.

- ***Shifting Legal Standards.*** There has been some shift by administrative law judges (ALJs) hearing due process cases to depart from the current *Rowley* U.S. Supreme Court standard for determining a student's "benefit from education" to a higher standard, especially for mental health issues, and deferring to the expertise of school district witnesses. Also, a 9th circuit court case that addressed a student's out-of-school behavior is having an influence on ALJ considerations.

Overall, focus group participants indicated that the district's approach to due process was reactive rather than proactive, and involved principals who were not consistently engaged in the special education process, including in mediation and due process. Specifically, the most common procedural compliance issues cited included:

- Proper members of the IEP team not being present at meetings;

- Goals/objectives not being clear and measureable, and periodic progress monitoring reports being missing;

- All IEP designated services not being provided;

- Clear documentation not explaining why services are reduced or terminated;

- Placement offers not being clearly written;

- All areas of suspected disability not being assessed;

- Appropriate and measurable postsecondary transition plans and goals not being developed and implemented;

- Educationally related mental health services and academic supports not being assessed and implemented in a timely manner.

Actions Taken and Planned to Address Legal Issues

According to information provided by district representatives, the following activities are being implemented to address the underlying legal issues that face the district with respect to due process.

- Program specialists are providing monthly training on quality IEP development and implementation/monitoring of IEPs. Such training occurred more frequently prior to the provision of site collaborative time, which was created this school year.

- Administrative staff and program specialists are maintaining strong communication and collaboration with schools to provide support and training when a pattern of deficiency in IEP development and implementation is detected.

- Schools with noted deficiencies are receiving targeted professional learning.

- The special education director and supervisors are attending "difficult" IEP meetings to provide support and guidance to site staff and IEP teams.

- For complicated IEPs, time is being taken after the meeting and before the document is finalized to ensure all decisions are well documented and defensible. Before providing consent, parents are given an ample opportunity to review and reconvene with staff.

- IEP paperwork is being randomly audited at each site to identify areas of needed improvement, monitoring and professional learning for specific case managers.

- Ongoing professional learning is being provided for parents on IEP development, strategies for home, and implementation of the common core curriculum.

- The district is funding an alternate dispute resolution specialist for 2016-17 to provide independent consultation to parents before seeking legal representation.

- An additional program specialist and supervisory position will support the monitoring of more IEPs, and provide a higher level of support to specific sites where training and monitoring is needed

The actions above are proactive and targeted. They do not include, however, any role for principals to play with respect to oversight of special education in their schools. With all responsibility placed on special education department personnel and the absence of accountability by school leaders, disputes may decrease some, but not to the maximum extent possible if more shared ownership existed.

Medi-Cal

Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) increased the required documentation to support Medi-Cal reimbursement, documentation that exceeds federal requirements. To address these issues, the district has implemented a system to support the electronic documentation of Medi-Cal eligible services for all students with IEPs, including those who are enrolled in Medi-Cal. Training was provided to facilitate the documentation process.

Reportedly, personnel are struggling with the new electronic documentation process, and not all personnel are using it to track the services required to bill for Medi-Cal reimbursement. Some personnel feel that their caseloads are too large to document services electronically, or simply record that service notes are on file, which is not sufficient for Medi-Cal. District officials have not communicated a clear message that relevant personnel must use the electronic tracking system to document related services, or indicated the frequency by which information are required to be uploaded. Furthermore, there are no stated consequences for any failure to comply. These circumstances are likely to decrease substantially the district's Medi-Cal reimbursement.

Transportation

In addition to other areas discussed above, transportation services comprise a high special education cost area, and there are various concerns about the effectiveness of these services.

Transportation Costs

During 2015-16, there were 107 special education bus routes to transport students to district, nonpublic, and county school programs. With an average cost of some $96,000 per driver/route, the service's total cost was over $10,000,000. Reasons for this high cost include the following:

- **SDCs and Special Schools.** The district's reliance on a large proportion of SDCs and special schools to educate students with disabilities.

- **Bell Times.** Scheduling common bell times that do not allow for buses to run two routes each day. This is now a common transportation pattern for many urban school districts.

Transportation Effectiveness

Focus group participants expressed the following concerns about transportation services.

- **Length of Routes.** Reportedly, most transportation routes are not longer than 60 minutes. However, there were estimates that some routes, including those for preschoolers, run as long as 1.5 hours.

- **Use of Technology.** Technology is not used to report each student's transportation needs, which delays communications and service initiation.

- **Bus Driver Shortage.** There is a shortage of bus drivers, which has affected the number of buses that can operate. (This is a nationwide issue.)

- **Shortened School Days**. In some cases, students have a shortened school day because they arrive late and leave early to accommodate bus-route schedules.

Accountability

In the fall of 2011, the Council of the Great City Schools published its report *Pieces of the Puzzle*: *Factors in the Improvement of Urban School Districts on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.* [106] The report summarized research the Council conducted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) on characteristics of urban school districts that had made the greatest academic improvements and had the highest overall performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The first characteristic involved a district's clear statement of goals and districtwide accountability for results. This helps to create a culture of shared responsibility for student achievement.

Other research found similar results and articulated barriers to effective teaching and learning. [107] School districts that effectively support school leadership often demonstrate a capacity to facilitate learning and development, address barriers to learning and teaching, and

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[106] Available at
http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Pieces%20of%20the%20Puzzle_FullReport.pdf
[107] Toward a School District Infrastructure that More Effectively Addresses Barriers to Learning and Teaching, A Center Policy & Practice Brief, Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. November 2011, at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/toward%20a%20school%20district%20infrastructure.pdf.

govern and manage the district in ways that prioritize good instruction. In pursuing these goals, districts showing improvement have mechanisms for systemic planning, program implementation, evaluation, and accountability. During the team's review of SCUSD documents and discussions with district personnel, it identified the following issues concerning accountability.

Elements of State Structure

California law requires school districts and schools to develop a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), and allocate resources based on a Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). In addition, the state has established several databases to collect data to assess student achievement and other related indicators. Related but not aligned with these components is the federal Results Driven Accountability framework for students with disabilities.

Local Control and Accountability Plan

California law requires each school district to annually develop an LCAP and complete an associated template to provide details on its actions and expenditures to support student outcomes and overall performance. The LCAP must describe the school district's and each school's goals and specific actions to achieve those goals for all pupils and each subgroup of students identified in the Education Code, including students with disabilities. The instructions for completing the LCAP are detailed, and include a requirement for the meaningful engagement of parents, students, and other stakeholders, including those representing relevant subgroups of students.

The purpose of the LCAP is to link transparency and accountability directly to the local budgeting process, and pair local level fiscal and instructional planning with stakeholders to ensure "more cooperative and comprehensive discussions about how to improve outcomes for all students."[108] But as of March 2015, the California statewide special education task force reported that California still had separate instructional services, accountability patterns, and reporting requirements for students with disabilities. Specifically, the state had not embedded the federal Results Driven Accountability indicators within the LCAP framework. "This separation contributes to a special education system that is 'siloed' in much of its implementation and is less effective than it could be."[109]

Local Control Funding Formula

In addition to the LCAP, the state's LCFF was designed to ensure that students receive the appropriate supports and services by providing more funding for students with the greatest needs, specifically English language learners, low-income students, and foster youth. However, the LCFF does not direct special education dollars, and "it remains to be seen how the separate special education dollars fit into this picture, and more importantly, how students who have disabilities and other needs will be served."[110]

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[108], page 1, retrieved from http://www.smcoe.org/assets/files/about-smcoe/superintendents-office/statewide-special-education-task-force/Task%20Force%20Report%205.18.15.pdf.
[109] *Id*.
[110] *Id*. at page 24.

SCUSD Accountability, Core Values, and Practices

The information below reviews how the district is using its Single Plan of Achievement, Strategic Plan, and data, and how it is balancing school autonomy and districtwide expectations to establish a shared accountability for all students, students with disabilities in particular.

Single Plan of Achievement

SCUSD uses the Single Plan for Student Achievement template to implement the state's LCAP requirement. Although the Single Plan is used to address Title I and LCAP expenditures, the template specifically states that it includes students with disabilities. Our review of the template provided to the Council team included achievement data for all students, but it was not sorted by subgroup. Focus groups reported to the Council team that students with disabilities were not included in school priorities or specified implementation activities.

According to district representatives, a new LCAP is being developed, along with a new benchmark system and a new set of key performance indicators (KPIs). Also, staff members expect to complete a data dashboard by mid-February. While the dashboard will include additional data strands, another upgrade is anticipated to make the dashboard more robust. There is an understanding that students with disabilities will be included in this accountability system.

SCUSD's Strategic Plan

The district's Strategic Plan for 2016-2021 includes accountability as one of its four core values. Specifically, SCUSD is committed "to transparency and ongoing review of data [to] create a culture focused on results and continuous improvement in a fiscally sustainable manner."

The Strategic Plan cites the following four goals for the district:

- College, career and life-ready graduates;

- Safe, emotionally healthy and engaged students;

- Family and community empowerment; and

- Operational excellence.

The Council's team reviewed the Strategic Plan actions and proposed services to identify components that specifically affected students with disabilities. In this regard, the Plan calls for the expansion and improvement of interventions and academic supports for all students in order to close the achievement gap by:

- Building systems that lead to positive outcomes for students of color, low income, English learners, foster and homeless youth, students with disabilities, and all underperforming demographic groups;

- Implementing MTSS in order to provide a broad set of solutions for struggling students, and

- Reducing disproportional representation of subgroups in special education.

The action related to the provision of culturally relevant social, emotional, and health supports to ensure positive school climates is particularly relevant to students with disabilities. Also, the area of increasing parent empowerment would include the CAC.

Data

California's system of data collection makes it difficult for the state's school districts, including SCUSD, to produce consistent reports across different databases. Currently, the state stores information about students receiving special education in the following databases and/or management systems: California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS), California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data system (CALPADS), California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS), the Special Education Non-Public School and Agency Database, and the Special Education Personnel Database. These databases have inconsistent definitions and time periods for data collection, which causes reports to be dramatically different from each other. These differences affect the ability to accurately and consistently identify and monitor students receiving special education, and to evaluate service effectiveness. As a result, there are concerns about the validity and reliability of data, including data reported to ED's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and the extent to which it is useful to inform policy.[111]

District representatives view the state as emerging from a "data desert," which has significantly impacted the district. School districts are responsible for their own data strands, for how to use the data, and how to introduce growth measures at the school site. There is a tension between the district and SCTA regarding the transparency of data. While the SCTA's position prevents the public and school stakeholders from understanding each school's outcomes compared to others in the district, it is also cognizant of unanticipated consequences that could arise.

School Autonomy vs. Districtwide Expectations

Our discussions with focus group participants revealed a strong perception that the district's current culture is based in school autonomy with no accountability. The following examples show the basis for this perception.

- *Funding Decisions.* Many decisions regarding how funds are used are made at the school level. As discussed throughout this report, local decision-making has resulted in fragmented and inconsistent access to evidence-based materials and practices across the district. There is concern that funds are being used for ineffective activities.

- *Compliant Operations.* Principals are not consistently involved with their staff to proactively address special education compliance issues. Those who are involved are aware of IEP data that shows approaching due dates for evaluations/IEP meetings, and dates that have not been met. They also ensure that IEPs being developed are meaningful for each child.

- *Area Assistant Superintendents.* There is a perception that the AASs have low expectations for principal performance around special education, and spend more time reacting to problematic and operational issues rather than to activities supporting instruction.

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[111] *Id*. At page 46.

- ***Finger Pointing.*** While some feel there is no accountability for teacher performance, others cite the lack of accountability for principals, as well as for central office. Much of this finger pointing is the result of unclear expectations that are accompanied by inadequate human and physical resources.

A more centralized approach would help to address these issues by providing districtwide performance indicators, guidance on the purchasing of evidence-based materials, provision of professional learning, etc. However, with a lack of trust by principals and school-based staff in central office decision-making, any radical movement in this regard is likely to be met with a high level of resistance. A collaborative process between schools and central office is necessary for a balanced and effective outcome. Such a process should produce a system of shared accountability for all students, including students with disabilities, which is based on expectations and consequences, and includes technical assistance and support.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

The following are areas of strength in the district's support for teaching and learning of students with disabilities.

- ***Central Office Collaboration.*** Several meetings are scheduled for the executive cabinet, extended cabinet, academic team, and networks to meet regularly. Also, informal collaboration between departments occurs on a periodic basis.

- ***Special Education Department Operation.*** With a few exceptions, the special education director is viewed positively, especially considering her workload and responsibilities. Also, department personnel we met appear to be committed to students and eager to improve their support for schools. Of special note is the department's employment of personnel dedicated to special education financial transactions.

- ***Partnership with SAC State University.*** The district is revitalizing a prior partnership with SAC State University to recruit graduating teachers before other districts do. Also, by using some teacher credential changes applicable to intern programs, the district hopes to have a cohort of 24 teachers next school year.

- ***Special Education Procedural Handbook.*** The district's special education procedural handbook, which provides information on special education compliance, is on the special education department's webpage reference list of parent resources.

- ***Activities Designed to Address Due Process Issues.*** The special education department has taken various steps to address the underlying legal issues related to due process, such as training, monitoring, involvement in complex IEP meetings, and alternate dispute resolution.

- ***Medi-Cal.*** The district has implemented a system to support the electronic documentation of Medi-Cal-eligible services for all students with IEPs, including those who are enrolled in Medi-Cal. Training was provided to facilitate the documentation process.

- ***Single Plan of Achievement.*** The district's Single Plan of Achievement Plan template contains no figures on disaggregated subgroups, such as students with disabilities.

Recognizing the need to include students with disabilities, the district is developing a new LCAP document, benchmark system, data dashboard, and KPIs.

- **Strategic Plan.** The district's Strategic Plan has sound core values and goals, which are inclusive of students with disabilities and articulate support for the CAC and the development of an MTSS framework and practices.

- **Data.** District representatives recognize the need to improve the district's data collection and reporting capacities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following describes opportunities to improve teaching and learning for students with disabilities.

Central Office Collaboration

The organization of the central office could be improved to maximize its support for and collaboration with schools. The district does not appear to have a clear vision and theory of action that is consistently communicated through a common language. The district is functioning as a system of schools that provides inconsistent teaching and learning opportunities, rather than a school system built on a foundation of equity and excellence. Schools have a high degree of autonomy without recognized non-negotiables. A number of circumstances, such as those described below, have produced a lack of shared ownership and accountability for special education.

- **Siloed Teaching & Learning Support.** Personnel supporting teaching and learning are not aligned for maximum effect. Leadership is fragmented by the absence of area assistant superintendents from the executive cabinet and their operational distance from the academic office. Network principal meetings are not structured to maximize communication and problem solving. AASs must supervise both principals and large districtwide departments and programs. Moreover, AASs and special education program specialists do not have the same sets of schools. Two sets of personnel support the physical health needs of students, and four sets of personnel support the social/emotional well-being of students. Also, there is separate administration for special education and Section 504 student services.

- **Disjointed District/School Visions and Actions.** Because of the lack of recognized non-negotiables, AASs are less able to hold principals accountable for student outcomes. Principals filter information to protect their schools from district mandates they do not fully embrace, and are disinclined to engage with central office personnel when it does not meet their individual purposes.

- **Insufficient Cross-Departmental and School Collaboration.** Insufficient collaboration has contributed to special education personnel vacancies, transportation issues, ineffective and untimely placement of students with IEPs from the centralized enrollment center, and inconsistent and untimely responses to schools by central office personnel.

To leverage the knowledge and expertise of SCUSD leaders and staff members we met, personnel need to be better aligned to maximize their collective efforts.

Administration and Operation of Special Education

- *Special Education Department's Organization and Operation.* As with other central office departments, special education was cut dramatically in 2010, which has made it more difficult for personnel to carry out their responsibilities. Nevertheless, the special education department's organization is not structured for maximum effectiveness. Although necessary, the program specialists' primary focus on compliance and gatekeeping leaves little time for them to support teaching and learning. There are also concerns related to the management of department assistants. The absence of shared responsibility and interdisciplinary accountability between central office and schools exacerbates these issues.

- *Student/Personnel Ratios.* Based on survey data that the Council team has collected, SCUSD has larger student-per-staff ratios compared to 70 other urban school districts. When compared to the Oakland Unified School District, for instance, which we recently reviewed, Sacramento City's ratios were larger except for paraprofessionals (which was also large). Smaller ratios in districts other than SCUSD or Oakland Unified School District are: special educators (92 percent and 44 percent, respectively), paraprofessionals (93 percent and 96 percent, respectively), speech/language pathologists (74 percent and 69 percent, respectively), and psychologists (74 percent and 33 percent, respectively). Complete data were not provided for social workers, nurses, occupational therapists (OT), and physical therapists (PT).

- *Personnel Vacancies.* Also, the presence of teacher, paraprofessional, speech/language pathologist, and psychologist vacancies has an impact on teaching and learning, and may increase reliance on the use of designated instructional paraprofessionals. A provision of the SCTA contract that limits district hiring for school positions until July 1st of each year is viewed as having a negative impact on the district's hiring prospects. Several methods used to boost teacher hires, i.e., the early hiring of a teaching pool for non-specified schools and the recruitment of teachers from the Philippines, have been useful in helping to fill vacant positions, but these efforts have been insufficient. There is also an inconsistent understanding about a principal's authority to hire special educators. These issues brought into question the lack of a full-time human resources staff member to focus on this complex personnel area.

- *Paraprofessional Usage.* The district has relied on three private agencies to hire some 200 behavior and individual aides to supplement paraprofessionals who are district employed. There are many concerns about one vender, in particular, with respect to their training and ability to communicate with school personnel.

- *Personnel Concerns.* Additional concerns related to speech/language pathologists include high caseloads that leave little opportunity for the provision of general education interventions, little administrative support, and limited access to professional learning. Concerns related to psychologists include an overreliance on assessments. Also, some occupational and physical therapy offerings depend on students traveling off-site for private therapy, which does not foster collaboration with teachers. Music therapy is provided without any apparent guidance for determining need. Finally, the limited supervision of related-services providers is problematic. This circumstance is a result of the supervisors' large span of responsibilities.

Compliance

- ***Data and Special Education Records.*** The district does not routinely report educational setting and suspension data for students in special education in a manner that is aligned with state and federal reporting templates. The district maintains all special education records centrally even though most of these records are/could be maintained on the district's SEIS system. Furthermore, although the district uses an electronic IEP record system, there were concerns about training, access by general educators, and migration of disability data to the student information system.

- ***Special Education Procedural Handbook.*** The district's document is not web-based with links to important resources and more detailed information, and is not readily assessable to stakeholders or able to be updated easily.[112] Also, the special education webpage has minimal information and is underutilized as a mechanism for communicating with parents and other stakeholders. Information contained in the SCTA/SCUSD Appendix D at Section 4c) pertaining to IEP attendance by regular education teachers is inconsistent with the handbook and federal/state requirements.

- ***Dispute Resolution.*** Settlement and legal costs associated with due process have increased over the last several years. The following issues are thought to be reasons: the shifting of state mental health services, including residential placement, from counties to schools; the local legal trend that has increased the standard for determining a student's benefit from education; procedural errors; and a lack of principal leadership and oversight.

Fiscal Issues

- ***Transportation.*** Transportation services are a high special education cost area, and there are various concerns about the effectiveness of these services. These concerns are related to the transportation of students to SDCs and special schools, the use of common bell times, long bus routes, a lack of technology for efficiency and communication, driver shortages, and routes that result in shortened school days for some students.

- ***Medi-Cal.*** Not all related services personnel are using the electronic process to track services required to bill for Medi-Cal reimbursement. There does not appear to be sufficient proactive steps being taken to address documentation concerns, provide written expectations, or articulate consequences for failure to comply. These circumstances are likely to substantially decrease the district's Medi-Cal reimbursement.

Accountability

- ***Single Plan of Achievement.*** District schools annually complete a Single Plan of Achievement template to show how each will expend Title I and other funds. Although the Plan is intended to include student subgroups, including students with disabilities, the sample template provided to the Council team contained no figures with disaggregated subgroups.

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[112] See for example, Houston Independent School District's web-based special education document.[112]

- ***Data.*** The district and SCTA have not resolved differences regarding the transparency of school-based data, and the extent to which various data outcomes will be visible to stakeholders.

- ***School Autonomy vs. Districtwide Expectations.*** There is a strong perception that the district's current culture is based on school autonomy with no accountability. Critical areas that are impacted include funding decisions, special education compliance, the role of area assistant superintendents, and unclear expectations accompanied by inadequate human and physical resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to improve support for teaching and learning for students with disabilities.

4. *Interoffice Collaboration.* With a representative group of principals, the AASs, the deputy superintendent, and the chief academic officer, discuss the optimum configuration for principals to communicate with each other and central office leadership. Follow up based on these discussions.

5. *Special Education and Support Services Organization.* Consider the following organization proposal to more effectively support students with disabilities as well as all students with respect to social/emotional learning and physical/mental health concerns. (See Appendix B for a proposed organization table.)

   a. *Department of Special Education and Student Support Services.* Group together support for special education and student support services to improve collaboration between personnel with expertise in social/emotional learning and students with physical and mental health concerns. Have an executive director with three direct reports in the following areas: 1) specially designed instruction, 2) SELPA/special education operations, and 3) student support services. Allocate office technicians to each area based on need, and have appropriate personnel attend CAO meetings.

   b. *Specially Designed Instruction.* Have two supervisors report to the director: one for area support and the other for districtwide services.

      - *Area Support*. Have the following personnel report to the area support supervisor, assigning them to schools that align with a single area assistant superintendent –
        – Program specialists*
        – Behavior intervention specialists who collaborate with student support services personnel*
        – Inclusive practice coaches
        – Designated instructional paraprofessionals.* Employ the DIPs at the school site when supporting specific students pursuant to their IEPs, and have principals provide supervision. Maintain a relatively small number of DIPs to deploy for crisis intervention.

        Have the area support unit manage the following additional functions –
        – Placement of new students with IEPs

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- SDC coordination
- Behavior review and pre-expulsion hearings for students with IEPs (with student hearing/placement director)
- Field trips

- *Districtwide Services.* Have the following personnel report to the districtwide services supervisor –
  - Speech/language pathologists and hearing interpreters*
  - Preschool coordination
  - Home/hospital instruction*
  - Assistive technology*
  - Occupational therapy*
  - Postsecondary transition*
  - Adapted PE*
  - Extended school year coordination

  Have the districtwide unit also manage the following additional functions –
  - Deaf Task Force
  - Coordination of staff development
  - Residential placement
  - Special Arts program
  - County Office of Education programs
  - Alternate standards curriculum
  - Extended school year coordination

- *Other Specially Designed Instruction Personnel*
  - Based on the number of personnel in each area designated with an asterisk, designate leadership for the area to provide support to the respective group members and to coordinate activities with the director and other leadership personnel within and outside of the specially designed instruction unit. This structure is essential to support communication, supervision, and collaboration.
  - Employ DIPs at the school site when supporting specific students pursuant to IEPs with principal supervision.[113] Maintain a relatively small number of DIPs by area to deploy for crisis intervention.
  - Employ preschool personnel at the school site. Maintain specially designed instruction coordination for preschool students with IEPs in collaboration with administrative support for general education preschoolers.
  - Move responsibility for processing paperwork for special education teachers with students over the contract limit to human resources.
  - Have preschool personnel be employed at the school site, but maintain support for preschool coordination.

c. *SELPA/Special Education Operations. .* Have the SELPA/Special Education Operations director, with SELPA support staff, the budget technician, and others as appropriate –

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[113] Note Recommendation 6c regarding the review of paraprofessionals and their respective roles, and employment status.

- Coordinate policy and compliance requirements
- Shift to a web-based special education policy and procedures information system
- Manage due process, complaint management, and alternate dispute resolution
- Coordinate internal monitoring
- Coordinate surrogate parents
- Coordinate and track the provision of compensatory education and tutoring.

d. *Student Support Services.* Have the following units report to the student support services director—
- Social workers, including those that support students with IEPs
- School psychologists
- Social/emotional learning
- Nurses/health aides
- Behavior/reentry
- Youth development
- Family and community partnerships

With the exception of social workers and health aides supporting students with IEPs and psychologists, these units are currently housed together. The combination of these personnel will enable staff to better collaborate, support students with common issues, manage Section 504, and manage Medi-Cal.

6. *School-Based Special Education Personnel.* Ensure that personnel who support students with IEPs are employed in sufficient numbers, and are available to meet student needs.

a. *Student-Staff Ratios.* On a regular basis with the AAS, review the staffing ratios summarized in this report (see Appendix A). *NOTE: Relatively low or high student-to-personnel ratios do not necessarily mean that any given area is staffed inappropriately; however, the ratios should prompt further review.* Ensure that adequate numbers of special education and related-services personnel are at each school to carry out their expected responsibilities. Based on a full review, consider the changes needed in the short and long term.

a. *Hiring Practices.* Review hiring practices for special educators and paraprofessionals employed by the district, and modify them if necessary to allow principals to select staff for their schools. Provide assistance to principals for them to carry out this responsibility, such as prescreening and identifying high-quality applicants. Under the current collective bargaining agreement terms, continue to have an applicant pool, and enable principals to select personnel for the next school year at the appropriate time. Encourage principals with expected or potential vacancies to participate in the process of selecting personnel from the applicant pool to increase their satisfaction with the quality of hires. Consider moving the induction program for all personnel to human resources, and ensure that it provides new personnel, especially those who come from other countries, with the training they need to be successful. Develop and implement a support program for new teachers from other countries in order to facilitate their adjustment to the culture, community and school based responsibilities of teaching and learning in the United States.

b. *Staff Shortages, Retention, and Recruitment.* Convene a diverse group of stakeholders such as principals, special educators, CAC representatives, and SCTA representatives. Have a high-level district official with decision-making authority convene the group to—

- *Recruitment/Retention.* Specifically, the group should discuss the need to recruit special education, paraprofessional, and related services personnel vacancies, and to address relevant high staff turnover. Have the group identify proactive and aggressive strategies to:
  - Promote recruitment/retention (including those discussed in this report);
  - Improve communication about high-quality applicants;
  - Support internship programs, such as the collaboration with Cal State to recruit speech/language pathologists;
  - Use assistants to support related services personnel;
  - Improve working conditions and access to essential materials, such as assessment tools for psychologists; and
  - Bolster recruitment activities.

  Include in these strategies the need for bilingual personnel with special education and related-services expertise. Until the vacancy issues are resolved, have human resources consider committing a full-time person to implementing these strategies with the assistance, and continue to review the success of these and other strategies.

- *Paraprofessional Usage.* The group should consider –
  - *An audit.* Auditing contractual aides would help the district determine the quality of training, retention, communication (between teacher and aide), and cost effectiveness. Depending on the results, reconsider the balance between district and private employment.
  - *Roles.* The district should review the roles of the three paraprofessionals types, and the value of this and other approaches, such as using a highly trained group of paraeducators to train and support one set of paraprofessionals for students with IEPs;
  - *Communication.* The district should also review the differences between how educators and paraprofessionals are allowed to communicate with schools based on the paraprofessionals' hiring status, as well as their participation in IEP meetings and other mechanisms for collaboration.

  Based on the outcome of these discussions, develop a plan for improving the usage and effectiveness of paraprofessionals.

7. *Compliance Support and Access to Information.* Consider the following actions to improve compliance and access to student special education records.

a. *Special Education Procedure Manual.* Update on an annual basis the *Special Education Procedures* document to include relevant written expectations developed in accordance with these recommendations. Provide public access to the information by posting it as a webpage with links to more detailed information and online resources. Collaborate with

CAC and other stakeholders to identify relevant information and resource links. Ensure staff members are available to update the information regularly with current information and resources. Provide training to stakeholders and parents to boost their understanding of the *Procedures'* contents. Ensure training is accessible to parents with diverse linguistic needs and sensory limitations.

b. *SCUSD/SCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement.* Ensure all provisions, such as attendance of regular education teachers at IEP meetings, comply with federal and state laws.

c. *Department of Special Education Webpage.* To the extent possible, enhance the special education webpage with links to information for stakeholders, including district and publicly available resources.[114]

d. *Dispute Resolution.* To reduce future disputes and resolve disputes quickly and effectively, consider the following actions—

- *High Level Attention.* Provide information to the extended cabinet and a representative group of principals on the costs of special education disputes and current processes in order to facilitate a discussion about the role and accountability of principals for the operation and administration of special education at their respective school sites.

- *Principal Involvement.* Establish written expectations for principals, and how they will be supported and monitored. As part of these expectations, provide principals with CDE, OCR, and due process complaints, and have principals take a leading role in their resolution. Have principals attend due process hearings to address issues in their schools.

- *AASs.* Involve area assistant superintendents to support compliance, resolve complaints, and address due process matters.

- *Red Alerts.* Establish a "red alert" system for validated complaints and due process to inform all relevant stakeholders about the issues and ways to avoid them in the future.

e. *Special Education Records.* Consider the following actions to improve access to student special education information –

- *Training.* Ensure hands-on special education IEP training is available for new personnel and for those who need to supplement their knowledge to support the development of effective IEPs and compliance practices.

- *Access.* Provide general educators with access to the IEP system, using read only access for inapplicable provisions.

- *Notice.* Add a disability field for IEPs and Section 504 to the student information system to notify teachers of students with disabilities, and the need to obtain additional information. If possible, migrate this data from other systems to avoid double entry of the information.

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[114] See, for example, the Anchorage School District's special education webpage, retrieved from http://asdk12.org/sped/.

- **Record Maintenance.** Develop a plan to stop sending all special education records to the central office and require schools to maintain the records according to privacy requirements. To the maximum extent, scan records to the electronic system to avoid record loss and to maximize their organization.

8. *Fiscal Considerations.* Pursue the following activities to enhance revenue and shift more funds toward improving instruction at home schools, schools of choice, and SDCs.

   a. *Medicaid Revenue Enhancement.* To increase Medicaid revenue, survey users of the district's new electronic documentation process through focus groups, an electronic survey, or other means to understand the challenges associated with its use. Take follow up actions based on the results, and execute accountability for usage and monitoring, including central office, school leadership, and others users of the system. Establish a group that will continually review usage and monitoring trends, and identify ways to maximize billing opportunities.

   b. *Potential Transportation Efficiencies.* Consider the following actions to enhance transportation efficiency.

      - **Maximize Technology.** To make transportation more efficient, research how other school districts have used technology to enhance the communication of student needs. As quickly as possible, move to an electronic process for managing requests for transportation. Council staff can provide support for this activity.

      - **Reduce Long Routes.** Identify all students by the length of their bus routes to address the routes that are excessive.[115] Based on this information, identify ways to reduce the routes.

      - **Comparable Length of School Day.** Review student routes to ensure that no student with IEPs have a shortened school day due to transportation schedules.

      - **Transportation Point Person.** Establish a point person in the transportation department to handle special education busing reimbursement.[116]

   c. *Long-Term Capacity Building.* Begin putting together a long-term plan to reduce the district's reliance on special schools. For such a plan to be successful, the district must build the capacity of each school to provide appropriate and equitable educational support. To support this process, consider the amount of transportation savings, and the expertise of district staff (including John Morse school personnel) that can be leveraged to build school capacity. (See also Recommendation 3c.)

9. *Shared Accountability for Student Achievement.* Consider the following actions that would strengthen the district's shared accountability for student achievement.

   a. *State Structure.* Work with other school districts to influence the CDE and legislature if necessary, to implement the March 2015 California statewide special education task force recommendations. Specifically, there is a need for universal accountability patterns and

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[115] Districts with good technology are able to sort this data easily and quickly.
[116] Team recognizes there is a transportation supervisor in the special education department but this responsibility needs to be embedded within the district's transportation department to maximize coordination with transportation functions.

reporting requirements for all students, including those with disabilities, and the inclusion of the federal Results Driven Accountability indicators within the LCAP framework.

b. *Single Plan of Achievement and Data Dashboard.* Ensure that school-based planning and dashboards include data and actions relevant to the achievement of students with disabilities, including special education state performance plan indicators.

c. *Strategic Plan.* Supplement the district's next iteration of its strategic plan with action necessary for the implementation of the Council team's recommendations.

d. *Data.* Review all the data elements contained in these recommendations and consolidate them into a comprehensive plan for implementation. (See Chapter 4's Recommendation Matrix, which identifies data and reporting elements.) As part of SCUSD's work with other districts pursuant to Recommendation 10a, address the state data collection issues that make reporting unnecessarily complex and time consuming.

e. *SCUSD/SCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement.* Consider requesting Council assistance in facilitating discussions between the SCUSD and SCTA to help resolve the issues identified in this report as well as others that may exist.

f. *Professional Learning.* Review all the recommendations related to professional learning to map out coordinated implementation activities. (See Chapter 4's Recommendation Matrix, which identifies training components.)

g. *Shared Accountability for Actions.* Review the information in this report and relevant recommendations pertaining to the need for districtwide expectations, and shared accountability with school and district personnel. Establish clear processes that track when and how resources and training have been made available, and follow up on initiatives that have been announced or launched. There is no justification for actions not carried out as expected. (See Chapter 4's Recommendation Matrix, which identifies accountability components.)

10. *Internal Project Manager.* Consider appointing an internal project manager reporting to the superintendent to support the execution of the district's plan and initiatives, including activities to follow up on the recommendations in this report. Have the project manager report on relevant data, the status of implementation, and barriers to execution that require interdepartmental collaboration, the superintendent's involvement, or the need for any adjustments to the plan.

This chapter summarizes the recommendations made in Chapter 3 in two ways. The first way lists the recommendations and the functional categories into which each one falls. The categories include accountability, planning, criteria/process, training, data/reports, and cross-references. The second way simply lists all the recommendations so the reader can see them in one place.

Recommendation Matrix

The exhibit below lists the recommendations from the previous chapter in table form corresponding to their functional categories.

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
I. Multi-tiered Systems of Support					
1. *Broad, Systemwide MTSS Framework, and Plan for Implementation and Oversight.* Using information from CDE's website as well as other sources, develop and communicate a comprehensive written vision, framework, and action plan that supports MTSS.					
f. District and School-based Leadership MTSS Teams. Establish leadership teams at the district and school levels to support MTSS planning and oversee implementation activities.	X				
b. Implementation Plan. Have the district MTSS leadership team evaluate its current program infrastructure as it develops its MTSS framework and implementation plan, e.g., universal screeners, formative assessments, standard protocols for intervention/support, curricular materials, supplemental and intensive resources, data platforms, use of data, professional learning, budget allocations, etc. Embed universal design for learning (UDL) into the MTSS framework, and incorporate the areas discussed below. As a part of the plan include benchmark and on-going district wide and school based progress monitoring to support the evaluation of MTSS implementation. When finalized, post the MTSS implementation plan on the district's website along with information relevant links to district information/resources, and publicly available resources. Ensure that the district's Strategic Plan intentionally embeds and utilizes the MTSS framework in its goals and activities. Embed relevant aspects of the MTSS framework in the district's Strategic Plan and school-based planning templates.	X	X			
c. Map Resources and Analyze Gaps. As part of a comprehensive planning process, conduct an assessment of current MTSS-related human and material resources provided by the district and independently funded by schools. As part of this process, consider the current roles of school psychologists and speech/language pathologists, and how they may be adjusted/reallocated to support students proactively within general education. Compare these resources to evidence-based resources in use, and plan for filling gaps. Conduct a data analysis of currently used resources by schools to	X			X	

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
evaluate the return on investment in terms of improved student outcomes. Identify which are supporting/accelerating student learning and those that are not. Consider having the district sponsor appropriate evidence-based resources from which all schools can choose to implement. As part of this process, consider how additional Title I resources provided to schools, can enhance the district provided resources based on the needs of students.					
d. Written Expectations. Establish a school board policy and written expectations for the district's MTSS framework (for academics in addition to social/emotional learning/restorative justice) that is consistent with the district's theory of action. Ensure that the MTSS framework includes all grades, and supports linguistically appropriate and culturally competent instruction. Develop a multi-year implementation plan that includes regular board updates.	X	X			
e. Professional Learning. Based on the MTSS framework, implementation plan, and written expectations, develop a professional-learning curriculum that is targeted to different audiences, e.g., special education teachers, related-services personnel, paraprofessionals, parents, etc. Provide at least four to five days of training for school-based leadership teams for two consecutive years. Ground training in the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning. Consider and budget for how access to training will be supported, e.g., through the use of stipends, funds for substitute coverage, incentives for after-school and Saturday training, summer training, etc. Embed specified components in the district's MTSS implementation plan.			X		
g. Data Analysis and Reports. Establish an early warning system that highlights students on track for graduation. Ensure key performance indicators, across elementary, middle and high schools are established data collection systems, and analysis (e.g., custom reports) are designed to enable the superintendent, administrators, principals, teachers, and related-services personnel to review student growth, identify patterns, solve problems, and make informed decisions.				X	
h. Monitoring and Accountability. Evaluate the effectiveness, fidelity, and results of MTSS implementation, and include specified areas in the assessment.					X
II. Special Education Demographics and Referral/Eligibility for Services					
2. *Special Education Referral, Assessment, and Eligibility.* Improve consistency and appropriateness of referrals, assessments, and eligibility decisions for special education.					
a. Data Review. With a multidisciplinary team of individuals inside and outside of the special education department, review Exhibits 2a through 2i and their associated analysis (along with other relevant data), and develop a hypothesis about areas, including those identified in the recommendations.				X	
b. Written Expectations. For any area that the multi-disciplinary team identifies as problematic, review current processes for referral, assessment, and eligibility, and amend those processes to provide more guidance. Ensure that the special education procedural manual and ELL master plan incorporate the additional guidance. Have both documents provide appropriate information regarding translation services for and written notices to parents who are ELL, and ensure that assessments are linguistically		X			

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
and culturally appropriate for ELL students. Specify that personnel who assess students should have access to sufficient and all current assessment tools.					
c. *Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) Teams.* With a representative group of special education department personnel and school-based personnel knowledgeable about the ERMHS process, review concerns discussed in this report and revise the process so that the team's expertise can be used more appropriately to support teaching and learning, and schools are more accountable for following written expectations.		X			
d. *Data Analysis and Reports.* Develop user-friendly summary reports for district leadership showing data similar to, and as appropriate in addition to Exhibits 2a - 2i. Share data by area and by school. As part of this process, address issues making it difficult for the district to provide the Council team with data aligned with the state performance plan indicators for special education (i.e., special/residential schools and suspensions), and supplement data with these reports. Consider how these data are attended to and reviewed by district leadership on a regular basis.				X	
e. *Differentiated Professional Learning.* Plan for and provide all relevant district stakeholders with the professional learning they need to implement the recommendations in this section. As part of this process, have special education and ELL department personnel collaborate on the referral and assessment needs of ELL students. (Coordinate this activity with Recommendation 1f.)			X		
f. *Monitoring and Accountability.* Develop a process for ongoing monitoring of expected referral, evaluation, and eligibility practices. Rather than using a traditional record-review model, review files so that school-based personnel are aware of issues and problems, and will better understand the need for follow-up action. Enable staff to observe best practices shown by others and receive coaching that will improve their knowledge and skills. (Coordinate this activity with Recommendation 1g.)					X
III. Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities					
3. *Academic Achievement and Social/Emotional Well-Being for Students with IEPs.* Review and address relevant data, and follow-up with actions such as the following –					
a. *Data Review.* With a multidisciplinary team of individuals in and outside the special education department, review Exhibits 3a through 3q and their accompanying analysis (along with other relevant data), and develop hypothesis about problematic patterns, such as those identified in the recommendations.				X	
h. *Inclusive Education Vision.* Have the extended cabinet establish a clear and defined vision for the value of inclusivity. Embed in that vision language from the common core state standards website and March 2015 statewide task force on special education to clarify the district's support for higher academic outcomes and the social/emotional well-being of students. Highlight the importance of providing students educated in general education classes with the differentiated and scaffolded instruction they need to learn. Emphasize that instruction needs to be linguistically appropriate and culturally relevant, and aligned with common core standards. These expectations will be easier to meet as teachers become more familiar with and base their instruction on the principles of UDL. At the same time, the vision should reinforce the importance of	X				

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
evidence-based academic and positive behavior interventions/supports that increase in intensity with specified student needs. The implementation of this vision will require substantial changes to Appendix D of the SCUSD/SCTA collective bargaining agreement, which portrays inclusive education as occurring in three static models.					
c. Implementation Plan. Based on the data review and the district's inclusive education vision, have the extended cabinet develop a written multi-year action plan that provides written expectations, professional learning, data analytics, and accountability (as specified below). Upon completion of the overall plan, establish a uniform way for school-based teams to embed local implementation activities into their school-based planning documents. In addition, include those areas identified in the recommendations. Establish a feedback loop as described in the full recommendation.	X				
d. Written Expectations. Develop and provide guidance on the implementation of practices designed to promote student achievement and positive behavior, including the areas specified in the recommendations.		X			
e. Differentiated Professional Learning and Parent Training. Embed in the professional learning curriculum mentioned in Recommendation 1e and the content needed to carry out Recommendation 3. Consider those areas listed in the full recommendation. Review training and information-sharing opportunities for parents and community partners, and identify topics for the 2017-18 school year, including areas mentioned in this report and what data suggest might be needed. As part of this process, consider how professional learning will be provided within the current weekly collaborative time limitations.			X		
f. Data Analysis and Reports. In addition to ensuring that activities described in Recommendation 1e include data and analysis of academic instruction and behavior/emotional supports for students with disabilities, consider the actions specified in the recommendations. Also, to the extent possible, embed data in the dashboard system used for all students.				X	
g. Monitoring and Accountability. Expect that all principals are responsible for overseeing special education in their buildings, and that area assistant superintendents hold principals accountable for this responsibility. Embed the activities identified in the recommendation for this area in the monitoring/accountability systems described in Recommendation 1g.					X
IV. Support for Teaching and Learning for Students with IEPs					
4. Interoffice Collaboration. With a representative group of principals, the AASs, the deputy superintendent, and the chief academic officer, discuss the optimum configuration for principals to communicate with each other and central office leadership. Follow up based on these discussions.	X				
5. Special Education and Support Services Organization. Consider organization proposal fully described in the recommendations and at Appendix B to more effectively support students with disabilities as well as all students with respect to social/emotional learning and physical/mental health concerns.	X				
6. School-Based Special Education Personnel. Ensure that personnel who support students with IEPs are employed					

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
in sufficient numbers, and are available to meet student needs.					
c. *Student-Staff Ratios.* On a regular basis with the AAS, review the staffing ratios summarized in this report (see Appendix A). *NOTE: Relatively low or high student-to-personnel ratios do not necessarily mean that any given area is staffed inappropriately; however, the ratios should prompt further review.* Ensure that adequate numbers of special education and related-services personnel are at each school to carry out their expected responsibilities. Based on a full review, consider the changes needed in the short and long term.				X	
b. *Hiring Practices.* Review hiring practices for special educators and paraprofessionals employed by the district, and modify them if necessary to allow principals to select staff for their schools. Provide assistance to principals for them to carry out this responsibility, such as prescreening and identifying high-quality applicants. Under the current collective bargaining agreement terms, continue to have an applicant pool, and enable principals to select personnel for the next school year at the appropriate time. Encourage principals with expected or potential vacancies to participate in the process of selecting personnel from the applicant pool to increase their satisfaction with the quality of hires. Consider moving the induction program for all personnel to human resources, and ensure that it provides new personnel, especially those who come from other countries, with the training they need to be successful. need to be successful. Develop and implement a support program for new teachers from other countries to facilitate the adjustment to the culture, community and school based responsibilities of teaching and learning in the United States.	X	X	X		
c. *Staff Shortages, Retention, and Recruitment.* Convene a diverse group of stakeholders such as principals, special educators, CAC representatives, and SCTA representatives. Have a high-level district official with decision-making authority convene the group to discuss recruitment/retention and paraprofessional usage as described in the recommendation. Based on the outcome of these discussions, develop a plan for improving the usage and effectiveness of paraprofessionals.	X				
7. Compliance Support and Access to Information. Consider the following actions to improve compliance and access to student special education records.					
a. *Special Education Procedure Manual.* Update on an annual basis the *Special Education Procedures* document to include relevant written expectations developed in accordance with these recommendations. Provide public access to the information by posting it as a webpage with links to more detailed information and online resources. Collaborate with CAC and other stakeholders to identify relevant information and resource links. Ensure staff members are available to update the information regularly with current information and resources. Provide training to stakeholders and parents to boost their understanding of the *Procedures'* contents. Ensure training is accessible to parents with diverse linguistic needs and sensory limitations.		X	X		
b. *SCUSD/SCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement.* Ensure all provisions, such as attendance of regular education teachers at IEP meetings, comply with federal and state laws.	X				X

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
c. Department of Special Education Webpage. To the extent possible, enhance the special education webpage with links to information for stakeholders, including district and publicly available resources.				X	
d. Dispute Resolution. To reduce future disputes and resolve disputes quickly and effectively, consider the actions specified for this recommendation.	X	X			
e. Special Education Records. Consider the specified actions described in the recommendation to improve access to student special education information.	X			X	
8. Fiscal Considerations. Pursue the following activities to enhance revenue and shift more funds toward improving instruction at home schools, schools of choice, and SDCs.					
a. Medicaid Revenue Enhancement. To increase Medicaid revenue, survey users of the district's new electronic documentation process through focus groups, an electronic survey, or other means to understand the challenges associated with its use. Take follow up actions based on the results, and execute accountability for usage and monitoring, including central office, school leadership, and others users of the system. Establish a group that will continually review usage and monitoring trends, and identify ways to maximize billing opportunities.	X			X	
b. Potential Transportation Efficiencies. Consider the following actions to enhance transportation efficiency.	X	X		X	
c. Long-Term Capacity Building. Begin putting together a long-term plan to reduce the district's reliance on special schools. For such a plan to be successful, the district must build the capacity of each school to provide appropriate and equitable educational support. To support this process, consider the amount of transportation savings, and the expertise of district staff (including John Morse school personnel) that can be leveraged to build school capacity. (See also Recommendation 3c.)	X				
9. Shared Accountability for Student Achievement. Consider the following actions that would strengthen the district's shared accountability for student achievement.					
a. State Structure. Work with other school districts to influence the CDE and legislature if necessary, to implement the March 2015 California statewide special education task force recommendations. Specifically, there is a need for universal accountability patterns and reporting requirements for all students, including those with disabilities, and the inclusion of the federal Results Driven Accountability indicators within the LCAP framework.	X			X	
b. Single Plan of Achievement and Data Dashboard. Ensure that school-based planning and dashboards include data and actions relevant to the achievement of students with disabilities, including special education state performance plan indicators.	X			X	
c. Strategic Plan. Supplement the district's next iteration of the strategic plan with action necessary for the implementation of the Council team's recommendations.	X				
d. Data. Review all data elements contained in these recommendations and consolidate them into a comprehensive plan for implementation. (See Chapter 4's				X	

Recommendations	Planning	Standards/Procedures	Training	Data/Repots/Tech	Accountability
Recommendation Matrix, which identifies data and reporting elements.) As part of SCUSD's work with other districts pursuant to Recommendation 10a, address state data collection issues making reporting unnecessarily complex and time consuming.					
e. *SCUSD/SCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement.* Consider requesting Council assistance in facilitating discussions between the SCUSD and SCTA to help resolve the issues identified in this report as well as others that may exist.	X				X
f. *Professional Learning.* Review all the recommendations related to professional learning to map out coordinated implementation activities. (See Chapter 4's Recommendation Matrix, which identifies training components.)			X		
g. *Shared Accountability for Actions.* Review the information in this report and relevant recommendations pertaining to the need for districtwide expectations, and shared accountability with school and district personnel. Establish clear processes that track when and how resources and training have been made available, and follow up on initiatives that have been announced or launched. There is no justification for actions not carried out as expected. (See Chapter 4's Recommendation Matrix, which identifies accountability components.)					X
10. Internal Project Manager. Consider appointing an internal project manager reporting to the superintendent to support the execution of the district's plan and initiatives, including activities to follow up on the recommendations in this report. Have the project manager report on relevant data, the status of implementation, and barriers to execution that require interdepartmental collaboration, the superintendent's involvement, or the need for any adjustments to the plan.	X				X

The Sacramento Unified School District asked the Council of the Great City Schools to review the district's special education programs and to make recommendations on how to improve services for students with disabilities. To conduct its work, the Council assembled a team of special education experts with strong reputations for improving services in their own districts. The Council team visited Sacramento in November, conducted numerous interviews, reviewed documents, and analyzed data. At the end of the visit, the team formulated preliminary recommendations and held a conference call with the superintendent to discuss high-level observations and proposals.

The Council has reviewed numerous special education programs in big city schools across the country, and the organization is not always able to point out positive features of each school district's work with students with disabilities. In this case, however, the SCUSD has a number of things it can be proud of.

For instance, the district does not appear to have an unusually high percentage of its students identified for special education. At 13.9 percent, the district's identification rate is comparable to state and national averages.

In addition, while there are some racial groups that are identified at higher rates than other groups, most rates do not rise to traditional levels of disproportionality. In addition, identification rates for English Language Learners appear not be either disproportionately high or low. Moreover, the state's 2014-15 finding of disproportionate identification of African American students in the area of emotional disturbance was promptly and successfully addressed by the district.

At the same time, there are disparities in identification rates among various student groups in individual disability areas that warrant the school system's attention and vigilance.

Programmatically, the district has pursued efforts in the areas of MTSS, Universal Design for Learning, and social/emotional support. Its work in these areas is uneven at best because of the site-based theory of action the school system uses. But it is developing capacity in these areas.

In addition, the district's rate of educating students with disabilities in general education settings at least 80 percent of the time is higher than the state rate and near the national rate. Conversely, the district's rate of educating students with disabilities outside of general education more than 60 percent of the time is lower than state and national rates.

In addition, with 94.8 percent of IEPs meeting requirements for postsecondary transition activities and services, the district almost met the state's 100 percent compliance target. And the district has almost met state targets for students enrolled in higher education, being competitively employed, and/or engaged in other postsecondary education or training programs. The district's transition services are much better than most other districts the Council's team has reviewed.

At the same time, the district has considerable work to do in order to make its special education services a model. For example, the district's organizational structure is not as well defined around the needs of students with disabilities as is optimal. In fact, there are substantial organizational disconnects that make it harder for staff to collaborate in the ways they say they want to. The system's operational challenges are serious as well, particularly in the areas of transportation and paraprofessional hiring.

In addition, as was noted, district efforts to implement a systemic MTSS system is fractured, and efforts to broaden its implementation is stalled over disagreements with the union. The district's data systems are also not capable of readily producing the kinds of data that it needs to improve achievement or to produce necessary reports.

It was also clear that suspension rates were higher among students with disabilities than among students without disabilities. And the graduation rate among students with disabilities dipped at the same time that the district's overall graduation rate improved.

The Council also found that staffing levels to carry out an adequate special education staffing program were low, along with some organizational mismatches referred to earlier. Moreover, there were critical staff vacancies. And the system's ability to maximize Medicaid reimbursements were not being realized.

To address these and other issues, the Council of the Great City Schools has provided numerous recommendations to help the Sacramento schools move forward on behalf of its students with disabilities. These proposals can be grouped into three big buckets: organizational, instructional, and operational.

The organizational proposals are generally meant to create greater coherence in the district's special educational programming and less siloing of staff. The instructional recommendations are meant to take the good work the district has done around MTSS and UDL to scale. And the operational proposals are designed to remove barriers in how smoothly the district's special education program runs.

Interestingly, many of the challenges that the district faces have been addressed at least in part by a number of other urban school systems—like the District of Columbia and Baltimore—that Sacramento can turn to for approaches.

The Sacramento school district clearly has the talent and the commitment to do much better for its students with disabilities, particularly in areas of achievement and opportunity. The Council hopes that this report will help the district create an integrated set of services for its students. The Council and its member districts stand ready to help.

NASHVILLE BALANCED LITERACY PILOT

Metropolitan Nashville K-1 Balanced Literacy Pilot

Background: At the request of Superintendent Shawn Joseph, the Council provided a strategic support team site visit for the Nashville Superintendent's Transition Team on Achievement during the 2016-2017 school year, focusing on the instructional program of the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools and ways in which the school district might improve student academic achievement. The literacy data reviewed during this process signaled a renewed focus on literacy as an initial priority for the 2017-2018 school year. The findings and data revealed that the Balanced Literacy Approach, as implemented over the years, did not result in the desired increase of students achieving grade level proficiency on district and state reading assessments.

Purpose: The pilot, funded by a grant from the Schusterman Foundation, addresses two areas which are historically short changed in traditional balanced literacy settings, particularly in early childhood classrooms. These are: (1) a systematic and research-based approach to word study (foundational skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary) and (2) building student knowledge and vocabulary through the skillful use of read alouds as students encounter rich complex text.

Pilot Description: This pilot is a collaboration among the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), Student Achievement Partners (SAP) and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). It provides targeted professional development developing the content knowledge and skills for K-1 teachers in ten pilot schools to effectively incorporate new or modified instructional materials that employ more systematic use of word study (foundational skills) and read alouds during the balanced literacy block and throughout the school day. Workshops are supplemented with online access to *The Reading Teacher's Top Ten Tools,* a virtual course that is provided free of charge for all participants. Teachers, coaches, and administrators are working collaboratively to understand the content behind grade level foundational skills and how to approach this systematically in the classroom. They are also learning the importance of building students' knowledge and vocabulary through content rich materials to provide them with a means of understanding complex text.

Pilot Implementation Status:

- **Principal Information Session** - Potential pilot principals, district leaders, and LTDS (District Learning Leads who support schools with their instructional efforts) participated in a half day informational session in May, 2017. The focus of this session was on learning why a systematic approach to foundational skills is critical to early childhood education and why building student vocabulary and knowledge will benefit students in accessing complex text. Principals who decided to participate also received the details, commitments, and requirements of the pilot. The grant funded five pilot schools, but the district chose to supplement the grant to enable the ten pilot sites that expressed their wish to participate.

- **Cycle 1 Professional Development – July 31-August 3, 2017.** All ten pilot schools' kindergarten and first grade teachers along with their Pilot Leads (designated by the principal) participated in a workshop focused on the rationale and strategies for teaching

the foundational skills of phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, phonics and fluency using engaging strategies.

- **Monthly Office Hours -** Once a month, Pilot Leads, district staff, and principals have the opportunity to participate in a conference call with SAP and CGCS staff to address teacher questions and concerns during pilot implementation.
- **Learning Walk #1** – **September 25-26, 2017**. The learning walks were designed to determine how well the professional development translated into observable classroom practices. The data collected has multiple uses:
    a. SAP and CGCS use the data to evaluate the impact of the professional development and inform future trainings.
    b. Pilot Leads and district leaders use the data to consider implementation strengths and needs for further support.
- **Cycle 2 Professional Development** – **October 4-6, 2017**. Cycle 2 workshops focused on the importance of building student knowledge and vocabulary through using high quality complex text in read alouds. Participants received text sets around a topic together with supporting instructional resources as they learned effective strategies for incorporating above grade-level read alouds into classroom instruction.

For more detailed information, you are welcome to attend the session on the Nashville K-1 Balanced Literacy Pilot during the Annual Fall Conference in Cleveland.

COLLEGE BOARD-KAHN ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP

CGCS District Winners of the SAT Practice All In Challenge

Over the past school year, 28 member districts of the Council of Great City Schools participated in the Official SAT Practice All In Challenge and made incredible gains in their efforts to increase access to higher education across their districts. Five districts were selected as winners of cash awards.

- ❖ **REACH Award: MVP**
  (Highest overall percent of linked test takers for grades 9-12)
  Long Beach, CA

- ❖ **REACH Award: Growth**
  (Highest percent increase of linked accounts from Dec 10)
  Fresno, CA

- ❖ **Proof of Practice Award: Students**
  (Highest average weekly percentage of **active accounts** from Dec 10)
  Orange County, FL

- ❖ **Proof of Practice Award: Time**
  (Highest average weekly **minutes** per active account)
  Denver, CO

- ❖ **Proof of Practice Award: Problems**
  (Highest average weekly **problems** per active account)
  Chicago, IL

COMPUTER SCIENCE WEBINARS

Are you searching for ways to increase access to Computer Science in your district?

Register NOW for upcoming webinars on Computer Science!

The Council of Great City Schools, in partnership with UChicago STEM Education at the University of Chicago, is pleased to host a series of webinars for CGCS member districts to learn more about district efforts to increase and improve K-12 computer science education. In these conversations, exclusively provided to staff in CGCS member districts, participants will dive deeply into one particular district's efforts. In each session, you will:

- Learn more about particular goals and strategies for improving computer science education for all students.
- Understand how computer science education efforts connect with the work needed to advance mathematics, science, STEM, and/or STEAM learning.
- Discuss ways to prioritize in order to address challenges faced during design and implementation of plans to increase access to computer science.
- Develop a network of support from educators in similar roles and interests.

Webinar 1: San Francisco Unified School District, James Ryan

Dr. Jim Ryan, STEM Executive Director for the San Francisco Unified School District, will discuss his team's efforts around computer science. Their focus includes strategic planning for implementing a K-8 computer science program for all while simultaneously increasing the number of computer science courses available at the high school level.

October 2, 2017, **1:00 PM – 2:00 PM EDT (12:00 PM – 1:00 PM CDT; 10:00 AM – 11 AM PDT)**
To register, sign up at http://bit.ly/cgcs-cs-webinar1.

Webinar 2: Dallas Independent School District, Oswaldo Alvarenga

Dr. Oswaldo Alvarenga, STEM Executive Director for the Dallas Independent School District, will share his team's efforts at planning and implementing a STEM program with a focus on computer science.

October 10, 2017, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM EDT (12:00 PM – 1:00 PM CDT; 10:00 AM – 11 AM PDT)
To register, sign up at http://bit.ly/cgcs-cs-webinar2.

Webinar 3: Metropolitan Nashville School District, David Williams

David Williams, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, will share his team's goals and strategies for connecting computer science with the districts new STEAM initiative.

October 23, 2017, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM EDT (12:00 PM – 1:00 PM CDT; 10:00 AM – 11 AM PDT)
To register, sign up at http://bit.ly/cgcs-cs-webinar3.

SOUTHERN CITIES PRE-CONFERENCE

Council of the Great City Schools Pre-conference
Hilton Cleveland Downtown
October 17, 2017
Supporting our Southern Cities

7 AM – 8:00 AM   **Breakfast**

8 AM – 8:15 AM   ***Welcome***
-Michael Casserly, Executive Director, CGCS

8:15 AM- 8:20AM   ***Introductions***
-Ricki Price-Baugh, Director of Academic Achievement, CGCS

Lessons from the Field

8:25AM - 9:40AM   ***Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools: Implementing intentionally designed, cross-functional literacy initiatives through the use of Instructional Leadership Teams***
- Brian Schultz, Chief Academic Officer
-Nakia Hardy, Executive Director, Teaching & Learning, PreK-5

(Break from 9:40 AM – 9:50 AM; coffee service available until 11 AM)

9:50AM – 11:05AM   ***Boston Public Schools: Engaging teachers and administrators to re-envision quality teaching and learning in mathematics.***
-Linda Davenport, Director of K-12 Mathematics

11:10 AM – 12:25 PM   ***Dallas Independent School District: Focusing on coherence in the middle school mathematics program of studies to provide a progression of topics as student's transition from grades six to eight***
-Oswaldo Alvarenga, Executive Director, STEM
-Stej Sanchez, Director of Mathematics

Lunch 12:25 PM – 1:20 PM

1:25 PM – 2:40 PM   ***Des Moines Public Schools: Using an iterative, data-driven process for school improvement rather than one that is compliance-driven***
-Matt Smith, Chief of Schools

(Afternoon coffee service: 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM)

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM　　　　　**Networking and feedback**

(Choose no more than three (3) rotations. This is your chance to ask clarifying questions about the presentations or questions that address problems of practice in your district)

4:05 PM – 4:50 PM　　　　　***Through the Superintendent's Lens: Solving Persistent Problems***
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　-Dr. Carol Johnson, Boston Public Schools Superintendent (retired)

4:50 PM – 5:00 PM　　　　　**Closing remarks/next steps**

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Achievement & Professional Development Task Force
Meeting Agenda
October 18, 2017
Cleveland, OH

1:00-3:00 p.m.

I. Introduction of Task Force Chairs

II. Review Purpose and Functions of Task Force

- ➢ Closing Achievement Gaps and Improving Districtwide Achievement
- ➢ Professional Development and Teacher Quality
- ➢ Common Core Working Groups and Networks in American's Urban Public Schools

III. Agenda—

Discussion Items

- o Use of Growth Indicators in School Improvement Planning
- o Key Performance Indicators and NAEP Update
- o District responses to Strategic Support Teams
- o Nashville Pilot Project: Incorporating the teaching of foundational skills and complex text in K-1 balanced literacy classrooms

Information Items

- o Catalog of Tools
- o Supporting Success
- o Southern Cities Preconference Summary
- o Mathematics ELL Update
- o Computer Science Webinars
- o Annual Academic and Research Meeting, June 25-27, 2018

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education

2017-2018

Task Force Goal

To assist urban public school systems nationally in improving the quality of instruction
for
English Language Learners and immigrant children.

Task Force Chairs

Richard Carranza, San Francisco Superintendent
Ashley Paz, Fort Worth School Board

IMMIGRATION POLICY

Immigration Policy

COMPARISON OF KEY PROVISIONS:
DREAM Act and SUCCEED Act

DREAM Act S. 1615	SUCCEED Act S. 1852
Sponsor(s): Senators Graham (R-SC), Durbin (D-IL), Flake (R- AZ), Schumer (D-NY)	Sponsor(s): Senators Tillis (R-NC), Langford (R-OK), Hatch (R-UT)
In General: Authorizes Secretary of DHS cancel deportation and adjust immigration status to "alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence on a condition basis."	In General: Authorizes Secretary of DHS to cancel deportation and grant conditional permanent resident status.
Basic Qualification Criteria for Conditional Status: (waiver of inadmissibility grounds on case by case basis) • Physical presence in the US continuous for 4 years prior to enacted of this Act (with some exceptions); • Younger than 18 when initially entered US; • Has been admitted to an institution of higher education, has earned a recognized high school diploma or GED, or is enrolled in secondary school or a program assisting attainment of a recognized high school diploma or equivalent or GED; • Has not violated a variety of criminal or other laws; or • Has been granted previous DACA status and not engaged in ineligibility conduct.	Basic Qualification Criteria for Conditional Status: (waiver of inadmissibility grounds on case by case basis) • Physical presence in the US continuously since June 15, 2012 (with some exceptions); • Younger than 16 when initially entered US; • Younger than 31 without lawful status on June 15, 2012; • If 18 or older has earned recognized high school diploma or GED, been admitted to a higher education institution or has served or enlisted in the military; • If younger that 18 is attending or enrolled in primary or secondary school or postsecondary school; • Since initial entry has been a person of good moral character; • Has paid applicable federal taxes; and • Has not violated a variety of criminal or other laws.

Biometric and Biographic Data, Medical Exam and Background Checks and fee required in application process.	Biometric and Biographic Data, Medical Exam, and Background Checks and fee required in application process.
Duration of Conditional Status: 8 years unless extended	Duration of Conditional Status: Initial period of 5 years (if younger than 18 until reaching 18) to be extended for an additional 5 years upon meeting various criteria, including not receiving any Federal public benefit.
Granting Permanent Residence Status: Requires maintaining residence status, completing certain education benchmarks, military service, or employment criteria	Granting Permanent Residence Status: After at least 10 years of conditional status, requires maintaining residence status, compliance with conditional criteria, and demonstrated good moral character
	New Provisions added for Visa Overstays
	No Immigration Benefits for Relatives of individuals granted conditional or permanent status under this Act
	Permanent Residence Status granted under this Act will satisfy the 5-year waiting period for welfare benefits
Confidentiality of Information protected in application process for attaining conditional or permanent status under the Act	Confidentiality of Information protected in application process for attaining conditional or permanent status under the Act
Repeal of Prohibition of Optional In-state Tuition Benefits	
Path to Citizenship: After permanent resident status has been granted, the time period of conditional status will be counted as permanent residence for purposes of application for citizenship naturalization	Path to Citizenship: After 5 years of permanent residence status, an application for citizenship naturalization may be submitted

ELA MATERIALS 3.0

Council of the Great City Schools

Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 68 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, technical assistance, 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.

Council of the Great City Schools

Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners

Updated, May 2017 (Second Edition)

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Preface

The Council of the Great City Schools is a membership organization of 68 of the nation's largest urban public school districts. According to the last comprehensive survey conducted by the Council, these districts collectively enrolled over 1.2 million English Language Learners (ELLs)—about 26 percent of the nation's total in 2010. The Council has a strong track record of initiating and working on policy, research, and programmatic efforts at the national and local levels to improve academic achievement among ELLs. Among other initiatives, the organization has produced groundbreaking reports and studies on how urban school systems improve the academic attainment of ELLs and comprehensive surveys on the status of ELLs in the nation's urban schools. In addition, the Council works directly with its member school districts to improve and support their instructional programs for ELLs through technical assistance, professional development, on-site reviews, meetings, and a national network of practitioners.

In conducting its work, the Council has found that many urban school districts report significant difficulty finding high-quality, rigorous, and grade-level instructional materials that are written for ELLs at varying levels of English proficiency. This dearth of materials presents a substantial problem for urban districts that enroll sizable numbers of ELLs, and it is particularly acute at the secondary grade levels, where the complexity of content and text is higher. The adoption and implementation of new college- and career-readiness standards, as well as new state-level English Language Development (ELD) standards, have only made this instructional need more obvious.

New standards underscore the importance of having rigorous and explicit guidance, both for defining a re-envisioned instructional framework for ELD that can be successfully implemented in varied educational settings across the nation, and for selecting instructional materials that are complex, standards-aligned, and able to meet the specific needs of ELLs within a district's chosen program model.

Purpose and Audience

This document is intended to clarify and define a renewed vision for high-quality, coherent, and rigorous instruction for English Language Learners—focusing on the areas of English language arts (ELA) and English language development (ELD)—and to provide guidance in evaluating and selecting appropriate ELA/ELD instructional materials. Originally published in 2014 and dubbed "*ELD 2.0*," this updated "*ELD 3.0*" version has been revised to make it more streamlined and aligned with the themes in the recently revised *Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool* (IMET). This document was developed to be applicable across grades K-12. The *Evaluating Instructional Materials* section is designed to work in tandem with other tools that make grade-level distinctions for selecting instructional materials, such as the *Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review* (GIMET-QR) developed by the Council as well other evaluation protocols adopted or developed by districts.

The document is meant to be a useful guide for educators who teach ELA or ELD to ELLs, and for anyone who is involved in the design, development, and/or selection of curricula, materials, and resources, whether in a district's central office or in schools. This includes administrators, principals, teachers (in general education and specialized areas), textbook evaluation committees, instructional leadership teams, resource teachers, math coaches, and content specialists.

The document is divided into three sections:

I. **Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for ELLs**
    A. Overarching Goals and Expectations
    B. District Context: Diversity of ELLs and Educational Settings
    C. Aligning District Systems, Professional Learning, and Instructional Materials
    D. Articulating a Theory of Action for Instruction of ELLs

II. **A Comprehensive Approach to ELD**
    A. Defining Re-Envisioned ELD
    B. Delivery Models for ELD
    C. District's Instructional Approach to ELA and ELD/ESL

III. **Evaluating Instructional Materials: A User's Guide**
    A. Key Considerations and Process for Evaluating Materials
    B. ELL Metrics—Summary Scoring Sheet

Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for ELLs

A. Overarching Goals and Expectations

For close to a decade, new academic standards with increased expectations for students have been adopted and implemented across the nation. These college- and career-readiness standards apply to all students—including English learners, who face the challenge of learning English as they are also learning grade-level content. Districts and states must therefore develop and provide instructional programs and services that accomplish two fundamental goals for ELLs:

1. *Access to Academic Content.* Districts must ensure that ELLs across all levels of language proficiency can access, fully engage with, and achieve rigorous grade-level academic content standards.

2. *English Language Development.* Districts must ensure that ELLs are developing advanced levels of English and closing the academic language gap.

B. District Context: Diversity of ELLs and Educational Settings

While the overarching goals of academic success and English language proficiency for ELLs are common across the nation, the paths to accomplishing these goals are not. States, districts, and schools must consider their specific contexts as they design and provide responsive and effective instructional services and programs for the distinct composition of their ELL communities. Key factors that shape the district context include:

1. *Diversity of ELLs.* English learners are a diverse group of students with varying language backgrounds, experiences, cultural contexts, academic proficiencies, and levels of English proficiency. Some may be just beginning to add English to their language proficiencies; others may be nearing advanced English proficiency or may be stalled at intermediate levels. Schools must *know who their ELLs are, capitalize on what they bring, and hone in on what they need* as they plan and provide instruction that will enable all ELLs to develop and extend English proficiency and achieve the academic standards established for their grade levels.

2. *Approach to English Language Development (ELD).* English Language Development may be named or defined differently across school districts: English Language Development (ELD), English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Acquisition (ELA), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), etc. Districts, nonetheless, must develop a common language and expectations for ELD for the range and diversity of ELLs—and develop a consensus around the key components of ELD.

3. *Instructional Delivery Models.* Instructional delivery varies with regard to *how* and *by whom* English language development and/or core instruction is provided. These differences in delivery design across districts are determined by a number of factors, including state law, resource allocation, particulars specified in district compliance agreements with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) or the Department of Justice (DOJ),[1] and district instructional frameworks and approaches to teaching and learning. These factors affect:

   - *Staffing.* Who provides ELD? Who provides grade-level, content-specific instruction? How do teachers work together to provide coherent learning experiences?

   - *Student placement, grouping, and instructional pathways.* How are students identified as ELLs? How are they placed? Are there coherent services and pathways as students progress in their English proficiency?

   - *Role of instruction and instructional materials.* What drives instruction? Are there curriculum maps? Instructional or curriculum frameworks? Are teachers the primary staff members responsible for instructional decisions? Is the district relying on instructional materials as the curriculum that drives instruction?

4. *Use of Native Language.* Use of native language varies among districts' instructional programs for ELLs, and may be used to support English acquisition and access to grade-level content. For programs that include the development of native language literacy as a goal (e.g., dual-language programs), rigorous academic language development should also occur in the native language, providing access to increasingly complex language.

C. Aligning District Systems, Professional Learning, and Instructional Materials

As districts analyze their own current contexts and how they address instructional needs, clear implications emerge in three interlocking areas that require attention to ensure quality instruction for ELLs:

1. *District Systems* that support a coherent instructional program for ELLs.

   - Clear, coherent systems for ELL identification, placement and pathways, and instruction—including ELD instruction, monitoring, and assessment

   - Clearly articulated ELL program models and delivery options

   - Supportive school structures: i.e., instructional coaches, professional learning communities (PLCs), extended learning (before/after school), leadership development

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1 The Office for Civil Rights acknowledges that "educators have not reached consensus about the most effective way to meet the education needs of LEP (Limited English Proficiency) students," and thus OCR allows school districts broad discretion concerning how to ensure equal education opportunity for LEP students: "OCR does not prescribe a specific intervention strategy or type of program that a school district must adopt to serve LEP students …" (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

2. *Professional Learning* that is centered around developing capacity to deliver rigorous instruction.

    ◆ Professional learning that clarifies the role of instruction, curriculum maps, resources, and materials

    ◆ Professional learning that is timely, effective, sustained, and designed to build district- and school-level capacity to deliver rigorous instruction

    ◆ Professional learning that builds the capacity of teachers and leaders to provide quality instructional practices that are appropriately scaffolded, leading to mastery of grade-level academic language and content

> "Regardless of their individual backgrounds and levels of English proficiency, ELs … are able to engage in intellectually challenging and content-rich activities, with appropriate support from teachers that addresses their language and academic learning needs."
>
> – 2015 California ELA/ELD Framework, p.104

3. *Instructional Materials* that support rigorous instruction of grade-level content with effective scaffolds to support ELLs.

    ◆ High-quality, rigorous instructional materials aligned with the district's program/delivery model

    ◆ High-quality, rigorous instructional materials that engage ELLs and accelerate grade-level content and language development (See *"Evaluating Instructional Materials: A User's Guide"* on page 21.)

D. Articulating a Theory of Action for Instruction of ELLs

Districts must establish a clear vision for how quality instruction will lead to improved outcomes for English Language Learners. The following elements comprise the Council's vision and theory of action for raising ELL achievement by acknowledging and respecting both *the learners and the educators who serve them*.

> **High expectations**—all English learners can achieve at high levels and graduate ready for college and career.
>
> **Asset based**—students' home languages and cultures are tremendous assets that add value.
>
> **Shared ownership**—all educators share responsibility and take ownership for student success.

- *High expectations.* ELLs are capable of engaging in complex thinking and engaging with complex text (reading and writing). When educators know and expect that ELLs will perform at high levels, they will work to provide ELLs with access to rigorous, grade-level instruction and materials. Given this opportunity to learn, ELLs will acquire the reasoning, language skills, and academic registers they need to be successful across the curriculum and throughout the school day.

- *Instruction that builds on student assets.* All students bring knowledge, skills, and experiences into the classroom that can be leveraged to promote learning. Students' home cultures and languages are key resources in their own right, and can help them in developing both the social and academic registers of English. Students benefit academically when their home languages and cultures are recognized as assets.

- *Support and professional development.* Teachers are professionals capable of planning effective lessons that engage ELLs and advance learning and language proficiency across the curriculum. If teachers are given the time and professional development to plan lessons aligned to the district's academic standards; incorporate grade-level appropriate, complex texts into their classroom instruction; and ensure access for English Language Learners through appropriate scaffolds or differentiation, they will succeed in raising ELL achievement. Teachers also need support and guidance from instructional leaders who understand the important shifts needed to engage ELLs in complex thinking, talk, and tasks anchored in complex, grade-level texts.

- *Shared ownership.* In an environment where all educators share responsibility for the success of all students, teachers are supported and empowered to improve their instructional practice in order to meet the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. Understanding that all teachers are teachers of ELLs promotes improved attention to language development, as well as coordination and dissemination of the support, instructional practices, and resources necessary for teachers across the curriculum to ensure that students at varying levels of English proficiency have access to core content and effective instruction.

In sum, when we *respect all students as learners* by holding high expectations for their achievement, equipping them with the skills they need to meet these expectations, and recognizing the value of the experience and knowledge they bring into the classroom, we can improve their social and academic outcomes. Likewise, when we *respect teachers as professionals* by providing them with the support and training they need to effectively engage ELLs and building a culture of shared accountability among all educators, we improve the quality of teaching and learning not only for ELLs but for all students.

A Comprehensive Approach to ELD

A. Defining a Re-envisioned ELD Framework

Effective ELD ensures that ELLs acquire the reasoning, language skills, and academic registers to be successful across the curriculum and throughout the school day. So, how will this occur? What must be in place to ensure every student is receiving abundant opportunities to develop the academic and discipline-specific language needed to access and fully engage in grade-level, standards-based instruction? And how will we ensure that students are developing an understanding of how English works—in varied contexts and situations, and with varied audiences and speakers of English?

The task, though challenging, is achievable. The answers to these questions lie in a re-envisioned approach to ELD that, *by design,* provides for intentional language-learning opportunities and experiences for ELLs throughout the school day that enrich and expand students' English proficiency and support them in achieving grade-level expectations and standards. This redesigned framework, applicable to any number of contexts, includes two key elements that work together to provide a comprehensive approach to ELD:

1. *Focused Language Study (FLS):* Dedicated time, where ELLs are strategically grouped together to concentrate on the critical language ELLs need for on-grade-level learning in English (language that their native English-speaking peers typically already know).

2. *Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE):* Academic language instruction throughout the day and integrated across various content areas. Teachers provide an intentional focus on the content-specific language demands and academic language that ELLs, along with their native English-speaking peers, must develop.

These two elements, together with effective and strategic instructional practices, comprise a framework for a strong and comprehensive system of ELD.

This comprehensive approach to ELD provides for contextualized learning opportunities throughout the day that support and accelerate language learning, and are respectful of learners and educators alike:

- ELLs have daily opportunities to work with other ELLs at similar levels of English proficiency to further develop, practice, and understand how English works. (FLS)

- ELLs are engaged in grade-level work with their peers, while being supported in developing and using authentic language. (DALE)

ELD is defined by the coherent integration of both FLS and DALE. Ideally, teachers coordinate services and bridge learning between FLS and DALE so that the language instruction that occurs in the content areas (DALE) is extended and deepened during FLS. Similarly, there is an expectation that language developed during FLS will be applied to content learning. Taken together, students receive coherent, rich, and comprehensive ELD every day.

Comprehensive ELD requires FLS plus DALE

$$\text{ELD} = \text{FLS} + \text{DALE}$$

What is Focused Language Study (FLS)?

FLS is a dedicated time for targeted English language development. Instruction focuses on the English language and how it works—those elements that are already typically known to native English speakers but must be learned and developed by ELLs (Wong Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012).

- ELD/ESL standards serve as the focus for instruction. The emphasis is on functional/purposeful use of language in all four language domains, and students develop and practice language for a variety of registers, purposes, and audiences.

- Instruction is differentiated by students' levels of English language proficiency and intentionally targeting development to higher levels of proficiency.

- It is a companion to, not a replacement for, quality standards-aligned English language arts instruction, and teachers bridge the learning from FLS to subject matter instruction in DALE (and vice versa).

Notes to FLS Teachers:

FLS is intended to increase students' English language proficiency and assist them in using English with increasing competence, flexibility, and fluency. To promote this:

- Provide instruction at a level slightly above students' independent level.
  - ◆ Stretch students' language by continually assisting them in finding additional ways to express ideas and expand, amplify, and extend language.
  - ◆ Demonstrate high expectations and hold students accountable for using and applying the language they are developing, with the goal of student independence.

- Identify and expand on HOW English works in various contexts. Explore and clarify linguistic demands of complex text, talk, and discourse in varied settings, audiences, and purposes.

- Explicitly bridge learning between FLS and subject matter curricula encountered throughout the day, encouraging students to extend and apply language developed during FLS to DALE (and vice versa). Students can then see the connectedness between various contexts and learn to use English with greater flexibility and fluency. (For example, "Look in your language log. Remember we discussed how we write a sequence? First/next/finally... Use this to explain how you solved the math problem.")

So What Does FLS Look Like in a Classroom?

- FLS instruction focuses on how the English language works in all four domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- Teachers explicitly teach elements that might be typically known to native English speakers and provide opportunities for students to practice English to develop an understanding of its sentence structures, grammatical conventions, and vocabulary.

- *Student Grouping:* Students may be grouped by similar English proficiency levels. However, rather than being isolated in a single level of proficiency, it is best when students are grouped with others within a limited range of levels.

- *Designated Time:* A specified number of minutes (e.g., 30-60) may be allotted daily in elementary grades. At the secondary level, one or more class periods may be allotted either as stand-alone courses or in combination with ELA, depending upon students' English proficiency levels, instructional needs, and/or state guidelines.

- *Designated Instructional Focus:*

  - At the **elementary** level, instruction is best provided by a classroom teacher who knows the students and can provide a bridge between FLS and DALE, or by teachers providing FLS and DALE who collaborate and co-plan to bridge grade-level work with development and use of academic language throughout the day.

  - At the **secondary** level, instruction may be in designated ELD/ESL courses, or in self-contained or co-taught ELD/ESL and ELA courses that align to grade-level ELA content.

- *FLS Teacher:* Instruction may be provided by a qualified ESL teacher (push-in, pull-out), classroom teacher (as a small group or ELA/ELD course), or co-teachers (each with a small group at similar language levels).

What is Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE)?

DALE is language instruction in the context of grade-level content; it focuses on deliberate language development and expansion through complex thought, texts, talk, and tasks (Wong Fillmore & Cucchiara, 2012). Discipline-specific language is used in distinct ways, not only because each content area deals with different subjects, but also because each subject describes and engages in different processes, concepts, and argumentation (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). DALE occurs in the content area class, can be extended and reinforced in FLS, and supports and benefits all students.

- Grade-level content standards serve as the focus for instruction. ELD standards support the academic language demands of the content, which ELLs—along with their native English-speaking peers—must develop.

- Language development takes place in an integrated manner within appropriate grade-level learning. The content lessons' language demands, challenges, and opportunities are analyzed and intentional instruction is provided to address the demands. High-utility, cross-disciplinary academic language is leveraged and developed.

- DALE attends to language usage and terminology in each field. Instruction attends to academic registers and ways of thinking and expressing ideas in different fields, which may be different than general usage.

Notes to DALE Teachers:

Use every opportunity to extend and develop the language of your subject area. DALE is a rich opportunity for language development and contributes directly to students' accelerated language development and academic success.

- **Strategically collaborate with the ELD/ESL/ESOL teacher to create lessons and opportunities that lead to language development.**

- **Preview and analyze tasks and identify the language demands and potential challenges.** Use these as opportunities to teach and support the language students need to fully engage in the academic learning.

- **Build bridges between FLS and DALE.** Encourage students to extend and apply language developed during FLS to DALE. Students can then see the connectedness between various contexts and learn to use English with greater flexibility and fluency.

So What Does DALE Look Like in a Classroom?

- Language development is integrated seamlessly into content-area instruction.
- Instruction may be provided by a content-area teacher with specialized training to support language development or by a content-area teacher and ESL teacher planning and teaching together.
- Teachers explicitly teach and develop the language of the subject area. This may include vocabulary and/or the specific patterns, forms, or overall structures of language required for the task or expectations of the discipline.
- Teachers model academic, high-level English, and encourage students to respond and communicate their own thinking using discipline-specific language.
- Students participate in structured activities and tasks that require interaction with others and the use of increasingly complex language.
- Students extend and apply language skills and knowledge developed during Focused Language Study.

B. Delivery Models for ELD

The *Re-envisioned ELD Framework* clearly articulates and attends to the development of full and robust English proficiency across all language domains and all subject areas. It lives within—not apart from—overall efforts to raise the rigor of language and content instruction, ensuring that all students achieve college and career readiness.

There are many ways in which ELD (both FLS and DALE) can be implemented. Any structure or model must support the key principles of FLS and DALE, but generally speaking, this best occurs when the school-level structure and schedule facilitate collaboration and co-planning among teachers who deliver FLS and/or DALE. Teachers are thus empowered to provide connections that bridge grade-level work and hold students accountable for using and applying academic language throughout the day.

Elementary-level Models: ELLs may be clustered in groups with similar English proficiency and placed in grade-level classes that include other, more-proficient peers. They are taught in English by teachers who have special ELL training and appropriate certification. The instruction might also include the use of the home language of ELLs, if delivered through a bilingual education program. Below are some examples:

- *Within a classroom taught by a general education teacher:* Classroom teachers with ELL-related credentials provide DALE and daily FLS in their respective classrooms.

- *Team teaching:* Two grade-level teachers team up to provide FLS during a designated time. Each provides instruction to a small group of students at a similar English proficiency level. Teachers co-plan and collaborate to coordinate learning and hold students accountable for using and applying language in both settings.
- *Cross grade-span team teaching:* Similar to team-teaching, teachers across a grade level or span (i.e., primary grades) provide FLS at a designated time to a small group of ELLs with similar English proficiency. Teachers collaborate and coordinate to bridge learning.
- *FLS provided by designated ELD teacher:* Designated ELD or ESL teachers provide FLS in either a push-in or pull-out model. General education teachers provide DALE. ELD/ESL/ESOL and general education teachers collaborate and coordinate to bridge learning.

Secondary-level Models: ELLs receive DALE through content courses by teachers who have special ELL training and appropriate certification. Content teachers collaborate and co-plan with FLS teachers to coordinate learning and to prepare students to use academic language in both settings.

- *Designated ELD courses:* Students receive FLS through designated ELD or ESL courses targeting specific English proficiency levels. These courses align and build on ELA standards and may be two-period blocks providing intensive language-learning opportunities. These courses are most appropriate for students at earlier levels of English proficiency.
- *ELD and ELA co-courses:* ELLs are enrolled in a designated ESL or ELD course by English proficiency level, as well as a grade-level ELA course. The two courses are aligned, with the ELD course providing additional, targeted opportunities for students to develop the language and literacy needed for success in the grade-level ELA course.
- *A specialized form of instruction* for ELA/ELD may also be implemented to address the need for accelerated language development for particular groups of ELLs, such as students with interrupted formal schooling, newcomers at secondary level who are entirely new to English, or long-term ELLs.

Implementing the Framework: A District Example

The following is one example of how a large urban district has implemented the Framework within their overall instructional program model.

District X has utilized the *Framework* to examine how to better address the inherent language demands of college- and career-readiness standards and Next Generation Science Standards. The Council's framework delineating Focused Language Study (FLS) and Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE) has been formative in the district's reconceptualization of ELD.

Recognizing that language and content are essential components in both ELD instruction and content instruction, and in alignment with its state ELA/ELD Framework, District X has determined that students at every grade level across the language proficiency continuum will receive both:

Designated ELD (FLS): A protected time where ELD teachers can zoom in on focused language study connected to core content.

- Instruction is targeted to the three proficiency levels of the state ELD standards (emerging, expanding, bridging).
- Language is in the foreground. The focus is on ELD standards and on how English works.

Integrated ELD (DALE): English Language Development that is embedded in core content instruction across the day and delivered by general education teachers with ELD training.

- Content is in the foreground. The focus is on interacting in meaningful ways and developing and using disciplinary language in service of accessing grade-level content.

At the Elementary Level, schools in District X will cluster groups of six to eight ELLs with similar English proficiency and place them in grade-level classes. ELLs will receive DALE from classroom teachers (with special ELL training and certification). Wherever possible, each classroom teacher will also provide FLS to their small group (cluster) of ELLs. Where not feasible, teachers will team up during a designated FLS time, each taking one group of ELLs with similar English proficiency. In either case, FLS and DALE instruction will be coordinated and build off of each other. FLS is also provided daily for ELLs enrolled in dual language and biliteracy programs, as is DALE (in both English and the target language.)

At the Secondary Level, schools in District X will identify and place ELLs by English proficiency in designated ELD courses that also align to and build on ELA standards (FLS). ELLs will also be enrolled in grade-appropriate ELA and other content courses supported by teachers who have special ELL training and certification (DALE). A newcomer program is also designed for students at the earliest level of English proficiency, including Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). For one to two semesters, Newcomer ELLs receive an intensive program of ELD, content-based electives, and orientation to the United States. ELLs are also enrolled in other more easily accessible elective courses (e.g., art, photography) that might have fewer language demands, with the general school population.

C. A District's Instructional Approach to ELA and ELD/ESL

In addition to identifying the ELD/ESL delivery model, it is critically important that districts clearly articulate the content and pedagogical connection between ELD/ESL and its broader English Language Arts (ELA) program *before* determining what instructional materials are needed. It is only *after* establishing and articulating the district approach to ELA and ELD/ESL—the instructional context in which the materials will be used—that a district can effectively evaluate instructional materials, determining those that best suit their specific context. Answering questions such as these for both ELA and ELD/ESL could help clarify a district's instructional approach, and therefore the type (or types) of materials best suited to their needs.

1. **District Created Curriculum:**
   - *Is the district creating standards-aligned units of study, curriculum maps, or frameworks for ELA?*
   - *Is the district incorporating ELD/ESL into any district created units, maps, or frameworks?*
   - *Do the ELD/ESL standards or program objectives clearly align to ELA standards?*

2. **Approach to Literacy Instruction:**
   - *What is the district's overarching approach to ELA and literacy at various grade levels?*
   - *Is the approach to ELD/ESL consistent with the approach to ELA, and does it provide opportunities to build on and extend language?*

3. **Professional Development:**
   - *Are there systems in place for strong and sustained professional development for ELA and literacy?*
   - *Do these systems also provide for strong, sustained, and aligned professional development for ELD/ESL (including FLS and DALE)?*

4. **Role of Instructional Materials:**
   - *Does the district take the stance that instructional materials are used **in support of** quality teaching—or are they intended **to closely guide** quality teaching?*
   - *Is the district stance on the role of instructional materials for ELD/ESL consistent with ELA?*

5. **Role of Native Language/Biliteracy and Dual Language Programs:**
   - *How is native language used to support literacy, content knowledge, and English acquisition?*
   - *Is the goal of dual language or biliteracy programs to develop language proficiency and literacy in two languages?*
   - *Is the role of native language instruction for ELD/ESL consistent with ELA (including dual language and biliteracy programs)?*

6. **ELD/ESL Delivery:**
   - *When and in what class(es) is ELD/ESL instruction provided (FLS and DALE)? Which instructional staff members are responsible for providing ELD/ESL instruction or support? (See "Delivery Models for ELD" on page 17.)*

The answers to these questions could point to a comprehensive, more structured set of ELA program materials that integrate specific ELD/ESL components within a given materials package, or a more flexible ELA and ELD/ESL program comprised of carefully chosen materials, text sets, and resources that together support the district-created curriculum (with curriculum maps, units, etc.).

Once a district has defined and articulated its 1. *ELL theory of action*, 2. *Delivery model for ELD/ESL*, and 3. *Instructional approach to ELA and ELD/ESL* (which then determines the type of instructional materials needed to design and deliver effective instruction for both ELA and ELD/ESL within the district context), a district is informed and prepared for the next step—evaluating and selecting instructional materials.

Evaluating Instructional Materials:
A User's Guide

Effective instructional practices that promote accelerated language and literacy development, including the complex ways of thinking, reading, writing, listening, and speaking called for in both ELA *and* ESL/ELD standards, are best supported by materials that align to both grade-level college- and career-readiness standards *and* ESL/ELD standards. In this section, we describe a general process and key features for evaluating, and ultimately selecting, quality ELA/ELD instructional materials for ELLs.

The materials review/selection process typically begins with the convening of a committee that is representative of multiple perspectives, including staff with experience and expertise in standards-aligned ELA and ELD/ESL as well as those who understand the specialized needs of the district's diverse ELLs.

This section provides information and tools designed to help members of this committee hone in on the specific features of materials that will provide accelerated language and literacy opportunities for ELLs. Ideally, this tool should be used alongside other review or evaluation tools such as the *Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool* (GIMET-QR), developed by the Council of the Great City Schools, or tools developed by state departments of education or local districts.

A. A Process and Key Considerations for Evaluating Materials

Through a collaboration with ELL experts, linguists, and practitioners from 15 urban school districts, the following step-by-step process was developed to guide the evaluation and selection of effective instructional materials that specifically attend to the needs of ELLs. This process of reviewing materials entails three general levels of review:

LEVEL ONE: Overarching Considerations

LEVEL TWO: Key Considerations for ELLs

LEVEL THREE: Additional Considerations

Each step of the process may be considered a gateway through which the perhaps daunting number of submissions to consider can be gradually and efficiently winnowed down to the instructional materials that best meet the specific needs of your students and of your program model.

Level One: Overarching Considerations

The process of reviewing ELA/ELD materials begins with an evaluation based upon general concerns, assumptions, and expectations that serve as a unifying foundation.

ESTABLISH DISTRICT CONTEXT:
Theory of Action
ELD/ESL Delivery Model
Approach to ELA/ELD Instruction

MATERIALS:
Confirm materials align to standards

Confirm materials are designed for ELLS

Confirm materials promote high expectations for ELLS
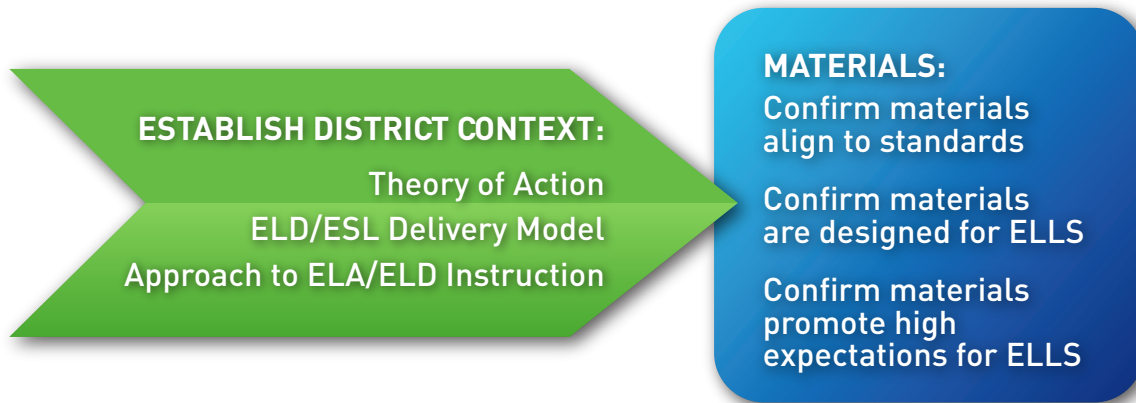
1. ***Establish district context.*** As described in the preceding section, before the process of evaluating materials can begin, each district must determine what materials are needed for its specific context. Districts review only those materials that are consistent with their:

    ◆ *ELL theory of action*

    ◆ *Delivery model for ELD/ESL*

    ◆ *Instructional approach to ELA and ELD/ESL*

2. ***Confirm an explicit and substantive alignment of materials to grade-level standards.*** Correspondence to new standards does not necessarily mean that there is an alignment of rigor and expectations. Publishers should show exactly where and how their materials align with grade-level standards and where they do not, making use of correlation matrices and point-of-use references in their teacher's guide. Districts, then, should seek to determine whether there is true alignment, or just a correlation to standards. The Council's GIMET-QR would be a helpful tool to help determine this alignment.

3. ***Confirm that materials have been designed and validated for use with ELLs.*** Publishers often indicate that their materials have been developed with ELLs in mind or for specific use in programs for ELLs. A series of writers and/or researchers may be mentioned as collaborators or developers. However, in order for schools and districts to confidently rely on these claims, there is a need for greater transparency on the following:

    ◆ Which researchers were included in the design phase of the materials, and what was their level of involvement (authors, commissioned papers, research)?

    ◆ Who are the writers and reviewers of the instruction, and what is their level of expertise with second language development?

    ◆ What is the evidence that the publisher's materials have been validated for use with ELLs? Was research conducted to confirm the instructional design? Were ELLs included in pilots conducted during the course of development? In what districts? Is the typology of the ELLs specified?

4. ***Confirm that the philosophy and pedagogy related to English language acquisition establish high expectations.*** To promote the development of sophisticated grade-level language and content knowledge for ELLs, instructional materials must incorporate rich and complex text, chosen through both quantitative measures (readability) and qualitative measures (levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, knowledge demands, and age-appropriateness). Districts should therefore pay particular attention to the criteria or considerations that were used for including specific texts. Materials must not be oversimplified; rather, they must attend to the role of language development in furthering conceptual understanding of content.

To address ELL needs, materials need to:

Provide **full access to grade-level content**

Provide the necessary **rigor in language development**

Integrate **scaffolding without compromising rigor** or content

Provide access to **text that increases in complexity,** intentionally connecting ELA and ELD/ESL instruction

Present a **cohesive and coherent approach** to developing and expanding concepts, content, thinking, and language through texts, tasks, and talk

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Level Two: Key Considerations for ELLs—Materials Evaluation Matrix

The table below provides a set of considerations that can serve as ELL-specific metrics for reviewing materials through the lens of ELL needs. These considerations are aligned to grade-level college and career-readiness standards, and are designed to be used as a companion or "overlay" **to other grade-by-grade tools** the district is using for the evaluation of instructional materials.

Instructional Materials for ELLs: Evaluation Matrix

Scoring Key: 1 = no evidence, 2 = some evidence, 3 = sufficient evidence, 4 = extensive evidence

1. READING: RANGE, QUALITY, AND COMPLEXITY OF TEXTS	1 2 3 4
Texts have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade, according to both quantitative measures and qualitative analysis of text complexity. Texts are not over-simplified; rather, they are worthy of student time and attention.	

1a) Materials include a range of grade-level and age-appropriate **instructional texts** (e.g., small group, guided) **and independent reading texts** along a staircase of reading and linguistic complexity.

- Text sets are consistent with **grade-appropriate content, themes, and topics,** and promote the development of **grade-level academic language and content.**

1b) Text sets are connected by an essential question or overarching theme; they include **complex and compelling ("juicy") texts** across a variety of genres.

- To the extent practicable, texts should reflect a range of content areas (e.g., math, science, social studies), in support of district curricula.

1c) Text sets address and support ELA/ELD standards and language progressions in a spiraling and reciprocal manner **without sacrificing content or rigor,** providing abundant opportunities for students to hear, read, and experience the rhythms and patterns of English.

1d) Materials provide **sustained time on the themes,** with opportunities (texts, tasks, talk) to reinforce conceptual development and extend the academic language that frames those concepts.

1e) Materials include "just-right" pre-reading activities that offer **visuals and other types of supports and scaffolds** for building essential and pertinent background knowledge on new or unfamiliar themes/topics.

1f) Materials include instruction in which **text complexity is called out** or highlighted, with specific emphasis on linguistic or structural complexity.

1g) Materials integrate high quality, **culturally responsive** texts that tap into student assets to deepen understanding and expand knowledge.

1h) Text provided in Spanish (or any other language) is **authentic, high quality, and at a level of complexity** that mirrors the language and content demands of grade-level standards.

2. QUALITY TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS THAT SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING	1 2 3 4
The majority of questions in the submission are high-quality text-dependent questions that build and extend students' thinking and discourse.	

2a) Materials support students in **recognizing phrases and linguistic constructs** that point to critical information in a passage, allowing them to identify and cite textual evidence for responses to text-dependent questions.

2b) Materials provide **multiple opportunities for extended academic discourse** as students explore and respond to richly developed text-dependent questions.

3. FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS *Materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support for challenges ELLs face as they acquire concepts of print, phonological awareness, word awareness, phonics and vocabulary, syntax, and fluency in a new language.*	1 2 3 4

3a) Materials are **connected to grade-level (not watered-down) content;** they incorporate a contextualized approach to teaching such foundational skills as phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary/syntax/fluency development.

3b) Materials build foundational skills by attending to comparative linguistics, **highlighting similarities and differences** (phonological, orthographic, and syntactic) between English and the native language(s), and **promoting transfer** between native language skills and English.

3c) Materials **avoid nonsense words** and phrases, but rather use English phrases, patterns, and resources that make sense and carry meaning (to reinforce developing English proficiency and meaning making).

4. LANGUAGE *Materials accelerate acquisition of rich academic language. Instruction may focus on how English works, and may be nested within grade-level content and concepts.*	1 2 3 4

4a) Materials pay explicit attention to, and engage students with, academic language—its features, functions, and grammar—**for varied purposes and in varied contexts** in service of effective communication and meaningful academic work.

4b) Materials accommodate students at varying levels of English proficiency. They **avoid tagging specific instructional practices for specific proficiency levels**, as this can hinder access to more advanced language and opportunities.

4c) Materials **regularly identify areas of potential challenge** within the texts (e.g., linguistically complex passages and constructs), and offer teachers support and guidance for determining appropriate instructional scaffolds for ELLs.

4d) Materials include **annotated deconstruction of text,** unpacking the linguistic complexity and richness of language with regard to syntax, and attending to the use of literary devices across genres, registers, and content.

4e) Materials consider how **control of language conventions develops along a non-linear progression,** attending to the conventions, patterns, and usage errors typical of language learners.

• Teachers are supported in modeling, providing examples, and **promoting development of language awareness,** so ELLs gain the ability to recognize and self-correct their errors.

4f) Materials attend to the language that frames the concepts/ideas; they **provide linguistic frames,** templates, and other recommendations to **scaffold the academic language demands** required for extended discourse.

4g) Materials provide opportunities for students to **examine language and text structures associated with each genre,** and use that knowledge to achieve deeper comprehension (e.g., How did you identify the text as persuasive? What was your first clue as to the author's intent? Cite phrases or constructs the author used in an attempt to persuade the reader.)

4h) Materials provide regular opportunities for students to **constantly expand their command of academic language** as they read across connected texts of various genres, grapple with essential questions, express opinions (with reasoning and rationale), and explore and discuss diverse points of view on important themes.

5. SPEAKING AND LISTENING	1 2 3 4
Speaking and listening are integrated into lessons, questions, and tasks; they reflect the progression of increasingly sophisticated communication skills required for college and career readiness.	

5a) Questions and tasks are **grade-level appropriate;** they promote and support expansion of students' spoken English proficiency.

5b) Materials offer **progressively complex linguistic frames** or models that:

- support students in **adapting language use according to task,** purpose, audience, text type, and discipline-specific academic registers, and

- **facilitate academic conversations** that encourage students to "go deeper" in their thinking, sharing and expanding ideas and concepts with their peers (e.g., through description, clarification, elaboration, rationale, building consensus).

5c) Materials include multiple opportunities for students to listen to **authentic models of academic English across genres and registers;** they provide insight into disciplinary demands and features across genres, and call attention to cultural differences in thought and writing patterns.

5d) Materials provide abundant and varied opportunities for teachers to **read rich and compelling texts aloud** to students. These read-alouds expose students to rich language, new ideas, and content knowledge they may not be able to access through independent reading.

5e) Materials provide opportunities for students to **develop receptive listening skills,** through note-taking and other active listening techniques, and support teachers in assessing comprehension of texts read aloud.

6. WRITING	1 2 3 4
Students are regularly required to communicate in writing, for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts, using increasingly complex language that reflects their growing English proficiency.	

6a) Materials include routine and systematic practice and opportunities for guided/shared and independent writing events to develop proficiency in structuring cohesive texts—**shifting language use based on task, purpose, audience, and text types.**

6b) Materials offer ELLs at all proficiency levels **regular opportunities to engage in writing tasks** that gradually build the content, language, and skills required to produce increasingly complex, extended writings (argument, informative/expository, narrative).

6c) **Mentor texts** across writing genres and registers are routinely used as vehicles for instruction and models for students, as they learn to **determine the appropriate register for each writing task** (e.g., formal, casual, content-specific).

6d) Materials provide frequent opportunities for text-connected writing tasks, through which students learn to cite text-based evidence to support their thesis.

7. SCAFFOLDING AND DIFFERENTIATION	1 2 3 4
Materials provide thoughtful supports/scaffolds to support all students in accessing college-and career-readiness standards.	

7a) Materials incorporate **carefully chosen, age-appropriate visuals and graphic supports** to activate prior knowledge and scaffold conceptual development. These graphics are used to clarify concepts and relationships within the text that are critical to comprehension.
 	
7b) Materials/texts emphasize or repeat selected **contextualized linguistic/grammatical structures that are central to meaning** and concept development so that students can access content and gain control over the academic language that frames them.
 	
7c) Materials offer support for assessment, including:
  • Guidance or recommendations for *expert noticing* for **formative assessment** of both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) dimensions of language and literacy, with a goal of informing instruction.
  • Tools (e.g., diagnostic, performance, summative, unit, etc.) to assist in **monitoring student progress** in literacy and language development.
  • Resources to support the **use of assessment data** for understanding student learning and responding with effective next step for student learning.
 	
7d) Teacher materials incorporate evidence-based approaches, strategies, and resources so that all ELLs (e.g., **SIFE, literate in native language, long-term ELLs,** etc.) may access and attain grade-level standards.
 	
7e) Teacher resources provide guidance to **distinguish between simply "meeting ELD standards" and achieving full comprehension** of complex text, including guidance on building background knowledge presupposed by text.
 	
7f) Teacher resources provide instructional suggestions and recommendations for scaffolding for ELLs with diverse needs that **incorporate cultural, linguistic, and background experiences** students bring to the classroom.
 	
7g) Teacher resources provide guidance for **differentiating between student needs related to language development and those related to developing and controlling reading behaviors,** and for responding via targeted support or intervention.
 	
7h) Teacher resources provide examples of student work, **highlighting potential areas of linguistic challenge** and offering related instructional guidance.
 	
7i) Teacher resources provide teachers with **recommendations and/or links to access additional resources,** materials, and texts for diverse student needs.	

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8. Cultural Relevance and Respect	1 2 3 4
Instructional materials must be respectful and inclusive of all students' backgrounds, language, culture, ethnicity, race, gender, and refugee or immigration experience; and must pay special attention to cultural implications for ELLs, providing appropriate supports for teachers.	

8a) Text sets offer a **range of views and perspectives** and are deliberately structured in a sensitive manner to provide opportunities for all learners to engage meaningfully with each text.

8b) Texts take special care to **address sensitive subjects with respect,** including—where appropriate— carefully chosen images and videos to build background and context.

8c) ELLs' **backgrounds are valued as assets and built upon,** as they bring rich experience to the learning environment.

8d) Texts **acknowledge students' life experiences** and social and emotional development.

8e) Texts are **free of negative misconceptions or stereotypes,** encouraging students to acknowledge multiple perspectives.

8f) Teachers' resources include **explicit guidance for identifying culturally distinct discourse patterns and linguistic features** within texts, highlighting similarities and/or contrasting differences. This guidance should include tasks and questions that are culturally respectful and that draw upon students' metalinguistic awareness and life experiences to guide intellectual exploration and discourse.

9. Additional Considerations for Teacher's Editions, Resources, and Professional Development	1 2 3 4
Teacher materials support—rather than usurp—the district's curriculum or professional development initiatives, and position teachers as the professionals who select materials and design lessons to accelerate student learning. In addition to teacher guidance and recommendations referenced in each section of this matrix, the following are additional general considerations for reviewing teacher's editions, resources, and related professional development.	

9a) Materials provide **reflection/coaching suggestions rather than a script** to follow.

9b) Materials support teachers in **scaffolding up rather than watering down,** encouraging students to strive upwards, and ensuring that ELLs are instructed with rigorous grade-level content.

9c) Materials include **samples of *more* structured units as guides for teachers, as well as others that are *less* structured,** to allow teachers to take greater command of designing their units as they feel more comfortable with the instructional shifts.

9d) The materials' design includes **spaces for collaborative conversations** among students and with teachers, and supports teachers who need to learn how to do this.

9e) Digital tools **support a virtual learning community** for teaching and reflection. This may include teaching videos.

9f) When offered, publisher indicates a **willingness to collaborate with districts to design customized professional development** rather than relying on a generic "one-size-fits-all" training framework.

9g) Professional development takes an **active stance on reinforcing high-expectations and opportunities for ELLs** to engage with and achieve grade-level content standards along with increased language proficiency.

Level Three: Additional Considerations

When selecting high-quality instructional materials for ELLs, schools and districts must consider additional factors that are critical for supporting high-quality, cohesive, and coherent instructional programs for ELLs. This section describes these additional factors in order to aid districts in their final selection of materials.

Aligned Professional Development

Instruction matters. A well-designed ELL instructional program has a clearly articulated theory of action and delivery model for ELD/ESL, along with a coherent approach to instruction, supported by carefully selected, quality instructional materials.

Building the capacity of a system, its leaders, and its teachers through professional development is therefore critical to student success. Professional development must be well-targeted; responsive to specific student, educator, and system needs; and provide for sustained educator learning to ensure the academic success of ELLs. Effective professional development for meeting the needs of ELLs would do the following:

> **High-leverage Additional Considerations**
>
> Aligned **Professional Development**
>
> Appropriate **Support and Intervention**
>
> Strategic Use of **Instructional Technology**

- Clearly position the teacher (rather than instructional materials) as the key driver in lesson design and delivery.

- Take an active stance in reinforcing high expectations and opportunities for ELLs to engage with and achieve grade-level content standards along with increased language proficiency.

- Provide for coherent and systemic support throughout the organization to ensure that principals and other leaders understand, are supportive of, and can lead effective instructional practices for serving ELLs.

- Align to and support the district context, including the ELL theory of action, delivery models, and instructional approaches and initiatives.

- Build expertise in connecting, developing, and extending language and literacy across the school day—strengthening both FLS and DALE.

- Provide differentiated options for educators in varying settings, with varying levels of expertise, and in varied formats and time-frames, such as job-embedded with coaches or teams, professional learning communities, targeted workshops, series, or institutes.

- Align publisher-provided professional learning to district needs, demonstrating a willingness on the part of publishers to collaborate with districts to design customized professional development rather than relying on a generic "one-size-fits-all" training framework.

Appropriate Support and Intervention

Additional support and intervention occurs only after students have first had opportunities for quality instruction with differentiated support and demonstrate that they require additional targeted instruction to accelerate learning. Appropriate materials for support and intervention are selected to support specific diagnosed needs, usually within a framework of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) or Response to Interventions (RTI). For ELLs, ELD/ESL is an integral part of this initial opportunity to receive quality instruction (also known as Tier I), and thus the ELD materials would not be considered intervention materials. Support and intervention strategies and materials will vary according to purpose, age, and grade level and should be used flexibly—only until students have closed a specific learning gap. Effective interventions and materials for meeting the needs of ELLs would do the following:

- Accelerate—rather than remediate—content learning and language development, presenting a cohesive and coherent approach to building and developing concepts, content, thinking, and language that lead to grade-level standards.

- Link to the core ELA materials and curriculum, and include abundant grade-level content (e.g., texts, tasks, talk, topics/themes).

- Provide progressions, student practice, and scaffolds that result in student access to grade-level content.

- Provide guidance and suggestions for adapting and extending tasks to support and expand academic language development.

- Provide for many entry and exit points to customize support to specific student needs, and to monitor attainment of specific learning.

> **Design and Focus**
>
> High-quality materials have design features that make them focused and easy to use:
>
> - Student resources provide clear directions and explanations, and labeling of reference aids
> - Materials are clearly laid out for students and teachers
> - The focus is on maximum student understanding and the pacing allows for completion within the regular school year
> - Materials contain clear statements and explanations of purpose, goals, and expected outcomes

Strategic Use of Instructional Technology

New technologies can be a valuable tool for promoting academic literacy for ELLs. The use of computers and the Internet can provide support for extensive and independent reading and writing, assist with language scaffolding, and provide opportunities for authentic research and publication (Warschauer, Grant, Del Real, & Rousseau, 2004). Moreover, the Internet can be an important source for instructional materials in a range of native languages and can afford educators substantially greater alternatives for fostering language learning with contextual and cultural depth. Technology can also play an important role in the construction of productive learning environments for young English learners (Castek, 2007).

The effectiveness of projects that use technology, however, does not lie in the technology itself, but in the purposeful use of technology to meet the needs of students (Durán, 2007). When selecting digital or technology-based modalities of instructional materials for ELLs, districts must consider how these fit into a larger vision of instruction for ELLs, and how teachers will use technology to extend literacy development and enhance access to rigorous content, while ensuring student engagement and interaction with peers.

Digital materials and resources can play a strategic role in enhancing and extending literacy development when they:

- Are high-quality, and are used as instructional tools to increase student engagement and augment and support—not replace—teacher instruction.

- Are not considered a stand-alone resource. Rather, they are integrated with teacher tools and delivery methods to create a technology-mediated learning environment (Rueda, 2007).

- Are used to support students in their development of academic literacy. Specifically, digital materials and resources may:
  - Promote independent reading, offering support for language scaffolding.
  - Provide contextual vocabulary instruction to facilitate reading comprehension and academic language proficiency.
  - Extend beyond basic reading skills to higher-level literacy and communication skills.

- Facilitate involvement in cognitively engaging projects, e.g., student analysis and creation of purposeful texts in a variety of media and genres (Warschauer et al., 2004).

- Simulate different contexts of language use, providing ELLs practice with vocabulary and literary devices across content areas and registers, and helping to create virtual settings in which students can see how language transforms depending on the particular context (like the playground and the classroom), social institution (like school and home), and practice (like games and lessons), countering language instructional practices that are abstract and decontextualized (Gee, 2004).

- Provide for—
  - high quality language input,
  - ample communicative opportunities for practice in various social, cultural, and academic contexts (registers),
  - feedback that is timely, meaningful, and of high quality, and
  - content that is individualized for the student's unique needs (Zhao & Lai, 2007).

- Include teacher resources that provide supports and models that demonstrate how to effectively integrate technology to meet the needs of students in the classroom.

B. ELL Metrics—Summary Scoring Sheet

ELL Metric	Score Point
Scoring Key: 1 = no evidence, 2 = some evidence, 3 = sufficient evidence, 4 = extensive evidence	
1. Reading: Range, Quality, and Complexity of Texts	1 2 3 4
1a) Materials include a range of grade-level and age-appropriate instructional texts… 1b) Text sets are connected by an essential question… complex and compelling texts… 1c) Text sets address and support ELA/ELD standards and language progressions in a spiraling… 1d) Materials provide sustained time on the theme… 1e) Materials include "just-right" pre-reading activities… 1f) Materials include instruction in which text complexity is called out or highlighted… 1g) Materials integrate high quality, culturally responsive texts… 1h) Text provided in Spanish (or any other language) is authentic, high quality… a level of complexity…	
2. Quality Text-Dependent Questions That Support Student Learning	1 2 3 4
2a) Materials support students in recognizing phrases and linguistic constructs… 2b) Materials provide multiple opportunities for extended academic discourse…	
3. Foundational Skills	1 2 3 4
3a) Materials are connected to grade-level (not watered-down) content… 3b) Materials for building foundational skills by attending to comparative linguistics… 3c) Materials avoid nonsense words and phrases, but rather use English phrases, patterns, and resources…	
4. Language	1 2 3 4
4a) Materials pay explicit attention to, and engage students with, academic language… 4b) Materials accommodate students at varying levels of English proficiency… 4c) Materials regularly identify areas of potential challenge within the texts… 4d) Materials include annotated deconstruction of text, unpacking the linguistic complexity… 4e) Materials consider how control of language conventions develops along a non-linear progression… 4f) Materials attend to the language that frames the concepts/ideas; they provide linguistic frames… 4g) Materials provide opportunities for students to examine language and text structures… 4h) Materials provide regular opportunities for students to constantly expand their command of academic…	
5. Speaking and Listening	1 2 3 4
5a) Questions and tasks are grade-level appropriate; they promote and support expansion of students'… 5b) Materials offer progressively complex linguistic frames or models that… 5c) Materials include multiple opportunities for students to listen to authentic models of academic English… 5d) Materials provide abundant and varied opportunities for teachers to read rich and compelling texts… 5e) Materials provide opportunities for students to develop receptive listening skills, through note-taking…	

6. Writing	1 2 3 4
6a) Instruction offers routine and systematic practice and opportunities for guided/shared and independent...	
6b) Materials offer ELLs at all proficiency levels regular opportunities to engage in writing tasks...	
6c) Mentor texts across writing genres and registers are routinely used as vehicles for instruction...	
6d) Materials provide frequent opportunities for text-connected writing tasks...	

7. Scaffolding and Differentiation	1 2 3 4
7a) Materials incorporate **carefully chosen, age-appropriate visuals and graphic supports** to activate prior...	
7b) Materials/texts emphasize or repeat selected **contextualized linguistic/grammatical structures**...	
7c) Materials offer support for assessment, including...	
7d) Teacher materials incorporate evidence-based approaches, strategies, and resources so that all ELLs...	
7e) Teacher resources provide guidance to **distinguish between simply "meeting ELD standards" and**...	
7f) Teacher resources provide instructional suggestions and recommendations for scaffolding for ELLs...	
7g) Teacher resources provide guidance for **differentiating between student needs related to language**...	
7h) Teacher resources provide examples of student work, **highlighting potential areas of linguistic**...	
7i) Teacher resources provide teachers with **recommendations and/or links to access additional resources**...	

8. Cultural Relevance and Respect	1 2 3 4
8a) Text sets offer a range of views and perspectives and are deliberately structured in a sensitive manner...	
8b) Texts take special care to address sensitive subjects with respect...	
8c) ELLs' backgrounds are valued as assets and built upon, as they bring rich experience to the learning...	
8d) Texts acknowledge students' life experiences, and social and emotional development...	
8e) Texts are free of negative misconceptions or stereotypes, encouraging students to acknowledge...	
8f) Teachers' resources include explicit guidance for identifying culturally distinct discourse patterns...	

9. Additional Considerations for Teacher's Editions, Resources, and Professional Development	1 2 3 4
9a) Materials provide reflection/coaching suggestions rather than a script to follow...	
9b) Materials support teachers in scaffolding up rather than watering down...	
9c) Materials include samples of more structured units as guides for teachers, as well as others that...	
9d) The materials' design includes spaces for collaborative conversations among students and with teachers...	
9e) Digital tools support a virtual learning community for teaching and reflection...	
9f) When offered, publisher indicates a willingness to collaborate with districts to design customized...	
9g) Professional development takes an active stance reinforcing high-expectations and opportunities...	
Total Score	

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MATH MATERIALS CRITERIA

A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners

DECEMBER 2016

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 70 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, instructional support, leadership, management, technical assistance, 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 education for urban youth.

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A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Schools in our Great Cities, and across the nation, are diversifying with increasing enrollment of English Language Learners—one of America's fastest growing student groups. The academic needs of these school children are complex and varied.

Fortunately, the achievement of these students is being taken seriously by urban educators across the nation. They have coalesced around a series of activities to ensure these children learn English and thrive in their studies of all subjects.

This document is one more piece of evidence of how urban school leaders are working to ensure success for all our students. It addresses two important needs. One, it provides a framework for understanding the interdependence of language and math in an era when the new college- and career-readiness standards in mathematics include unprecedented language demands. And two, it presents criteria by which school administrators and teachers can determine whether instructional materials being considered for implementation are well-suited for English Language Learners and are consistent with college and career ready standards for mathematics. Nothing like this has been previously attempted.

The intellectual horsepower that was involved in pulling this document together was impressive. An extraordinary team came together to discuss intensely complex and interconnected issues. I thank these extraordinarily talented and committed individuals, who include: Frances Esparza, Karla Estrada, Cathy Martin, Jennifer Yacoubian, Maria Crenshaw, Julio Moreno, Judy Elliott, Philip Daro, Harold Asturias, Lily Wong Fillmore, Judit Moschkovich, and Kevin Oh. Special thanks goes to Liz Gamino and our own Denise Walston who devoted numerous hours to pouring over the contributions of the experts and district practitioners of the team, and to the Council's ELL Team and Amanda Corcoran who brought this to completion. We also thank the school systems, universities, and organizations that permitted these individuals to work collaboratively on such an important initiative.

At this point, we hope that school officials and teachers across the country will use this document and the proposals and criteria in it to strengthen mathematics instruction for our English Language Learners and ensure they have materials that meet their needs.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

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SECTION I:
PREFACE

The Council of the Great City Schools is a membership organization of 70 of the nation's largest urban public school districts. These districts collectively enroll over a million English Language Learners (ELLs) or about 24 percent of the nation's total. The Council has a strong track record of initiating and working on policy, research, and programmatic efforts at the national and local levels to improve academic achievement among ELLs. Among other initiatives, the organization has produced groundbreaking reports and studies on how urban school systems improve the academic attainment of ELLs and comprehensive surveys on the status of ELLs in the nation's urban schools. In addition, the Council works directly with its member school districts to improve and support their instructional programs for ELLs through technical assistance, professional development, on-site reviews, meetings, and a national network of practitioners.

In conducting its work, the Council found that many urban school districts report significant difficulty finding high quality, rigorous, grade-level instructional materials that are written for ELLs at varying levels of English proficiency. This dearth of materials presents a substantial problem for urban districts that enroll sizable numbers of ELLs, and it is particularly acute at the secondary grade levels, where the complexity of content and text is higher than at the elementary grades. The adoption and implementation of new college- and career-readiness standards, as well as new state-level English Language Development (ELD) standards required by federal law, have only made this instructional need more obvious. This need was further documented by the Council's own field survey to gauge the perceived quality of instructional materials for ELLs. The results of this survey corroborated what has been common knowledge among urban educators for some time, i.e., quality instructional materials for ELLs are in short supply and the need has been exacerbated by the adoption of new standards.

In August of 2014, the Council released *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*, a guide designed to define a new vision for English Language Development and to provide step-by-step guidance for selecting instructional materials, for English Language Arts, that will accelerate the acquisition of academic language and grade-level content for all English Learners in urban school districts. The Framework describes a re-envisioned English Language Development composed of two critical elements: Focused Language Study (FLS), and Discipline-Specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE). Language development and expansion (DALE) is expected to take place throughout the school day in all content areas of the curriculum. Because in a great majority of school systems, ELLs are more likely to be supported during their ELA instructional time than during mathematics or other content, the *Framework* included criteria for selecting materials that explicitly address the area of English Language Arts; it did not, however, address the area of mathematics. To articluate how DALE would take place within the context of mathematics, this companion document was developed to explicitly address the unprecedented role that language and communication play in service of understanding and applying mathematical concepts, under the new standards in mathematics. These new language

demands in mathematics are particularly challenging for students who are learning English as a new language while they are also learning mathematical concepts.

Purpose and Audience

The overarching purpose of this document is to define a new vision for mathematics instruction that explicitly attends to the needs of ELLs, addressing the interdependence of language and mathematics. The following sections are devoted to (a) making clear that the grade-level college- and career-readiness mathematics standards are for ALL students, including ELLs, ELLs who require special education services, and any other students who face learning challenges in mathematics related to language needs; (b) articulating a theory of action in which ELL academic achievement improves when teachers provide all students with grade-level instruction, requiring a high caliber of materials and lessons that present high cognitive demand; (c) identifying and providing instructional principles and practices designed to address the language demands in the new standards for mathematics that may pose challenges for students who are developing both English proficiency and academic language in mathematics; and (d) providing criteria for the selection of instructional materials for mathematics that attend to academic language development and the language demands of the new standards for mathematical practices, so that ELLs and other students with language-related needs have access to grade-level content and practices as set by these standards.

Both the English Language Development and Mathematics Framework documents were developed to be applicable across grades K-12, and are designed to work in tandem with other tools that make grade-level distinctions for selecting instructional materials, such as the *Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review* (GIMET-QR) and the *Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool* (IMET), or in combination with other evaluation protocols adopted by districts, as deemed appropriate by each district's instructional leadership.

Before selecting instructional materials for ELLs, however, districts must have a clear vision of how their instructional program for ELLs ensures attention to the instructional shifts and rigor of the college- and career-readiness standards, providing both the language development and the scaffolded grade-level content required for ELLs to be successful. To aid districts in this task, we have developed a framework for the interdependence of language and mathematics that is anchored in the language demands of the new standards and the needs for English language acquisition.

This document is designed for educators who are teaching mathematics to ELLs, whether in mainstream/general education classes, in self-contained classes for ELLs, or in other instructional contexts. It may also be used by teachers of students who have a high-incidence disability (e.g., Specific Learning Disability) and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), or who have unfinished learning in mathematics due to language-related needs.[1] Though these constituencies are distinct, and each

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1   This document does not address the particular needs of students with more severe disabilities, a low-incidence group that may not necessarily be receiving services in a general education classroom for most of their instructional time.

have unique needs, their needs may intersect when related to learning academic English and the interdependence between language and understanding complex mathematical content. No single method has proven effective in differentiating between English Learners who have difficulty acquiring language skills and those who have learning disabilities. As a result, schools, districts, and states struggle with the challenges of meeting the needs of these students. Throughout the document, we call out instances of specific considerations that our experts and practitioners have identified as being relevant for students from these distinct groups.

Finally, the document is meant to be a useful guide for anyone who is involved in the design, development, and/or selection of curriculum, materials, and resources, whether in a district's central office or at the school level. This includes administrators, principals, teachers (in general education and specialized areas), textbook evaluation committees, instructional leadership teams, resource teachers, math coaches, and content specialists.

Under IDEA 2004, Specific Learning Disability is defined as "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; of intellectual disability; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage."

Additionally, under IDEA, a child may not be identified as a "child with a disability" primarily because he or she speaks a language other than English and does not speak or understand English well. A child may also not be identified as having a disability just because he or she has not had enough appropriate instruction in math or reading.

RE-ENVISIONING MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

College- and career-readiness standards set new expectations for all students—including a deep understanding of core mathematical concepts, the ability to apply these concepts to real-world problems, and student participation in key mathematical practices, including fluency. In planning math instruction for a diverse array of learners, districts and states not only grapple with how to facilitate the development of conceptual understanding in mathematics, they must also address the specific needs of students who are simultaneously developing their English proficiency. As they respond to the required shifts within both the general education curriculum and ELL programming, districts need to ensure that their instructional practices and materials reflect a core set of foundational principles about academic language, teaching, and learning for mathematics.

Expectations and Agency

In recognizing the central role of *agency* and *authority* in student learning and progress, educators must embrace high expectations for ELLs and other students with language-related needs. Agency is defined as *the student's capacity and willingness to engage mathematically* and authority is defined as *the recognition for being mathematically capable*.[2] Both agency and authority are built through student's engagement in rigorous mathematical tasks and discussions that require them to conjecture, explain, construct mathematical arguments, and build on one another's ideas.

Yet many teachers are unsure of how to provide grade-level instruction when students are "so far behind," and may overuse the flexibility of resources to teach off level, which results in gaps of knowledge, concepts, and the language of mathematics. Changing this approach requires us to debunk the myth of fixed ability and build the fundamental <u>expectation of access</u> to the full content of the standards for ELLs and all students. As Jo Boaler mentions in *Mathematical Mindsets*, "Our education systems have been pervaded with the traditional notion that some students are not developmentally ready for some levels of mathematics… But these ideas are outdated, as students

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[2]   Schoenfeld, A.H., Folden, R.E., & the Algebra Teaching Study and Mathematics Assessment Project. (2014). *An Introduction to the TRU Math Dimensions*. Berkeley, CA & E Lansing, MI: Graduate School of Education, University of California, Berkeley & College of Education, Michigan State University. Retrieved from http://ats.berkeley.edu/tools.html and/or http://map.mathshell.org/materials/pd.php

are as ready as the experiences they have had and if students are not ready, they can easily become so with the right experiences, high expectations from others, and a growth mindset."[3]

Teachers, therefore, need support in providing grade-level instruction and filling in "unfinished learning." Rather than aiming to equip students with only the learning necessary to perform each mathematical task or grasp each concept in isolation, teachers must also focus on instilling *horizon thinking* (an awareness of the larger mathematical landscape), on moving students to the next level, and on developing critical thinking through rigorous tasks and assignments. For example, the transition from arithmetic to algebraic thinking is a crucial horizon for teachers to consider. Teachers need materials that support this transition both conceptually and linguistically by helping students acquire skills such as developing the language to generalize about arithmetic situations.

Developing agency and authority, after all, requires creating opportunities for constructive engagement in mathematics and building on students' social and cultural knowledge and life experiences to develop not only conceptual understanding and related language competencies, but also the belief that mathematics is worthwhile, sensible, and feasible. And, in addition for students with learning disabilities (LD), a delicate balance in instruction should include maintaining cognitive rigor and sustaining persistent efforts to build capacity and proficiency in conceptual understanding and/or computational skills where weaknesses may be present.

The Interdependence of Language and Math

According to Judit Moschkovich, a professor and education researcher in the field of ELLs and mathematics, "Language is a socio-cultural-historical activity, not a thing that can either be mathematical or not, universal or not." She writes that "'the language of mathematics' does not mean a list of vocabulary or technical words with precise meanings, but the communicative competence necessary and sufficient for participation in mathematical discourse."[4]

Language in the math classroom, then, needs to expand beyond talk to consider the interaction of different systems involved in mathematical expression, i.e., natural language, mathematical symbols/systems, and visual displays. In recognition of this, teachers need to move away from a focus on simplified vocabulary and language toward a view that supports ELLs' productive engagement and participation in mathematical discussions. If we want students to use complex reasoning, engage in complex language, and participate in valued mathematical practices, teachers should focus less on a student's accuracy in using formal language as they learn English and more on students' mathematical reasoning and conceptual understanding, as reflected in their discourse practices.

3   Boaler, J. (2016). *Mathematical Mindsets: Unleashing Students' Potential through Creative Math, Inspiring Messages and Innovative Teaching* (pp. 8-9).

4   Moschkovich, J. (2012). *Mathematics, the Common Core, and Language: Recommendations for Mathematics Instruction for ELs Aligned with the Common Core*. Retrieved from http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/02-JMoschkovich%20Math%20FINAL_bound%20with%20appendix.pdf

The language of math can be particularly challenging for some students with language-based learning disabilities, resulting in confusion about terminology or difficulty following verbal explanations. In addition, for some students with learning disabilities, weak verbal skills affect their ability to monitor the steps of complex calculations. Instruction can therefore be most effective for these students if it allows for ample time to process verbal information that is 'chunked' into discrete segments. The 'chunking' of information is particularly important when asking questions, giving directions, presenting concepts, and offering explanations.[5]

Most students—but perhaps more so ELLs and students with learning disabilities—react to math word problems as a signal to do or solve something, rather than as meaningful sentences that need to be read for understanding.[6] It is therefore important to ask students to read or verbalize problems beforehand, and to verbalize their explanations of what they are doing as they solve a problem.

Language, in effect, should be understood as a complex meaning-making system,[7] and we may define mathematical discourse as communication that centers on making meaning of mathematical concepts.[8] While the language of mathematics is domain dependent (some of the language of geometry differs from the language needed to work with ratios and fractions, for instance), it nevertheless involves negotiating meanings by listening, responding, describing, understanding, making conjectures, presenting solutions, challenging the thinking of others, and connecting multiple representations, including mathematical notation and visual displays such as graphs, tables, and diagrams.

Attending to precision is one of the key mathematical practices delineated by many college- and career-readiness standards. This precision includes not only using precise words but, more importantly, making precise claims. Teachers need to model the practice of making precise claims and support students in using increasingly more precise ways of describing mathematical situations.

Finally, in considering the complex interaction between language and learning mathematics, students' everyday language and experiences should be understood and approached as resources, not as obstacles.[9] The home language of students and informal ways of talking are assets for reasoning mathematically and provide a springboard teachers can use to develop academic language and support mathematical understanding.

5   Garnett, Kate. "Math Learning Disabilities." *Division for Learning Disabilities Journal of CEC*, November 1998.
6   Ibid.
7   Moschkovich, J. (2012). *Mathematics, the Common Core, and Language: Recommendations for Mathematics Instruction for ELs Aligned with the Common Core*. Retrieved from http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/02-JMoschkovich%20Math%20FINAL_bound%20with%20appendix.pdf
8   Ramirez, N., & Celedon-Pattichis, S. (2012). Second Language Development and Implications for the Mathematics Classroom. In N. Ramirez & S. Celedon-Pattichis (Authors), *Beyond Good Teaching: Advancing Mathematics Education for ELLs*.
9   Moschkovich, J. (2012). *Mathematics, the Common Core, and Language: Recommendations for Mathematics Instruction for ELs Aligned with the Common Core*. Retrieved from http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/02-JMoschkovich%20Math%20FINAL_bound%20with%20appendix.pdf

Theory of Action: Re-envisioned Instruction for Developing Mathematical Language and Understanding

Given this core set of principles, what should effective mathematics instruction and materials for ELLs and other students with language-related needs look like, and how should they be experienced by students who require specific supports and differentiation related to language?

To begin, ELLs and other students with language-related needs *can* achieve college- and career-readiness standards in mathematics, engaging with complex mathematical concepts and solving real-world problems. If students are provided with productive opportunities to engage in rigorous mathematics instruction, high cognitive demand tasks, and discussions, they will build both understanding of complex mathematical concepts as well as procedural fluency.

Moreover, there is some evidence that the processes of developing language and developing conceptual mathematical understanding are interdependent and symbiotic. If ELLs and other students with language-related needs are encouraged and taught how to communicate their mathematical understanding and reasoning, their mathematical learning will serve to reinforce and advance their development of English proficiency.

Further, for students with learning disabilities, especially language deficits, it is important to develop the practice of reading or saying the mathematical problems before and after they solve them to understand that mathematics is not simply problems on a page, but rather meaningful sentences that need to be read for understanding.[10]

We also believe that teachers should use data to drive instruction, and should be given sufficient planning and instructional time by school and district leaders in order to attend to the thoughtful and strategic employment of language-focused supports in mathematics classrooms. District leaders should also ensure that teachers are provided with related, high-quality professional development and instructional materials that facilitate rigorous instruction aligned to grade-level college- and career-readiness standards. This will equip and empower teachers to ensure that ELLs and other students with language-related needs can engage meaningfully in complex, grade-level mathematics, and in the meaningful expression of their mathematical reasoning.

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10 Garnett, Kate. "Math Learning Disabilities." *Division for Learning Disabilities Journal of CEC*, November 1998.

SECTION III:

KEY INSTRUCTIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

What, then, are the instructional principles for effectively building mathematical understanding and skills among students with language-related learning needs? What practices will further this vision for instruction?

To begin, we need to define what we mean by mathematical proficiency. Our working definition of proficiency involves five intertwined strands of knowledge and skills:[11]

1. Conceptual understanding, or comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations, and relations;

2. Procedural fluency, or skill in carrying out procedures flexibly, accurately, efficiently, and appropriately;

3. Strategic competence, or competence in formulating, representing, and solving mathematical problems (novel problems, not routine exercises);

4. Adaptive reasoning, or logical thought, reflection, explanation, and justification; and

5. Productive disposition, a habitual inclination to see mathematics as sensible, useful, and worthwhile, coupled with a belief in diligence and one's own efficacy.

We can think of procedural fluency as *knowing how to compute*. Although mathematical proficiency is often reduced to procedural fluency in arithmetic, this is only one component of a complete version of mathematical proficiency. For full mathematical proficiency, students need to learn more than computation or symbol manipulation. Conceptual understanding, strategic competence, and reasoning are as, if not more, important than fluent arithmetic computation—for example, understanding the applications of mathematics and knowing when to apply specific computations.[12]

Conceptual understanding is fundamentally about the relationships and *meanings* that learners construct for mathematical ideas, operations, solutions, or situations: knowing the meaning of a result (what a number, solution, or result represents), knowing why a procedure works, or explaining why a particular result is the right answer. Other aspects of conceptual understanding are connecting procedures to concepts and connecting procedures to multiple representations such as words,

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11 Kilpatrick, J., Swafford, J., & Findell, B. (2001). *Adding It Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics*.
12 Hiebert, J., & Carpenter, T. P. (1992). Learning and Teaching with Understanding. In D. A. Grouws (Ed.), *Handbook of research in teaching and learning of mathematics* (pp. 65-97).

drawings, symbols, diagrams, tables, graphs, or equations.[13] Reasoning, logical thought, explanation, and justification are closely related to conceptual understanding. Student reasoning is evidence of conceptual understanding when a student explains why a particular result is the right answer or justifies a claim or conclusion. For example, when students make connections between multiplication and division, they recognize that multiplication can be conceived as repeated addition,[14] and can model multiplication using number lines, arrays, area models, and using base ten blocks. Moreover, students are able to make connections between and among these various representations.

It is crucial to note that conceptual understanding is *not* about teaching students to memorize formal and precise definitions of mathematical concepts. This typical misunderstanding of what conceptual understanding entails leads instruction right back to a focus on memorization. When teaching English Learners this is especially important to clarify, since a focus on precise use of words at the expense of mathematical reasoning can derail the development of conceptual understanding and mathematical proficiency in its fullest sense of the five strands of mathematical proficiency.

In an effort to advance this deeper, more nuanced definition of mathematical proficiency, today's college- and career-readiness standards call for several shifts from traditional mathematics instruction:[15]

1. **Balancing conceptual understanding and procedural fluency:** Instruction should (a) balance student activities that address both important conceptual and procedural knowledge related to a mathematical topic and (b) connect the two types of knowledge.

2. **Maintaining high cognitive demand:** Instruction should (a) use high cognitive demand math tasks and (b) maintain the rigor of mathematical tasks throughout lessons and units.

3. **Developing beliefs:** Instruction should support students in developing beliefs that mathematics is sensible, worthwhile, and doable.

4. **Engaging students in mathematical practices:** Instruction should provide opportunities for students to engage in a set of core mathematical practices:[16] (1) making sense of problems and persevering in solving them, (2) reasoning abstractly and quantitatively, (3) constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, (4) modeling with mathematics, (5) using appropriate tools strategically, (6) attending to precision, (7) looking for and making use of structure, and (8) looking for and expressing regularity in repeated reasoning.

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13 Ibid.
14 In the early grades, repeated addition might be used to help students develop preliminary intuition about multiplication. However, repeated addition does not contribute to an understanding of multiplication required in higher grades, particularly when students progress beyond operations with natural or "counting" numbers, and move to using negative values, irrational numbers, etc.
15 Moschkovich, J. (2012). *Mathematics, the Common Core, and Language: Recommendations for Mathematics Instruction for ELs Aligned with the Common Core*. Retrieved from http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/02-JMoschkovich%20Math%20FINAL_bound%20with%20appendix.pdf
16 Standards for Mathematical Practice. (2016). Retrieved from Common Core State Standards Initiative website: http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Practice/

But what will these instructional shifts look like in the classroom? To begin, tasks and assignments for ELLs and all math learners should be at a high level of cognitive demand, mathematically rigorous, on grade level, and make explicit connections between new and prior concepts. Teachers should ensure that ELLs have the opportunity to engage in *productive struggle*, allowing them sufficient time to make sense of a task or problem before intervening. ELLs—as well as all math learners—should be in classroom environments that make ample use of multiple modes of communication (speaking, listening, reading, writing), multiple representations (pictures, diagrams, tables, graphs, visual displays), and multiple communication settings (working with a peer, in small groups, making presentations, sharing written explanations, and critiquing the reasoning of others.) that allow students to express their mathematical reasoning, describe their solutions to problems, and develop understanding of mathematical concepts. Classroom instruction should also facilitate academic discussions focused on mathematical ideas and support exploratory and explanatory talk and writing. Finally, and only when necessary, teachers should strategically employ scaffolds specifically targeted to meet an individual student's educational needs or academic difficulties, while ensuring that this scaffolding does not compromise their access to rigorous mathematics content or their development of higher order conceptual understanding.

Each of these key areas of instructional practice is considered in detail in the following sections.

Employing Rigorous Tasks and Assignments

As with all students, the tasks and assignments used when working with ELLs must be rigorous, on grade level, and reflect high expectations. Classwork and assignments that students encounter should not be limited to memorizing facts, rules, or only carrying out calculations, but should extend to showing, describing, and discussing the underlying mathematical meaning of those procedures.

Instruction, therefore, should consistently employ cognitively demanding tasks that challenge students' mathematical thinking, problem-solving, and communication. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing about mathematics should not be approached as "enrichment" activities, but rather as integral parts of mathematics instruction to support students' understanding. Teachers should maintain this high level of rigor throughout lessons and units, supporting students as they progress in understanding mathematical concepts and allowing them to continuously develop and communicate their mathematical reasoning.

Like all students, ELLs also benefit from making explicit connections to mathematics learned before, so tasks and assignments should help students make connections among concepts and among various forms of mathematical representations.

It is important to recognize that, though some students may not have the language required to express their understanding of sophisticated mathematics concepts as a result of prior learning (or different methods of cognitive processing), they could be quite mathematically advanced. Some students may show the need for remedial math during elementary years when computational accuracy is heavily stressed but go on to join honors classes in higher math courses where conceptual understanding is more highly valued. For example, students in algebra may be able to explain when quadratic equations have complex solutions using conceptual understanding of the graph and the discriminant b^2-4ac

but have computational difficulty when applying the quadratic formula $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$ to solve equations. So, ELLs and other students with language-related needs may require multiple entry points, along with other appropriate supports for language development and communicating their understanding of mathematics, to allow for productive struggle while maintaining the high cognitive demand of the task.

To ensure a balance between access and mathematical rigor, teachers need to take a hard look at what students are asked to do. What are the tasks? Are they worthy of time and effort? Are students producing tables, graphs, and mathematical arguments (productive language) or are they just reading them? Through their tasks and assignments, teachers should ensure that they build experiences that are both receptive (learning and understanding the mathematics) and productive (doing, explaining, clarifying, connecting, and illustrating evolving understanding).[17]

So what does this look like in a classroom?

- Teachers design lessons and use resources that demand rigorous teaching and grade-appropriate learning, expecting students to employ higher-order thinking and communication skills such as explaining, conjecturing, and justifying.

- Teachers expect students to demonstrate deep conceptual understanding of mathematics—for example, through explanations of why a procedure works and how it connects to a previously-learned procedure or algorithm, the use of multiple representations to show the meaning of a procedure, or the successful completion of application-based assignments and tasks that require more than regurgitating facts or definitions and using basic procedural skills.

- Teachers support students in making sense of and solving problems rather than directly guiding them to answers. Teachers also ask students to justify their approaches and solutions to a problem. For example, when a teacher asks a student to explain how the/she solved a problem and the student says, "I divided," the teacher then asks, "Why did you divide?" or "What information in the problem led you to believe that division was the most efficient choice?".

- Teachers support students in demonstrating their understanding of procedures and their connections to underlying concepts, using academic language to communicate - either verbally or in writing - what they understand and how they reason or solve problems.

- When provided examples of and non-examples of a claim, concept, or strategy, students are able to analyze, verbally think out loud, describe the differences, and explain why these differences matter.

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17 Baldinger, E., & Louie, N. *TRU Math conversation guide: A tool for teacher learning and growth.* Berkeley, CA & E. Lansing, MI: Graduate School of Education, University of California Berkeley & College of Education, Michigan State University. Retrieved from http://ats.berkeley.edu/tools.html and or http://map.mathshell.org/materials/pd.php

Encouraging Productive Struggle

There is a pervasive myth that math is nothing more than learning how to produce answers. College- and career-readiness standards require an approach to mathematics instruction that emphasizes developing mathematical understanding, engaging in valued mathematical practices, and applying mathematical concepts to real-world situations. Making sense of mathematics inherently requires that students engage in productive struggle. Thus, there is a real need for students and teachers alike to acknowledge the value of productive struggle in developing mathematical understanding, even if this struggle may be amplified for some students who are simultaneously working toward English language proficiency, or who have particular language-related needs. Teachers should learn to distinguish between productive and unproductive struggle when solving math problems. "When students make a mistake while using a standard algorithm, obtain an incorrect answer, or have difficulty generating a strategy on a problem, it is easy to misdiagnose the error as indicating something more broadly about the level of a student's ability in mathematics."[18] Teachers should therefore resist the urge to lighten productive struggle, and instead, look for ways to retain the *productive* nature of the *struggle*. But what do we mean by *productive struggle*—and how should we define this along the two scales of language and mathematical content development?

Encouraging *productive struggle* does not mean grappling with difficulty for the sake of difficulty. Rather, educators must strike a balance between providing mathematical rigor and scaffolding and encouraging emergent thinking as students grow in their understanding of mathematical concepts. As students engage in productive struggle, teachers should create opportunities to go beyond simply asking for answers to asking students to explain their problem-solving approaches and reasoning. This includes supporting and critiquing the reasoning of others during classroom discussions. As students struggle to explain their mathematical thinking, teachers are granted a window into assessing their instructional needs.

Teachers should use common misconceptions as a driving force for learning more mathematics.[19] Teachers and students must recognize mistakes or misconceptions not as failure, but as opportunities for learning through productive struggle, focusing on making "errors a fruitful site for mathematical work."[20]

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18 Battey, D. S., & Stark, M. (2009). Inequitable Classroom Practices: Diagnosing Misconceptions as Inability in Mathematics. In D. Y. White & J. S. Spitzer (Authors), *Mathematics for every student. Responding to diversity, grades pre-K-5*. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
19 Ibid.
20 Ball, D., & Bass, H. (n.d.). *With an Eye on the Mathematical Horizon: Knowing Mathematics for Teaching to Learners' Mathematical Futures*.

So what does this look like in a classroom?

- Teachers reinforce the habits of analyzing mistakes and persisting through problem solving struggles. They use examples and non-examples to guide student learning through error analysis.

- Teachers develop a classroom culture where students feel safe to take risks in solving problems and are unafraid to engage with mathematical challenges.

- Teachers provide tools to enhance students' ability to independently solve real-world problems.

- Teachers support student participation in core math practices set forth by college- and career-readiness standards (each math practice does not have to be the focus of every lesson, but students need to have opportunities to participate in all the math practices at some point).

- Teachers use appropriate scaffolding to allow students to think about the mathematics they are learning. It is not about "rescuing" students—it is about developing students' thinking rather than the teacher's thinking.

- Teachers balance "discovery" of knowledge and understanding through strategic student-led instructional activities focused on processes (with direct instruction when appropriate).

- Students justify their reasoning, communicate their reasoning to others, and respond to the arguments of others. This includes explaining the reasoning behind correct answers as well as the misconceptions behind incorrect responses, which enhances conceptual understanding of central math ideas.

- Students demonstrate agency, persistence, and independence in mastering mathematical content.

Employing Multiple Modes and Representations in Mathematics

The mathematics classroom should be as flexible as possible in terms of using language to support the development of conceptual understanding in mathematics. Classroom environments that make ample use of multiple modes of communication and representations in teacher presentations, written explanations, and classroom discussions help advance students' understanding of mathematics. Such environments provide students with the means to express the thinking behind their own reasoning and to discuss the meaning of another student's reasoning while referring to a public record on the board (math symbols, pictures, diagrams, text, etc.), instead of discussing only what another student said.

It is important to keep in mind that "multi-modal" and "multiple representations" means more than just listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For example, teachers' use of visual representations—such as gestures, drawings, mathematical symbols, models, and diagrams—can support mathematical thinking for ELLs and other students with language-related needs. A mathematical diagram or table organizing information in a word problem, when chosen carefully, can serve as an intermediate step between understanding the text of a word problem and representing a solution using math symbols, offering a visual anchor for talking about the mathematical structure, as well as any important linguistic features, of a word problem.

In the same way, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) removes barriers for learners and provides multiple ways for representing information, allowing action and expression to convey student learning and understanding. UDL impacts the why, what, and how of learning through multiple methods or opportunities for engagement, representation, action, and expression, respectively.[21]

Students' understanding deepens when they are given the opportunity to create and analyze diagrams, tables, and graphs to represent a problem concretely or pictorially, as well as verbally or in writing, and to make explicit connections between and among these various representations. Once the door of access and understanding is open, ELLs can further develop academic language and use it to engage in mathematical discourse.[22]

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21 Universal Design for Learning Guidelines. (2014, November 12). Retrieved from National Center on Universal Design for Learning website: http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines_theorypractice

22 Driscoll, M., Heck, D., & Malzahn, K. (2012). *Beyond Good Teaching: Knowledge for Teaching English Language Learners Mathematics: A Dilemma*. NCTM.

So what does this look like in a classroom?

- Teachers employ multiple modes of written and oral communication (including listening, speaking, reading, writing, or gestures), and multiple representations (including pictures, diagrams, tables, math symbols, objects or manipulatives, talk, and written text).

- Teachers provide varied opportunities to participate in the classroom using concrete tools, pictorial representations, computers, assistive and instructional technologies, and manipulatives.

- Teachers create multi-modal learning experiences for students to recognize patterns across multiple representations of mathematical ideas or procedures (for example, representing whole number multiplication not only with math symbols but also area models, arrays, number lines, and base ten blocks).

- Teachers promote students' use of alternative representations and solutions to problems, constructing diverse opportunities for repeated exposure to content.

- In addition to listening, speaking, reading, and writing about mathematics, students create, analyze, share, and discuss visual representations as they work through math problems.[23]

- Students use a variety of representations to communicate their thinking and make explicit connections between and among the representations.

- ELLs and students with language-related needs are actively engaged in learning and develop the confidence to communicate their mathematical understanding in different modes and representations, using both informal and more formal language.

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23   Garnett, Kate. "Math Learning Disabilities." *Division for Learning Disabilities Journal of CEC*, November 1998.

Supporting Academic Language and Conversations

Mathematics instruction needs to support students in learning to reason mathematically and to express their mathematical reasoning. Precise mathematical language is highly valued by communities of people who use mathematics, such as mathematicians, scientists, and engineers. However, it is important to note that, for students learning mathematics, informal language is also important, especially when students are exploring a mathematical concept, learning a new concept, or discussing a math problem in small groups. This is called exploratory talk and can include informal language that reflects important student thinking. In other situations, such as when making a presentation or writing an account of a solution, more formal academic mathematical language becomes more important.

Such academic or formal mathematical language can be challenging for many students—especially ELLs. When we say *academic language*, we refer to language that falls into two categories: (1) technical, discipline-specific words and phrases used in the area of mathematics (such as hypotenuse, prime number, rational number, base-ten, "per," if and only if), and (2) all-purpose academic words—such as analyze, structure—that transcend the discipline of mathematics.[24] Mathematical discussions also involve much more than such language; they involve *discourse* practices such as going back to definitions, stating conjectures, making claims both explicit and precise, connecting claims to mathematical representations (such as a graph, table, or equation), generalizing across examples, and using counter examples. Moreover, when we talk about *academic mathematical discussions*, we refer not only to students sharing their solutions to a problem, but discussions where students are supported by the teacher in gradually developing more sophisticated language to articulate their mathematical reasoning, and to deepen their understanding and the understanding of other students through purposeful teacher or peer questions focused on the mathematics and the mathematical reasoning.

Teachers therefore need to carefully consider when informal ways of mathematically communicating are sufficient and when they are not, and how to support students in refining their informal language to gradually become more academic. While multi-modal representations of ideas support students as they use language while solving challenging mathematical tasks, educators must gradually support ELLs as they learn to express mathematical thinking and reasoning in more formal academic English and to engage productively in mathematical discussions with other students.

But how do you give teachers permission to stop and allow mathematical discussions to unfold? To begin, teachers should be encouraged to take time to highlight and clarify student strategies and mathematical thinking during whole class discussions, and to create opportunities for students to meaningfully interact by explaining, clarifying, justifying, and adding to the thinking of others. Moreover, teachers need to ensure the equity of all students' voices so that ELLs and other students with language-related needs feel empowered to participate and clarify their mathematical thinking in deep ways. These types of intentional math discussions facilitated by teachers help build experiences that are both receptive (students listening, watching, learning and understanding the

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24 Driscoll, M., Heck, D., & Malzahn, K. (2012). *Beyond Good Teaching: Knowledge for Teaching English Language Learners Mathematics: A Dilemma*. NCTM.

mathematics) and productive (students doing, explaining, clarifying, connecting, representing, and illustrating their evolving understandings).[25]

So what does this look like in a classroom?

- Teachers model mathematical reasoning and academic language to support students as they learn to communicate the way they think through and solve mathematical problems.

- Teachers allow sufficient time for students to productively struggle with learning to communicate the thinking behind their solutions to mathematical problems. Teachers provide learning opportunities with appropriate scaffolds that encourage students to use more formal mathematical communication practices, including attention not only to precision in using words but also to whether students are making precise claims (for example, paying attention to constraints).

- Teachers establish classroom norms for how to ask purposeful questions of other students focused on mathematical reasoning and arguments and provide students with multiple opportunities to analyze their own and other students' solutions to problems.

- Teachers provide learning opportunities for using formal mathematics vocabulary *after* students have had direct experiences working on a math problem or concept, instead of pre-teaching vocabulary.

- Students encounter and solve mathematics problems expressed in a variety of formats (audio, text, etc.).

- Students are supported in refining their use of language to move towards more formal ways of describing, explaining, and justifying their reasoning in solving problems (both applied and not applied).

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25 Baldinger, E., & Louie, N. *TRU Math conversation guide: A tool for teacher learning and growth.* Berkeley, CA & E. Lansing, MI: Graduate School of Education, University of California Berkeley & College of Education, Michigan State University. Retrieved from http://ats.berkeley.edu/tools.html and http://map.mathshell.org/materials/pd.php.

Using Strategic Scaffolding

The concept of scaffolding is often misunderstood and misinterpreted. Scaffolds should never entail a lower level of content, instructional rigor, or cognitive demand. Appropriate scaffolding provides an entry point for students to actively engage with cognitively demanding grade-level mathematics. It is not about "rescuing" students; instead, scaffolding empowers students to engage in, and ultimately emerge successfully from, productive struggle.

To ensure the appropriate and strategic use of scaffolds, teachers need to be explicit in the purpose of their use, when and why to use them, and when and how to remove them. Rather than suggesting generic strategies or one-size-fits-all scaffolds for ELLs and other students with language-related needs, scaffolds should be carefully selected and specifically targeted to reflect an understanding of students' previous experiences with mathematics instruction, their language development history, and their educational needs. For example, when identifying a student's educational needs or academic difficulties, it is essential to accurately determine whether the needs are indicators of developing levels of English proficiency, literacy gaps, a particular learning disability, or any combination of these factors.

Scaffolding should enable all students to be active participants in the mathematics classroom—reading, listening, discussing, explaining, writing, representing, and presenting—thereby not compromising student thinking, understanding, and communication.[26] Teachers must recognize when over-scaffolding impedes either the development of mathematical thinking or the language needed to express mathematical understanding and explain mathematical reasoning. And, teachers must gradually "fade" scaffolds, ensuring that students move to independence with complex, grade-level mathematical knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding.[27]

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26 *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners*. (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2016, from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/application-for-english-learners.pdf

27 Ball, D. L., & Forzani, F. M. (2011). Building a Common Core for Learning to Teach: And Connecting Professional Learning to Practice. *American Educator*, *35*(2), 17-21.

So what does this look like in a classroom?

- Teachers tap into their knowledge of students' needs to employ targeted scaffolding that develops their grade-level content knowledge, skills, reasoning, conceptual understanding, and language.

- Teachers are mindful of the pacing implications related to targeted scaffolding, and are supported by their administrators in taking time to select and use these scaffolds, ensuring that students with language-related needs can fully participate in grade-level mathematical work and practices.

- Teachers gradually "fade," or remove, supports, providing ample opportunities for students to independently demonstrate grade-level skills, content knowledge, reasoning, and conceptual understanding in mathematics. This allows students to develop agency, authority and identity.

- Teachers have access to school- and district-level professional development and resources so they can identify students' academic needs and select appropriate scaffolds.

SECTION IV:

CRITERIA FOR MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Effective instructional practices that provide access to grade-level mathematics and support the development of academic language in mathematics need to be supported by materials that are aligned to college- and career-readiness standards and designed to facilitate planning and delivery. In this section, we describe some general features that would indicate materials are appropriate for furthering grade-level mathematical understanding for ELLs.

To begin, a committee should be convened that incorporates members with multiple perspectives – including staff with expertise in mathematics instruction that is aligned with college- and career-readiness standards as well as those who understand the specialized needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students.

This tool is designed to help the members of this committee hone in on the specific features of materials that make them accessible and effective for English Language Learners and other students with unfinished learning in mathematics related to language needs and challenges, and may be used alongside such tools as the Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (GIMET), developed by the Council of the Great City Schools, as well as the tools developed by Student Achievement Partners (SAP).

The process of reviewing materials for their accessibility and alignment to college- and career-readiness mathematics standards entails three general levels of review:

- Level One: Overarching Considerations

- Level Two: Non-Negotiable Criteria and Considerations for ELLs

- Level Three: Additional Considerations

Overarching Considerations

The process of reviewing mathematics materials begins with an evaluation based upon general concerns, assumptions, and expectations that serve as a unifying foundation.

- *Background knowledge, culture, and language as assets.* Confirm that the materials recognize that students bring background knowledge to the classroom that can be used to advance their learning of mathematics. Specifically—

  a) Materials should explicitly state that all languages (including informal ways of talking and home languages) are assets, and that the home language and cultural practices of students are integral to their learning of mathematics.

  b) Assignments and learning experiences should value diverse backgrounds and empower students to effectively build upon their past learning experiences. Situations for applied problems used in materials should be as familiar and meaningful as possible for students, helping to bridge gaps between informal and formal learning experiences and inviting diverse learners to use their background knowledge to make sense of applied problems in instruction.

  c) Cultural contexts should respectfully reinforce and affirm students' multi-faceted identities by recognizing the assets of diversity rather than belittling identities with stereotypes and assumptions.

  d) Materials should equally emphasize various cultures and aspects of student identities and offer a wide range of views and perspectives, allowing all learners to meaningfully engage with the materials with the goal of developing students' academic identities as mathematics learners.

- *Integrated attention to academic language development.* Confirm that the materials explicitly address the language-related needs of ELLs who are learning mathematics in a new language (English), as well as the language-related needs of their English-speaking peers. In particular, ensure that:

  a) Materials are designed to address the interdependence of language, mathematical reasoning, understanding, and practices, supporting students' as they use and refine language to explain their mathematical reasoning and critique and build on the reasoning of others.

  b) Materials explicitly address the refinement from informal to formal mathematical language through activities and support that help students build on everyday informal language and move towards more formal academic mathematical language. This requires attention not only to discipline-specific terms (Tier III words such as angle, isosceles, etc.), but also to connection words and sentence structures that are particular to the language of mathematics (for example, given $x = 130$, solve for y or f(x)), as well as attention to typical math practices that are

language intensive such as conjecturing, generalizing, making precise claims, and connecting claims to mathematical representations.

c) Materials provide tools to guide and structure mathematical discussions with a wide range of complex math texts (textbooks, word problems, assessment items, etc.), tasks, and expectations, as well as structured opportunities to revisit language over time with the goal of gradual development of the more formal language of mathematics.

d) Instructional materials support language development in all four modes (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

- *Standards alignment.* Confirm an explicit and substantive alignment of materials to grade-level college- and career-readiness standards. In particular, assess whether:

a) Instructional materials have passed a review using the Council's Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (GIMET).

b) Materials support grade-level conceptual understanding in mathematics through rigorous tasks, high cognitive demand work, and applications (including applications to real life situations).

c) Materials provide students with the opportunity to perform and apply a range of core mathematical practices.

d) Materials make explicit connections to ELA college- and career-readiness expectations or "practices." For example, materials may connect to a specific genre of writing, such as journal writing, and how it could be relevant in mathematics classrooms.

Non-Negotiable Criteria and Considerations for ELLs

The Council has developed the following set of specific criteria related to language for selecting high quality, grade-appropriate mathematics materials that advance both conceptual understanding and language development for ELLs and other students with language-related needs.

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
Criterion I: The materials develop an in-depth understanding of key mathematical concepts.				
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials cover complex conceptual ideas, with both examples and non-examples, addressing high-frequency misconceptions with clear explanations that provide strong language models for students.				
2. Materials attend to the development and expression of conceptual understanding where the grade-level standards set explicit expectations for understanding or interpreting. (IMET)				
3. Materials outline key mathematical concepts, essential questions, and corresponding standards.				
4. Materials include standards-aligned formative and summative assessments with rubrics, answer keys, and guidelines for scoring.				
5. Materials also include guidance for collecting and examining student work to assess conceptual understanding of key mathematical concepts, and to interpret student performance in accordance with various English proficiency levels.				
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
6. Materials allow students sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) to make connections to prior knowledge, connections between mathematical ideas and their different mathematical representations, and, when appropriate, in learning to use the relevant academic language. The progression of deeper mathematical understanding builds from one concept to the next.				
7. Materials include tools for students and teachers, including self-assessments and standards-aligned data trackers, to maintain a focus on developing and expressing deep understanding of concepts and student participation in mathematical discussions while also supporting fluency in mathematical computation.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Multiple Representations**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
8. Materials reference and require students to make connections between linguistic and non-linguistic representations. This includes using a student's primary language, mathematical symbols, and using a variety of representations such as pictures, diagrams, drawings, graphs, tables, etc. For example, at the elementary level, materials may use pictures of 3D rectangular models to help students visualize "slicing" or decomposing the models into layers and smaller 3D rectangular models, or packing the 3D models with unit cubes to find the volume, and to relate the side lengths to the total volume through discussions, illustrations, and modeling.				
■ **Academic Language**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
9. Materials provide experiences for students to participate in both receptive and productive language functions[1] while learning to use more complex, sophisticated, and precise language to express their mathematical ideas.				
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
10. Materials define, illustrate, highlight, and encourage students to use both Tier II words that "cut across" all content areas (e.g., analyze, describe) and Tier III technical and discipline-specific words (e.g., hypotenuse, range, base-ten). Language and definitions, including those that are built through shared experiences in the classroom, must be accessible and usable to students, even if formulated in elementary terms.				

Criterion II: The materials ensure that students attain the fluencies and procedural skills required by grade-level college- and career-readiness standards.

	Rating			
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide a balance of important conceptual and procedural knowledge and connect the two types of knowledge.[2]				
2. Materials support student progress toward acquiring fluency in procedural skills— a. by developing students' conceptual understanding of the operations in question, b. by providing students with the mathematical language they need to communicate their increasing understanding, and c. by engaging students in meaningful and standards-aligned application tasks.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
3. Materials provide sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) for both exploration and repeated practice for developing procedural fluency throughout the year.				
4. Materials promote increasing independence in students' work with mathematical procedures based upon the grade-level fluency requirements, and provide opportunities for both exploratory and explanatory talk.				
■ **Multiple Representations**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
5. Materials strategically use a variety of representations for students to make meaning of procedural skills as they engage in repeated practice. For example, materials use fraction strips or visuals of fraction bars to help students understand why dividing fractions involves reciprocals.				
■ **Academic Language**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
6. Materials require students to communicate their mathematical reasoning about procedures using both informal and formal language to describe patterns and structure while developing procedural fluency.				
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
7. Materials provide mathematical experiences that are both receptive (understanding the mathematical concept) and productive (doing, explaining, clarifying, connecting, and illustrating their evolving understanding of procedures).				
8. Materials provide supports for students' language development and use of academic language specific to mathematics.				

Criterion III: The materials allow teachers and students sufficient time to work with applications without losing focus on the major work of each grade.

	Rating Scale			
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials include applications that are embedded in situations that are potentially familiar and/or meaningful to students and stress applying the major mathematics concepts of the grade.				
2. Materials include single-and multi-step application problems that develop the mathematical concepts (or ideas) of the grade, afford opportunities for practicing procedures, and engage students in solving problems.				
3. Materials include a balance of real-world problems and tasks that take students beyond only *memorizing and using procedures*. The complexity of tasks progresses to allow fundamental procedural skills, mathematical language, and conceptual understanding to develop across grades.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	1	2	3	4
4. Materials allow students to spend sufficient time working by themselves (before the teacher intervenes) with application problems and tasks using appropriate scaffolds based on their language needs, without minimizing the complexity of the task.				
5. Materials support students in using mathematical ideas and engaging in mathematical practices to help them make sense of a variety of problems, develop mathematical models, and express their thinking.				
■ **Multiple Representations**	1	2	3	4
6. Materials facilitate students making sense of quantities expressed in different representations for solving problems.				
7. Materials reference and require students to make connections between linguistic and non-linguistic representations.				
■ **Academic Language**	1	2	3	4
8. Materials require that students communicate their mathematical reasoning while solving applied problems using either informal or formal language and attending to precision in calculations and claims.				
9. Materials provide teachers and students with purposeful and targeted activities for learning how to read typical mathematics texts. For example, materials provide opportunities and tools for extracting relevant information from word problems (such as highlighting, color-coding, and drawing attention to essential ideas) so that students learn to derive meaning from the text. Materials also encourage students to make connections between different types of word problems and real-world situations. Materials should also support students in learning to read textbooks, graphs, and tables used in applied problems.				
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	1	2	3	4
10. Materials provide culturally-relevant examples of real-world applications for mathematical concepts in ways that motivate students to understand the content and spend time working with applications. For example, students may determine rates for how quickly news is disseminated through various print media compared to social media to understand measures of center and variability; or students may be asked to determine the estimated costs for heating and cooling their dream home in various climates, using a blueprint of the home to calculate area, volume, and surface area.				
11. Materials provide resources for students and teachers to bridge prior formal and informal mathematical knowledge to grade-level forms of mathematical reasoning and expression.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
Criterion IV: Materials provide students with the opportunity to develop and apply a core set of mathematical practices that enrich, rather than distract from, the major academic objectives of the grade.				
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	1	2	3	4
1. Materials support students in acquiring and refining language to *express* or *describe* how they: • make sense of problems, • use abstract and quantitative reasoning, • construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, • make use of structure, and • see regularity in repeated reasoning. For example, in K-5, students look for regularity while learning addition and multiplication, the properties of operations, and the place value system, while in grades 6-8 students express regularity in repeated reasoning about proportional relationships and linear functions, or when they use regularity in mathematical operations to create equivalent algebraic expressions.				
2. Materials address the full spectrum of mathematical practices so that both assignments and tasks enrich and connect to the major work of the grade while highlighting the interdependence of language and mathematical understanding.				
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	1	2	3	4
3. Materials describe the major work of the grade and each of the mathematical practices, including their language demands, for each lesson and unit. Materials also articulate how the mathematics in each lesson or unit reflects the major mathematical concepts of the grade.				
4. Materials encourage student engagement and participation in key mathematical practices. a. The key mathematical practices are reflected in assignments, activities, and problems that support and encourage students in developing the habits described in the practice standards. b. Assignments and tasks prompt students to: • take sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) to make sense of problems and share strategies for solving problems, orally and in writing, • generate multiple approaches and representations, • explain and support viable arguments, and critique the reasoning of others, • and examine the validity of claims and solutions.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Multiple Representations**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
5. Materials highlight opportunities for students to make connections between representations, generate and discuss multiple representations of mathematical concepts or procedures, communicate their thinking about multiple representations, and justify their reasoning while using multiple representations.				
6. Materials and assignments provide abundant and diverse opportunities for speaking, listening, reading, and writing, encouraging students to take risks, construct meaning, and seek reinterpretations of knowledge.				
■ **Academic Language**				
7. Materials model and support students as they develop both the language and the mathematical understanding to be able to participate in the full spectrum of mathematical practices requiring higher order thinking skills.				
8. Materials afford students the opportunity to actively use mathematical language to master the major work of the grade, focusing on students' mathematical reasoning, not on accuracy using language.				
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
9. Materials provide examples of teacher-student actions and interactions that model and reflect the intent of the full spectrum of mathematical practices.				
10. Materials and assignments include robust problems with multiple entry points that display an arc of growing sophistication to support students' engagement in the full meaning of each practice standard as they refine their participation in the practice standards across grades and/or grade bands.				
Criterion V: Materials support the development of mathematical reasoning.				
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials and assignments focus on reasoning (i.e., why a solution works, not only a description of the steps for a solution) with opportunities to examine, compare, analyze, and discuss examples of solutions to problems.				
2. Materials engage students in grade-level mathematical reasoning, deepening their understanding through speaking, listening, reading, and writing about their thinking and others' thinking.				
3. Materials encourage teachers to focus on ELLs' development of conceptual understanding rather than over-emphasizing precise use of language when not central to the task. They may, for example, draw attention to complex language constructs in mathematics, identifying errors which may be typical at different levels of English Language Proficiency (ELP), while helping to support ELLs in continuously expanding their command of the language of mathematics.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4. Materials allow students sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) to construct viable arguments and critique the arguments of others using the grade-level mathematics ideas detailed in the content standards.				
5. Materials allow students sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) to produce not only answers and solutions, but arguments, explanations, diagrams, and mathematical models, providing them with an opportunity to describe, analyze, and critique the reasoning behind solutions.				
6. Materials prompt teachers to prepare for a lesson by thinking about how to a) provide sufficient time before intervening, b) consider multiple student responses, approaches, questions, and possible misconceptions, and c) include opportunities for students to analyze and correct or address their own errors using mathematical reasoning.[3]				
■ **Multiple Representations**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
7. Materials prompt teachers to prepare for a lesson by considering ahead of time how students might use multiple representations to describe, analyze, critique mathematical reasoning, and correct errors in problem-solving.				
8. Materials encourage students to relate multiple representations to academic language by requiring them to use multiple approaches and mathematical representations in solving problems and describing their reasoning.				
■ **Academic Language**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
9. Materials include the specialized language of mathematical arguments, problem solving, and explanations. When necessary (i.e., for formal presentations, written work, etc.), that language is explicitly taught rather than assumed. Informal language used by students (especially in small groups) serves as a basis and resource for refining and introducing more formal language. For example, when students use the term "cancel," materials should make a direct connection to the mathematical concept of equivalent expressions to avoid over generalization.				
10. Materials require students to use language in their explanations and arguments—even if it is informal or not perfect—to "piece" concepts together and build whole ideas in mathematics.				
11. Materials prompt students to transition between everyday informal language and formal mathematical language while employing multi-modal representations.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
12. Materials support students in learning how to construct and critique arguments using both informal and formal textbook definitions and conceptual understanding to explain and justify their reasoning about mathematical ideas and solutions. (For example, materials describe how providing a counter-example is one way to construct an argument, but also highlight that examples alone do not establish a general statement).				

Criterion VI: The materials facilitate the use of a range of instructional approaches for a variety of learners.

	Rating Scale			
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide students with opportunities to conjecture, explain, construct, and share mathematical arguments, as well as build on others' ideas, in ways that contribute to their development as *budding mathematicians*, confident in their ability to take on complex new mathematical challenges.[4]				
2. Materials consistently include extensions and/or more advanced tasks, activities, and lessons for students who are performing at or above grade level, supporting continuous language development for all learners. For example, elementary students who have developed proficiency with operations for "adding to" and "joining, separating, or comparing" (or "putting together") may work on more advanced problems, where they explore and apply the commutative and associative properties of addition.				
3. Materials consistently engage students who are performing below grade level in rigorous, content-related and standards-aligned tasks, activities, and lessons with targeted tools to progressively fill in unfinished learning, build skills, expand mathematical language, and increase independence.				
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4. Materials provide multiple opportunities and sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) for students to detect and correct their own error patterns and to engage with grade-level content.				
5. Materials invite, support, and provide sufficient time for the active engagement of all students with the core mathematical ideas being addressed in a lesson.[5]				
6. Materials provide multiple entry points and explicit connections to prior knowledge that allow students to engage with lessons at their level of English proficiency in order to increase their depth of mathematical understanding.				
7. Materials allow sufficient time (before the teacher intervenes) for students to make meaningful connections between procedures, concepts, and applied problems presented in various ways (allowing for scaffolds and supports as appropriate).				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
▪ **Multiple Representations**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
8. Materials provide alternative ways to acquire new information, share mathematical reasoning, and participate in mathematical practices such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing in addition to engaging students in multiple modes of input (e.g., visual, kinesthetic).				
9. Materials use multi-modal representations to support development of academic language and mathematical concepts, and materials model for students how to use the various representations to communicate their knowledge.				
10. Materials require that students use multiple representations (talk, text, drawings, diagrams, math symbols, graphs, tables, etc.) as an intermediate step between the text (for example, a word problem or a textbook passage) and the symbolic (math symbols such as numbers, operations, or variables) phases of solving a mathematical task.				
▪ **Academic Language**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
11. Materials identify linguistic demands and offer appropriate instructional approaches, assignments, and tasks to support language development (English and, when possible, the home language), perhaps including a section on mathematical language.				
12. Language development is carefully considered while maintaining mathematical rigor. This includes— a. supporting students in making sense of the language of word problems without oversimplifying the text, b. paying close attention to the connections among a student's home language, mathematical symbols, and the use of multiple representations, c. highlighting cognates between mathematical terms in English that are shared with other languages, and d. providing activities and problems that lend themselves to instructional strategies such as "3 READS"[6] for word problems and other texts or graphic organizers that attend to the language of word problems and engage students with high-level language functions such as synthesizing, comparing and contrasting, and evaluating.				
13. Materials include tools that aid in the analysis and understanding of the language used for instructions, procedural exercises, and word problems to make sense of problems that are text based or language intensive.				
14. Materials engage students in activities that support both receptive and productive language functions (see ELPD for details) and experiences, meeting the demands of grade-level standards by providing meaningful supports.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
15. Materials note instructional approaches suggested for whole class and differentiated lessons and activities.				
16. Materials include resources, if possible, that provide access to materials in students' native language. For example, native language might be used to preview or review concepts.				

Additional Criteria for Teacher's Edition

	Rating Scale			
■ **Rigorous Tasks**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide lesson overviews with rigorous standards-aligned and grade level content learning objectives, essential questions, standards-alignments, and sample agendas.				
2. Materials support teachers in planning effective, rigorous, and standards-aligned lessons for diverse learners with planning templates, sample instructional plans, and digital planning tools. Lessons should not be scripted to provide districts and teachers flexibility in planning for their curricular needs.				
3. Materials provide information about intentional math talk,[7] naming specific talk moves (e.g., talk to whole class, explain to a shoulder partner, follow, repeat, agree, disagree, comment) and using talk moves that focus on mathematical ideas, reasoning, understanding, and practices.[8]				
4. Materials provide opportunities for high level applications-based problems, activities, and projects with resources for facilitation, including background information, graphic organizers, worksheets, exemplars, and rubrics.				
5. Materials provide incorrect solutions based on common errors or misconceptions for students to analyze and compare to correct solutions with explanations of misconceptions leading to the incorrect solutions.				
■ **Encouraging Productive Struggle**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide information and examples of teacher moves to support mathematical discussions and students' explaining their reasoning.[9]				
2. Materials support teachers in establishing a classroom environment where students respect each other, learn to value each other's ideas, and learn to discuss the reasoning of others. Material's pacing guides and estimated time requirements for all activities are realistic in fostering such a classroom environment.				
3. Materials support identifying and building of multiple and frequent opportunities in lessons and units to pay attention to problem solving, reasoning, connecting multiple representations, and engaging in the eight math practices.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
4. Materials outline common errors and misconceptions for different mathematical topics and provides support for recognizing and remediating these misconceptions.				
5. Provides opportunities and guidelines for using embedded formative and summative assessments including tools for developing standards-aligned assessments (test bank and test maker) with answer keys and/or rubrics.				
■ **Multiple Representations**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide teachers with samples of different ways of student thinking at different grade levels and for different ways of expressing mathematical understanding at different levels of English proficiency.				
2. Materials provide teachers with samples of different ways of processing mathematical information in multiple modes.				
3. Rather than highlighting one representation and solution for problems, materials provide alternative representations and solutions.				
4. Materials suggest a variety of multi-modal resources and activities for teaching each topic with recommendations for implementation with learners at different levels of language development.				
5. Materials support technology integration with high quality interactive resources, including videos, presentations, and online features.				
■ **Academic Language**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide teachers with resources and models including word/phrase lists and concept maps to sustain academic vocabulary development with ELLs (words and phrases) in the context of mathematical work, to develop understanding of words referring to thinking and communicating.				
2. Materials provide teachers with resources and models for supporting students in developing language practices beyond vocabulary by focusing on the function (not the form) of mathematical claims and arguments.				
3. Materials provide content-related and standards-aligned informational texts to help engage students in content, make connections to real-world situations, and sustain language development that moves students along the English acquisition progression.				
4. Materials include content and language development grading guidelines and grading tools for students and teachers, which offer clear and helpful feedback concerning learning progress.				
5. Materials provide "can do" and "look for" indicators for students at various language levels with guidelines for supporting these students with language development along the English proficiency progression.				
6. Materials identify cognates and language teaching strategies to support content instruction.				

Language-Related Criteria	Rating Scale (1-4, 4 being the best)			
■ **Strategic Scaffolding**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. Materials provide look-fors, cues, etc. for teachers to examine student work to detect the evidence to determine what a student with particular high needs understands and needs in mathematics instruction.				
2. Materials provide explicit guidance about opportunities and strategies for re-engagement with mathematics when misconceptions and/or incomplete understandings occur.				
3. Materials provide specific guidance for flexible grouping and team facilitation/ management strategies as appropriate for team-based activities. These guidelines should be developed to enhance learning in specific activities rather than being a general listing of strategies.				
4. Materials provide specific differentiation recommendations with guidance on implementation for students with various needs tailored toward instructional strategies used in a particular lesson. These recommendations should not be generic "cover-all" strategies.				
5. Materials provide asset-based learning inventories to help facilitate flexible grouping and differentiation based on student strengths.				
6. Materials provide self-paced learning center activities, both paper and online-based, to build foundational skills and strengthen existing skills.				

Criteria Matrix References

1 See ELPD Framework, developed by CCSSO for details. Framework for English Language Proficiency Development Standards corresponding to the *Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. (2012, September). Retrieved from Council of Chief State School Officers we*bsite: http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2012/ELPD Framework Booklet-Final for web.pdf

2 Principles for Mathematic *Instruction for ELLs. (n.d.). Retrieved from ht*tp://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/math_learn-more_files/2.Principles%20for%20Math%20Instruction%208-14-13.pdf

3 For examples, see Smith, M. S., & Stein, M. K. (2011). Five Practices for Orchestrating Productive Mathematics Disc*ussions. NCTM. or Math Pathway*s & Pitfalls. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://mpp.wested.org/.

4 Schoenfeld, A. (2016). The Teaching for R*obust Understanding (TRU) Framework. Retrieved from* http://map.mathshell.org/trumath/TRU_framework_overview.pdf

5 Ibid.

6 SFUSD Mathematics Department. (2015, June). SFUSD Signature S*trategy #2: Three Read Protocol. Retrieved from ht*tp://www.sfusdmath.org/uploads/2/4/0/9/24098802/3_read_protocol_from_math_teaching_toolkit_2015-2016.pdf

7 Hintz, A., & Kazemi, E. (2014). Talking about Math. Ed*ucational Leadership,* 72(3), 36-40.

8 For examples, see: Chapin, S. H., O'Connor, C., & Anderson, N. C. (2009). Classroom Discussions: Using Math Talk t*o Help Students Learn, Grades K-6. Math Solutions.; Anderson, N. (2011). Classroom Discussions: Seeing Math Discourse in Action, Grades K-6: A Multimedia Professional Learning Resource. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.; and Kazemi, E., & Hintz, A. (2014). Intentional Talk: How to Structure and Lead Productive Mathematical Discussions.*

9 For examples, see "Six Important Talk Moves" described in Resnick, L., O'Connor, C., & Michaels, S. (2007). Cl*assroom Discourse, Mathematical Rigor, and Student Reasoning: An Accountable Talk Literature Review.*

Additional Considerations

In addition to assessing the quality and appropriateness of instructional materials for ELLs, schools and school districts have to consider a number of additional factors that are critical to ensuring that English Learners and other students with specialized language-related learning needs receive high quality mathematics instruction. These factors include assessments, professional development, instructional technology, and interventions. Below, we provide a number of high-level considerations school district need to address in each of these areas.

Assessments

Assessments are integral to the learning process, measuring as well as facilitating student progress. As such, assessments must be designed to accurately and dependably provide information about student learning in order to guide instruction. The review committee should consider embedded formative assessments that meet the following criteria:

- The language of assessments should mirror the language of instruction, just as the tasks of assessment should mirror the tasks students have encountered in the classroom and in their assignments.[28]

- The contexts used in assessments need to be culturally-relevant in order to remove linguistic and cultural bias.

- Assessments, whether oral or written, should provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate rigorous, standards-based mathematics learning, reasoning, understanding, and practices in various ways and consistently throughout the learning process.

- Scoring guidelines and keys should support teachers in providing meaningful feedback to students about their progress and determining next steps.

- Student self-assessment opportunities should be provided to help students gauge their progress and increase their agency for continuous growth.

Professional Development

One of the leading challenges to ensuring rigorous, standards-aligned instruction for ELLs and students with language-based learning disabilities is the misconception that unfinished learning is an insurmountable obstacle to attaining grade-level proficiency. Many teachers will tell you they can't teach on grade level because their kids are "so far behind." Professional development, therefore, needs to be well targeted and provide ongoing job-embedded coaching to help teachers support grade-level instruction while filling in "unfinished learning."

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28 Moschkovich, J. (n.d.). *Understanding Language: Principles for Mathematics Instruction for ELLs.* Retrieved from http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/math_learnmore_files/2.Principles%20for%20Math%20Instruction%208-14-13.pdf

In particular, professional development opportunities need to—

- Provide ongoing professional learning around how to engage ELL students and other students with language-related needs with visual representations and mathematical thinking tools, while regularly integrating language access and language production strategies into mathematics lessons.

- Bring together ESL and math teachers, as well as Special Education teachers, and provide guidance for collaboratively analyzing student work and recognizing student mathematical thinking about specific mathematical concepts.

- Provide coherent and systemic support throughout the organization to ensure that principals and administrators are supportive of new instructional practices in math. In particular, principals and administrators need to develop an understanding that language development and mathematical discussions are productive parts of the process of learning math.

- Highlight high-leverage research-based strategies for supporting and enhancing mathematical reasoning among ELLs.

In general, teachers should be provided opportunities to diagnose and assess their own professional learning needs and access differentiated learning as well as ongoing professional learning networks and communities through which best practices and resources are shared. Accessible on-demand resources including teaching videos, implementation guides, and toolkits designed to help diagnose and address common instructional challenges would be welcomed resources.

Strategic Use of Instructional Technology

Instructional technology has the potential to increase student engagement and deepen student understanding of mathematical reasoning. The review committee should look for resources that—

- Include scaffolds for ELLs and any other students with language-related needs and challenges that deepen understanding.

- Assist students in making connections among multiple representations (verbal, symbolic, abstract, visual, algebraic, etc.) and support students in expressing their reasoning using multiple representations.

- Guide teachers in using technology to support the development of mathematical reasoning and encourage student agency and independence in the learning process through student-paced instructional activities focused on building conceptual understanding.

- Support alternative research-based teaching models—flipped classrooms, blended learning, etc.—with digitally accessible instructional activities and resources.

- Support differentiated instruction among diverse learners in ways that provide opportunities for remediation, intervention, and enrichment through enhancing and expanding classroom content through online instructional resources.

- Support integration of content and activities onto Learning Management Systems (LMS)—such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, Canvas, Blackboard, etc.—with downloadable videos and assignment files.

Intervention

Finally, intervention materials should be selected to support specific diagnosed needs. It is assumed that intervention occurs after students have first had access to and opportunities for quality math instruction with differentiated support, and students demonstrate that they require additional intervention and focused instruction. Intervention strategies and materials will therefore vary according to purpose, age, and grade level. In general, the committee should ensure that—

- Any formal intervention programs are developed or purchased to augment current curriculum and are not considered a "replacement." They are intended to support and provide the learning students need to be successful in core instruction.

- Intervention strategies, support, and programs are designed to fill in student learning gaps, are directly connected to grade-level mathematical content, and include opportunities for students to develop conceptual understanding and participate in key math practices.

- Interventions do not leave students working only with lower grade-level work, or procedural fluency, and should not involve going back and re-teaching everything before students can proceed.

- Intervention is not only used for remediation. Interventions should also accelerate/ ramp up students' knowledge from where they are, filling in gaps in understanding, and ensuring students are successful in core instruction.

- Interventions are data driven and designed with guidance on monitoring students' rate of growth on targeted areas, thereby limiting their use over time, and progressively encouraging students to gain independence.

- The purpose and outcomes of interventions are clearly defined and progress is monitored with data.

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AN FGM/C PREVENTION RESOURCE FOR U.S. SCHOOLS

The Council of the Great City Schools' member districts serve a rich tapestry of children whose families hail from all around the globe. This ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity is one of the key assets of our membership, but it also presents a significant responsibility for school districts—to help orient immigrant families to the way the U.S. school system works and the overall legal framework of our nation. Much of this orientation and integration into our nation's society occurs seamlessly through the school districts' curricula and the local community. In some cases, however, the integration must take place in a manner that is more explicit to ensure that all students in our schools can thrive academically and socially, all while maintaining their cultural identity.

The latest estimate from the Centers for Disease Control indicate that in 2012 there were over half a million (512,000) young women and girls were at risk of undergoing a non-medical surgical procedure with devastating consequences for their overall health, and specifically, their reproductive health. This procedure, known as female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C), is the partial or total removal of a girl's external genitalia. It is a practice that remains widespread in certain nations and among certain cultures, despite being outlawed in the United States and in an increasing number of nations.

The half a million young women and girls who are at risk of FGM/C in the U.S. are most likely to reside in one of 16 major metropolitan areas, all which are served by school districts that are members of the Council of the Great City Schools. Several tools and resources have been developed to raise awareness, particularly in the medical, legal, and social services communities. Despite such efforts, however, school-aged girls remain at risk, and there is no comprehensive resource or toolkit to guide staff in U.S. schools on how to prevent FGM/C, or on how to provide culturally responsive support for at risk girls and survivors.

Because the 16 major high-risk metropolitan areas are members of our organization, the Council of the Great City Schools partnered with Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation to create this resource guide for U.S. school staff to support the prevention of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C). This document is the result of the hard work and dedication of Angela Peabody from the Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation and Ashley Ison, Gabriela Uro, and David Lai from the Council, who worked in collaboration with other important stakeholders such as the Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc., to compile this much needed resource for school districts. A number of other important resources developed across the globe were also examined to guide school stakeholders (i.e., educators, nurses, counselors, etc.) on how to help prevent FGM/C and support victims. We hope that staff in our member school districts find this resource helpful.

CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF FGM/C

For communities and individuals who practice FGM/C, the reasons and motivations are many. While it is difficult to identify a single rationale for the practice of FGM/C, there are several cross-cultural motivations. Some common justifications from families are the protection of family honor, love for the girl, cleanliness, preserving traditions, ensuring chastity, and preparation for marriage.

CULTURAL REASONS

TRADITION

For some, FGM/C is deeply rooted in cultural practices and is a tradition that has been passed down through generations of women. It is a core part of life and cultural practice.

IDENTITY

In many cultures where FGM/C is practiced, it is a part of a girl's coming of age. As a result, there is sometimes a deep sense of pride and belonging that comes from the practice. For immigrant populations residing in the United States, the practice can also be a means of maintaining cultural identity.

RELIGION

Although FGM/C is not required by any religious faith or group, some use religion as a rationale for the practice. However, religious leaders and advocates emphasize that there is no true religious purpose of FGM/C.

MARRIAGEABILITY

FGM/C is often a requirement for marriage among cultures where it has traditionally been practiced. Parents fear that if their daughters are not cut, they will be less likely to find a suitable husband.

HEALTH/AESTHETIC REASONS

CLEANLINESS

In some cultures, portions of the female genitalia are considered unclean, ugly, or masculine. The belief is that performing FGM/C will increase a girl's health and make her "clean."

SEXUALITY

FGM/C is considered a means of keeping women from becoming hypersexual, encouraging unwed women to remain virgins, and maintaining female fidelity within marriage.

THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF FGM/C

The kinds of problems that develop because of the practice depend upon the degree of the excision, the cleanliness of the tools used, and the health of the girl receiving the excision. This section lists some short-term and long-term consequences suffered by girls during and after experiencing FGM/C (*Female Genital Mutilation Factsheet*, WHO 2016).

SHORT-TERM CONSEQUENCES

- **Bleeding or hemorrhaging** – If the bleeding is severe, girls can lose their lives, either during or shortly following the procedure.
- **Infection** – The wound can become infected and develop into an abscess (a collection of pus). Fever, sepsis (a blood infection), shock, and even death can develop if the infection is left untreated or not treated in time.
- **Pain** –Girls are routinely excised without anesthetic. The worst pain tends to occur the day after the excision.
- **Trauma** – Physical and psychological trauma from girls being forcibly held down during the excision.

FGM/C is bad for women and it is bad for men–no one benefits from FGM/C.
/// Dr. Marci Bowers

LONG-TERM HEALTH PROBLEMS

- **Problems using the bathroom** – In severe cases, (Infibulation or Excision) girls take much longer to use the bathroom. This type can slow or strain the normal flow of urine and the menstrual cycle, and can cause infection.
- **Scar tissue** – In most cases, following healing, the girls are left with heavy scarring (covering most of the vagina). The scars can also develop into large bumps (cysts or abscesses) or thickened scars (keloids), which can cause maternal and infant mortality during pregnancy. This can also cause problems in performing pap tests and other gynecological exams, including prenatal care.
- **Increased risks of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV** — Excisers with no formal medical training or untrained midwives tend to use one tool for multiple excisions, without sanitation or sterilization. These conditions greatly increase the risk of life-threatening infections such as hepatitis and HIV.
- **Infertility** – The infertility rates among post-FGM/C women in some West African countries are as high as 30 to 50 percent. Those post-FGM/C women who are fortunate enough to conceive a child can have lengthy labors, tissue tears, or excessive bleeding and infection during childbirth, which causes distress to both infant and mother.
- **Psychological and emotional stress** – The psychological effects of this experience can be closely compared to those of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Some girls suffer from insomnia, anxiety, and depression.

IDENTIFYING GIRLS AT-RISK

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that over half a million U.S. girls and young women were at risk of FGM/C if their families still adhered to beliefs from the home countries where this harmful practice is common (*Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in the United States: Updated Estimates of Women and Girls at Risk, 2012*, CDC 2016). Many of these girls and young women who are at risk live in select metropolitan areas. For example, in 2013 the Population Reference Bureau (PRB) indicated that forty percent of the population at risk lived in five metro

NUMBER OF GIRLS AT-RISK
- 25,000 or more
- 10,000-24,999
- 5,000-9,999
- Less than 5,000

areas: New York, the District of Columbia and adjacent states, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Additional metro areas identified by the CDC include: Dallas/Ft. Worth, Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, and San Francisco (*A State of-Art-Synthesis of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: What Do We Know Now?,* The Population Council 2016). The map on this page illustrates the states with the highest number of girls and young women at risk of FGM/C.
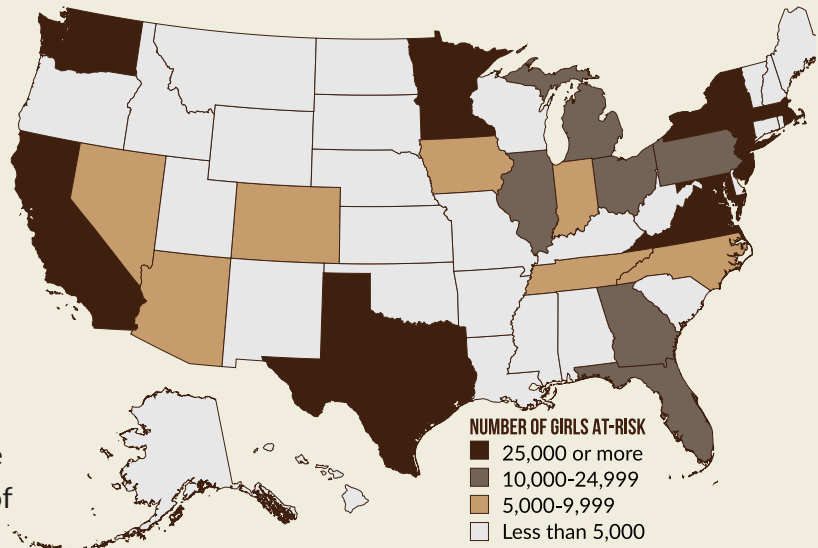
TOP 10 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Egypt

Liberia

Ethiopia

Sierra Leone

Somalia

Sudan

Nigeria

Kenya

Eritrea

Guinea

Although the practice can be performed at any age, FGM/C is most commonly performed on girls between the ages of 4 and 15 (*Female Genital Mutilation Factsheet*, 2016). In other words, school-age girls are most at risk and, therefore, there is an urgent need to equip school staff—including teachers, counselors, nurses, coaches, and principals—with the knowledge to detect the socio-emotional signals of this practice and aid in its prevention.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

FGM/C has been traditionally practiced in about 28 countries in Africa, parts of Asia (including Indonesia, Malaysia, and parts of India), and parts of the Middle East (such as Iraq and Yemen). As a result of global migration, the practice has surfaced in the United States and countries in Europe (*Women and Girls At Risk of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in the United States*, Population Reference Bureau 2016). The prevalence of FGM/C might not be limited to recent immigrants but practiced in subsequent generations as well.

BEHAVIORAL SIGNALS

Since most girls who undergo FGM/C are quite young, it may be difficult for them to understand or describe exactly what might or has already happened to them. It is therefore important that school staff become knowledgeable about signals that

a student is at risk or is a survivor of FGM/C. Keep in mind that if a student exhibits one or several behavioral signals, it does not automatically mean that she is at risk for FGM/C or a survivor of such a practice.

The following signals have been compiled from various sources, including the World Health Organization. School staff should be prepared to see any of the behaviors below as a signal that support may be needed. Schools should also consider how suspected or confirmed cases of FGM/C will be handled given state laws and school district reporting protocols related to child safety and welfare. School staff must take measures to ensure the psychological and emotional well-being of the girl at-risk by considering the highly sensitive nature of the issue and protecting the girl's privacy.

Signals that a girl may be at risk:
- Child references FGM/C (or other terms such as "the thing," "the secret," or "surprise").
- The family is preparing to take a girl to a family's country of origin (if FGM/C is practiced there).
- Child mentions a special ceremony or procedure they will undergo either in the U.S. or abroad.

Signals that a girl is a survivor of FGM/C:
- Child becomes anxious, withdrawn or exhibits unusual behavior after a long absence from school.
- Child mentions pain or discomfort between her legs.
- Child takes an abnormally long time using the bathroom or has difficulty using the bathroom.
- Child does not want to undergo medical examinations.
- Child does not want to change clothes during gym or sports activities.
- Child says they have a secret they are not allowed to talk about.
- Child asks for help.

LEGAL CONTEXT OF FGM/C

The Federal law against FGM/C (18 U.S.C. §116) makes it a crime to perform FGM/C on a girl under the age of 18. Specifically, the law states that it is illegal to knowingly circumcise, excise, or infibulate the whole or any part of the labia majora or labia minora or clitoris of a girl under 18, if there is no medical necessity and the procedure is not performed by a medical professional. The fact that the person doing the procedure believes that it is required by custom, religion, or by ritual is not an allowable defense. And because it is a crime to order or assist in a federal crime, any family member who assists or helps the child be cut is also criminally liable.

It is also a federal crime to send a girl outside the United States to have the FGM/C performed. This practice is referred to as "vacation cutting," because it usually takes place during school vacation periods. And it is not just a crime to send the girl away for cutting, it is also a crime to attempt to do so. The United States government believes that performing FGM/C on a girl is a form of child abuse, and, as such, it is covered by each state's child abuse reporting laws. Violations are punishable by five years in prison, fines, or both.

As of this writing, 24 states also have laws that make it a crime to perform FGM/C on a girl. While these laws largely mirror the federal law, schools should be familiar with the requirements of their state's laws, as some are more restrictive than the federal law. Most notably, Tennessee and Illinois require mandatory reporting of any suspected FGM/C. In addition, five states also make it a crime to cut any women - not just girls.

PREVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES: ENGAGING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

FGM/C prevention requires widespread efforts at multiple levels of school management and throughout the district community. The following pages identify some potential strategies schools and districts can use to prevent FGM/C.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Some ways to employ sensitivity and build relationships within communities

Engaging parent-teachers associations and speaking to them at their meetings

Speaking to women's groups at churches, mosques and community centers

Engaging inter-faith leaders, such as Imams, Pastors or Rabbis

Hosting training through webinars, workshops in communities

Speaking at ethnic beauty salons and ethnic restaurants

BREAKING TABOOS, BREAKING SILENCE

One of the most important parts of the campaign against FGM/C is eliminating the secrecy and isolation that accompanies it. The girls are often sworn to secrecy at the time of ceremonial excision, and taught never to speak of what they experienced. The testimonies of women are therefore crucial in assisting women and girls who have been silenced through fear. With the growing movement across the world, including in the United States, against FGM/C, many young women have spoken out against the practice, and have vowed not to have their own daughters excised. When women break their silence and disclose their experiences, the secrecy around FGM/C, and the misunderstanding and myths begin to be dispelled. The result of more open discussions and awareness in communities around the U.S. has been a slow change in attitudes in affected communities.

Schools can participate in breaking the taboo against speaking out by creating safe spaces to spread awareness about the legal and health

consequences of FGM/C. By working with and alongside communities, schools can help create widespread change and keep girls safe.

COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Centuries-old cultural practices will not change overnight. Change is a learned behavior, and community organizations can be well equipped to convey this message to communities at risk of practicing FGM/C. Community organizations are likely to have the cultural and linguistic sensitivity to work with at-risk communities, and may have better knowledge and context of the FGM/C practice than school staff members. Community organizations can educate school staff about the cultural, economic, and emotional needs of the community. They can also serve as bridges between the school and the communities they serve.

As community organizations advocate for cultural awareness and respect for their communities, some include FGM/C prevention in these efforts.

TERMS USED TO REFERENCE FGM/C

Across the globe many cultures and ethnic groups have practiced FGM/C as a sacred ritual in a woman's rite of passage. FGM/C is often performed on girls between infancy and 15 years old. FGM/C is known by various names across different cultures. The direct, literal translation of most of these terms refers to acts of "circumcision," "cutting," purifying," and "cleaning." In English, the practice is typically referred to as "female genital mutilation," "female genital cutting," or "female circumcision."

"Cutting" is typically a safe word to use around both those who practice FGM/C and those who are against it.

"Mutilation" is a term used almost exclusively among advocates against the practice. U.S. Law uses the term female genital mutilation, or FGM (18 U.S. Code §116). However, some practicing communities find this term judgmental.

"Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)" is used here to acknowledge the harmfulness of the practice, while simultaneously respecting those whose cultural traditions include or have included FGM/C.

It is crucial to be culturally sensitive when referring to the practice, including mirroring the language and terms based upon an individual's cultural reference, or using general terms such as "cutting."

The role of community organizations is often to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the community. Schools can partner with these organizations to refer students in need of services or offer additional information on FGM/C to the school. Community organizations could also provide additional resources to women and girls affected by FGM/C.

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS:
Recognition, respect, honor, and inclusion for another's cultural beliefs and practices

Although communication is key to the FGM/C prevention process, it is vital for school staff to acknowledge that FGM/C is often viewed as a sensitive issue that is never openly discussed. School staff members have to be culturally competent, avoid stigmatization, and use culturally appropriate language when they address FGM/C with girls and families who are survivors or at risk of FGM/C.

FGM/C is an unlawful practice and a human rights violation, yet school staff must acknowledge that, for practicing communities, FGM/C is often associated with cultural ideals of femininity and modesty, which include the notion that girls are

clean and beautiful after the removal of body parts that are considered "unclean." It is significant to educate practicing communities that FGM/C is illegal in the U.S. and is considered child abuse, violence against women and girls, a human rights violation, and an indicator of gender inequality. Nevertheless, the discussion about FGM/C also needs to be addressed in a respectful manner.

School staff must avoid using culturally inappropriate and insensitive approaches that might drive the practice further underground. Schools should always discuss the topic based on fact, without judging or stigmatizing the practicing community. Schools and school personnel should avoid reinforcing a community's stereotypes. When school staff discuss FGM/C, it is important to be cognizant of the individual's circumstances, listening with compassion and valuing the individual's dignity.

PREVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES: ESTABLISHING PREVENTION PROTOCOLS

Designate "liaisons" to organizations that specialize in FGM/C prevention, or work with practicing communities.

Consider school- or district-wide training on FGM/C in addition to staff "Summary One-Pagers" in this resource.

3 BUILD RESPONSE CAPABILITY

Who will be the team or person responsibile for initiating prevention protocols?

2 ASSESS RISK & CAPACITY

Do any staff members have specialized knowledge (e.g., nursing, counseling, connection to practicing community, etc.) relevant to FGM/C?

4 BUILD RESPONSE CAPABILITY

What should all staff members know about FGM/C prevention? How do we spread this knowledge?

1 ASSESS RISK & CAPACITY

What is the size of our school's or district's "at-risk" population?

Use the "Identifying Girls At Risk" section on pages four and five to create criteria for "at-risk" students.

Use the sample Prevention and Support Protocol on page nine.

5 BUILD RESPONSE CAPABILITY

What are our school's or district's reporting protocols according to state law?

DISTRICT AND SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD CONSIDER THESE QUESTIONS WHEN FORMING FGM/C PREVENTION PROTOCOLS

SAMPLE: PREVENTION & SUPPORT PROTOCOL

STEP 1: IDENTIFY POSSIBLE FGM/C SURVIVOR

School staff make note that there are behavior signals of possible FGM/C practice

Student conveys concern about travelling with family to home country

SUGGESTED KEY PLAYERS
Teacher
Counselor
Coach
Principal
Parents
Nurse

STEP 2: ACTIVATE SCHOOL RISK ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

School staff member notifies school-designated FGM/C prevention lead of concern

School includes culturally-appropriate and supportive community consultant to help determine student status

SUGGESTED KEY PLAYERS
Counselor
Nurse
FGM/C Consultant
Social Workers

STEP 3: CONFIRM GIRL'S STATUS

Confirm that the girl is not at risk for FGM/C. **STOP PROCESS.**

Confirm that the girl is at-risk

Confirm that the girl is a survivor of FGM/C

SUGGESTED KEY PLAYERS
Principal
Counselor

STEP 4: INITIATE SUPPORT & REPORTING PROTOCOL

SUGGESTED KEY PLAYERS
Principal
Counselor
Nurse
Social Worker
FGM/C Consultant

FGM/C AT-RISK

Provide family with information and services around FGM/C laws and consequences

Monitor the well-being of the student and any additional signals

FGM/C SURVIVOR CONFIRMED

Report

Provide support to family and community for next steps

PRIVACY RIGHTS: Schools need to consider the privacy rights of students, protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), and under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) that provides rights over individuals' health information.

MANDATORY REPORTING: All states/territories require child abuse reporting by medical professionals and teachers. Many states/territories also require reporting by other professionals like clergy, law enforcement, public officials, social workers, legal counsel, child care professionals, etc.

States that require reporting by ALL persons who have reason to suspect abuse include: DE, IN, ID, KY, MD, MN, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NC, OK, RI, TN, TX, UT, WY.

Mandatory reporting for FGM/C is required by law in IL (minors) and TN (minors and adults).

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DISTRICT-LEVEL STRATEGY WORKSHEET

Use this space to customize ideas for your own district/school...

DISTRICT WIDE INITIATIVES

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

TEACHER'S ROLE IN FGM/C PREVENTION

Teachers, coaches, and mentors must be able to identify the "signals" that indicate a girl might be at-risk of FGM/C.

PROTECTING STUDENTS

Ensuring a girl's psychological and emotional well-being should be a priority when addressing the issue.

STUDENT PRIVACY
Laws such as HIPAA and FERPA provide guidance on what information can be shared. Beyond these legal requirements, use discretion to avoid sharing sensitive student information unless necessary.

STUDENT EMOTIONAL/ MENTAL HEALTH
Be mindful of how every interaction may affect a girls' emotional well-being. If a girl is at risk, or a survivor, monitor her behavior and guide her towards the appropriate mental health resources if necessary.

STUDENT SUPPORT
Show empathy in a culturally responsive manner.

Some of these signals include:

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

- A girl is an immigrant or first generation U.S. citizen from a practicing country.

- A student is between 4 and 15 years old.

SIGNALS A GIRL MAY BE AT-RISK

- Child references FGM/C (or other terms such as "the thing" or "the secret" or "surprise").

- The family is preparing to take a girl to a family's country of origin (if FGM/C is practiced there).

- Child mentions a special ceremony or procedure they will undergo either in the U.S. or abroad.

SIGNALS A GIRL IS A SURVIVOR OF FGM/C

- Child becomes anxious, withdrawn or exhibits unusual behavior after a long absence from school.

- Child mentions pain or discomfort between legs.

- Child takes an abnormally long time using the bathroom or has difficulty using the bathroom.

- Child does not want to undergo medical examinations.

- Child does not want to change clothes during gym or sports activities.

- Child says they have a secret they are not allowed to talk about.

- Child asks for help.

Keep in mind...just because a student shows one, or even several, of the signals does not mean that she is at-risk for FGM/C.

IF YOU THINK A GIRL IS AT-RISK...

- Talk to your school-designated leader on FGM/C prevention.

- Activate school student risk assessment protocol.

- See "Prevention and Support" on page 9.

SCHOOL NURSE'S ROLE IN FGM/C PREVENTION

Nurses and other healthcare providers should be well-versed in the four classifications of FGM/C, the health effects of FGM/C, as well as the indicators that a girl is at risk-of or a survivor of FGM/C.

CLINICAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF FGM/C

TYPE 1: CLITORIDECTOMY
The partial or total removal of the clitoris.

TYPE 2: EXCISION
The partial or complete removal of the clitoris and the labia minor and/or the labia majora.

TYPE 3: INFIBULATION
The labia is cut and rearranged so that the vaginal opening may be completely or nearly completely sewn shut. The clitoris may or may not be removed during this process.

TYPE 4: ALL OTHER
This category contains all other non-medical "harmful procedures" to the female genitalia.

Some of these signals include:

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

- A girl is an immigrant or first generation U.S. citizen from a practicing country.

- A student is between 4 and 15 years old.

SIGNALS A GIRL MAY BE AT-RISK

- Child references FGM/C (or other terms such as "the thing" or "the secret" or "surprise").

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IF YOU THINK A GIRL IS AT-RISK...

- Talk to your school-designated leader on FGM/C prevention.

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- See "Prevention and Support" on page 9.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE IN FGM/C PREVENTION

PROTECTING STUDENTS

Effective FGM/C prevention requires extreme sensitivity to a student's privacy and cultural background. Staff must also recognize that a girl may fear that her parents will be arrested or even deported.

To protect the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of girls at-risk, staff members must incorporate considerations of student privacy, mental health, and cultural norms.

Some strategies include:

- Protecting the girl from any possible bullying/harassment or shaming

- Monitoring a girl's mental health and social interactions

- Using discretion when discussing an at-risk student

FOUR ACTION ITEMS

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND SECURE SUPPORT

Build relationships with professional service providers, community organizations, and stakeholder groups to enhance district/school prevention efforts.

ASSESS YOUR AT-RISK POPULATION

Use the "demographic trends" on page four to determine the number of girls who may be at risk of FGM/C. Assess your schools' capacity to provide a safe environment that ensures the psychological and emotional well-being of girls.

EDUCATE AND SPREAD AWARENESS

Educate yourself and school staff about how to identify at-risk students and implement prevention protocols. Build community awareness through outreach campaigns information sessions or events, and/or public notices.

CREATE AN FGM/C RESPONSE TEAM

Identify appropriate staff member(s) to lead FGM/C prevention efforts and coordinate prevention strategies. Support response team staff in furthering their knowledge and dedicating time to the effort.

LOCAL CONTACTS

Use this space to note helpful professional contacts.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S ROLE IN FGM/C PREVENTION

QUESTIONS TO ASK

STUDENTS

1. Is there anything you would like to share with me?
2. Are you worried about something?
3. Is there anything hurting you?
4. What will you do for summer vacation? Did you do something fun for your summer vacation?

FAMILIES

1. What is your country of origin?
2. Do you have other family members here in the U.S?
3. Do you have any cultural rites of passage ceremonies?
4. Are you aware that circumcision of a girl is against the law?
5. Did you know Americans regard circumcision as child abuse?

Some of these signals include:

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

- A girl is an immigrant or first generation U.S. citizen from a practicing country.
- A student is between 4 and 15 years old.

SIGNALS A GIRL MAY BE AT-RISK

- Child references FGM/C (or other terms such as "the thing" or "the secret" or "surprise").
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- Child becomes anxious, withdrawn or exhibits unusual behavior after a long absence from school.
- Child mentions pain or discomfort between legs.
- Child takes an abnormally long time using the bathroom or has difficulty using the bathroom.
- Child does not want to undergo medical examinations.
- Child does not want to change clothes during gym or sports activities.
- Child says they have a secret they are not allowed to talk about.
- Child asks for help.

LOCAL CONTACTS

Use this space to note helpful professional contacts.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

REPORTS

Traditional and local terms for FGM – FORWARD UK, 2016

Women and girls at risk of female genital mutilation/cutting in the United States – Population Reference Bureau, 2016

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in the United States: Updated Estimates of Women and Girls at Risk, 2012 – Public Health Reports, U.S. Centers for Disease Control, 2016

Women and Girls At Risk of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in the United States – Population Reference Bureau, 2016

Female Genital Mutilation Fact Sheet — the World Health Organization's webpage for information and resources related to FGM/C, 2016

Female genital mutilation (FGM) frequently asked questions – United Nations Population Fund, 2015

Changing a harmful social convention: Female genital mutilation/cutting – United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2005

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A statistical overview and exploration of the dynamics of change — United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2013

STAFF TRAINING MATERIALS

United to END FGM e-learning Course — United to End FGM

FGM Prevention Webinar — U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

The School Nurse's Role in Addressing Female Genital Mutilation — National Association of School Nurses

Female Genital Mutilation: A Teacher's and Student's Guide — World Health Organization (WHO)

Engaging Schools on Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage — FORWARD UK

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

U.S. DOJ – OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

U.S Department of Justice FGM/C Brochure: Brochure in English, Arabic, and French detailing the U.S. FGM/C law, consequences of FGM/C, and contact information for support and information

SCHOOL NURSE ASSOCIATIONS

School Nurses' Role in Addressing Female Genital Mutilation: National Association of School Nurses' podcast on what school nurses can do to prevent FGM. Associated article with guidance on how nurses to educate staff members and incorporate FGM/C prevention into their practice.

UNICEF

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A comprehensive UNICEF report on FGM/C internationally including background information on the practice, its consequences, and the state of contemporary prevention efforts.

Changing a Harmful Social Convention: UNICEF report that provides information on FGM/C including policy recommendations.

SURVIVOR NARRATIVES

Desert Flower: The Extraordinary Life of a Desert Nomad, Waris Dirie

Female Mutilation: the Truth Behind the Horrifying Global Practice of Female Genital Mutilation, Hillary Burrage

Cut, Hibo Wardere

COUNCIL MEMBER DISTRICTS

Albuquerque

Anchorage

Arlington (TX)

Atlanta

Austin

Baltimore

Birmingham

Boston

Bridgeport

Broward County

Buffalo

Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Chicago

Cincinnati

Clark County

Cleveland

Columbus

Dallas

Dayton

Denver

Des Moines

Detroit

Duval County

El Paso

Fort Worth

Fresno

Guilford County

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Jackson

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Kansas City

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New Orleans

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Newark

Norfolk

Oakland

Oklahoma City

Omaha

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Pinellas County

Pittsburgh

Portland

Providence

Richmond

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San Antonio

San Diego

San Francisco

Seattle

Shelby County

St. Louis

St. Paul

Toledo

Tulsa

Washington, D.C.

Wichita

ELL MATERIALS
PROCUREMENT PROJECT

ELL Materials-Joint Procurement Initiative Update
October 2017

Purpose: This project set to explore the possibility of using the Council's joint purchasing power as an alliance to more effectively influence the market to produce higher quality materials for English language learners. Conditions in the instructional materials marketplace and the parameters of district procurement are examined to arrive at a proposed process for joint procurement of materials.

Status: As of September 8, 2017, Los Angeles Unified issued the RFP. The resulting contract will be the underlying vehicle by which other district may also purchase the instructional materials selected via a committee review process.

Districts Participating: In addition to Los Angeles Unified (Lead District) four member districts and Council staff are participating in the review of proposals and selection process which vendors will proceed to the materials review and feedback phase.

DETAILED TIMELINE

Progress/Activity to Date:
Early Fall 2016: Council staff conducted preliminary research regarding district protocols and state laws related to procurement of instructional materials.

September 2016: First face-to-face meetings in Washington DC, engaging expert consultants Joseph Gomez and Geoffrey Fletcher to facilitate discussion among district participants drawn from both procurement and curriculum departments. Discussion focused on generating key issues and potential obstacles related to joint procurement.

October 2016: Second face-to-face meeting in Miami, Florida. At this meeting, the group engaged in discussion to review and further refine a draft Request for Proposals (RFP).

December 2016: Los Angeles Unified leadership confirmed as "Lead District" for this initiative; subsequently, consultant worked with LAUSD procurement leadership to create an evolved RFP that reflects LAUSD protocols, as a vehicle for cooperating districts to also procure materials.

January 2017: Joseph Gomez finalized summary report of potential obstacles and results of discussions resulting in a proposed protocol and vehicle to realize a joint procurement of instructional materials for ELLs.

April 2017: Council staff met in Los Angeles with LAUSD staff responsible for procurement and the office of multicultural and multilingual education to refine criteria and the review process for the RFP. Based on recommendations from the working group, the RFP will seek to procure mathematics materials for middle school grades.

July 2017: Council staff meet with LAUSD mid-July to finalize criteria to be folded into RFP.

August 2017: Establish selection review teams, drawing from initially involved member districts and other interested members.

September 2017: Issued RFP and commenced LAUSD protocol for procurement. All selection committee members involved, including Council staff, are to adhere to a strict Cone of Silence and communication through the LAUSD procurement specialist.

Next Steps:
October 2017 through November 2018: Finalize review and selection of winning proposals.

November 2017 through March 2018: Iterative process of review and feedback to improve instructional materials proposed by selected vendors.

November 2018: Convene review teams for <u>final </u>meeting to review the resulting materials to determine whether they have met the criteria stipulated in the RFP. Materials that are deemed to have met the criteria will be eligible for purchase using the LAUSD contract.

Opportunity for involvement:
Once vendors have been selected a Materials Working Group will be assembled composed of district practitioners, expert in mathematics and English language acquisition, to provide concrete feedback to improve the proposed materials. The Working Group will meet three times along the timeline described below.

Meeting	Date	Activities
1nd Meeting	November 2017	Publishers present prototypes for review and comments Individual work sessions with each publisher team of developers
2rd Meeting	February/March 2018	Publisher teams present their evolution of prototypes review and discussion with the working group. Refinements and final directions are given to developers.
3th & final meeting	November 2018	Finished materials are presented for final review to determine if the changes were made and materials meet the Framework criteria and other criteria laid out in the joint procurement process.

Please contact Gabriela Uro at guro@cgcs.org for information about participating in the Materials Working Group.

ONLINE ELL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLATFORM

Inaugural Courses:
Complex Thinking and Communication Across Content Areas

A program of courses for teachers serving high-needs students to ensure they meet college- and career-readiness standards by engaging in complex forms of communication and thinking

Introduction

Today's college- and career-readiness standards require considerably higher levels of academic language mastery and cognitive functioning across the curriculum than ever before. Teachers across all content areas are expected to deepen their students' understanding of content and develop their mastery of academic language, while also addressing any "unfinished" learning students may bring. For educators in Great City School districts, this challenge is a daily reality. These districts enroll a large share of the nation's English learners and economically disadvantaged students, many of whom are performing below grade level. Few, if any, efforts have focused on helping teachers who serve high-needs students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to meet these new instructional standards.

To address this gap between instructional expectations and capacity, there is an urgent need for professional development that provides teachers new ways of supporting academic language and literacy development across content areas, particularly for *high-needs students*. The Council of the Great City Schools, with the generous support of the Leona Helmsley Charitable Trust, has therefore initiated its learning platform and developed a set of courses focused on expanding the capacity of teachers to support high-needs students in their acquisition and use of the complex thinking and communication skills required by college- and career-readiness standards in both English language arts and mathematics.

Unique Course Design Features

Format and delivery. Large urban districts have substantial professional development needs, and increasingly rely on professional learning communities to provide that development. To support these professional learning communities, and address the limited time and strained budgets many districts face, this professional development resource is designed to provide:

- **Affordable, on-demand, and ongoing access** to nationally-known experts, research, and evidence-based pedagogy, along with high-leverage practices
- **Flexibility** to be delivered either in face-to-face sessions or in professional learning communities with live facilitation
- **Adjustable pacing** to accommodate individual district professional development schedules and opportunities throughout the year
- **Explicit connections** between course content and a district's own tools and resources to maximize relevance for educators

Adult learning cycle. The Council's advisory teams, consisting of nationally-regarded researchers and urban district practitioners, identified three important design features for an effective professional learning experience. To help teachers transform their instructional practices to better support high-needs students in their attainment of rigorous standards—

- Content must show how teachers implement high-leverage instructional moves for high-needs students.
- Courses should provide access to expert research, evidence-based and effective pedagogy, and promising practices relevant to member districts.
- Course and platform design should allow for maximum integration or coordination with other ongoing district professional learning opportunities.

The web-based learning platform, the brief videos, and the overall design of activities allow for courses to be delivered in many ways and at any time during the year. Flexibility is embedded into the system to provide ample time for participants to experience each phase of the learning cycle: *learn* new approaches and strategies, *plan* to execute these approaches and strategies, *apply* them in classrooms, and *reflect* upon the implementation experience.

LEARN > PLAN > APPLY > REFLECT

Vision of the Council's Professional Learning Platform

We envision a hybrid professional development offering that acknowledges and prioritizes educators as learners, while honoring ELLs, students performing below grade level, and economically disadvantaged students as the ultimate center and focus of the work. Professional development should help build learning communities across districts by accommodating and connecting diverse audiences across roles and content areas (e.g., teachers, instructional coaches, principals, and district administrators), and by providing safe learning environments that support reflection on practice outside of any formal evaluative protocols.

For more information, contact the Council of the Great City Schools at: PLP@cgcs.org.

Content and Structure of Inaugural Courses

The courses focus on academic language development in order to accelerate the learning needed to master grade-level content tied to college- and career-readiness standards. The program includes the following:

- **Videos and demonstations of the "how."** Each of the courses includes video clips of teachers and educators planning and implementing high-leverage strategies, along with video presentations of experts and practitioners describing how to prepare for and execute the instructional moves.

- **Tools and resources.** A range of tools and resources are also provided to aid in the planning and execution processes.

- **Contextualized integration.** Practical and locally-relevant application of new knowledge is built into the course design and the learning cycle. The design assumes a central role for district-based facilitators.

All participants are first required to complete the *Foundations* course in order to build a common understanding of the theory of action and the key research behind the professional development courses, as well as to build a common vocabulary. Once educators complete the *Foundations* course, they can select the course sequence in either the ELA pathway or the Mathematics pathway.

- **ELA pathway:** Focuses on building academic language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, using complex grade-level materials aligned with the college- and career-readiness standards.

- **Mathematics pathway:** Focuses on building academic language skills to address the language demands of mathematics, equipping teachers with the skills necessary to engage students in grade-level reasoning and to build conceptual understanding in math.

Inaugural Program: Ten Courses on Complex Communication and Thinking

FOUNDATIONS

ELA/ELD

ELA/ELD 1
Achieving through Learning, Language, and Literacy

ELA/ELD 2
Choosing Complex and Compelling Texts

ELA/ELD 3
Constructing Framed Motivation and Incorporating Word Play

ELA/ELD 4
Reading Closely and Using Juicy Sentences

ELA/ELD 5
Planning for Learning, Language, and Literacy

MATHEMATICS

Math 1
Selecting Tasks to Support Academic Language and Conversations

Math 2
Fostering Constructive Conversation Skills

Math 3
Fortifying Language and Reasoning

Math 4
Planning for Stronger and Clearer Language

Member District Pricing*

Districts may select one of three packages for subscription access to all 10 courses in the program for an entire calendar year, from the date of contract. These packages offer varying numbers of subscriptions and bundled training to meet the professional development needs of different school systems. [*Non-member districts can access the courses at a higher rate, subject to approval by the Council.]

1-Year Package

Package 2K–$15,000	Package 4K–$25,000	Package 10K–$50,000
• 2,000 subscriptions • 2 facilitators • Technical support	• 4,000 subscriptions • 3 facilitators • Technical support	• 10,000 subscriptions • 5 facilitators • Technical support

Additional facilitators beyond the bundled components may be added at $700 per person.

Price protection extension plans are available for discounted rates in the subsequent year. Districts without the plan will contract at market rates for subscription access and facilitators' training to renew.

+1 Year Price Protection Extension Plan (Subscription Price in Year 2)

Districts that purchase the extension plan will secure a discounted price for subscriptions in Year 2 at a subscription level of choice, which can be different from the previous year. A la carte facilitators' training provided under the price protection extension plan is guaranteed at $700 per person beyond the initial year.

Extension Plan 1–$12,500	Extension Plan 2–$21,000	Extension Plan 3–$42,000
• 2,000 subscriptions • Technical support	• 4,000 subscriptions • Technical support	• 10,000 subscriptions • Technical support

When the price protection plan expires, districts will contract at the market price, with an option to purchase an additional price protection extension plan for the subsequent year.

How to sign up for the Program

Contracting for the Council's inaugural courses is best if arranged through a single point of contact, such as office for English language learners or another office selected by the district.

Contact us at PLP@cgcs.org to request a free consultation to determine the best package for you.

About the Council

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 68 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, technical assistance, 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.

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Milwaukee Public Schools

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Miami-Dade County Public Schools

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Council of the Great City Schools

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1331 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
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4

MATH 2: Fostering Constructive Conversation Skills

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Fostering Constructive Conversation Skills

Table of Contents

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2. Learn: Introducing and Addressing the Challenge of Practice

3. Plan: Planning to Build Constructive Conversation Skills

4. Apply: Addressing the Challenge of Practice in Your Classroom

5. Reflect: Review and Discuss

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1.1. Introduction And Objectives
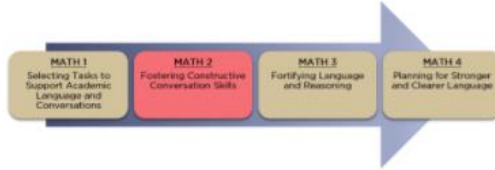
This course builds upon others in a series designed to equip participants with tools and understandings of the interdependence of language and mathematics to facilitate teaching that values high expectations, develops grade-level content, and expands academic language.

The current course on *Fostering Constructive Conversation Skills* engages participants to examine strategies to strengthen conversation skills that enable students to convey mathematical reasoning. Through a facilitated exploration supported by brief video segments, professional readings, and opportunities for practice, participants will gain skills and confidence to apply the new strategy to their teaching.

Objectives

Through this course, participants will:

- analyze oral output for content and language dimensions;
- design activities to foster complex output in mathematics; and
- examine challenges in fostering academic discussions.

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2.1. The Challenge Of Becoming Stronger And Clearer

Videos

Challenges in Conveying Reasoning

Focal Points

- What are some ways that can be used to communicate conceptual understanding?
- Why can explaining solutions in mathematics be a challenging process for students?

Activity

Watch the following videos to see how engaging in academic conversations influences reasoning skills.

Focal Points

- How do conversations improve the quantity and quality of language in the classroom?
- How does oral language influence written language?
- How does the process of clarifying language influence reasoning?

How Discussions Strengthen Reasoning

Students Build Clarity Through Conversation

Additional Resource

Instruction for Diverse Groups of English Language Learners 🔗

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Walqui, A. (n.d.). Instruction for Diverse Groups of English Language Learners. Understanding Language. Retrieved from
http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/09-Walqui%20Heritage%20Instruction%20for%20Diverse%20Groups%20FINAL_0.pdf

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ELL SURVEY

ELL DEMOGRAPHICS, STAFFING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Preliminary Data Analysis

Council of the Great City Schools

Survey Status Updated: September 29, 2017

District Responses to ELL Demographics, Staffing, and Professional Development Survey

The Council received enrollment data from 43 of 70 districts. Completed Survey Monkey responses were received from 47 of 70 districts.

Survey Status as of September 29, 2017

District	Survey Monkey	Data Worksheet
Albuquerque Public Schools	✓	✓
Anchorage School District	✓	✓
Arlington Independent School District	✓	✓
Atlanta Public Schools	✓	✓
Austin Independent School District	✓	✓
Baltimore City Public Schools	✓	✓
Birmingham City Schools	✓	
Boston Public Schools	✓[1]	✓
Bridgeport Public Schools	✓[2]	
Broward County Public Schools	✓	✓
Buffalo Public Schools	Partial Response	
Charleston County School District		
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools		
Chicago Public Schools	Partial Response	
Cincinnati Public Schools	✓	
Clark County School District	✓	✓
Cleveland Metropolitan School District	✓	✓
Columbus City Schools	✓	✓
Dallas Independent School District	✓	✓
Dayton Public Schools	✓	
Denver Public Schools	Partial Response	✓
Des Moines Public Schools	✓	✓
Detroit Public Schools Community District		
District of Columbia Public Schools	✓	
Duval County Public Schools	✓	Partial Response[3]
El Paso Independent School District		✓
Fort Worth Independent School District	✓	✓
Fresno Unified School District	✓	✓
Guilford County Schools	✓	✓
Hawaii State Department of Education		
Hillsborough County School District	✓	✓
Houston Independent School District	✓	✓
Indianapolis Public Schools	✓	✓
Jackson Public Schools		
Jefferson County Public Schools	✓	✓

[1] Number of speakers needed for languages.
[2] Language data for SY 2015-16 and SY 2014-15 in addition to professional development data needed.
[3] Special education enrollment needed for SY 2013-2014.

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Kansas City Public Schools	✓	✓
Long Beach Unified School District		
Los Angeles Unified School District	Partial Response	✓
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	✓	✓
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	✓	✓
Milwaukee Public Schools	✓	✓
Minneapolis Public Schools	✓	✓
New Orleans Public Schools		
New York City Department of Education		
Newark Public Schools		
Norfolk Public Schools	✓	
Oakland Unified School District	✓	✓
Oklahoma City Public Schools		
Omaha Public Schools	✓	✓
Orange County Public Schools	✓	✓
The School District of Palm Beach County	✓	✓
The School District of Philadelphia	✓	✓
Pinellas County Public Schools	✓	✓
Pittsburgh Public Schools	Partial Response	
Portland Public Schools		
Providence Public School District		
Richmond Public Schools	✓	✓
Rochester City School District		
Sacramento City Unified School District	Partial Response	
Salt Lake City School District	✓	✓
San Antonio Independent School District	✓	✓
San Diego Unified School District	Partial Response	
San Francisco Unified School District	Partial Response	✓
Seattle Public Schools	✓	✓
Shelby County Schools	✓	Partial Response[4]
St. Louis Public Schools	✓	✓
St. Paul Public Schools	✓[5]	✓
Toledo Public Schools		
Tulsa Public Schools	✓	✓
Wichita Public Schools	✓	✓
Total Complete Responses	47	43
Response Rate	67.1%	61.4%

[4] Missing or incomplete Table 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.
[5] PDF submitted; awaiting Survey Monkey entry.

Total K-12 Student and ELL Enrollment Ranked within Bands by ELLs as Percentage of Total Enrollment in SY 2015-16

District	Total K-12	ELL K-12	ELLs as Percentage of Total Enrollment	Bands by Number
Los Angeles	517,001	118,788	23.0%	100,000 +
Dallas	148,276	62,615	42.2%	50,001 – 100,000
Houston	199,813	57,987	29.0%	
Miami-Dade County	348,062	67,946	19.5%	
Clark County	321,199	61,535	19.2%	
Oakland	36,977	12,060	32.6%	10,001 – 50,000
St. Paul	36,821	11,709	31.8%	
Fort Worth	81,781	24,711	30.2%	
Boston	50,993	14,912	29.2%	
Denver	85,688	23,920	27.9%	
El Paso	57,180	15,202	26.6%	
Austin	78,377	20,561	26.2%	
Arlington (TX)	59,274	14,455	24.4%	
San Francisco	52,754	12,452	23.6%	
Fresno	70,420	16,280	23.1%	
Albuquerque	85,988	14,577	17.0%	
Metropolitan Nashville	83,101	12,980	15.6%	
Orange County	196,635	28,447	14.5%	
Hillsborough County	210,801	25,392	12.0%	
Palm Beach County	170,619	19,139	11.2%	
Broward County	263,273	28,122	10.7%	
Philadelphia	131,698	12,951	9.8%	
Salt Lake City	25,634	7,389	28.8%	5,001 – 10,000
Minneapolis	35,801	7,955	22.2%	
Des Moines	31,883	6,580	20.6%	
Wichita	46,826	9,005	19.2%	
San Antonio	48,028	9,131	19.0%	
Tulsa	36,844	6,633	18.0%	
Indianapolis	28,388	5,035	17.7%	
Omaha	49,359	7,285	14.8%	
Anchorage	47,621	6,032	12.7%	
Seattle	53,276	6,111	11.5%	
Milwaukee	68,678	7,123	10.4%	
Guilford County	71,908	5,196	7.2%	
Jefferson County	97,121	6,973	7.2%	
Pinellas County	102,834	6,245	6.1%	
Duval County	126,010	5,638	4.5%	

District	Total K-12	ELL K-12	ELLs as Percentage of Total Enrollment	Bands by Number
Kansas City	14,705	3,482	23.7%	
St. Louis	22,561	2,352	10.4%	
Richmond	22,044	2,192	9.9%	
Cleveland	41,632	3,282	7.9%	1,001 – 5,000
Baltimore	78,975	3,642	4.6%	
Atlanta	50,399	1,559	3.1%	
Columbus	56,881	1,477	2.6%	

44 Districts, 62.9% Response Rate

ELL Enrollment and Percentage of Total Enrollment in SY 2015-16
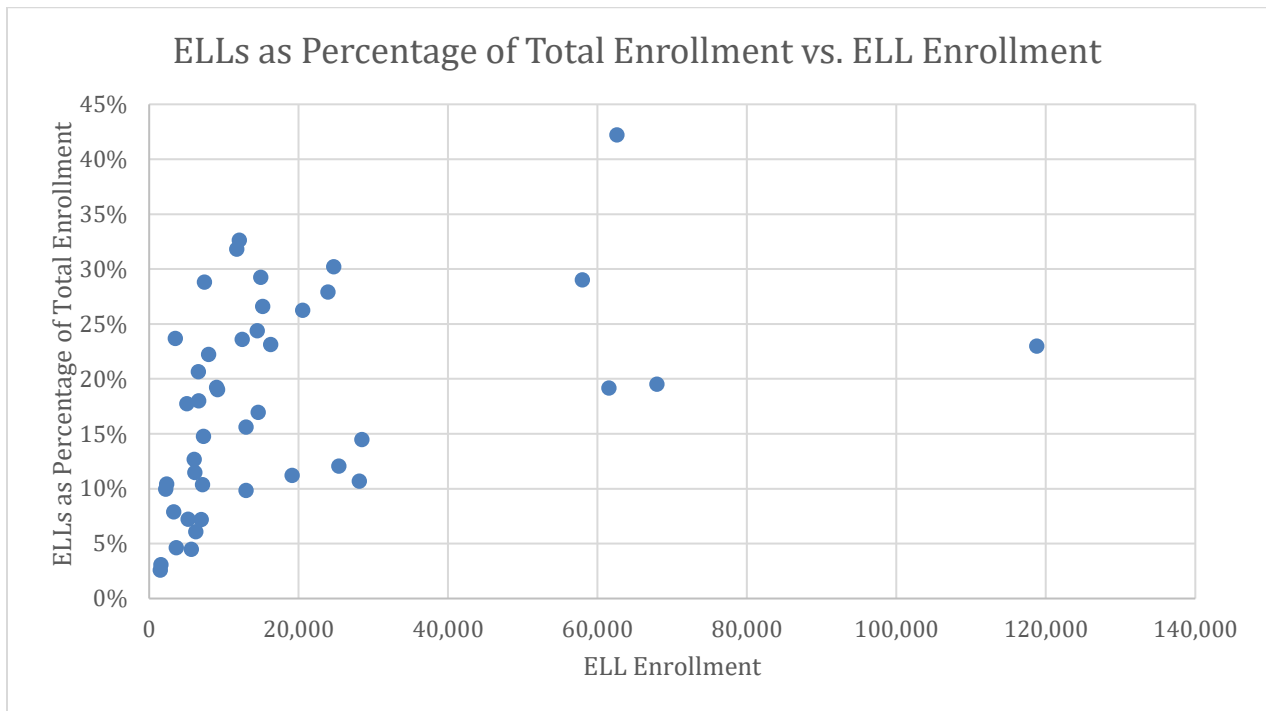
44 Districts, 62.9% Response Rate

ELL Enrollment from SY 2013-14 to SY 2015-16

ELL Enrollment, 2013-16
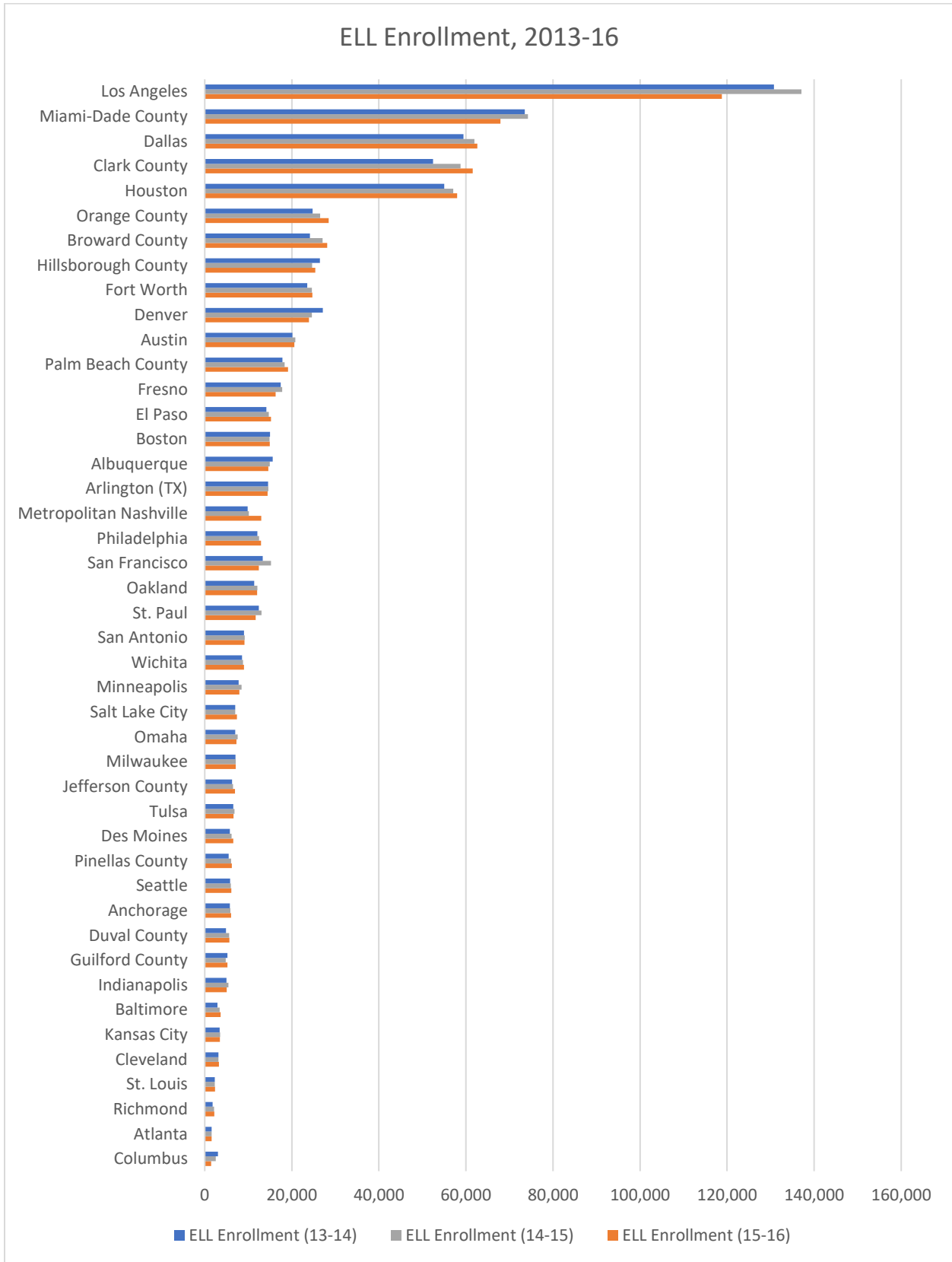
44 Districts, 62.9% Response Rate

ELL vs. Non-ELL Enrollment Percentage Change from SY 2013-14 to SY 2015-16

District	SY 2013-14		SY 2015-16		Percentage Change	
	ELL Enrollment	Non-ELL Enrollment	ELL Enrollment	Non-ELL Enrollment	ELL Enrollment (2013-16)	Non-ELL Enrollment (2013-16)
Albuquerque	15,587	71,609	14,577	71,411	-6.5%	-0.3%
Anchorage	5,794	41,789	6,032	41,589	4.1%	-0.5%
Arlington (TX)	14,564	45,633	14,455	44,819	-0.7%	-1.8%
Atlanta	1,558	47,465	1,559	48,840	0.1%	2.9%
Austin	20,116	59,766	20,561	57,816	2.2%	-3.3%
Baltimore	2,936	77,031	3,642	75,333	24.0%	-2.2%
Boston	15,008	36,869	14,912	36,081	-0.6%	-2.1%
Broward County	24,150	233,704	28,122	235,151	16.4%	0.6%
Clark County	52,452	263,861	61,535	259,664	17.3%	-1.6%
Cleveland	3,135	37,225	3,282	38,350	4.7%	3.0%
Columbus	3,035	52,493	1,477	55,404	-51.3%	5.5%
Dallas	59,424	90,618	62,615	85,661	5.4%	-5.5%
Denver	27,103	54,403	23,920	61,768	-11.7%	13.5%
Des Moines	5,769	25,742	6,580	25,303	14.1%	-1.7%
Duval County	4,864	121,399	5,638	120,372	15.9%	-0.8%
El Paso	14,183	44,720	15,202	41,978	7.2%	-6.1%
Fort Worth	23,564	56,265	24,711	57,070	4.9%	1.4%
Fresno	17,434	53,403	16,280	54,140	-6.6%	1.4%
Guilford County	5,228	67,160	5,196	66,712	-0.6%	-0.7%
Hillsborough County	26,467	185,128	25,392	185,409	-4.1%	0.2%
Houston	55,023	139,288	57,987	141,826	5.4%	1.8%
Indianapolis	4,979	25,018	5,035	23,353	1.1%	-6.7%
Jefferson County	6,249	90,183	6,973	90,148	11.6%	0.0%
Kansas City	3,436	10,768	3,482	11,223	1.3%	4.2%
Los Angeles	130,775	415,057	118,788	398,213	-9.2%	-4.1%
Miami-Dade County	73,540	273,428	67,946	280,116	-7.6%	2.4%
Milwaukee	7,078	63,536	7,123	61,555	0.6%	-3.1%
Minneapolis	7,803	27,597	7,955	27,846	1.9%	0.9%
Metropolitan Nashville	9,866	70,496	12,980	70,121	31.6%	-0.5%
Oakland	11,375	25,315	12,060	24,917	6.0%	-1.6%
Omaha	7,000	41,524	7,285	42,074	4.1%	1.3%
Orange County	24,797	161,875	28,447	168,188	14.7%	3.9%
Palm Beach County	17,845	151,639	19,139	151,480	7.3%	-0.1%
Philadelphia	12,100	119,794	12,951	118,747	7.0%	-0.9%
Pinellas County	5,498	97,571	6,245	96,589	13.6%	-1.0%
Richmond	1,795	20,227	2,192	19,852	22.1%	-1.9%
Salt Lake City	6,975	19,145	7,389	18,245	5.9%	-4.7%
San Antonio	9,012	39,789	9,131	38,897	1.3%	-2.2%
San Francisco	13,316	40,528	12,452	40,302	-6.5%	-0.6%

District	SY 2013-14		SY 2015-16		Percentage Change	
	ELL Enrollment	Non-ELL Enrollment	ELL Enrollment	Non-ELL Enrollment	ELL Enrollment (2013-16)	Non-ELL Enrollment (2013-16)
Seattle	5,852	46,037	6,111	47,165	4.4%	2.5%
St. Louis	2,298	22,688	2,352	20,209	2.3%	-10.9%
St. Paul	12,404	24,622	11,709	25,112	-5.6%	2.0%
Tulsa	6,554	30,681	6,633	30,211	1.2%	-1.5%
Wichita	8,566	38,961	9,005	37,821	5.1%	-2.9%

44 Districts, 62.9% Response Rate

Upcoming Analysis

Further analysis for an upcoming report will illuminate key details about ELLs in urban school systems, including—

- Languages spoken by ELLs
- Enrollment of ELLs in special education
- Special education disproportionality ratios
- Percentage of ELLs enrolled in ELL program for 6+ years
- Language proficiency trends
- Teacher recruitment efforts
- State and district requirements for educators of ELLs
- Districts with ELL-related evaluation criteria
- Number of teachers by type of credentials, certifications, or endorsements
- Assignments of teachers with ELL-related credentials, certifications, or endorsements
- ELLs served with Title III funding
- Title III disbursement within districts
- Types of ELL-related professional development
- ELL-related professional development content

TASK FORCE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education
Wednesday ✷ October 18, 2017 ✷ 3:30-5:00 pm

Meeting Agenda

3:30 pm   **Meeting Convenes**

I.   Introductions—Co-Chairs and Council Staff
- Co-Chair—Richard Carranza, Superintendent, Houston ISD
- Co-Chair—Ashley Paz, Ft. Worth School Board Member

II.   College & Career Ready Standards Implementation Update
- Improving Instructional Materials for ELLs—Joint Procurement Project for Mathematics Materials
- Launch of Inaugural Courses: Complex Communication and Complex Thinking Across Content Areas.

III.   Federal Update
- Immigration Updates: DACA, Social Media scrutiny, and Sanctuary Cities
- Accountability for ELLs in ESSA State Plans
- Council member concerns:
    i.   WIDA screeners and ACCESS
    ii. Placement of students coming from devastated areas without school records

IV.   Upcoming Survey—*Last Call*
- Sample of preliminary data
- Status update and discussion

V.   Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education (BIRE) Directors Meeting-2018
     BIRE 2018
     Locations under consideration: Dallas, Ft. Worth, Atlanta.

VI.   New Business

5:00 pm   **Meeting Adjourns**

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Urban School Leadership, Governance, and Management

2017-2018

Task Force Goals

To improve the quality of leadership in urban public education.
To improve the effectiveness of urban school boards
To lengthen the tenure of urban school superintendents
To enhance accountability, management, and operations of the nation's urban public
school systems.

Task Force Chair

Michael O'Neill, Boston School Committee
Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent

SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE TOOL

SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE TOOL

Council of the Great City Schools

2017

VISION & GOALS: The Board will, in collaboration with the Superintendent, adopt a vision & goals that are student outcomes focused.			
Not Student Outcomes Focused	**Approaching Student Outcomes Focus**	**Meeting Student Outcomes Focus**	**Mastering Student Outcomes Focus**
0 Points	**10 Points**	**25 Points**	**40 Points**
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true: The Board has not adopted a **vision**. The Board has not adopted **goals**. The Board has not hosted opportunities to listen to the vision of the community during the previous twenty-four month period.	*No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:* The Board has adopted a vision. If there is a permanent Super-intendent, that person was included in vision-setting the process. The Board has adopted, in collaboration with the Superintendent, goals aligned with the vision. The Board has adopted only **SMART** goals that include a **starting point**, an **end point**, and a "**by when**" **date**. The Board has adopted no fewer than one and no more than five goals. Fewer goals allow for greater focus; more allow for less. The Board has adopted one to three **interim goals** for each goal, and each interim goal is SMART. The Board publicly posted the vision, goals, and interim goals for public comment prior to adoption.	*All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board's goals all pertain to desired **student outcomes**. In addition to the goal/interim goal end points and the "by when" dates, the Board has adopted goal/interim goal end points for each year leading up to the "by when" dates. All interim goals pertain to **student outputs** or student outcomes. The Board included students, parents, staff, and community members in the goal and interim goal development process. All Board goals last from three to five years; all interim goals last from one to three years. The goals and interim goals will challenge the organization and will require changes in adult behaviors.	*All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board used a process that included students, parents, staff, and community members in a way that leads them to support the adopted vision, goals, and interim goals. All of the interim goals are predictive of their respective goals, and are influenceable by the Superintendent (and the Superintendent's team). Predictive suggests that there is some evidence of a correlation between the interim goal and the goal. Influenceable suggests that the Superintendent -- and through them, the district staff -- has authority over roughly 80% of whatever the interim goal is measuring.

VALUES & CONSTRAINTS: The Board will, in collaboration with the Superintendent, adopt constraints aligned with the vision & goals.			
Not Student Outcomes Focused	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus
0 Points	5 Points	10 Points	15 Points
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true: The Board has not adopted a vision. The Board has not adopted goals. The Board has not hosted opportunities to listen to the **values** of the community during the previous twenty-four month period.	*No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:* The Board has adopted, in collaboration with the Superintendent, **constraints** based on the community's values and that are aligned with the vision and goals. Each constraint describes a single operational action or class of actions the Superintendent may not use or allow in pursuit of the goals. The Board has adopted no fewer than one and no more than five constraints. Fewer constraints allow for more focus; more allow for less. The Board has adopted one to three **interim constraints** for each constraint, and each interim constraint is SMART. The Board publicly posted the constraints and interim constraints for public comment prior to adoption.	*All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board's constraints directly relate to the Board's goals. In addition to having end points and "by when" dates for the interim constraints, the Board has adopted interim constraint end points for each year leading up to the "by when" date. The Board included students, parents, staff, and community members in the constraint and interim constraint development process. The Board has adopted one or more **theories of action** to drive the district's overall strategic direction. If there is a permanent Superintendent, that person was included in the theory selection process. All Board constraints last from three to five years; all interim constraints last from one to three years. The constraints, interim constraints, and theories of action will challenge the organization and require change in adult behaviors.	*All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board used a process that included students, parents, staff, and community members in a way that leads them to support the adopted constraints, interim constraints, and theories of action. All of the interim constraints are predictive of their respective constraints, and are influenceable by the Superintendent (and the Superintendent's team). Predictive suggests that there is some evidence of a correlation between the interim constraint and the constraint. Influenceable suggests that the Superintendent -- and through them, the district staff -- has authority over roughly 80% of whatever the interim constraint is measuring. In addition to the constraints on the Superintendent's authority, the Board has adopted one to five constraints on its own behavior and evaluates itself against at least one of them each month.

ACCOUNTABILITY & MONITORING: The Board will devote significant time monthly to monitoring progress toward the vision & goals.			
Not Student Outcomes Focused	**Approaching Student Outcomes Focus**	**Meeting Student Outcomes Focus**	**Mastering Student Outcomes Focus**
0 Points	**5 Points**	**15 Points**	**25 Points**
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true: The Board has not adopted goals, constraints, or interim constraints. The Board does not schedule each goal to be monitored at least four times per year. The Board does not schedule each constraint to be monitored at least once per year. The Board has not adopted a **monitoring calendar**. The Board does not track its use of time in **Board-authorized public meetings**. The district has not achieved any of its annual end points or "by when" date end points for any of its interim goals during the previous twelve month period.	*No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:* The Board spends no less than 10% of its total Board-authorized public meeting minutes monitoring its goals and interim goals. The Superintendent led the interim goals/constraints and monitoring calendar development processes while working collaboratively with the Board. The Board has a Board-adopted monitoring calendar. The Board's monitoring calendar spans no fewer than twelve months. A longer period -- twenty-four to thirty-six months -- allows for more focus; shorter allows for less. The Board has received **monitoring reports**. The Superintendent is evaluated only on performance regarding the Board's goals, constraints, and interim goals/constraints. The Board considers Superintendent performance to be indistinguishable from district performance.	*All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board spends no less than 25% of its total Board-authorized public meeting minutes monitoring its goals and interim goals. No more than two goals are monitored per month. Every goal is monitored at least four times per year. Every constraint is monitored at least once per year. The Board has been provided copies of -- but did not vote to approve / disapprove -- the Superintendent's plan(s) for implementing the Board's goals and worked to ensure that the plan included both an implementation timeline and **implementation instruments**. The most recent annual Superintendent evaluation took place no more than twelve months ago.	*All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board spends no less than 50% of its total Board-authorized public meeting minutes monitoring its goals and interim goals. The Board modifies its goals, constraints, interim goals/constraints, and monitoring calendar no more than once during any twelve month period. A longer period -- twenty-four to thirty-six months -- allows for more focus; shorter allows for less. The district has achieved the annual end point or the "by when" date end point for at least half of its interim goals during the previous twelve month period.

COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION: The Board will lead transparently and include stakeholders in the pursuit of the vision & goals.			
Not Student Outcomes Focused	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus
0 Points	1 Point	5 Points	10 Points
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true: The Board has not adopted goals or interim goals. The Board did not receive the final version of materials to be voted on at least three calendar days before the Board-authorized public meeting during which the materials would be considered. There were more than six Board-authorized public meetings in a single month during the previous twelve month period (Board committees are counted in this total). Any meeting of the Board lasted more than ten hours during the previous twelve month period. The Board does not use a consent agenda. The Board has not hosted opportunities to listen to the vision and values of the community during the previous twenty-four month period.	*No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:* All **consent-eligible items** were placed on the consent agenda and all but a few were voted on using a consent agenda. The Board tracks its use of time in Board-authorized public meetings, categorizing every minute used as one of the following: - **Goal Monitoring:** reviewing and discussing goal monitoring reports - **Constraint Monitoring:** reviewing and discussing constraint monitoring reports - **Leadership Evaluation:** Board self-evaluations and Superintendent evaluations - **Voting:** debating and voting on any item (these activities are never a form of "monitoring") - **Community Engagement** - **Other**	*All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* There are no more than four Board-authorized public meetings per month and none lasts more than three hours. The Board schedules no more than five topics during any one Board-authorized public meeting. The Board limits its adoption of Board policies regarding district operations to matters that are 1) required by law or 2) an appropriate exercise of the Board's oversight authority as defined by the Board's adopted constraints. Existing policies that do not meet one of these criteria have been removed from the Board's policy manual (though the Superintendent may retain them as administrative policy/regulation). The Board made no edits to the Board's regularly scheduled meeting agenda during the meeting and during the three business days before the meeting unless a state of emergency was declared.	*All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* There are no more than two Board-authorized public meetings per month and none lasts more than two hours. The Board schedules no more than three primary topics for discussion during any Board-authorized public meeting. The Board received the final version of materials to be voted on at least seven calendar days before the Board-authorized public meeting during which the materials would be considered. The Board used a process that included students, parents, staff, and community members in a way that led them to support the adopted goals, constraints, interim goals/constraints, and theories of action.

UNITY & TRUST: The Board will lead with one voice in its pursuit of the vision and goals.			
Not Student Outcomes Focused	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus
0 Points	**1 Point**	**3 Points**	**5 Points**
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true: The Board has not adopted goals or interim goals. The Board has not adopted policies that establish Board operating procedures. Any Board Member voted on an item on which they had a conflict of interest, as defined by law, during the previous three month period. Board Members serve on committees formed by the Superintendent or staff without approval of the Superintendent and a majority of the Board.	*No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:* Attendance at all Board-authorized public meetings was over 80% during the previous three month period. The Board has adopted a policy requiring that information provided by the Superintendent to one Board Member is provided to all Board Members. The Board reviews all policies governing Board operating procedures once per year. The Board has adopted an Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement and all Board Members have signed the statement during the previous twelve month period. All Board Members understand that if the Board has committees, their role is only to advise the Board, not to advise the staff.	*All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board has included language in its Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement requiring that Board Members do not give operational advice or instructions to staff members. The Board has included language in its Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement requiring that Board Members are responsible for the outcomes of all students, not just students in their region of the district. The Board unanimously agrees that all Board Members have honored the two aforementioned ethical boundaries during the previous three month period.	*All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:* The Board unanimously agrees that all Board Members adhered to all policies governing Board operating procedures during the previous three month period. All Board Members have memorized the Board's goals and interim goals. The Board conducted the most recent quarterly self-evaluation and unanimously voted to adopt the results.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: The Board will invest time and resources toward improving its focus on the vision and goals.			
Not Student Outcomes Focused	**Approaching Student Outcomes Focus**	**Meeting Student Outcomes Focus**	**Mastering Student Outcomes Focus**
0 Points	**1 Point**	**3 Points**	**5 Points**
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true:	*No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:*	*All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:*	*All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:*
The Board has not adopted goals or interim goals. The Board has not conducted a self-evaluation during the previous twelve month period. The Board has conducted a self-evaluation during the previous twelve month period but did not vote to adopt the results. The Board has not participated in a **governance team** training or retreat where all members of the governance team were present, during the previous twelve month period.	The Board tracks its use of time and reports monthly the percentage of Board-authorized public meeting time spent monitoring the Board's goals and interim goals. The Board tracks the average cost of staff time spent on governance and reports quarterly. This includes the time of any staff members spent preparing for, attending, and debriefing after meetings. This includes all Board-authorized public meetings as well as all closed sessions and all hearings. The Board has provided time during regularly scheduled Board-authorized public meetings to recognize the accomplishments of its students and staff regarding progress toward goals and interim goals. The most recent Board self-evaluation took place no more than 12 months ago using this instrument or a research-aligned instrument.	The most recent Board self-evaluation took place no more than 45 days before the most recent Superintendent evaluation. The Board has hosted and the Board Members have led or co-led at least one training session on Student Outcomes Focused Governance during the previous twelve month period. [Meetings to accomplish this objective do not have to be counted as part of the total of Board-authorized public meetings or minutes.] The Board has continuously updated the status and targets of all goals, constraints, and interim goals/constraints, and publicly displays them in the room in which the Board most frequently holds regularly scheduled Board meetings. The Board conducted the most recent quarterly self-evaluation and voted to adopt the results.	The Board included students as presenters in at least one of the Student Outcomes Focused Governance training sessions during the previous twelve months. Prior to being elected, all newly elected Board Members received training on Student Outcomes Focused Governance from fellow Board Members on their Board. The Board conducted the most recent quarterly self-evaluation and unanimously voted to adopt the results. The Board created a self-constraint concerning the cost of staff time devoted to governance.

DEFINITIONS

Board-Authorized Public Meeting: Any non-privileged meeting authorized by the Board or Board president including, but not limited to, Board workshops, Board hearings, and Board committees. Legally mandated hearings are exempted from this definition.

"By When" Date: The date "by when" the current value will be the end point. A "by when" date can be no less than one and no more than five years away. [see SMART definition]

Consent-Eligible Items: Matters on the Board agenda that include, but that are not limited to, personnel actions, contract renewals, previous meeting minutes, policy updates, construction amendments, non-monitoring administrative reports, committee reports, enrollment updates, and regular financial reports where financial activities remained within budgetary parameters.

Constraint: An operational action or class of actions, usually strategic not tactical, the Superintendent may not use or allow in pursuit of the district's student outcome goals. Constraints are based on the community's values and are aligned with the vision and goals. [see Examples section]

End Point: The goal's desired number/percentage at the time of the "by when" date. [see SMART definition]

Goals: Policy statements that are SMART, that are student outcomes focused, and that describe the Board's top priorities during the timeline for which they are adopted. The first priority for resource allocation in the district should be toward achieving the Board's goals. Once those allocations are complete, remaining resources may be allocated in a manner that addresses the additional needs and obligations of the district. Goals generally are set for a three to five year period.Goals generally take the form of "student outcome will increase from X to Y by Z." [see Goal Examples section; see SMART, Student Outcome definitions]

Governance Team: All Board Members and the Superintendent. The Superintendent is not a member of the Board, but is a member of the governing team.

Implementation Instruments: Measures that describe the quality of effort that goes into execution of inputs or outputs. This document is an example of an implementation instrument for the governing team's outputs.

Inputs: Resources and activities invested in a particular program or strategy that are usually knowable at the beginning of a cycle and that are a measure of effort applied.

Interim Goals: A measure of progress toward a defined goal or constraint that can be expressed as a number or percentage. [see Goal Examples, Constraint Examples section]

Monitoring Calendar: A Board-adopted multi-year schedule that describes months during which goals, interim goals, constraints, and interim constraints are reported to the Board.

Monitoring Report: A report that evidences to the Board whether or not reality matches the adopted goals/constraints and interim

goals/constraints. Each monitoring report must contain 1) the goal/constraint being monitored, 2) the interim goals/constraints showing the previous three reporting periods, the current reporting period, and the annual and end point numbers/percentages, 3) the Superintendent's evaluation of performance (not met, approaching, meeting, mastering), and 4) supporting documentation that shows the evidence and describes any needed next steps.

Outcomes: The impact of the program or strategy that is usually knowable at the end of a cycle and that is a measure of the effect on the intended beneficiary.

Outputs: The result of a particular set of inputs that is usually knowable in the midst of a cycle and that is a measure of the implementation of the program or strategy.

SMART: An acronym for "specific, measureable, attainable, research-based, time-bound." Goals and interim goals/constraints partially accomplish SMART-ness by having starting points, end points, and "by when" dates. [see Starting Point, End Point, "By When" Date definitions]

Starting Point: The goal's current number/percentage at the time of adoption. [see SMART definition]

Student Outcomes: The impact on students of the program or strategy that is expressed in terms of what students know or are able to do -- as distinct from adult inputs, adult outputs, student inputs, and student outputs. [see Goals, Outcomes definitions]

Student Outputs: The student experiences resulting from a particular set of inputs that are usually knowable in the midst of a cycle and that are a measure of the implementation of the program or strategy. [see Outputs definition]

Theory of Action: A set of high level strategies to which all district inputs and outputs must be aligned. Unlike other constraints, theories of action do not have interim constraints.   [see Examples section; see Constraint definition]

Values: The shared understanding of what the community considers important but that is not the vision. It is not appropriate for the Board to allow the community's values to be violated, even if doing so would support the accomplishment of the vision.

Vision: The shared understanding of what the community ultimately desires to accomplish for all students. Also, an aspirational policy statement that describes what the Board understands the community's vision to be. Vision statements generally are set for a five to ten year period.

GOAL EXAMPLES

Sample Goals:
- *Many of these examples are drawn from current or proposed goals from CGCS member districts (or adaptations of their policy that meet the goal definition).*
- The percentage of kindergarten students who will enter kindergarten school-ready on a multidimensional assessment will increase from X% to Y% by Z
- The percentage of graduates who are persisting in the second year of their post-secondary program will increase from X% to Y% by Z
- The percentage of free and reduced lunch-eligible students in kindergarten through 2nd grade who are reading/writing on or above grade level on the district's summative assessment will increase from X% to Y% by Z

- The percentage of students at underperforming schools who meet or exceed the state standard will increase from X% to Y% by Z
- The percentage of males of color who graduate with an associate's degree will increase from X% to Y% by Z

Sample Interim Goals:
- *Many of these examples are drawn from CGCS' "Academic KPIs" work.*
- The percentage of students successfully passing Algebra I by the end of ninth grade will increase from X% to Y% by Z
- The percentage of students showing growth from one district formative assessment to the next will increase from X% to Y% by Z
- The percentage of students earning at least three IB, AP, or college credits each semester will increase from X% to Y% by Z

CONSTRAINT EXAMPLES

Sample Constraints:
- *Many of these examples are drawn from current or proposed constraints from CGCS member districts (or adaptations of their policy that meet the constraint definition).*
- The Superintendent will not allow underperforming campuses to have principals or teachers who rank in the bottom two quartiles of principal or teacher district-wide performance
- The Superintendent will not propose major decisions to the Board without first having engaged students, parents, community, and staff
- The Superintendent will not allow the number or percentage of students at underperforming campuses to remain the same or increase
- The Superintendent will not allow the inequitable treatment of students

Sample Interim Constraints:
- *Many of these examples are drawn from CGCS' "Managing for Results" work.*
- The percentage of People Incidents per 1,000 Students at underperforming schools will decline from X% to Y% by Z
- The Employee Separation Rate for principals and teachers in the top quartile of district-wide performance will decline from X% to Y% by Z

THEORY OF ACTION EXAMPLES

Sample Theories of Action:
- *Some of these examples are drawn from current or proposed Theories of Action from CGCS member districts (or adaptations of their policy that meet the Theories of Action definition).*
- **Managed Instruction:** Instructional materials and methods are directed by the central office to ensure that students experience consistency and quality of instructional delivery across a system of campuses. Central office will be responsible for accomplishing the Board's goals while operating within the Board's other constraints.
- **Earned Autonomy:** The central office directly operates some schools and grants varying levels of autonomy to other schools. The central office will clearly define operational thresholds that deserve higher levels of autonomy, and the specific autonomies earned, consistent with Board goals and constraints. Responsibility for accomplishing the Board's goals while operating within the Board's constraints will vary between central office and school leaders based on school-level operational capacity and student outcomes.
- **Portfolio:** The central office devolves autonomy to schools, empowers parents to make choices among schools operated by differing governing bodies, creates performance contracts with schools, annually evaluates performance of and demand for schools, and makes strategic decisions regarding growing access to high performing schools and addressing low performers. School performance contracts will require the school to accomplish the Board's goals while operating within the Board's other constraints.

SOURCES

Primary Sources

Effective Governance Survey (2015), Council of the Great City Schools

Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards, National School Board Association: *http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Public-education/Eight-characteristics-of-effective-school-boards*

Policy Governance Consistency Framework, International Policy Governance Association: *https://www.policygovernanceassociation.org/assets/documents/principles-and-model-consistency-framework-2014.pdf*

School District Leadership That Works, J. Timothy Waters & Robert Marzano: *https://www.mcrel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/McREL-research-paper_-Sept2006_District-Leadership-That-Works-Effect-of-Superintendent-   Leadership-on-Student-Achievement-.pdf*

The 4 Disciplines of Execution, Chris McChesney, Sean Covey, & Jim Huling: *https://www.amazon.com/dp/B005FLODJ8/*

The Relationship Between School Board Governance Behaviors and Student Achievement, Ivan J. Lorentzen: *http://scholarworks.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2406&context=etd*

Lone Star Governance, Texas Education Agency: *http://tea.texas.gov/lsg*

What School Boards Can Do, Donald R. McAdams: *https://www.amazon.com/dp/0807746487/*

Secondary Sources

Boards That Make A Difference, John Carver: *https://www.amazon.com/dp/B008L01JWO/*

The Future of School Board Governance, Thomas L. Alsbury: *https://www.amazon.com/dp/1578867959/*

The Impact of School Board Governance on Academic Achievement in Diverse States, Michael Ford: *http://dc.uwm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1334&context=etd*

The Role of School Boards in Improving Student Achievement, Washington State School Directors' Association: *http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED521566.pdf*

Good To Great, Jim Collins: *https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0058DRUV6/*

Does School Board Leadership Matter?, Arnold F. Shober & Michael T. Hartney: *https://edex.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/publication/pdfs/Does-School-Board-Leadership-Matter-FINAL.pdf*

Building A Board That Works, U.S. Department of State: *https://www.state.gov/m/a/os/41119.htm*

The Fifth Discipline, Peter M. Senge: *https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000SEIFKK/*

Leading Change, John P. Kotter:
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00A07FPEO/

Immunity to Change, Robert Kegan & Lisa Lahey:
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B004OEILH2/

Who Killed Change, Pat Zigarmi & Ken Blanchard:
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B002AR2Q1W/

BOARD QUARTERLY SELF-EVALUATION						
Current Date	/ /			**Votes For/Against**		/
	January -March	**April -June**	**July -September**	**October -December**	**January -March**	**Total Possible**
Vision & Goals						**40**
Values & Constraints						**15**
Accountability & Monitoring						**25**
Communication & Collaboration						**10**
Unity & Trust						**5**
Continuous Improvement						**5**
Total						**100**

Directions
1. You will enter five sets of evaluation results: three previous quarters, most recently completed quarter, and the next quarter estimate.
2. **Enter** the self-evaluation results for the previous three completed quarterly self-evaluations. (For example, if it is currently January then enter the self-evaluation results for Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, and Jul-Sep.)
3. **Conduct** the quarterly self-evaluation for the most recently completed quarter and vote to adopt the results. (Continuing the example, conduct the quarterly self-evaluation for Oct-Dec.)
4. **Compare** the quarterly self-evaluation results with the estimated self-evaluation results from the previously completed self-evaluation (Continuing the example, compare the self-evaluation results for Oct-Dec with the estimated Oct-Dec self-evaluation results that were entered during the Jul-Sep self-evaluation.)
5. **Enter** the self-evaluation results. (Continuing the example, enter the self-evaluation results for Oct-Dec.)
6. **Estimate** the self-evaluation results the Board can achieve during the next quarter. (Continuing the example, estimate the self-evaluation results for Jan-Mar.)
7. **Enter** the estimated self-evaluation results for the next quarter. (Continuing the example, enter the estimated self-evaluation results for Jan-Mar.)

ANNUAL DISTRICT/SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

A Goal or Constraint's performance is **Met Standard** if:
- The Actual SY17/18 End Point >= Desired SY17/18 End Point
  OR
- At least two thirds of the Interim Goals'/Constraints' Actual SY17/18 End Points >= their respective Desired SY17/18 End Points

Otherwise the Board must consider growth and performance and vote to determine whether or not a Goal or Constraint's performance **Met Standard** or **Did Not Meet Standard**.

Overall District/Superintendent performance is **Met Standard** if:
- At least two thirds of the Goals are **Met Standard**
  AND
- At least half of the Constraints are **Met Standard**

Otherwise the Board must consider growth and performance and vote to determine whether or not overall District/Superintendent performance **Met Standard** or **Did Not Meet Standard**.

Goal 1: Percentage of schools meeting passing standard on the state assessment in reading and math will increase from 60% to 68% by 2022			
Baseline End Point:		Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:
Interim Goal 1.1:			**Management Comments**
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Goal 1.2:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Goal 1.3:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
SY17/18 Evaluation			
Met Standard: ☐ Did Not Meet Standard: ☐			

Goal 2: Percentage of schools meeting passing standard on the state assessment in reading and math will increase from 60% to 68% by 2022			
Baseline End Point:		Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:

Interim Goal 2.1:			Management Comments
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Goal 2.2:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Goal 2.3:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	

SY17/18 Evaluation

Met Standard: ☐   Did Not Meet Standard: ☐

Goal 3: Percentage of schools meeting passing standard on the state assessment in reading and math will increase from 60% to 68% by 2022			
Baseline End Point:		Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:

Interim Goal 3.1:			Management Comments
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Goal 3.2:			
Baseline	Desired SY17/18	Actual SY17/18	

End Point:	End Point:	End Point:	
Interim Goal 3.3:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
SY17/18 Evaluation			
	Met Standard: ☐	Did Not Meet Standard: ☐	

Constraint 1: Superintendent will not allow the percentage or number of students in low performing schools to increase or remain the same			
Interim Constraint 1.1:			**Management Comments**
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Constraint 1.2:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Constraint 1.3:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
SY17/18 Evaluation			
	Met Standard: ☐	Did Not Meet Standard: ☐	

Constraint 2: Superintendent will not allow the percentage or number of students in low performing schools to increase or remain the same			
Interim Constraint 2.1:			**Management Comments**
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Constraint 2.2:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Constraint 2.3:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
SY17/18 Evaluation			
Met Standard: ☐ Did Not Meet Standard: ☐			

Constraint 3: Superintendent will not allow the percentage or number of students in low performing schools to increase or remain the same			
Interim Constraint 3.1:			**Management Comments**
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Constraint 3.2:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
Interim Constraint 3.3:			
Baseline End Point:	Desired SY17/18 End Point:	Actual SY17/18 End Point:	
SY17/18 Evaluation			
Met Standard: ☐ Did Not Meet Standard: ☐			

INTERNAL AUDITING REPORT

Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools

Fall 2017

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About the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public-school districts. Composed of 69 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, instructional support, leadership, management, technical assistance, 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 to deliver the best education for urban youth.

Council of the
Great City Schools

Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools

Fall 2017

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Executive Summary

Education leaders often take a narrow view of their internal auditing functions, associating them solely with school-activity audits. However, internal audit departments can potentially provide value far beyond the traditional school audits required by many states. Internal auditing offers school boards and senior management an independent and objective source of information that can help them identify some of the most significant operational and compliance issues preventing them from meeting their goals.

The objective of this "white paper" is to describe best practices in internal auditing and demonstrate the value that an internal audit function brings to a school district. Based on this review, The Council of the Great City Schools and the task force of urban school specialists that assembled this document suggest that it is time to rethink the use of scarce internal audit resources to more effectively address high-risk areas affecting urban school districts.

Introduction

According to the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), internal audit is "an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to help an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes."

The roles and objectives of an internal audit function vary across the nation's large urban school districts. This variation is attributable to the differing needs of districts and the general lack of understanding about the potential applications and value of internal auditing.

The *internal* audit function is often equated with or mistaken for an external audit function. However, while there are similarities between the two processes, the scope of an internal audit function goes well beyond the financial statements of an external auditor, incorporating a district's risk management and control procedures. Furthermore, while an external audit typically stops at reporting problems, an internal audit often provides recommendations for continuous improvement.

The purpose of this document is not to duplicate the resources already available through the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) or the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), but rather to provide guidance on addressing some of the common challenges pertaining to internal auditing that the Council's Strategic Support Teams typically identify in their peer reviews of the financial, business, and operational services of member districts.

Best practices, values, and standards for operating a school district internal audit function are described in the following sections:

- Department Reporting Structure
- Audit Committee Structure
- Risk Assessment and Audit Plan
- Auditing Standards
- Data Analytics and Fraud
- What Internal Auditors Do Not Do
- Non-audit Services
- Follow-up Activities
- Key Performance Indicators

Department Reporting Structure

The Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) recommends that a Chief Audit Executive report functionally to an organization's board and administratively to the organization's Chief Executive Officer or other appropriate executive.[1] These reporting lines are meant to ensure that an auditor's work is independent, impartial, and objective so decision-makers can trust the audit's findings and recommendations. Examples of functional reporting include:

- Approval of the overall charter of the internal audit function
- Approval of an internal audit risk assessment and related audit plan
- Receiving communications from the Chief Audit Executive on results of internal audit activities or other matters that the Chief Audit Executive determines to be necessary
- Appointment or removal of the Chief Audit Executive
- Approval of the annual salary and benefits of a Chief Audit Executive
- Determining whether scope or budgetary limitations are impeding the internal audit function's ability to execute its responsibilities

Administrative reporting, on the other hand, entails the relationship within the organization's management structure that facilitates the day-to-day operations of the internal audit department. In accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS), internal auditors who work under the direction of an audit entity's management are considered independent for the purposes of reporting internally if the head of the internal audit organization meets the following criteria:[2]

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1   Examples of major urban school districts where the internal auditor reports functionally to the school board include Orange County (Orlando), Fresno, Charleston, Miami-Dade County, Seattle, and others. (The Council conducted a survey of its members to determine which ones have internal auditors and to whom they reported. See appendix)

2   Government Auditing Standards Exposure Draft, April 2017 revision, page 24.

- Is accountable to the head or deputy head of the government entity or to those charged with governance
- Reports engagement results both to the head or deputy head of the government entity and to those charged with governance
- Is located organizationally outside the staff or line-management function of the unit under audit
- Has access to those charged with governance, and
- Is sufficiently removed from political pressures to conduct audits and report findings, opinions, and conclusions objectively without fear of political reprisal.

GAGAS also states, "When internal audit organizations perform audits of external parties, such as auditing contractors or outside party agreements, and no impairments to independence exist, the audit organization can be considered independent as an external audit organization of those external parties."

Best Practices

The Council of the Great City Schools recommends that the Chief Audit Executive and the internal audit office report functionally to the school board, ideally through an audit committee. If functional reporting to the school board is not possible, a less preferable, but acceptable, reporting structure entails having the Chief Audit Executive report to the Superintendent or Deputy Superintendent, with access to those charged with governance (school board). In either case, the Council recommends that school districts maintain an independent internal audit function.

Value

A reporting structure that preserves the internal audit function's independence will add value to a school district by ensuring that the auditors' work is impartial and objective, so decision-makers and other key stakeholders can trust internal audit findings and recommendations.

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Audit Committee Structure

The primary role of an Audit Committee is to provide advice to a school board on audit, finance, and risk management. An Audit Committee can also oversee an internal audit function, and act as a liaison between the school board and the Chief Audit Executive. Examples of roles and responsibilities of a school district Audit Committee include:

- Reviewing and approving an Internal Audit Charter
- Providing expertise on risks affecting the school district and approving an annual internal audit plan
- Ensuring that internal auditors have unrestricted access to school district personnel, facilitates, vendors, data, and documents
- Assisting in determining if management has placed any restrictions on the scope of internal audits and investigations
- Receiving completed internal audit reports, investigations, and other communications deemed necessary by the Chief Audit Executive
- Monitoring follow up on reported internal audit findings to ensure corrective actions are taken
- Engaging and overseeing the work of external auditors
- Reviewing audit findings by state and federal agencies to determine the school district's action on recommendations
- Reviewing the effectiveness of systems for monitoring compliance with laws and board policies and regulations
- Reviewing and making recommendations to the school board on matters affecting the adequacy of internal controls, accounting procedures, technology systems, and financial reporting in accordance with laws and regulations
- Approving all decisions regarding the appointment or removal of the Chief Audit Executive
- Providing input on the Chief Audit Executive's evaluation
- Approving the annual salary and compensation adjustments of the Chief Audit Executive

- Serving on behalf of the school board to oversee the internal audit function
- In conjunction with the Chief Audit Executive, providing an annual report to the school board
- Performing other oversight responsibilities as assigned by the school board

Best Practices

To promote the success of an internal audit function, an Audit Committee should ensure that individual school board members, the superintendent, and other school district staff do not impair, prevent, or prohibit internal audit staff from initiating, carrying out, or completing independent and objective audits and investigations. To accomplish this, an Audit Committee should ensure that the internal audit office is free of political pressure and other impairments to independence.

In order to ensure an internal audit office's objectivity and independence, the Council recommends that a school district's Audit Committee be comprised of individuals who are independent of the school district and who are experts in auditing, finance, risk management, and government.[3] An Audit Committee that includes experts who do not have authority over the school district's operations or decision-making process can shield the internal audit staff from actual or perceived pressure to compromise their objectivity and independence. This structure is also supported by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

Value

An Audit Committee structured to ensure the internal audit function's independence and objectivity will ensure that internal auditors are free to conduct their work without fear of retaliation, retribution, or political pressure. This will also ensure fair and impartial internal audit results that can be relied upon by the school board, school district management, and the public.

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3   Some large urban school districts have audit committee comprised solely of school board members; some also include external experts; and some have external "investment committees" that do not conduct internal auditing functions per se but advise the district on managing its investment portfolio.

Risk Assessment and Audit Plan

The Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) requires that an organization, such as a school district, "establish a risk-based plan to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity…"

Depending on the size and structure of a school district and its internal audit function, the Council recommends that a detailed risk assessment be performed at a minimum of every three years.[4] Regardless of how often an internal audit office conducts a detailed analysis, the risk assessment and audit plan should be modified or updated annually to reflect any new or changing risks affecting the school district.

Best Practices

The risk assessment and audit plan should provide or perform audit and allowable non-audit services for various departments, functions, and activities of a school district. Factors that should be taken into consideration include:

- Financial impact
- Time since last audit engagement
- Audits to be performed by other audit entities
- Perceived quality of internal controls
- Likelihood of occurrence
- Degree of change or stability in management
- Complexity
- Requests and expectations of the school board, senior management, and other stakeholders
- Opportunities to achieve operating benefits

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4   The auditing standards followed by the internal auditor may require more frequent risk assessments.

- Changes to and capabilities of audit staff
- Work of the Enterprise Risk Management team (if this function exists in a school district)[5]

The audit plan should describe what audit and non-audit activities are to be performed, the scope of work, and the time and staffing resources required to complete the work. An audit plan should be flexible enough to accommodate minor mid-plan adjustments and, if a substantial adjustment is required (e.g., based on a senior management request), the changes should be approved by the school board and/or Audit Committee.

Common and emerging areas for audit and non-audit services that might be included in the plan include:

- Operational performance audits (to assess cost-beneficial internal controls, efficiency, effectiveness, contract oversight, and compliance)
- School internal fund and school-based audits (could include student FTE and tangible personal property work)
- Charter school audits and fiscal oversight (the IA function is uniquely qualified to add value in this significant and growing sector)
- Facilities construction and maintenance audits and oversight
- Contract audits
- Information technology audits
- Forensic accounting and investigative audits
- Healthcare insurance-related audits (especially for large self-insured districts)
- Acting as a liaison for external audit entities
- Identifying emerging risks (adding value by alerting the school board and management of audit findings and trends occurring at similar entities)
- Promoting awareness of fraud policies and internal controls (controls created and owned by management, not the internal audit function)

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5   See Council of the Great City Schools (2016). *Enterprise Risk Management in the Great City Schools*. Washington, DC: Council of the Great City Schools, Spring 2016.

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While the internal audit function should be housed organizationally with a district's Chief Audit Executive and staff, the Chief Audit Executive should consider outsourcing or co-sourcing with external entities, under the Chief Audit Executive's oversight, when the internal audit staff lacks expertise or when a specialized audit is infrequent and/or irregular.

Value

An objective risk assessment by an internal audit function provides the school board and senior management value by communicating risks associated with the school district's various business and operational functions. An audit plan based upon a comprehensive risk assessment ensures that internal audit resources will be strategically allocated to address the most significant and likely risks affecting the school district. The results of completed audits will provide management with actionable recommendations to meet its goals and objectives, and will provide the school board with valuable information to assist in its governance.

Auditing Standards

The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) are two reputable organizations recognized for issuing professional auditing standards that provide a framework for conducting audits.

Best Practices

The Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS), issued by the GAO and commonly referred to as the "Yellow Book," articulates requirements for financial audits, performance audits, and attestation engagements in government, including school districts, which receive federal funds.

The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) has also issued standards in its International Professional Practices Framework, commonly referred to as the "Red Book," which are often implemented along with the performance audit requirements of GAGAS. Audit organizations following either the Yellow Book or the Red Book standards are required to reference the standards in their completed audit reports.

The Council does not promote one set of standards over another, but it does recommend that each school district adopt a professionally recognized set of auditing standards.

Value

By following a professionally recognized set of auditing standards, an internal audit organization will add value to its district. Senior management and the school board will have a greater appreciation for an internal audit function knowing that it is following prescribed auditing standards.

Data Analytics and Fraud

Data analytics can be used by internal audit staff to identify transactions that could present potential risks of fraud in financial and operational areas, including accounts payable, purchasing, payroll, and benefits. It is important that the school district has clear policies about fraud and its consequences, and that an internal audit office has an effective fraud risk assessment program to address the risks in these operating areas and to ensure public trust.

Best Practices

The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) advocate data monitoring and analysis to guide risk assessment and direct the annual audit planning process on the materiality of potential audit areas, identify unusual trends or fluctuations, and evaluate high risk areas being considered for auditing.

The use of data analytics also allows for continuous monitoring of potentially fraudulent transactions. When employees are aware that all transactions in the district's data systems are monitored for signs of fraud, it provides a meaningful deterrent. This is particularly important since business processes, which have become more reliant on IT systems and automation, have significantly reduced human oversight, which previously acted as a fraud control.

When using data analytics, it is critical that appropriate security protocols be put in place during the extraction and analysis of data to protect the integrity and confidentiality of source information.

Value

Performing data analysis is an effective way to help auditors be more proactive in the detection and reduction of fraud, waste, and abuse. Data analytics can also guide a school district's risk assessment and audit planning processes to ensure that internal audit resources are directed toward areas with the greatest materiality and risk for the district. With appropriate planning and consultation, school districts can employ technology tools that help their audit staff provide greater audit coverage in a more efficient manner.

What Internal Auditors Do Not Do[6]

As noted in the Department Reporting Structure section of this white paper, maintaining independence is imperative for an effective and credible internal audit function. In addition to having the proper reporting structure, internal audit functions must avoid even the appearance of a lack of independence by refraining from performing certain functions. Internal Auditors cannot be a part of the management of any function they audit, which means they should not:

- Take responsibility for the district's financial statements
- Authorize or execute transactions on behalf of any department other than their own
- Approve district budgets
- Prepare or make changes to source documents
- Assume custody of district assets, including maintenance of bank accounts
- Establish or maintain internal controls, including the performance of ongoing monitoring activities as part of the control process
- Supervise employees other than their own in the performance of normal recurring activities
- Report to the school board on behalf of management
- Serve as a general counsel
- Sign payroll tax returns on behalf of their district
- Approve vendor invoices for payment, other than those for their own department
- Design a district's financial management system or make modifications to source code underlying that system
- Hire or terminate employees, other than for their own department

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6   Adapted for school districts from materials prepared by Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman Certified Public Accountants. http://www.grfcpa.com/resources/publications/auditor-responsibilities

This list is not all-inclusive. But, in short, the internal auditor may not assume the role and duties of management, or implement anything that they will ultimately audit.

In addition, the school district should not expect the internal auditor to:

- Analyze or reconcile accounts
- "Close the books"
- Locate invoices, etc., for testing
- Prepare confirmations for mailing
- Select accounting policies or procedures
- Prepare financial statements or footnote disclosures
- Determine estimates included in financial statements
- Determine restrictions of assets
- Establish value of assets and liabilities
- Maintain permanent records, such as loan documents, leases, contracts and other legal documents
- Prepare or maintain minutes of school board meetings
- Establish account coding or classifications
- Determine retirement plan contributions
- Implement corrective action plans

Non-Audit Services

Non-audit services are advisory in nature, and are generally performed at the specific request of a client, which could include the school board, the audit committee, senior management, or the management of a particular unit or function within the district. The Chief Audit Executive should consider accepting proposed non-audit service requests based on the activity's potential to improve management of risks, add value, and improve the district's operations. The Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework (Red Book) and Government Accountability Office's Government Auditing Standards (Yellow Book) recommend that an internal audit organization maintain its independence and objectivity and not assume management responsibilities when it provides non-audit advisory services. Both groups also recommend that advisory services be performed free of political pressure or perceived conflict of interest.

Best Practices

The nature and extent of non-audit services to be performed by the internal audit function should be included in the Internal Audit Charter and non-audit engagements accepted should be included in the annual audit plan. The school board acts to safeguard and protect the objectivity and independence of the internal audit function, in conjunction with the Chief Audit Executive, to ensure requests are suited to and appropriate for the internal audit function. Examples of advisory services that can be provided by internal audit staff include counsel, advice, facilitation, and training.

For instance, internal auditors can lend their expertise in analyzing risks and internal controls to advise management on better-informed decision making and to facilitate benchmarking and the identification of best practices that could enhance operational performance. Internal auditors can also support the school district in promoting ethical behavior and employee awareness of and commitment to internal controls.

Value

Performing non-audit services allows an internal audit function to provide just-in-time advice to school district management in cost effective ways, and to improve the district's governance, risk management, and control processes. Non-audit services can also improve relations with other district departments and provide internal auditors with greater exposure and enriched career opportunities.

Follow-up Activities

Government Auditing Standards (Yellow Book) and The Institute of Internal Auditors International Professional Practices Framework (Red Book) set standards for monitoring and determining whether management takes corrective action to address internal audit issues and findings or whether it accepts the risk of not acting. Specifically, auditors:

- Should evaluate whether the audited entity has taken appropriate corrective action to address findings and recommendations from previous engagements. *(Yellow Book 6.36 Previous Audits and Attestation Engagements)*

- Must establish and maintain a system to monitor the disposition of results communicated to management. (*Red Book 2500-Monitoring Progress)*

- Must establish a follow-up process to monitor and ensure that management actions have been effectively implemented or that senior management has accepted the risk of not acting. *(Red Book 2500.A1)*

Best Practices

Chief Audit Executives should collaborate with senior management to determine the timing and nature of corrective actions that will address issues and items identified in audit findings. Regardless of the methods used to monitor and assess the status of these corrective actions, leading internal audit departments use dashboards to indicate the nature of audit findings and prepare annual reports highlighting management's progress towards resolving past audit findings and recommendations.

Value

Follow-up activities provide assurance to senior management, the school board, and other stakeholders that audit findings are being taken seriously and that corrective actions are being implemented. Follow-up activities also provide a measure of accountability to the community that any noted weaknesses are being addressed and the district is committed to operating and using public funds in an efficient and effective manner.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Internal auditing is a value-added proposition that provides assurances, advisory services, efficiency audits, and strategic consultations to school boards and management. Increasingly, internal auditing is expected to take on more strategic, collaborative, and advisory roles without impairing objectivity and independence.[7] The value-added proposition can be measured from a quantitative and qualitative perspective.

Best Practices

Leading internal audit departments are designing balanced scorecards using key performance indicators (KPIs) to set goals, measure performance, and provide information to stakeholders. School boards and senior managers are creating environments where expectations among various stakeholders are clearly defined and communicated. Common KPIs are also included in the Council's Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project, which analyzes internal audit performance and provides a quality check on work being done across districts.

Value

The adoption of KPIs for an internal audit function can provide the school board, senior management, and the public with necessary information to evaluate whether the internal audit function is meeting its objectives and helping the school district accomplish its mission.

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7   Shooting straight, How internal auditors can be strategic and collaborative—while maintaining independence and objectivity, Journal of Accountancy, Ken Tysiak, December 2013 - See more at: http://www.journalofaccountancy.com/issues/2013/dec/20138669. html#sthash.DYdBm39r.dpuf

Appendix[8]

Percentage of Districts with an Audit Committee

Pie chart:
- No 21%
- Yes 79%
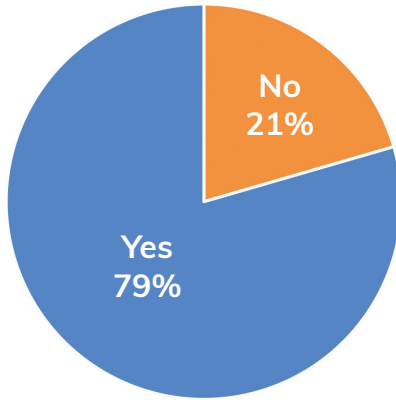
Internal Audit Departments that Report to the School Board

Pie chart:
- No 18%
- Yes 82%

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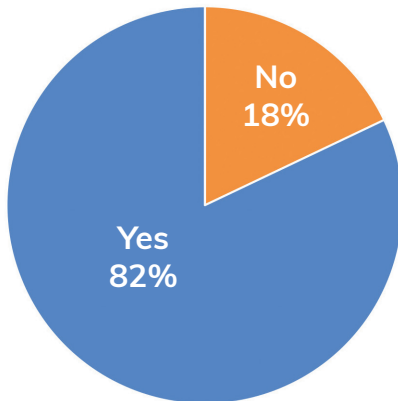
8   Based on self-reported data from 39 school districts as of May 5, 2017

Audit Committees Containing Community Volunteers as Voting Members
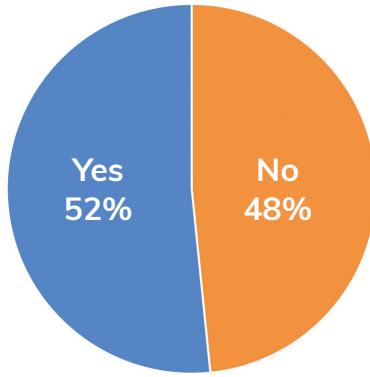
Average School District Investment in the Internal Audit Function	
Average Amount of the General Fund Budget Spent on the School District Internal Audit Function:	0.073%
Average Number of Internal Auditors for Every 1,000 Students Enrolled in a School District:	0.08
Average Number of School District Internal Auditors for Every $100 Million in the General Fund	0.71

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The Council of the Great City Schools greatly appreciates the work of the Task Force, which produced this report. They included—

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CYBER-SECURITY REPORT

Council of the Great City Schools

Council of the Great City Schools

Cyber-Security in Today's K-12 Environment

By Member Districts of the Council of the Great City Schools

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fresno Unified
School District

About the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public-school districts. Composed of 69 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, instructional support, leadership, management, technical assistance, 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 to deliver the best education for urban youth.

Cyber-Security in Today's K-12 Environment

By

Member Districts of the
Council of the Great City Schools

Council of the
Great City Schools

Fall 2017

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Introduction

Welcome to the Digital Age of Education

Technology has ushered in a new era for teaching and learning in classrooms from kindergarten through high school, with digital learning tools now an integral part of the K-12 education environment. Students are living in a world where horizons for learning extend well beyond the classroom, school building, school district, and even any individual state. With these expanded horizons comes a responsibility for educators to provide environments where students are empowered to achieve academic and personal goals, be well prepared for success in college and career, and be productive, responsible citizens in our fast-paced and interconnected world.

Equipping our children with the 21st century skills they need for our digital age requires turning traditional classrooms into a digital-learning ecosystem and ensuring teachers have the professional skills and unfettered access to the tools they need for 21st century teaching and learning. This new environment requires considerable investment in infrastructure, hardware, software, online resources, and professional development.

This digital transition is not only happening in classrooms, but also in school district administrative and operational offices. Everything is going digital—from transportation and the management of food services to communication systems, procurement processing, and everything in between. Reliance on a digital network and the applications running over them are now mission critical. In fact, the latest "IT Leadership Survey" from the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) identified the following top three priorities and challenges for school district IT leaders:

1. Mobile learning

2. Broadband and network capacity

3. Cybersecurity and student data privacy

As such, throughout this report, the reader should keep the following minimum considerations of recognized best practices and industry trends in mind.

Increased infrastructure capacity.

The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) has developed recommendations for broadband capacity in school districts, based on the number of students served ("The Broadband Imperative II: Equitable Access for Learning," 2016). Based on these recommendations, large school districts (more than 10,000 students) should ramp up internet service to 2.0 Gbps and wide area network (WAN) services to at least 10.0 Gbps per 1,000 users by 2020-21 to stay ahead of the burgeoning demand for broadband access.

Increased focus on security.

School district networks are being used for instruction, business, and information sharing on an ever-increasing scale and are increasingly interconnected. As recommended in the white paper published by Education Networks of America, the eLearn Institute, and TechEdvantage in collaboration with the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) ("Education Network Security in a Hyperconnected World," 2016), education technology leaders should have a solid districtwide network security plan that includes (1) policy and procedures that address network use, (2) communications and professional development for all school-district stakeholders, (3) network intrusion prevention measures, and (4) incident response and mitigation strategies.

Increased reliance on cloud computing.

As school districts move toward cloud-based solutions for instructional and business applications, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and other related privacy rules and regulations add a layer of complexity to network implementation. School districts must ensure that personally identifiable information is securely stored, processed, transmitted, and otherwise managed according to established standards (Consortium for School Networking, "Protecting Privacy in Connected Learning Toolkit," 2014).

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Establishing a Holistic Cyber-Security Strategy

With the escalating rise in frequency and variety of security incidents and attacks affecting school districts, it is essential to establish a holistic approach to security. Developing a holistic strategy helps to focus efforts on different and critical components of the K-12 education technology infrastructure that must be secured. There are several security "layers" to consider that range from physical security to cloud security. It is important to differentiate each of these layers and develop a security strategy for each as outlined below:

1. Physical Security — In schools, physical security is very much about the security of brick and mortar buildings themselves as well as the students, faculty, and staff that learn, teach, and work in them. With so much focus on securing technology, it can be easy to overlook the interrelationship between physical security and cybersecurity, but one of the success stories provided by the Fresno Unified School District shows that close monitoring of network and content security tools can help children in need.

2. Network Security — Network security is focused on ensuring there isn't any unauthorized traffic flowing across the network, that no one is abusing or gaining illegitimate access to network-connected resources and that sensitive information is secured while it is traversing the network (data in motion). In schools across the nation, distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks have been used to disrupt online testing and other important assessment activities. DDoS attacks are a form of network resource abuse, and mitigating those attacks is a critical component of network security. Seminole County Public Schools, for instance, discusses their three-pronged approach to designing and protecting network security later in this report.

3. Application Security — Application security is about eliminating software vulnerabilities that could lead to security breaches. As Baltimore City Public Schools demonstrates later in this report, thinking about application security throughout the application lifecycle--and particularly in the early requirements-gathering and design phases--is critical to overall application success and cost effectiveness.

4. Content Security — Content security is focused on protecting data at rest (for instance, in a database) and on complying with various local, state, and federal requirements for data security and privacy. In schools, discussions of content security are highly intertwined with discussions of student data privacy. Many organizations combine content security and application security into a single process, but as software development projects in K-12 become more sophisticated, and different teams work on the data layer and application tiers, thinking of content and application security separately can be helpful in ensuring a positive overall security posture. This can be a complex project, but Broward County Public Schools works to strike a balance between complexity and simplicity—as described in this report.

5. End-Point Security — End-point security is traditionally concerned with keeping malicious or otherwise unwanted and unauthorized software and users off your endpoint devices. Particularly in 1:1 environments, end-point security includes asset location tracking and processes for eliminating sensitive data from and reporting lost or stolen devices. Miami-Dade County Public Schools shares their approach to embracing multiple device initiatives while maintaining a secure network environment.

6. Cloud/Data Center Security — As noted above, schools are moving more and more towards cloud-based solutions. Cloud/Data Center security is focused on ensuring a school district's core computing resources, whether hosted in the cloud or on premises, are appropriately patched and segmented to prevent unauthorized access and contain any unauthorized access if it does occur. Cloud-based data centers and services are rapidly growing within the K-12 community as they provide multiple operations and cost-saving benefits. Using cloud resources provides both a security approach as well as new security considerations as highlighted in this report by the Fresno Unified School District and the Broward County Public Schools.

This white paper outlines key considerations for establishing secure environments, particularly for the large urban school districts that are part of the Council of the Great City Schools. Contributions from educators and information technology experts in the Baltimore City Public Schools, Fresno Unified School District, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and Seminole County Public Schools provide recommendations, best practices, and examples addressing the important components of establishing a holistic security strategy.

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Security Planning for K-12 Education Systems
Fresno Unified School District

This section addresses:

- *Network Security*   - *Physical Security*   - *Application Security*

Resilience

Background and rationale.

Large school districts are complex organizations, systems of systems, that include the coordination of educational platforms and practices (e.g., curriculum, instruction, learning, assessments, etc.) delivered to large numbers of students, and conducted with multiple operational logistics (e.g., transportation, food services, warehouse, facilities, and maintenance). A world-class, 21st century, education can no longer tolerate extended outages at schools or downtime for critical services, just as these things cannot be tolerated in other professional-service organizations. Technology infrastructure must be designed to withstand attacks and failures of systems' components where such resilience is warranted relative to probability, cost, and impact of failure. Even so, technological systems will inevitably fail, so education organizations have the responsibility to be ready and able to withstand system failures and continue operating while protecting their stakeholders.

Success story: Recovery from network outage.

There are numerous success stories and exemplars related to resilience. Districts are moving to managed or self-provisioned dark fiber with built-in monitoring rather than the virtual-shared environment of carrier-managed switched ethernet. Resilience can also mean multiple logical and physical paths that connect schools to the local educational agency's internet hub.

During the first cycle of student testing using the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia, the Fresno Unified School District experienced a failure in a carrier-managed switched ethernet. The IT team was ready with line-of-sight radios to bridge between geographically proximate sites. On the morning of the second day, without a definite time for restoration of services by the carrier, the IT team deployed the radios and bridged two schools, creating a new pathway to the internet so both schools could continue testing.

Best Practices:

- *Move to security embedded into services*

- *Identify and recognize risks and vulnerabilities as well as the interconnected nature of K-12 ecosystems*

- *Design systems and services with a design-for-failure mindset*

- *Design for resilience*

- *Consider the benefits of a diverse combination of technologies and providers*

Collaboration

Background and rationale.

Just as educational reform requires teachers to move out of silos and work within professional learning communities, so too does protection of critical information assets require collaboration within IT units, across district departments, beyond district boundaries with external partners, and to users of information assets. This is especially true in the interconnected, complex IT ecosystems found in the K-12 sector.

IT departments must work across teams to ensure the entire technology stack is secure from design to build, test, deploy, and patch; from server to endpoint; from private to public cloud; and across the interchanges with external agencies and partners. IT departments must move beyond their silo to collaborate with purchasing, facilities, human resources, and other areas to build a stronger security posture.

A district's partnerships with other agencies and partners can be leveraged to improve services to students, staff, and stakeholders. These partnerships can increase a district's attack surface and yet--with priority given to security, intentional design, and project practices--they can deliver the intended outcomes without substantial security risks.

Success Story: Student in crisis.

In a crisis, collaboration must be swift. An incident occurred in the Fresno Unified School District where the content filter administrator became aware of a student searching topics related to suicide. The system administrator collaborated with teachers on special assignment who used the district's Student Information System to identify the student's school and schedule. The team contacted the principal and school counselor, so the student could be pulled from the classroom and receive counseling that might have prevented a tragic outcome.

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Best Practices:

- *Leverage partnerships with agencies and external entities to improve security controls*

- *Establish a culture of vigilance and ongoing audit of those controls*

- *Expand security resilience beyond cybersecurity into the design of processes, the organizational culture, and the executive suite*

- *Establish and enforce an acceptable-use policy that provides enforceable guidance on what is and is not acceptable in the use of district IT assets*

- *Establish data-sharing agreements that structure partner relationships with clear provisions for indemnification, data governance, security expectations, and conditions for remedy or termination*

- *Encourage a culture of collaboration by setting clear expectations for collaborative behavior within departmental routines*

- *Create incident response plans that clearly identify roles, communication protocols, and expectations for escalation to ensure incident resolution*

Socialization

Background and rationale.

Security compromises are often the result of social engineering or an attack that capitalizes on normal behavioral responses. For example, ransomware preys on people's curiosity and spear phishing targets specific users. Whaling attacks go after high-value targets, such as a fiscal services employee who receives a spoofed email from the superintendent requesting a copy of every W2 for the last year. The bounty for the hacker includes the name, address, and social security number of every employee in the district. A key aspect of any effective security program clearly must be socialization that ensures people adopt better practices.

Success Story: Password policy.

A tiered password policy allows different groups of users, including staff and students, to have different requirements for password complexity. Staff members with limited need to use student data can have less complex password requirements than do data handlers or system administrators. Levels of complexity can be applied to students by grade level, according to the scope of access and ability of the student.

Success Story: Device configuration management.

The Fresno Unified School District uses Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager to track the known state of IT assets and process the initial configuration, patching, updating, and validation of configurations. The improvement and socialization of these practices across data center, network, and desk-side support staff result in consistent quality configurations on new computers (i.e., images), the timely rollout of security patches across the enterprise, and the effective targeted deployment of software updates (such as new assessments or instructional software). The automation of these processes has facilitated support for an ever-increasing number of computers.

Security Operations
Fresno Unified School District

This section addresses:
- *Network Security*
- *Application Security*
- *Physical Security*
- *Cloud Security*

Authenticating Identity, Authorizing Access

Authentication is the process in which a system verifies the identity of a user. Authorization is the process in which the system verifies if the identified user has access or levels of access to a system. All systems rely on authentication and authorization; however, implementation may vary. In a local environment, authentication can be handled by a system such as Microsoft's Active Directory and authorization by Active Directory group membership.

A cloud service can use the infrastructure already in place with a federated trust such as Active Directory Federation Service (ADFS), which allows secure online transactions among partner organizations. In this approach, authentication occurs using your own directory service, eliminating the need to create new log-in credentials for the cloud service or share password information with a third party. An additional benefit of federated authorization is timely changes to the directory; for example, a fired employee with a disabled account will no longer be able to log into the service.

Accounts for educational institutions are unique in that there are multiple groups of users—including certificated staff, uncertificated staff, and students—each with its own set of needs and challenges. Well written acceptable-use policies help define what is suitable for each group to use and access; responsible-use policies take this one step further, moving beyond the black-and-white nature of an acceptable-use policy to include and encourage positive digital citizenship as well as accountability for actions online. To reduce risks associated with account compromise and following the principle of least privilege, each account should be assigned the minimal security rights needed for the user.

The organization's Help Desk provides a vital role in account management and front-line security defense. Help Desk staff assist users with issues related to account access and can also inform users of good practices. Employee account self-service portals can reduce the burden on the Help Desk and improve time-to-account reset for employees while using multifactor authentication. Either way, account resets and Help Desk requests should be logged to monitor for potential abuse or attacks.

Most user accounts are compromised by clicking on a link in an email, perusing the web, or careless password management. To minimize the harm of a compromised account, a separate privileged account can be created for administrative functions as well as for functions that a user won't often need to access. There are users both inside and outside of the IT department who need a greater level of access. For example, the payroll manager may need to approve checks for the pay period, a system administer may need to modify a report, and Help Desk staff will need to reset a user's password. These functions could be done using an administrative account in lieu of granting access to the user's regular account.

Groups and Roles.

Managing accounts can be labor intensive, but the task can be automated. Users can be more efficiently managed by assigning individual accounts to a group or role, and then granting access for all assigned individuals based on that group or role. Security can be adjusted for the group rather than individual users. Products such as Microsoft Active Directory use group membership at the network level, and most student information systems allow for role-based security.

Security roles or groups may be defined by factors such as job title, department, functional group, or job function. Identity management can streamline this process further and generate accounts for new employees, assign predefined security roles, and update systems as necessary. A single system of record (such as the human resources system) defines new employees and changes in department or job title.

Successful permission management requires stakeholders to collaborate on the design of identity provisioning and permissions. If users feel the rules are tedious, draconian, or not based in the reality of job functions, they will find a way to subvert the system and negate any gains made. As noted previously, Fresno Unified created its multi-departmental Security Review Committee (SRC) to create the initial security roles for the student information system. The intent was to give all stakeholders a voice and ensure that decisions were made based on knowledge and input from different areas.

Account directories need to be reviewed on a regular schedule to highlight potential issues with identity management automation, disable inactive administrator or service accounts, and identify accounts that have unusual account activity or inactivity. A filterable report with job title, separation date, and date of last log-on can identify accounts that may need attention. It is highly unlikely that a teacher's account would be inactive, whereas a bus driver who does not need regular access to email may have little account activity.

Physical Security.

Keep in mind that "access control" includes physical access to technology as well as user account management. Data centers and control rooms need be locked and monitored, including for climate control and potential flooding. As buildings and classrooms get "smarter" with more technological devices and enhancements, security becomes an issue there as well. IT, facilities, and campus safety departments have traditionally worked in silos; however, collaboration among them can enhance student safety and protect assets.

Use of technology systems, such as video monitoring and DVRs, benefits from such collaboration. Video surveillance is a powerful tool for campus safety. Moving DVRs away from school sites and into physically secured central locations can prevent equipment tampering and damage as well as provide access for outside agencies, such as local police. Such projects require data-sharing agreements among the organizations.

Incident Response

With respect to information security, it's not a matter of if but when there will be an attack or other incident. When a security incident does occur, an Incident Response Plan will enable an organization to focus on containment rather than identifying the people and processes that need to occur. A successful incident management program combines people, processes, and technology.

According to the SANS Institute, a security incident has one or more of the following indicators: violation of security policy, attempts to gain unauthorized access, denial of resources, unauthorized use, or changes without the owner's knowledge or consent. Incident management begins with clearly defining responsibilities and processes for addressing each of these indicators before any incident occurs. An incident response team with defined roles enables effective, efficient handling of the situation. Any single team member has limited capacity during a crisis and cannot manage multiple responsibilities concurrently.

In terms of process, addressing any incident follows a path of triage, remedy or mitigation, recovery, reporting, and review. The triage phase includes ascertaining the scope of the incident and which systems and users are affected. Mitigating the incident while preserving evidence for further analysis is a paramount activity. Recovery may include restoring from a backup, eradicating a virus, or containing a vulnerability. Reporting can be a delicate matter and may include external stakeholders or the media. A review or postmortem provides the organization with insight on the effectiveness of the response, guidance on preventing future incidents, and any breakdowns in processes.

Keep in mind that communications protocols are an important part of the Incident Response Plan. Decisions about how to report on incidents of various types should be made in advance, with draft communications prepared so that, when an incident occurs, administrators do not need to be distracted or take time away from resolving the incident to review language for timely communications to stakeholders, authorities, or the media. Note also that incidents that result in compromising privacy requirements under FERPA, HIPAA, or other regulations require reporting to the appropriate agencies.

Preventive Measures Against Attacks

Background, impact, and rationale.

A variety of preventive measures are available to address different sorts of threats. For example, preventive measures against the threat of unauthorized access by hackers, crackers, or employees or partners (unintentional or intentional) include solutions that protect and monitor sensitive information and privileged use. Preventive measures can also mitigate against the threat of destruction, interruption, and theft, including unintentional destruction of assets, systems failure affecting access to information and services, malicious code or network attacks that disrupt access to information and services, and environmental factors and people that damage IT assets.

A network monitoring system should be in place to log the status of IT services and track availability and changes to IT assets. This information can be used for forensic investigation during incident response or for correlation analysis to discover behavioral anomalies. Vulnerability assessment is both a process and a technology that assesses applications and their underlying stack for vulnerabilities, remediates those vulnerabilities, and provides ongoing monitoring of these applications.

Employ integrity protections to ensure access to and availability of critical IT assets are controlled and monitored. Such protections can include secure content management platforms, network and host-based firewalls, data loss protection tools, active network intrusion detection systems, and filtering services using sandboxing and machine learning. Active network intrusion detection systems or "next-gen" security platforms can actively inspect, identify, and disrupt intrusions through decryption of traffic and correlation of user-application-host behavior based upon machine learning. A layered defense of the data center can use both next-gen security platforms and traditional firewalls that protect application services and server ports. Security Event and Incident Management systems correlate security expertise and multiple sources of information including logs from directory servers, logs from network equipment, remote sensors, and logs from security appliances.

At a minimum, school districts should employ content and email filtering and inspection to reduce the likelihood that users will fall prey to nefarious actionable code in websites or email messages and attachments. Prevention requires building capacity of the IT department as well as awareness among the user community.

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Best Practices:

- Socialize IT staff to the importance of configuration and change management as well as asset tracking

- Consider implementing a data center configuration management or Runbook tool to track high priority IT assets, their current configuration, and all changes made to these assets

- Standardize IT assets and configurations wherever possible

- Automate provisioning of IT assets, including initial configuration, changes, patches, and software updates

Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Process

Background, impact, and rationale.

Disruptions to the everyday work of organizations happen: an internet outage caused by a squirrel or a denial of service attack; a power outage caused by a backhoe or utility speculation; a data center outage caused by a malfunctioning HVAC unit or self- propagating malware. What varies for organizations is the frequency, probability, and impact of disruptions, and the readiness to prepare for, respond to, and recover from such disruptions. Disaster recovery focuses on preparation and recovery from disruptive events, while the business continuity process seeks to ensure the ongoing operation of the organization's work, regardless of disruptions (although capacity may be limited depending upon the nature of the disruption).

Disaster recovery considers what services must be restored and which critical IT assets recovered after the disruption, how to recover from the disruption to normal operations, and why the investment in the planning, testing, and actual recovery is necessary. Disaster recovery planning should consider the probability and impact of disruptions. A mature practice will extend to IT resiliency: Do all critical functions have at least two persons who can perform them? What happens if those persons are unable to perform their functions? What can be done to manage the risks of possible disruptions? Assuming the payroll data are recovered and the payroll software is working following the disruption, who will continue to process payroll? Where will they work, and what will they need to perform their work? Further, will there still be employees for whom to process payroll?

A disaster recovery plan begs questions of business continuity. The business continuity plan extends beyond IT to all critical functions within the organization. The organizational impact is assessed for each substantial risk to determine how to manage the risk as well as recover from and respond to disruptions to the organization's normal, critical operations.

Best Practices:

- *Develop an initial disaster recovery plan, test its execution according to the documented plan, and update and improve the plan annually*

- *Implement steps to increase IT resilience to reduce risks associated with disruptions*

- *Participate in developing, reviewing, and updating the organization's business continuity plan*

Security Awareness

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

This section addresses:

• *Network Security*   • *Content Security*   • *End-Point Security*

Communication: A Key Component

 Regular communications ensure an enterprise stays abreast of current events and the evolving threat landscape. Sparse or infrequent communications allow information to become stale, doing little to reinforce secure or responsible online behavior. However, organizations must be careful to temper messages so they don't become overwhelming; users tend to tune out if they get hit with too much information or receive messages too frequently.

Responsible digital citizenship should be emphasized to help users form secure cyber habits. A user who is conscientious about her or his browsing routines at school is more likely to be so at home, and vice versa. Simply letting users know how easy it is to fall prey to exploits or hackers is often enough to pique their interest. Once you have their attention, the next step is getting them to understand that threats and vulnerabilities are ever present--just because they haven't seen or heard anything for some time, doesn't mean that they can return to unsafe practices. This is the digital equivalent to changing your eating habits, rather than going on a diet.

One often overlooked facet of security awareness is regulatory compliance. In the education sector, we are bound by a multitude of local, state, and federal mandates and regulations. These mandates and regulations may not necessarily be straightforward in terms of allowing users to adhere to them without deviating from their "normal" online behaviors. Without providing guidelines or policies and procedures for users, it may be unreasonable to expect them to achieve full compliance. Guidelines, policies, and procedures must exist to cover a wide array of scenarios, and users must be told that these documents exist. They should be written in a user-friendly style that makes them understandable to the layperson while being comprehensive enough to cover all areas of concern. It does very little if an organization documents everything in a format that most users doesn't understand.

Initiatives such as bring your own devices (BYOD), one-to-one computing, and take-home devices can often introduce wrinkles into a security plan by making it more difficult to control networked resources. Physically or logically segmenting these devices from the business or general instructional network is paramount to helping control the environment. As such, users should be given clear and explicit instructions

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on how to ensure that they are connected to the appropriate network. A contract or acceptable use policy is a must; not only should it be informative as a user resource, but it should also serve as the foundation for data protection--not only for the user but also for enterprise assets.

Informing users of potential or imminent threats and teaching them how to be responsible digital citizens may help to avoid unfavorable situations, but it likely won't eliminate them altogether. Despite best-effort approaches to addressing the threat landscape, users can still intentionally or unwittingly circumvent established measures and place themselves in harm's way. While backing up data doesn't often appear at the top of "security awareness" documents, providing information to users about how, when, why, and where to back up data is crucial in helping users and the organization recover from the inevitable cyber incident. In addition, by providing clear information to users and making data available on more than one front, situations can avoid being exacerbated by insecure data storage and resulting data loss.

Several years ago, the district centralized the management of school-based technicians to make technical support more efficient. One of the more positive results of this reorganization is our ability to control the network environment and to disseminate pertinent information to our technicians. Meetings (both in person and online), conference calls, and email communications occur regularly to keep technicians "in the loop." The technicians, in turn, are aware of imminent threats and concerns and have the ability not only to mitigate them, but also to pass information along to end users.

We also observe National Cyber Security Awareness Month districtwide in October. Tips and tricks to help keep users safe when using connected devices are posted on student and employee portal pages, along with videos tailored to the various age demographics to engage our users with useful information.

Local Note:

Managing network security within a school district is an interesting proposition. Network resources are just as likely to be targeted by "hackers" from outside of the network as by students sitting in a classroom. The wide range of technical abilities also provides a fertile ground for unwitting victims. A layered approach to security and security awareness is necessary for mitigating concerns.

At Miami-Dade County Public Schools, we have various methods for communicating concerns to our users. For example, our "Weekly Briefings" system conveys information about topics of concern, ranging from notifications of new systems or procedures to alerts regarding cyber-security threats. For concerns that require more immediacy, email is used.

Security Testing

Background, impact, and rationale.

An organization should pay attention to vulnerability assessment testing in its environment. Often, vulnerabilities are introduced unwittingly and go undetected until well after they have been exploited. For organizations staffed or equipped to perform internal vulnerability assessments, these should be performed frequently to determine whether weaknesses exist within the infrastructure or systems. The goal is to find and repair vulnerabilities before they are exploited and a breach occurs.

Frequent and ongoing internal vulnerability assessments should be accompanied by periodic penetration testing (pen testing) performed by a trusted outside entity to uncover any vulnerabilities undetected by internal scans. New vulnerabilities are found in software and hardware (firmware) on a regular basis; passing a pen test this month doesn't mean an organization will still be vulnerability-free next month. Pen testing may be the only option for organizations that do not have the staff or expertise to perform internal assessments, and may also serve to augment internal efforts with different tools or methods of evaluation.

Utilities such as port scanners and service enumerators are helpful in providing a good initial overview of what may be an easy target. That gives us a starting point to protect our assets. Protecting high-value targets directly does not guarantee that they will not be compromised, however. When a hacker is unable to compromise a high-value target, she or he will often use any device that can be easily compromised as a jump-off point to enter your network and look for other targets. New vulnerabilities and exploits are released regularly, so regular assessments are necessary to remain in step.

Local Note:

A pen test is often like seeing the doctor for an annual checkup. It is generally cost prohibitive for school districts to enter into an engagement more frequently for this type of testing. At Miami-Dade, we began ramping up our internal assessment efforts to keep our network healthy between checkups.

In performing internal assessments, we initially identified high-value targets, such as SQL databases, financial servers, and other servers that held sensitive data but were essentially "set-it-and-forget-it" boxes that nobody interacted with directly on a frequent basis.

Software Development Security

Baltimore City Public Schools

This section addresses:

• *Application Security*

In recent years, school districts have been the target of sophisticated cyberattacks. Application software vulnerabilities continue to be among the top targets for exploitation by hackers, and these deficiencies have become one of the top information security concerns facing school districts today. The need for security is an integral part of application development, requiring consistent application of methodologies that adhere to agreed-upon security policies, objectives, and principles. It does not happen by itself, and the fact that many applications are outsourced adds to the complexity of ensuring that application development includes a strong integration of security components.

A Lifecycle Approach

In conventional system development, software security is an afterthought and typically reactive in nature, incorporated sometimes in the development phase or when a vulnerability is discovered. But integrating software security at a later stage is cost prohibitive and time consuming. A more effective and cost-efficient way to protect information and information systems is to integrate security into every step of the development lifecycle: "The cost of removing an application security vulnerability during the design phase ranges from 30-60 times less than if removed during production" (as noted by NIST, IBM, and the Gartner Group).
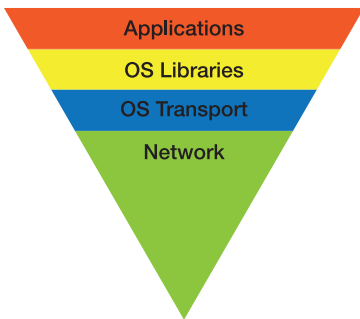
Most organizations use some type of lifecycle framework to build applications. They are several standard models in use to fit individual circumstances and organizational needs. A typical process includes phases for initiation, requirements gathering, design, development, testing, and deployment ("Securing the software development lifecycle," 2015; "Security and resilience in the software development life cycle," n.d.). Ensuring that security is embedded into every phase will result in the most secure end-product possible.

Initiation.

During this phase, staff assign an initial categorization of the proposed application (e.g., low, moderate, or high) based on the potential impact a security breach could have on organizations or individuals (e.g., loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability). Some of the parameters that can drive the application security categorization include data sensitivity (sensitive or not sensitive) and technology used (web based or not web based). Security categorization assists organizations in making the appropriate selection of security controls for their information systems.

Requirements gathering.

During this phase, a more in-depth assessment should be done. In addition to the preliminary assessment of the initiation phase, staff should map out and document security requirements and identify and review any organizational security and privacy policies and compliance laws that could affect implementation of the product.

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Design.

During this phase, staff identify security design specifications and requirements along with any potential system vulnerabilities using threat modeling and system design and architecture reviews.

Development.

Here the development team goes over best practices and guidelines in secure coding. Code analyzer tools can be used to perform source code scanning to identify vulnerabilities and provide timely feedback to the developers. Peer reviews should be sought to mitigate or minimize vulnerabilities.

Testing.

This is a critical phase to detect any software vulnerabilities not detected earlier. Comprehensive security test cases should be created using business processes and assumptions. The test plans should include unit testing, integration testing, stress testing, and user-acceptance testing. Dynamic analysis is an effective way of performing security testing. This approach consists of using automated tools to test for security vulnerabilities to identify vulnerabilities.

Deployment.

During this phase, the system is installed and evaluated in the organization's operational environment, and server and network configuration reviews are performed--along with final security reviews to ensure all security risks identified in the prior phases have been fixed or a mitigation protocol exists. The software system should be continually monitored for performance in accordance with security requirements and periodically assessed to determine how it can be made more effective, secure, and efficient.

Benefits

There are several benefits of incorporating security as part of the system development lifecycle:

- Early identification and mitigation of security vulnerabilities and problems with the configuration of systems, resulting in lower costs to implement security controls

- Identification of shared security services and reuse of security strategies and tools that will reduce development costs and improve the system's overall security posture through the application of proven methods and techniques

- Facilitation of informed decision making through the timely application of a comprehensive risk-management process

- Documentation of important security decisions made during the development process to inform management about security considerations during all phases of development

- Improved interoperability and integration of systems that would be difficult to achieve if security was considered separately at various system levels

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Communication and Network Security: Designing and Protecting Network Security

Seminole County Public Schools

This section addresses:

- *Network Security* • *Content Security* • *End-Point Security*

Network security is at the top of the list of concerns for IT professionals, regardless of the industry. In public education, network security concerns move from the perimeter of the network inward to include segmenting, logging, monitoring, and encrypting as well as improving overall security through improved communication among all stakeholders.

Challenge

The primary mission of a public-school district focuses on teaching and learning. School district IT teams must therefore position themselves to make the case that continued improvements and strengthening of the organization's networks directly support this mission. As leaders in this space, it is incumbent on IT professionals to develop a formalized strategy for maintaining a secure network, soliciting recurring funding sources to invest in needed network security tools, identifying and closing gaps in network vulnerabilities, and educating all individuals within the organization—students, staff, and faculty—on appropriate behaviors when using the network.

The challenge is to develop an agile strategy that maximizes limited resources to ensure appropriate measures are in place, while also creating an IT culture where network security is part of an ongoing journey rather than a destination. Ongoing assessments of network security must be part of the primary responsibility of any IT unit, whether large or small and regardless of industry. In public education, IT professionals bear what is arguably an even greater responsibility, considering that a secure network with appropriate stakeholder communication is part of preparing our next generation of digital citizens.

Solution Overview

Possibly the best place to begin identifying network security needs is to assess the current state of the network. Awareness of current trends, available security tools, and services on the market can all be enhanced by a three-pronged approach:

1. Investing in professional development focused on network security and cybersecurity

2. Building relationships with local resources (e.g., law enforcement), with the goal of creating a collaborative team of security experts

3. Leveraging strong vendor relationships to maintain awareness of network security and cybersecurity trends in the market space

These strategies must lead to diligence in creating a network and cybersecurity strategy that includes an education component targeting all individuals in the organization. Like traditional emergency procedures, the mature network and cybersecurity strategy should include components ranging from identification of appropriate individuals to serve on a cybersecurity committee, hardware and services, incident response procedures, and an end-user education component.

Solution Details

A strategic framework for looking at network security and vulnerabilities begins outside the network perimeter and moves inside to the network. Concurrently, a program for educating users on network use and data privacy best practices, such as creating strong passwords and the risks of malware and phishing, should be designed or procured, implemented, and moved to a sustained maintenance level.

A layered approach known as "defense in depth" is vital to network security. This architecture includes firewalls, intrusion detection and prevention systems, and content inspection systems including anti-virus, anti-malware, anti-spam, and URL filtering. These defenses should exist at the client, server, and perimeter (gateway) levels of the network. Layered security protections complement one another by catching what an individual component might miss.

Zoning through network segmentation is also essential for a solid security strategy. Computer systems providing mail, web, FTP, and other services for the internet should be in a "de-militarized zone" separate from the internal network's computer systems. In addition, user workstations should be in different security zones than servers. A network access control solution may also be implemented to keep guest mobile device traffic separate from all other internal networks.

Security information and event management (SIEM) solutions that provide the network security team with monitoring ability along with event-logging and alerting applications contribute to the overall health of the network and facilitate troubleshooting and identifying intrusion attempts. A deeper dive into network security will take into consideration strategic solutions that provide for data loss prevention (DLP) and encryption.

Penetration tests along with third-party assessments are valuable tools for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the perimeter of the network.

These tools and approaches are critical, but without doubt the most critical resource in the network security equation is the IT security team. Individuals who are passionate about their profession and connected to the teaching and learning mission of the organization are the heart of any strong security program in K-12 public education, and their contributions are vital. Investing in their professional learning must be deliberate and ongoing.

Working Toward Learning Continuity

Strong practices and policies focused on network security and user education allow for what is often called "business continuity." In education, this is what allows us to make efficient use of every minute for teaching the individual child. Providing a stable, reliable, and safe network in public education means our teachers and learners can go about the business of being lifelong learners. Multiple examples exist showing the concrete costs incurred when an organization's security and data are breached. While maintaining a continuous improvement mindset in this area of network security will never offer complete protection, it establishes a posture that mitigates risk to a point that allows for "learning continuity" through appropriate responses ready for implementation in the event of a breach.

When it comes to network security and communication, the approach outlined is aligned in some degree to industry standards. As the world of cybersecurity changes almost on a minute-by-minute basis, so do standards and solutions that attempt to mitigate known and emerging risks. The constant in this equation, and oftentimes both the most challenging and the most rewarding component, is the technology user. Taking advantage of opportunities to educate our network guests in appropriate uses of technology and how to recognize if something suspicious is a real threat provides the greatest return on investment in both organizational and societal terms.

It's Really a Revolution, Not an Evolution
Broward County Public Schools

This section addresses:

• *Network Security*   • *Content Security*   • *Cloud/Data Center Security*

The Broward County Public Schools' Information and Technology (I&T) Department is committed to its vision of "Technology, enabling learning for all—any time, any place." We know the district's network is truly the foundational enabler for solutions that improve student achievement and operational efficiencies. As instructional applications, network connectivity, communications systems, and administrative services increase in complexity, it is the I&T Department's goal to keep things as simple as possible. Mixing simplicity with technical elegance is the ultimate balance the I&T Department would like to achieve.

As the I&T Department's responsibilities have expanded, Broward County engages its vendors and service providers for additional expert guidance and support. For example, we engage our Internet service provider, Education Networks of America (ENA), for their expertise in network design and ongoing support. We also reach out to our vendors for research and design services for projects that are specific to Broward's needs.

The biggest network security issues the I&T Department currently focuses on include:

- Identity Management

- DDoS Attacks and Social Engineering

- Network Health

Identity Management

Users want easier access, but it also must be secure. Providing secure access, authentication, and provisioning for 271,000 students and 31,000 staff members to both control and allow access to appropriate resources is a daily challenge. Single sign-on for student and business applications is essential for the district to implement. With our personalized learning approach, students now have 15 or more applications available to them, which is just one of the reasons why single sign-on is so important. Password protection is one of the biggest internal network security breach threats faced. The human factor is difficult to manage, but education is an effective mitigation strategy when it comes to password protection.

DDoS Attacks and Social Engineering

Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks are the biggest external network security threat. In the past, it took a highly tech-savvy person to hack a network and bring it down. Today, a non-technical person can easily purchase a hacking service to bring down a network for the equivalent of a few days of lunch money. Unfortunately, this is becoming a common occurrence in education, especially during test days. This can also fall into the category of social engineering, which is defined as a non-technical method of intrusion, used by hackers, that relies heavily on human interaction and often involves tricking people into breaking normal security procedures. Like identity management, network security threats from DDoS attacks or other forms of social engineering results from the human factor. We are addressing these concerns with network designs that are redundant and resilient to mitigate the effects of attacks.

Network Health

Two of the best strategies for maintaining network health include building a strong perimeter defense and diligently monitoring the network. The I&T Department is proactive in finding and implementing best-of-breed solutions. The team also engages service providers for firewall, quality of service, traffic management, and intrusion prevention services. In addition to having great tools, we emphasize the importance of having staff and/or service providers in place who are engaged in monitoring the network. Monitoring the system or network logs is a critical part of a school system's network security strategy. Having a diligent network monitoring team, whether it is composed of internal staff members or through a service provider, is a crucial component of a mitigation plan.

Network Security Recommendations

Based on our experiences, we have several recommendations for school districts who want to stay on top of network security in a hyperconnected world.

1. Have the right technology infrastructure in place

2. Strike a balance between complexity and simplicity

3. Develop and implement identity management strategies and solutions for personalization and security management

4. Educate all your stakeholders and users on the importance of network security

5. Be diligent in monitoring the network or utilize a service provider who is

6. Implement strong perimeter defense services and solutions

7. Be proactive—research emerging technologies and implement best-of-breed solutions for perimeter defense and intrusion prevention

8. Engage service providers and vendors who not only have a deep understanding of the solution they are providing but also have experience and knowledge of the unique needs of the K-12 environment

9. Designate security manager to work with service providers and focus on all aspects of network security

10. Conduct an end-to-end network security assessment to identify gaps or areas of improvement

Conclusion

In today's hyperconnected world, school districts need to adopt a holistic approach when creating security strategies. Security considerations must be embedded into virtually every aspect of school district operations and applications to be effective. From forming strategic partnerships with service providers, to effectively leveraging applications and resources, to developing impactful stakeholder communications and enforceable policies, to planning for the worst, district technology leaders must take proactive and defensive steps to protect their organizations.

While each of the school district briefs addresses a different aspect of security, there are several common themes that run through the best practices and information shared, as noted below.

- *Identify risks and vulnerabilities*
  It is important to be ever vigilant. Monitoring networks and other systems is critical, as are regular security audits and vulnerability testing. This can be accomplished using internal personnel and resources in addition to engaging service providers and external tools and resources.

- *Architect for resilience and diversity*
  It is not a matter of "if", but "when" your school district will be targeted or compromised. Designing resilience and diversity will help you address a security breach and recover more quickly.

- *Develop disaster recovery and business continuity plans*
  Not only is it important to develop disaster recovery and business continuity plans, but it is also important to test and update them on a regular basis. Disaster recovery and business continuity plans determine how a district will recover from and respond to disruptions and expeditiously return to steady-state operations.

- *Design for Failure*
  When designing your infrastructure, assume that components will fail or become compromised, and then build layers of resiliency around the concept of failure. This leads to developing multiple checkpoints and barriers for intruders and well as a robust infrastructure overall. Consider expanding security resilience into the design of processes, the organizational culture, and the executive suite.

- *Collaborate*
  Creating a culture of collaboration is important for implementing successful security strategies. Protection of critical information assets require collaboration internally across district departments, beyond district boundaries with external partners, and to users of information assets.

- *Communicate and train*
  Social engineering is becoming the most common and frequent form of vulnerability in organizations. Communicating and training all education community stakeholders ensure the school system stays abreast of current events and the evolving threat landscape. Proactive communication and training are the best ways to combat social engineering threats.

- *Establish clear policies and procedures*
  Establishing clear policies and procedures is essential for maintaining security in a school system. They also set the stage for proper executive sponsorship and responsibility to maintain ongoing ownership and relevance. Policies should be considered "living documents" that evolve to accommodate the needs of dynamically changing school systems.

The information shared in this white paper is not exhaustive, but designed to provide insight into key considerations for today's K-12 environments. The most important takeaway is what Seminole County Public Schools labeled "defense in depth". While their brief was primarily addressing network security, this "defense in depth" approach can and should be applied to each of the security layers discussed in the white paper. In looking to the future, we know that security attacks are not going away and are, unfortunately, becoming more prevalent. New tools and resources, such as enhanced visibility management and data analytics, are being introduced to help identify, mitigate, and eliminate these threats. The more we share information and needs with our internal and external communities, the better we will become in defending and protecting our organizations.

A Special Thanks to Contributing School Districts and Sector Partners

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Baltimore City Public Schools is the third largest school system in Maryland with over 180 schools serving more than 82,000 students. Dr. Kenneth J. Thompson is the Chief Information Technology Officer leading the Information Technology Office. Mr. Shashikanth Buddula, Director Applications, also contributed to the Baltimore City Public Schools brief.

Broward County Public Schools is the second largest school system in Florida with over 235 schools serving more than 271,000 students. Mr. Tony Hunter is the Chief Information Office leading the Information & Technology Department.

Fresno Unified School District is the fourth largest school system in California with over 100 schools serving more than 73,000 students. Mr. Kurt Madden is the Chief Technology Officer leading the Information Technology Department. Dr. Philip Neufeld, Executive Director for Information Technology, authored and Ashley Aouate, Information Security Specialist, contributed to the Fresno Unified School District brief.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the largest school system in Florida with over 392 schools serving more than 345,000 students. Ms. Debbie Karcher is the Chief Information Officer leading the Information Technology Services Department.

Orange County Public Schools is the fourth largest school system in Florida with over 188 schools serving more than 203,000 students. Mr. Jim Pullam is the Chief Information Officer leading the Information Technology Services Department.

Seminole County Public Schools is the twelfth largest school system in Florida with over schools serving more than 67,000 students. Mr. Tim Harper is the Chief Information Officer leading the Information Services Department. Mr. Tom Condo, Supervisor, DevOps Division, also contributed to the Seminole County Public Schools brief.

Education Networks of America ® (ENA) is the leading provider of Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) solutions to K–12 schools, high education institutions, and libraries. Since 1996, we have worked with our customers to ensure they have the robust and reliable high-capacity broadband, Wi-Fi/LAN, communication, and cloud solutions they require to meet the present and emerging technology needs of the communities they serve. Today, ENA manages numerous system-wide and statewide contracts, including 16 of the largest school systems in the country, successfully delivering IaaS solutions to more than 8.0 million users across the nation. For more information, please visit www.ena.com, call 866- 615-1101, or email info@ena.com.

Worldgate is a management and technology consulting firm specializing in solutions to support the information technology needs of our K-12 and State and Local Government clients. We have a deep understanding of the very specific needs of these Public Sector clients and have successfully supported our clients through varied enterprise software implementations by truly understanding their needs and aligning with their unique cultures. For more information, please visit http://worldgatellc.com, call 571-349-0493, or email info@worldgatellc.com.

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Council of the Great City Schools

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MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools 2017: Preview of Response Rates for the 2015-16 School Year

For the 2017 edition of *Managing for Results*, the Council and consultants from TransACT worked together to ensure that districts continue to have access to meaningful key performance indicators in operations, human resources, information technology, and finance. Thanks to increased participation from Council districts, this year's data are more robust and allow for comparisons across a wider range of districts and indicators.

	Demographics			Finance			Human Resources			Information Technology			Operations		
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1	100	21	42	100	12	100	100	0	0	100	0	100	100	50	75
2	21	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	94	98	98	100	100	75
3	81	60	100	100	96	100	100	0	100	98	0	100	100	100	100
4	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	99	100	100
5	100	63	39	100	81	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	8
6	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
7	100	100	100	100	98	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	99	78	97
8	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
9	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
10	100	0	93	99	0	100	100	0	100	82	0	57	100	50	100
11	81	0	63	80	0	72	100	0	15	96	0	68	37	25	31
12	100	100	100	98	99	99	100	100	100	98	97	98	90	100	100
13	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	85	100	100	100	98	96	72
14	100	100	100	100	82	96	100	0	100	100	0	100	100	100	100
15	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	100	100	21	100	100	27	38	100	15	100	100	100	92	100	100
18	75	100	81	100	100	88	0	90	100	0	85	100	75	100	100
19	100	78	42	100	100	0	100	0	2	100	100	100	100	50	25
20	75	90	75	97	99	100	0	70	100	98	100	100	100	100	100
21	100	75	0	100	63	0	61	25	0	97	100	94	95	64	0
23	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	72	100	87	99	86	90	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	75	47
26	100	100	0	46	38	0	0	0	0	53	0	100	50	56	25
27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	62	0	0	0
28	75	81	100	99	3	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	99	100
29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
32	100	100	90	100	93	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	92	67	93
33	21	0	0	86	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	67	28	53
34	63	100	100	67	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
35	42	81	100	71	94	83	0	85	72	0	100	100	25	80	95
37	100	100	100	89	91	86	0	0	2	100	0	100	75	50	71
39	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
40	75	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0

Managing for Results

in America's Great City Schools

2017

RESULTS FROM FISCAL YEAR 2015-16

Council of the Great City Schools

ActPoint KPI
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The Performance Management and Benchmarking Project

In 2002 the Council of the Great City Schools and its members set out to develop performance measures that could be used to improve business operations in urban public school districts. The Council launched the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project to achieve these objectives. The purposes of the project were to:

- Establish a common set of **key performance indicators** (KPIs) in a range of school operations, including business services, finances, human resources, and technology;
- Use these KPIs to benchmark and compare the performance of the nation's largest urban public school systems;
- Use the results to improve operational performance in urban public schools.

Since its inception, the project has been led by two Council task forces operating under the aegis of the organization's Board of Directors: the Task Force on Leadership, Governance, and Management, and the Task Force on Finance. The project's work has been conducted by a team of member-district managers and technical advisors with extensive expertise in the following functional areas: business services (transportation, food services, maintenance and operations, safety and security), budget and finance (accounts payable, financial management, grants management, risk management, compensation, procurement and cash management), information technology, and human resources.

Methodology of KPI Development

The project's teams have used a sophisticated approach to define, collect and validate school-system data. This process calls for each KPI to have a clearly defined purpose to justify its development, and extensive documentation of the **metric definitions** ensures that the expertise of the technical teams is fully captured.

At the core of the methodology is the principle of **continuous improvement**. The technical teams are instructed to focus on operational indicators that can be *benchmarked* and are *actionable,* and thus can be strategically managed by setting improvement targets.

From the KPI definitions the surveys are developed and tested to ensure comparability, integrity and validity of data across school districts.

Power Indicators and Essential Few

The KPIs are categorized into three levels of priority—Power Indicators, Essential Few, and Key Indicators—with each level having its own general purpose.

- **Power Indicators:** Strategic and policy level; can be used by superintendents and school boards to assess the overall performance of their district's non-instructional operations.
- **Essential Few:** Management level; can be used by chief executives to assess the performance of individual departments and divisions.
- **Key Indicators:** Technical level; can be used by department heads to drive the performance of higher-level measures.

This division is more or less hierarchical, and while it is just one way of many of organizing the KPIs, it is helpful for highlighting those KPIs that are important enough to warrant more attention.

A Note on Cost of Living Adjustments

We adjust for **cost of living** in most cost-related measures. Regions where it is more expensive to live, such as San Francisco, Boston, New York City and Washington, D.C., are adjusted downward in order to be comparable with other cities. Conversely, regions where the costs of goods are lower, such as Columbus, OH, and Nashville, TN, are adjusted upwards.

GUIDANCE FOR READING THIS REPORT

Each page of this report shows detailed information for a single KPI measure. The figure below shows the key components.

Name of KPI

Functional area that this KPI belongs to

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
AP Cost per Invoice

3-year trend of the quartiles

Colors indicate high / low performance (or gray if not applicable)

- Upper Quartile
- Median
- Lower Quartile

Description of Calculation

Total AP department personnel costs plus AP department non-personnel costs, divided by total number of invoices handled by the AP department.

Narrative for KPI explains how the measure can be used

Importance of Measure

This measure determines the average cost to process an invoice. According to the Institute of Management, the cost to handle an invoice is the second most used metric in benchmarking AP operations.

Factors that Influence

- Administrative policies and procedures
- Administrative organizational structure
- Administrative leadership style, decision making process and distribution of organizational authority
- Departmental and individual employee responsibilities and competencies
- Performance management systems
- Monitoring and reporting systems
- Number of FTEs in the Accounts Payable Department
- The total dollar amount of invoices paid annually
- Level of Automation
- Regional salary differentials and different processing approaches

Identification of top-performing districts

Districts in Best Quartile (FY 2013-14)

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Austin Independent School District
- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Broward County School District
- Charleston County School District
- Dallas Independent School District
- Hillsborough County Public School District
- Houston Independent School District
- Jefferson County Public Schools
- Miami-Dade County Public School District
- Milwaukee Public Schools
- Orange County Public School District
- Palm Beach County School District

Use the data table to look up specific values

District ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1	$5.97	$8.37	$6.15
2		$5.11	$7.98
3	$3.64	$5.83	$8.11
4	$2.66	$3.10	$4.48
5	$7.91	$7.68	$7.53
6	$6.79	$11.87	$15.15
7	$5.02	$3.82	$4.85
8	$2.09	$2.35	$1.99
9	$7.84	$7.75	$7.00
10	$1.81	$1.96	$1.67
11	$6.71	$6.08	$5.50
12	$13.23		$12.12
13	$2.49	$2.27	$2.46
14	$4.47	$3.73	$3.74
15		$12.48	
16	$11.86	$10.05	$11.33
18	$5.33	$5.80	$5.72
19			$87.43
20	$6.29	$4.50	$7.65
21	$6.23	$8.69	$12.76
23	$1.94	$2.26	$2.23
25	$15.61	$12.13	$14.01
26	$4.15	$4.79	$6.44
28	$8.61	$8.29	$8.85
30	$5.62	$2.54	$3.66
32	$2.74	$2.73	$2.93
33		$18.81	$12.32
35	$5.91	$8.39	$8.23
37	$5.43	$5.05	$9.19
39	$1.92	$2.53	$1.74
41	$3.55	$3.51	$3.67
43	$10.86	$10.35	$7.88
44	$9.47	$8.18	$7.83
45	$23.77	$25.36	
46	$3.13	$3.18	$3.70
47	$6.18	$9.50	$9.12
48		$2.09	$1.54
52	$10.99	$8.68	$8.64
53	$3.43		$3.95
54		$1.78	
55		$4.92	$5.34	$5.42
56	$23.02	$10.28	$9.56
57	$8.22	$6.83	$9.26
58		$7.13	$7.25
62	$7.44	$8.59	$9.14
63			$9.26
66	$7.70	$7.85	$6.78
67	$7.98	$7.99	$8.70
71	$3.31	$2.70	$2.75
74	$15.04		$18.66
77		$20.35	$7.08
79	$23.31	$14.23	$12.75
101	$11.14	$17.17	

The quartiles plotted on the chart are reasonable benchmarks ("high, middle, low") for measuring performance. Showing the multi-year trend is useful for thinking about trends over time.

Reports from previous years (before the 2015 edition of this report) showed only the latest year of data as a single bar chart for each measure. The new format makes it easier to see the broad trends for a measure. And because the data table is sorted by district ID number, it is also easier to look up a single district's data.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are districts in this report identified by ID number instead of district name?

The data tables in this report list districts by their ID number. This is done to create a safe environment so public reporting of the data is done through district numbers, and not by name.

How do I find my district's ID number?

You can contact Bob Carlson at rcarlson@cgcs.org or Ray Hart (rhart@cgcs.org) and ask for your KPI ID. Your ID is also shown when you log in to ActPoint® KPI (https://kpi.actpoint.com).

How do I get the ID numbers for all the other districts?

The ID numbers of other districts are confidential, and we do not share them without the permission of each district. If you would like to identify specific districts that are in your peer group in order to collaborate with them, please contact Bob Carlson at rcarlson@cgcs.org or Ray Hart at rhart@cgcs.org.

Districts can share their own ID numbers with others at their own discretion.

Why isn't my data showing? My district completed the surveys.

It is likely that your data was flagged for review or is invalid. To resolve this, log in and check the Surveys section of the website. You should see a message telling you that there are data that need to be reviewed.

It is also possible that you submitted your data after the publication deadline for this report. To resolve this, log in to ActPoint® KPI (https://kpi.actpoint.com) and check the Survey section of the website.

In either case, it may be possible to update your data in the surveys. Once you do, your results will be reviewed and approved by CGCS or TransAct within 24 hours of your submission. You will then be able to view the results online.

Can I still submit a survey? Can I update my data?

You may still be able to submit or edit a survey depending on the survey cycle. Log in to ActPoint® KPI where you will see a message saying "This survey is now closed" if the survey is closed to edits. If you do not see this message, then updates are still allowed for the fiscal year.

If the surveys are still open, any data that is updated will need to be reviewed and approved by CGCS or TransAct before the results can be viewed online. You can expect your data to be reviewed within 24 hours of your submission.

Accounts Payable

Performance metrics in Accounts Payable (AP) focus on the cost efficiency, productivity, and service quality of invoice processing. Cost efficiency is measured most broadly with **AP Costs per $100K Revenue**, which evaluates the entire cost of the AP department against the total revenue of the district. This metric is supported by a similar metric, **AP Cost per Invoice**, which compares against the number of invoices processed rather than district revenue.

Productivity is measured by **Invoices Processed per FTE per Month**, and service quality is captured, in part, by **Days to Process Invoices**, **Invoices Past Due at Time of Payment** and **Payments Voided**.

With the above KPIs combined with **staffing** and **electronic invoicing** KPIs, district leaders have a baseline of information to consider whether their AP function:

- Needs better automation to process invoices
- Is overstaffed or has staff that is under-trained or under-qualified
- Should revise internal controls to improve accuracy
- Needs better oversight and reporting procedures

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

AP Cost per $100K Revenue
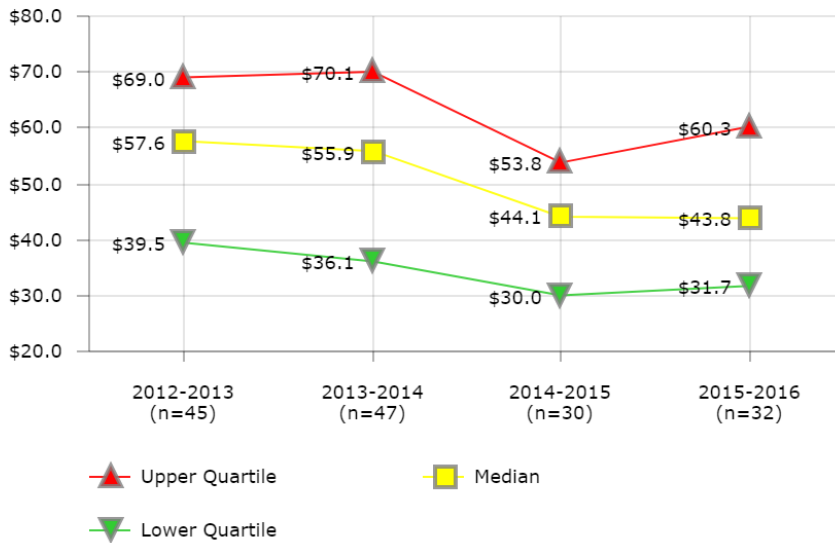
Description of Calculation

Total AP department personnel costs plus AP department non-personnel costs divided by total district operating revenue over $100,000.

Importance of Measure

This measures the operational efficiency of an Accounts Payable Department.

Factors that Influence

- Administrative policies and procedures
- Administrative organizational structure
- Administrative leadership style, decision making process and distribution of organizational authority
- Departmental and individual employee responsibilities and competencies
- Performance management systems
- Monitoring and reporting systems
- Number of FTEs in the Accounts Payable Department
- The total dollar amount of invoices paid annually
- Level of Automation
- Regional salary differentials and different processing approaches

Districts in Best Quartile (2015-2016)

- Chicago Public Schools
- Clark County School District
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Houston Independent School District
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Milwaukee Public Schools
- Pittsburgh Public Schools
- School District of Philadelphia

District	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1	$86.2	$63.0		
2	$57.6		$108.8	$122.1
3	$92.1			$38.3
4	$32.4	$36.1	$37.7	$31.8
5	$73.5	$66.2		
6	$201.4	$200.2		
7	$41.5	$35.9	$19.2	$47.2
8	$39.5	$32.1	$31.0	$33.9
9		$34.6	$32.6	$31.6
10	$28.7	$25.0		$28.6
11		$44.0		$33.6
12	$151.2	$162.7	$152.2	$158.9
13	$34.2	$33.8	$34.6	$38.0
14	$63.5	$63.6		$46.7
16	$63.4	$75.7	$52.5	
18	$59.9	$47.7	$58.9	
19		$136.8		
20	$61.3	$72.6	$47.7	$59.4
21	$58.2	$51.2	$38.1	
23	$53.1	$55.9		
25	$38.1	$45.4	$46.7	$36.2
26	$22.1	$23.3	$22.4	
28	$79.9	$71.4		$62.8
30	$37.9	$32.9	$28.9	$28.6
32	$37.8	$35.5	$30.0	$29.4
33	$75.6			
34		$58.5	$111.3	$120.2
35	$76.8	$71.1	$79.8	$84.1
37	$51.4	$66.8	$59.4	
39	$33.4	$31.6	$29.8	$29.1
41	$49.6	$49.8	$53.8	$55.1
43	$44.9	$38.0		$28.0
44	$69.0	$61.7	$51.6	$61.2
45	$68.0	$64.2		
46	$19.2	$22.3	$23.6	
47	$70.6	$64.3	$50.7	$39.7
48	$62.2	$46.3	$49.3	$44.9
49	$62.4	$58.2		$43.9
51			$158.0	$151.8
52	$52.2	$53.7		
54	$14.5		$11.8	$13.9
55	$49.4	$46.9	$43.8	
56	$67.4	$62.2		
57	$53.4	$70.1		
58	$21.2	$16.5	$16.0	$15.7
62	$54.2	$51.8		$43.8
63		$58.0	$40.0	$43.8
66	$81.8	$85.3		
67	$65.3	$91.9		$73.4
71	$44.8	$47.6	$44.4	$46.4
74		$81.8		
79	$119.2	$102.8		

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

AP Cost per Invoice
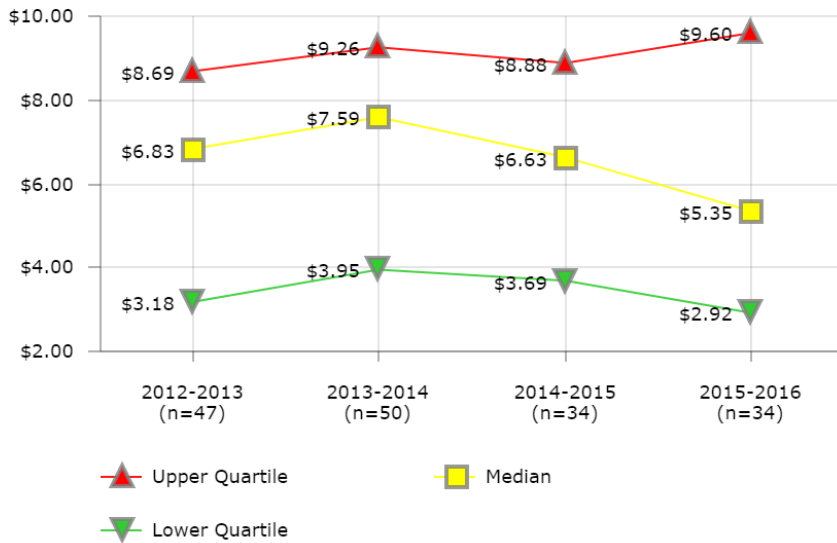
District	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1	$8.37	$6.15		
2	$5.11	$7.98	$9.97	$11.22
3	$5.83	$8.11	$9.26	$4.60
4	$3.10	$4.48	$6.41	$4.67
5	$7.68	$7.53	$9.33	
6	$11.87	$15.15		
7	$3.82	$4.85	$4.06	$5.01
8	$2.35	$1.99	$1.92	$2.00
9	$7.75	$7.00	$6.67	$6.32
10	$1.96	$1.67		$1.51
11	$6.08	$5.50		$4.38
12		$12.12	$10.85	$11.74
13	$2.27	$2.46	$2.54	$2.92
14	$3.73	$3.74		$1.35
15	$12.48			
16	$10.05	$11.33	$10.11	
18	$5.80	$5.72	$6.07	$6.62
19		$87.43	$21.29	
20	$4.50	$7.65	$7.20	$11.78
21	$8.69	$12.76	$9.97	
23	$2.26	$2.23		
25	$12.13	$14.01	$15.57	$12.72
26	$4.79	$6.44		
28	$8.29	$8.85		$9.40
30	$2.54	$3.66	$3.30	$2.46
32	$2.73	$2.93	$2.58	$2.57
33	$18.81	$12.32		
35	$8.39	$8.23	$8.62	$8.67
37	$5.05	$9.19	$8.05	
39	$2.53	$1.74	$2.94	$2.86
41	$3.51	$3.67	$4.33	$4.89
43	$10.35	$7.88		$11.77
44	$8.18	$7.83	$6.59	$13.79
45	$25.36	$25.19		$37.45
46	$3.18	$3.70	$3.69	$3.75
47	$9.50	$9.12	$4.86	$5.69
48	$2.09	$1.54	$1.74	$1.67
51			$8.88	$9.45
52	$8.68	$8.64		
53		$3.95	$3.70	
54	$1.78		$1.99	$2.62
55	$5.34	$5.42	$5.15	
56	$10.28	$9.56		
57	$6.83	$9.26	$6.86	
58	$7.13	$7.25	$7.66	$6.62
62	$8.59	$9.14		$10.15
63		$9.26	$7.66	$8.01
66	$7.85	$6.78	$7.01	$4.25
67	$7.99	$8.70		$9.60
71	$2.70	$2.75	$2.83	$3.56
74		$18.66		
77	$20.35	$7.08		
79	$14.23	$12.75		

Description of Calculation

Total AP department personnel costs plus AP department non-personnel costs, divided by total number of invoices handled by the AP department.

Importance of Measure

This measure determines the average cost to process an invoice. According to the Institute of Management, the cost to handle an invoice is the second most used metric in benchmarking AP operations.

Factors that Influence

- Administrative policies and procedures
- Administrative organizational structure
- Administrative leadership style, decision making process and distribution of organizational authority
- Departmental and individual employee responsibilities and competencies
- Performance management systems
- Monitoring and reporting systems
- Number of FTEs in the Accounts Payable Department
- The total dollar amount of invoices paid annually
- Level of Automation
- Regional salary differentials and different processing approaches

Districts in Best Quartile (2015-2016)

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Broward County Public Schools
- Chicago Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Houston Independent School District
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Milwaukee Public Schools
- Orange County Public School District
- Palm Beach County School District

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Invoices - Days to Process
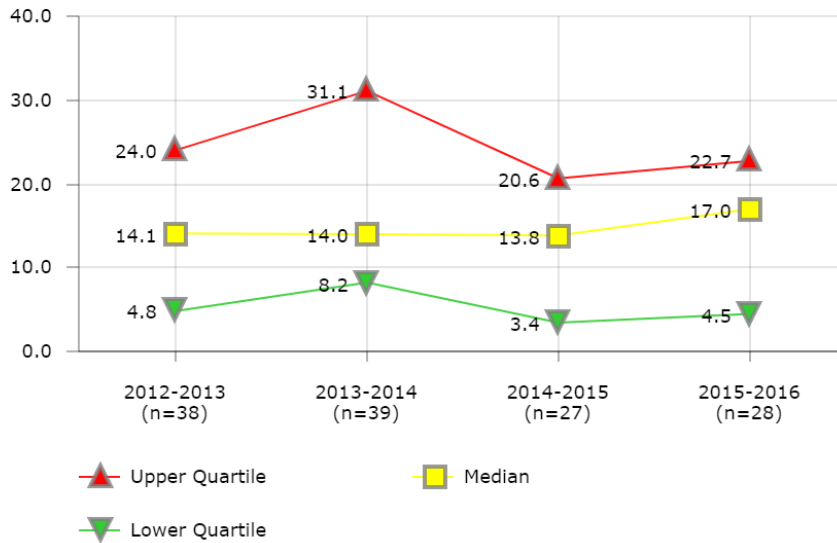
Description of Calculation

Aggregate number of days to process all AP invoices, from date of invoice receipt by the AP department to the date of payment post/ check release, divided by the total number of invoices handled by the AP department.

Importance of Measure

This measures the efficiency of the payment process.

Factors that Influence

- Automation
- Size of district
- Administrative policies

Districts in Best Quartile (2015-2016)

- Broward County Public Schools
- Chicago Public Schools
- Duval County Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Omaha Public School District

District	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
3	3.4	59.3	13.8	14.0
4	19.7	20.4	18.1	19.7
5	6.8	10.8	19.8	
6	7.0	7.0		
7	25.3	13.5	15.0	16.7
8	10.8	8.3	7.3	6.9
9	24.0	20.0	22.3	20.0
10	14.7	8.2		1.4
11	19.0	20.9		19.7
12			3.4	18.1
13	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.0
14	4.2			9.2
16	17.1	19.8	14.9	
18		20.1	20.4	20.4
20	4.8			
21	15.9	30.0	7.6	
23	20.0	23.2		
25	57.8	52.4	53.9	53.3
26	30.0	0.0		
28		11.6		
30	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
32	3.0	1.0	1.7	1.0
33	3.4	8.5		
35	23.7	21.2	20.6	21.2
37	3.5	7.3	13.7	
39		38.1		
41	1.2			
43		1.0		
44	29.1	41.6	35.0	0.4
45	39.6	39.4		57.4
46	38.1	32.6	75.0	64.9
47	2.6	3.6	3.0	24.3
48	16.2	17.4	17.3	17.3
51				0.7
53		3.7	1.1	
54	14.2		0.0	0.6
55	4.2	4.3	3.9	
56	42.2	37.9		
57	5.0			
58	42.8	40.5	38.5	52.3
62	6.2	10.2		8.4
63		31.6	32.4	34.7
66	14.0	14.0	0.0	1.3
67	29.1	31.1		43.2
71	10.1	10.3	8.6	8.6
79	14.0	13.0		

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Invoices Processed per FTE per Month

Legend:
- ▲ Upper Quartile
- □ Median
- ▼ Lower Quartile

Description of Calculation

Total number of invoices handled by the AP department, divided by total number of AP staff (FTEs), divided by 12 months.

Importance of Measure

This measure is a major driver of accounts payable department costs. Lower processing rates may result from handling vendor invoices for small quantities of non- repetitive purchases; higher processing rates may result from increased technology using online purchasing and invoice systems to purchase and pay for large quantites of items from vendors.

Factors that Influence

- Administrative organizational structure
- Administrative leadership style, decision making process and distribution of organizational authority
- Departmental and individual employee responsibilities and competencies
- Performance management systems
- Monitoring and reporting systems
- Number of FTEs in the Accounts Payable Department
- The number of invoices paid annually
- Level of automation

Districts in Best Quartile (2015-2016)

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Broward County Public Schools
- Chicago Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Milwaukee Public Schools
- Orange County Public School District
- Palm Beach County School District

District	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1	729	684		
2	804	713	647	618
3	726	680	493	1,084
4	1,657	1,222	823	1,167
5	618	652	555	
6	675	536		
7	1,340	1,013	1,194	1,187
8	1,768	1,990	2,281	2,516
9	746	778	792	826
10	1,978	2,240		2,618
11	801	893		1,159
12		376	462	450
13	2,029	1,686	1,695	1,482
14	925	862		1,678
15	326			
16	467	434	465	
18	1,145	1,178	1,134	1,076
19		77	322	
20	1,184	833	527	493
21	639	400	595	
23	2,163	2,033		
25	325	282	374	359
26	1,001	820		
28	410	719		645
30	3,430	1,949	1,905	2,495
32	1,674	1,631	2,025	2,010
33	260	419		
35	955	951	913	989
37	945	591	691	
39	1,417	2,408	1,280	1,332
41	1,333	1,332	1,233	1,149
43	456	635		611
44	508	571	682	289
45	232	241		225
46	1,437	1,473	1,531	1,541
47	641	694	1,079	839
48	2,223	2,564	2,700	2,707
51			802	730
52	658	692		82
53		1,056	952	
54	3,109		3,019	2,694
55	890	849	888	
56	552	594		
57	825	856	894	
58	978	1,046	1,024	1,202
62	775	669		558
63		645	812	824
66	686	840	709	764
67	720	604		614
71	1,399	1,517	1,626	1,332
74		240		
77	140	455		
79	438	419		

1002

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Invoices Past Due at Time of Payment
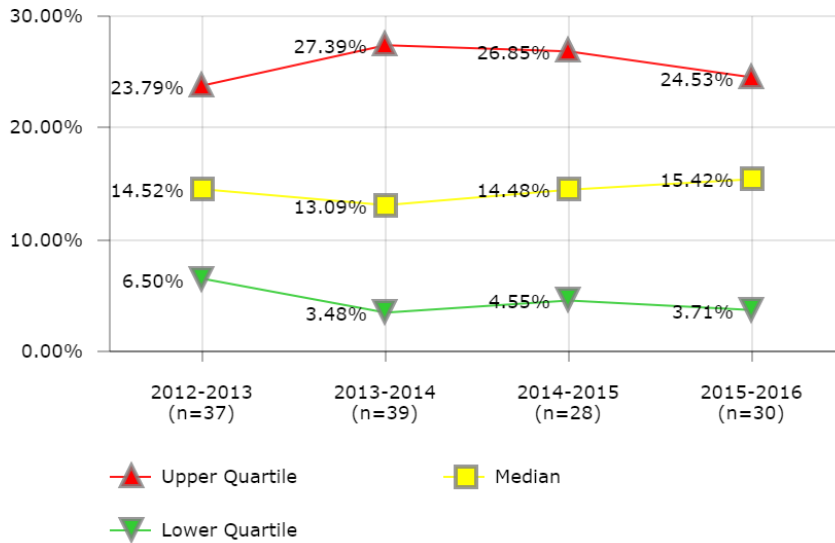
Description of Calculation

Number of invoices past due at time of payment, divided by total number of invoices handled by the AP department.

Importance of Measure

Minimizing the number of payments that are past due should be a crucial mission of the accounts payable department.

Factors that Influence

- Process controls
- Department workload management
- Overtime policy

Districts in Best Quartile (2015-2016)

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Des Moines Public Schools
- Duval County Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Omaha Public School District
- Orange County Public School District
- Richmond City School District

District	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
2	1.64%	1.86%	1.82%	1.50%
3	1.51%	35.43%	8.75%	5.79%
4	18.05%	17.37%	14.43%	17.16%
5	17.75%	16.18%	18.43%	
6		5.00%		
7		3.48%	4.13%	4.60%
8	22.58%	3.29%	4.96%	6.08%
9	8.18%	8.21%	14.53%	17.01%
10	8.13%	7.99%		2.79%
11	11.62%	19.02%		21.13%
12		12.22%	0.43%	1.19%
14	24.76%			3.71%
15	31.95%			
16	13.11%	35.83%	36.28%	
18	19.98%	20.21%	28.53%	24.53%
19			20.08%	
20	19.07%			
21			66.84%	
23	0.45%	14.57%		
25	63.18%	63.22%	66.14%	71.57%
28	11.69%	13.09%		
32	22.31%	19.78%	17.55%	18.08%
33		0.86%		
35	19.32%	16.62%	15.42%	17.39%
37	14.52%	27.39%	28.89%	
39	34.76%	19.82%	21.28%	21.71%
41	23.79%	34.05%	25.16%	100.00%
43	42.12%	31.07%		
44	1.80%	1.52%	1.63%	2.22%
45	43.38%	41.42%		75.27%
46	22.48%	34.41%	37.46%	46.83%
47	9.35%	1.56%	34.57%	54.42%
48	0.36%	0.39%	0.40%	0.50%
51				1.05%
52				5.00%
53		2.48%	1.98%	
54	84.42%		9.32%	41.28%
55	4.05%	5.49%	5.24%	
56	38.92%	43.14%		
57	36.43%	36.73%		
58	6.50%	9.27%	7.24%	5.64%
62	3.11%	7.30%		39.64%
63		13.80%	13.20%	13.84%
66	2.08%	1.77%	1.69%	1.69%
67	10.78%	12.13%		22.12%
71	10.64%	8.33%		6.56%
79	4.00%	2.00%		

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Payments Voided

Description of Calculation

Number of payments voided, divided by total number of AP transactions (payments).

Importance of Measure

This measure reflects processing efficiencies and the degree of accuracy. Voided checks are usually the result of duplicate payments or errors. A high percentage of duplicate payments may indicate a lack of controls, or that the master vendor files need cleaning, creating the potential for fraud.

Factors that Influence

- Administrative policies and procedures
- Administrative organizational structure
- Administrative leadership style, decision making process and distribution of organizational authority
- Departmental and individual employee responsibilities and competencies
- Performance management systems
- Monitoring and reporting systems
- Number of FTEs in the Accounts Payable Department
- The total number of checks written annually
- Level of automation

Districts in Best Quartile (2015-2016)

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Columbus Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Houston Independent School District
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Metropolitan Nasvhille Public Schools
- Milwaukee Public Schools
- Minneapolis Public Schools
- School District of Philadelphia

District	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1	0.69%	0.94%		
2	1.78%	2.63%	2.93%	3.10%
3	0.91%	0.99%	0.89%	0.50%
4	0.21%	0.39%	1.13%	0.48%
5	1.01%	1.00%	1.03%	
6	0.92%	1.12%		
7	0.91%	0.22%	0.21%	2.49%
8	0.46%	0.49%	0.48%	0.44%
9	0.58%	0.49%	0.60%	0.61%
10	0.76%			0.43%
11	0.51%	0.44%		0.35%
12		0.10%	0.21%	0.76%
13	0.70%	1.28%	0.61%	0.67%
14	0.40%	0.36%		0.12%
15	5.29%			
16	1.17%	1.72%	2.15%	
18	1.23%	0.55%	0.71%	0.83%
19			1.02%	
20		2.05%	2.97%	2.66%
21	0.31%	1.08%	2.36%	
23	1.34%	0.57%		
25	1.49%	1.13%	1.30%	2.42%
28	2.13%	0.45%		
30		0.37%	0.44%	0.24%
32	0.82%	0.99%	0.58%	1.19%
33	2.24%	1.02%		
34				1.08%
35	0.60%	0.36%	0.67%	0.24%
37	0.26%	0.28%	0.06%	
39	1.11%	1.15%	0.27%	0.32%
41	2.08%	5.51%	1.61%	2.34%
43	1.09%	0.71%		1.08%
44	1.44%	0.67%	0.46%	1.37%
45	0.29%	0.30%		0.68%
46		0.78%	0.62%	2.39%
47	0.16%	0.14%	0.12%	0.09%
48	1.99%	3.71%	2.41%	1.70%
49	0.69%			
51				1.12%
52	0.17%	0.12%		0.16%
53		7.14%	0.48%	
54				1.19%
55	1.59%	1.82%	1.58%	
56	0.52%	0.42%		
57	1.23%	0.77%	0.60%	
58	0.51%	0.61%	0.39%	0.41%
63		2.06%	2.63%	1.07%
66	0.41%	0.32%	0.42%	0.50%
67	0.65%	0.76%		1.34%
71	0.93%	0.76%	0.08%	0.64%
74		0.51%		
77	0.11%	0.06%		
79	0.98%	0.27%		

SHELBY COUNTY REPORT

Review of Procurement Services of the Shelby County Schools

December 2016

Dorsey Hopson, Superintendent of the Shelby County Schools (SCS), requested that the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) provide a high-level management review of the district's Procurement Services.[1] Specifically, he requested that the Council[2] —

- Review and evaluate the leadership and management, organization, and operations of the district's procurement functions

- Develop recommendations that would help Procurement Services achieve greater operational efficiency and effectiveness.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team of senior managers with extensive experience in procurement operations from other major urban school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Attachment A provides brief biographical sketches of team members.)

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

David Koch, Principal Investigator
Chief Administrative Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Gary Appenfelder
Director, Purchasing & Ethics
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Kristen DeCato
Director, Procurement & Risk Management
Milwaukee Public Schools

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[1] The Council has conducted some 300 instructional, management, and operational reviews in over 50 big-city school districts over the last 18 years. The reports generated by these reviews are often critical, but they also have been the foundation for improving the operations, organization, instruction, and management of many urban school systems nationally. In other cases, the reports are complimentary and form the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate. (Attachment E lists the reviews that the Council has conducted.)

[2] The Council conducted a review of food services in Shelby County Schools in 2016.

Michael Eugene
Chief Operating Officer
Orange County (Florida) Public Schools

James Skrobo
Purchasing Manager
Omaha Public Schools

Christopher Steele (Retired)
Assistant Superintendent, Budget & Planning
Portsmouth Public Schools

The team conducted its fieldwork for the project during a four-day site visit to Memphis on December 11-14, 2016. The general schedule for the site visit is described below. (The Working Agenda for the site visit is presented in Attachment B.)

The team met on the first day of the site visit to discuss expectations and objectives for the review and to make final adjustments to the work schedule. The team used the second and third days of its fieldwork to conduct interviews with staff members and others (a list of individuals interviewed is included in Attachment C) and to review documents, reports, and data provided by the district (a list of documents reviewed by the team is presented in Attachment D).[3] The final day of the visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and to debriefing the Superintendent's Chief of Staff on the Team's preliminary conclusions.

The Council sent a draft of this document to the team members for their review to ensure the accuracy of the report and obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations. A draft of the report was also sent to the Shelby County school administration for their review and comment. District comments were sent to the team for their examination and comment. All district comments were considered as part of this final report. All observations and recommendations are current as of the team's site visit. This management letter contains the findings and recommendations that were designed by the team to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's Procurement Services. Please note that the footnotes contained herein are an integral part of this report.

The Shelby County Schools

Procurement Services

As of July 1, 2013, the Memphis City Schools were merged with the Shelby County Schools (SCS), resulting in the largest public-school district in Tennessee and 25th largest public-school district in the nation. Now, the combined SCS operates 220 schools serving 95,000

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[3] The Council's peer reviews are based on interviews of district staff and others, a review of documents provided by the district, development or review of comparability data, observations of operations, and the teams' professional judgments. In conducting interviews, the teams must rely on the willingness of those interviewed to be factual and forthcoming, but cannot always judge the accuracy of their statements.

students with over 9,100 employees. Located in the southwest corner of Tennessee, SCS covers a large geographic area that spans over 460 square miles.

SCS is governed by an elected, nine-member Board of Education that appoints the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent is responsible to the Board of Education for the effective operation of the school system, including implementation of the district's 10-year Strategic Plan, *Destination 2025*.[4]

The Superintendent is also responsible for the efficient management of the district's resources. The approved General Fund budget for 2016-2017 was $958,913,051.[5] An abridged overview of the Superintendent's administrative organization is shown below in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1. Superintendent's Administrative Organization Chart
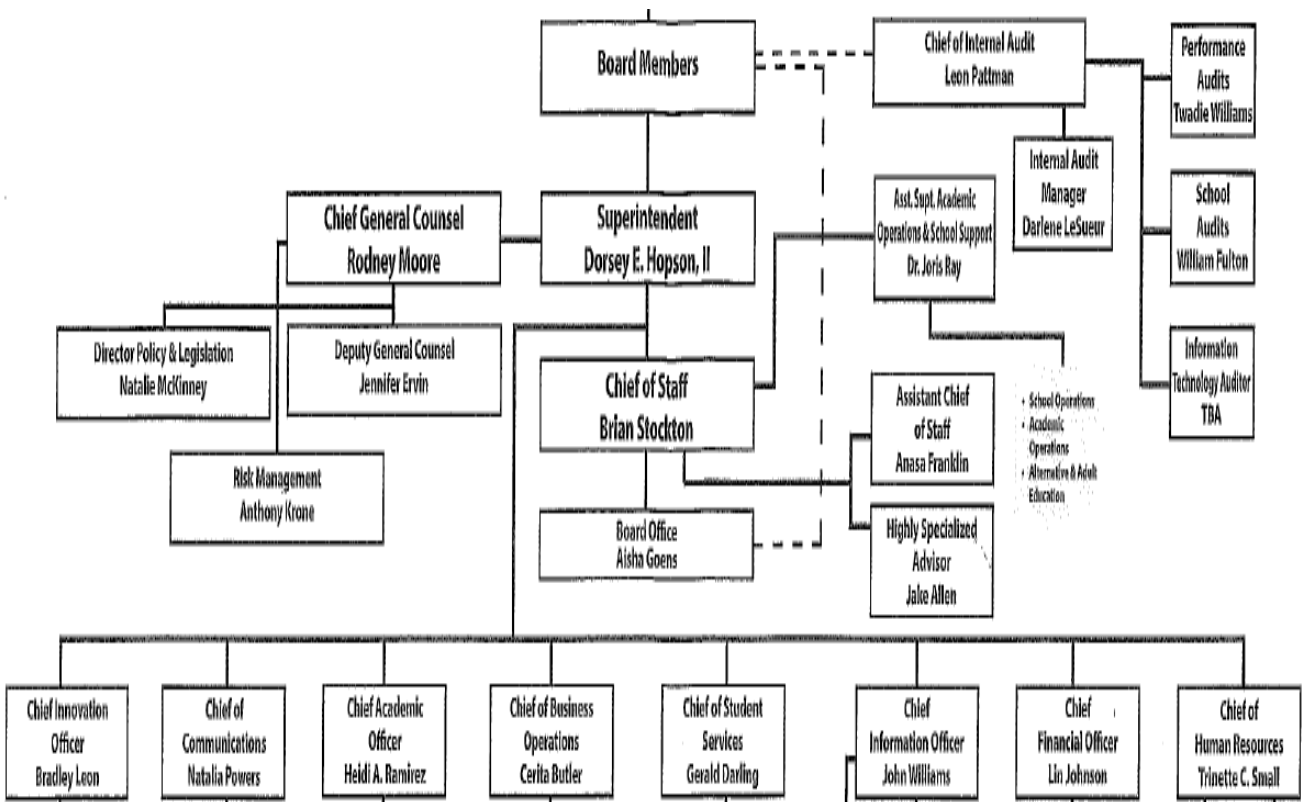
Source: Shelby County Schools

The Interim Chief of Business Operations (CBO), who is a direct report to the Superintendent, has responsibility for Transportation Services, Nutrition Services, Facility Planning and Management, and Procurement Services. The Interim Chief of Business Operations' organizational structure is shown below in Exhibit 2.

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[4] The SCS Strategic Plan can be viewed at: http://www.scsk12.org/2025/
[5] The SCS FY17 Approved General Fund Budget can be viewed at:
http://www.scsk12.org/finance/files/2016/FY17%20DISTRICT%20BUDGET_FINAL%20101416.pdf

Exhibit 2. Chief of Business Operations' Organization Chart
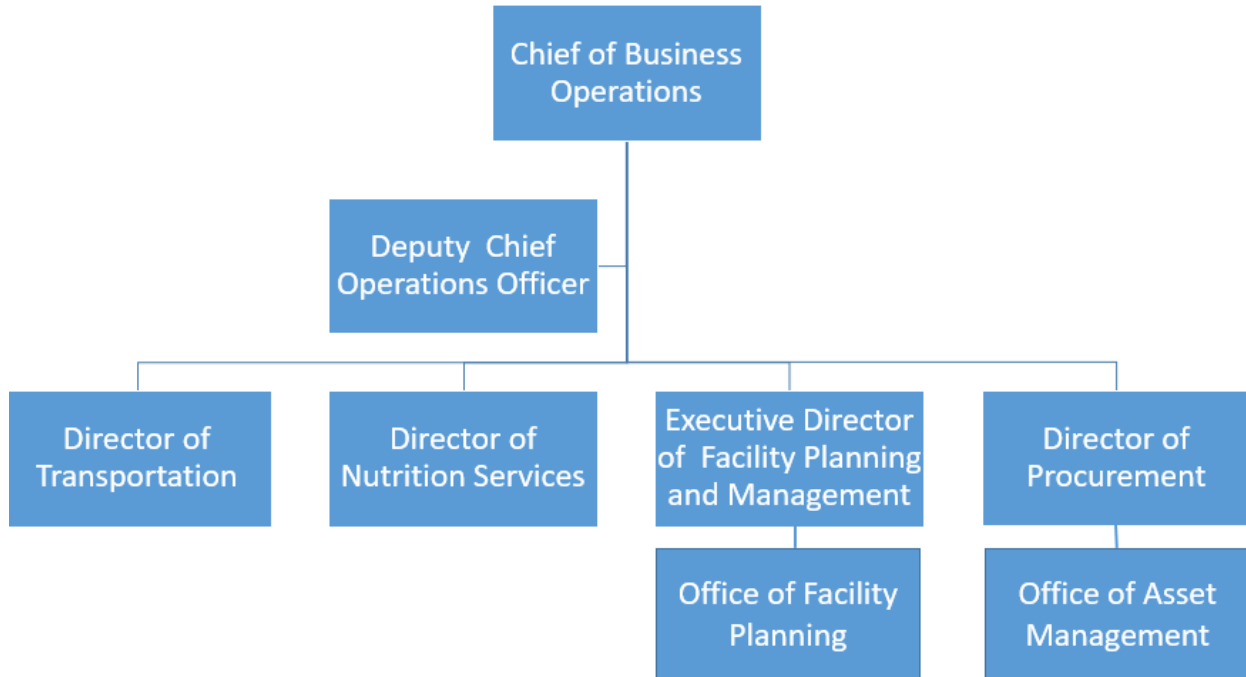
Source: Shelby County Schools

The Procurement function is headed by an Interim Director of Procurement, supported by the Procurement Manager and the Manager of Assets Management, which was a unit recently added to the department.[6] Exhibit 3 below shows this organization and its 17 positions at the time of the team's review. The Procurement Manager is responsible for five buyers, whose work is organized by commodity; two Fast Lane personnel who focus on expediting lower value orders; and two Child Nutrition Buyers who are funded by the Food Service program. The Asset Management unit of four is charged with accounting for and tracking district assets on two asset inventory systems.

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[6] At the time of the site visit, the Procurement Manager and Asset Manager positions were vacant – a condition that had existed for nearly twelve months.

Exhibit 3. Procurement Services Organization Chart
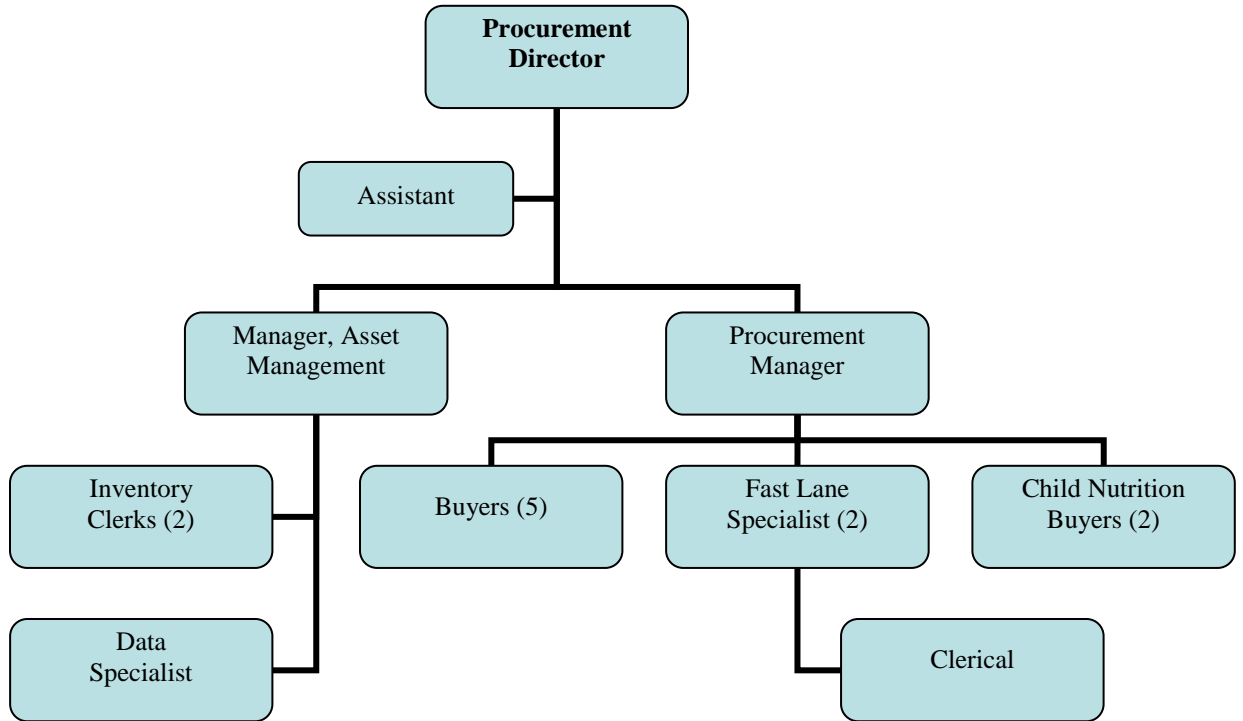
Source: SCS Procurement Services Reference Manual

Findings and Observations

The overall conclusion of the Council's Strategic Support Team was that the "*Shelby County School system is encumbered by workplace culture differences remaining from the legacy districts that inhibit a unified movement forward.*" Specifically, the team's findings and observations below are organized into four general areas: Commendations, Organization, Leadership and Management, and Operations. These finding and observations and followed by a series of recommendations.

Commendations

- Many staff members in the Procurement Services unit appeared to be experienced, hardworking, and dedicated to their assigned tasks.

- The Procurement Services unit has developed an excellent Reference Manual, which is comprehensive and constitutes an effort at best practices.

- The Interim Director of Procurement Services appears to possess the interest, motivation, and energy to move the department forward by instituting improvements necessary to make the organization exemplary.

- The Procurement Services unit has begun modernization of its practices, including testing Reverse Auction acquisition techniques.

- To improve cyber security, the district has entered into a contract for recycling surplus and obsolete computers, including the destruction of their hard drives.

Organization

- The district's procurement functions are fragmented and the organization of the Procurement Services unit does not represent industry best practice. For example -

  o General Counsel staff is assigned tasks that should be performed by the Procurement Department, specifically -

    ▪ Procurement's role in facilitating and executing agreements and General Counsel's role in reviewing legal sufficiency and form are not being reflected in current processes

    ▪ The General Counsel's office is negotiating contract content, such as scope, price and term, which should be the responsibility of the Procurement Department.

    ▪ Some departments are submitting proposed vendor agreements directly to the General Counsel rather than processing those agreements through Procurement Services.

    ▪ It was reported to the team that schools often do not know where to go with contract requests.

  o The department's processes are transactional driven. As a result, the department is focused on workload and processing speed rather than strategic goals, which would enable it to achieve fiscal efficiencies and ensure internal control.

  o The placement of Asset Management in the Procurement Services unit distracts from its core business, which is to account for and track district assets. This critically important function is not getting the attention from the Chief Financial Officer that is warranted. For example -

    ▪ The team was told that the two asset management systems maintained by the district may account for as little as 60 percent of the district's total assets.

    ▪ The Chief Information Officer indicated that he did not have an accurate count of electronic devices in schools.

- Procurement Services appeared to be adequately staffed. However –

  o The resources in the Fast Lane unit, focused on expediting lower-value orders, would likely be more productive if converted to regular buyer positions and workloads were redistributed. Issues related to the expediting of low-dollar transactions should be

addressed through process improvements, ERP automation of work orders, and P-Card utilization.

o While productivity data were not readily available, the staffing level of the Procurement Services unit was generally higher than peer school districts of comparable size.

Leadership and Management

- While management appears to be open to innovation and new ways of doing business, nothing seems to be changing and projects languish because there is no sense of urgency and detailed implementation plans do not appear to have been developed.

- The instability and uncertainly resulting from the designation of management positions as Interim Chief of Business Services and Interim Director of Procurement Services negatively affect the department's ability to set a cohesive direction and implement positive changes.

- The process for developing specifications for the proposed new ERP did not appear to have been robust enough to ensure that the new system would not simply replicate the current "as is" processes, but rather would take full advantage of best practices. The district reported that it retained an outside consultant to work with the district and its personnel in developing the scope and specifications of a new ERP, and that the work was not a duplication of the present system. However, the team did not see any evidence that a "gap analysis" had been conducted to identify needs *versus* capabilities; that offline processes had been incorporated into the system; or that an independent verification was made that the result was best-in-class. In addition, key stakeholders reported to the team that they were not involved in the process.

- The team did not see evidence that the Procurement Services unit (which should be a critical player) has been involved in bringing custodial services in-house or that the requisite due diligence (business-case planning) has been performed by those who have been involved in the process. For example, critical steps would involve developing (a) exit strategies from the current contract, and (b) identifying manpower, plant, equipment, and supplies needed to support an in-house operation

- The Procurement Services unit does not have a business plan with specific goals, objectives, timelines, resource allocations, accountabilities, metrics and reporting procedures that are linked to the district's strategic plan. For example –

o The department has adopted four SMART Goals for FY 17. (See Exhibit 4 below.)

Exhibit 4. Procurement Services SMART Goals for 2016-17

Destination 2025 Priority	Metric	Current Baseline	2016 Target

3 - Develop Teachers Leaders & Central Office	Fully implement 100% on-line vendor registration process	0%	100%
3 - Develop Teachers Leaders & Central Office	Achieve $500,000 in cost savings through procurement initiatives	10% ($50,000)	$500,000
3 - Develop Teachers Leaders & Central Office	Implement monthly staff professional development/training program	50%	
3 - Develop Teachers Leaders & Central Office	Fully implement new asset management/inventory policies and procedures	10%	100%

- o However, these goals are not supported by implementation plans, timelines, defined measurements of dollar goals, or specific outcomes desired.

- The Procurement Services unit is not a data-driven organization and does not maintain a metrics dashboard to monitor operational performance. For example, the organization does not have basic purchasing information, such as –

  - o Volume of requisitions, purchase orders, and contracts

  - o Average size and distribution of requisitions, purchase orders, and contracts

  - o Spend analysis

  - o Vendor analysis

  - o Dollar savings achieved through competitive procurements

  - o Disaggregated order fulfillment cycle time analysis

  - o Percent of contracts strategically sourced[7]

  - o KPIs or other benchmarking tools to measure performance or productivity[8].

- Procurement Services is transaction-centered, has not strategically focused on supply chain management, and has not adopted many 21st century tools to leverage efficiency and generate cost savings. For example--

  - o The district does not have a P-card program to generate rebate savings and reduce the volume of small requisitions and purchases orders.[9] The district reports that small

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[7] The strategic sourcing process includes assessment of the current spending, assessment of the supply market, total cost analyses, identification of suitable suppliers, development of a sourcing strategy, negotiation with suppliers for service levels and added value, tracking of results, and continuous improvement.

[8] The district reports that its current ERP system does not provide these reporting capabilities, which is something the team noted as well. The district is looking for a new ERP system, but it does not have the management direction in place that would make either the old or the new systems produce the kinds of analyses that the team believes is necessary.

purchases under $500 do not require a requisition or purchase order, but can be made via a payment request. However, the team does not believe that this practice creates the same kind of efficiencies that the district would see by using P-Cards.

- o It appears the district may under-utilize piggy-back contracting and buying consortia.

- o The district uses an on-line solicitation platform and conducts and awards bids on-line to achieve tactical efficiencies, but does not have or use e-procurement functionalities in its ERP to increase operational efficiencies (e.g., electronic bids and paperless workflows).

- o There does not appear to be a focus on the total cost of ownership in the acquisition process.

- o The team did not see the Department using detailed analyses to determine if there were high demand items that should be aggregated and contracted or if strategically sourced master contracts were in use beyond office supplies, computers, and interactive boards.[10]

- Organizational silos within the district and the Business Operations group limited communications, coordination, and collaboration among the various units and negatively affected the Procurement Services Department. For example--

- o There was no formalized acquisition planning or advanced notification of expiring contracts.

- o There are no final sign-offs on solicitations from both the end users and Procurement Services unit prior to their advertisement.

- o Senior leaders of user departments cited examples where solicitation specifications had been deleted or had unapproved restrictions added by the Procurement Services unit.

- o The team was told that cancellations and reissuances of RFPs had resulted from inadequate definitions of project scope and specifications that related to communications breakdowns.

- o The Procurement Services unit does not appear to leverage the Purchasing Review Committee to advance procurement policy issues.

- o The department does not conduct customer satisfaction surveys to identify areas in need of improvement.

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[9] The team noted that over 66 percent of purchase order payments were under $500 and 80 percent were less than $1,000.

[10]The district did produce (presumably from the existing ERP system) a report of district expenditures for 2016-2017 at line item detail with vendor name, description and amount. Though not perfect, it certainly could be used as a starting point for the type of analysis commented upon. The team hopes that the new ERP system would have a purchasing module that could produce this kind of report.

- The team became aware of several weaknesses in the district's internal controls within Procurement Services operations. For example –

  o The Internal Audit Department has not conducted an enterprise-level risk assessment to direct its work, nor has it developed a formalized plan to conduct audits of the district's procurement and payment functions and processes, which the Council has found to be high-risk areas in other districts where it has conducted similar peer reviews. The team was told by the internal auditor that his office was currently responsible for school compliance and school accounting only, but that's the point. Because of the narrow focus of the internal audit unit, it has not performed an enterprise-level risk assessment nor has it developed a formal plan to do so. It has also not conducted an internal audit of procurement operations per se.[11]

  o Academic professional-services contracts that individually exceed $100,000 can be submitted directly to the Board of Education for approval without the involvement of the Procurement Services unit.

  o It does not appear that direct payments to vendors are reviewed to ensure adherence to procurement policies.

  o The Procurement Department does not uniformly perform vendor evaluations, have formally defined debarment processes, or consistently incorporate performance penalties (i.e., liquidated damages) in its contracts.[12]

  o It was reported to the team that finance personnel have no formal role in facilities construction projects and do not have automated financial systems to manage multi-year construction contracts.[13]

  o There are no automated systems controls to prevent overspending of contracts.

  o The district's policies and procedures do not prohibit supervisors and their direct subordinates from participating on the same RFP evaluation team, exposing the process to the possibility of undue influence by the ranking individuals.

  o The team noted evidence of multiple numbers in the vendor file assigned to a single vendor, which could lead to duplicate payments and inaccurate spending reporting.

  o School board policy (V,E) specifies that the "superintendent's designee and/or general counsel are responsible for drafting, reviewing and, when necessary, revising the terms and conditions of the purchase order and bidding standards. This shall occur

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[11] The Council's team included a certified public accountant. (See attachment A.)

[12] The team noted that penalties are outlined in the district's contracts with the custodial cleaning services and transportation providers, and encourages the district to extend this practice to other providers.

[13] The Council has found that industry best practice includes (1) finance personnel that participates in and ensures that financial aspects are factors in project selection; (2) is the final Approver (for School Board approval of the CIP budget) for selected projects as part of the planning process; and (3) sets budget controls and is the final Approver of CIP expenditures.

annually, periodically, or on request of the board, superintendent, or the general counsel; or upon the recommendation of the purchasing department." The board's policy, however, does not clarify who has ultimate authority for these changes. In addition, contract values *could* be unilaterally increased by designated staff above their originally approved value without formal board approval.

o The team was told during interviews that Accounts Payable had to go to various departments asking for invoices rather than requiring or ensuring that vendors send their invoices directly to Accounts Payable.

o All travel expenses are not encumbered. While federal regulations require encumbrance of travel expenses incurred with federal monies, it does not appear that the district has the capability currently of encumbering all other travel-related expenses. The district reports being in the process of implementing a travel module with the ability to encumber funds for all travel expenses, but the team did not hear what the time-frame for this implementation was.

o There is no centralized receiving of capital assets to ensure they are properly identified, tagged, and accounted for.

o While personnel who breach purchasing policies are sent a notice of violation, repeat offenders are not tracked and superiors are not notified.

- None of the staff in the Procurement Services unit has professional certification[14] and there are no incentives to obtain such certifications, nor is there any formal professional development plan or cross-training for employees.

- The effectiveness of the local preference program has not been evaluated to determine if it has met the Board of Education's intended purposes and objectives.

Operations

- There is a general perception within SCS that the procurement process takes too long. While this concern appears legitimate, the team found that cycle times are affected by several external factors. For example -

o Federal program requisitions require an excessive number (four to six) of approvals outside the Procurement Department.

o It was reported to the team that items being presented to the Board of Education for approval require six weeks' notice to be posted on the Board's agenda.

o Staff of the Fast Lane unit indicated that 20 percent of lower-value requisitions received are rejected due to errors.

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[14] Several professional procurement organizations offer certification programs, including the Certified Public Procurement Officer (CPPO) and Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB) programs.

- The team was told that while there are non-federal and federal funds templates and the General Counsel's office uses a standard template in RFP/RFQ documents; the procurement unit does not always use standard templates for issuing RFPs, contracts, or terms and conditions.

- There is no formal policy or adopted procedure for protesting contract or purchase awards or other procurement decisions.

- A current memorandum of delegation for contract signatures does not exist.

- Personnel in the Procurement Services unit do not appear to be fully aware of the provisions of federal procurement guidelines and The Uniform Grant Guidance requirements and deadlines.[15]

- There is no program to encourage early-payment discounts. (The only evidence of such discounts appears to be when a vendor offers it).

Recommendations

1. Consolidate the procurement functions and resources currently in the General Counsel's office into the Procurement Services Department to provide uniformity, consistency, and efficiency in purchasing and contracting.

2. Organizationally relocate the Asset Management function under the Chief Financial Officer to bring additional focus to establishing a single, accurate inventory system for capitalized assets.

3. Reorganize the resources within the consolidated Procurement Services Department by converting Fast Lane positions into Buyers and by charging each Buyer with responsibility for priority processing of lower-value requisitions.

4. Permanently appoint leaders who have the appropriate skill-sets, training, experience, and attitude to expertly execute their responsibilities.

5. Involve all relevant stakeholders in a thorough review to confirm that the specifications in the proposed new ERP ensures that the system has the capability to take full advantage of best practices and innovative procurement techniques. The district should not rely solely on the assurances of the consultant.

6. Before embarking on a project to in-source custodial services, ensure that a comprehensive business plan has been developed in coordination with human resources,

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[15] On December 26, 2013, the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued rules that combine several OMB Circulars into one document titled "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards." This document is also referred to as the Uniform Grant Guidance. Administrative requirements and cost principles are effective for new awards after December 26, 2014.

finance, facilities, procurement, and school management that encompasses implementation steps, timelines, and resource requirements.[16]

7. Expand the portfolio and responsibilities of the Internal Audit Department[17] to include--

    a. Conducting an enterprise-level risk assessment

    b. Developing an annual audit plan

    c. Preforming a review and evaluation of internal controls in the procurement and disbursement areas

    d. Conducting a performance audit of the purchasing and contracting processes

    e. Supplement the Internal Audit Department's professional development program for staff to address the proposed expanded role of the unit.

8. Develop and execute a business plan for the Procurement Services Department with specific goals, implementation plans, timelines, resource allocations, accountabilities, and reporting calendars that are linked to the district's strategic plan.

9. Establish basic measures of performance, including KPIs and other benchmarking tools to measure performance and productivity, and ensure that the new ERP system can perform the following kinds of analysis--–

    a. Volume of requisitions, purchase orders, and contracts,

    b. Average size and distribution of requisitions, purchase orders, and contracts

    c. Spend analysis

    d. Vendor analysis

    e. Dollar savings achieved through competitive procurement, negotiations, and cost-avoidance strategies

    f. Disaggregated order fulfillment cycle time analysis

    g. Percent of contracts strategically sourced

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[16] Since its site visit, the Council was informed that the insourcing of custodial services is no longer under consideration. The Council recommends, however, that the district require comprehensive business plans in coordination with stakeholders, which include implementation steps, timelines, and resource requirements for all major projects, programs and initiatives.

[17] The Council team has included some limited number of findings and recommendations concerning internal audits in this report because it has found high-risk problems in other districts where it has conducted similar peer reviews in the interface of procurement and internal audit.

10. Adopt a strategically focused organization by implementing a supply-chain management approach, which will leverage efficiencies and generate cost savings. These include -

    a. Implementation of e-commerce techniques for efficiently broadcasting solicitations and receiving informal quotes, bids and proposals, issuing purchase orders, and establishing automated catalogs with punch-outs to pre-contracted vendors.

    b. Implementation of a P-Card system with appropriate controls to improve efficiency (freeing up staff to focus on more strategic and higher value procurements), reduce costs, and achieve rebates.

    c. Continue expansion of piggy-back contracting and the use of buying consortia.

    d. Aggregation of multiple purchases into master contracts to balance choice and take advantage of economies of scale.

    e. Re-evaluate current purchasing thresholds (bid limits) and work with other state governmental entities to increase those that would increase efficiencies and reduce costs and delays.

    f. Establishment of a focus on the total cost of ownership.

11. Involve stakeholders in strategic procurement decisions by focusing adequate time on front–end scope development to ensure stakeholder goals and district interests are met in the procurement process.[18]

12. Establish a pre-solicitation sign off process for the Procurement Services unit and its customers to help ensure specifications and requirements are complete and agreed upon.

13. Establish a professional certification and training program for buyers, including training on The Uniform Grant Guidance requirements.

14. Create a uniform vendor evaluation system with performance measures, liquidated damages, and a debarment process that is applied to all vendors.

15. Review, update, or establish standardized templates for all RFPs, contracts, and terms and conditions.

16. Execute a current memorandum of delegation for contract signatures.

17. Create a policy and process for protesting contract awards or other purchasing decisions.

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[18] The district indicates that end-scope development for an acquisition is the responsibility of the purchasing stakeholder, not procurement. But the team notes that this is not industry best practice. The partnership on front-end scope development results in tighter specifications, reduces cycle time by avoiding amendments, improves expectations in contract deliverables, ensures legally required aggregation, improves efficiency by strategic sourcing, etc.

18. Develop a program to negotiate, automate, and track early payment discounts.

19. Breakdown organizational silos and improve communications within the Business Operations group by conducting regularly scheduled meetings, developing cross-departmental goals that require collaboration, and conducting customer satisfaction surveys.

20. Conduct evaluations of the local-preference programs to determine its effectiveness in addressing the Board of Education's objectives.

21. Evaluate the Direct Payment process (those payments made without a purchase order) to ensure these transactions are reviewed and approved by the Procurement Services unit and are in accordance with district policy.

ATTACHMENT A. STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAM

Robert Carlson

Robert Carlson is Director of Management Services for the Council of the Great City Schools. In that capacity, he provides Strategic Support Teams and manages operational reviews for superintendents and senior managers; convenes annual meetings of Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Transportation Directors, and Chief Information Officers and Technology Directors; fields hundreds of requests for management information; and has developed and maintains a Web-based management library. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Carlson was an executive assistant in the Office of the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools. He holds doctoral and master's degrees in administration from The Catholic University of America; a B.A. degree in political science from Ohio Wesleyan University; and has done advanced graduate work in political science at Syracuse University and the State Universities of New York.

David Koch

David Koch is the former Chief Administrative Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the nation's second largest public-school system. Mr. Koch's responsibilities encompassed virtually all non-instructional operations of the District, including finance, facilities, information technology, and all business functions. Mr. Koch also served the LAUSD as Business Manager, Executive Director of Information Services, and Deputy Controller. Mr. Koch was also Business Manager for the Kansas City, Missouri Public School District and was with Arthur Young and Company prior to entering public service. He is a graduate of the University of Missouri and a Certified Public Accountant in the states of California, Missouri, and Kansas. Currently a resident of Long Beach, California, Mr. Koch provides consulting services to public sector clients and companies doing business with public sector agencies.

Gary Appenfelder

Gary Appenfelder has been the Director of Purchasing & Ethics for the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools for nearly six years. Prior to that, Mr. Appenfelder had over 30 years of experience in private industry Procurement, Supply Chain, and Operations Management with a variety of world-leading companies such as Texas Instruments, Koch Industries, and Cray Research. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and served his country for nine years as a U.S. Marine Corps jet pilot.

Kristen DeCato

Kristen DeCato is the Director of Procurement & Risk Management for the Milwaukee Public Schools and has been with the district for 8 years in various capacities. In this capacity, she is responsible for all district purchasing and contracting, and managing the district's risk portfolio, including workers' compensation and all insured programs. Prior to moving the public education, Ms. DeCato practiced law for 5 years, representing public and private clients, including school districts and other municipal entities. Ms. DeCato also served as a contributing

author to the white paper published by the Council of Great City School entitled: *Enterprise Risk Management in the Great City Schools*. Ms. DeCato is a graduate of James Madison University and a juris doctor from University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

Michael Eugene

Michael Eugene is the Chief Operating Officer for the Orange (Florida) County Public Schools. In that capacity, he leads Food & Nutrition Services, Transportation, Information Technology, Safety & Security, Procurement & Contracts, Warehouse Operations, and Building Code Compliance. Prior to joining Orange County, he was Business Manager for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Mr. Eugene also served as the Chief Operating Officer for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Mr. Eugene serves in a voluntary capacity as co-director of the Council of the Great City Schools' "Managing for Results" KPI Program. Before joining public education, Mr. Eugene was a management consultant in the private and not-for-profit sectors, specializing in performance measurement, benchmarking, and public budgeting. Mr. Eugene holds a master's degree in public administration.

James Skrobo

James Skrobo has 17 years in education procurement and is the Purchasing Manager for the Omaha Public Schools. In this capacity, he has responsibility for and experience in service contract management, manages the daily activities of a staff of 13, and is the Division's software system super user. Mr. Skrobo has long experience particularly in the procurement of the commodity areas of computers, network infrastructure, short / long term services, furniture, music supplies and instruments, classroom supplies, textbooks, special education and vehicles. Mr. Skrobo was involved in the District's original implementation of the Financial Information System software, was the Functional Lead for the 2006 upgrade, and currently is in a leadership position for an upcoming upgrade and reimplementation of that system. His prior experience in private procurement included working with General Electric's Apparatus Service Division, as well as with Kiewit Construction on the nationwide Level 3 project. Mr. Skrobo graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Marketing.

Christopher Steele

Christopher Steele is the former Assistant Superintendent for Budget & Planning for the Portsmouth (Virginia) Public Schools, and previously served as the Senior Director of Purchases & Supply at Norfolk City Public Schools. Mr. Steele has over 30 years' experience in operational supply chain logistics, financial management, facility management and acquisition contracting with both the public (federal, state, and K-12) and private sector. Mr. Steele holds a master's degree in engineering and business from the University of Kansas, a master's degree in human resource management from Pepperdine University, and a B.S. degree in chemistry from Pennsylvania State University. Mr. Steele attained the following certifications: Certified Public Procurement Officer (CPPO), Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.), Certified Management Accountant (CMA), Certified Purchasing Card Professional (CPCP) and the highest certification level in the federal Acquisition Professional Corps.

DAYTON REPORT

2017

Review of the Organizational Structure and Staffing Levels of the Dayton Public Schools

BY THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Acknowledgements

The Council of the Great City Schools thanks the individuals who contributed to this project. Their efforts were critical to our ability to present the district with the best possible findings and recommendations.

First, we thank Superintendent Rhonda Corr for requesting this review and for following through to make sure that the study stayed on track. It is not easy to ask for reviews like this from the Council of the Great City Schools. It takes courage, openness, and uncompromising commitment to the city's children. Thank you.

Second, we thank the Board of Education, particularly Ronald Lee, for requesting the review and working to ensure that it was conducted.

Third, we thank Randall Harper, the district's internal auditor, who arranged most of the interviews and ensured that the Council had the data it needed to conduct its work. He was instrumental in moving this review forward and ensuring that the team was well supported during our visit.

Fourth, we thank the staff members of the Dayton Public Schools, who provided all the time, documents, and data the Council needed. We also thank them for their candid comments during interviews. Their openness and enthusiasm were critical to our understanding of the district's needs.

Finally, the Council thanks the city school districts that contributed staff to this effort: Albuquerque, Cleveland, Des Moines, Hillsborough County, Houston, Miami-Dade County, and Philadelphia. Everyone contributed his or her time *pro bono* to help the Dayton Public Schools improve. The enthusiasm and generosity of these districts serve as a further example of how the nation's urban public school systems are working together to help each other improve and reform. Thank you.

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Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

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A. Origins and Purpose of the Project

I. Origin and Goals of the Project

Rhonda Corr, Superintendent of the Dayton Public Schools (DPS), requested that the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) conduct a high-level review of the organizational structure and staffing levels of the Dayton Public Schools.[1] Specifically, the Council was asked to:

- Provide a review and evaluation of the organization and management structure of the Dayton Public Schools,

- Examine overall staffing levels compared to other urban school districts,

- Utilize statistical data to compare Dayton Public Schools to other urban school districts in terms of (a) FTE number of administrators, (b) students per school administrator, and (c) total administrator personnel cost,

- Determine proper spans of control, and

- Develop recommendations that would help the Dayton Public Schools optimize its structure to improve operational efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability while focusing on student achievement.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team (the team) comprised of current and former school district executives from major city school districts across the country to conduct this review. (Brief biographical sketches of team members are presented in Attachment A.) The team was composed of the following individuals—

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

Tom Ryan (Principal Investigator)
Chief Information Officer (Retired)
Albuquerque Public Schools

Gretchen Saunders
Chief Business Officer
Hillsborough (Tampa) County Public Schools

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[1] The Council has conducted some 300 instructional, organizational, management, and operational reviews in over 50 big-city school districts over the last 15 years. The reports generated by these reviews are often critical, but they also have been the foundation for improving the performance of many urban school systems nationally. In other cases, the reports are complimentary and form the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate. (Appendix G lists the reviews that the Council has conducted.)

Thomas Harper
Chief Financial Officer
Des Moines Public Schools

Jose L. Dotres
Chief Human Capital Officer
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Karen Rudys
Executive Director of Labor Relations & Staffing
Albuquerque Public Schools

Christopher Farkas
Chief Operating Officer
Hillsborough County (Tampa) Public Schools

Patrick Zohn
Chief Operating Officer
Cleveland Municipal School District

Frances Burns
Chief Operating Officer
School District of Philadelphia

Scott Gilhousen
Director, IT, Engineering & Operations
Houston Independent School District

Robin Hall
Director of Language Arts and Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools

Denise Walston
Director of Mathematics
Council of the Great City Schools

The team conducted fieldwork for the project during a four-day site visit to Dayton on March 21-24, 2017. The general schedule for the site visit is described below. (The Working Agenda is presented in Attachment B.).

The team used the first day to review various documents, reports, and data that had been provided by the district; and made last minute adjustments to the working agenda. The team met with the Superintendent to discuss her expectations and objectives for the review, and conducted interviews with key executive staff members of the central office on the second day of the site visit. The third day was devoted to conducting interviews with additional administrative staff (Directors, Managers, or their equivalents) of major departments. The final day of the visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and recommendations.

The Council sent the draft of this document to the team for its review in order to ensure that the report accurately reflected their findings and to obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations.

This report identifies deficiencies in the current organizational structure, staffing levels of the central office, and some overarching operational concerns. It then offers recommendations to restructure the district and realign functions that could help the district achieve greater operational efficiency and effectiveness and enhance the ability to meet its strategic mission.

This approach of providing technical assistance, peer reviews, and support to urban school districts to improve student achievement and operational effectiveness is unique to the Council of the Great City Schools and its members, and the process has proven to be effective over the years for a number of reasons.

First, the approach allows the Superintendent and staff to work directly with talented, experienced practitioners from other major urban school systems that have established track records of performance and improvement. No one can claim that these individuals do not know what working in a large school system like Dayton means.

Second, the recommendations developed by these peer teams have validity because the individuals who developed them have faced many of the same problems now encountered by the school system requesting a Council review. Team members are aware of the challenges faced by urban schools, and their strategies have been tested under the most rigorous conditions.

Third, using senior urban school managers from other cities is faster and less expensive than retaining a large management consulting firm. It does not take team members long to determine what is going on in a district. This rapid learning curve permits reviews that are faster and less expensive than could be secured from experts who are not so well versed on how urban school systems work.

Fourth, the reports generated from this process are often more hard-hitting and pointed than what school systems often get when hiring a consulting business that may pull its punches because of the desire for repeat business. For the Council, this work is not a business (and members of the team are not compensated); it is a mission to help improve public education in the country's major urban school systems.

Finally, the teams comprise a pool of expertise that a school system such as Dayton can call upon to implement recommendations or develop alternative plans and strategies. The Council would be pleased to put this team and others at the disposal of the new Superintendent as she works to carry out recommendations and pursue other reforms.

II. Contents of This Report

This report is made up of several chapters. This, the first chapter (A), describes the origin and goals of the project, lays out the process involved, and presents the individuals who participated. The second chapter (B) presents a brief overview of the Dayton public schools and its demographics. The third chapter (C) lays out the broad findings of the Strategic Support Team. The

fourth chapter (D) presents the team's recommendations. And the final chapter (E) presents a synopsis of the team's overall observations, synthesizes results, and presents next steps.

The appendices of the report include the following:

- Attachment A. Biographical sketches of members of the Strategic Support Teams who participated in this project.

- Attachment B. The working agenda for the team's site visit.

- Attachment C. A list of documents and materials reviewed by the Strategic Support Teams.

- Attachment D. A list of individuals the Strategic Support Teams interviewed—either individually or in groups—during their site visits.

- Attachment E. A history of Strategic Support Teams the Council of the Great City Schools has fielded over the last 18 years.

B. About the Dayton Public Schools

The Dayton Public Schools (DPS) serves some 13,800 students in pre-K through grade 12 and operates 28 schools. The school district's enrollment has been in decline for many years.

The district employs about 2,069 FTE individuals, including 981 teachers, and it had an operating budget of $248.4 million in FY2016—or about $18k per student.

DPS is governed by a seven-member Board of Education, all of whom are elected. The board appoints the Superintendent of Schools, who is responsible for the instructional program of the district and the effective operation of the school system. The Superintendent is also responsible for the efficient management of the district's approved budget.

The school system's mission is *to equip our students to achieve success in a global society by implementing an effective and rigorous curriculum with fidelity.* The district's goals involve high-quality education, high-quality faculty and staff, engaged parents, community collaboration and partnerships, and fiscal responsibility and accountability.

DPS offers a range of learning experiences, including gifted and talented (GT) courses, career and technical education (CTE), English as a Second Language (ESL), early college programs, STEM courses, visual and performing arts, single gender education, online courses, and early college. The district has—

- 18 pre-k to 8 schools
- 2 middle schools
- Six high schools
- One special center (Longfellow)
- One virtual academy
- Two community schools

Students enrolled in DPS are diverse, both racially and socioeconomically. Over two thirds (68 percent) of the district's students are African American. White students constitute the next largest racial/ethnic group, and total over a quarter (28.0 percent) of district enrollment. Hispanic students comprise about 2.0 percent of the district's enrollment.

Nearly all of DPS' students are classified as low income based on free or reduced-price lunch status. This figure is no longer officially reported because the district uses the federal community eligibility factor in determining school lunch status, and the results are not fully comparable to past free or reduced-price lunch eligibility statistics.

In general, student achievement in Dayton is among the lowest in the state. However, some 85 percent of third graders met the state's third-grade reading guarantee promotion score.

The district's four-year graduation rate has remained at around 72 percent for several years. The average ACT score in 2015-16 among students taking the exam was 19.

At the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, the district had to reduce staff significantly because of declining enrollments over well more than a decade. Reductions in Force were made across a range of positions, and the action prompted the Superintendent to request this report.

C. Findings and Observations

The findings of the Council's Strategic Support Team are organized into four general areas: Overarching Concerns; Organizational Structure; Staffing Levels of the Central Office; and Operational Issues.

Overarching Concerns

The overarching concerns that surfaced as a result of the team's interviews with staff involve the following—

- The fall 2016 Reduction in Force (RIF) was intended to correct overstaffing during the 2015-2016 school year at a cost of $5,500,000, but it may have cut too deeply into central office administrative departments and may have marginalized their ability to operate efficiently and effectively in support of schools.

- The team did not see evidence that the 2016 RIF involved a detailed business plan that provided cost justifications or an effective change management strategy to mitigate operational risks.

- The 2016 RIF resulted in a reorganization of the central office administrative structure (see the district's 2016-2017 Central Office Organizational Chart in Exhibit 1 below) that has wide spans of control, omissions in key positions, and a lack of clarity in positions. It also resulted in misalignments in functions that the Council has not observed in reviews of other urban school districts.

- It does not appear there was a strategic restructuring or realignment of functions for positions that were eliminated in the 2016 RIF, so job responsibilities have been unclear, work has not been adequately transitioned to remaining staff, and employees are uncertain about where they should go for decisions and direction. The team heard that "one staff member with limited knowledge of department functions and staff roles drove the 2016-2017 organization structure."

- The rationale for the reorganization was not clearly communicated, and the lack of understanding of the resulting structure and why certain decisions were made has raised concerns about the district's future among staff. The team heard, for example, that—

    o There was a dearth of routinely scheduled meetings between the Superintendent, leadership, and department managers. And some staff members and principals stated they had not yet met the Superintendent.

    o Department-level management staff and school site administrators were not informed or given a voice in decisions that affected their departments or sites, and

had limited opportunities to raise concerns to cabinet-level management. This led to unintended consequences, such as—

- Overlaps in district and state assessments
- Difficulties in the roll-out of the 1:1 initiative and several programs that were procured during SY 2016, e.g., Achieve 3000, Imagine Learning, Big Brainz, and ALEKs mathematics programs
- Changes in bus schedules from three tiers to two tiers that negatively affected schools

- The team saw no evidence that there were clear external or internal communications channels that would facilitate coordination between departments. This was at least partly due to the fact that the position that would head the department, e.g., the Office of Strategic Communication, was vacant and it was unclear when the position would be filled.

Organizational Structure

- **Spans of Control**

  o Some 17 staff members and/or departments report directly or indirectly to the Superintendent. This is an unusually wide span of control.[2] See Exhibit 1. Specifically—

    - Two staff positions (General Counsel and an Administrative Assistant) are direct reports to the Superintendent; and one staff department (the Office of Assessment, Accountability, and Research) has a dotted-line relationship to the Superintendent.

    - Five departments have a direct reporting relationship to the Superintendent—the Chief Academic Officer, the Office of Student Services, the Office of Human Resources, the Office of Strategic Communications, and Chief Operating Officer.

    - Eight staff and/or departments have a dotted-line relationship to the Superintendent (Chief of Schools North, Chief of Schools South, Chief on Special Assignment, Director of Grants Administration, Director of Athletics, Chief of Office for Exceptional Children, Executive Director for Safety and Security, and the Director of Transportation) report indirectly to the Superintendent.

    - One additional department (Treasurer's Office) has a dual reporting relationship with the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

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[2] As a rule, wide spans of control tend to foster operational silos that restrict the flow of information within an organization and across various line positions. Without intentional cross-functional collaboration, it also inhibits cooperation and teamwork, narrows the focus of managers, leads to a lack of awareness of priorities outside the silo, fosters insular decision-making and budgeting, and is often excessively hierarchical.

- o At the same time, a number of line staff have unusually narrow spans of control. For instance, the Chief Academic Officer has only four direct reports on the organizational chart: Chief of Schools (north), Chief of Schools (south), Chief on Special Assignment, and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The first three positions also have a dotted line relationship with the Superintendent.

Exhibit 1. Organization of the Central Administration
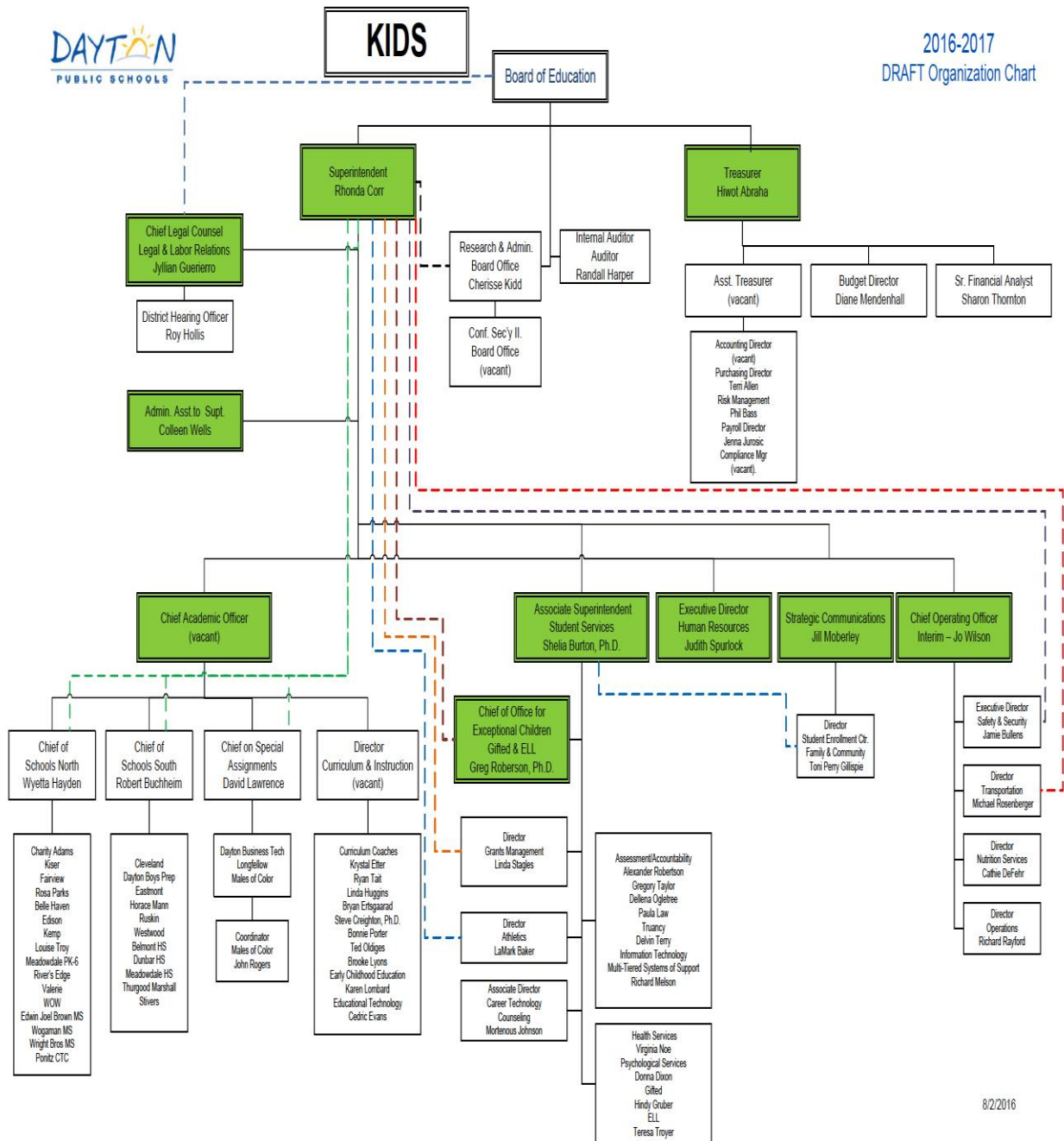
- **Omissions, Lack of Clarity, or Misalignments in Existing Functions**

  o The Superintendent's Executive Cabinet (which is posted on the district's website) is comprised of the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, the Associate Superintendent of Student Services, the Chief Academic Officer, the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Legal Counsel, Chiefs of Schools-North and South, and the Chief of the Office for Exceptional Children. However, the cabinet does not include critically important staff members from other areas that are often included in the executive cabinets of other Council member districts, e.g., the Chief of Staff, Chief Communications Officer, Chief Operating Officer (COO), the Chief Information Officer (CIO), and the Office of Safety and Security.

  o The Internal Auditor reports directly to the Board of Education, but there is no reporting line to the Superintendent, who normally facilitates the day-to-day operations of the office in other Council member districts.[3]

  o The Budget Director reports to the Treasurer, but it is unclear what reporting or working relationship exists between the Budget Director and the Superintendent.

  o The functional roles and responsibilities of the Directors and Associate Directors in the Office of Human Resources are not identified, as they are in other departments.

  o The Chief of the Office for Exceptional Children, which includes gifted education and English Language Learners, reports to the Associate Superintendent for Student Services instead of the Chief Academic Officer. In other Council member districts, the Chief of the Office for Exceptional Children typically reports to the Chief Academic Officer.

  o The Office of Student Services has roles and responsibilities that would not be performed by comparable offices in other Council member districts. For example—

    ▪ The Office of Research, Assessment, and Accountability (which oversees the administration of district and state, and national tests; conducts program evaluations, surveys, and other research-related activities; manages data related to local, state, and federal accountability standards; transmits data to the U.S. Department of Education; fills data and information requests from internal and external clients; and trains staff in using data to make informed decisions) would typically report to the Superintendent, which is considered "best practice," or to a Chief Academic Officer

    ▪ The Office of Information Technology (which is responsible for maintaining reliable, secure technology infrastructure, and resources that support teaching and learning for students, staff, faculty and community) would normally report to the

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[3] There is also no audit committee, which is typically comprised of volunteers from the community who are experts in auditing, finance, risk management, and government that would act as liaison and advisor to the Board of Education and shield the internal audit function from any actual or perceived pressure to compromise its objectivity and independence.

Superintendent or to a major department, since IT manages the systems and applications that undergird the work of other departments, e.g., Research, Accountability, and Assessment; Finance; Human Resources; and Operations.

- The Office of State and Federal Grants Management (which ensures compliance and guarantees state and federal grants supplement and align with the district's vision, initiatives, and programs) typically reports to either the Chief Academic Officer because of its programmatic importance, or to the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer because of the fiduciary nature of the role.

- The Chief on Special Assignment with a coordinator and specific programmatic focus (Males of Color) would typically be viewed as a staff position reporting to the Chief Academic Officer rather than as a separate department, since its managerial and administrative responsibilities are not comparable to those of a Chief of Schools or a Director of Curriculum and Instruction (Teaching and Learning).

o The Office of Student Services and its various functions, e.g., athletics, health, CTE, counseling, etc., generally report to the Chief Academic Officer in other major urban school districts.

o The Office of Strategic Communication (which is "responsible for oversight and coordination of the district's internal and external communication efforts") is represented as a department with no reporting line. In other Council member districts, this is a staff position that reports directly to the Superintendent. In other cases, it is its own department reporting to the Superintendent.

o The Director of the Student Enrollment Center, who is responsible for registering children in the Dayton Public Schools, is a direct report to the Department of Strategic Communications and not to the Associate Superintendent for Student Services.

o There is no project management function or operation in the district.

Management and Staff Levels

The Council team used a number of federal and state data sources from differing years to determine whether the Dayton Public Schools were staffed at the right level.

- The most recent federal source of staffing data is from the National Center for Educational Statistics. Its main advantage is that it allows one to compare staffing levels in Dayton with any other school district or set of school districts in the nation. In this case, we compared Dayton's staffing levels with those in other Great City School districts, with school districts nationally with enrollments of at least 15,000 students, and with school districts in Ohio. The main disadvantage of this data base is that the most recent data are from 2013-14. However, this does allow for an examination of staffing levels before Dayton instituted its RIF. Findings from this data base indicate the following—

o In general, staffing levels in Dayton in 2013-14 were considerably higher than the median Great City School district. The district had 6.07 students for every staff member that year, compared with an urban school median of 8.11 students per staff member. (Exhibit 2.)

o Some 40.31 percent of all staff in the Dayton Public Schools in 2013-14 were teachers, compared with the median among the Great City School districts of 51.06 percent. In other words, the district had more staff that were not teachers that year than the median urban school district. (Exhibit 3.)

o On the other hand, the ratio of pupils to teachers in Dayton was 15.05 in 2013-14, compared to a Great City School median of 16.06. In other words, the district had as many, if not slightly more, teachers than one would expect for its enrollment that year, but it had unusually large numbers of other staff. (Exhibit 4.)

o The district had considerably more administrators than the median Great City School district in 2013-14. That year, the district had 55.94 students per administrator, compared with the urban median of 74.73 students per administrator. (Exhibit 5.)

o In addition, the Dayton Public Schools had 120.42 students per district-level administrator in 2013-14 (using the most recently available federal NCES data) versus the median of 212.23 in other Great City School districts in the same year. In other words, the district that year had almost twice as many district-level administrators for its enrollment as the median urban school district nationwide. (Exhibit 6.)

o The district also had 104.48 students per school-level administrator in 2013-14, compared with 114.42 in the median Great City School district. (Exhibit 7.)

o If one compares Dayton with the average (not median) staff numbers among school districts with enrollments at or above 15,000 students nationally in 2013-14 and the Great City School districts, then it is clear that Dayton's staffing patterns are dissimilar from both. (Exhibit 8.)

o However, the staff configuration in Dayton looks more like other school districts in Ohio than the median Great City School district or districts nationally with enrollments of 15,000 students or more. Still, Dayton had somewhat more staff than the average Ohio school district in 2013-14.

o If one assumes—with these NCES data—that all ratios among other Great City School districts remained the same in 2016-17 as they were in 2013-14, and one applied Dayton's 2016-17 total staffing count (2,069) and enrollment (13,275), then one would have to conclude that the RIF did NOT cut too many people. (Students per staff member: 6.42; students per central office staff: 109.71; students per teacher: 13.53; students per school administrator and support staff member: 57.72.) One should keep in mind that this conclusion is based on norm data and not a standard.

Exhibit 2. Students per Total Staff in the Dayton Public Schools
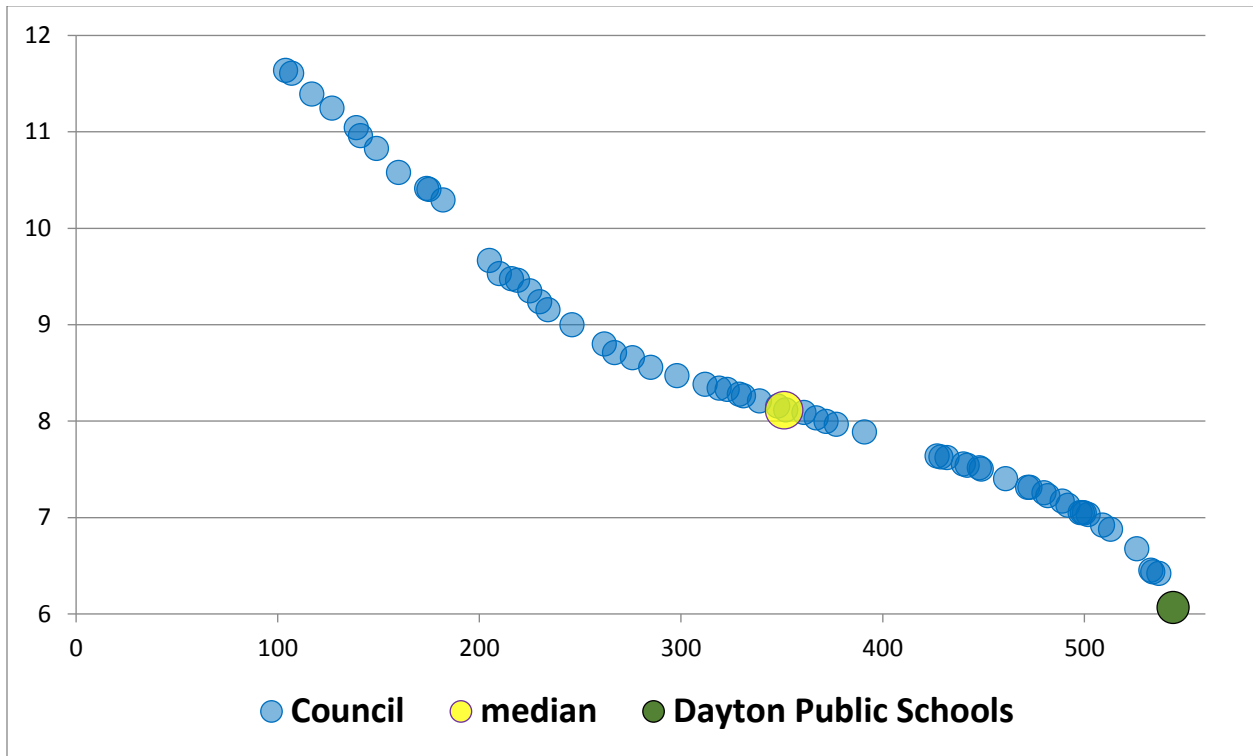
Exhibit 3. Teachers as a Percent of Total Staff in the Dayton Public Schools
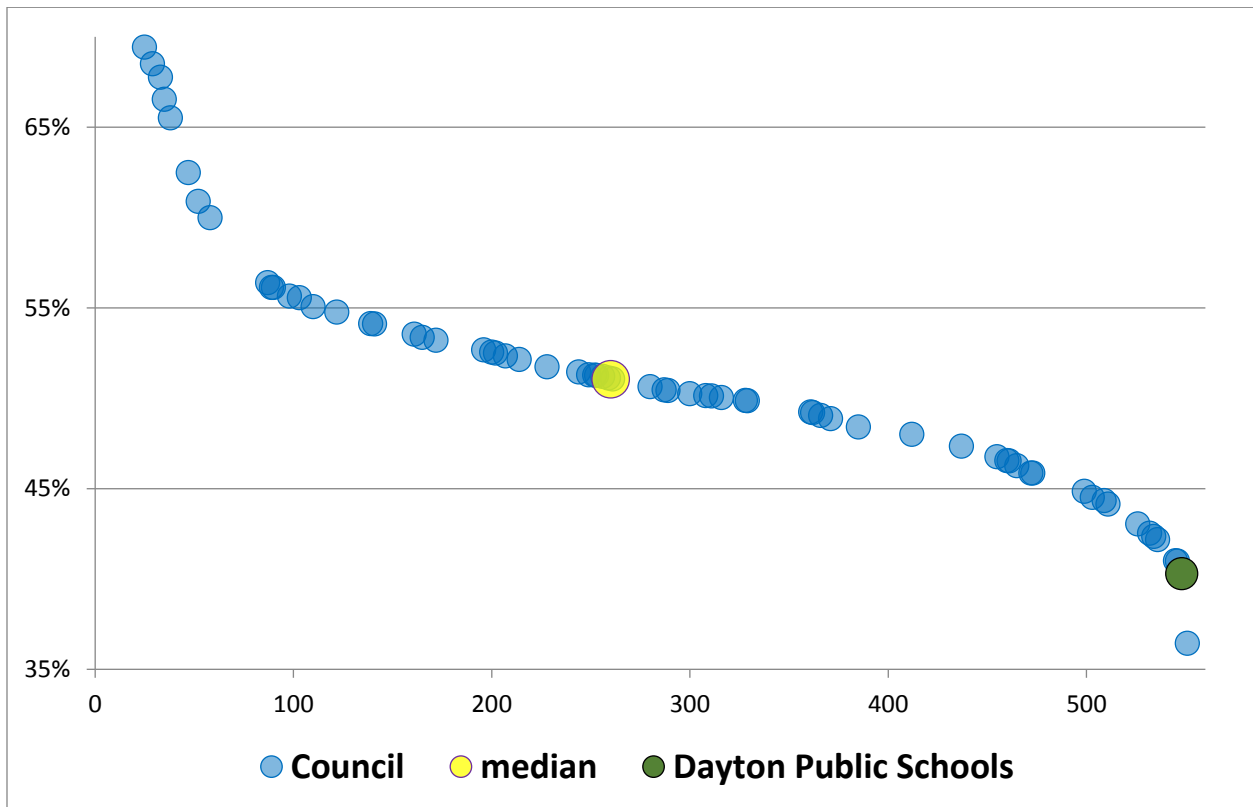
Exhibit 4. Number of Students per Teacher in the Dayton Public Schools
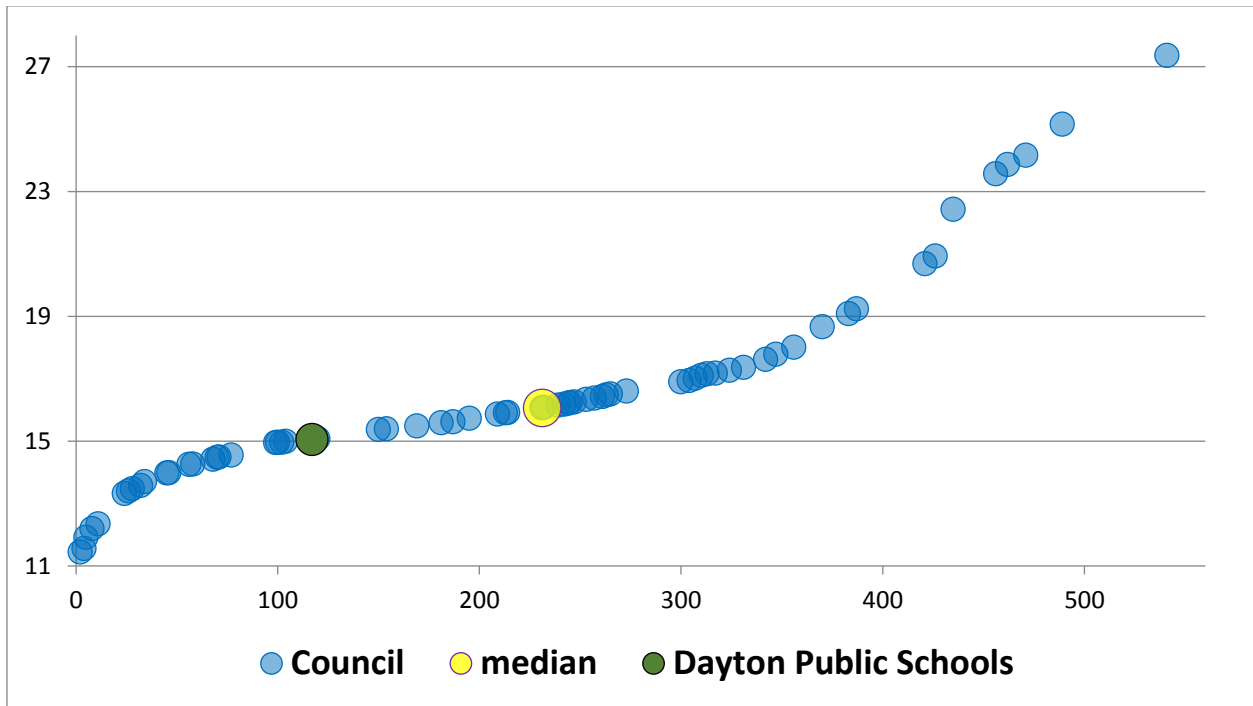
Exhibit 5. Number of Students per Total Administrative Staff in the Dayton Public Schools
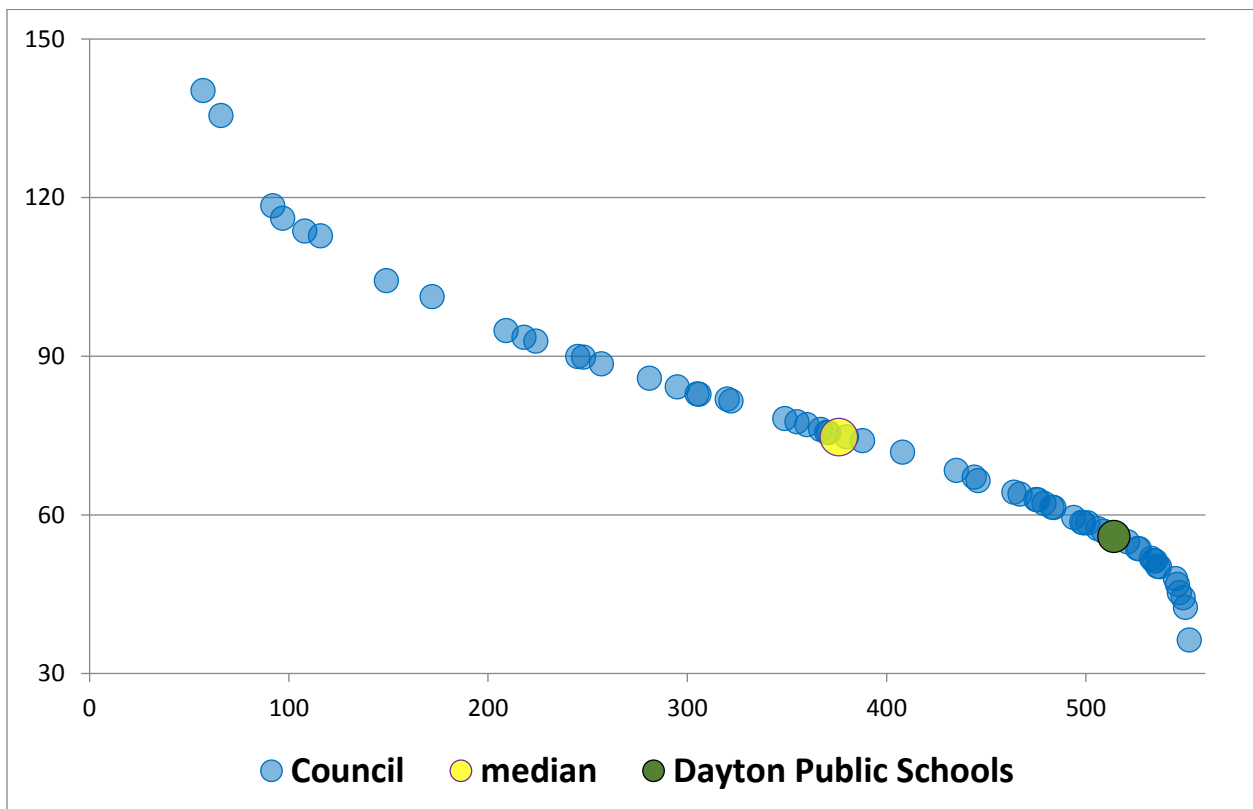
Exhibit 6. Number of Students per District-level Administrator

Students per LEA Administration
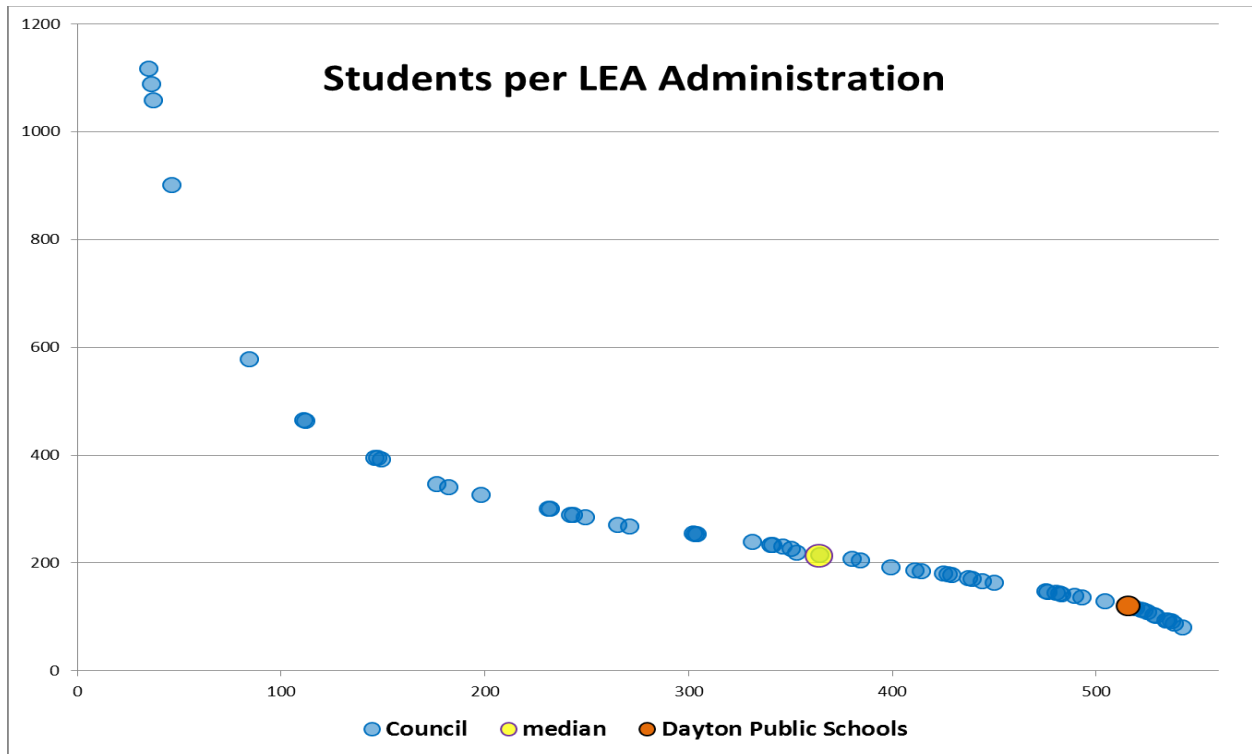
Exhibit 7. Number of Students per School-level Administrator
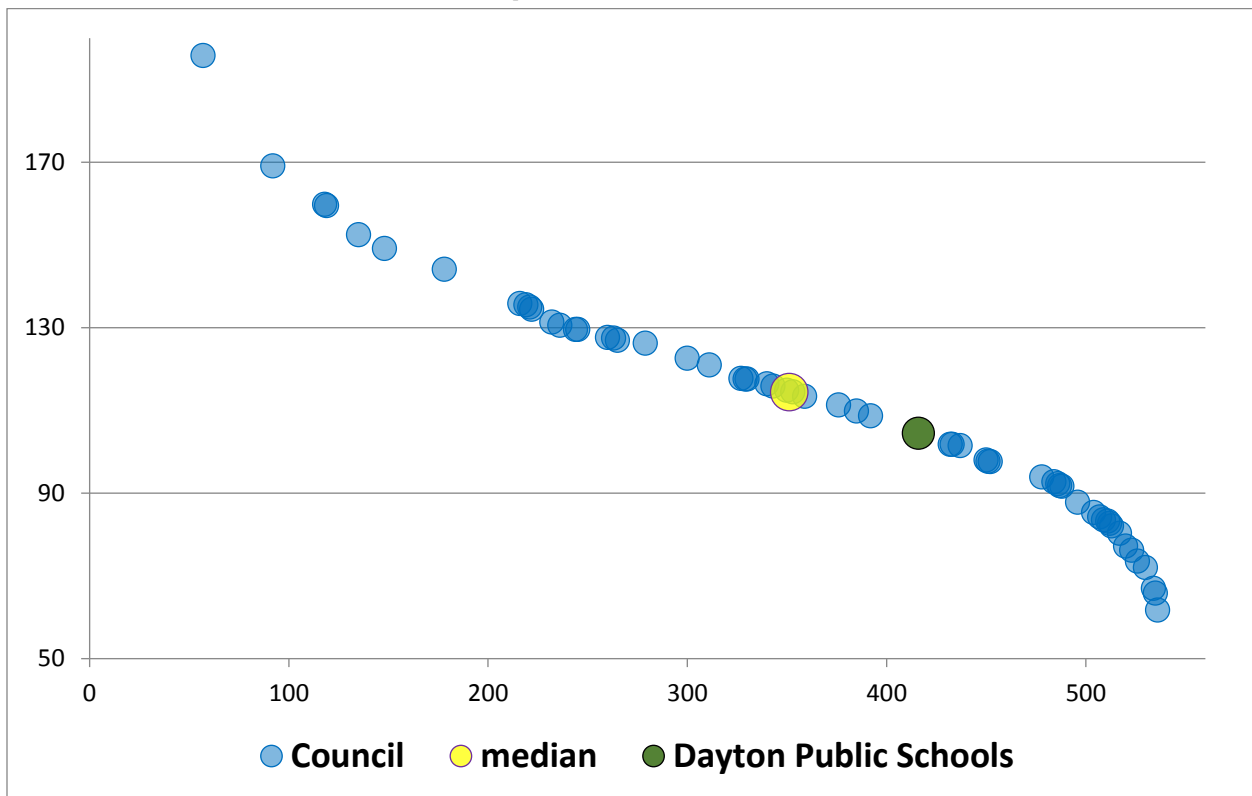
Exhibit 8. Mean Staffing Percentages in Dayton by Position Category Compared with the Averages in Ohio, School Districts Nationally with Enrollments of at least 15,000, and the Great City Schools, 2013-14[4]

Staff Category	Dayton	Ohio Mean	15+ Mean	Great City Schools Mean
TOTTCH	40.31%	44.56%	52.15%	52.32%
AIDES	12.72%	7.39%	10.75%	11.07%
CORSUP	0.26%	1.89%	1.43%	1.52%
TOTGUI	0.56%	1.82%	1.78%	1.70%
LIBSPE	0.30%	0.62%	0.73%	0.73%
LIBSUP	0.00%	1.12%	0.34%	0.27%
LEAADM+SUP	5.04%	9.36%	3.52%	3.98%
SCHADM	2.52%	2.31%	2.87%	2.88%
SCHSUP	3.29%	4.14%	4.18%	4.09%
STUSUP	7.98%	8.94%	4.40%	4.35%
OTHSUP	27.03%	17.85%	17.85%	17.10%
TOTSTAFF	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

o The Council also used the NCES database to compare total student enrollment to total staff ratios in Great City School districts with student counts similar to those in Dayton (Exhibit 9); to Great City School districts in Ohio (Exhibit 10); and to Great City School districts of any size that have shown recent academic improvements on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Exhibit 11).

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[4] TOTTCH: Percent of all staff who were teachers; AIDES: Percent of all staff who were instructional aides; CORSUP: Percent of all staff who were instructional coordinators or supervisors; TOTGUI: Percent of all staff who were guidance counselors; LIBSPE: Percent of all staff who were librarians or media specialists; LIBSUP: Percent of all staff who were library or media support staff members; LEAADM+LEASUP: Percent of all staff who were LEA administrators and administrative support; SCHADM: Percent of all staff who were school administrators; SCHSUP: Percent of all staff who were school administrative support staff; STUSUP: Percent of all staff who were student support services staff; and OTHSUP: Percent of all staff who were all other support services staff.

Exhibit 9. Students per Total Staff in Comparably Sized Great City School Districts
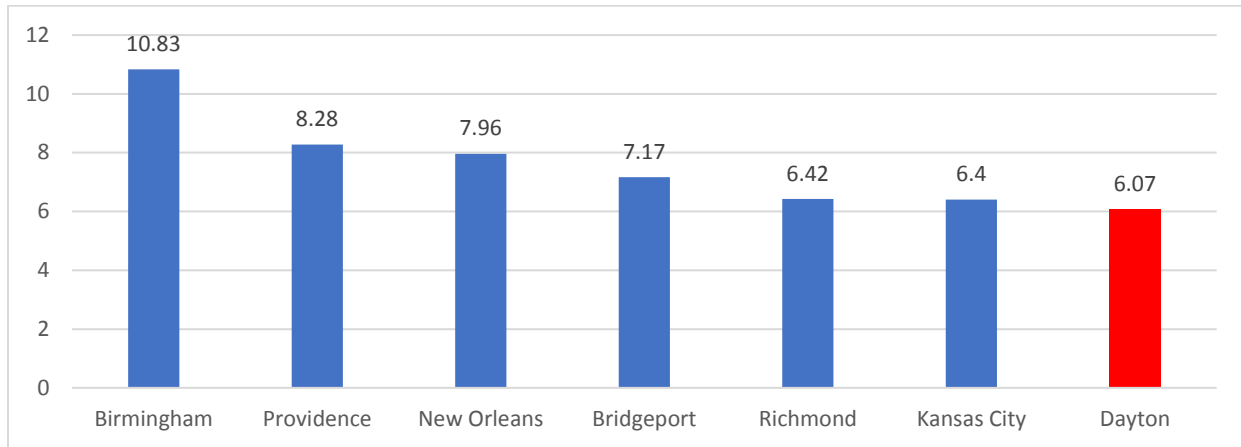
o   The data in Exhibit 9 compare student-to-total-staff ratios in Dayton to other Great City School systems with enrollments that are similar to Dayton using the NCES statistics. The results show that Dayton has fewer students per staff than any of the other comparison districts, i.e., Dayton had more total staff members than other districts of similar enrollment.

Exhibit 10. Students per Total Staff in Ohio Great City School Districts
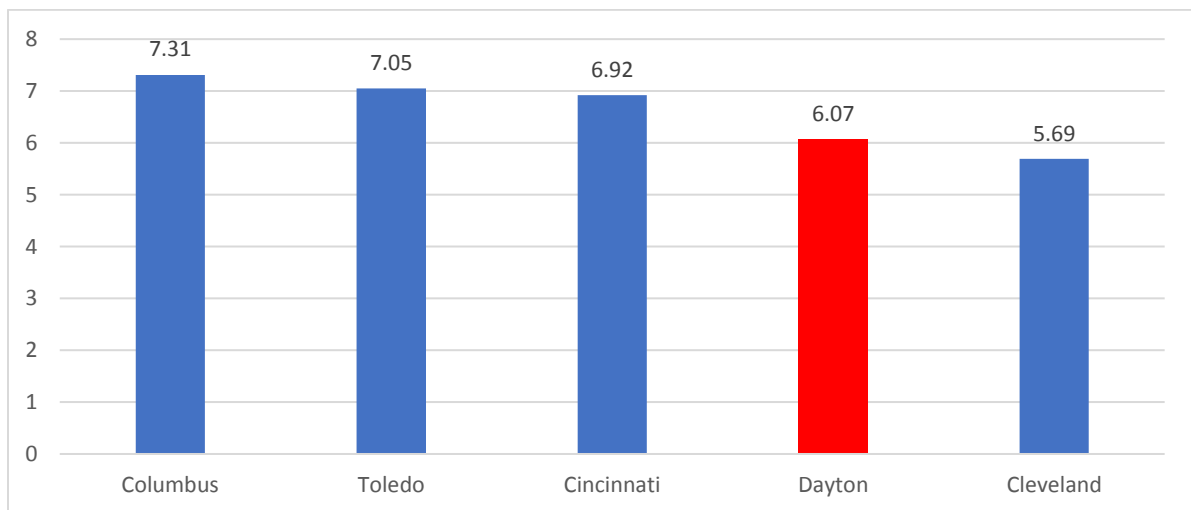
o   The data in Exhibit 10 compare student-to-total-staff ratios in Dayton to other Great City School systems in Ohio using the NCES statistics. The results show that Dayton's staffing looks more like other Great City School districts in Ohio than other urban school systems nationwide. Still, Dayton had more total staff, given its enrollment, than all other urban school systems in Ohio except Cleveland.

Exhibit 11. Students per Total Staff in Great City School Districts Showing NAEP Gains
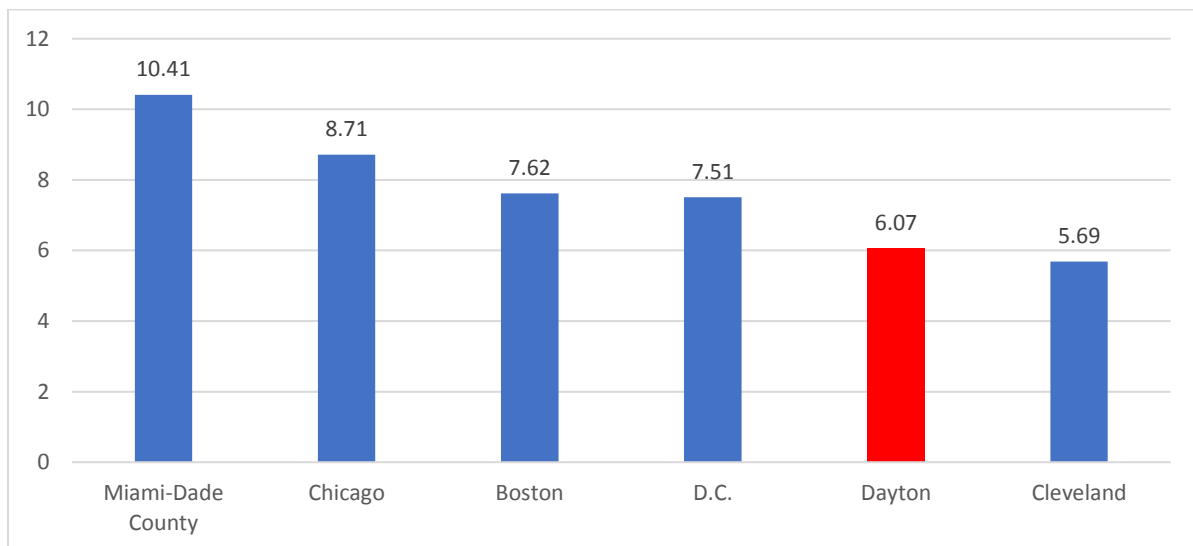
- The data in Exhibit 11 compare student-to-total-staff ratios in Dayton to other Great City School systems that have shown significant improvement on NAEP. The results show that Dayton had more staff for its enrollment, except Cleveland, than the other academically improving Great City School districts.

- The state staffing data in its CUPP Report presents another set of more up-to-date comparisons of Dayton with other districts in Ohio. The figures are not directly comparable to NCES figures because of differences in the definitions of terms, but the overall pattern of results is similar in both data sets. We will analyze the data in two ways: one using the district's *enrollment* counts for 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16; and the second using *average daily membership* for the same years. Like the NCES database, there are disadvantages to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) data: the database does not have a full count of staffing levels by district and the system does not divide district-level and school-level staff in the same way that NCES does. Nonetheless, findings from this data base indicate the following—

  - Dayton had 97.90 students *enrolled* per total administrative staff[5] districtwide in 2015-16, the most recent year for which ODE has posted data. This ratio has remained fairly consistent between 2013-14 and 2015-16 (Exhibit 12). This is the lowest ratio of any of the other Great City School systems, except Cleveland, meaning that Dayton has a larger number of administrators for its enrollment than Cincinnati, Columbus, and Toledo. This is the same general finding as was seen with the NCES data.

[5] FTE Number of Administrators include the following positions and codes: administrative assistants (101), deputy superintendent (103), assistant principal (104), school principle (108), superintendent (109), supervisor/manager (110), treasurer (112), coordinator (113), education administrative specialist (114), director (115), community school administrator (116), and other officials/administrators (199).

Exhibit 12. Students Enrolled per Total Administrative Staff in the Ohio Great City Schools

	13-14 SY	14-15 SY	15-16 SY
Cincinnati	127.50	182.33	174.71
Cleveland	93.06	69.34	63.83
Columbus	163.43	183.44	136.27
Dayton	96.78	86.39	97.90
Toledo	143.68	55.48	122.81

School Year
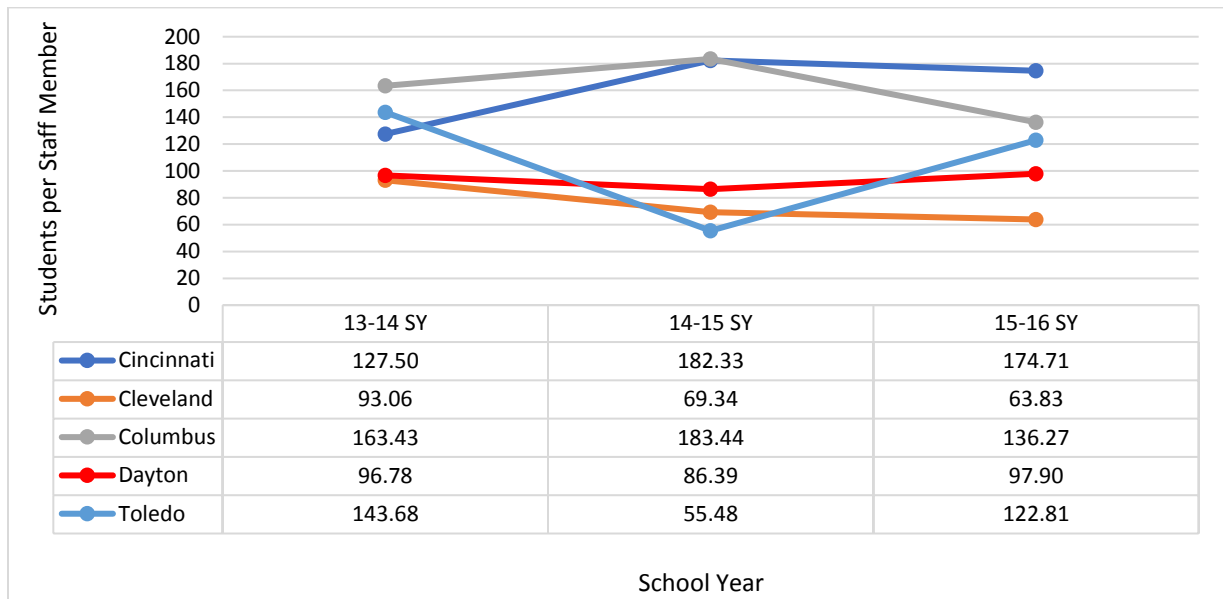
- o Dayton also had 12.48 *enrolled* students per teacher districtwide in 2015-16, the most recent year for which ODE has posted data (Exhibit 13). This ratio has declined slightly since 2013-14 when the ratio was 13.18. This is the lowest ratio of any of the other Great City School systems in 2015-16: Cincinnati (15.97), Cleveland (13.96), Columbus (14.74), and Toledo (15.59).

Exhibit 13. Students Enrolled per Teacher in the Ohio Great City Schools

	13-14 SY	14-15 SY	15-16 SY
Cincinnati	14.43	16.38	15.97
Cleveland	15.38	13.65	13.96
Columbus	16.12	18.14	14.74
Dayton	13.18	11.75	12.48
Toledo	15.13	15.31	15.59

School Year
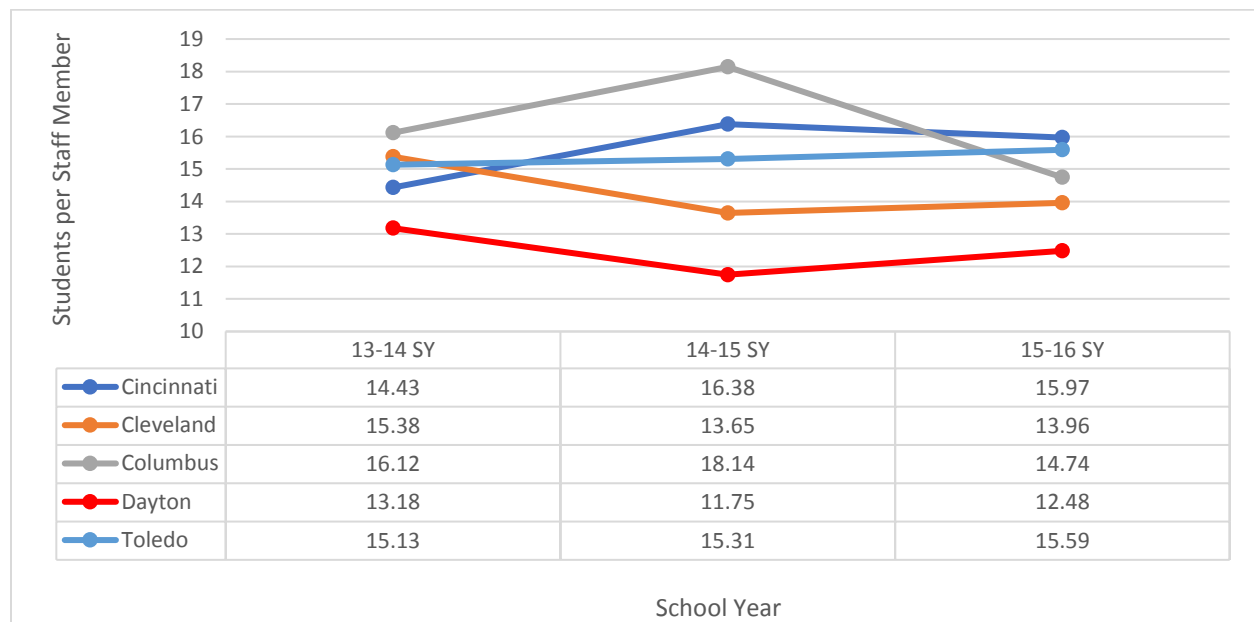
o If one uses *average daily membership* instead of *enrollment,* then the results show that the students per administrator ratio in Dayton was 161.85 in 2015-16, a level that has remained fairly consistent since 2013-14. Again, this number of administrators districtwide in Dayton is the highest among the Ohio cities, second only to Cleveland.

o Dayton also had 20.63 students (*in average daily attendance*) per teacher in 2015-16 according to 2016-16 ODE data. This ratio has dropped slightly since 2013-14. This ratio meant that Dayton was similar to but had slightly more teachers for its ADM than did all of the other Ohio cities except Cleveland.

• The state data also allowed the team to analyze administrative costs in Dayton compared to similar costs in other Ohio urban school districts. In this case, we multiplied the number of administrators districtwide using the definition in footnote 5 by the average administrative salary and divided the product by the number of students *enrolled or by the average daily membership*. The findings from this data base indicate the following—

o Using the numbers of students *enrolled*, Dayton had an administrative cost per pupil of $614.43 in 2015-16, a lower level than 2013-14. Overall, the per pupil administrative cost in Dayton was slightly higher than Toledo ($578.57) and Cincinnati ($545.92), but lower than Columbus ($706.52) and Cleveland ($1,223.56). (Exhibit 14)

Exhibit 14. Administrative Costs per Student Enrolled in the Ohio Great City Schools

	13-14 SY	14-15 SY	15-16 SY
Cincinnati	$725.14	$514.88	$545.92
Cleveland	$814.31	$1,106.26	$1,223.56
Columbus	$566.75	$510.45	$706.52
Dayton	$686.07	$657.19	$614.43
Toledo	$483.46	$628.20	$578.57

School Year
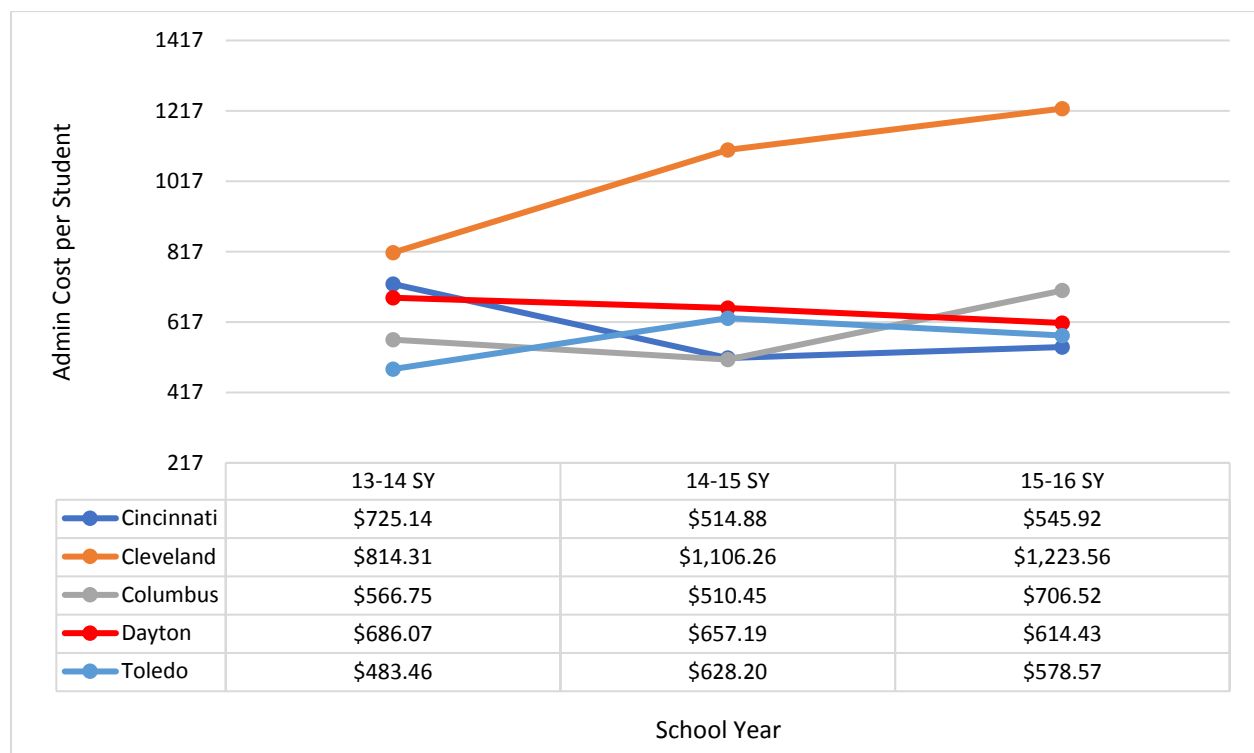
- Using average daily attendance, Dayton had an administrative cost per pupil of $371.67 in 2015-16, a lower level than 2013-14. Overall, the per pupil administrative cost in Dayton was the lowest of the five comparison districts.

- The average administrator salary in Dayton in 2015-16 was lower than any of the five Ohio comparison districts. In addition, the average teacher salary in Dayton was lower than any of the five Ohio comparison districts.

- In general, the Dayton Public Schools were somewhat over-staffed in 2015-16, but their staff salaries were lower than the comparison districts—suggesting that they were getting more people for less.

- Staff cuts as part of the RIF in 2016-17 were not large enough in combination with enrollment decreases to change the ratios appreciably in comparison to other Ohio districts.

Operating Issues

The team was unable to identify which of the following operational deficiencies were caused by the 2015-16 Reduction in Force, which was claimed in several of interviews with staff, and which situations existed before the RIF. Nonetheless, the team identified the following major operating issues.

- Without an automated position control system, the Offices of the Treasurer and Human Resources had not taken ownership of accurately forecasting enrollment results. This lack of coordination between the offices has resulted in the overstaffing of school-based teaching positions.

- The reconciliation of student enrollment and school-based allocations was conducted late in November as opposed at the beginning of the school year, which is considered best practice in other Council member districts.

- There was a general lack of succession planning and urgency in filling staff vacancies, and an understanding of what needs to be done or the consequences of failing to fill them. For example, the team saw no evidence of any action taken to fill a key position in the Purchasing Department when a highly qualified and skilled veteran employee retired.

- It was unclear what the budget department process was for developing departmental and school budgets with funding requests that go directly to the Budget Director without prior review and approval by the Superintendent or designee.

- The differences between the functions, roles, and decision-making authority of the Chief Academic Officer and the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning were not clearly defined or understood. As a result, the Chiefs of Schools (COSs) and school-based administrators were unclear as to who was responsible for providing school-based support and ultimately accountable for school results.

- The team believed the current span of control for the Chiefs of Schools (COS) was adequate. However, during interviews the team heard that there were plans to eliminate one of the positions, so the remaining COSs would have responsibility for supervising all schools.

- Among individuals interviewed, it was evident that no one knew or understood the rationale for the required 300 observations per school-based administrator. It was also not clear what would be done with the information collected from the observations.

- There was a lack of subject matter expertise in key positions, and performance metrics, procedures, and policies were not used to address operational deficiencies. For example, the elimination of staff in key content areas (e.g., 7-12 mathematics staff and a CTE coordinator) created gaps in support services for schools and placed directors in compliance roles. Additionally, eliminating the Early College Coordinator at Dunbar Early College HS affected the support for students necessary for them to make a successful transition to college- and career-level courses.

- Interviewees reported that there was not adequate staff to support the needs of special populations, e.g., gifted learners, students with disabilities, and the growing population of English Language Learners.

- There does not appear to be a clearly articulated plan or a central office strategy to improve student performance districtwide. For example—

  o There was no well-articulated system or plan for improving Tier 1 instruction.

  o There was no shared understanding of what good Tier 1 instruction looks like, so the district's current focus on interventions results in teachers inappropriately using interventions primarily for Tier 1 instruction.

  o There were no explicit instructional interventions identified for teachers to employ when students begin to fall behind academically.

  o There was no Tier I school support system and no coherent and consistently applied strategy for supporting schools in the work.

- The implementation of multiple intervention programs for ELA and math have taken precedence over the urgency of implementing the district curriculum in all content areas. For example, professional development is focused on how to use the intervention programs rather than increase the knowledge, content, and pedagogy needed to improve teacher practice across the content areas.

- The Office of Teaching and Learning does not have adequate support for the 1:1 initiative and only limited instructional content support for schools. For example, the ELA coordinator moved from focusing on grades 3-8 to 3-12 as well as overseeing *READING WONDERS* (a new adoption) and Imagine Learning.

- High-level Special Education Directors are used for IEP compliance rather than supporting school staff to ensure that students receive appropriate accommodations in least restrictive environments.

- The loss of the Grant Manager and program management function may impact expenditures and lead to the potential loss of funds.

- It was not clear how the Departments of Assessment, Research, and Accountability, Teaching and Learning, and the Chiefs of Schools provided guidance to school staff on implementing the MAP assessment and using the results to inform instructional practice and differentiate instruction based on student needs. For example, there was extensive discussion about the review of data, but little discussion of how guidance was provided to support principals and teachers in making data-driven instructional decisions that improve student learning. Specifically—

  o The assessment strategy lacked consistency and definition in terms of how data will be used to inform instructional priorities and make programmatic decisions in the district (e.g., tests used for ELLs, Gifted).

  o The assessment team focuses on summative and required assessments without clear direction or capacity to support the use of formative assessments for instructional modifications.

  o The Research, Accountability, and Assessment units were not staffed to provide more than a reactive response to district needs.

- The Human Resources Director's functions and responsibilities were too broad and involved multiple roles and responsibilities, including recruitment, discipline, certification, grievances, negotiations, and retirements. The department, by and large, focuses on daily operational and transactional tasks and not strategic goals.

- There was no established process, structure, or capacity for the Human Resources unit to provide ongoing professional development to enhance job skills and promotional opportunities across employee classifications. By and large, the district has no capability to improve the capacity of its own people.

- A temporary clerical position in Human Resources who shares responsibilities with other departments minimizes the ability to support major initiatives in the HR office.

- The functions in Human Resources are heavily manual and lack automated systems, e.g., applicant tracking and workflow systems that would provide more accurate data, improve effectiveness, and achieve greater efficiencies.

- The lack of a recent compensation study and ongoing position classification analyses contribute to the reported inability of Human Resources to fill vacancies and retain employees.

- There is no clear HR communications plan that would provide for administrative procedures relating to staffing formulas, recruitment, salary schedules, leave programs, and employee benefits.

- There has been no effort to develop a baseline assessment of what improvements are needed in the operational departments or what is needed to improve service delivery to schools.

- There was no evidence of a preventative maintenance plan to support the Ohio School Facilities Commission investment and funding.

- There was no investment strategy based on cost-benefit analyses and return on investments (ROIs) to address equipment deficiencies in the operational departments.

- There was a lack of focus and accountability in the custodial division. It was reported that custodians played a limited role with a narrowly defined scope of work duties, and that, coupled with a lack of maintenance and operations (M&O) staff, the results were an inability to address deferred needs and costs.

- There was no action plan or structure to address vacant or under-utilized buildings.

- The absence of competency-based employee promotional transfers affects movement within the operational departments, leading to inexperienced and unqualified employees and continual disruption in staffing.

- There were no roles or responsibilities assigned within the Office of Information Technology to align complex district systems, or lead and support strategic planning in the operational, instructional, and technology departments.

- The IT contractor, instructional leadership, and school-based leaders did not collaborate routinely to identify the best academic and instructional technologies for schools, e.g., Smart Boards, document cameras, and software acquisitions.

- There was limited planning across departments for districtwide professional development days, the result of which is redundancy in training and gaps that undermine the effectiveness of offerings. For example, Educational Technology, which reports to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, may plan a professional development day for specific grade levels while the Science Department and SPED are pulling the same teachers at the same time for professional development.

- Major initiatives such as the 1:1 and assessment systems were being implemented outside the contracted Scope of Work (SOW) of the IT contractor, who was often taking on a project manager role without the organizational authority to direct the work of other departments and schools.

- There was no technology roadmap to replace outdated legacy IT systems; no funded refresh program for student computing devices or IT infrastructure; and no life cycle plans, upgrade strategies, and aggregated data reporting tools.

- There was no evidence of a business continuity and disaster recovery plan; process and procedures for IT mission critical systems; or planning for the district's Internet and network needs based upon the significant growth in computers and applications deployed in the district.

D. Recommendations and Proposals

The team recommends a reorganization and realignment of the Office of the Superintendent and central office staff, as well as a reassessment of whether the district has the right people with the applicable skill sets in the appropriate positions to achieve greater operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Decision-Making Framework

1. Create an Enterprise Governance structure comprised of the Superintendent's leadership team (Superintendent, Chief of Staff, Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Information Officer, and Director of Research, Accountability and Assessment) in order make systemwide management decisions based on complete, accurate, and timely information across district functions.

2. Ensure that this governance team employs the methodologies and controls necessary to ensure their vision, strategies, and instructions are carried out systematically and effectively to meet the district's strategic goals and objectives. Hold this team explicitly accountable for progress on the school board's and district's goals.

3. Set up a small set of cross-functional teams to immediately address the district's most serious and long-standing challenges, and hold the teams explicitly accountable for working together to make progress on those issues.

4. Charge the school board with regularly monitoring progress on district goals using an agreed-upon set of Key Performance Indicators tied to the goals.

5. Require a "business case" with goals, objectives, costs, timelines, accountabilities, cost-benefit analyses, and returns on investment calculations for all new initiatives, programs, and projects.

Reorganization and Realignment

6. Reorganize the Office of the Superintendent and central office staff according to the proposed structure shown in Exhibit 15.

7. Create an Office of Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff should serve as a member of the Superintendent's leadership team, and the office should be charged with: (1) ensuring the Superintendent's office is involved in budget development and, on a regular basis, has the opportunity to review and understand all cost analyses, revenues, expenditures and other related financial information before they are made public; (2) facilitating day-to-day operations of the Internal Auditor's and General Counsel's offices; (3) using program management (PMO) methodologies and control mechanisms to coordinate the work of the leadership team to ensure work meets the district's strategic and day-to-day operational

needs; and (4) serving as liaison to the Board of Education in order to develop and shepherd the board agenda and to address individual board member issues.

8. Retitle the Public Information Officer as the Strategic Communications Officer, and have this position report directly to the Superintendent. Functions under this position would include: community engagement and outreach, press relations, public complaints and concerns, media production and graphics, web services and social media, and internal communications.

Exhibit 15. Recommended Reorganization and Realignment
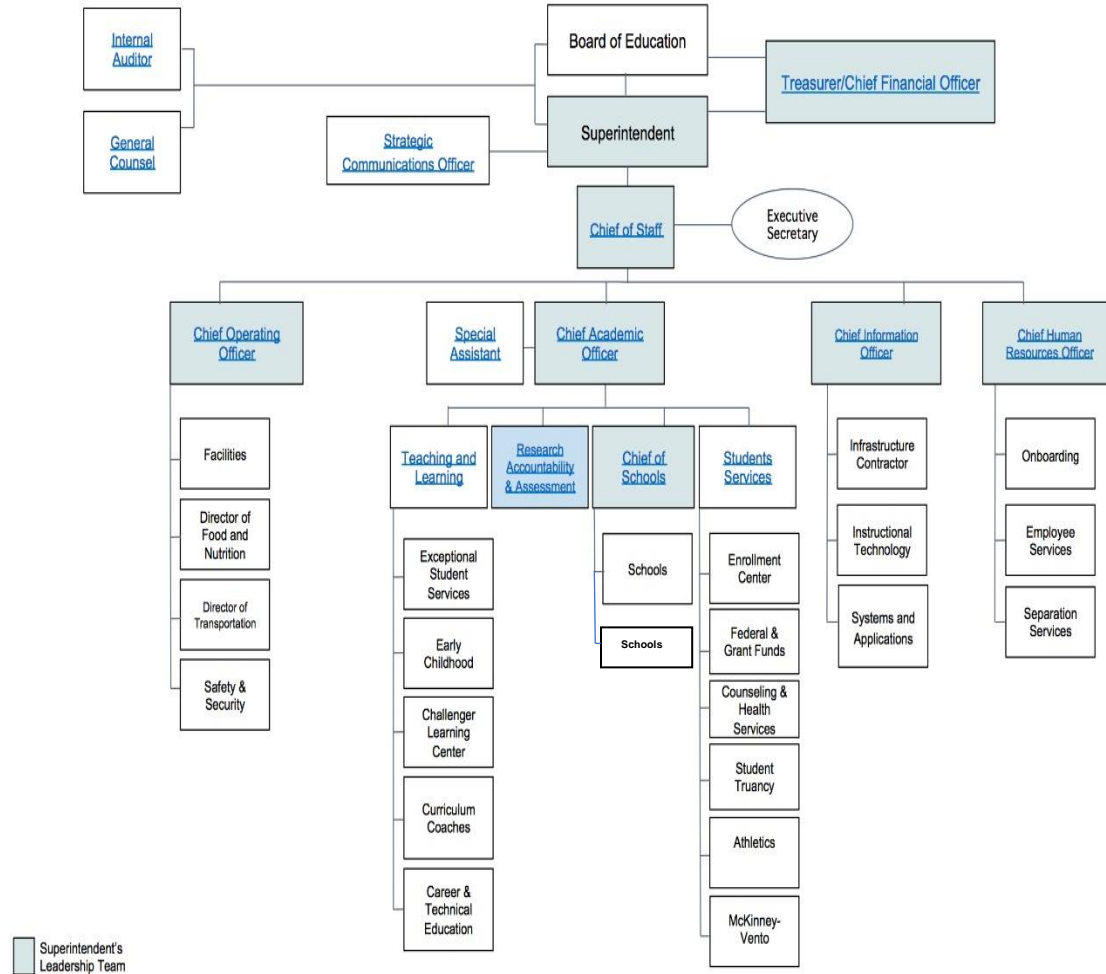
4. Reorganize and realign the Office of the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The CAO should serve as a member of the leadership team with the following direct reports—

   i. Retitle the Chief on Special Assignment as a Special Assistant to the CAO, with responsibilities for the Males of Color initiative and other similar initiatives.

   ii. A Director of Assessment, Accountability, and Research, which as a member of the Superintendent's leadership team will continue to be responsible for overseeing the administration of district, state and national tests; conducting program evaluations and

other research-related activities; managing data related to local, state, and federal accountability standards; conducting surveys; filling data and information requests; and other research-related activities—including analyzing student performance data to help the district identify areas of particular student strength and weaknesses where interventions may be necessary. An alternative to this recommendations would be to have the Director of Assessment, Accountability and Research report directly to the Superintendent.

iii. A Director of the Department of Teaching and Learning, responsible for overseeing Exceptional Student Services (Gifted, ELL, and Special Education); Early Childhood Education; the Challenger Learning Center; Instructional Technology; curriculum coaches; content specialists; professional development; and Educational and Career Technology in collaboration with the Office of Information Technology.

iv. A Director of Student Services, responsible for the Student Enrollment Center; Counseling and Health Services; Student Truancy; McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program; Athletics; and Grants Management and Compliance—in collaboration with the Treasurer's Office to ensure all grant funds are used and expended appropriately.

v. A Chiefs of Schools, who would continue to be responsible for overseeing and supervising principals and serving as the liaison and facilitator between the central office and local school sites. An alternative to this recommendation would be to have the Chief of Schools report directly to the Superintendent. Either way, two principal supervisors would report to the Chief of Schools and would have responsibility for coaching principals on instruction and evaluating principals.

In general, functions under the CAO should include: teaching and learning (along with all content staff), special education, bilingual education, early childhood education, adult education and CTE, instructional technology, federal programs, and student services (e.g., counseling, athletics, etc.). Typically, the CAO has the widest span of control in a school district.

5. Retitle the Director of the Office of Human Resources as the Chief of Human Resources and include the chief on the Superintendent's leadership team. This Chief of Human Resources would continue to be a direct report to the Superintendent. Reorganize the office around the following functions: (a) onboarding (including recruiting, vetting, tracking, and placement of new employees), employee services (including labor relations, employee assistance and counseling, benefits, and compensation), and separation services (including retirement, termination, employee standards, and other separation processing).

6. Elevate the Office of Information Technology and appoint the director as Chief Technology Officer and a member of the Superintendent's leadership team. Responsibilities should include (1) overseeing the contractor who manages the district's IT infrastructure, or direct management of these operations until they are brought in-house; (2) managing the systems and applications that support Research, Accountability, and Assessment, Finance, Human Resources, and Operations; and (3) collaborating with the Chief Academic Officer to identify

appropriate instructional technology processes and resources that facilitate teaching and learning. Functions under this unit would include: data warehousing, state reporting, field technician supervision, network operations, solutions and Help Desk, and ERP management for SIS, transportation, finance, HR, disaster recovery, and business continuity.

7. Appoint a Chief of Operations, who would serve as a member of the Superintendent's leadership team and would continue to oversee the district's facilities (with dual responsibilities for overseeing both the Ohio School Facilities investments and funding and the district's maintenance and operations). Functions under this unit would include transportation, nutrition, safety and security, facilities, and maintenance and operations.

Staffing

8. Assess and determine that qualified people with the applicable skill sets are on the leadership team to address the operational deficiencies that have impeded the district's ability to achieve operational effectiveness and efficiency.

9. Thoroughly examine the staffing levels and workloads of all offices and departments to ensure they are right-sized, and make needed adjustments; define the roles and responsibilities of all people with managerial and supervisory responsibilities; conduct a study to determine the compensation and benefits packages that would enable the district to compete for and retain certificated and classified administrative and support staff; and set up a vetting process to ensure people with applicable skills sets are appointed to fill those positions.

Operational Decisions

The team prefers not to be overly prescriptive since it did not conduct a deep dive into district operations, but it does make the following recommendations for initial steps that could be taken to correct some overarching issues once the leadership team is in place.

10. Require that all departments map their workflows to identify areas where there are inefficiencies (i.e., operational redundancies, gaps, duplications) and adopt processes and procedures that would remedy those and increase overall operational effectiveness.

11. Formalize a process to ensure that the Superintendent's office is involved in budget development and, on a regular basis, reviews and understands all cost analyses, revenues, expenditures, and other related financial information before they are made public.

12. Review the workflow in the Accounting, Payroll, and Purchasing Departments and refine existing operations. Adopt processes to enhance communications between departments and improve efficiencies.

13. Upgrade major business and instructional enterprise systems, automate the legacy and current manual processes, and develop a life-cycle strategy for maintaining them.

14. Clearly define the decision-making authority of the Chief Academic Officer and those staff members who are direct reports.

15. Set clear academic standards, develop a well-articulated and coherent curriculum, sharpen data systems, and establish efficient business operations, transparent accountability procedures, and regular student assessments and interventions.

16. Create a cross-functional team to design an instructional plan that clearly articulates a process for improving Tier 1 instruction, aligning intervention programs, and moving from a summative, end-of-instruction assessment to a more formative assessment, beginning with an instructional design function.

17. Prioritize the initiatives currently underway to ensure they are aligned with critical district goals and are staffed for success.

18. Create a process by which the Human Resources Office can act as a strategic partner in building capacity among district staff by playing a more active role in organizational and human resources development, such as facilitating and promoting ongoing professional development that enhances job skills and career opportunities for employees in all job classifications (certificated and classified).

19. Develop business-case methodology that would help justify modifications to roles and responsibilities, processes, and workflows that would inform any future Reduction in Force and determine more accurately how many staff should be subtracted or added, a strategy to mitigate the negative impact on schools and district operations, and the actual cost savings that would be realized.

20. Review the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to determine if the IT contractor has met district expectations; identify "out of scope" services that need to be modified in the contract to improve performance; and prepare a business case outlining alternative approaches if changes and progress are not realized.

21. Develop a comprehensive technology master plan and roadmap that aligns technology systems, services, and projects to the district's instructional master plan.

22. Strategically align data systems, and develop a life-cycle strategy for upgrading major enterprise systems (both business and instructional).

23. Develop a comprehensive facilities master plan that includes methods for—

    i. Calculating school building life-cycle investments, life-cycle costs, and the costs of deterring maintenance;
    ii. Analyzing and prioritizing the condition of school buildings and identifying strategies, methods, and costs for maintaining them;
    iii. Deciding to close, repurpose, or demolish schools that are past their expected lifespans, no longer educationally adequate, or underutilized because of declining enrollment.

24. Consider splitting operations into two divisions, so there is clear focus on the dual responsibilities of overseeing (1) the Ohio School Facilities investments; and (2) the district's maintenance and operations, including a defined scope of duties and accountabilities in the custodial division.

E. Synopsis and Discussion

The Dayton Public Schools asked the Council of the Great City Schools to conduct a high-level analysis of the district's staffing levels, organizational structure, and operations, and to make appropriate recommendations based on what the organization found. To conduct its work, a team of instructional and non-instructional experts from other major urban school systems across the country was assembled, and spent four days in Dayton. The Council team interviewed staff, examined reports, studied organizational charts, and analyzed data. In general, the team found many talented and committed individuals in the school system who were working extremely hard to provide the city's children with the highest quality education.

At the same time, the Council team did not find the school district organized and staffed for maximum effectiveness and efficiency. For one, there were too many people reporting either directly or indirectly to the Superintendent. The Council team understood that the new Superintendent wants to get a better handle on what staff members do and how well they are functioning, but 17 direct reports was too many for any leader to supervise personally.

Second, the recent Reduction in Force resulted in uneven spans of control, a fractured organizational structure, vacancies, and staffing gaps in the central office at the very time that cohesive leadership was most needed. Job responsibilities and reporting lines were not always clear, and communications around the rationale for the moves was weak. The result was that staff was not always certain about the vision and priorities of the school district.

In addition, the Council team did not see an adequate analysis of staffing levels, work-flows, and processes before the recent Reduction in Force. The inadequacy of the analysis left some in the school district asking whether too many people were cut, and others asking if enough people were cut. As a rule, these analyses should be done prior to a districtwide re-staffing initiative rather than afterwards.

The team was also provided with a number of organizational charts, but the one that appeared to be the most accurate suggested a splintered organizational structure, particularly under the chief academic officer. Direct reports included two Chiefs of Schools, a Chief on Special Assignment, and a Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Not under the CAO was special education, gifted and talented, grants management, counseling, career and technical education, or other student services. This structure, if retained, assures weak communications and silo-like behavior from staff.

On the operations side, it was not clear how staff and stakeholders were involved in the budgeting process. In addition, it was not clear what the relationship was between the district's internal auditor and the Superintendent. Typically, an internal auditor will have relationships both with the Board of Education and the Superintendent. And the team did not see any evidence of a project management function or a well-developed position-control system in the school district. The budget development process was not as transparent as one would like to see. Human resource functions were often transactional and manually operated. The Information Technology

unit sometimes lacked defined roles and responsibilities, and there was weak collaboration with the instructional units.

The instructional unit also appeared to be struggling, although the team had renewed optimism with the newly appointed Chief Academic Officer. There was plenty of work for her to do in strengthening the district's instructional program. Student achievement is quite low, and there did not appear to be a convincing plan to improve the district's core academic program.

The team did not see a clear understanding of what good instruction looked like, and it did not see a coherent system for catching students up once they began to fall behind. Support for students with disabilities and English learners seemed particularly weak. Data systems were not effectively used to inform classroom practice, and professional development looked fragmented.

The main question that drove this high-level review was whether or not the RIF had gone too far. Our analysis suggests that it did not. In fact, the district continues to be generously staffed on a per pupil basis compared with other urban school systems in the state and nationwide, although we would caution against cutting too much further. In some respects, the district can afford to be somewhat overstaffed because it does not pay its people as well as other districts, so it can actually pay for more of them. However, there is an implicit tradeoff being made, and the district might want to think about and conduct an analysis of what impact raising salaries, further reducing staff, trying to recruit staff with better skills, or redeploying current talent would have.

What is clear is that the district's direction, organizational structure, and staff capacity need to be strengthened, better aligned, and focused far more intensely on improving student achievement. Cross-functional collaboration and teamwork needs to be strengthened. The Board of Education needs to be more involved in monitoring—not managing—progress on student academic goals and indicators.

In sum, there is little reason that Dayton cannot be a far better school system, but it needs to align its systems, bear down on its instructional program, and build the capacity of its people to achieve better results for students. The Council's team and the organization itself stands ready to assist the district at every turn as it works to implement the recommendations proposed in this review, and to improve how it serves its children and community.

Attachment A. Strategic Support Team

Robert Carlson

Robert Carlson is Director of Management Services for the Council of the Great City Schools. In that capacity, he provides Strategic Support Teams and manages operational reviews for superintendents and senior managers; convenes annual meetings of Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Human Resources Directors, and Chief Information Officers and Technology Directors; fields hundreds of requests for management information; and has developed and maintains a Web-based management library. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Carlson was an executive assistant in the Office of the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools. He holds an Ed. D. and an M.A. degree in administration from The Catholic University of America; a B.A. degree in political science from Ohio Wesleyan University; and has done advanced graduate work in political science at Syracuse University and the State Universities of New York.

Thomas Ryan

Thomas Ryan Ph.D. retired from the Albuquerque Public Schools where he served as CIO for 11 years, Dr. Ryan led all IT efforts for the largest public school district in New Mexico. He was also a high school principal and teacher and has a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction. He is an education professional with 36+ years of experience and expertise in teaching, leadership, technology, technology integration and blended/online learning program development. Dr. Ryan is currently Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the eLearn Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming education through the effective use of digital learning tools. He works with schools leadership on strategic planning and leadership, designing digital learning environments, technology infrastructure reviews, and the shift to digital tools. He is engaged in leadership activities in several state and national organizations including President Elect on the Consortium of School Networking (CoSN) Board, iNACOL, ISTE, and the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS). Work with the CGCS includes: large school district IT reviews of infrastructure, strategic planning, instructional technology, and digital transformation efforts. He also helps coordinate of the Council's annual CIO conferences. Dr. Ryan presents at several state and national conferences throughout the year.

Gretchen Saunders

Gretchen Saunders joined the Hillsborough County Public Schools in 1996, as the Office Manager of the Payroll Department. 1997 – 2001, she served as the Supervisor of Special Projects in the Budget Department. 2001 – 2003, she served as the Manager of Budget and Cash Management. In 2003, she assumed the additional responsibilities of the vacant position of Manager of Federal Finance. She served as the General Manager of Budget and Federal Finances from October 6, 2004 through December 31, 2004, and then in January 2005 was named Chief Business Officer for the School District. Prior to her employment with

Hillsborough County Schools, Ms. Saunders held positions as the Assistant Finance Office for the School District of Hardee County, Wauchula, Florida, from 1994 – 1996. She also held the position of Office Manager for the Double C Ranch, Wauchula, Florida, and was an administrative assistant for the Lockheed Martin Fort Worth Company in Ismailia, Egypt, and Financial Analyst for St. Joseph Hospital, Mt. Clemens, Michigan. Gretchen holds a Bachelor of Science in Business from Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Michigan, and a Master of Science degree in Public Administration from Central Michigan University. She is a past president of the Florida School Finance Officers Association, and currently the association sponsor coordinator. She was elected to membership on the Florida School Finance Council in June 2004 and is still serves in that capacity today. The council is a policy advisory group of the Commissioner of Education.

Christopher Farkas

Since April 2014, Christopher Farkas has served as Hillsborough County Public Schools' Chief Operating Officer, overseeing all Maintenance departments, Transportation, Student Nutrition Services, Construction and Growth Management and Planning for the eighth largest school district in the country. Mr. Farkas began his career with Hillsborough County Public Schools in 1999 as an Alternative Education/Drop-Out Prevention Teacher. From 2002 to 2003 he served as Coordinator of Youth Services, working with the Department of Juvenile Justice. From 2004 to 2007 he served as Assistant Principal for Administration, Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Principal at Tampa Bay Technical High School. In 2008 he was appointed Principal at Freedom High School. Mr. Farkas served as the school district's Area VIII Leadership Director from 2012 to April 2014. Mr. Farkas earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education from the University of Alabama and a master's degree in educational leadership from National Louis University.

Jose Dotres

José L. Dotres is the Chief Human Capital Officer for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), the fourth largest school district in the nation. Mr. Dotres is charged with overseeing approximately 50,000 employees and collaborating with five labor unions. His career spans over 24 years in various capacities with M-DCPS, to include Principal, District Administrative Director of Leadership Development, Regional Administrative Director of Curriculum and Superintendent of the North Region Area, where he was responsible for 82 public schools across 12 municipalities. He was also Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital Management for Professional Development and was tasked with strengthening the leadership capacity of principals and enhancing the teacher evaluation system. He has also served as Chief of Staff for Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Alberto M. Carvalho. Mr. Dotres holds an educational specialist degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Miami, master's degree in Reading from Barry University, and a bachelor's degree for Public Administration from Florida International University.

Denise Walston

Denise M. Walston is the Director of Mathematics for the Council of the Great City Schools. Her work focuses on supporting member districts in their implementation of college-and career-readiness standards, assisting with the development of resources and tools to support implementation, and providing ongoing support for the improvement of student achievement. Ms. Walston retired from Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) as the Senior Coordinator of K-12 Mathematics. Her responsibilities included the development of a K-12 mathematics curriculum; providing job-embedded professional development; leveraging resources to provide quality professional development for teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators. Denise has served on various mathematics councils including the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics (served as 1st Vice-President 2011-2012 and 2nd Vice-President 2010-2011), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (Program committee member for 2015), Virginia Council for Mathematics Supervision (served as president 2008-2010); Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition (board member from 2009-2012) and the Benjamin Banneker Association (served as southeast regional representative 2002-2004). Recently, she served on a panel to help with the study of the alignment of NAEP items to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. She is also past president of the Beta chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, a professional honorary society of women educators. Ms. Walston received her B.A. degree from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro in mathematics and history, her M.Ed. in mathematics education from Old Dominion University, and has completed additional study at the Woodrow Wilson Institute at Princeton University and the College of William and Mary.

Robin Hall

Dr. Robin Hall is the Director of Language Arts and Literacy for the Council of the Great City Schools. Prior to joining the Council, she has served in various capacities for Atlanta Public Schools, including Executive Director of K-8 schools, Principal, K-12 Language Arts Coordinator, Instructional Liaison Specialist, Language Arts Department Chairperson and high school language arts teacher constituting over twenty-five years of educational experience. Dr. Hall has also served on the Council of Great City Schools support teams in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and professional development. In 2006, Dr. Hall was nominated to the National Assessment Governing Board by Secretary Margret Spellings. Among the board responsibilities are selecting the content of the NAEP test, selecting the subjects to be tested, identifying learning objectives for each grade tested, identifying appropriate achievement goals and ensuring that all items selected for use in the assessment are free from racial, cultural, gender and regional biases. Dr. Hall received her B.A. Degree in English from Vassar College and received her M.A. Degree from Clark Atlanta University. She also earned her Doctor of Arts in Humanities Degree from Clark Atlanta University.

Patrick Zohn

Patrick Zohn is the Chief Operating Officer for the Cleveland Municipal School District and has served in this role since March 15, 2010. As the COO, he is responsible for the school district's capital construction, safety & security, food service, facilities, trades, distribution & logistics and transportation departments. In 2011, the Council of Great City Schools named

Cleveland as one of the top five operations divisions in the country. The Council also named Patrick the top COO in 2016. Prior to accepting his current position, he was a principal in the Gateway Consultants Group, a firm that helped cities build ballparks and arenas. Before that, he was a senior trial attorney for the United States Department of Labor. He earned a Juris Doctorate degree from Case Western Reserve University School of Law in 1978 and a bachelor's degree in Social Science and Education from West Liberty State College in 1975.

Thomas Harper

Thomas Harper is the Chief Financial Officer for Des Moines Public Schools. From 2004 to 2011, he served as the Chief Financial Officer for Billings Public Schools in Billings, Montana. Prior to entering the public sector, Thomas spent more than 35 years in the private sector. He is an executive with proven success in profit & loss/ general management, finance, strategic planning, and business development. Thomas has an extensive background in Business and Management, and holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Rocky Mountain College in Billings Mt. He is also a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Internal Auditor (CIA), Certified Management Accountant (CMA), Certified in Financial Management (CFM), Certified Administrator of School Finance and Operations (SFO), Certified Information Technician Professional (CITP), Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA), Certified Government Finance Manager (CGFM), Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO), and School Business Official (SBO).

Karen Rudys

Karen Rudys is the Executive Director of Labor Relations & Staffing for the Albuquerque Public Schools and Chief Negotiator for eight bargaining units. Ms. Rudys has over 20 years of leadership experience in Human Resources administration with fourteen years of progressive Human Resources responsibility in a large urban K-12 public school educational setting focused on labor management negotiations, dispute resolution, compliance and staffing, benefits and compensation and employee relations. Ms. Rudys has worked in the Albuquerque Public Schools Human Resources Department since 2001. Ms. Rudys was also the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources during a transition in Superintendents and budget cuts. Ms. Rudys worked for over 15 years in the private sector as an HR Generalist with a focus on labor relations; employment law; and training/employee development. Ms. Rudys has a master's degree in Organizational Management; a master's degree in Educational Leadership; bachelor's degree in Education and a bachelor's degree in International Relations.

Frances Burns

Frances Burns currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer for the School District of Philadelphia joining the district in July 2013. With 20 years of public sector experience, Fran's background encompasses operations, economic development and public sector finance. She has held various public sector positions including Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority, Commissioner of the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections. She also held positions as Assistant Budget Director and Assistant Managing Director for the City of Philadelphia. Ms. Burns also served as Executive Director

of the Manayunk Development Corporation and started her career working for the City of Philadelphia Commerce Department. Fran has an undergraduate degree in Political Science as well as a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Villanova University.

Scott Gilhousen

Scott Gilhousen is the Director of IT Infrastructure, Engineering and Operations for Houston Independent School District, the seventh largest school district in the country. Mr. Gilhousen has been a member of Houston ISD since 1999 and brings over 18 years of experience in the field of Information Technology with the last 15 years in leadership roles. He oversees and is responsible for IT departments which support systems architecture and operations, infrastructure, communications, end-user computing systems, datacenter operations and information security for approximately 30,000 employees across 300 locations. He provides leadership in high priority projects such as the district's 1:1 initiative, engages in strategic investment planning, and drives change across the organization. He attends and participates in conferences like Council of Great City School, Consortium of School Networking, the Center for Digital Education, and Gartner. He earned his Bachelors of Science degree in Management of Information Systems (MIS) from the University of Houston.

Attachment C. Documents Reviewed

- _MPR Final February 2016.pdf
- _MPR Final February 2017.pdf
- ADC-Final-Report-Dayton.pdf
- Dayton Organization and Salaries.xlsx
- Dayton District Org Chart 08 02 2016.pdf
- Dayton Mission-Statement---Goals – Poster.pdf
- Dayton Org Chart complete.pdf
- District-improvement-Plan—update-9-29-2016.pdf
- Facts-about-DPS-Postion-reductions5.pdf
- Framework School System Success_PUBLIC – June 1216
- Statement of Activity-4thQrt-Jan-Dec2016-22217.pdf
- Statement of Financial Position – 4thQtr-Jan-Dec2016-22217.pdf

Attachment D. Personnel Interviewed

- Rhonda Corr, Superintendent
- Markay Winston, Chief Academic Officer
- Elizabeth Lolli, Asst. Supt., Teaching & Learning
- Judith Spurlock, Chief, Human Resources
- Richard Rayford, Ex. Dir., Operations
- Shelia Burton, Assoc. Supt., Student Services
- Cheryl Owens, Director Special Education
- Clifford Clements, Assoc. Dir., Special Ed.
- Hindy Gruber, Assoc. Director of Gifted
- Hiwot Abraha, Treasurer
- Brennon Hettery, Assistant Treasurer
- Jill Drury, Communication Specialist
- Wyetta Hayden
- Robert Bucheim
- Diane Mendenhall, Budget Director
- Sharon Thornton, Senior Financial Analyst
- Michael Rosenberger, Director Transportation
- Torrence Jackson, Associate Director, Transportation
- Kelvin Anders, Associate Director, Transportation
- Lori McCutcheon, Associate Director, Transportation
- LaToya Harper, Director, Human Resources
- Andrae Hicks, Director, Human Resources
- Alexander Robertson
- Gregory Taylor
- Dellena Ogletree, Assessment & Accountability
- Paula Law, EMIS Coordinator
- Tobette Brown, Student Services Advisor
- Larry Wilchli,   Sr. Accountant
- David Riley, Accountant
- James Allen, Directors, O&M
- Richard Kidd,   Carpenter Foreman
- Michael Helpling, Plumber/HVAC Foreman
- Kirk Vencill, Grounds Foreman
- Mark Burns, Electrical Foreman
- Greg Spencer,   Electronic Equipment Foreman
- Kennyatta Mays, Assoc. Dir., Human Resources
- Melissa Branham, HR Analysts
- Sherida Wynn, HR Analysts
- Karen Lombard, Early Childhood Education
- Ryan Tait, Director, Educational Technology
- Teresa Troyner

- Jenna Jurosic, Payroll DIrector
- Janie Hall, Payroll Coordinator
- Donna Ward, Level IV Financial
- Cathie DeFehr, Director. Nutrition Services
- Jamie Holster, Assoc. Dir., Nutrition Services
- Sandy Conatser, Business Manager
- Pamela Calvert, Benefit Coordinator
- Ida Nalls, Assoc. Dir., Professional Learning
- LaRae Sweetman, Program Manager
- Cedric Evans, Educational Technology
- Greg Roberson, Chief, Exceptional Children
- Terri Allen, Purchasing Director
- Jimmy Hubbard, Sr. Contract Spe
- Bobby Smith, Sr. Contract Spe
- Nancy Bowman, Acquisition Spec.
- Jamie Bullens, Ex. Director, Safety & Security
- Richard Wright, Assoc. Director, Safety & Security
- Chiquith Smith, SRO
- Tahwann Manier, SRO
- Anthony Bronaugh, SRO
- Robert Essex, SRO
- Bobby Kennerly, SRO
- Frances Pate, Temporary Clerical
- Edison, Ruskin
- Lisa Njoku-Farr, Acct. Clerks, Accounts Payable
- Donna Stroud, Acct. Clerks, Accounts Payable
- Sampson Wright, Acct. Clerks, Accounts

SAN ANTONIO TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Review of the
Student Transportation Program
of the
San Antonio Independent School
District

Pedro Martinez, Superintendent of the San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD), requested that the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) provide a high-level management review of the district's student transportation program. Specifically, he requested that the Council[1]—

- Identify opportunities to increase transportation service levels for traveling students

- Review and comment on existing business processes, planning and forecasting, internal controls, and identify opportunities for improvement.

- Develop recommendations that would help the district's transportation operations achieve greater operational efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team (the team) of senior managers with extensive experience in transportation operations from other major city school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Attachment A provides brief biographical sketches of team members.)

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

David Palmer, Principal Investigator
Deputy Director of Transportation (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

James Beekman
General Manager, Transportation
Hillsborough County Public Schools

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[1] The Council has conducted some 300 instructional, management, and operational reviews in about 50 big-city school districts over the last 19 years. The reports generated by these reviews are often critical but they have also been the foundation for improving the operations, organization, instruction, and management of many urban school systems nationally. These reports have also been the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate. (Attachment E lists the reviews that the Council has conducted.)

Shirley Morris
Director, Transportation Department
Fort Worth Independent School District

Nicole Portee
Executive Director, Transportation Services
Denver Public Schools

Reginald Ruben
Director, Transportation Services
Fresno Unified School District

Patricia Snell
General Manager, Transportation Services
Broward County Public Schools

The team reviewed documents provided by the district prior to a four-day site visit to San Antonio, Texas, on February 14-17, 2017. The general schedule for the site visit is described below, and the complete working agenda for the site visit is presented in Attachment B.

The team met during the evening of the first day of the site visit to make final adjustments to the work schedule. The team then met with Superintendent Pedro Martinez the next morning to discuss expectations and objectives for the review. The team used the remainder of the second and third days of the site visit to observe operations, conduct interviews with key staff members (a list of individuals interviewed is included in Attachment C), and examine additional documents and data (a complete list of documents reviewed is included in Attachment D).[2]

The final day of the visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and recommendations, and providing the Superintendent and Chief of Staff with a briefing on the team's preliminary findings.

The Council sent the draft of this document to team members for their review in order to affirm the accuracy of the report and to obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations. This management letter contains the findings and recommendations that have been designed by the team to help improve the operational efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the SAISD transportation program.

San Antonio Independent School District

The city of San Antonio is the seventh most populous city in the United States, and the second most populous city in Texas.[3] The greater San Antonio area is served by sixteen

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[2] The Council's reports are based on interviews with district staff and others, a review of documents, observations of operations, and professional judgment. The team conducting the interviews must rely on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming, but cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by interviewees.

[3] Source: https://www.biggestuscities.com/city/san-antonio-texas

independent school districts, of which SAISD is the third largest. SAISD currently serves a (declining) enrollment of 52,514 pre-kindergarten-to-12th grade students,[4] who are supported by over 7,530 employees.

SAISD is governed by an elected seven-member Board of Trustees that appoints the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent is responsible to the board for the effective operation of the school system, including execution of the district's 5-year plan, *Blueprint for Excellence*. The SAISD vision states: *Our primary purpose of improving lives through a quality education is driven by an unrelenting determination to graduate all of our students and prepare them for success in higher education. Our ideology is reflected in our fundamental beliefs, commitments and core values that guide us in our daily practices*.

The Superintendent is also responsible for the efficient management of the school district's resources. The approved General Fund budget for 2016-2017 was $436,342,092.[5] Exhibit 1 below displays the overall district organization and the 12 direct reports to the Superintendent.

Exhibit 1. SAISD Organization Chart – September 2016
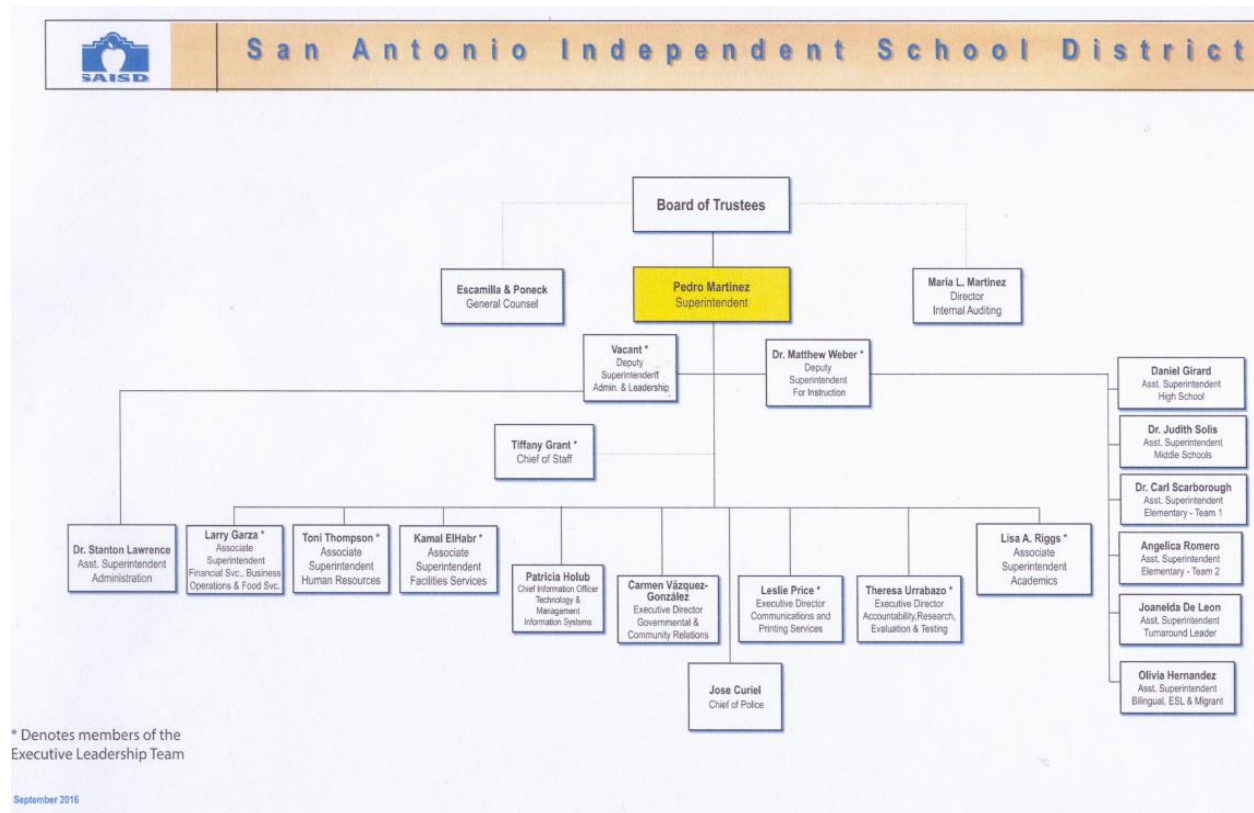
Source: San Antonio Independent School District

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[4] Includes 5,053 pre-k students.
[5] The SAISD FY17 Adopted Budget can be viewed at:
http://www.saisd.net/main/documents/Departments/Finance/16_17_adopted_budget.pdf

Superintendent Martinez told the team that as part of a planned reorganization, a new Chief Operations Officer (COO) would soon be joining the SAISD executive team. The new COO position will oversee several critical functions, including transportation.

Department of Transportation

The DoT is led by the Senior Executive Director, Transportation. This position has three direct reports: Two - Director of Transportation positions and one Assistant Director, Vehicle Maintenance position. Exhibit 2 below presents the Department's organizational structure.

Exhibit 2. Department of Transportation Organization Chart
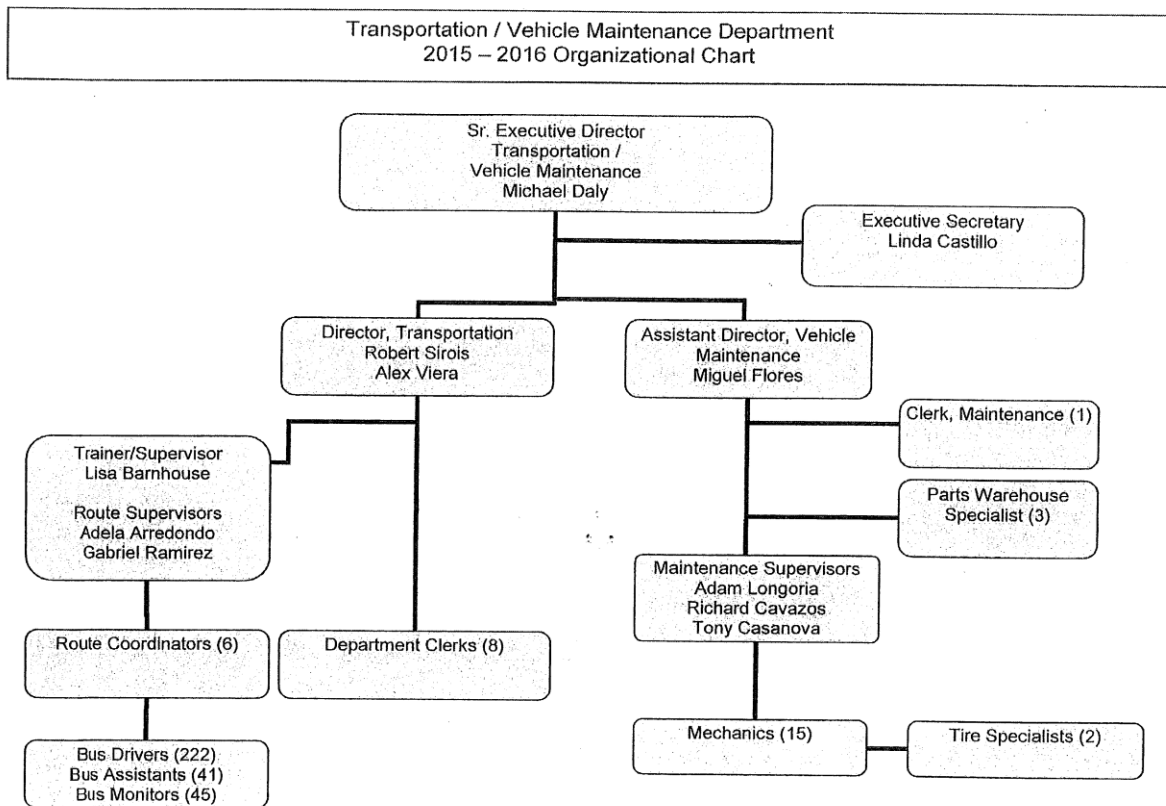
Source: SAISD Department of Transportation

The Senior Executive Director, Transportation, is responsible for the FY17 department budget of $10,357,901, which is 2.23 percent of the district's General Fund budget. Exhibit 3 below compares DoT budget allocations to actual expense summaries over the past four fiscal years.[6]

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[6] The 2013-2014 deficit was explained by the DoT as the result of an underfunding of employee salary accounts; and most of the 2015-2016 deficit was explained by the unanticipated purchase of 10 school buses.

Exhibit 3. Department of Transportation Allocated Budget vs. Actual Expense

Fiscal Year	Allocated Budget	Actual Expense	Excess/(Deficit)
2012-2013	10,214,291	10,055,670	158,621
2013-2014	10,160,090	11,284,553	(1,124,463)
2014-2015	10,127,849	10,130,783	(2,934)
2015-2016	10,632,750	11,819,766	(1,187,016)
2016-2017	10,307,566		

Source: SAISD Department of Transportation

The DoT is responsible for the daily transportation of nearly 7,200 students (13.66 percent of total district enrollment), transported on 180 district-operated bus routes into nearly all the district's 89 schools, academies, and centers. SAISD buses traveled over 2,296,500[7] miles in FY16, picking-up and dropping-off students at approximate 6,240 separate locations or stops.

Based on current statutes, SAISD is required to provide transportation for students participating in special education programs when transportation has been identified as a related service, when students are eligible based on the distance they live from school, the presence of hazardous traffic areas, and when students are designated as homeless and school choice is required by federal legislation. Exhibit 4 below compares the number of students transported by program category since FY2013, as reported on the Texas Education Agency state reports.[8]

Exhibit 4. Students Transported FY2013 - Present

Program	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
District Enrollment	54,268	53,857	53,750	53,069	52,514
Full State Reimbursement					
Career & Technology	201	254	244	115	147
Partial State Reimbursement					
Regular Home-to-School/School-to-Home	4,395	5,461	5,236	5,596	5,058
SWD Home-to-School/School-to-Home	1,147	1,121	1,116	1,222	971
Curriculum/Academic	643	718	714	969	965
SWD Special Auxiliary/Extended School Year	181	89	72	66	30
Private	7	9	5	2	1
Sub Total (Partial State Reimbursement)	6,373	7,398	7,143	7,855	7,025
Grand Total - Transported Students	6,574	7,652	7,387	7,970	7,172
Number of Routes/Buses	NA	NA	185	182	188

Source: SAISD Department of Transportation

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[7] Source: 2015-2016 Texas Education Agency State Report.
[8] The reduction in students for FY2017 is partially attributed to the elimination of 331 capped students, and the lack of Extended School Year program counts. Regular Home-to-School/School-to-Home category includes Distance, Hazard, Capped, Head Start, Teen Parenting, and Mc-Kinney-Vento students.

The Department of Transportation also provides designated SAISD students summer transportation services to selected locations, and facilitates transportation of more than 15,000 athletic and curricular trips annually. In addition to the 270 district 12-81 passenger school buses[9] used for transporting students, the DoT also maintains 425 white fleet[10] vehicles, and numerous district-owned small engine equipment.

Findings

The findings of the Council's Strategic Support Team are organized into four general areas: Commendations, Leadership and Management, Organization, and Operations. These findings are followed by a set of related recommendations for the district.

Commendations

- The team observed a positive culture in the DoT and noted that employees displayed enthusiasm and pride, enjoyed their colleagues, and appeared to be committed to their jobs and to student success. To illustrate –

  - Staff interviewed by the team expressed strong working relationships between supervisory staff and line staff

  - Staff was professionally attired in clothing distinguished by their classification

  - Routing and dispatching staff demonstrated a high level of experience and expressed excitement and enthusiasm about their jobs

  - Staff members who were engaged in employee payroll processing voiced a keen awareness of the importance and timeliness of the functions for which they were responsible

  - Many DoT employees have tenure and longevity, contributing to district and department institutional memory.

- Principals interviewed indicated that –

  - DoT responsiveness to transportation needs of schools has been generally good

  - Most drivers do a great job transporting their students safely and effectively.

- In addition to video cameras and GPS on most buses, DoT continues to leverage technology by exploring student tracking to digitally track where and when students enter and exit a bus and to prevent unauthorized riders boarding.

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[9] Includes spare and surplus buses.
[10] A white fleet vehicle is a district-owned vehicle that is not a school bus. White fleets typically include district trucks, vans, automobiles, and other equipment with engines (e.g., generators, lawnmowers).

- While DoT has historically not sought grant opportunities for bus replacement, the team commends DoT for its recent activities, which have placed the district as a recipient of a grant to replace 45 buses.

- The DoT requires ongoing training for drivers and exhibits a strong commitment to improving safety for students and employees. In addition, the training department developed a safety video for showing at school sites to students that ride buses.

- The DoT implemented a policy to monitor the unnecessary idling[11] of school buses to reduce student and driver exposure to engine exhaust, to improve engine life, and to conserve fuel. Daily monitoring utilizes GPS technology installed on SAISD buses.

Leadership and Management

- The team saw a departmental culture that had not been seriously challenged to do things differently, and a culture that tends to be reactive and transactional rather than proactive and strategic. The Department's failure to establish long-range goals, conduct planning, make data-driven decision making, and adopt a philosophy of continuous improvement has contributed to many of the conditions described in these findings. For example, the Department has --

  o No business plan with financial and performance objectives measured against established targets, benchmarks, or key performance indicators that are used at any level

  o No mechanism for identifying and implementing industry best practices

  o No plan to perform formal surveys to gauge customer satisfaction with services provided or to identify areas of concern

  o No deliberative or proactive succession plan to ensure continuity in the event of retirement, promotion, or resignation of key department staff

  o No voice at the table when decisions are made regarding bell times, programs, or boundary changes

  o No ongoing process improvement program to encourage innovation and efficiency.

- Business cases with financial analyses have not been developed to move the DoT forward to address critical operational challenges and opportunities, including --

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[11] In this instance, "idling" refers to running a vehicle's engine when the vehicle is not in motion. Idling typically occurs when drivers are stopped, waiting while parked at a bus stop, school site, residence, bus yard, or otherwise stationary with the engine running.

- Out-sourcing all or part of the vehicle maintenance function vs. maintaining the existing internal model

- Purchasing school (yellow) buses vs. purchasing more expensive activity buses

- The identification of priorities and objectives for bus replacement that are linked to the district's ability to provide funding

- Integrating, to the greatest extent possible, students from all transportation programs on the same buses

- Proving public transportation (VIA Metropolitan Transit) access for selected secondary students vs. yellow school bus transportation.

- Principals place the DoT in a "no win situation" when they assert that students are being short-changed on field and extracurricular trips due to DoT's priority for home-to-school and school-to-home transportation services over field and extracurricular trips.

- The team saw no evidence of an internal DoT follow-up plan to evaluate bus accidents by type, monitor trends, customize training based on trends, or articulate driver/mechanic accountability.[12]

- The DoT has been unable to fill all driver and mechanic positions for several years.[13] To illustrate --

  - Current key DoT operations staffing levels include --

    - 181 of 222 driver positions filled (18% vacancy rate)

    - 9 of 15 mechanic positions filled (40% vacancy rate)

  - Contributing factors to this shortage include --

    - Nearby independent school districts, public transportation, and private sector operators in the San Antonio area all draw from the same candidate pool

    - SAISD does not provide annual salary step increases

    - Promotions are not merit or seniority based

    - DoT staff moving to surrounding operators that provide higher wages, improved benefits, and additional guaranteed hours

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[12] The current accident evaluation process is handled by the Human Resources Department - Employee Benefits, Risk Management and Safety Office.

[13] This is a common issue that the Council has found in its reviews of districts and their efforts to recruit and retain classified employees.

- A lack of a district-wide strategy to recruit and retain staff, and the district's not requiring DoT to own the recruitment and onboarding process for new DoT hires

- The DoT does not utilize exit interviews or track reasons why employees voluntarily separate from service. Exhibit 5 below compares starting salaries of neighboring districts and VIA, the public transportation system in the San Antonio area.

Exhibit 5. Starting Salaries of Neighboring Districts and Public Transportation

Neighboring Districts and Public Transit	Starting Bus Driver Hourly Rate	Neighboring Districts and Public Transit	Starting Mechanic Hourly Rate
VIA Metropolitan Transit	$17.30	VIA Metropolitan Transit	$19.04
Southwest	15.54	Floresville	17.92
Edgewood	13.87	Northside	17.52
Judson	13.75	Edgewood	17.24
San Antonio	13.75	East Central	17.23
Schertz-Cibulo-University City	13.68	North East	16.80
South San Antonio	13.30	South San Antonio	16.75
Lackland	13.10	San Antonio	16.03
Northside	13.08	Southwest	15.03
Alamo Heights	13.02	Harlandale	14.40
East Central	13.00	Lackland	13.10
Southside	13.00	Alamo Heights	N/A
North East	12.46	Judson	N/A
Floresville	12.43	Schertz-Cibulo-University City	N/A
Harlandale	12.15	Southside	N/A

Source: Individual District/VIA Web Pages and Telephone Interviews

- Inadequate communication and collaboration between DoT and principals has resulted in confusion as to who is responsible for, or how student behavior issues on buses will be resolved. As a result of this disconnect --

  o Student safety is jeopardized

  o The district is exposed to increased risk and liability

  o Driver morale and retention are negatively impacted

- The reimbursable rate for field trips does not appear to fully cover DoT costs in that the "idle"[14] rate of $12.00/hour does not cover bus driver hourly wages that range from $13.75 to $20.14 per hour.

- The team found some students with disabilities (SWD) are transported with McKinney-Vento students, but a resistance to transport other non-disabled students on the same bus with their disabled peers. One-hundred percent of transported SWD students receive door-

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[14] Idle, in this instance, is when the driver stays with the group while at the destination.

to-door service, pursuant to the student's Individual Educational Program (IEP)[15] to provide the student with a Free Appropriate Public Education as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.[16]

- There is a lack of communication channels up-and-down and side-to-side within the Department. As a result –

  o The Department's mission, vision, goals and objectives have not been identified or, if they exist, have not been disseminated throughout the organization

  o There is a lack of intradepartmental collaboration as regularly scheduled staff meetings, the team was told, do not exist

  o The team heard and saw evidence of organizational silos within the DoT.

- There was no indication that a formal interdepartmental (Department of Special Education Services, Facilities Planning, Technology and Management Information Systems, and DoT) annual route planning timeline existed.

- There is a lack of communication, information exchange, and collaboration between the DoT, principals, and parents. Principals interviewed indicated that –

  o There was a lack of student route information communicated to school site staff and parents prior to the start of the school year

  o School site staff members lack timely notification of late arriving buses and other interruptions in service

  o More opportunities to interface with DoT staff to resolve transportation related issues are needed

  o Although SAISD utilizes the *School Messenger*[17] communications system, it is not utilized to notify school administrators or parents of route delays.

- A previous transportation review, the *San Antonio Independent School District Transportation Management Review*, was conducted approximately 10 years ago. Although a majority of the recommendations have been implemented or are in progress of being implemented, several recommendations to improve safety, efficiency,

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[15] An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written education plan designed to meet a child's learning needs.
[16] Pursuant to the U.S. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the least restrictive environment [LRE] is a principle that governs the education of students with disabilities and other special needs. LRE means that a student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. These students should have access to the general education curriculum, extracurricular activities, or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access, including transportation.
[17] School Messenger is a mass communication program that provides notifications to recipients *via* text message, email, voice, social media, or any combination thereof. Typical notifications regarding transportation could include route delays, emergencies, severe weather, substitute buses, and other related information.

communication, and cost effectiveness have not been brought to fruition. Exhibit 6 below summarizes the implementation status of these recommendations.

Exhibit 6. Previous Transportation Review

Review Section	Number of Recommendations	Number of Recommendations Implemented or In-Progress
Administration/Operations	22	18
Bus Routes	6	4
Vehicle Maintenance	12	8
Fleet	1	1
Purchasing and Inventory	3	2
Facilities	4	2
Other	1	0
Total	49	35
Percentage Complete or In-Progress		71.43%

Source: SAISD Department of Transportation

Organization

- Current organizational structures, position titles, and reporting relationships are unclear or need updating. For example –

  o The DoT organization chart indicates that Route Supervisors report to the Directors' of Transportation, whereas the job description indicates that they report to the Assistant Director, Transportation, a position that does not currently exist

  o The DoT organization chart indicates that Parts Warehouse Specialists (a position title that does not exist in the DoT budget) reports to the Assistant Director, Vehicle Maintenance, whereas the job description indicates they report to Maintenance Supervisors.

- The DoT lacks an internal program analyst to provide needed departmental support. The Senior Executive Director, Transportation, is currently functioning in this role.

- The team saw no evidence that the DoT organizational structure and workflows had been examined recently to determine if people could be repurposed to achieve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Operations

- The team was told that district policy requires drivers to pick-up all students, at all stops, regardless of whether the student is an authorized rider or a suspended rider. As a result –

  o Buses are transporting unauthorized, ineligible, or unknown riders that may not in the DoT database

- State funding reimbursement to the district may be reduced due to ineligible riders on buses

- In the event of an emergency or needed hospitalization, the district or the DoT may be unable to identify or notify parents/guardians of students who may be impacted

- Unnecessary costs, liability, and risk is being assumed by the district.

- School site staff does not have access to software that is available as a component of the district's current routing system. As a result, schools –

- Do not have immediate view-only access to routing information for their traveling students

- Must rely on outdated ridership lists provided by the DoT

- Are unable to assist with the identification and resolution of unauthorized or ineligible riders on buses.

- The 2015-2016 SAISD cost per transported student is considerably higher than most neighboring districts in the San Antonio area, and higher than most of the larger urban districts in Texas that were canvassed. Exhibit 7 below compares these per pupil costs.

Exhibit 7. Comparative Transportation Costs

Non-Students With Disabilities			Students With Disabilities		
Neighboring Districts	Cost Per Student	Daily Ridership	Neighboring Districts	Cost Per Student	Daily Ridership
Harlandale	$1,334.93	1,574	North East	$8,502.00	635
San Antonio	1,088.19	6,565	Harlandale	4,999.56	207
Floresville	997.08	2,067	Floresville	4,864.60	93
Somerset	951.40	2,395	San Antonio	4,716.41	1,288
South San Antonio	907.40	1,554	Northside	4,251.94	2,798
Judson	884.00	7,870	Judson	3,806.27	593
North East	808.62	19,015	Southwest	2,844.81	414
East Central	664.28	5,623	Schertz-Cibulo-University City	2,840.87	393
Northside	642.25	32,805	East Central	2,751.31	408
Southwest	607.79	6,642	Somerset	2,458.31	45
Southside	522.45	3,453	Southside	2,451.20	130
Schertz-Cibulo-University City	470.85	7,160	South San Antonio	1,063.49	166
Large Urban Districts			**Large Urban Districts**		
Austin	$1,134.77	16,109	Austin	$5,257.77	2,417
Houston	1,107.57	30,212	San Antonio	4,716.41	1,288
San Antonio	1,088.19	6,565	Houston	4,692.48	5,132
El Paso	951.09	7,821	Forth Worth	4,080.79	1,474
Forth Worth	919.34	17,689	El Paso	3,807.93	1,950
Dallas (No State Data Available)			Dallas (No State Data Available)		

Source: Texas Education Agency Operations Reports for FY2015-2016.

- The DoT lacks ongoing plans or processes to leverage daily ridership data to contain or reduce transportation costs by consolidating or eliminating buses. To illustrate –

  o Although ridership data for state reporting is collected at least two times throughout the school year, the team found no evidence that the data were used to review actual ridership for opportunities to consolidate routes, eliminate buses, or equalize loads

  o The team was told that the only proactive approach used in the Department to monitor bus loads is when drivers complain that their buses are "over-crowded."

- Depending on grade configuration, bell schedules for all SAISD schools and early childhood education centers (Head Start) are standardized.[18] However, these standardized bell schedules are not designed to maximize the multiple uses of the fewest buses possible to reduce transportation costs. To illustrate --

  o School start and end times for each school level are not calibrated to maximize use of the "three-tier"[19] transportation system. As a result , 31 routes/buses currently service only one morning tier (extremely inefficient), 104 routes/buses service two morning tiers, and 38 routes/buses service three morning tiers (highest efficiency)

  o The district approved 23 variances[20] (25.8 percent of SAISD schools) to standardized bell schedules, which inhibits the multiple use of buses and results in additional costs.

- The team did not see evidence that all transported students have been instructed in bus evacuation or other emergency situations.

- Principals interviewed expressed frustration and concern about the following –

  o Late arriving buses resulting in a loss of instructional time for impacted students

  o Buses having to double back to ensure all students have been picked-up

  o Large loads on buses exacerbating student behavioral problems

  o Negative impact on the scheduling of field trips

  o No dedicated (private) telephone number for principals to contact the DoT when necessary

  o Referrals from bus drivers for student behavior issues do not go directly to the school, but must be channeled first through the DoT, which is creating delays in principals᾿ ability to follow-up on the problem in a timely way

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[18] Standardized start and end times for Head Start programs are 7:30am to 2:20pm, 8:05am to 3:20pm for elementary schools, 8:45am to 4:00pm for middle schools, and 8:45am to 4:15pm for high schools.
[19] Three (3) separate staggered school starting times, with the goal of buses/routes in the morning performing three (3) runs each, and in the afternoon performing three (3) runs each accommodating all transported students.
[20] Source: SAISD DoT.

- Safety concerns regarding congestion and the safe delivery and pick-up of students at school sites

- Many school sites lack appropriate signage for designated school bus loading and unloading areas

- Drivers not following instructions as to where students should be dropped-off or picked-up

- Inconsistent notification from the DoT of buses that are late or have other interruptions of service

- The lack of a process to notify parents, by specific route, of buses that are running late

- Buses returning late from field trips delay subsequent on-time bus departures and cause student management problems in the afternoon.

- The team had the following observations about fleet maintenance operations based on staff interviews and a site visitation to the vehicle service area --

  - DoT lacks an interface between systems that the DoT and district use for managing parts inventory. Since the DoT apparently does not barcode its parts inventory, parts transactions must be manually entered into both systems

  - Industry productivity measurement tools, including flat-rate times for specific functions, repairs or services, are not utilized

  - The district lacks a comprehensive white fleet vehicle replacement plan

  - Mechanics are used to pick-up parts, which is a non-productive use of a resource that is currently experiencing a 40 percent vacancy rate

  - The DoT practice of not charging labor costs for white fleet services, which unnecessarily inflates DoT expenses and negatively impacts the Department's bottom line.

- The district's student information system is not able to digitally send student adds, drops, or changes directly to the district's routing software. This lack of connectivity requires the DoT to manually update student transportation files, which can delay adding new students to buses or to quickly accommodate student address changes.

- The team heard that school police respond slowly when called to assist with student behavior and other problems. Specifically—

  - The team was told that the typical response time was between 20-30 minutes

  - This lack of a timely response is further exacerbated by the DoT's decision to place only one supervisor in the field to respond to emergencies, accidents, incidents, student

behavior issues, and provide other critical support for the 180 buses transporting SAISD students.

- The team found a lack of controls in place to ensure students board or exit buses at their designated stop. This failure has resulted in students being dropped-off at incorrect locations and parents losing trust and confidence in SAISD transportation services.

- The team noted that SAISD scores poorly when compared to other urban school districts that participated in the latest CGCS Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Project survey.[21] Exhibit 8 illustrates several random performance comparisons.

Exhibit 8. Comparative 2014-2015 CGCS Key Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	State Average of Texas CGCS Districts	San Antonio ISD	CGCS National Median
Average Age of Fleet (years)[22]	8.47	9.47	8.76
Miles Between accidents[23]	44,172	31,228	48,257
Miles Between Preventable Accidents[24]	99,306	58,384	95,475
Daily Buses as a % of Total Buses[25]	79.60%	70%	87.08%
Daily Runs per Route Bus[26]	3.44	3.52	4.32
Cost per Bus[27]	$59,175	$69,946	$56,690
Buses per Mechanic	23.71	28.3	19.75

Source: Data Provided by SAISD DoT and CGCS 2014-2015 KPI Report

- Even though the DoT converted to the SAISD time-reporting software system, considerable staff time[28] is still spent manually entering payroll exceptions/adjustments (adding or correcting employee time) to meet deadlines.

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[21] The Council's *Managing for Results* is a Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project that identifies performance measures, key indicators, and best practices that can guide the improvement of non-instructional operations in urban school districts across the nation.

[22] Fleet replacement plans drive capital expenditures and ongoing maintenance costs (lower scores are best).

[23] Accident awareness and prevention can reduce liability exposure to a district (higher scores are best).

[24] Tracking accidents by type allows for trending and designing specific training programs to reduce/prevent trends noted (higher scores are best).

[25] Maintaining of unneeded buses is expensive and unnecessary as these funds could be used in the classroom (higher scores are best).

[26] There is a positive correlation between the number of daily runs a bus makes and operating costs (higher scores are best).

[27] This is a basic measurement of the cost efficiency of a pupil transportation program (lower scores are best).

[28] Estimated to be as much as 80 percent of the work day.

Recommendations

The Strategic Support Team has developed the following recommendations[29] to help improve efficiency and effectiveness, leadership and management, organization and operations of the Department of Transportation of the San Antonio Independent School District.

1. Develop a comprehensive and definitive departmental business plan with goals, objectives, benchmarks, performance measures, accountabilities, and costs that support the SAISD Strategic Plan, *Blueprint for Excellence*. The DoT plan should include timelines and process descriptions for, at least, the following activities –

   a. A department business plan linked to SAISD vision, values, and beliefs

   b. Yearly department initiatives

   c. Annual department forecasting, planning, and timelines

   d. Budget development

   e. Vehicle maintenance equipment and computer replacement cycles

   f. Training and professional development

   g. Defined performance measures, including KPIs and industry standards for all major functions of the department, and manager and supervisor accountability for these measures

   h. Employee performance appraisal and evaluation for all DoT staff

   i. An ongoing departmental process improvement program to encourage innovation.

2. Prepare business-case justifications for the following activities at a minimum–

   a. Discontinuing transportation of unauthorized or ineligible students

   b. Out-sourcing all or part of the vehicle maintenance function vs. maintaining the existing internal model

   b. Purchasing school (yellow) buses vs. purchasing more expensive activity buses

   c. Bus replacement linked to the district's ability to fund

   d. Field and extracurricular trip expenditures vs. fees charged to schools

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[29] Recommendations are not listed in any specific order or priority.

e. Absorbing white fleet labor costs vs. charging these costs to the appropriate organizational unit

f. Providing public transportation (VIA Metropolitan Transit) passes for selected secondary students vs. yellow school bus transportation

g. Increasing field supervision during morning and afternoon peak transportation times.

3. Create a comprehensive staff development plan that provides opportunities for new and current employees at all levels to enhance their skills and learn industry best practices through –

a. Participation in professional organizations

b. In-depth new employee orientation

c. Cross-functional training

d. Visiting peer districts to gather routing, safety, customer service, and technology leveraging strategies.

4. Continue implementation and leveraging unused features of the routing software the district has already invested in order to –

a. Allow parents to view their student's routing and other important information

b. Allow school site staff to view traveling student routing information, which does not require special software, only an internet connection

c. Allow school site staff the ability to generate reports using an internet connection

d. Better integrate GPS and routing functions

e. Provide enhanced monitoring of service and safety levels.

5. Evaluate recommendations from previous management reviews that have not been fully implemented. Prioritize and prepare a cost/benefit analysis for each remaining recommendation and a timeline for its implementation. Together with the COO, finalize the priority for implementation and assign project owners to move the recommendations forward.

6. Commence a comprehensive review of all routing processes to identify opportunities to improve safety and cost-effective routing outcomes. To move forward, the DoT should --

a. Establish an annual interdepartmental routing timeline committee that will develop appropriate and acceptable deadlines for the submission of data and completion of tasks. This committee should be comprised of key staff from Technology and Management Information Systems, Department of Special Education Services, transportation, and other departments deemed appropriate. The committee should ensure that--

  i. Routing staff has sufficient time to prepare summer and fall routes that are efficient and cost-effective

  ii. Student routing information provided to schools is received in a timely fashion and presented in a clear and logical format

 b. Use, to the greatest extent possible, the previous school year's ending routing configuration as the starting point for next year's routing

 c. Review all hazardous-traffic-area conditions to validate if the hazardous condition still exists or if new hazardous conditions need to be approved by the Board of Trustees

 d. Consider transporting students into two nearby schools on the same bus, such as middle school students with nearby high school students

 e. Develop, as routing policy, maximum ride times and earliest pick-up times and route to maximize the number of students on each bus and minimize the number of runs and buses used

 f. Design a strategy to monitor actual ridership throughout the school year with the goal of aggressively identifying stops, runs, and ultimately buses that can be consolidated or eliminated.

7. Expand the use of *School Messenger* to allow the DoT to notify parents, school site administrators, and others of route delays and other critical transportation related information in a timely way.

8. Require the DoT to become the "owner" and the Department of Human Resources to become the primary "supporter" of recruitment and onboarding of bus drivers and mechanics. Together, the two departments should –

 a. Maintain and track all DoT verified vacancies, which drive recruiting, onboarding, training, and position control

 b. Study the successes of peer districts' recruiting, onboarding, and training methods, and identify and adopt processes that can be incorporated in SAISD

 c. Appoint one individual from each organization (DoT and HR) who will have the authority, and will be held accountable for, the timely completion of all processes within their organization. Together, these two individuals should be responsible for ensuring that DoT positions are fully staffed. Bi-weekly status reports should be forwarded to the Chief of Human Resources and the Senior Executive Director, Transportation

 d. Establish exit interview protocols for DoT employees who voluntarily separate from the district, and identify and track the root causes for opportunities to make or recommend changes in policy

e. Plan and staff recruitment opportunities and fairs by leveraging mass communication and social media approaches. Consider using *School Messenger* to invite parents to join the "team"

f. Design strategies to assist applicants who are not computer savvy to navigate the required on-line application process

g. Conduct employee classification and compensation studies[30] that would analyze job classifications, salaries and benefit structures in comparable organizations so SAISD can take appropriate steps to better compete for and retain employees

h. Update the DoT organizational chart and all DoT job descriptions

i. Develop opportunities and invest in making SAISD a more attractive employer by –

    i. Continuing starting-salary placement by factoring-in prior experience at the time of onboarding

    ii. Allowing retired employees who are properly licensed to work at school startup periods and during high absentee periods such as paydays or after the winter holiday break.

9. Determine additional costs for current and proposed bell schedule variances and require administrative approval and funding on an annual basis to facilitate variances.

10. Incorporate best practices into fleet services by –

    a. Developing a white fleet replacement program that incorporates, at a minimum, vehicle age, vehicle mileage, and vehicle cost per mile to operate

    b. Reducing the number of spare and surplus school buses to national averages to eliminate the unnecessary costs associated with maintaining these unassigned buses

    c. Implementing standardized industry productivity measurement tools, including flat-rate times for specific functions, repairs or services

    d. By eliminating the practice of having mechanics pick-up parts.

11. Implement programs to measure customer satisfaction, including the use of customer surveys, to identify service concerns and establish future priorities. At a minimum, input from parents, school administrators, customers of Fleet Services, teachers on field trips, athletic directors, and coaches should be solicited.

12. Require Technology and Management Information Systems to study the reducing of manual and repetitive data entry by --

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[30] The team recommends first analyzing the starting hourly rate for Journeyman Mechanics.

a. Automatically updating bus driver time reporting utilizing GPS, routing, and other systems currently in place to capture when a driver is performing supplemental tasks

b. Automatically transferring fleet parts inventory transactions between systems and incorporate the utilization of bar code inventory technology to reduce data entry

c. Facilitating a nightly update, to the DoT student routing software, of adds, changes that require DoT action, and dropped students

d. Determining if the above interfaces can be developed in-house or will need to be contracted-out

e. Developing specifications and prepare Invitation for Bid (IFB) or Request for Proposals (RFP) if interfaces cannot be developed in-house.

13. Develop succession planning within the Department of Transportation to ensure knowledge transfer and the orderly transition of responsibilities.

14. Monitor response times of school police and DoT staff for calls from drivers needing assistance. Establish criteria for the types of calls to be handled by school police and types of calls to be handled by DoT staff.

15. Convene a team of stakeholders, including key instructional staff, key Department of Special Education Services staff, key transportation staff, and a consultant that specializes in bell time optimization to identify changes necessary to maximize three-tier bell schedule efficiencies and route planning strategies. The finished plan should--

a. Align schools so that an equal number of buses are scheduled on each bell tier

b. Allow reasonable travel time between tiers and appropriate bus loading and unloading times at schools

c. Allow tier assignment changes or exchanges

d. Allow for the inclusion of early release schedules.

16. Create an effective communication system throughout the DoT organization that includes channels up-and-down the unit with regular meetings at each level with specific agendas, documented minutes of discussions, decisions, and follow-up activities so employees know –

a. The Department's goals and objectives and how they will be achieved

   i. How employees will be held accountable for and be evaluated in the process

   ii. That managers and supervisors will be held accountable to ensure that information and feedback is disseminated up-and-down the organization

iii. That communication channels are in place to disseminate, on a regular basis, department news and information. A sample Communications Matrix is illustrated in Exhibit 9 below.

Exhibit 9. Sample Department Communications Matrix

Annually	Quarterly	Twice Monthly	Weekly
Department All-Employee Meeting	Department Central Office Staff Meeting	Department Leadership Team Meeting	Direct Report Meetings
Purpose			
Provide team building, employee recognition, mandatory training, common vision, and points of emphasis for the year.	Provide central staff with team building, interdepartmental updates, introduction of new staff, and review safety, telephone, and emergency procedures.	Provide department leadership staff an opportunity to share information on department projects, status reports, priority issues and challenges, and personnel updates.	Identify concerns and issues that affect unit and department that require support or action plans.
Required Attendees			
All Department of Transportation staff.	All central office staff.	Directors, managers, and others as appropriate	Managers/supervisors and direct reports

Source: Council of the Great City Schools

17. Identify opportunities to increase student safety and reduce risk and liability by –

a. Implementing a collaborative plan with school site administrators for appropriate and timely responses to student discipline issues that occur on the bus and in loading zones

b. Reviewing the student behavior referral process to streamline and reduce the number of steps necessary to ensure principals receive prompt notification of any referral

c. Ensuring students are held accountable

d. Confirming video recording equipment on all buses is working properly

e. Requiring all drivers of SAISD students and operations staff to receive continuous training on SAISD policies, and be held accountable for –

    i. Picking-up and dropping-off students at the correct location

    ii. Not releasing any student that requires an authorized receiver until the driver confirms the authorized receiver is physically present at the stop

     iii. Required responses to bus accidents, breakdowns, buses running late, bullying and harassment, unauthorized individuals attempting to board the bus, smoking on the bus, reported weapons on the bus, and all other safety related situations

    f. Requiring all students who ride, or could ride, school buses to be instructed in school bus evacuation and other emergency situations.

18. Expand the use of *School Messenger* and allow the DoT to notify parents, school site administrators, and, as appropriate, students of route delays, and other critical transportation related information in a timely way.

19. Create a committee comprised of leaders from transportation and the Department of Special Education Services to regularly confer on issues of mutual concern. At a minimum, these discussions should include –

    a. Establishing when a transportation representative should be present at an IEP meeting to discuss specialized equipment or services a student requires

    b. The pros, cons, and costs associated with changing or adding special education programs at a school

    c. Identifying opportunities to ensure a *least restrictive environment* whenever possible by—

     i. Identifying students that can be integrated on buses with their non-disabled peers

     ii. Designing runs that will safely accommodate both corner and curb-to-curb stops.

20. Strengthen outreach and department visibility to internal and external customers of the DoT by –

    a. Being present at principal meetings to address home-to-school and field trip service options,[31] school-site concerns, and to reassure site administrators of transportation's commitment to provide quality transportation services and support

    b. Providing school-site administrators with an unpublished single point of contact telephone number to resolve any transportation-related matters, regardless of where a bus may park

    c. Promptly meeting with parents to address and resolve concerns

    d. Providing an exceptional and informative experience for visitors to the DoT website

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[31] Schools have the option to contract with private vendors that have been approved by SAISD if the DoT is not able to accommodate needs for specific trips. Some schools have buses parked at their locations that can be used for field and extracurricular trips and driven by school staff who are licensed to drive buses.

21. Collaborate with the district's Human Resources Department - Employee Benefits, Risk Management and Safety Office to ensure the timely review and follow-up of school bus accidents, so the DoT can –

    a. Evaluate bus accidents by type[32]

    b. Monitor trends by type

    c. Customize training based on trends

    d. Hold drivers accountable for preventable accidents

    e. Reduce risk and liability.

22. Review, together with each site administrator, school loading and unloading zones for safety, accessibility, and appropriate signage. At each site, determine whether –

    a. The current school bus loading and unloading area is appropriate

    b. School bus loading and unloading should be moved a different area

    c. School bus loading zone signs need to be installed or relocated. Contact the appropriate SAISD department or agency to have signs moved or added as necessary.

23. Invest in an internal data analyst position to provide needed department data and analytical support. This position should support department initiatives, retrieve and maintain DoT KPI data, monitor and report on performance and customer satisfaction trends, and assign passwords and train school site staff on retrieving student routing information for students attending their school.

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[32] Accident types generally include turning right, turning left, backing, or moving forward.

ATTACHMENT A. STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAM

Robert Carlson

Robert Carlson is Director of Management Services for the Council of the Great City Schools. In that capacity, he provides Strategic Support Teams and manages operational reviews for superintendents and senior managers; convenes annual meetings of Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Transportation Directors, and Chief Information Officers and Technology Directors; fields hundreds of requests for management information; and has developed and maintains a Web-based management library. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Carlson was an executive assistant in the Office of the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools. He holds doctoral and master degrees in administration from The Catholic University of America; a B.A. degree in political science from Ohio Wesleyan University; and has done advanced graduate work in political science at Syracuse University and the State Universities of New York.

David M. Palmer

David Palmer, Deputy Director of Transportation (retired), Los Angeles Unified School District, is a forty-year veteran of the school bus industry. Mr. Palmer's executive responsibilities included the management and oversight of bus operations (transportation of over 75,000 students on 2,500 school buses into over 850 schools and centers), fleet maintenance (3,300+ vehicles), strategic planning and execution, budget development and oversight, and contract administration. Mr. Palmer oversaw the design and implementation of performance standards, benchmarks and accountabilities for department staff and advised the Council of Great City Schools on the *Key Performance Indicator* project. Mr. Palmer also instructs the transportation component in the School Business Management Certificate Program at the University of Southern California. Mr. Palmer currently provides consulting services for school districts and providers.

James Beekman

James Beekman is the General Manager of Transportation for Hillsborough County (Florida) Public Schools (HCPS). HCPS is currently the 8th largest school district in the nation servicing over 205,000 students. Mr. Beekman began his career in student transportation in 1983 and has been in a leadership role since 1989. He has been active in the Florida Association of Pupil Transportation where he served as a Regional Director, as President and has chaired numerous committees in both operations, fleet and school bus specifications. He was recognized by School Bus Fleet Magazine as the national 2014 Administrator of the Year. In his role at HCPS, he directs the daily operation of Transportation Services which transports over 90,000 students daily on 996 routes that cover an annual total of 17 million miles. In addition to yellow bus, Transportation Services also maintains over 600 vehicles in its white fleet used by a variety of departments in the District. He is a graduate of Florida Southern College in Lakeland with a B.S. in Business.

Shirley Morris

Shirley Morris currently serves as Director III of Transportation for the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD), Fort Worth, Texas. Ms. Morris has served the FWISD for 23 years. She

started as the Textbook Coordinator for four years after which she successfully worked her way through Management for 19 years before she was promoted to Director. With an extensive academic background, Ms. Morris holds a Bachelors of Arts (B.A.) in Criminal Justice/Psychology and Social Work from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 1983 and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 1989. As a Commissioned Officer of the United States Army; Captain, and now a disabled Veteran, she used her military leadership skills to be directly responsible for the operation of providing transportation services for 137 schools. As well, she oversees 584 employees; 479 buses, which 352 are on active routes that are dispersed among three satellite facilities. Out of the 83 thousand students that attend the FWISD; 19,424 are serviced on school buses.

Nicole Portee

Nicole Portee currently serves at the Executive Director of the Denver Public Schools (DPS) Transportation Department, overseeing a fleet of more than 400 school buses, 500 personnel, $24M budget, and transportation for over 39,000 students throughout Denver. Mrs. Portee earned a B.A. from American InterContinental University. She is a distinguished leader within the field of school bus transportation. Her passion for Transportation came while working for the Air Force & Accounting on Lowry AFB and United Parcel Service (UPS) where she served in various capacities with emphasis on Workforce Planning. In 2003 Nicole joined Denver Public Schools Transportation team and served in various capacities before accepting the role of Executive Director in 2010. In 2013 Nicole was honored by the DPS Superintendent and awarded "Persons of the Year" for exemplifying DPS Shared Core Values. In 2014 she was also named one of the 14 Phenomenal Women in School Transportation by the School Bus Fleet magazine and again in 2014 one of the 14 Fascinating Personalities in Pupil Transportation School Bus Fleet magazine. Nicole has continued to be recognized by various organizations for her leadership and outstanding out of the box thinking. Nicole served as the President of the Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association (CSPTA) from 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. She has presented as several National Conferences such as Transporting Students with Disabilities and Preschoolers National Conference.

Reginald Ruben

Reginald Ruben is the Director of Transportation for Fresno Unified School District, has been in the field of transportation for twenty – plus years in the school bus industry. Mr. Ruben, has worked his way up the ranks in this field, from a bus driver, state certified instructor, and in 2012 promoted to Director of Transportation for the 4th largest school district in California. He is responsible for transporting 29,000 students daily, not including sports and activities, with 102 buses in his fleet traveling 1.5 million miles each year.

Patricia Snell

Patricia Snell is the director of Student Transportation and Fleet Services for Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) in Fort Lauderdale, FL. BCPS is the 6th largest school district in the country transporting over 70,000 students daily on 997 routes that travel over 15M miles per year. Pat is in her 29th year serving students in the State of Florida. Her career started in Seminole County, Fl in 1987 as a bus driver, relocated to Miami-Dade, FL in 1994 as a Director in the 4th

largest school district before joining the Broward team in 2013. In addition to the 1200 yellow buses, transportation also maintains over 900 white fleet vehicles for the district. She is a graduate of Indiana State University with a B.S. in Biophysics and is presently a Regional Director for Florida Association of Pupil Transportation as well as past treasurer of the same group.

ATTACHMENT C. DISTRICT PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED

- Mike Daly, Sr. Executive Director. Transportation
- Robert Sirois, Director Local Routes & Field Trips
- Miguel Flores, Assistant Director Vehicle Maintenance
- Elizabeth Barnhouse, Trainer, Supervisor
- Tony Casanova, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
- Richard Cavazos, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
- Adam Longoria, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
- Adela Arredondo, Route Supervisor
- Gabriel Ramirez, Route Supervisor
- Carmen Hughes, Payroll Clerk
- Elena Moreno, Payroll Clerk
- Rosie Alvarado, Department of Special Education Services
- Linda Kochheiser, Department of Special Education
- Janel Cowen, Director Special Education, Transportation
- Mercedes Cavazos, Route Coordinator/Dispatcher
- Janet Pena, Route Coordinator/Dispatcher
- Sandra Herrera, Route Coordinator/Dispatcher
- Petra Lura, Route Coordinator/Dispatcher
- Traci Smith, Principal, Stewart Elementary School
- Frances Whitaker, Principal, Woodlawn Hills Elementary School
- Moises Ortiz, Principal, Rhodes Middle School
- Mary Rodriguez, Principal, Hirsch Elementary School
- Laura Cooper, Principal, Lanier High School
- Ixchell Gonzalez, Principal, Ogden Elementary School
- N. Gould, Principal, Eloise Japhet Elementary School
- C. De La Garza, Principal, Collins Garden Elementary School
- I. Talamantes, Principal, Whittier Middle School

ATTACHMENT D. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- Transportation Management Review (~2009)
- District Enrollment (FY13 - FY17)
- Bus Replacement Plan (17-year cycle)
- FY17 Bell Schedule
- Job Descriptions
  - Senior Executive Director – Transportation
  - Director – Transportation
  - Assistant Director – Vehicle Maintenance
  - Warehouseman (Automotive Parts)
  - Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
  - Trainer/Supervisor – Transportation
  - Tire Technician
  - Route Supervisor
  - Route Coordinator
  - Journeyman Mechanic
  - Bus Monitor
  - Bus Driver
  - Bus Driver Assistant
- Transportation Budget (FY13 - FY17)
- Special Education Route Analysis by Bus
- Runs by Bus and Tier
- McKinney-Vento Route Analysis by Bus
- Local Route Analysis by Bus
- Transportation Department Handbook FY17 (draft)
- SAISD FY17 Employee Handbook
- Transportation Service Survey – October 2016
- SAISD Handbook for Classified Employees (October 2007)
- Bus Inventory by Year and Fuel Type
- Transportation Services Handbook (Rev. Spring 2016)
- Shop Safety and Standard Operating Procedures
- Employee Acknowledge Form – Annual Polices Notification
- CDL Training – Parts 1 and 2
- District Improvement Plan (2014 – 2015)
  - Chapter 9 – Transportation Action Plan
- Plan for Enhanced Service and Operations, Transportation (2016 – 2017)
- Organization Charts
  - Office of the Superintendent
  - Transportation/Vehicle Maintenance Department
- Route Sheets
  - Bus B-401
  - Bus 407 (SPED)
- 2015-2016 State Reimbursement Summary
- Student Counts for February 8, 2017
- Procedure to Limit School Bus Idling
- State Reimbursement Reports for Various Districts
- State Head Count Form

- Student Counts for March 15, 2017
- Monthly Stop Arrival Summary
- Function 34 Budget Report

SAN ANTONIO IT REPORT

Review of the Information Technology Operations of the San Antonio Independent School District

February 2017

In February 2017, the San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) asked the Council of the Great City Schools to provide a high-level management review of its information technology (IT) operations.[1] Specifically, the Council was requested to—

- Review and evaluate the organization, leadership and management, and operations of the district's IT Department.

- Develop recommendations that would help the district's IT operations achieve greater operational efficiency and effectiveness.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team comprised of current and former school district information technology executives from major city school districts across the country to conduct this review. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Attachment A provides brief biographical sketches of team members.)

Robert Carlson, Project Director
Director, Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

Tom Ryan (Principal Investigator)
Chief Information Officer (Retired)
Albuquerque Public Schools

Arnold Veramontes
Chief Information Technology Officer (Retired)
Houston Independent School District

Shahryar Khazei
Chief Information Officer
Los Angeles Unified School District

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[1] The Council has conducted some 300 instructional, management, and operational reviews in over 50 big-city school districts over the last 19 years. The reports generated by these reviews are often critical but they have been the foundation for improving the operations, organization, instruction, and management of many urban school systems nationally. These reports have also been the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate. (Attachment G lists the reviews that the Council has conducted.)

Phil Neufeld
Executive Director, Information Technology
Fresno Unified School District

Annmarie Lehrer
Chief Information Officer
Rochester City Schools

Sharyn Guhman
Chief Information Officer
Denver Public Schools

Kenneth Thompson
Chief Information Officer
Baltimore City Schools

The team conducted its fieldwork for the project during a four-day site visit to San Antonio on February 21-24, 2017. The general schedule for the site visit is described below. (The Working Agenda for the site visit is presented in Attachment B.)

The team met with the Superintendent on the first day of the site visit to understand the expectations and objectives for the review and to make final adjustments to the schedule. The Superintendent indicated there was tendency for the district to maintain outdated and inefficient practices that might be impeding growth opportunities. He also indicated that he believed that schools using technology in their intended ways were likely to do better than schools without technology. And he recognized that technology can accelerate great instruction but that good planning was needed.

The team used the second and third days to conduct interviews with staff members (see list of interviewees in Attachment C) and to review documents, reports, and data provided by the district (see List of Documents reviewed in Attachment D). The final day of the visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and to briefing the Superintendent, the newly appointed Chief Operating Officer *via* telephone, and the Chief of Staff on the team's preliminary conclusions and proposals.

The Council sent the draft of this report to team members for their review to ensure the accuracy of the report and to obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations. This management letter contains the findings and recommendations that were designed by the team to help improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the district's Information Technology operations.

Findings

The findings of the Council's Strategic Support Team are organized into four general areas: Commendations; Organization; Leadership and Management; and Operations.

Commendations

- The district has a dedicated IT staff with institutional knowledge broadly distributed across front-line functions.

- The department's Digital Leadership staff is motivated and working to help teachers move to "21st Century Learning Environments."

- The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and Data Services staff are highly competent and experienced in ensuring data integrity and working to improve data quality.

- The district has made substantial progress in moving to Voice Over IP (VOIP), which enables voice calls to be made using the Internet at greatly reduced costs. This was achieved at a time when the E-Rate subsidy was no longer available for telecommunication conversions.

- The district has a robust wide-area network bandwidth and high-end core network equipment.[2]

Organization

- There was no formal Enterprise-Wide or IT Governance Structures or decision-making framework for identifying, selecting, prioritizing, and tracking resources for district and departmental initiatives and projects.

- There was a no dedicated district or IT Program Management Office (PMO) that maintained a comprehensive portfolio of initiatives and projects; monitors on-going work; mitigates risks, or provides accountability; or documents projects, services and applications through their life cycle.[3]

- Roles and responsibilities in the IT organization were not functionally aligned. The team heard, for example, that--

  ○ Instructional Designers were doing technical work, e.g., Multiple Device Management (MDM) and Learning Management System (LMS) administration.

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[2] The team noted, however, that the local school networks may not be adequate, optimized or equitable because variations in planning or funding have created gaps at school sites. The team did not note this as a finding since it understands the issue will be addressed as part of the Bond and TRE programs.

[3] The staffing levels and responsibilities of the district's Bond, E-rate and Project Management Department do not reflect what is considered "best practices" in comprehensive program management and methodologies.

- ○ Multiple groups were making independent network decisions.

- ○ Programmers were maintaining software applications.

Leadership and Management

- There was no overall vision, mission statement, "theory of action" with milestones, timelines or clear definitions of the specifications and requirements to develop district-wide 21st Century Learning Environments. During its visit, the team heard, for example, that--

  - ○ Staff in both technology and other departments could not identify where the district was going with the use of technology to improve or support instruction.

  - ○ There was no clear definition of a 21st Century Learning Environment and no specifications or requirements for achieving it.

  - ○ There was no written long-term instructional plan that would guide and drive the development of a technology plan; and there were no clear recommendations regarding the instructional uses of the technologies.

  - ○ There were no defined device or platform standards.

  - ○ The Digital Leadership Team (DLT) was focused on supporting teachers in their shift to 21st Century Learning Environments, but its work was being done without an overall strategic vision to drive it.

  - ○ There continues to be confusion and conflict between the Academic Coaches and Digital Leadership Team because there has been no clear articulation of goals for each of the groups around technology.

- The district has maintained outdated and inefficient practices and processes, which have reduced knowledge transfer and inflated costs. For example--

  - o The team heard from IT staff that they strive to keep the district's current infrastructure working, which suggests their lack of interest in driving change has resulted in—

    - ▪ Maintaining the status quo
    - ▪ A preference for home-grown applications
    - ▪ Customizations rather than off-the-shelf applications
    - ▪ Inflated costs
    - ▪ Reduced knowledge transfer

o The team heard from IT staff that state-run (iTCCS) legacy applications do not meet district requirements, but it did not hear or see evidence staff had tried to migrate to new applications.[4]

○ IT staff did not appear to be unaware of "proven practices," industry standards, IT organizations and associations, or the operational functionalities of information systems used by other large district systems that could provide guidance and direction for improved processes, services, and practices.[5]

- It appears there has been an over emphasis on "solutions" without first identifying and agreeing on the "problem(s)" that needed to be fixed; what new items, technologies, services or products would be "right" for the organization; and business cases have not been used to make the decisions that have been made. For example—

○ The team heard from staff that interactive whiteboards were purchased without a clear instructional purpose.

○ Staff expressed concern to the team about the use of technologies (e.g., Smart Boards, LMS, Chromebooks) without clear instructional purpose, buy-in, vetting, documented planning, evaluation, and metrics to justify expansion, or whether there was a true alignment to instructional improvements and student success.

- Staff may lack the ability to meet expectations and requirements to develop 21st Century Learning Environments district-wide. unless strong management and appropriate technical support (mentoring, consultancies) is provided in areas such as—

o Application lifecycle management and human resource management for the Application Development Team leads.

o Educational technology frameworks and change management practices for the Instructional Technology team leads.

- There was no defined communication matrix or formal communication channels across departments and within IT. For example—

○ Stakeholders across departments were not represented in planning and implementing major projects, e.g., 21st Century Learning Environment, Learning Management System (LMS), Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), the integration of technology to support instruction.

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[4] The Internet-based Texas Computer Cooperative Software (iTCCS) legacy mainframe, which is hosted at Region 20, has limited ability to be modified, relies on outdated technologies, creates the need for multiple credentials and requires ad hoc programming (workarounds).

[5] IT governance, portfolio management, service management, project management, cyber security, DevOps, hybrid cloud for computer storage, etc., are some of the areas that are well documented and could assist in improving processes and practice.

- ○ Inadequate communication with IT limits the ability of staff to provide high quality support for initiatives or help to resolve issues. Help Desk staff stated, for instance, that they were unaware of many new applications

- ○ System outages and changes in systems were not systematically communicated between key IT staff and users, in part, because there was no change-control board or IT Service Management (ITSM) standards.[6]

- ○ There was no clear point of contact, protocols or formal communication channels tying IT and facilities for implementing long-term bond and TRE programs, and current projects.

- There was a lack of a focus on priorities and clear boundaries for projects and services, which have diffused energy, created confusion, and paralyzed IT staff who are reluctant to say "no." The team heard, for example, that--

  - ○ People were agreeing to projects without real analyses as to what the needs were, knowing how they fit with district priorities and goals, and what trade-offs needed to be made between priorities given constraints of cost, time, and resources.

  - ○ The shifting of staff from one project to another was impacting the quality of work, staff's ability to provide long-term support to sustain services, and was creating a backlog of projects.

  - ○ Managers were undertaking projects and initiatives without structured and documented requirements, definitions, and practices.

  - ○ There were duplications of functions and skills across the department (e.g., application and report developers, network, end-point user support) rather than a coherent grouping of resources based upon a set of IT services and complementary skills.

- Professional standards were not required and there was limited technical training and professional development opportunities provided for new and current staff, which could increase their effectiveness and justify the district's investments in the technology and systems it has. For example—

  - o Technical job classifications do not require requisite certifications, e.g., ERP Tiers I, II, III, network, and project management.

  - o There was minimal, if any, on-going technical training to support district operations, e.g., Help Desk, desktop support

  - o There was no professional development plan for administrators and teachers related to the digital learning initiative.

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[6] IT service management (ITSM) standards are the activities, directed by policies, organized and structured in processes and supporting procedures for planning, designing, delivering, operating and controlling information technology (IT) services.

- There was no clear definition of goals for Academic Coaches and Digital Leadership Team, a situation that results in confusion and conflicts among staff in each area. For example-

  ○ School-based staff view the Digital Leadership Team as technology support rather than instructional leaders who support the integration of technology into the classroom.

  ○ Educational technology is incorrectly described by some as connected devices and smart boards rather than how it provides meaningful and beneficial instructional support.

  ○ The Digital Leadership Team's mission and initiatives, e.g., the Google framework and the Chromebook roll-out are not fully understood nor supported (and maybe even resisted) by other IT departments.

- The current model of face-to-face professional development has limited capacity and may not be scalable to reach the administrators and teachers in the district's 89 schools. For example--

  ○ The Learning Management System is not being leveraged to provide comprehensive professional development.

  ○ Professional development, offered by the Digital Learning Team, listed classes that are application-specific and not aligned to academic content areas or pedagogically driven use, which reinforces the perception of technology support rather than instruction.

- Annual personnel evaluations are generic and do not include goals, objectives, and performance metrics.

Operations

- There were multiple operational deficiencies that have the potential to put the district at risk including—

  ○ There was no formal software lifecycle management (ALM) process for designing, developing, testing for quality assurance, deploying, releasing and maintaining enterprise and custom created applications, resulting in—

    ▪ "Ad hoc" changes that were made to systems without understanding their implications for or impact on other systems.

    ▪ Multiple single-points-of-failure for critical applications and critical infrastructure services, such as Mobile Device Management (MDM) and System Center Configuration Management (SCCM).

  ○ The technical requirements and timelines for relocating the data center, which have not been considered or planned for.

- ○ No independent penetration testing, internal use of vulnerability assessments or audit since 2012 to determine the health or level of security of the infrastructure and the applications.

- ○ The crystal report tool that goes down on a weekly basis and the solution to address the problem has been delayed.

- ○ The delay of the business intelligence (BI) project because the technical solution has significantly changed, so—

  - ▪ Staff will need to learn new skills

  - ▪ Reports will need to be rewritten

  - ▪ A new security model will need to be implemented

- ○ There was no formal or annual review of existing processes and procedures or clear ownership for the development of new processes and procedures for handling security threats and attacks that could disrupt services and jeopardize access to data and sensitive information, such as usernames and passwords.

- Data were not used to make decisions to measure performance, and stakeholder feedback was not collected to improve efficiencies and effectiveness. For example--

  - o There were no standard delivery and incident-resolution workflows that would allow end-to-end tracking of services and coordination across teams.

  - o The Help Desk's current ticketing system does not record in-coming calls, so there were no data to assess mean-time for repair, first call resolution, and ticket types and aging.

  - o Customers were not surveyed to measure levels of service or satisfaction.

- There was no plan to improve Help Desk service levels, which include a 23 percent abandonment rate that is well above the median of 15.5 percent rate reported in the Council's 2016 report, *Managing for Results* 2016.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Support - Help Desk Call Abandonment Rate

	2011-2012 (n=32)	2012-2013 (n=34)	2013-2014 (n=33)	2014-2015 (n=26)
Upper Quartile	17.2%	20.7%	20.8%	23.1%
Median	11.5%	11.7%	12.9%	15.5%
Lower Quartile	6.0%	6.3%	6.8%	7.0%
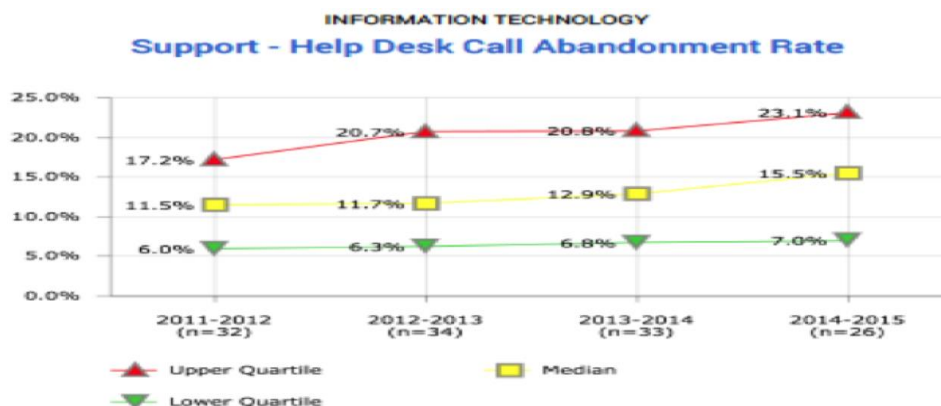
- There was no formal or documented process for providing or removing access to critical enterprise systems, a situation that could result, for example, in findings in a future financial audit.

- The network architecture and systems infrastructure, which includes two disparate systems (VLAN/DIF), is overly complex and negatively impacts problem resolution, performance, user experience, support costs, and security.

- Network design and support was spread across different IT groups and construction contractors, leading to a lack of problem resolution for end-to-end network service delivery. For example—

  ○ Stakeholders used work-arounds with unintended consequences, including such things as guest network access and generic log-in to the desktop.

  ○ Network and system monitoring tools were not utilized effectively to detect, identify, and proactively resolve issues (reactive problem resolution).

  ○ Current low voltage systems--such as surveillance, public address and intercom--were connected to the network, but IT had no role in monitoring and policing to ensure the integrity of the network because management of the systems were outside its control.

- Current complex or unique functions had not been assessed to determine if they should be outsourced or supplemented to offer greater organizational resiliency. These functions included, for example—

  o E-rate administration and/or consultation

  o Managed network services

  o Application software development

  o Public or private cloud services for sourcing computer storage

- There was no formal process for creating, maintaining, and updating education specifications and standards, which has led to multiple competing enterprise applications performing the same function, increased training and support, and confusion among staff. For example—

  ○ Goggle and Office 365 provide the same functionality but require different training and support, and there is confusion over the use of Schoology and Google Classroom, which offer similar services.

  ○ Infrastructure standards have not been implemented consistently across the district.

  ○ E-Rate and Bond-funded projects have been built to different standards.

○ The presence of and inability to remove or replace outdated Operating Systems has made the district vulnerable for attacks and penetrations, e.g., 1600 XP machines.

○ There were no baselines or targets, so there were significant disparities and equity issues in device ratios across schools.

○ There was no evidence of a technology refresh plan or migration strategy, including operating systems, business applications, and hardware.

- The team heard from principals that they were unware of the status of requisitions and that it can take months for sites and schools to acquire equipment because of the district's complex procurement process.

Recommendations.

1. Create a district strategic plan with vision, mission, goals, objectives, milestones and timelines with specific business plans in each of the major departments that are aligned with and support the district's intent to develop 21st Century Learning Environments. The district's strategic plan should include—

   i. A clear definition of 21st Century Learning Environments with specifications and requirements for achieving them, and

   ii. Department business plans that specify roles, responsibilities, and levels of effort needed in the transition.

2. Create an Enterprise-Wide Governance decision-making framework with a strong focus on priorities that can control, direct, and regulate performance of district and departmental projects, portfolios, infrastructure and processes; and develop an IT Governance framework as a sub-set to oversee the use of information and related technology to create value and manage risks associated with using information and technology.

3. Create an Enterprise Program Management Office with methodologies to--

   i. Guide the district's implementation of the strategic plan by prioritizing and aligning initiatives, allocating resources, monitoring a Project Portfolio, and receiving input and reporting out to stakeholders.

   ii. Coordinate and prioritize resources across the various district initiatives or projects;

   iii. Manage the links between and the costs and risks of these initiatives and projects; and

   iv. Leave the management of individual initiatives and projects to project managers.

4. Restructure the IT organization so job titles of staff are aligned with their roles and responsibilities; minimize the shifting of staff from one project to another so they have time to develop the skills required to provide the long-term support needed to sustain services and move the district forward; and consider—

i. Integrating the Digital Learning Team into the Academics Office as instructional coaches that use technology to accelerate learning goals to support all schools

ii. Creating a Digital Strategist either as a position or a contracted resource to help guide an enterprise strategy that moves the district into a 21st Century Learning Environment,

5. Require professional standards and certifications for technical job classifications; provide comprehensive technical training and professional development to increase the effectiveness of new and current staff and justify the district's investment in its technology; and use annual personnel evaluations that include goals, objectives, and performance metrics to measure performance.

6. Leverage functionalities in the district's Learning Management System to deliver digital learning that is focused on academic content areas or pedagogically driven to administrators and teachers in all 89 district school sites.

7. Provide opportunities for staff to attend organizational and association meetings and participate in Webinars, so they are exposed to "proven practices," industry standards, the operational functionalities of information systems used in other large district systems that could provide guidance and direction for improved processes, services, and practices.

8. Identify operational deficiencies and outdated and inefficient IT-related processes, procedures, and systems that do not meet district requirements and determine the feasibility of replacing or out-sourcing them. As part of this effort—

i. Conduct a Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for the iTCCS system that includes its maintenance fees, program customizations and programming costs to sustain it; and conduct an RFI to identify other systems, costs, and functionalities that may be available to help reduce costs and improve service delivery.

ii. Conduct a thorough analysis to determine if out-sourcing the e-rate administration, network services, and application software development could achieve cost savings, improve service and quality, and mitigate potential risks to the district.

9. Create a process for updating educational specifications and standards that—

i. Identifies enterprise level systems that are duplicative

ii. Creates life-cycle standards to remove and replace outdated devices and systems

iii. Assures equity between schools using technology resources

10. Define the district's instructional goals and strategies and align work of the IT Department to help achieve them (change strategies) by—

i. Creating relevant teaching frameworks related to technology to inform curriculum and instruction such as—

a) SAMR, which is a model designed to help educators infuse technology into teaching and learning.
b) TPaCK that describes the complex interaction among three bodies of knowledge: Content, pedagogy, and technology.
c) Technology Integration Matrix (TIM) provides a framework for describing and targeting the use of technology to enhance learning.
d) 21CLD (21st Century Learning Design) - a framework for teachers and a set of tools for building 21st century learning opportunities into their lessons.

ii. Using relevant change management models such as the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) to guide professional development for 21st Century Learning.

iii. Using high stakes assessments to measure improvements in student performance, resulting from the use of instructional technology.

iv. Providing training focused on the instructional core instead of applications

v. Implementing major systems, such as the LMS, to expand professional development across instruction and operations and reduce cost for paper-based instructional resources.

11. Require the development of business cases to justify decisions for new items, technologies, services or products so they have a clearly defined purpose, have structured and documented requirements, and fit with district priorities and goals; and require that they are evaluated and vetted so there is buy-in by the ultimate users before they are acquired.

12. Conduct an assessment to determine where there are gaps with networking standards, where better practices could be implemented, and where configurations could be rationalized to make improvements.

i. Use national standards such as SETDA to guide NW capacity decisions
ii. Use network monitoring tools to proactively resolve issues

13. Determine relevant software life-cycle management practices to reduce risk and improve software performance based upon categories of applications within the application portfolio and the type of development efforts and formal management approaches to support the software life-cycle. Common processes include--

i. Agile Business Intelligence - a software development process that looks at reducing the time to develop BI software through an iterative process.

ii. DevOps - a set of practices that emphasize the collaboration and communication between both software developers and information technology (IT) professionals while automating the process of software delivery and infrastructure changes

14. Conduct penetration tests and vulnerability assessments to determine the level of security of the infrastructure, applications and data; and annually review the processes and procedures for

handling security threats that could disrupt service and jeopardize access to data and sensitive information.

15. Appoint an individual to be the district's Security Officer with responsibilities to include—

    i. Running security tests as the basis for developing and implementing a network and data security plan and conduct annual audits to maintain it.

    ii. Developing incident response strategies

    iii. Communicating security protocols to district staff

    iv. Identifying and mitigating security risks, such as granting and removing access to enterprise systems

16. Improve the Help Desk, institute the use of key performance indicators and metrics to measure performance, improve the Help Desk to increase operational efficiencies and effectiveness, and use surveys to determine levels of customer satisfaction with service delivery.

17. Adopt an IT service management process that is directed by policies, and standardized processes and procedures to plan, design, and deliver IT services, such as Implement Information Technology Service Management standards (ITSM) leveraging the ITIL standards.

18. Develop and enforce a comprehensive documented and published set of IT policies, standards, and specifications for the network, devices, instructional technology, and technology refresh.

19. Develop a detailed plan for data center relocation that identifies technical requirements, timelines, risks, and risk mitigation strategies. This plan needs sign-off by key executives on cost, facilities, and timelines.

20. Review interdepartmental workflows to improve efficiency and effectiveness in district operations both within IT and in relationship with other departments. Provide stakeholders timely feedback on the status of requests and incident resolution.

ATTACHMENT A. STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAM

Robert Carlson

Robert Carlson is Director of Management Services for the Council of the Great City Schools. In that capacity, he provides Strategic Support Teams and manages operational reviews for superintendents and senior managers; convenes annual meetings of Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Human Resources Directors, and Chief Information Officers and Technology Directors; has directed multiple projects to improve operational efficiencies and effectiveness in our nation's large urban school districts, and recognize senior executives who have done do; and fields hundreds of requests for management information. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Carlson was an executive assistant in the Office of the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools. He holds an Ed. D. and an M.A. degree in administration from The Catholic University of America; a B.A. degree in political science from Ohio Wesleyan University; and has done advanced graduate work in political science at Syracuse University and the State Universities of New York.

Thomas Ryan

Thomas Ryan Ph.D. retired from the Albuquerque Public Schools where he served as CIO for 11 years, Dr. Ryan led all IT efforts for the largest public school district in New Mexico. He was also a high school principal and teacher and has a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction.   He is an education professional with 36+ years of experience and expertise in teaching, leadership, technology, technology integration and blended/online learning program development. Dr. Ryan is currently Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the eLearn Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming education through the effective use of digital learning tools. He works with schools leadership on strategic planning and leadership, designing digital learning environments, technology infrastructure reviews, and the shift to digital tools. He is engaged in leadership activities in several state and national organizations including President Elect on the Consortium of School Networking (CoSN) Board, iNACOL, ISTE, and the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS). Dr. Ryan presents at several state and national conferences throughout the year.

Annmarie Lehner

Annmarie Lehner is the Information Technology Officer for the Rochester City School District in Rochester, New York. As the CTO, Annmarie's areas of responsibility include network infrastructure; telecom; ERP applications including the Oracle PeopleSoft suite of products, Pearson PowerSchool SMS;   Instructional Technology; Library Services for all district schools; HelpDesk; school technology support; and technology innovation. Annmarie is a member of the District's Senior Management Team supporting the Organization's strategic initiatives.   During her tenure, Annmarie has achieved success in the adoption of a large-scale business intelligence/data warehouse project, utilizing the Oracle OBIEE framework, which serves as the source of data for all executives, administrators, teachers throughout the district. In addition to sustaining the district ERP applications through many upgrade releases, Annmarie has been instrumental in enhancing the technology in all schools with the successful completion of several initiatives including a full wireless expansion project; the creation of the Virtual Academy of Rochester Program School, now delivering online courses to 1000+ students each year; as well

as the implementation of a District Learning Management System which support both online content for students and online professional development for teachers.

Arnold Viramontes

Arnold Viramontes retired, as the Chief Technology Information Officer for the Houston Independent School District. As the CTIO, he oversaw Information Technology, Instructional Technology and Research and Accountability. Prior to HISD he was the Chief of Staff for the Dallas Independent School District. As Chief of Staff, Mr. Viramontes oversaw eleven departments including the Transformation Management Office, the Communications/Public Relations Department, Emergency Services, Athletics Department and the Office of Evaluation and Accountability. Prior to that, he served the district as Chief Transformation Officer and led the restructuring of the Dallas ISD central office which included the realignment of the District office at all levels and the allocation of resources more effectively. Mr. Viramontes serves as the CEO of the Viramontes Group, Inc. (VGI), a technology and corporate consulting company he began in 1972, serving clients in the United States, Mexico and South America. Arnold was the initial Executive Director of the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIF) which was charged with disbursing up to $1.5 billion over a ten-year period to be link Texas schools, libraries, higher education institutions, and not-for-profit health care facilities to an advanced telecommunications infrastructure. He is also a Senior Research Fellow to the IC2 Institute at the University of Texas, an organization whose mission is to foster technology, entrepreneurship and education.

Shahryar Khazei

Shahryar Khazei is the Chief Information Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District, the second largest school district in the United States. The IT department has over 600 employees and an operating budget of over $50 million. Over the last 32 years, Mr. Khazei has held a variety of leadership positions in LAUSD, including deputy Chief Information Officer responsible for district's network and systems infrastructure operations and support and Chief Director of Software development and support, managing a staff of 300 and focusing on student information and business data. Mr. Khazei serves as a member of the board of directors of the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, a non-profit organization serving the foster and homeless students with special needs. Mr. Khazei graduated from Washington State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Sharyn Guhman

 Sharyn Guhman is the Chief Information Officer for the Denver Public Schools (DPS) which serves approximately 90,000 students in more than 150 locations. In her role, Ms. Guhman actively drives innovation and excellence while fusing technology and education. She has successfully forged relationships across the organization, raised employee engagement levels in her 130 person team, maintained one of the largest networks in the state of Colorado, and delivered on strategic projects while navigating budget reductions, significant influxes of technology, and the introduction of site based flexibility for decision making. Before serving as CIO, Ms. Guhman led the DPS Program Management Office facilitating the setting of district-wide technology priorities and building a team of skilled leaders to bring technical projects to

fruition at DPS. Sharyn brought to DPS more than 16 years of previous experience in private-sector management and IT consulting where she led large-scale systems development, implementation, and change-management initiatives across a variety of industries.

Kenneth Thompson

Kenneth J. Thompson, Ed.D. is the Chief Information Technology Officer for the Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS). BCPS servers approximately 84,00 students in more than 180 locations. He joined the BCPS team in 2012 with more than 20 years' experience in leading complex IT service delivery organizations and leveraging IT resources to assist K-12 organizations in achieving organizational goals. Throughout his years as an IT executive, he has continued to maintain an ongoing focus on creating strategies to assist with the advancement of 21st century education in urban school districts; while simultaneously building a cohesive and competent IT team. He is most comfortable when he is combining his technical expertise with strong business and financial acumen to build and create an IT environment conducive for achieving student success. Ken is most noted for enhancing the educational environment by working with stakeholders are different levels --recommending, managing, and validating the appropriate technology resources and enterprise systems to facilitate learning while improving student performance by utilizing the appropriate technology tools and processes.

Philip Neufeld

Philip Neufeld is the Executive Director of Technology Services for Fresno Unified School District, the 4th largest District in California serving 74,000 students with over 110 locations. Philip's responsibilities include core enterprise services, data center and network/telecomm services, endpoint management, end-user support, and educational technology rollouts. Philip has managed enterprise initiatives for the district and has co-formed a research collaborative with Microsoft, HMH, and Fresno State studying the Personal Learning Initiative to understand factors affecting transformation in teacher practice, shifts in student learning experiences, and improvements in student outcomes. Philip is engaged in leadership as board chair with Kings View Behavioral Health Systems; board supervisory committee for Educational Employees Credit Union; and has previously served on national boards. Philip previously served as Senior Director, Technology Services at California State University, Fresno as well as CTO or Executive Director of several private sector firms.

ATTACHMENT C. INTERVIEW LIST

- Pedro Martinez, Superintendent
- Patricia Holub, Chief Information Officer
- Dr. Mateen Diop, Ex. Dir., Digital Teaching & Learning
- Ray Tena, Sr. Mgr., Tech & Bus Srvcs
- Josh Johannessen, Mgr., PEIMS & Data Svcs.
- Yolanda Maldonado, Student-side Systems Admin.
- Hector Chavarria, Security analyst
- Eugene Gonzales, Mgr., Operations & Systems Integration
- Teresa Dominguez, Super., Help Desk
- Xavier Sanche, Systems Administrator
- Dr. Greg Lee, Mgr.,Bond, Erate & Project Management
- Lucas Hernandez, Tech Project Manager
- Eva Mendoza, Tech Project Manager
- Dagoberto Garcia, Mgr., Internet Security & Telecommunications
- Eddie Martinez, Mgr., Data Warehouse Database Administrator
- Brad Wehrig, Web Administrator
- Angelica Romero, Assistant Superintendent
- Carl Scarbrough, Assistant Superintendent
- Dr. Stanton Lawrence, Assistant Superintendent
- Terry Morawski, Director
- Abigail Grass, Construction Project Coordinator
- Samuel Vargas, Associate Superintendent of Facilities
- Ernest Gonzales, Digital Learning Designer
- Sonia Briones, Digital Learning Designer
- Kelly O'Neill, Digital Learning Designer
- Tonya Mills, Digital Learning Designer
- Genevieve Bersen, PEIMS Data Specialist
- Beatrice Cruz, PEIMS Data Specialist
- Melinda De La Rosa, PEIMS Data Specialist
- Veronica Perez, PEIMS Data Specialist
- Daniel Jamie, PEIMS Analyst
- Elisa Sanchez, PEIMS Analyst
- Stephanie Soliz, PEIMS Analyst
- Oscar Mascorro, Help Desk Tech
- Francisco Zamarripa, Help Desk Tech
- Carol Alonzo,   Help Desk Tech
- Karl Pradel, Help Desk Tech
- Ernest Williams, Systems Admin
- Aaron Alonzo, Systems Admin
- Toni Thompson, Assoc. Supt., Human Resources
- Larry Garza, Chief Financial Officer
- Kamal ElHabr, Assoc. Supt., Facilities

- Doug Rodriguez, Telec/VOIP Tech
- Jordan Garza, Telec/VOIP Tech
- Arnaldo Ramirez, Sys VOIP Analyst
- Gareth Peart, Sys VOIP Analyst
- Daniel Castillo, Program Analyst
- Juan Constante, Program Analyst
- Vamsee Jarugula, Program Analyst
- Margaret Villesca, Program Analyst
- Israel Deleon, Comp Ntwrk Tech. III
- Mark McRae, Comp Ntwrk Tech. III
- Amelia Mata, Business Analyst
- John Gruber, Business Analyst
- Carlos Moreno, Business Analyst
- Sylvia Orta, Business Analyst
- Yesenia Alvarez, Mgr., Networking & Technology Support

ATTACHMENT D. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- 2012-06-08 San Antonio ISD Security System Standards - Updated - Combined with Typical Drawings.pdf
- San Antonio ISD Classroom Audio Visual Systems Standard XFINALX.pdf
- San Antonio ISD Structured Cabling Infrastructure Standards XFINALX.pdf
- San Antonio ISD Data and Voice Systems Standards R.pdf
- SAISD Technology Standards Clarifications - FINAL.pdf
- Org Chart, Technology and Management Information Systems, 01132017.pptx
- San Antonio IT Highlights.docx
- San Antonio IT Braindump.docx
- LMS-CMS_Office of Digital Teaching and Learning.pdf
- SIS -iTCCS Brochure.pdf
- SIS Information - iTCCS.pdf
- ESC20_iTCCS_Business_System_012017.pdf
- Major Enterprise Systems - Operational Systems (DW).pdf
- FoodService_Point_Of_Sale_System_012017.pdf
- ANYQUEUE.pdf
- EDUPHORIA.pdf
- RACF_TSO.pdf
- SOFTDOCS.pdf
- Student Activity Funds_SharePoint.pdf
- District Dept Campus Websites - Joomla (DW).pdf
- Technology Systems.pdf
- ExternalAuditors_ComputerControlQuestions_091214_Filled_012017.doc
- SAISD IT_Benchmark_2010_Final_summary_012017.pdf
- SAISD IT_Benchmark_2010_Final_updated20101116_012017.pdf
- All Security Findings.docx
- Preliminary Internal Vulnerability Report 2.docx
- SAISD Preliminary Internal Vulnerability Report 1.docx
- SAISD Preliminary Internal Vulnerability Report 3.docx
- SAISD_Jan2016_Asset_ReportV2.xlsx
- SAISD_Jan2016_Device_EoX_StatusV2.xlsx
- Org Chart Technology and Management Information Systems 01132017 (002).pptx
- Employee_Appraisal_Schedule_2016___2017.pdf
- Paraprofessional Eval.pdf
- SAISD Professional Support Personnel Performance Appraisal Checklist.pdf
- SAISD Professional Support Personnel Performance Appraisal Form.pdf
- SAISD Recommendation Form.pdf
- REVISED 6-29-12 title changed from Finance Human Resources Analyst Technology Business Services.pdf
- Business Analyst - Finance Technology 8-7-14.pdf
- Chief Information Officer - Technology 4-2015.pdf
- Clerk - Department.pdf
- Coordinator - Digital Learning Experience Designer 5-2016.pdf
- COORDINATOR JD.pdf
- Current_JobPosting_BusinessAnalyst_ProjectImplementation_021114.pdf

- Data Quality Analyst - PEIMS 9-8-14.pdf
- Database Administrator.pdf
- Database Analyst Previously Junior Database Administrator REVISED AND RECLASSIFIED 6-29-12.pdf
- Executive Director - Technology and Integration.pdf
- Helpdesk Technician 10-2016.pdf
- HR_Risk Management Analyst.pdf
- Manager - Data Warehouse REVISED June 29, 2012.pdf
- Manager - Network and Technical Services New Format and REPOSTED 10-25-13.pdf
- Manager - Operations and Systems Integration REVISED June 29, 2012.pdf
- Manager - PEIMS and Student Data Services POSTED 1-31-14.pdf
- Manager - Telecommunications and Systems Security REVISED June 29, 2012.pdf
- PEIMS Specialist REV 3-29-2012.pdf
- programmer_Analyst I.pdf
- Project Manager - Technology Previously Technology Project Manager E-Rate REVISED AND RECLASSIFIED 6-29-2012.pdf
- Secretary - Department.pdf
- Secretary - Executive.pdf
- Senior Manager - Technology Business Services REVISED June 29, 2012.pdf
- Senior Network Analyst II.pdf
- Senior Programmer Analyst.pdf
- Student Gradebook Analyst 3-27-13.pdf
- Systems Administrator - Student Applications 4-2014.pdf
- Systems Specialist - Business Technology 1-9-2015.pdf
- Systems Specialist - Operations and Integration 3-28-14.pdf
- Technician Computer.pdf
- Technician II computer Network.pdf
- Technician III, Computer Network 10-2016.pdf
- Technology Project Specialist.pdf
- Web Administrator New Format 8-21-14.pdf
- Web Design Coordinator New Format 4-2014.pdf
- Campus Summary, 11162016.pdf
- Summary SAISD Network and Wireless-VoIP infrastructure design.pdf
- Technology Department - Inventory - Equipment (DW).pdf
- WAN Room Servers.pdf
- ALL CAMPUSES TYPICAL IDF LAYOUT.pdf
- ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TYPICAL MDF LAYOUT.pdf
- HIGH SCHOOL TYPICAL MDF LAYOUT.pdf
- MIDDLE SCHOOLS_ACADEMIES TYPICAL MDF LAYOUT.pdf
- Costs ODTL.pdf
- Software costs.pdf
- Key Performance Indicators 2016.pdf
- Technology Budget 16-17.pdf
- Technology 950- Budget 16-17.pdf
- LRTP, SAISD Technology Plan, 2013 thru 2016, 01312017.pdf
- C29_Records_Management_Retention_4_24_14.pdf
- C36_Disposal_of_Computer_Equipment.pd.pdf
- D5_Computer_Telecommunication_Use_Employees_08_20_10.pd.pdf

- D36_A_Participation_in_Electronic_Media_Private_Password_Protected_Parent_Permission .pdf
- F19_FERPA_5_16_12.pdf
- HB 5 CASE Reminders and Updates.pdf
- SECURITY Policies.pdf
- TX Schedule SD - Effective 2011-08-14.pdf
- Internet Provider Costs.pdf
- Application-process-flow-chart.pdf
- 1_5yrE-Rate Applications.pdf
- SAISD WAN and Security.pdf
- MDM.pdf
- Project Strategies Training Funding.pdf
- ProjectsPortfolio_SAISD-Technology.pdf
- Disaster_Prepaedness_Project_Example.pdf
- MS-AC_MDF_ProjectPortfolioExample.pdf

STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

COUNCIL REVIEWS

History of Strategic Support Teams of the Council of the Great City Schools

The following is a history of the Strategic Support Teams provided by the Council of the Great City Schools to its member urban school districts over the last 18 years.

City	Area	Year
Albuquerque		
	Facilities and Roofing	2003
	Human Resources	2003
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2005
	Legal Services	2005
	Safety and Security	2007
	Research	2013
	Human Resources	2016
Anchorage		
	Finance	2004
	Communications	2008
	Math Instruction	2010
	Food Services	2011
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Facilities Operations	2015
	Special Education	2015
	Human Resources	2016
Atlanta		
	Facilities	2009
	Transportation	2010
Austin		
	Special Education	2010
Baltimore		
	Information Technology	2011
Birmingham		
	Organizational Structure	2007
	Operations	2008
	Facilities	2010
	Human Resources	2014
	Financial Operations	2015
Boston		
	Special Education	2009
	Curriculum & Instruction	2014
	Food Service	2014
	Facilities	2016
Bridgeport		

	Transportation	2012
Broward County (FL)		
	Information Technology	2000
	Food Services	2009
	Transportation	2009
	Information Technology	2012
Buffalo		
	Superintendent Support	2000
	Organizational Structure	2000
	Curriculum and Instruction	2000
	Personnel	2000
	Facilities and Operations	2000
	Communications	2000
	Finance	2000
	Finance II	2003
	Bilingual Education	2009
	Special Education	2014
Caddo Parish (LA)		
	Facilities	2004
Charleston		
	Special Education	2005
	Transportation	2014
Charlotte- Mecklenburg		
	Human Resources	2007
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Transportation	2013
Cincinnati		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Curriculum and Instruction	2009
	Special Education	2013
Chicago		
	Warehouse Operations	2010
	Special Education I	2011
	Special Education II	2012
	Bilingual Education	2014
Christina (DE)		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
Cleveland		
	Student Assignments	1999, 2000
	Transportation	2000
	Safety and Security	2000
	Facilities Financing	2000
	Facilities Operations	2000
	Transportation	2004

	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Safety and Security	2007
	Safety and Security	2008
	Theme Schools	2009
Columbus		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Human Resources	2001
	Facilities Financing	2002
	Finance and Treasury	2003
	Budget	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Information Technology	2007
	Food Services	2007
	Transportation	2009
Dallas		
	Procurement	2007
	Staffing Levels	2009
	Staffing Levels	2016
Dayton		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2001
	Finance	2001
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Budget	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
Denver		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Bilingual Education	2006
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
	Common Core Implementation	2014
Des Moines		
	Budget and Finance	2003
	Staffing Levels	2012
	Human Resources	2012
	Special Education	2015
	Bilingual Education	2015
Detroit		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2002
	Assessment	2002
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Assessment	2003

	Communications	2003
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Food Services	2007
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
	Facilities	2008
	Finance and Budget	2008
	Information Technology	2008
	Stimulus planning	2009
	Human Resources	2009
Fresno		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2012
Guilford County		
	Bilingual Education	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Facilities	2004
	Human Resources	2007
Hillsborough County		
	Transportation	2005
	Procurement	2005
	Special Education	2012
	Transportation	2015
Houston		
	Facilities Operations	2010
	Capitol Program	2010
	Information Technology	2011
	Procurement	2011
Indianapolis		
	Transportation	2007
	Information Technology	2010
	Finance and Budget	2013
Jackson (MS)		
	Bond Referendum	2006
	Communications	2009
Jacksonville		
	Organization and Management	2002
	Operations	2002
	Human Resources	2002
	Finance	2002
	Information Technology	2002
	Finance	2006
	Facilities operations	2015
	Budget and finance	2015
Kansas City		

	Human Resources	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Finance	2005
	Operations	2005
	Purchasing	2006
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Program Implementation	2007
	Stimulus Planning	2009
	Human Resources	2016
	Transportation	2016
	Finance	2016
	Facilities	2016
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
Little Rock		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2010
Los Angeles		
	Budget and Finance	2002
	Organizational Structure	2005
	Finance	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Human Resources	2005
	Business Services	2005
Louisville		
	Management Information	2005
	Staffing study	2009
Memphis		
	Information Technology	2007
	Special Education	2015
	Food Services	2016
	Procurement	2016
Miami-Dade County		
	Construction Management	2003
	Food Services	2009
	Transportation	2009
	Maintenance & Operations	2009
	Capital Projects	2009
	Information Technology	2013
Milwaukee		
	Research and Testing	1999
	Safety and Security	2000
	School Board Support	1999
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Alternative Education	2007
	Human Resources	2009

	Human Resources	2013
	Information Technology	2013
Minneapolis		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Finance	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
	Transportation	2016
	Organizational Structure	2016
Nashville		
	Food Service	2010
	Bilingual Education	2014
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
Newark		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
	Food Service	2008
New Orleans		
	Personnel	2001
	Transportation	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Hurricane Damage Assessment	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
New York City		
	Special Education	2008
Norfolk		
	Testing and Assessment	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2012
Omaha		
	Buildings and Grounds Operations	2015
	Transportation	2016
Orange County		
	Information Technology	2010
Palm Beach County		
	Transportation	2015
Philadelphia		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Food Service	2003
	Facilities	2003
	Transportation	2003
	Human Resources	2004
	Budget	2008
	Human Resource	2009
	Special Education	2009
	Transportation	2014

Pittsburgh		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Technology	2006
	Finance	2006
	Special Education	2009
	Organizational Structure	2016
	Business Services and Finance	2016
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
	Research	2016
Portland		
	Finance and Budget	2010
	Procurement	2010
	Operations	2010
Prince George's County		
	Transportation	2012
Providence		
	Business Operations	2001
	MIS and Technology	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Human Resources	2007
	Special Education	2011
	Bilingual Education	2011
Reno		
	Facilities Management	2013
	Food Services	2013
	Purchasing	2013
	School Police	2013
	Transportation	2013
	Information Technology	2013
Richmond		
	Transportation	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Human Resources	2014
Rochester		
	Finance and Technology	2003
	Transportation	2004
	Food Services	2004
	Special Education	2008
Sacramento		
	Special Education	2016
San Antonio		
	Facilities Operations	2017

	IT Operations	2017
	Transportation	2017
	Food Services	2017
San Diego		
	Finance	2006
	Food Service	2006
	Transportation	2007
	Procurement	2007
San Francisco		
	Technology	2001
St. Louis		
	Special Education	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Human Resources	2005
St. Paul		
	Special Education	2011
	Transportation	2011
Seattle		
	Human Resources	2008
	Budget and Finance	2008
	Information Technology	2008
	Bilingual Education	2008
	Transportation	2008
	Capital Projects	2008
	Maintenance and Operations	2008
	Procurement	2008
	Food Services	2008
	Capital Projects	2013
Toledo		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
Washington, D.C.		
	Finance and Procurement	1998
	Personnel	1998
	Communications	1998
	Transportation	1998
	Facilities Management	1998
	Special Education	1998
	Legal and General Counsel	1998
	MIS and Technology	1998
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Budget and Finance	2005
	Transportation	2005

	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
	Common Core Implementation	2011
Wichita		
	Transportation	2009

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

Governance, Leadership, and Management and Finance Task Forces

Governance, Leadership and Management Task Force

Chairs: **Michael O'Neill, Chair, Boston Public Schools School Committee
Barbara Jenkins, Superintendent, Orange County Public Schools**

Urban School Finance Task Force

Chairs: **Marnell Cooper, Board Member, Baltimore City Public Schools
Thomas Ahart, Superintendent, Des Moines Public Schools**

Agenda
**Wednesday, October 18, 2017
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.**

Hope Ballroom D, 3rd Floor

- *Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools*

- *Security Considerations in Today's K-12 Environment*

- *Managing for Results in the Great City Schools –* the 2017 Report of the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project

- *Strategic Support/Technical Assistance*

- *Board of Education Governance*

- *Next Steps in Our Dialogue*

Goals of the Leadership and Management Task Force
To improve the quality of leadership in urban public education.
To improve the effectiveness of urban school boards.
To lengthen the tenure of urban school superintendents.
To enhance accountability, management and operations of the nation's urban public school systems.

Goals of the Finance Task Force
To challenge the inequities in state funding of urban public schools.
To increase federal funding and support of urban public schools.
To pass new federal school infrastructure legislation to repair and build urban public school buildings.
To enhance the ability of urban schools to use Medicaid.

HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORTS

Hurricane Relief Efforts by the Great City Schools
By the
Council of the Great City Schools[1]
October 11, 2017

City	Response
Albuquerque	Albuquerque Public Schools posted information from the Council of the Great City Schools on how to help Houston schools on the district's website and social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). In addition, many local schools gathered supplies and clothing donations, and the Student Senates of 13 high schools initiated a donation challenge.
Atlanta	Atlanta Public Schools sent 250 backpacks stuffed with school supplies to Houston students recovering from Hurricane Harvey. Individual Atlanta schools organized drives to collect hygiene products and other necessities to send to Houston students. Atlanta also arranged for some 2,300 cases of ceiling tiles to be delivered to Houston to help the district fix water-damaged ceilings, courtesy of construction partners Carroll Daniel Construction and Simco Interiors. Finally, Atlanta shipped another 500 backpacks filled with school supplies in addition to Atlanta Hawks apparel for Houston's students impacted by the storm.
Austin	Austin ISD was the first tier of the city's inter-local emergency support agreement and resourced and supported some 7,000 evacuees at 2 stadium mega-centers and 3 high schools, including medically fragile populations. The school district staffed a number temporary sites, providing daily meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) and counseling services, and enrolled and supported students as needed. The district also collected donations for the Austin Ed Fund Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund, which provided school supplies, clothing, basic needs and financial support for students enrolling in Austin ISD

[1] The Council of the Great City Schools has also set up a Great City Schools Emergency Relief Fund with initial support from the Stuart Foundation and PureEdge.

	campuses. Austin ISD's Project Help program coordinated this program.
Boston	Boston Public Schools sent toiletries, diapers, baby formula, non-perishable foods, new clothing, and blankets to the Houston school system, and prepared an emergency response playbook for all Council member districts: **School Partnership Playbook** In addition to efforts for Houston, the Boston Public Schools rallied folks from numerous school districts, city agencies, and non-profit partners in response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico to coordinate services and supports to handle an influx of students from Puerto Rico. The district created one-stop shops with our community partners as well as deploying its "Welcome Centers," (where students sign up for school) to provide incoming families one place to register for school, get winter clothing, facilitate immunizations, help locate housing, etc. The district also worked with its Office of Engagement to find ways to streamline the enrollment process for these students -- many of whom were homeless or living with relatives — and reallocating current bilingual supports. We invited select media (a reporter from the Boston Globe, and two radio reporters from our NPR affiliates) to observe our meeting to coordinate efforts. We were also interviewed by the Wall Street Journal. Our Superintendent, Tommy Chang, was quoted saying that it is our "legal and moral obligation" to help these students. Here is a write-up in the Boston Globe: https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/09/28/boston-schools-prepare-for-influx-puerto-rican-families-after-hurricane-maria/K67mo2RXb8YZq4TcXJhYLP/story.html
Bridgeport	The Bridgeport Public Schools sent 100 back packs with school supplies to Houston and another 200 to Miami.
Broward County	In addition to being hit by Hurricane Irma, the Broward County Public Schools are enrolling students who were displaced by hurricanes in Texas, Puerto Rico, Florida,

	the U.S. Virgin Islands, and other islands of the Caribbean. During Hurricane Irma, the Broward County schools opened multiple shelters for local residents, provided meals, clothes, and supplies to thousands of people.
Buffalo	The Buffalo Public Schools provided supplies to Houston through community organizations and its teacher association, In addition, the district is preparing for an influx of students from Puerto Rico by putting together backpacks full of school supplies that will be at Central Registration, at the same time that the district is collecting goods at several locations that will be sent to Puerto Rico. Board President Dr. Barbara Nevergold spearheaded the effort. Video on the story is linked below. http://www.wkbw.com/news/after-devastation-in-puerto-rico-buffalo-schools-expect-influx-of-students-from-island
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools set up collection boxes at all 176 schools in the district. Donations of new children's clothing in all sizes and toiletries were collected and transported to Houston on an 18-wheel truck. It took over an hour to unload the truck because of the volume of supplies. Individual departments of the school district are also raising funds to donate to the HISD Foundation.
Cleveland	The Cleveland school CEO sent an urgent message to all district staff and to the leadership of all surrounding school districts to begin collecting new and gently used clothing, uniforms, water, canned and dry goods, school supplies, and toiletries for the children of Houston's Schools. Schools and work sites were asked to set up collection points. The district shipped over 100 boxes of clothes to Houston from its own and surrounding districts. The CEO encouraged not only CMSD Educators to participate, but also for schools to consider how the

	district's scholars and families/caregivers could contribute individually. Cleveland also sent about 35 boxes of supplies to the Miami-Dade County school district.
Dallas	The Dallas ISD immediately enrolled students impacted by Hurricane Harvey, who had been displaced and were housed with family, friends, in shelters and hotels. Students who evacuated to the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center and wished to attend school while in Dallas received bus service to and from the John F. Kennedy Learning Center, Alex W. Spence Talented/Gifted Academy, and North Dallas High School, depending on grade level. Dallas ISD did not turn away any students who did not have the required enrollment documentation, including immunization records. Of note, counselors, social workers, and psychologists assisted students who needed emotional support. Finally, the Dallas schools donated some $63.6 thousand dollars in school uniforms (720), back packs with school supplies (490), and cash ($35,000)
Dayton	The Dayton Public Schools collected new school clothes and bottled water at athletic events and shipped them to Houston in the aftermath of the hurricane. The district also set up a "read initiative" where 3rd graders had family members pledge money for every word they read. The Red Cross collected some $200 students raised at last reporting.
Des Moines	• North and Roosevelt high schools: Paired up and filled a truck with supplies for the Houston school district. • East High School: Students in the deaf program at the school made signs on how people could help, primarily giving to the Red Cross. • Central Academy: Instituted a donation drive that involved several schools in the district. • Merrill Middle School: Conducted a 'Hats and Hoodies for Houston' day; students who brought a donation for HISD could ignore the dress code.

	- McCombs Middle School: Students did a 'Dimes for Hurricane Harvey Relief' to raise funds for the American Red Cross. - Greenwood Elementary School: Collected and shipped supplies to HISD. - Hubbell Elementary School: Students had a hat day, and money raised was given to the HISD Foundation. - Walnut Street School: Students conducted a Meals from the Heartland (a group based in Des Moines that prepares ready-to-eat meals shipped to areas in need around the world) day; meals were shipped to Houston. - The school board president sent four large boxes of clothes. The Des Moines school district also provided school supplies to the Miami-Dade County schools.
District of Columbia	The D.C. Public Schools collected clothing, school uniforms, school supplies and other items and sent them to the Houston schools.
Duval County	During Hurricane Irma, the Duval County schools opened multiple shelters for 11,000 local residents, and provided meals, clothes, and supplies.
El Paso	The El Paso Independent School District, new car dealerships, and several news stations joined forces to collect and deliver much-needed supplies (school supplies, clothes, toiletries, and water) to the thousands of southeast Texas families who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey. In an operation called El Paso Cares, the three groups collected the necessary supplies that shelters and responders needed to tend to displaced families in the Houston area. The partnership sent five tractor trailers full of supplies to the Houston schools. The district also offered education and housing services to children and families that arrived in El Paso because of the evacuation. The district provided buses to transport families and hired certified substitutes to provide instructional services to displaced school-aged children.
Fort Worth	Fort Worth ISD partnered with Goodwill Industries and accepted donations to support Hurricane Harvey

	evacuees. The school district also let the City of Fort Worth use the district's Wilkerson-Greines Activity Center as a shelter for people who had been displaced by Hurricane Harvey. The district hosted nearly 1,000 evacuees at the center, many of them children under age three, and staffed it throughout the storm. The district also installed smart boards in the center for both adults and children to use. Transportation to school for evacuees was provided by the district, which allowed parents to ride along to their children's new settings.
Fresno	The Fresno Unified School District collected 1,009 boxes full of donated school supplies, clothes, and other items for students and staff at Houston Independent School District. Papé Kenworth, which has a location in Fresno, generously offered to provide two trucks and ship all items for free to Houston. DTL Transportation also stepped up last minute to donate two trailers to hold donated items.
Guilford County (Greensboro)	The Guilford County schools launched its Change for Children campaign and placed a donation bucket at each school to collect change from students. (The campaign ran through October 13.) Donations of clothing, non-perishable food items, and toiletries were also made and shipped. Oak View Elementary adopted James Berry Elementary School in Houston, which served as a shelter before being flooded. Northern and Northwest high schools also collaborated to collect supplies, toiletries, household goods, baby items, and non-perishable foods before football games. Multiple other schools made donations and sent cards to Houston students.
Hawaii	The Hawaii state district sent emails asking for help from all Hawaii schools. Multiple schools responded. For instance, staff and students of Kilohana Elementary School, Molokai, HI, and several others sent school supplies to Houston ISD.
Hillsborough County	During Hurricane Irma, the Hillsborough County schools opened multiple shelters for 29,000 local residents, and provided meals, clothes, and supplies throughout and after the storm.

Kansas City	Kansas City Public Schools sent 100-200 backpacks through a partnership with Costco and the district secured uniforms for Houston students through its partnership department.
Long Beach	The superintendent and school board chair sent the word out to schools regarding the need for clothing to be sent to Delmar Stadium in Houston. Multiple schools responded
Los Angeles	The Los Angeles Unified School District team provided the following in response to Hurricane Harvey: A communication to all employees was sent by superintendent Michelle King, providing information on how folks could donate directly to the Houston ISD and victims of the hurricane. A spotlight on the front page of the LAUSD website (lausd.net) provided donation information. A tweet by Superintendent King asking staff and others to please donate with a link to all other district social media platforms). The district also asked its operations team to identify districtwide donation drop-off locations. All items were sent to Houston via the address the Council of the Great City Schools provided.
Miami-Dade County	The Miami-Dade County Public Schools sent children's clothes and school supplies to the Houston schools. And building inspectors were standing by to help determine the usability of HISD buildings. During Hurricane Irma, the Miami-Dade County schools opened multiple shelters for thousands of local residents, and provided meals, clothes, and supplies throughout and after the storm. In addition, the district superintendent Alberto Carvalho reached out to schools in Key West and to migrant areas in the state to provide supplies and relief for those areas. The Miami-Dade County public schools are also providing personnel and assistance to Puerto Rico.

Milwaukee	The Milwaukee Public Schools encouraged donations to the HISD Foundation, and posted a blog from the superintendent asking people to support HISD through donations to the foundation or by sending supplies and clothing. The district also held a clothing and supply drive with all collections sent to HISD. The district also set up a page dedicated to helping on its website: http://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/News/Help-for-Houston.htm The district is also enrolling students from Puerto Rico.
Minneapolis	The Minneapolis superintendent tweeted out the link to Houston's school foundation to all school employees asking them to donate.
Nashville	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools placed all donation information for the Houston schools foundation on its website and Facebook page and other social media sources. District leadership encouraged both staff and the community to give.
New York City	The New York City Department of Education provided cash donations through an official source for Houston schools to purchase clothes and supplies.
Norfolk	The Norfolk Public Schools sent 200 backpacks with supplies to Houston. Also, one of the district's high schools, Booker T. Washington, collected toiletry items at home football games to send to displaced residents.
Oakland	Oakland's Education Fund provided a grant to the Houston Education Fund. The district also collected new clothes and shipped them to Houston. Items collected included backpacks stuffed with supplies and classroom supply kits. The district worked in partnership with Sydney Page, based in the East Bay, who the district uses for backpacks and school supplies for newcomer students.
Oklahoma City	The Oklahoma City Public Schools sent information to its staff and social-media sites asking them to consider donating to Houston's HISD Foundation. The district hosted fundraisers throughout the month of September to raise money for the Houston ISD Foundation The

	district also enrolled students relocating to Oklahoma City from southern Texas.
Omaha	The Omaha Public Schools coordinated with its foundation and teachers' union to do fundraising for the HISD foundation.
Orange County (Orlando)	The Orange County Public Schools, the Foundation for OCPS, and non-profit partner--A Gift for Teaching, joined together to hold a school supply drive for fellow public schools in the Houston area. In addition, OCPS and the Foundation coordinated with their clothing pantry non-profit, A Kids' Closet, as well as A Gift for Teaching, to collect new, in-the-package socks and underwear in child through adult sizes and sent to Houston. The Foundation for OCPS also collected donations of money to pass through to Houston area school districts. In addition to being hit by Hurricane Irma, the Orange County Public Schools are enrolling all students who were displaced by hurricanes in Texas, Puerto Rico, and Florida. Orange County has one of the largest Puerto Rican populations in the nation. During Hurricane Irma, the Broward County schools opened multiple shelters for thousands of local residents, provided meals, clothes, and supplies both during and after the storm.
Palm Beach County	In addition to being hit by Hurricane Irma, the Palm Beach County Public Schools enrolled students who were displaced by hurricanes in Texas, Puerto Rico, and Florida. During Hurricane Irma, the Palm Beach County schools opened scores of shelters for 50,000 local residents, provided meals, and supplies both during and after the storm. In response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, Palm Beach delivered backpacks from local churches stuffed with supplies. The district also assembled packets to put

	in back packs providing information about services available to families who were displaced.
Philadelphia	The school district of Philadelphia placed donation boxes in all its schools and trucked all donations to the Houston Independent School District.
Pinellas County	During Hurricane Irma, the Pinellas County schools opened multiple shelters for some 25,000 local residents, and provided meals, clothes, and supplies.
	In addition, the district—
	• Educated district staff on ways they could connect families affected by Hurricane Irma with community resources and counseling services.
	• Enrolled Puerto Rican students whose families had been displaced by Hurricanes Irma and Maria and connected them with free school supplies, meals, and community resources.
	• Participated in donation drives to assist hurricane victims in Houston, Puerto Rico and statewide.
	• Brought water and other supplies to a Florida district hard-hit by Hurricane Irma.
Portland	The Portland Public Schools organized a week-long donation drive in conjunction with Starbucks, KOIN, iHeart Radio, and OnPoint Community Credit Union for Houston and Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The effort collected shoes, socks, and school supplies.
Providence	The Providence school system is preparing for an influx of students from Puerto Rico, because of the sizable population in the city. Many new arrivals will be school age, and some will arrive without their parents. The school district's Student Registration Center (325 Ocean St.) is ready to handle all students from Puerto Rico with expedited registration procedures. For example, academic records may not be available but registration will occur; the district will follow protocol for unaccompanied minors. Once students are in school, bilingual teachers and social workers will be providing ESL and social emotional supports. Our Office of Family and Community Engagement will also offer

	personal support to families and connect them with appropriate services in the community.

(http://turnto10.com/news/local/providence-schools-superintendent-ready-to-enroll-students-from-puerto-rico |
| Sacramento | The Sacramento City Unified School District team reached out to all schools to collect clothes to send to HISD. Schools sent clothes to the central office, which were then shipped to HISD at the address provided by the Council of the Great City Schools.

A communication was also sent to all employees by the Superintendent, providing information on how folks could donate directly to Houston ISD and victims of the hurricane.

A spotlight was also posted on the front page of the district's website (www.scusd.edu), which provided donation information. Here was the link to the district's webpage for the effort: http://www.scusd.edu/hurricane-harvey-relief |
| San Antonio | San Antonio ISD welcomed all students displaced by Hurricane Harvey. All students could register immediately in any of the district's schools.

The district also prepared one of its schools for processing evacuees as the Red Cross requested, and processed children from the refugee center located on the city's Eastside. |
| San Diego | The San Diego Unified School District asked San Diegans to send donations of clothing of all sizes, school uniforms, and school supplies to aid the Houston Independent School District. The district also sent city-wide bulletins and alerts out calling for assistance. The call to action was seen by over 31,000 people on Facebook in the first couple of days of posting and by over 58,000 people on Twitter. Nearly every media outlet in the city repeated the district's call for assistance. |
| St. Louis | The St. Louis superintendent sent a message to all staff and community partners setting a goal of raising at least |

	$10,000 to donate to the Houston Independent School District for Hurricane Harvey relief. Ultimately, the district raised $15,977.90, and cut a check to the HISD Foundation. The elementary, middle, and high schools that raised the highest average amount per student won a prize. Schools were encouraged to hold penny wars, bake sales, dance-a-thons, or other activities to aid Houston students. The district and its schools held a series of small fundraisers like pay $1 and get to dress like a super hero for the day (Heroes for Houston) or pay $1 and get to wear a funny hat for the day (Hats for Harvey). The SLPS Foundation counted $107 in dimes and nickels alone, so the district's little ones were definitely involved! Gateway STEM High School JROTC and student council also hosted a "Stuff the Bus" event during its football games to collect supplies and raise funds for HISD students. First Student provided the bus and the local teamsters drove it to Houston. The effort produced 14 mixed skids and 23 boxes containing non-perishable food, household cleaning products, pet food, water, uniforms, diapers, diaper wipes, personal hygiene items, uniforms, and book bags for Houston students.
St. Paul	The St. Paul Public Schools sent an all-staff message to suggest that employees make donations to disaster relief sites to help displaced Houston families, or that schools handle the collection/sending of donations.
Toledo	Students and staff at Toledo Public Schools raised money for their counterparts in Houston, after the city — and much of its public-school district — was devastated by Hurricane Harvey. The Toledo district did not have a complete tally of how much was donated district-wide, but about a dozen schools ran dress-down days where students could donate. Beverly Elementary alone raised $1,453, Riverside Elementary raised $435, and Robinson Elementary raised $310. The Toledo Public Schools also worked with their local NBC affiliate and several other local school districts to collect supplies for HISD. Supplies were shipped.

FINANCE TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Urban School Finance

2017-2018

Task Force Goals

To challenge the inequities in state funding of urban public schools.

To increase federal funding and support of urban public schools.

To pass new federal school infrastructure legislation to help repair, renovate and build urban public school buildings.

To enhance the ability of urban schools to use Medicaid for health services to students.

Task Force Co-Chairs

Thomas Ahart, Des Moines Superintendent
Marnell Cooper, Baltimore School Board

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

NEWS . . . NEWS . . . NEWS . . . NEWS

Council of the Great City Schools
1331 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Suite 1100N, Washington, D.C. 20004
cgcs.org

FOR RELEASE   CONTACT: Henry Duvall
May 3, 2017   (202) 393-2427 or hduvall@cgcs.org

Fresno School District Receives National Award
For 'Excellence in Financial Management'

WASHINGTON, May 3 – The Council of the Great City Schools today recognizes California's Fresno Unified School District for reaching the highest standards in financial management, accountability and fiscal control.

The leading coalition of the nation's large urban public school systems presented the **Award for Excellence in Financial Management** to the Fresno school district for enhancing, safeguarding and protecting the financial integrity of the district.

"The Fresno Unified School District has demonstrated an extraordinary dedication to excellence in financial management and integrity in the stewardship of taxpayer dollars," said Council Executive Director Michael Casserly in presenting the award in Fresno.

This is only the fifth time since the Council launched the award program in 2009 that it has honored a school district with its highest national award for sound financial management. The last award was given to the Atlanta Public Schools in 2015. Other big-city school districts recognized have been the Miami-Dade County Schools, Houston Independent School District and Florida's Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale.

To receive the **Award for Excellence in Financial Management**, an urban school district must demonstrate it complies with a series of management practices that represent the highest standards in financial accountability and control in nine categories: general financial management, internal controls, budget, strategic planning and management, internal and external financial auditing, capital asset management, debt management, risk management and purchasing.

The Council convenes a panel composed of respected senior financial executives from major school systems across the nation to conduct the review process, which includes an assessment of the district's management practices, an extensive review of documents, and a lengthy site visit.

\# \# \#

1148

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MEMBERSHIP

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on Membership

2017-2018

Subcommittee Goal

To review criteria and applications for membership, and recruit and retain members.

Chair

Larry Feldman, Miami-Dade County School Board

Members

Thomas Ahart, Des Moines Superintendent
Sharon Contreras, Guilford County Superintendent
Marnell Cooper, Baltimore School Board
William Hite, Philadelphia Superintendent
Barbara Nevergold, Buffalo School Board
Susan Valdes, Hillsborough County School Board

Ex Officio

Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Membership by Region
October 2017

East (E)	Midwest (MW)	Southeast (SE)	West (W)
Boston	Arlington (TX)	Atlanta	Albuquerque
Bridgeport	Austin	Baltimore	Anchorage
Buffalo	Chicago	Birmingham	Fresno
Cincinnati	Dallas	Broward County	Hawaii
Cleveland	Denver	Charlotte	Las Vegas
Columbus	Des Moines	Guilford County	Long Beach
Dayton	El Paso	Jackson	Los Angeles
Detroit	Ft. Worth	Jacksonville	Oakland
Newark	Houston	Louisville	Portland
New York City	Indianapolis	Memphis-Shelby Cty	Sacramento
Philadelphia	Kansas City	Miami-Dade County	San Diego
Pittsburgh	Milwaukee	Nashville	San Francisco
Providence	Minneapolis	New Orleans	Santa Ana
Rochester	Oklahoma City	Norfolk	Seattle
Toledo	Omaha	Orlando	
	San Antonio	Palm Beach	
	St. Louis	Richmond	
	St. Paul	St. Petersburg	
	Tulsa	Tampa	
	Wichita	Washington D.C.	
15	20	20	14

GARLAND INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
LETTER OF INTEREST

April 3, 2017

RECEIVED
APR 1 9 2017
By_____

Michael Casserly, Executive Director

Council of the Great City Schools

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 1100 N

Washington D.C. 20004-1758

Mr. Casserly,

Please accept this letter as GISD's formal request to become an active member of The Council of Great City Schools. I am including the necessary information for your review. Data sources are indicated in parentheses:

1. **Total PK-12 enrollment:** 57,418 (2015-16 State of Texas Academic Performance Report)
2. **City Population:** Garland – 226,876; Rowlett – 56,199; Sachse – 20,329 (Suburbanstats.org)
3. **GISD Economically Disadvantaged Student Population:** 65.6% (2015-16 State of Texas Academic Performance Report)
4. **GISD Student Demographics:** Hispanic – 49.77%; White – 20.25%; African-American – 17.58%; Asian – 8.37%; Two or More Races – 2.22%; American Indian – 1.73%; Pacific Islander – 0.08% (2015-16 State of Texas Academic Performance Report)

I am also enclosing a copy of GISD's District Profile.

Thank you for your consideration of The Garland Independent School District for membership in The Council of the Great City Schools. We look forward to a partnership that will work towards enabling our students to become well-educated members of our Great American Society.

Respectfully,

Dr. Deborah Cron, Interim Superintendent

Garland Independent School District

Linda Griffin, President

Garland ISD School Board

GISD District Profile

72 Campuses
- **2** Prekindergarten Schools
- **47** Elementary Schools
- **12** Middle Schools
- **7** High Schools
- **4** Other Educational Centers

TEA Ratings
- District rated Met Standard
- 68 schools rated Met Standard
- One school rated Improvement Required
- Three campuses Not Rated

Teacher Demographics

White: **60.7%**
Hispanic: **18.5%**
African American: **15.2%**
Asian: **3.1%**
Two or More Races: **1.6%**
American Indian: **0.8%**
Pacific Islander: **0.1%**
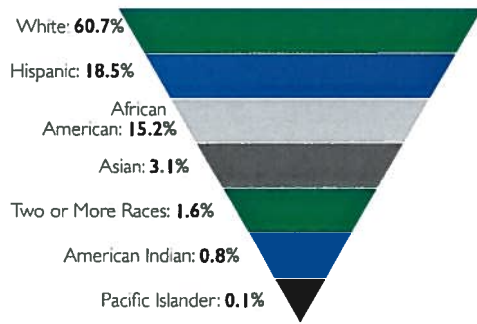
- Beginning Teacher Salary: **$51,500**
- Average Teacher Experience*: **11.2 years**
- Average Years with GISD*: **7.8 years**
- Student:Teacher Ratio*: **15.7:1**

Student Demographics*
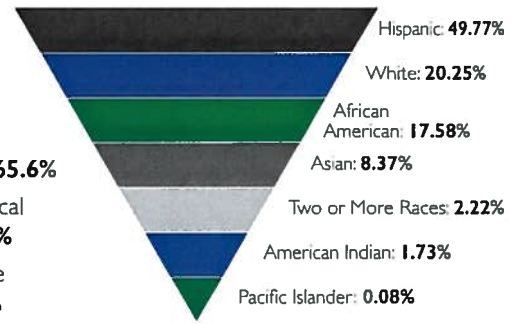
- 2015-16 Student Enrollment: **57,418**
- Economically Disadvantaged: **65.6%**
- Career & Technical Education: **27.1%**
- English Language Learners: **26.3%**
- Bilingual/ESL: **25.7%**
- Special Education: **8.2%**
- Gifted & Talented: **7.3%**

Hispanic: **49.77%**
White: **20.25%**
African American: **17.58%**
Asian: **8.37%**
Two or More Races: **2.22%**
American Indian: **1.73%**
Pacific Islander: **0.08%**

Staff By the Numbers*
- Teachers: **3,664**
- Auxiliary Staff: **2,045**
- Professional Support Staff: **801**
- Educational Aides: **538**
- Campus Administration: **188**
- Central Administration: **57**

2015-16 Total Staff: 7,293

2016-17 Adopted Budget
- General Fund Operating Budget: **$466,495,952**
- Instruction: **59.1%**
- Facilities Maintenance & Operations: **8.6%**
- Guidance, Counseling & Evaluation: **4.9%**
- Student Transportation: **3.1%**
- Curriculum/Staff Development: **2.4%**

Financial Facts
- Tax Rate: **$1.46**
- 2014-15 Per Pupil Expenditure^: **$7,537**
- Aaa Rating from Moody's
- AA Rating from Standard & Poor's
- AA+ Bond Rating from Fitch

College & Career Readiness
- 2014-15 Attendance Rate*: **96.1%**
- 2015 Graduates*: **3,938**
- Four-Year Graduation Rate*: **91.3%**
- Students Taking SAT/ACT*: **56.3%**
- Average SAT Score*: **1411**
- Average ACT Score*: **20.3**
- 2015-16 National Merit Scholars: **3**

2016 STAAR EOC Performance*
Students meeting or exceeding Level II Standard

- English I: **65%**
- English II: **67%**
- Algebra I: **76%**
- Biology: **86%**
- U.S. History: **91%**

2016 STAAR Performance*
Students meeting or exceeding Level II Standard

Grade	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
3	75%	75%			
4	76%	71%	69%		
5	82%	86%		69%	
6	70%	71%			
7	71%	69%	68%		
8	87%	76%		73%	58%

Data Sources:
* 2015-16 Texas Academic Performance Report   ^2014-15 Actual Financial Data

AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Membership Interest from Aurora, CO

From: Cheryl Dalton-Cedillo [mailto:cadalton-cedillo@aps.k12.co.us]
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2017 11:52 AM
To: Teri Trinidad <ttrinidad@cgcs.org>
Subject: Inquiry from the Aurora Public Schools Superintendent Rico Munn Re: Membership

Good morning Terri:

Aurora Public Schools Superintendent Rico Munn is interested in our district becoming a member of the Council of Great City Schools. We would like to be able to pay for the annual membership prior to June 30th if that is at all possible to allow us to fund it from this school year's budget. Please advise as to what information you need and the cost of the membership.

Kind regards,

Cheryl Dalton-Cedillo
Executive Assistant to Superintendent Rico Munn
15701 E. 1st Ave., Suite 206
Aurora, CO 80011
cadalton-cedillo@aps.k12.co.us
303-326-1820

Council Note

Aurora may be eligible based on demographics, with a city population of 361,710, an enrollment of 39,184 students, 83% minority enrollment, and 71.3% free and reduced price lunch.
The district is next to Denver and is located in parts of three different counties: Adams, Araphoe, and Douglas.

It has a School District Locale Code of 11, which is defined as: LARGE CITY - Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more.

Census Population (updated 2016, from http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPANNRES/1620000US0804000):

District Enrollment (in 2014-15, from the school district website http://aurorak12.org/about-aps/fast-facts/demographics/):

Total enrollment: 39,184 students

Native American: 0.8%
Asian: 4.6%
Black: 18.5%
Hispanic: 54.5%
White: 16.6%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander: 0.6%
Two or More Races: 4.4%

- Students come from more than 131 countries and speak more than 133 languages. 36% of students are second language learners, with 82% of them Spanish-speakers.
- 71.3% of students receive free or reduced lunch.
- 10.4% of students attend special education programs.
- 5% of students are identified as gifted and talented.

PEORIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

From: MICK WILLIS [mailto:MICK.WILLIS@PSD150.ORG]
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2017 5:15 PM
To: Teri Trinidad <ttrinidad@cgcs.org>
Subject: Membership

Hi Teri!

I am from Peoria Public Schools, and interested in membership and the financial recognition program you have for school districts.

Thank you.

Mick

Mick Willis
Chief Financial Officer
Peoria Public Schools
Phone: 309-672-6735

RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND OTHER INFORMATION												
	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	American Indian	Two or More Races	Percent Low-Income	Percent Limited-English-Proficient	Percent IEP	Percent Homeless	Total Enrollment
District	22.6	57.3	9.7	1.6	0.2	0.4	8.1	68.0	5.5	16.3	3.7	13,297
State	48.8	17.3	25.5	4.7	0.1	0.3	3.2	49.9	10.5	14.3	2.2	2,041,779

Council Note

Peoria Public Schools does not appear to be eligible. They have urban demographics, but their Total Enrollment is only 13,297 students. The city population is only 114,265 and they are not the biggest city in the state of Illinois.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on By-Laws

2017-2018

Subcommittee Goal

To define the mission, responsibilities and composition of the Council's structural components within the framework of applicable laws and regulations.

Chair

Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Denver School Board

Members

Juan Cabrera, El Paso Superintendent
Richard Carranza, Houston Superintendent
Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent
Aurora Lora, Oklahoma City Superintendent
Lacey Merica, Omaha School Board
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Committee
Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board

Ex Officio

Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent

BY-LAWS
OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1.01 <u>Name</u>. The Corporation shall be organized as non-profit and be known as the Council of the Great City Schools.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND MISSION

Section 2.01 <u>Purpose</u>. The purpose of this Corporation shall be to represent the needs, challenges, and successes of major-city public school districts and their students before the American people and their elected and appointed representatives; and to promote the improvement of public education in these districts through advocacy, research, communications, conferences, technical assistance, and other activities that may also benefit other schools, school districts and students across the country.

Section 2.02 <u>Mission</u>. The Council of the Great City Schools, being the primary advocate for public urban education in America, shall:

- Articulate the positive attributes, needs and aspirations of urban children and youth;

- Promote public policy to ensure improvement of education and equity in the delivery of comprehensive educational programs;

- Provide the forum for urban educators and board members to develop strategies, to exchange ideas and information and to conduct research; and

- Create a national focus for urban education in cooperation with other organizations and agencies.

to ensure that the members of the Great City Schools meet the needs of the diverse urban populations they serve.

ARTICLE III: OFFICES

Section 3.01 <u>Principal Office</u>. The principal office of the Corporation shall be at 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest, Suite 1100N, Washington, D.C. The location of the registered office of the Corporation shall be in the offices of the Corporation Trust System in Chicago, Illinois at 228 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The Registered Agent of the Corporation shall be the Corporation Trust System in Chicago, Illinois and Washington, D.C.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section 4.01 <u>Membership</u>. A Board, Committee or Commission (hereafter referred to as "Board of Education") responsible for public education in cities with a population of two hundred fifty thousand (250,000) or more, and an enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools of thirty five thousand (35,000) or more in 1980 or which is the predominant Board of Education serving the largest urban city of each state regardless of the enrollment of the school district. If the Board of Education has jurisdiction over areas outside

the central city, then the enrollment of those areas may also be included for purposes of eligibility, but the population outside the central city shall not.

Provided the above criteria are met, the Executive Committee will examine the urban characteristics of each applicant city brought to it by the membership committee prior to submitting a recommendation for membership to the Board of Directors for final approval.

Such urban characteristics may include: children eligible for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; children in families qualifying for T.A.N.F.; children who are English language learners; and children who are African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Native American, Alaskan Native or other racial minorities as classified by federal Civil Rights statutes.

The enrollment of school districts for purposes of membership in the organization shall be based on the official district enrollment reported to the state, however calculated.

A Board of Education may retain its membership by meeting its dues-paying obligations without regard to changes in population or enrollment. To remain in good standing, dues must be paid.

A district that has not paid its dues will be notified after one year of nonpayment that it will not receive services from the organization in the subsequent year. A district will be dropped from membership after two consecutive years of non-payment of dues and will be required to reapply for membership should it wish to rejoin the organization. The Executive Committee retains the right to levy a "reinstatement fee" in an amount the committee will determine as a condition of a district's rejoining the organization after its membership has otherwise lapsed or to waive such fees depending on the circumstances of the district. The Committee will annually review the status of all district dues and make determinations for needed action.

Section 4.02 Participation of Non-Member Cities. Non-member districts may, on approval of the Executive Committee, be involved in studies or other projects of the Council of the Great City Schools. Conditions for such participation shall be established by the Executive Committee.

Section 4.03 Participation of Former Board of Directors Members. Former members of the Board of Directors may be involved as non-voting members at conferences and may receive publications of the organization under conditions established by the Executive Committee.

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.

ARTICLE V: ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS

Section 5.0l Board of Directors. The affairs of the Corporation shall be operated by the Board of Directors. Members of the Board of Directors are the officers of the corporation and the Superintendent of Schools and a member of the Board of Education officially designated by each Board of Education and the Chair of the Great City Colleges of Education. Each member of the Board of Directors shall vote as an individual. No proxies may be appointed to the Board of Directors for the purposes of constituting a quorum of the Board of Directors

or for purposes of voting on matters coming before the Board of Directors. A member of the Board of Directors who is unable to attend a board meeting may, in writing, addressed to the Chair, appoint a representative to attend such meeting for the sole purpose of reporting back to the board member on the business of the meeting.

Section 5.02 Officers.

(a) **Elected Officers.** The elected officers of the Corporation shall be the Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary/Treasurer. No person shall be elected to the same position for more than two successive years. The officers shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors from persons who have served on the Executive Committee. Officers and shall take office on the 1st of July following their election. If an officer is unable to complete a term, the Board of Directors shall fill the vacancy at the next meeting of the Directors. The Office of the Chair shall alternate generally between superintendents and Board of Education members. Where the Chair or Chair-Elect is a Board of Education member, he or she may continue to be Chair, or Chair-Elect and then Chair, as the case may be, even though he or she is no longer the designated Board of Education member for his or her school district; provided, however, that only the designated Board of Education member from his or her district shall be entitled to vote at Board of Directors meetings.

(b) **Non-Elected Officers.** The immediate past Chair shall serve as a non-elected, but voting officer of the Corporation. The Executive Director shall serve as a non-elected and non-voting officer of the Corporation.

Section 5.03 Executive Committee

(a) **Voting Members.** The voting members of the Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, Immediate Past Chair, and twenty (20) persons elected by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee shall be elected by the Directors at the Annual Meetings of the membership on a staggered basis for terms of three years and shall take office on the 1st of July following their election. The maximum consecutive number of years that a member of the Board of Directors can serve on the Executive Committee shall be limited to the total of (i) the balance of an unexpired term to which, pursuant to subsection 5.03(e), he or she is appointed by the Executive Committee and is then elected by the Board of Directors; (ii) two three-year terms; and (iii) any additional consecutive years during which he or she serves as an officer of the Corporation.

(b) **Proxies.** No proxies may be appointed to the Executive Committee for purposes of constituting a quorum of the Executive Committee or for purposes of voting on matters to come before the Executive Committee. A member of the Executive Committee who is unable to attend a committee meeting may in writing, addressed to the Chair, appoint a representative to attend such meeting for the sole purpose of reporting back to the committee member on the business of the meeting.

(c) **Composition.** The Executive Committee and Officers of the Corporation shall have equal proportion of Superintendents and Board of Education Members; shall include geographic representation, race, gender, ethnicity, and attendance at Board of

Directors meetings as criteria for membership on the Executive Committee and for Officers of the Corporation. Attendance at Executive Committee meetings will be a criterion for renomination to the Executive Committee and for Officers of the Corporation. Failure to attend both the summer and winter meetings of the Executive Committee in any single calendar year may result in a member's replacement. No more than one person from each member district shall be nominated to the Executive Committee. In addition, the Chair of the Great City Colleges of Education shall serve as an *Ex Officio* non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

(d) **Responsibilities and Powers of the Executive Committee.** Except as to matters for which the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986 of the State of Illinois, as amended from time to time, requires the approval of the members and to the extent not otherwise limited in these By-Laws and by resolution from time to time adopted by the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall have and may exercise all the authority of the Board of Directors, when the Board of Directors is not in session. The Executive Committee shall have power to authorize the seal of the Corporation to be affixed to all papers where required. Copies of the recorded minutes of the Executive Committee shall be transmitted to the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee shall have the power to contract with and fix compensation for such employees and agents as the Executive Committee may deem necessary for the transaction of the business of the Corporation, including but not limited to the Executive Director who shall serve as Assistant Secretary/Treasurer and disbursing agent of the Corporation. All salary rates shall be approved annually by a vote of the Executive Committee.

(e) **Vacancies.** Between meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall have and exercise the authority to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee on a temporary basis and to declare a vacancy on the Executive Committee if a member shall be unable to attend meetings of the Committee, or should no longer hold a Superintendency or be a member of a Board of Education in the membership. Appointments to such vacancies shall be confirmed by the Board of Directors at their next regular meeting.

(f) **Subcommittees of the Executive Committee.** There shall be three subcommittees of the Executive Committee: Audit, By-Laws, and Membership. These Committees and their chairpersons will be appointed by the Executive Committee upon the recommendations of the Chair.

Section 5.04 <u>Task Forces of the Board of Directors</u>. The Board of Directors may from time to time create Task Forces to address critical issues facing urban public education. A Chair and Co-Chair of each Task Force shall be appointed by the Chair of the Board and shall include one Superintendent and one School Board member, and may also include a representative of the Great City Colleges of Education. The mission, goals, products, and continuation of each Task Force shall be subject to annual review and concurrence by the Board of Directors. Recommendations of the Task Forces shall be posted and circulated to the Board of Directors within a reasonable time before its meetings in order to be considered.

Section 5.05 <u>Nominations Committee</u>.

(a) **Composition.** A Nominations Committee shall be chosen annually by the Chair to nominate officers and members of the Executive Committee. In order to ensure racial, ethnic and gender representation on all committees and subcommittees, the Chair shall use these criteria in establishing the Nominations Committee and all other committees and subcommittees. The Nominations Committee shall consist of the Immediate Past Chair of the Organization, who shall act as Chair of the Committee, and at least four other persons appointed by the Chair. The elected officers of the Corporation shall not serve on the Nominations Committee.

A majority of the members of the Nominations Committee shall be members of the Board of Directors who do not serve on the Executive Committee. The Nominations Committee shall have, to the extent possible, an equal number of Superintendents and Board of Education members, and in addition to being geographically representative, shall be balanced by race, ethnicity and gender.

(b) **Responsibilities and Procedures.** The Nominations Committee shall announce nominations at least 14 days before the date of the Board of Directors meeting at which such election will occur. Additional nominations may be made by written petition submitted to the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee at least 24 hours in advance of the start of the Business Meeting at which the election will take place. A written petition must have at least five written signatures from five Board of Directors members from at least five different member cities.

ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Section 6.01 Duties and Responsibilities. An Executive Director shall be employed by the Executive Committee. In general, the responsibilities of the Executive Director shall be to organize and to coordinate the activities that form the basic program of the Corporation. The Executive Director shall function as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Corporation in accordance with policies established by the Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall be responsible for executing contracts in the name of the Corporation. The Executive Director shall serve as Assistant Secretary/Treasurer and disbursing agent of the Corporation.

Section 6.02 Fidelity Bond. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the acquisition and maintenance of a fidelity bond for all corporate officers and employees.

ARTICLE VII: CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Section 7.01 Conferences. The Board of Directors shall provide for at least one conference annually at which its members and staff shall meet to plan, discuss and hear reports of the organization. These meetings shall be determined and planned by the Executive Committee. The Conference may recommend to the Board of Directors problems and items for the Corporation's consideration.

Section 7.02 Time and Place of Meetings. Meetings of the Board of Directors and/or the Executive Committee shall be held at the call of the Chair, a majority of the Executive Committee, or one-third of the Board of Directors, and shall be held in the city of the registered office of the Corporation, or in member cities. The Board of Directors shall meet at least twice annually, once in the spring and once in the fall.

Section 7.03 <u>Spring Directors Meeting</u>. The spring meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held to elect officers, approve the annual budget, and transact such other matters of business as are necessary.

Section 7.04 <u>Notices of Meetings</u>. Written notices of the meetings of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee shall be given at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 7.05 <u>Quorum</u>. The presence of one-third of the Board of Directors or a majority of elected Executive Committee members, respectively, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and unless otherwise provided in these By-Laws or by law, the act of a majority of The Board of Directors present or the act of a majority of elected Executive Committee members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be an act of the Corporation.

Section 7.06 <u>Organization</u>. At every meeting of the Executive Committee, the Chair of the Board of Directors shall act as Chair. The Chair-Elect of the Board or other person designated by the Chair may chair the Executive Committee when the Chair is absent. The Executive Director or his or her designee shall serve as the Recording Secretary at all meetings of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

Section 7.07 <u>Press Policy</u>. All meetings of the Corporation shall be open to the press and to the public. The Board of Directors or the Executive Committee, however, may by a majority vote declare a meeting closed.

ARTICLE VIII: FISCAL YEAR

Section 8.01 <u>Fiscal Year</u>. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be from July 1st of each year to June 30th of the succeeding year.

Section 8.02 <u>Audit</u>. The accounts of the Corporation for each fiscal year shall be audited, and the financial reports verified annually by the Audit Committee of the Executive Committee. A written report of the Audit Committee shall be filed in the minutes of the meeting of the Corporation at which the report is submitted.

Section 8.03 <u>Bond</u>. The Officers and employees responsible for handling funds for the organization shall be bonded in an amount to be determined by the Executive Committee and premium shall be paid by the Corporation.

ARTICLE IX: FINANCES

Section 9.01 <u>Financial Support</u>. The Board of Directors shall determine the amount of the service charges and/or membership dues to be paid to the Corporation by Boards of Education in the membership. The Executive Committee shall review the membership dues structure and amounts in years ending in zero or five, and may recommend modifications to the Board of Directors.

Section 9.02 <u>Grants</u>. The Board of Directors shall be empowered to receive grants from foundations or other sources tendered to the Corporation.

Section 9.03 <u>Receipts</u>. All funds received are to be acknowledged by the Executive Director or his or her designee, and a monthly financial report is to be created internally for

management purposes and quarterly financial reports are to be submitted to the Executive Committee. Earmarked funds are to be carried in a separate account.

Section 9.04 <u>Checks, Drafts, and Order for Payment of Money</u>. Orders for payment of money shall be signed in the name of the corporation by such officers or agents as the Executive Committee shall from time to time designate for that purpose. The Executive Committee shall have the power to designate the officers and agents who shall have authority to execute any instruments on behalf of the Corporation.

Section 9.05 <u>Disbursements</u>. Checks written for amounts not exceeding $100,000 shall be signed by the Executive Director or other persons authorized by the Executive Committee. Checks written in excess of $100,000 shall be countersigned by the Executive Director and an officer.

Section 9.06 <u>Contracts and Conveyances</u>. When the execution of any contract or conveyance has been authorized by the Executive Committee, the Executive Director shall execute the same in the name and on behalf of the Corporation and may affix the corporate seal thereto.

Section 9.07 <u>Borrowing</u>. The Executive Committee shall have the full power and authority to borrow money whenever in the discretion of the Executive Committee the exercise of said power is required in the general interest of the Corporation. In such case, the Executive Committee may authorize the proper officers of the Corporation to make, execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Corporation such notes, bonds, and other evidence of indebtedness as the Executive Committee shall deem proper. No pledge or mortgage of the personal or real property of the Corporation is authorized unless by a resolution of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X: MISCELLANEOUS

Section 10.01 <u>Amendments</u>. These By-Laws may be altered, amended, or repealed, and new By-Laws may be adopted by a vote of a majority of the Board of Directors at any meeting for which there has been written notification fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting at which the By-Laws are proposed to be amended.

Section 10.02 <u>Rules of Order</u>. The parliamentary procedures governing meetings of the Board of Directors and the meetings of its committees and subcommittees shall to the extent not otherwise covered by these By-Laws, be those set out in the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

APPROVED

April 19, 1961   Chicago, Illinois

REVISED

April 23, 1961	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
March 25, 1962	Chicago, Illinois
November 4, 1962	Detroit, Michigan
April 12, 1964	Chicago, Illinois
November 20, 1964	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
March 20, 1966	Chicago, Illinois
April 9, 1967	Chicago, Illinois
November 10, 1967	Cleveland, Ohio
May 4, 1968	Boston, Massachusetts
December 7, 1968	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
March 29, 1969	San Diego, California
May 9, 1970	Buffalo, New York
May 8, 1971	San Francisco, California
November 16, 1972	Houston, Texas
March 21, l974	Washington, D.C.
October 18, 1974	Denver, Colorado
May 21, 1975	Washington, D.C.
November 21, 1976	Chicago, Illinois
May 20, 1979	Los Angeles, California
November 4, 1979	New York City, New York
May 21, 1983	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
March 18, 1984	Washington, D.C.
March 8, 1987	Washington, D.C.
March 11, 1989	Washington, D.C.
November 9, 1990	Boston, Massachusetts
Revised- March 17, 1991	Washington, D.C.
March I5, l992	Washington, D.C.
October 30, 1992	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
March 14, 1993	Washington, D.C.
October 29, 1993	Houston, Texas
July 8, 1995	San Francisco, California
March 21, 1999	Washington, D.C.
October 14, 1999	Dayton, Ohio
March 18, 2001	Washington, D.C.
March 12, 2005	Washington, D.C.
July 29, 2005	Portland, Oregon
March 16, 2008	Washington, D.C.
October 21, 2010	Tampa, Florida
October 26, 2011	Boston, Massachusetts
March 19, 2012	Washington, D.C.
March 23, 2014	Washington, D.C.
March 11, 2017	Washington, D.C.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AUDIT

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on Audit

2017-2018

Subcommittee Goal

To review and report on Council budgetary matters, and ensure the proper management of Council revenues.

Chair
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO

Members
Paul Cruz, Austin Superintendent
Michael Hinojosa, Dallas Superintendent
Michelle King, Los Angeles Superintendent
Ronald Lee, Dayton School Board
Ashley Paz, Fort Worth School Board
Elisa Snelling, Anchorage School Board
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board

Ex Officio

Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent

2016-2017 BUDGET

COMBINED REPORT
GENERAL OPERATIONS
AND
CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS

ESTIMATED TOTALS
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017

ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
PREMILINARY REPORT FOR FY16-17

COMBINED GENERAL OPERATIONS AND CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS

	GENERAL OPERATIONS FY16-17	CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS FY16-17	PRELIMINARY COMBINED TOTAL
REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	$ 2,744,018.00	$ 11,000.00	$ 2,755,018.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	$ 15,000.00	$ 2,235,969.99	$ 2,250,969.99
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	$ 41,000.00	$ 1,211,150.02	$ 1,252,150.02
REGISTRATION FEES	$ -	$ 498,272.50	$ 498,272.50
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	$ 258,081.77	$ -	$ 258,081.77
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	$ 6.50	$ 31,447.88	$ 31,454.38
TOTAL REVENUE	$ 3,058,106.27	$ 3,987,840.39	$ 7,045,946.66
EXPENSES			
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$ 1,992,880.10	$ 1,183,931.35	$ 3,176,811.45
OTHER INSURANCE	$ 21,012.40	$ -	$ 21,012.40
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	$ 65,382.38	$ 1,290,131.29	$ 1,355,513.67
GENERAL SUPPLIES	$ 15,732.04	$ 5,040.00	$ 20,772.04
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	$ 30,042.39	$ 1,625.36	$ 31,667.75
COPYING & PRINTING	$ 107,020.80	$ 62,371.10	$ 169,391.90
OUTSIDE SERVICES	$ 498,388.28	$ 1,383,384.21	$ 1,881,772.49
TELEPHONE	$ 31,637.84	$ 2,866.20	$ 34,504.04
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	$ 4,188.47	$ 16,337.44	$ 20,525.91
EQUPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	$ 23,120.60	$ -	$ 23,120.60
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	$ 11,548.21	$ -	$ 11,548.21
ALLOW FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	$ 120,000.00	$ -	$ 120,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	$ (416,572.18)	$ 416,572.18	$ -
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$ 2,504,381.33	$ 4,362,259.13	$ 6,866,640.46
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$ 553,724.94	$ (374,418.74)	$ 179,306.20
ADJUSTMENTS:			
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	$ 6,250,935.95	$ 3,746,955.57	$ 9,997,891.52
NET GAIN/(LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	$ 574,644.70	$ -	$ 574,644.70
COMPLETED PROJECTS	$ -	$ -	$ -
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	$ 7,379,305.59	$ 3,372,536.83	$ 10,751,842.42

GENERAL OPERATIONS BUDGET REPORT

ESTIMATED TOTALS
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017

ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
FY 2016-17 Membership Dues

STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP DUES AS OF June 30, 2017

DISTRICT	NOT PAID	PAID	Date Rec'd FY16-17		Date Rec'd FY15-16		Date Rec'd FY14-15		Date Rec'd FY13-14	
1 Albuquerque		$42,557	6/22/2016		8/20/2015		7/21/2014		7/22/2013	
2 Anchorage		$37,239	8/1/2016		6/8/2015	***	6/3/2014	***	7/2/2013	
3 Arlington		$42,557	2/7/2017		9/8/2015		NEW			
4 Atlanta		$37,239	8/1/2016		8/4/2015		8/11/2014		7/16/2013	
5 Austin		$42,557	6/30/2016	***	10/22/2015		3/2/2015		6/11/2013	***
6 Baltimore		$42,557	11/1/2016		8/24/2015		7/23/2014		8/13/2013	
7 Birmingham		$37,239	7/28/2016		6/10/2015	***	6/30/2014	***	5/30/2013	***
8 Boston		$42,557	8/2/2016		7/5/2015		8/11/2014		8/7/2013	
9 Bridgeport		**$20,088**	8/18/2016		8/20/2015		6/26/2014	***	6/17/2013	***
10 Broward County		$54,969	2/21/2017		3/8/2016		9/23/2014		8/2/2013	
11 Buffalo		$37,239	8/18/2016		9/9/2015		8/18/2014		8/6/2013	
12 Charleston County	$37,239		Not Paying		5/27/2016		5/7/2015		8/6/2013	
13 Charlotte-Mecklenburg		$47,875	6/21/2016	***	6/8/2015	***	6/13/2014	***	6/7/2013	***
14 Chicago		**$44,696**	4/18/2017		5/16/2016		2/17/2015		10/4/2013	
15 Cincinnati		$37,239	3/6/2017		12/7/2015		2/10/2015		10/23/2013	
16 Clark County		$54,969	8/24/2016		9/17/2015		7/31/2014		2/11/2014	
17 Cleveland		$37,239	10/14/2016		7/21/2015		6/30/2014	***	6/17/2013	***
18 Columbus		$37,239	8/18/2016		7/24/2015		8/29/2014		7/22/2013	
19 Dallas		$47,875	6/30/2016	***	5/3/2016		7/21/2014		7/19/2013	
20 Dayton		$37,239	8/11/2016		7/15/2016		9/18/2014		4/4/2014	
21 Denver		$42,557	9/7/2016		7/13/2015		8/4/2014		7/22/2013	
22 Des Moines*		$30,088	7/12/2016		10/27/2015		6/17/2014	***	7/16/2013	
23 Detroit		$37,239	2/13/2017		did not pay		11/21/2014		5/23/2014	
24 Duval County		$47,875	8/29/2016		8/20/2015		8/4/2014		9/3/2013	
25 El Paso		$42,557	1/24/2017		8/6/2015		2/17/2015		4/22/2014	
26 Fort Worth		$42,557	8/1/2016		7/31/2015		2/25/2015		10/7/2013	
27 Fresno		$42,557	9/20/2016		7/14/2015		9/3/2014		8/27/2013	
28 Greensboro(Guilford Cty)		$42,557	9/13/2016		11/5/2015		10/3/2014		10/23/2013	
29 Hawaii		$47,875	6/21/2016	***	7/6/2015		11/25/2014		new	
30 Hillsborough County (Tampa)		$54,969	1/24/2017		8/4/2015		7/23/2014		7/22/2013	
31 Houston		$54,969	8/2/2016		6/5/2015	***	7/7/2014		7/19/2013	
32 Indianapolis		$37,239	8/1/2016		1/12/2016		7/7/2014		11/6/2013	
33 Jackson. MS		$37,239	12/21/2016		2/24/2016		8/11/2014		2/10/2014	
34 Jefferson County		$42,557	8/23/2016		8/7/2015		8/4/2014		8/13/2013	
35 Kansas City, MO		$37,239	8/18/2016		7/28/2015		9/15/2014		3/19/2014	
36 Long Beach		$42,557	7/12/2016		8/25/2015		8/11/2014		9/10/2013	
37 Los Angeles		$54,969	8/10/2016		3/2/2016		8/8/2014		3/13/2014	
38 Miami-Dade County		$54,969	8/18/2016		7/28/2015		8/4/2014		7/22/2013	
39 Milwaukee		$42,557	6/15/2016	***	6/3/2015	***	6/23/2014	***	7/31/2013	
40 Minneapolis		$37,239	8/1/2016		3/15/2016		9/18/2014		11/6/2013	
41 Nashville		$42,557	8/4/2016		8/4/2015		7/23/2014		8/1/2013	
42 New Orleans	$37,239		Not Paying		did not pay		did not pay		did not pay	
43 New York City		$54,969	8/19/2016		1/19/2016		10/1/2014		2/24/2014	
44 Newark	$37,239		Not Paying		3/8/2016		2/6/2015		11/26/2013	
45 Norfolk		$37,239	8/29/2016		2/17/2016		9/15/2014		4/4/2014	
46 Oakland		$37,239	7/12/2016		7/28/2015		6/19/2014	***	7/16/2013	
47 Oklahoma City		$37,239	8/18/2016		8/20/2015		8/12/2014		did not pay	
48 Omaha		$37,239	6/15/2016	***	6/5/2015	***	6/20/2014	***	6/25/2013	***
49 Orange County, FL		$47,875	6/7/2016	***	5/20/2015	***	6/2/2014	***	6/4/2013	***
50 Palm Beach County		$47,875	7/18/2016		7/21/2015		2/10/2015		2/18/2014	
51 Philadelphia		$47,875	4/4/2017		9/17/2015		2/12/2015		10/4/2013	
52 Pinellas County		$47,875	7/22/2016		3/2/2016					
53 Pittsburgh		$37,239	7/12/2016		6/8/2015	***	7/11/2014		5/24/2013	***
54 Portland		$37,239	7/18/2016		7/20/2015		6/20/2014	***	7/11/2013	
55 Providence*		$30,088	3/28/2017		8/20/2015		1/21/2015		2/18/2014	
56 Richmond		$37,239	3/10/2017		4/26/2016		6/11/2014	***	3/31/2014	
57 Rochester		$37,239	7/22/2016		6/16/2015	***	6/11/2014	***	6/11/2013	***
58 St. Louis		$37,239	6/29/2016	***	7/28/2015		8/11/2014		3/27/2014	
59 St. Paul		$37,239	7/28/2016		6/30/2015	***	7/3/2014		7/5/2013	
60 Sacramento		$37,239	7/15/2016		6/3/2015	***	8/1/2014		10/15/2013	
61 San Antonio		$37,239	1/18/2017		8/17/2015		NEW			
62 San Diego		$47,875	7/18/2016		8/20/2015		8/1/2014		8/1/2013	
63 San Francisco		$42,557	8/2/2016		8/20/2015		7/31/2014		8/1/2013	
64 Santa Ana	$47,875		Not Paying		did not pay		8/11/2014		3/4/2014	
65 Seattle		$37,239	7/12/2016		8/3/2015		7/23/2014		6/4/2013	***
66 Shelby County		$47,875	8/11/2016		9/25/2015		8/11/2014		did not pay	
67 Toledo		$37,239	1/18/2017		10/22/2015		8/11/2014		7/18/2013	
68 Tulsa		$37,239	7/11/2016		2/18/2016		not a member			
69 Washington, D.C.		$37,239	2/7/2017		8/4/2015		7/23/2014		7/5/2013	
70 Wichita		$37,239	6/30/2016	***	6/16/2015	***	6/17/2014	***	6/17/2013	***
Total	$159,592	$2,744,018	9		13		14		11	

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THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2016-17

BY FUNCTION

	AUDITED REPORT FY15-16	REVISED BUDGET FY16-17	PRELIMARY TOTALS FY16-17
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	$ 2,735,255.50	$ 2,759,609.00	$ 2,744,018.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	$ -	$ -	$ 15,000.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	$ 9,000.00	$ 56,000.00	$ 41,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	$ -	$ -	$ -
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	$ 285,735.24	$ 270,000.00	$ 258,081.77
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	$ -	$ -	$ 6.50
TOTAL REVENUE	$ 3,029,990.74	$ 3,085,609.00	$ 3,058,106.27
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES			
ADMIN AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	$ 1,237,949.14	$ 913,307.60	$ 897,517.54
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP	$ 385,690.69	$ 714,173.37	$ 525,433.05
FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	$ 32,160.00	$ 29,239.79	$ 25,331.63
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY	$ 519,367.37	$ 359,178.53	$ 585,266.47
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	$ 19,310.29	$ 76,000.00	$ 54,711.87
PUBLIC ADVOCACY	$ 474,980.34	$ 481,799.51	$ 422,648.22
MEMBER MANAGEMENT SERVICES	$ 185,403.40	$ 181,460.99	$ 177,230.09
POLICY RESEARCH	$ 226,047.24	$ 411,438.21	$ 232,814.64
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	$ (500,940.52)	$ (466,055.00)	$ (416,572.18)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$ 2,579,967.95	$ 2,700,543.00	$ 2,504,381.33
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$ 450,022.80	$ 385,066.00	$ 553,724.94
ADJUSTMENTS:			
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	$ 8,696,126.57		$ 9,997,891.52
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	$ 1,232,019.20		$ (374,418.74)
NET GAIN/(LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	$ (315,708.05)		$ 574,644.70
LOSS ON RETURN OF GRANT FUNDS	$ (64,569.00)		$ -
ENDING BALANCE	$ 9,997,891.52		$ 10,751,842.42

10/05/17
(4th Qtr Report.xls)

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2016-17

BY EXPENSE LINE

	AUDITED REPORT FY15-16	REVISED BUDGET FY16-17	PRELIMINARY TOTALS FY16-17
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	$ 2,735,255.50	$ 2,759,609.00	$ 2,744,018.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	$ -	$ -	$ 15,000.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	$ 9,000.00	$ 56,000.00	$ 41,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	$ -	$ -	$ -
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	$ 285,735.24	$ 270,000.00	$ 258,081.77
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	$ -	$ -	$ 6.50
TOTAL REVENUE	$ 3,029,990.74	$ 3,085,609.00	$ 3,058,106.27
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES			
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$ 1,926,875.31	$ 2,161,633.00	$ 1,992,880.10
OTHER INSURANCE	$ 22,481.29	$ 22,500.00	$ 21,012.40
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	$ 87,575.67	$ 80,000.00	$ 65,382.38
GENERAL SUPPLIES	$ 28,393.60	$ 30,000.00	$ 15,732.04
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	$ 21,293.04	$ 25,000.00	$ 30,042.39
COPYING & PRINTING	$ 113,638.89	$ 126,000.00	$ 107,020.80
OUTSIDE SERVICES	$ 412,910.21	$ 519,100.00	$ 498,388.28
TELEPHONE	$ 39,431.61	$ 25,000.00	$ 31,637.84
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	$ 4,933.48	$ 10,000.00	$ 4,188.47
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEPRECIATION	$ 24,434.42	$ 40,000.00	$ 23,120.60
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	$ 279,440.94	$ 7,365.00	$ 11,548.21
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	$ 119,500.00	$ 120,000.00	$ 120,000.00
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	$ (500,940.52)	$ (466,055.00)	$ (416,572.18)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$ 2,579,967.94	$ 2,700,543.00	$ 2,504,381.33
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$ 450,022.80	$ 385,066.00	$ 553,724.94
ADJUSTMENTS:			
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	$ 8,696,126.57		$ 9,997,891.52
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	$ 1,232,019.20		$ (374,418.74)
NET (GAIN)/LOSS ON INVESTMENT	$ (315,708.05)		$ 574,644.70
LOSS ON RETURN OF GRANT FUNDS	$ (64,569.00)		$ -
ENDING BALANCE	$ 9,997,891.52		$ 10,751,842.42

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THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2015-16
AUDITED TOTALS FOR FY15-16 ENDING JUNE 30, 2016

	ADMIN & FINAN MANAGEMENT (10)	EXECUTIVE SUPPORT (11)	FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES (12)	LEGISLATIVE SERVICES (13&31)	CURRICULUM & INSTRUCT (14)	PUBLIC ADVOCACY (15)	MEMBER MGT SERVICES (16)	POLICY RESEARCH (17)	4TH QUARTER TOTAL (7/1/15-6/30/16)
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$488,420.13	$311,919.81	$32,160.00	$402,282.17	$5,721.23	$326,448.32	$169,660.82	$190,262.83	$1,926,875.31
OTHER INSURANCE	22,481.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,481.29
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	$5,679.48	60,701.20	0.00	5,172.62	0.00	10,003.22	2,793.29	3,225.86	87,575.67
GENERAL SUPPLIES	28,393.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	28,393.60
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	2,378.98	0.00	0.00	5,103.44	0.00	5,306.85	0.00	8,503.77	21,293.04
COPYING & PRINTING	1,128.21	312.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	96,656.81	10,946.62	4,595.00	113,638.89
OUTSIDE SERVICES	244,174.33	5,979.85	0.00	101,506.05	13,456.19	32,303.79	135.00	15,355.00	412,910.21
TELEPHONE	18,765.40	5,977.40	0.00	5,153.93	132.83	3,736.89	1,867.67	3,797.49	39,431.61
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	3,152.36	800.18	0.00	149.16	0.00	524.46	0.00	307.32	4,933.48
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	24,434.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	24,434.42
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	279,440.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	279,440.94
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	119,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	119,500.00
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	(500,940.52)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(500,940.52)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$737,008.62	$385,690.69	$32,160.00	$519,367.37	$19,310.25	$474,980.34	$185,403.40	$226,047.27	**$2,579,967.94**
	$500,940.52								
	$1,237,949.14								

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
REVISED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-17

	FINANCE & ADMIN (10)	EXECUTIVE SUPPORT (11)	FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES (12)	LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY (13)	CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION (14)	PUBLIC ADVOCACY (15)	MEMBER MGT SERVICES (16)	RESEARCH ADVOCACY (17)	ONE YEAR TOTAL
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$462,142.60	$585,173.37	$28,239.79	$209,478.53	$0.00	$328,799.51	$173,360.99	$374,438.21	$2,161,633.00
OTHER INSURANCE	22,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,500.00
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	2,500.00	42,500.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	9,000.00	3,000.00	13,000.00	80,000.00
GENERAL SUPPLIES	30,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	1,200.00	0.00	0.00	10,200.00	0.00	5,000.00	100.00	8,500.00	25,000.00
COPYING & PRINTING	500.00	5,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.00	106,500.00	1,000.00	10,000.00	126,000.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	223,100.00	78,000.00	0.00	120,000.00	76,000.00	21,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	519,100.00
TELEPHONE	3,500.00	3,000.00	500.00	6,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	25,000.00
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	7,500.00	0.00	500.00	10,000.00
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	40,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40,000.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	7,365.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,365.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	(466,055.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(466,055.00)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$447,252.60	$714,173.37	$29,239.79	$359,178.53	$76,000.00	$481,799.51	$181,460.99	$411,438.21	**$2,700,543.00**
	$466,055.00								
	$913,307.60								

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2016-17
EXPENSES FOR TWELVE MONTHS ENDING June 30, 2017

	ADMIN & FINAN MANAGEMENT (10)	EXECUTIVE SUPPORT (11)	FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES (12)	LEGISLATIVE SERVICES (13&31)	CURRICULUM & INSTRUCT (14)	PUBLIC ADVOCACY (15)	MEMBER MGT SERVICES (16)	POLICY RESEARCH (17)	ONE YEAR TOTAL (7/1/16-6/30/17)
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$456,916.89	$401,983.33	$24,596.39	$427,379.59	$0.00	$302,014.72	$167,633.92	$212,355.26	$1,992,880.10
OTHER INSURANCE	21,012.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	21,012.40
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	$4,911.51	38,235.68	0.00	2,421.38	0.00	772.06	8,503.41	10,538.34	65,382.38
GENERAL SUPPLIES	15,683.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	49.00	0.00	0.00	15,732.04
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	5,507.47	1,599.00	0.00	11,582.41	0.00	7,311.54	0.00	4,041.97	30,042.39
COPYING & PRINTING	260.25	11,184.50	0.00	0.00	484.95	90,252.95	0.00	4,838.15	107,020.80
OUTSIDE SERVICES	210,155.62	68,569.87	735.24	141,964.87	54,226.92	22,340.00	0.00	395.76	498,388.28
TELEPHONE	25,603.67	2,973.04	0.00	1,733.69	0.00	(311.63)	1,092.76	546.31	31,637.84
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	2,797.88	887.63	0.00	184.53	0.00	219.58	0.00	98.85	4,188.47
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	23,120.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,120.60
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	11,548.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,548.21
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	(416,572.18)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(416,572.18)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$480,945.36	$525,433.05	$25,331.63	$585,266.47	$54,711.87	$422,648.22	$177,230.09	$232,814.64	**$2,504,381.33**
	$416,572.18								
	$897,517.54								

INVESTMENT SCHEDULE - FY16-17
ENDING 6/30/17
Balances are from date of purchase

INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS	ENDING BALANCE 6/30/2017	PURCHASES (7/1/16 - 6/30/17)	SOLD (7/1/16 - 6/30/17)	UNREAL GAINS/(LOSS) (7/1/16 - 6/30/17)	REAL GAINS/(LOSS) (7/1/16 - 6/30/17)
Banc of Calif NA CD	$249,958	$250,000	$0	-$43	$0
Citibank NA CD	$249,878	$250,000	$0	-$123	$0
Aberdeen FDS Emerging Mkts Fd	$276,120	$2,828	-$81,147	$30,087	$12,898
Amer Cent Fds	$576,381	$25,488	$0	$79,940	$0
Deutsche Sec TR Enhanced Comm	$118,920	$4,409	-$50,701	-$34,844	$3,447
Deutsche Sec Tr Glob RE	$183,845	$11,783	-$1,463	-$3,101	$77
Dodge&Cox Intl Stock	$360,842	$11,130	-$10,597	$93,343	-$628
Eaton Vance Inc Fd	$259,503	$14,689	-$3,436	$9,952	$11
Eaton Vance Large Cap Val Fd	$752,228	$8,553	$0	$89,429	$0
First Eagle Fds Sogen Overseas	$260,141	$8,700	-$2,650	$13,429	$335
Goldma Sachs TRUST Strat Inc Fd	$0	$1,055	-$181,009	$15,172	-$11,585
Goldman Sachs Treas Instr	$59,740	$196	-$27	$0	$0
Harbor Fund Cap Appr	$511,570	$25,729	-$174,277	$3,852	$80,880
Harris Assoc Invt Tr Oakmk Equity	$689,322	$25,792	-$59,661	$73,041	$4,630
Hartford Mut Fds MIDCAP Fd	$290,783	$253,775	$0	$37,008	$0
JPMorgan Core Bd FD Selct	$733,090	$90,378	$0	-$22,426	$0
MFS Ser TR X Emerging Mkts Debt	$187,287	$189,045	$0	-$1,758	$0
Victory Portfolios Munder MIDCAP	$0	$0	-$178,836	-$23,535	$27,224
Nuveen INVT Fds Inc RE Secs*	$122,803	$12,157	-$888	-$14,544	$304
Inv Mgrs Pioneer Oak Ridge Sm Cp	$389,163	$83,924	$0	$15,196	$0
Ridgeworth Fds Mid-cap Val Eqty Pd	$355,255	$136,908	$0	$42,544	$0
Victory Portfolios Sm Co Oppty	$431,202	$73,889	$0	$62,333	$0
Virtus Emerging Mkts Opportunites	$202,151	$1,415	-$9,146	$24,081	$754
TOTAL:	**$7,260,183**	**$1,481,842**	**-$753,840**	**$489,035**	**$118,348**

NOTE: The Investments ending balance shown above does not include the CAP Cash Account used for operations, which had
an ending balance of $1,492,875.19 as of 6/30/17.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
Investment Portfolio by Asset Class
As of 06/30/2017

Fund Name	Ticker	Category per Morningstar		Amount	Asset Class
Bank of California NA		Certicate of Deposit	$	249,958	Fixed Income
Citibank NA		Certicate of Deposit	$	249,878	Fixed Income
MFS Ser TR X Emerging Markets Debt	MEDIX	Diversified Emerging Markets	$	187,287	Fixed Income
Eaton Vance Inc Fd	EIBIX	High yield bond	$	259,503	Fixed Income
JPMorgan Core Bd Fd Selct	WOBDX	Intermediate term - bond	$	733,090	Fixed Income
			$	1,679,715	
Amer Cen Mut Funds	TWGIX	Large growth - equity	$	576,381	Large Cap Equity
Harbor Fund Cap Appr	HACAX	Large growth - equity	$	511,570	Large Cap Equity
Eaton Vance Large Cap Val Fd	EILVX	Large Value equity	$	752,228	Large Cap Equity
			$	1,840,179	
Victory Sycamore Small Co. Opp I	VSOIX	Small Value	$	431,202	Small/Mid Cap Equity
Pioneer Oak Ridge Sm Cp	ORIYX	Small growth - equity	$	389,163	Small/Mid Cap Equity
RidgeWorth Mid-Cap Value Equity I	SMVTX	Mid-Cap Value	$	355,255	Small/Mid Cap Equity
Hartford Mut Fds MIDCAP Fd	HFMIX	Midcap Growth - equity	$	290,783	Small/Mid Cap Equity
			$	1,466,404	
Aberdeen Emerging Markets Instl	ABEMX	Diversified Emerging Markets	$	276,120	International Equity
Virtus Emerging Mkts Opportunities	HIEMX	Diversified Emerging Markets-equity	$	202,151	International Equity
Dodge & Cox Intl Stock Fd	DODFX	Foreign Large Blend - equity	$	360,842	International Equity
First Eagle Fds Sogen Overseas	SGOIX	Foreign Large Blend - equity	$	260,141	International Equity
			$	1,099,253	
Nuveen INVT Fds Inc Real Est Secs	FARCX	Real Estate - equity	$	122,803	Alternative Investments
Deutsche Secs TR Comm Stra	SKIRX	Commodities Broad Basket	$	118,920	Alternative Investments
Deutsche Secs TR Glob RE Se	RRGIX	Real Estate - equity	$	183,845	Public Real Estate (Alternative Investments)
			$	425,569	
Goldman Sach TR Treas Instr	FTIXX	Money Market	$	59,740	Cash Equivalents
Harris Assoc Invt Tr Oakmk Equity	OAKBX	Moderate Allocation - equity **	$	689,322	Balanced Strategy (23% fixed income, 37% Large Cap, 18%Small/MidCap,6%International,10%Alternative,6%cash)
Total Investments			**$**	**7,260,183**	

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
ASSET ALLOCATION ACTUALS VS TACTICAL RANGE
For Fiscal Year ending 6/30/2017

ASSET CLASS DISTRIBUTION

Fixed	Large Cap	Small/Mid	Intl	Alternative	Cash	TOTAL	
$1,679,715	$1,840,179	$1,466,404	$1,099,253	$425,569	$59,740	$6,570,861	
$158,544	$255,049	$124,078	$41,359	$68,932	$41,359	$689,322	**
$1,838,259	$2,095,229	$1,590,482	$1,140,613	$494,501	$101,100	$7,260,183	**TOTALS**
25.32%	28.86%	21.91%	15.71%	6.81%	1.39%	100.00%	ACTUALS FY16-17 (%)
20.0%-60%	20%-40%	5%-25%	10%-30%	0%-20%	0%-20%		TACTICAL RANGE Change (%)
38%	27%	15%	15%	3%	2%	100.00%	STRATEGIC TARGET (%)

CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS
BUDGET REPORT

ESTIMATED TOTALS
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017

ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT
TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS
PAGE 1 OF 2

	MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES (20)	EXXON MOBIL SCHOLARSHIPS (20-EX)	STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS (21)	SPECIAL PROJECTS ACCOUNT (22)	KPI BUSINESS PLAN (29)	GATES SOLUTIONS TO COMMON CORE (32)	HELMSLEY GRANT (34)	SCHUSTERMAN FOUNDATION GRANT (38)
OPERATING REVENUE								
MEMBER DUES	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
GRANTS & CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	456,456.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	510,000.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	1,185,250.02	25,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
REGISTRATION FEES	498,272.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ROYALTIES & OTHER INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	31,447.88	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	$1,683,522.52	$25,000.00	$456,456.99	$0.00	$31,447.88	$0.00	$0.00	$510,000.00
OPERATING EXPENSES								
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$153,283.55	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$80,879.71	$0.00
OTHER INSURANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSES	1,069,197.75	310.40	93,723.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	16,277.59	0.00
GENERAL SUPPLIES	0.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00
DUES, SUBSCR & PUBLICATION	0.00	92.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	438.10	0.00
COPYING & PRINTING	54,502.71	0.00	1,169.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,964.00	0.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	322,025.32	20,024.00	269,744.49	61,308.10	51,923.16	0.00	243,776.19	0.00
TELEPHONE	9.83	0.00	2,144.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	214.00	0.00
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	16,020.53	44.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	160.09	0.00
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	0.00	4,488.14	146,327.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	34,202.52	0.00
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	$1,615,039.69	$25,000.00	$513,109.77	$61,308.10	$51,923.16	$0.00	$384,912.20	$0.00
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$68,482.83	$0.00	($56,652.78)	($61,308.10)	($20,475.28)	$0.00	($384,912.20)	$510,000.00
CLOSEOUT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
CARRYOVER BALANCE 6/30/16	$619,758.23	$0.00	($68,352.75)	$171,209.13	($24,496.95)	$568,997.87	$722,241.79	$0.00
ENDING BALANCE 6/30/17	$688,241.06	$0.00	($125,005.53)	$109,901.03	($44,972.23)	$568,997.87	$337,329.59	$510,000.00

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT
TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS
PAGE 2 OF 2

	URBAN DEANS NETWK (40)	S Schwartz Urban Impact Award (41)	GATES FOUNDATION CCSS Implem (49)	WALLACE FOUNDATION GRANT (54/56/57)	UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO GRANT (60)	THE COLLEGE BOARD GRANT (86)	ONE YEAR TOTAL (7/1/16-6/30/17)
OPERATING REVENUE							
MEMBER DUES	$11,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$11,000.00
GRANTS & CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00	850,000.00	19,513.00	400,000.00	$2,235,969.99
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	0.00	900.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$1,211,150.02
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$498,272.50
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
ROYALTIES & OTHER INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$31,447.88
TOTAL REVENUE	$11,000.00	$900.00	$0.00	$850,000.00	$19,513.00	$400,000.00	$3,987,840.39
OPERATING EXPENSES							
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$0.00	$0.00	$564,679.63	$377,249.29	$7,839.17	$0.00	$1,183,931.35
OTHER INSURANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSES	0.00	0.00	60,873.30	47498.38	2250.18	0.00	$1,290,131.29
GENERAL SUPPLIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$5,040.00
DUES, SUBSCR & PUBLICATION	0.00	0.00	948.60	146.00	0.00	0.00	$1,625.36
COPYING & PRINTING	835.00	0.00	1,899.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	$62,371.10
OUTSIDE SERVICES	3,165.72	0.00	269,318.17	137692.66	4406.40	0.00	$1,383,384.21
TELEPHONE	0.00	0.00	497.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	$2,866.20
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	0.00	0.00	22.16	89.86	0.00	0.00	$16,337.44
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	0.00	0.00	136,741.98	89,728.19	5,084.10	0.00	$416,572.18
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	$4,000.72	$0.00	$1,034,981.26	$652,404.38	$19,579.85	$0.00	$4,362,259.13
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$6,999.28	$900.00	($1,034,981.26)	$197,595.62	($66.85)	$400,000.00	($374,418.74)
CLOSEOUT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
CARRYOVER BALANCE 6/30/16	$402.50	$21,089.50	$1,364,033.00	$372,073.25	$0.00	$0.00	$3,746,955.57
ENDING BALANCE 6/30/17	$7,401.78	$21,989.50	$329,051.74	$569,668.87	($66.85)	$400,000.00	$3,372,536.83

2017-2018 BUDGET

GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET

FOR

FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 1100 N, Washington, D.C. 20004
Tel (202) 393-2427 Fax (202) 393-2400 Web Page: http://www.cgcs.org

MEMBERSHIP DUES STRUCTURE BY TIERS

	2016-2017 DUES	WITH 1.69% INCREASE 2017-2018 DUES
Largest city in the state TIER I	$30,088.00	$30,596.00
Based on enrollment		
TIER II 35,000 TO 54,000	$37,239.00	$37,868.00
TIER III 54,001 TO 99,000	$42,557.00	$43,276.00
TIER IV 99,001 TO 200,000	$47,875.00	$48,684.00
TIER V 200,001 PLUS	$54,969.00	$55,898.00

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
FY 2017-18 Membership Dues

STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP DUES AS OF October 5, 2017

DISTRICT	NOT PAID	PAID	Date Rec'd FY17-18		Date Rec'd FY16-17		Date Rec'd FY15-16		Date Rec'd FY14-15	
1 Albuquerque		$43,276	6/19/2017	***	6/22/2016		8/20/2015		7/21/2014	
2 Anchorage		$37,868	7/19/2017		8/1/2016		6/8/2015	***	6/3/2014	***
3 Arlington	$43,276				2/7/2017		9/8/2015		NEW	
4 Atlanta	$37,868				8/1/2016		8/4/2015		8/11/2014	
5 Austin		$43,276	7/26/2017		6/30/2016	***	10/22/2015		3/2/2015	
6 Baltimore		$43,276	8/14/2017		11/1/2016		8/24/2015		7/23/2014	
7 Birmingham		$37,868	7/31/2017		7/28/2016		6/10/2015	***	6/30/2014	***
8 Boston	$43,276				8/2/2016		7/5/2015		8/11/2014	
9 Bridgeport		$20,746	8/28/2017		8/18/2016		8/20/2015		6/26/2014	***
10 Broward County	$55,898				2/21/2017		3/8/2016		9/23/2014	
11 Buffalo		$37,868	8/22/2017		8/18/2016		9/9/2015		8/18/2014	
12 Charleston County	$37,868				did not pay		5/27/2015		5/7/2015	
13 Charlotte-Mecklenburg		$48,684	6/27/2017	***	6/21/2016	***	6/8/2015	***	6/13/2014	***
14 Chicago	$55,898				4/18/2017		5/16/2016		2/17/2015	
15 Cincinnati	$37,868				3/6/2017		12/7/2015		2/10/2015	
16 Clark County		$55,898	7/24/2017		8/24/2016		9/17/2015		7/31/2014	
17 Cleveland	$37,868				10/14/2016		7/21/2015		6/30/2014	***
18 Columbus		$37,868	8/10/2017		8/18/2016		7/24/2015		8/29/2014	
19 Dallas		$48,684	6/30/2017	***	6/30/2016	***	5/3/2015		7/21/2014	
20 Dayton	$37,868				8/11/2016		7/15/2016		9/18/2014	
21 Denver	$43,276				9/7/2016		7/13/2015		8/4/2014	
22 Des Moines*		$30,596	6/29/2017	***	7/12/2016		10/27/2015		6/17/2014	***
23 Detroit	$37,868				2/13/2017		did not pay		11/21/2014	
24 Duval County		$48,684	8/22/2017		8/29/2016		8/20/2015		8/4/2014	
25 El Paso		$43,276	8/7/2017		1/24/2017		8/6/2015		2/17/2015	
26 Fort Worth	$43,276				8/1/2016		7/31/2015		2/25/2015	
27 Fresno		$43,276	8/7/2017		9/20/2016		7/14/2015		9/3/2014	
28 Greensboro(Guilford Cty)		$43,276	8/24/2017		9/13/2016		11/5/2015		10/3/2014	
29 Hawaii		$48,684	7/19/2017		6/21/2016	***	7/6/2015		11/25/2014	
30 Hillsborough County (Tampa)	$55,898				1/24/2017		8/4/2015		7/23/2014	
31 Houston		$55,898	8/14/2017		8/2/2016		6/5/2015	***	7/7/2014	
32 Indianapolis		$37,868	9/12/2017		8/1/2016		1/12/2016		7/7/2014	
33 Jackson. MS		$37,868	8/14/2017		12/21/2016		2/24/2016		8/11/2014	
34 Jefferson County		$43,276	8/1/2017		8/23/2016		8/7/2015		8/4/2014	
35 Kansas City, MO	$37,868				8/18/2016		7/28/2015		9/15/2014	
36 Long Beach		$43,276	7/31/2017		7/12/2016		8/25/2015		8/11/2014	
37 Los Angeles	$55,898				8/10/2016		3/2/2016		8/8/2014	
38 Miami-Dade County		$55,898	8/8/2017		8/18/2016		7/28/2015		8/4/2014	
39 Milwaukee		$43,276	6/19/2017	***	6/15/2016	***	6/3/2015	***	6/23/2014	***
40 Minneapolis	$37,868				8/1/2016		3/15/2016		9/18/2014	
41 Nashville		$43,276	8/1/2017		8/4/2016		8/4/2015		7/23/2014	
42 New Orleans	$37,868				did not pay		did not pay		did not pay	
43 New York City	$55,898				8/19/2016		1/19/2016		10/1/2014	
44 Newark	$37,868				did not pay		3/8/2016		2/6/2015	
45 Norfolk		$37,868	7/24/2017		8/29/2016		2/17/2016		9/15/2014	
46 Oakland	$37,868				7/12/2016		7/28/2015		6/19/2014	***
47 Oklahoma City		$37,868	8/8/2017		8/18/2016		8/20/2015		8/12/2014	
48 Omaha		$37,868	6/14/2017	***	6/15/2016	***	6/5/2015	***	6/20/2014	***
49 Orange County, FL	$48,684				6/7/2016	***	5/20/2015	***	6/2/2014	***
50 Palm Beach County		$48,684	7/10/2017		7/18/2016		7/21/2015		2/10/2015	
51 Philadelphia	$48,684				4/4/2017		9/17/2015		2/12/2015	
52 Pinellas County		$48,684	7/24/2017		7/22/2016		3/2/2016			
53 Pittsburgh		$37,868	6/27/2017	***	7/12/2016		6/8/2015	***	7/11/2014	
54 Portland		$37,868	7/24/2017		7/18/2016		7/20/2015		6/20/2014	***
55 Providence*	$30,596				3/28/2017		8/20/2015		1/21/2015	
56 Richmond		$37,868	7/31/2017		3/10/2017		4/26/2016		6/11/2014	***
57 Rochester		$37,868	6/30/2017	***	7/22/2016		6/16/2015	***	6/11/2014	***
58 St. Louis		$37,868	6/27/2017	***	6/29/2016	***	7/28/2015		8/11/2014	
59 St. Paul		$37,868	7/14/2017		7/28/2016		6/30/2015	***	7/3/2014	
60 Sacramento		$37,868	9/21/2017		7/15/2016		6/3/2015	***	8/1/2014	
61 San Antonio	$37,868				1/18/2017		8/17/2015		NEW	
62 San Diego		$48,684	7/24/2017		7/18/2016		8/20/2015		8/1/2014	
63 San Francisco		$43,276	8/14/2017		8/2/2016		8/20/2015		7/31/2014	
64 Santa Ana	$37,868				did not pay		did not pay		8/11/2014	
65 Seattle		$37,868	6/27/2017	***	7/12/2016		8/3/2015		7/23/2014	
66 Shelby County		$48,684	8/14/2017		8/11/2016		9/25/2015		8/11/2014	
67 Toledo		$37,868	7/19/2017		1/18/2017		10/22/2015		8/11/2014	
68 Tulsa		$37,868			7/11/2016		2/18/2016		not a member	
69 Washington, D.C.		$37,868	6/30/2017	***	2/7/2017		8/4/2015		7/23/2014	
70 Wichita		$37,868	6/27/2017	***	6/30/2016	***	6/16/2015	***	6/17/2014	***
Total	$1,072,842	$1,879,772		12		9		13		14

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THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2017-18

BY FUNCTION

	AUDITED REPORT FY15-16	PRELIMINARY TOTAL FY16-17	APPROVED BUDGET FY17-18	**ESTIMATED** 1ST QTR TOTALS 7/1/17 - 9/30/17
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE				
MEMBERSHIP DUES	$2,735,255.50	$2,744,018.00	$2,810,992.00	$1,879,772.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	0.00	15,000.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	9,000.00	36,000.00	50,000.00	21,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	285,735.24	258,081.77	270,000.00	46,135.10
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	0.00	6.50	0.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	$3,029,990.74	$3,053,106.27	$3,130,992.00	$1,946,907.10
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES				
ADMIN AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	$ 1,237,949.14	$897,517.54	$1,329,299.82	$288,186.94
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP	$ 385,690.69	525,433.05	770,893.52	108,726.02
FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	$ 32,160.00	25,331.63	26,000.00	12,788.07
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY	$ 519,367.37	585,266.47	576,694.41	152,017.55
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	$ 19,310.29	54,711.87	75,000.00	13,576.88
PUBLIC ADVOCACY	$ 474,980.34	422,648.22	514,053.44	114,198.59
MEMBER MANAGEMENT SERVICES	$ 185,403.40	177,230.09	179,412.50	46,240.70
POLICY RESEARCH	$ 226,047.24	232,814.64	694,065.92	52,969.06
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	$ (500,940.52)	(416,572.18)	(534,427.61)	(157,801.91)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$2,579,967.95	$2,504,381.33	$3,630,992.00	$630,901.91
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$450,022.80	$548,724.94	($500,000.00)	$1,316,005.19
ADJUSTMENTS:				
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	$8,696,126.57	$9,997,891.52	$10,746,842.42	
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	$1,232,019.20	($374,418.74)		
NET GAIN/(LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	($315,708.05)	$574,644.70		
LOSS ON RETURN OF GRANT FUNDS	($64,569.00)	$0.00		
ENDING BALANCE	$9,997,891.52	$10,746,842.42	$10,246,842.42	

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2017-18

BY EXPENSE LINE

	AUDITED REPORT FY15-16	PRELIMINARY TOTAL FY16-17	APPROVED BUDGET FY17-18	**ESTIMATED** 1ST QTR TOTALS 7/1/17- 9/30/17
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE				
MEMBERSHIP DUES	$2,735,255.50	$2,744,018.00	$2,810,992.00	$1,879,772.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	0.00	15,000.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	9,000.00	41,000.00	50,000.00	21,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	285,735.24	258,081.77	270,000.00	46,135.10
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	0.00	6.50	0.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	$3,029,990.74	$3,058,106.27	$3,130,992.00	$1,946,907.10
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES				
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$1,926,875.31	$1,992,880.10	$2,829,967.61	$519,740.40
OTHER INSURANCE	22,481.29	21,012.40	22,500.00	8,229.84
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	87,575.67	65,382.38	80,000.00	16,161.76
GENERAL SUPPLIES	28,393.60	15,732.04	30,000.00	2,365.70
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	21,293.04	30,042.39	25,000.00	8,992.05
COPYING & PRINTING	113,638.89	107,020.80	126,000.00	24,903.83
OUTSIDE SERVICES	412,910.21	498,388.28	523,510.00	103,882.77
TELEPHONE	39,431.61	31,637.84	10,000.00	6,677.91
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	4,933.48	4,188.47	10,000.00	2,212.60
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	24,434.42	23,120.60	40,000.00	9,615.30
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	279,440.94	11,548.21	368,442.00	60,921.66
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	119,500.00	120,000.00	100,000.00	25,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	(500,940.52)	(416,572.18)	(534,427.61)	(157,801.91)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$2,579,967.94	$2,504,381.33	$3,630,992.00	$630,901.91
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$450,022.80	$553,724.94	($500,000.00)	$1,316,005.19
ADJUSTMENTS:				
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	$8,696,126.57	$9,997,891.52	$10,751,842.42	
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	$1,232,019.20	($374,418.74)		
NET GAIN/(LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	($315,708.05)	$574,644.70		
LOSS ON RETURN OF GRANT FUNDS	($64,569.00)	$0.00		
ENDING BALANCE	$9,997,891.52	$10,751,842.42	$10,251,842.42	

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
FOR FY 2017-18
ESTIMATED EXPENSES FOR QUARTER ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

	ADMIN & FINAN MANAGEMENT (10)	EXECUTIVE SUPPORT (11)	FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES (12)	LEGISLATIVE SERVICES (13&31)	CURRICULUM & INSTRUCT (14)	PUBLIC ADVOCACY (15)	MEMBER MGT SERVICES (16)	POLICY RESEARCH (17)	ESTIMATED 1ST QUARTER TOTAL (7/1/17-9/30/17)
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$ 129,590.52	$ 81,653.01	$ 12,788.07	$ 112,524.10	$ -	$ 87,556.71	$ 46,040.24	$ 49,587.74	$ 519,740.40
OTHER INSURANCE	$ 8,229.84	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 8,229.84
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	$ 151.98	$ 12,104.08	$ -	$ 103.47	$ -	$ 1,237.38	$ -	$ 2,564.85	$ 16,161.76
GENERAL SUPPLIES	$ 2,365.70	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,365.70
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	$ 612.05	$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 6,263.96	$ -	$ 829.19	$ -	$ 286.85	$ 8,992.05
COPYING & PRINTING	$ 625.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 23,853.83	$ -	$ 425.00	$ 24,903.83
OUTSIDE SERVICES	$ 45,916.60	$ 11,753.29	$ -	$ 32,636.00	$ 13,576.88	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 103,882.77
TELEPHONE	$ 4,651.51	$ 1,449.05	$ -	$ 167.64	$ -	$ 104.63	$ 200.46	$ 104.62	$ 6,677.91
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	$ 506.78	$ 766.59	$ -	$ 322.38	$ -	$ 616.85	$ -	$ -	$ 2,212.60
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	$ 9,615.30	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 9,615.30
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	$ 60,921.66	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 60,921.66
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	$ 25,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 25,000.00
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	$ (157,801.91)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ (157,801.91)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	$ 130,385.03	$ 108,726.02	$ 12,788.07	$ 152,017.55	$ 13,576.88	$ 114,198.59	$ 46,240.70	$ 52,969.06	**$ 630,901.91**
	$ 157,801.91								
	$ 288,186.94								

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS
BUDGET REPORT

FOR

FISCAL YEAR 2017-18

1ST QUARTER

ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT
FIRST QUARTER ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS

	MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES (20)	STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS (21)	SPECIAL PROJECTS ACCOUNT (22)	KPI BUSINESS PLAN (29)	GATES SOLUTIONS TO COMMON CORE (32)	HELMSLEY GRANT (34)	SCHUSTERMAN FOUNDATION GRANT (38)	URBAN DEANS NETWK (40)	S Schwartz Urban Impact Award (41)	GATES FOUNDATION CCSS Implem (49)	WALLACE FOUNDATION GRANT (56/57)	THE COLLEGE BOARD GRANT (86)	FIRST QTR TOTAL (7/1/17-9/30/17)
OPERATING REVENUE													
MEMBER DUES	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
GRANTS & CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	657,700.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$657,700.00
REGISTRATION FEES	272,600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$272,600.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
ROYALTIES & OTHER INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	28,629.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$28,629.52
TOTAL REVENUE	$930,300.00	$0.00	$0.00	$28,629.52	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$958,929.52
OPERATING EXPENSES													
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	$38,331.46	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$48,414.10	$28,047.47	$0.00	$0.00	$197,641.11	$34,522.68	$0.00	$346,956.82
OTHER INSURANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSES	345,546.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,026.53	0.00	0.00	$347,573.21
GENERAL SUPPLIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
DUES, SUBSCR & PUBLICATION	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	97.29	0.00	0.00	$97.29
COPYING & PRINTING	35,064.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$35,064.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	173,928.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	91,525.98	0.00	0.00	84,317.47	46,955.47	0.00	$396,727.73
TELEPHONE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	12,339.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$12,339.26
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	$0.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	85,031.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	17,936.02	0.00	0.00	42,612.36	12,221.72	0.00	$157,801.91
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	$690,242.02	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$48,414.10	$137,509.47	$0.00	$0.00	$326,694.76	$93,699.88	$0.00	$1,296,560.22
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$240,057.98	$0.00	$0.00	$28,629.52	$0.00	($48,414.10)	($137,509.47)	$0.00	$0.00	($326,694.76)	($93,699.88)	$0.00	($337,630.70)
CLOSEOUT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
CARRYOVER BALANCE 6/30/17	$686,441.06	($125,005.53)	$109,901.03	($44,972.23)	$568,997.87	$337,329.59	$510,000.00	$7,401.78	$21,989.50	$329,051.74	$569,668.87	$400,000.00	$3,370,803.68
ENDING BALANCE 9/30/17	$926,499.04	($125,005.53)	$109,901.03	($16,342.71)	$568,997.87	$288,915.49	$372,490.53	$7,401.78	$21,989.50	$2,356.98	$475,968.99	$400,000.00	$3,033,172.98

PERSONNEL POLICY AND INVESTMENT POLICIES HANDBOOKS

Amendment #1 to Personnel Policy Handbook

I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Preamble

Employees are required to comply with all provisions of this personnel policy handbook. The provisions contained herein are intended to ensure a professional and supportive work environment for all employees, and to discourage any appearance of impropriety or the perception of undue influence upon the business of this Council.

Amendment #2 to Personnel Policy Handbook

Conflicts of Interest

The Council respects employee's rights to engage in activities outside the work of the organization. Employees are encouraged to be well-rounded, active and contributing citizens of the community. However, to avoid any actual or apparent conflicts of interest:

- Employees should not become involved in any outside transaction or activity that could be viewed as a conflict between those of the Council or those of the individual's role as an employee of the Council.

- Employees should not accept any outside employment that potentially could interfere with attendance or satisfactory performance of duties at the Council.

- Employees should not accept gifts, payments, fees, return services, discounts, privileges or favors of any type that might appear to obligate or compromise the Council or the individual as an employee of the Council.

- Supervisors should refrain from hiring or retaining relatives, or from influencing the hiring or retaining of relatives by the organization's members, sponsors, or providers.

All employees, upon initial hiring and annually thereafter, shall certify in writing that they comply with this policy, and that they will self-report any relationship that may implicate a potential conflict of interest or other violations of this policy.

If an employee has questions about whether outside interests or activities might be interpreted as a conflict of interest, please discuss them with the Director of Finance and Administration or the Executive Director.

The amendment is shown in red text above.

Amend Section INVESTMENT GUIDELINES – ALLOWABLE ASSETS by adding the following additional criteria.

All assets of the Council of the Great City Schools shall be invested in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds, which are committed to a diverse workforce, do not support activities that would be contradictory to the vision and goals of the Council, or are detrimental to public education or urban children.