

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MARCH 15, 2015

WASHINGTON D.C.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
Board of Directors Meeting
March 15, 2015
Washington, D.C.

AGENDA

CONVENE 8:30 AM

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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 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

2014-2015

OFFICERS

Chair of the Board: Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Oakland School Board
Chair-Elect: Richard Carranza, San Francisco Superintendent
Secretary/Treasurer: Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board
Immediate Past-Chair: Valeria Silva, St. Paul Superintendent

MEMBERS

Cecelia Adams, Toledo School Board
Jose Banda, Sacramento Superintendent
JoAnn Brannon, Metro Nashville School Board
Juan Cabrera, El Paso Superintendent
Meria Carstarphen, Atlanta Superintendent
Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent
Lawrence Feldman, Miami-Dade County School Board
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO
Terry Grier, Houston Superintendent
Michael Hanson, Fresno Superintendent
Kaya Henderson, District of Columbia Chancellor
William Isler, Pittsburgh School Board
Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent
Pam Knowles, Portland School Board
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Board
Keith Oliveira, Providence School Board
Shanaysha Sauls, Baltimore City School Board
Bolgen Vargas, Rochester Superintendent
Airick West, Kansas City 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 March 2, 2015)

CITY	SUPERINTENDENTS	BOARD MEMBERS
Albuquerque	Brad Winter (Interim)	David Peercy
Anchorage	Ed Graff	Natasha Von Imhof
Atlanta	Meria Carstarphen	Leslie Grant
Austin	Paul Cruz	Gina Hinojosa
Baltimore	Gregory Thornton	Shanaysha Sauls
Birmingham	Spencer Horn (Interim)	Wardine Alexander
Boston	John McDonough (Interim)	Michael O'Neill
Bridgeport	Frances Rabinowitz (Interim)	Sauda Baraka
Broward Co.	Robert W. Runcie	Laurie Rich Levinson
Buffalo	Donald Ogilvie (Interim)	James Sampson
Charleston	Michael Bobby (Interim)	Todd Garrett
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	Ann Clark (Deputy)	Mary T. McCray
Chicago	Barbara Byrd-Bennett	Jesse Ruiz
Cincinnati	Mary Ronan	Melanie Bates
Clark County	Pat Skorkowsky	Linda E. Young
Cleveland	Eric Gordon	Denise Link
Columbus	Daniel J. Good	Gary Baker II
Dallas	Mike Miles	Mike Morath
Dayton	Lori L. Ward	Ronald C. Lee
Denver	Tom Boasberg	Allegra Haynes
Des Moines	Thomas Ahart	Cindy Elsbernd
Detroit	Karen Ridgeway	Darnell Earley
East Baton Rouge	Bernard Taylor, Jr.	David Tatman
El Paso	Juan Cabrera	Dee Margo
Fort Worth	Patricia Linares (Interim)	Ashley Paz
Fresno	Michael Hanson	Lindsay Cal Johnson
Guilford County	Maurice Green	Rebecca M. Buffington
Hawaii Department of Education	Ronn Nozoe (Deputy)	Donald G. Horner
Hillsborough County	MaryEllen Elia	Doretha Edgecomb
Houston	Terry Grier	Paula Harris
Indianapolis	Lewis Ferebee	Samuel Odle
Jackson	Cedrick Gray	Monica Gilmore-Love
Jacksonville	Nikolai P. Vitti	Paula Wright
Jefferson County	Donna Hargens	Diane Porter
Kansas City	Steven R. Green	Airick West
Long Beach	Christopher Steinhauser	Felton Williams
Los Angeles	Ramon Cortines	Steve Zimmer
Miami-Dade County	Alberto Carvalho	Lawrence Feldman
Milwaukee	Darienne Driver	Michael Bonds
Minneapolis	Michael Goar	Don Samuels
Nashville	Jesse Register	JoAnn Brannon
Newark	Cami Anderson	Antoinette Baskerville-Richardson
New Orleans	Stan Smith (Interim)	N/A
New York City	Carmen Fariña	N/A
Norfolk	Samuel T. King	Kirk T. Houston, Sr.
Oakland	Antwan Wilson	Jumoke Hinton Hodge
Oklahoma City	Rob Neu	Phil Horning
Omaha	Mark Evans	Lacey Merica

Orlando
Palm Beach County
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Portland
Providence
Richmond
Rochester
Sacramento
St. Louis
St. Paul
San Diego
San Francisco
Santa Ana
Seattle
Shelby County (Memphis)
Toledo
Washington, D.C.
Wichita

Barbara Jenkins
E. Wayne Gent
William R. Hite, Jr.
Linda Lane
Carole Smith
Susan Lusi
Dana Bedden
Bolgen Vargas
Jose L. Banda
Kelvin Adams
Valeria Silva
Cindy Marten
Richard Carranza
Rick Miller
Larry Nyland
Dorsey E. Hopson, II, Esq.
Romules L. Durant
Kaya Henderson
John Allison

William Sublette
Debra L. Robinson
William Green
William Isler
Pam Knowles
Keith Oliveira
Jeffrey Bourne
Van Henri White
Christina Prichett
Rick Sullivan
Mary Doran
Marne Foster
Hydra Mendoza
Rob Richardson
Harium Martin-Morris
Kevin Woods
Cecelia Adams
N/A
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
Shirley Lathern, Systems and Administrative Specialist
Anna Barrera, Accounting and Conference Specialist
Jeff Simering, Director of Legislation
Julie Beth Halbert, Legislative Counsel
Manish Naik, Legislative Manager
Gabriela Uro, Manager of ELL Policy & Research
Debra Hopkins, ELL Project Coordinator
Carol Aguirre, ELL Policy Specialist
Henry Duvall, Director of Communications
Tonya Harris, Communications Manager
Danyell Taylor, Communications Specialist
Raymond Hart, Director of Research
Renata Uzzell, Research Manager
Moses Palacios, Research Specialist
Jeannette Fernandez, Research Intern
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
Jonathon Lachlan-Haché, Special Projects Specialist

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MILWAUKEE, WI
OCTOBER 25, 2014**

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Chair of the Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 8:50 am. Members introduced themselves and a quorum was established.

Minutes

Jumoke Hinton Hodge presented the minutes of the March 23, 2014 meeting of the Board of Directors at the Legislative Conference in Washington, DC and the July 25-26, 2014 meeting of the Executive Committee in Los Angeles, CA. Two corrections were made—one on the list of attendees and a date correction. A motion to approve the minutes, with these changes, passed by voice vote.

Annual report

The organization's annual report was provided in the Board materials, along with individual reports provided to each city that detail the value and services provided to each district in the 2013-14 school year. Jumoke Hinton Hodge indicated that these reports should be used as a resource to gauge how members are taking advantage of the assistance and expertise available to them as Council members. As a sample, Cleveland's district-specific report was included in the materials.

The annual report passed by a voice vote.

Conferences and meetings

Executive Director Michael Casserly presented the meeting lineup for the remainder of 2014 and next year. The annual 2015 conference will be held in Long Beach, CA, a few weeks earlier than usual, and the 2016 annual conference will be in Miami-Dade County. For 2017, the due date for proposals was September 15. The Council received four bids, from Cleveland, Los Angeles, Baltimore, and Louisville, KY. Of those bids the Executive Committee selected Cleveland as the site for 2017. The remaining candidates will now be considered for 2018. Council staff will check with each of the districts about their interest in hosting for 2018.

Legislation

Jeff Simering, the Council's Director of Legislation, gave the report on legislative activities and developments. He indicated that Congress had adjourned and given up any pretense that they were going to get anything done—including the annual appropriations bill, which the lame duck congress will now have to deal with in November. ESEA, IDEA, and the Perkins reauthorization are all overdue as well. To date, the Council has assumed the posture that the current ESEA with waivers might be preferable to a reauthorization in the current climate, a position that most other education organizations do not share.

Three major issues are likely to emerge if a reauthorization proceeds in 2015. The first is the elimination of MOE. Portability is the second—this would allow states the option of a per-child Title I allocation. And the third would involve the modification of the Title I funding formula.

Simering also indicated that there was increased pressure to raise budget caps due to issues like unaccompanied minors, student loan processing, wildfires, ISIS, the Ebola pandemic, etc.

He also described the Council's efforts to advocate administrative and regulatory action from the agencies. Specifically, the organization is pushing for local district waivers, E rate accommodations, school meals adjustments, etc.

Felton Williams requested taking a look at the impact of charter schools on member districts.

Communications

Board materials included a sample of recent press releases, articles, and editorials. Casserly invited board members to inform us if our communications efforts were not representing their interests or positions. Materials also included communications efforts around the common core standards, e.g., the script for a new PSA three-minute video and the results of a poll that the Council conducted of parents in member districts. Results showed that over 50 percent of parents had seen improvements in their schools.

Materials also included circulation statistics for the prior PSAs which won two Telly Awards and were viewed some 250 million times over the last 18 months. Usage statistics were also provided on other common core materials and tools.

The Council also developed a new publication entitled *How We Help Urban Schools*—which, like the annual report and city-by-city reports, informs members and potential members of the value and activities of the council. And the group unveiled another new report, *Good News in Urban Education*, which features a sampling of achievements and awards urban districts have been winning and the progress they have been making.

Casserly then reviewed winners of the Bernard Harris scholarships.

In response to a question regarding the need for a forum for communications departments to collaborate, Casserly indicated that the communications directors meet annually and stay in regular contact through a Council listserv.

Research

The research section of the board materials started with an overview of research activities. Other materials included the Council's Males of Color pledge and a list of school districts who had signed on, as well as a press release from the White House following the July event. Ray Hart, the Council's Director of Research, then described the results of the preconference session on Males of Color and the outreach efforts the

Council is pursuing. In addition, the Council has asked districts to share written implementation plans for raising Black and Hispanic male achievement. From these plans, the Council intends to develop a toolkit drawing from the districts' most promising practices. Richard Carranza suggested that, as district leaders, board members and superintendents needed to reach out to mayors and other elected officials to create a groundswell of support and attention.

Research materials also included a joint statement with CCSSO on testing, along with various statements of support for the announcement. Casserly reminded the group that it had launched a discussion and survey of member testing practices. Survey responses were very high and analysis of the results is underway. Discussion followed on naming a testing task force and on how to report the results of the testing survey.

In addition, research materials included a working draft of *Implementing Common Core Assessments*—a collection of recommendations from a working group that was convened to delve into how to effectively plan and prepare for PARCC, SBAC, or other new online assessments.

Finally, a preliminary analysis of the effects of SIG grants was provided.

Achievement Task Force

Eric Gordon gave the Achievement Task Force report. The task force covered a number of issues, including the *Implementing Common Core Assessments*, mentioned previously. Gordon noted connections between this report and a previous Council study—*Beyond Test Scores*. Gordon also called attention to the results of the SIG survey.

The task force also reviewed templates of the new ELA and math grade-level instructional materials evaluation tool that staff were developing. And the group was updated on the development of the Council's academic KPIs. Gordon indicated that the task force had streamlined its meeting agenda and is operating much more smoothly.

Professional Development Task Force

Deb Shanley gave the task force report. Casserly then updated the Board on the Council's discussions with Harvard University around developing a partnership to prepare rising district leaders and create a pipeline for instructional leaders. Discussion followed on whether or not to proceed with the partnership under the terms that Harvard was laying out.

Casserly also called the group's attention to the Urban School Executives program—a different model that is currently employed for operational staff in member districts, CFOs, COOs, etc. Participation in this program is growing, and it has the practical dimensions that a university setting cannot offer.

Bilingual Task Force

Valeria Silva gave the report for the Bilingual Task Force, starting with an update on common core standards implementation with ELLs. The Council has developed a number of documents and tools, available in the board materials. One is the *ELD 2.0* document, an effort funded by The Gates Foundation and the Televisa Foundation, which lays out a new framework for having ELLs meet the new standards and a set of criteria for assessing whether ELL materials are compatible with the common core. Also, the Council's bilingual staff is developing a professional development learning platform for teachers, a project underwritten by the Helmsley Foundation.

Gabriela Uro, the Council's Director of Language Policy, updated the board on unaccompanied minors and the Council's efforts with the federal agencies on this front. She then turned to the issue of deferred action and gave a status report on needed renewals.

Finally, the BIRE meeting will be held in May in Charlotte this year. This meeting is growing every year, and Ms. Uro encouraged members to send their ELL program staff.

Casserly then described what the organization was doing to spur commercial publishers to produce better materials for ELLs. The board was highly complementary of this effort.

Leadership and Governance Task Force

Thomas Ahart gave the report for the Leadership, Management, and Governance Task Force. The board materials included the latest edition of *Managing for Results*. At the meeting earlier this week, the task force delved into the results of this report.

Casserly informed the board that there was also a lengthy conversation during the task force meeting about the superintendent hiring processes, evaluations, and board governance. The Council has been asked to put together something more concrete to help guide boards in the process of hiring superintendents, and to serve as an ongoing guide. Jumoke Hinton Hodge reiterated the importance of further discussions around school board governance.

Finally, the new Council report on deferred maintenance was covered and described.

Finance Task Force

No report.

Membership

No report. (The application from Durham was deferred.)

By-Laws

No report.

Audit

Casserly informed the group that the organization remained in good financial standing. The FY 2013-14 budget numbers will be reviewed by the external auditor later this fall, and the results of that audit will be shared with the Board of Directors at the March Legislative Conference. We have a number of large grants that have helped our financial picture.

The board materials included investment accounts, categorical breakdowns, dues payment status, etc. The organization will be sending out third dues notices to member districts after the conference.

A motion to accept the budget passed by a voice vote.

Strategic planning and personnel

No report.

In closing, Casserly thanked Milwaukee for hosting the 2014 conference and board members gave the Milwaukee delegation an enthusiastic round of applause.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
JACKSONVILLE, FL
JANUARY 23-24, 2015**

Friday, January 23, 2015

Present:

Officers:

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Chair, Oakland School Board
Richard Carranza, Chair-elect, San Francisco Superintendent
Valeria Silva, Immediate Past Chair, St. Paul Superintendent

Members:

Cecelia Adams, Toledo School Board
JoAnne Brannon, Metro Nashville School Board
Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO
Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent
Bill Isler, Pittsburgh School Board
Shanaysha Sauls, Baltimore School Board
Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College, CUNY Dean
Bolgen Vargas, Rochester Superintendent
Airick West, Kansas City School Board
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board

Absent:

Jose Banda, Sacramento Superintendent
Meria Carstarphen, Atlanta Superintendent
Lawrence Feldman, Miami-Dade School Board
Terry Grier, Houston Superintendent
Michael Hanson, Fresno Superintendent
Kaya Henderson, District of Columbia Chancellor
Pam Knowles, Portland School Board
Keith Oliveira, Providence School Board
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Board
Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board

Richard Carranza, Chair-elect of the Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm. Present members introduced themselves and a quorum was established.

Minutes

Richard Carranza presented the minutes of the October 23, 2014 meeting of the Executive Committee and the October 25, 2014 meeting of the Board of Directors at the Annual Fall Conference in Milwaukee. A correction was noted to reflect the attendance of Cecelia Adams, Pam Knowles, Michael O'Neill, and Paula Wright at the October Executive Committee meeting. A motion to approve the minutes, with these corrections, passed by voice vote.

Nominations

The following nominations were presented and passed by voice vote:

- 1) Darienne Driver, Milwaukee Superintendent, to serve the unexpired term of Health Morrison, whose term expires June 30, 2017
- 2) Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent, to serve the unexpired term of Winston Brooks, whose term expires June 30, 2017
- 3) Bolgen Vargas, Rochester Superintendent, to serve the unexpired term of John Deasy, whose term expires June 30, 2016
- 4) And, Juan Cabrera, El Paso Superintendent, to serve the unexpired term of Craig Witherspoon, whose term expires June 30, 2017.

Membership

Pending membership applications were deferred to the March meeting of the Executive Committee.

By-Laws Subcommittee

No report.

Audit Subcommittee

A draft of the audit report was provided in committee materials. The final audit for the July 2013 through June 2014 period will be ready in March. The organization does not expect any changes to the numbers presented in the draft audit. Once again, the audit was completely clean, with no findings, exceptions, or material weaknesses.

In response to a question about rotating auditors, Michael Casserly and Teri Trinidad informed the group that the same auditor has been used by the Council for a number of years now, although each year they send different field agents.

The materials also included a general statement of the organization's financial assets, investments, and activities. Casserly called the group's attention to the large cash carryover balance—and explained that the amounts were due to private foundation grants that were temporarily offsetting some general fund expenditures. Casserly indicated that

he expected the carryover to be spent down throughout 2015 and into part of 2016. At that point, in the absence of any further grants, cash reserves will appear to drop quickly.

Casserly then briefly reviewed each of the grants the Council is currently working on. The Executive Committee has indicated in the past that it doesn't need to approve each grant received, but should be kept informed of the proposals submitted and funds received.

Casserly also called the group's attention to the fact that not all investment funds are FDIC-insured, which the auditors have confirmed is not problematic, but something staff wants to keep the Executive Committee informed of.

A motion to approve the draft audit report passed by a voice vote.

The materials also include the current dues status. Little Rock has been dropped from membership rolls—per recent bylaws changes—and does not receive any services from the organization.

In response to a question concerning investment dividends, Casserly and Teri Trinidad informed the group that the organization has an investment policy, but nothing written into the by-laws. This administrative policy will be included in the Executive Committee materials in March. Members discussed having a threshold at which point the committee may get involved, but in the meantime committee members agreed that they didn't wish to micromanage the relatively small amount of funds.

The dues status for the deans group was then discussed. Deb Shanley shared a copy of a letter asking for dues payments, and asked committee members to review the list of urban colleges of education and to inform her if any institutions need to be added.

Casserly reviewed the remaining budget materials, including the budget for the first six months of 2015, and the projected budget through 2016. The organization is on target for a balanced budget for the current fiscal year. These materials will go before the board at the March meeting. Casserly then thanked Teri Trinidad for her budget expertise. She received a round of applause.

A motion to accept the general audit report passed by a voice vote.

Conferences and Meetings

Michael Casserly presented the meeting lineup for 2015. The Legislative Conference is scheduled for March 14 -17 in Washington, DC. Education Secretary Arne Duncan will be joining the group for the Sunday lunch again this year. The July Executive Committee meeting will be held in San Francisco, July 17-18.

Conference evaluations from Milwaukee were also provided in committee materials. There weren't a lot of responses to evaluation questions in the conference App, most likely because the App required a password. The reviews we did receive were positive, both overall and for individual sessions. One committee member commented that the

response rate was startlingly low, and this was something we should address. The group then discussed options, such as incentivizing evaluation submissions or using paper evaluations at each session.

In response to a question, Casserly informed the group that the Council cleared around \$100,000 on the conference, which was typical. The organization does better in more affordable cities, whereas in cities like Boston we barely break even.

The 2015 annual conference will be held in Long Beach, a bit earlier than usual this year. We are working on securing speakers now, but are open to suggestions.

The 2016 conference will be in Miami-Dade County, and Cleveland has been chosen as the site for 2017. A motion to select Baltimore as the site for 2018 passed by voice vote. Casserly indicated that he will follow up with Louisville to see if they are interested in hosting 2019.

Meeting Materials Software

In response to a request made at the October meeting of the Executive Committee, Council staff researched the viability of purchasing Diligent Boardbooks, a software system for sharing and storing materials for Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings. The staff assessment was that the software was more appropriate for smaller boards, and not worth the significant financial investment. The Committee then discussed the utility and necessity of upgrading our current platform. Other systems are available and may be more suited to our needs, but the Committee was in agreement that this is not something that the Council really needs at this point.

Testing Task Force Discussion

Last year the Council indicated that it would create a testing task force to develop recommendations and models for more coherent assessment systems. Since that announcement, a number of high profile assessment experts have volunteered to serve or have been suggested as potential task force members. The Committee needs to decide whether it wants this body to be strictly internal, or a mix of internal and external experts. One member pointed out that it wouldn't be wise to make it just internal—that it will look defensive and closed, and whatever comes out of the task force will be criticized. The group agreed that we should include external experts, but noted that the external experts should be nonpartisan, not tied to any particular vendor or testing group, or have a particular testing agenda that would undermine the integrity of the work. Also, the mixture of members should be weighted toward urban practitioners—including district leaders and board representatives—to reflect the priorities of the membership. We should also include a university representative, as well as someone who can represent the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities.

In terms of size, the task force shouldn't be too large or unwieldy. Casserly asked Committee members that were named to indicate whether they would accept the nomination. He indicated that he will email the final list of names out to the group.

Communications

Casserly reviewed recent Council press releases, news articles, and editorials. He reminded the group that staff was always open to input to ensure that the organization's communications were reflecting member positions. The group then discussed the Council's statement on the Ferguson decision, and commended Casserly for his leadership and courage in issuing it.

The Council also pursues communications work around the common core, developing tools and materials to support implementation efforts in districts. Casserly played the organization's new three-minute video and two 30-second ELA and Math PSAs, which were well received by Committee members. The Council also developed radio pieces, and all materials are available in Spanish. These have now been circulated to member districts and to television and radio outlets throughout the country. Casserly invited members to use the PSAs in any way that would be useful. One member suggested outreach to movie theaters, as this is sometimes a venue for anti-common core messaging. Another member urged caution about movie theaters, given the pushback against ads in theaters. The group also weighed the relative benefits of targeting large markets versus markets with more pushback, and concluded focusing on large markets would be better. In addition, a number of members asked staff to look into the cost of customizing the videos for individual districts.

The committee materials also included statistics on the usage of other common core tools, along with a list of awards the Council has received for these and other communications efforts. Finally, communications materials included a copy of the latest *Urban Educator*, as well as applications for the latest round of Bernard Harris scholarships.

Saturday, January 24, 2015

Jumoke Hinton-Hodge, Chair of the Board, called the committee to order at 8:00 am.

Legislation

Jeff Simering and Manish Naik updated the Executive Committee on federal legislative developments. The new majority in the 114th Congress has brought a shift in tone, and education committee chairs in both House and the Senate have indicated that they wanted to pass an ESEA reauthorization quickly.

Simering and Naik indicated that there were a number of silver linings at the end of 2014. The FCC, which does not need congressional approval to make changes to the e-rate program, finally increased funding substantially for the program. Naik indicated that the Council was pivotal in ensuring that e-rate funding was not diluted as total funds were increased. The FCC also made a number of other programmatic changes that the Council was largely in accord with.

A Congressional appropriations bill was also agreed to at the end of 2014—an omnibus bill to keep everything funded for a full year, with the exception of the Department of

Homeland Security, which got a Continuing Resolution for three months. The result was that education programs avoided another sequestration. Education programs mostly received level funding, although one K-12 program receiving a notable increase was Title III for English Language Learners, which received an additional \$14 million. Over the past few months, Council staff worked with Congressional appropriations staff on the mechanism that was used to secure funding for districts nationwide that were enrolling large numbers of unaccompanied minors.

Another piece of good news at the end of 2014—Congress passed a tax bill, which had some positive implications for school construction bonds, which some member districts still use. And a final piece of good news—the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) released guidance on school-based Medicaid reimbursements that eliminated the “free care rule.” This has the potential to help districts get reimbursements for health expenditures with Medicaid-eligible kids. The Council has been working on increasing these reimbursements for ten years.

The Obama Administration will also release its new budget in the next couple of weeks. The Administration is going to ask for an increase of \$1 billion in Title I funding. However, with a Republican Congress it will be difficult to get a significant portion of this requested money. Also, there have been additional requests for early childhood education funding, which will also be difficult to secure. This requested funding is applicable to the 2016-17 school year.

Paula Wright then introduced the Mayor of Jacksonville, Alton Brown, and a member of the city council, who detailed for the Executive Committee some of the partnerships being undertaken and work being done in the school district and across the city to close achievement gaps and increase graduation rates.

Continuing the legislative update, Jeff Simering detailed the long-term agenda for the incoming chairmen of the House and Senate education committees. ESEA reauthorization has been made the priority, and we expect a bill to be introduced in the House in early February. This bill is expected to look a lot like the bill that was introduced in 2013, which was passed entirely along party lines. There is also an accelerated schedule on the Senate side. A new discussion draft has been released—it is nearly 400 pages long and comments on it have been requested. The expectation is that the committee will try and move the bill through committee by the end of February. The current discussion draft is very similar to the bill Senator Alexander offered in 2013, when he was the Ranking Member of the committee. Just like in 2013, the draft Alexander bill has a number of problematic provisions. The bill would keep the major categorical programs in ESEA (although the measure would consolidate many smaller programs), but problematic fiscal provisions would undercut the foundation of ESEA. For instance, the draft would eliminate maintenance of effort provisions, which serve as a barrier to states’ cutting state education aid. Moreover, the bill changes current supplement-not-supplant provisions, modifications that would dilute the impact of federal funds.

In the draft bill, there is also a “portability” provision, which creates a new per-child allocation system under Title I where equal funding is distributed to every eligible child in a state regardless of how concentrated the poverty of districts may be. The provision also dilutes funding within school districts. Finally, the draft bill freezes ESEA funding for the next six years. The Council will be submitting its comments to the committee next week.

The Council also expects that on one or both sides of the Capitol we will face a Title I formula fight, and an effort to direct more funding to less-poor, non-urban districts. Most of this action may happen quickly, and the outcome is in doubt.

In drafting a platform for the ESEA reauthorization, Council staff has crafted and proposed a middle ground between typical Republican and Democratic positions, but it is unclear whether there is any interest in a bipartisan solution. Executive Committee materials included the Council’s draft recommendations for ESEA. In general, the organization has tried to maintain a focus on disadvantaged kids and subgroup accountability, along with an emphasis on effective local interventions in low performing schools. In addition, the Council draft proposes to roll back a number of provisions that have not been effective under NCLB. The draft also seeks to beef up the program management side of Title I. Given that state accountability systems may be diluted in other proposals, the Council’s draft platform attempts to bolster accountability measures at the local level. The committee was then given additional time to read and discuss the draft staff proposal.

In response to Executive Committee discussions of and comments on the draft recommendations, the Council will:

- Add language that encourages stability and continuity in federal policymaking—to avoid constant upheavals in requirements and allow sustained local effort toward consistent federal goals.
- Modify early childhood language to include pre-K and kindergarten. (Simering asked Committee members to indicate their district’s approach to kindergarten, and most reported having full-day kindergarten programs only partially funded by the state.)
- Add language about qualifications of substitute staff for preschool. However, this language should not create barriers to the multiple delivery systems currently operating in districts.
- Add language on extended time—perhaps as a use of Title I dollars.

A motion to accept these recommendations, with suggested additions, passed by a voice vote. Members also agree to circulate the document, encourage a close reading within their districts, and to be prepared to act soon.

Research

Michael Casserly started the discussion on the Council's research activities with the latest (and possibly last) edition of *Beating the Odds*. In addition, Council staff met with NAGB in December regarding additional funding for TUDA, and the result is that the president's budget will include funding for an additional ten cities. This could bring the total number of participating districts to 31. Casserly urged members already in TUDA to continue their participation.

Next, there was an update on the latest developments in the Males of Color initiative. Committee materials include the Council's pledge, along with a list of districts that have signed onto the pledge and submitted implementation plans. Casserly urged everyone to develop implementation plans to outline how members intend to put the pledge into place.

The research section of the materials also provided a number of proposed partnerships/projects in this area, and Casserly asked the committee for guidance on how or whether to move forward with each. The first of these was the College Board partnership. Members expressed having had mixed experiences with recent College Board meetings, but wanted to move forward with this partnership.

The second was a proposal from the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and Attendance Works. This proposal mostly involved tools for analyzing data rather than providing strategies to improve attendance rates. Members voiced concern about the group and their work in districts. The group reached a consensus not to pursue this partnership.

The final proposal was from the Pacific Education Group. Several committee members raised the point that this program should be a district-by-district decision, and questioned whether a Council partnership was necessary. Other members voiced their belief that this work would be an important next step in the Males of Color initiative. Members agreed that the organization needed to be cautious about who we align with and give our stamp of approval to since many groups actively pursue our endorsement or partnership.

Casserly shared with the group the general history of the Males of Color initiative, the various milestones of the work to date, and his disappointment with the proposal. The group agreed that more clarity was needed from the Pacific Education Group, and if we do agree to collaborate that it not be used to pressure member districts that did not want to work with the Pacific Education Group. Casserly will request additional modifications in the proposal, and there was general consensus that any work would be pursued in stages.

The next item was the NBA proposal. This group wants to work with each district where it has a team. The group was in agreement to move forward with this—even for cities without a team, as it had potential given the national profile of NBA teams and players.

The research section also includes the Council's common core assessment implementation report, and results from the latest survey on common core standards implementation.

Finally, the Council's final draft SIG report was discussed. Casserly indicated that the report was the most comprehensive study of the program that anyone has undertaken to-date. Members indicated that the report could be released publicly.

Achievement

Eric Gordon gave the report of the Achievement Task Force. The latest drafts of the GIMET—grade level rubrics—in ELA and math were provided in the materials.

In addition, academic KPIs were currently being piloted in a handful of volunteer districts, including Houston, Baltimore, Albuquerque, and Los Angeles. Casserly indicated that the Council was still looking for four to five more districts to volunteer. Kansas City, St. Paul, and Milwaukee volunteered to serve as pilot districts.

Moreover, the Council will be holding a number of new common core professional development sessions and workshops over the next few months, including text-set workshops and an argument-writing meeting.

Furthermore, a Wallace Foundation-funded project on principal supervisors is now underway, and the Council will be conducting site visits to eight new PSI districts, including Broward County, Cleveland, DeKalb County, Des Moines, Long Beach, Minneapolis, DCPS, and Tulsa over the next two months. And the Curriculum and Research Directors' Meeting was now set for July 14-18 in Chicago.

Finally, a report on common core implementation in Denver was included in committee materials.

Professional Development

Committee materials included information on three models of capacity/pipeline building. The first was a potential partnership with Harvard Graduate School of Education—a straightforward training model. After the last Executive Committee meeting, Council staff went back to Harvard to voice our concerns over the lack of co-branding. They came back with a new title that names the Council explicitly.

Also, at the last meeting we discussed the importance of mentoring, technical assistance, and sustained support for new leaders—which was featured in a proposal by Carol Johnson, former superintendent in Boston.

A third model was based on the Council's urban school executive program.

Casserly asked the group for feedback and guidance on the three models. The Committee indicated that it was important to pair training with mentoring and technical assistance—perhaps over a sustained period.

The Committee also agreed on the general importance of professional development and support for superintendents, and the need to make this one of the issues board members should strongly support. Board members, too, require ongoing technical assistance and

professional development. The Council has committed to finding a better way to systematically provide boards with leadership support. The group then discussed the utility of this training coming from effective board members—rather than just externally.

There was consensus around pursuing several avenues of capacity/pipeline building at the same time—including further pursuing the Harvard partnership and following up with Stanford, along with Carol Johnson’s approach and the urban executives’ model.

Finally, the group further discussed the idea of providing support and information to districts in approaching their labor management negotiations. This was a continuation of a conversation on labor management held at the October meeting of the Executive Committee in Milwaukee, and Committee members agreed that the Council should keep this on the radar.

Bilingual

Valeria Silva provided an update of the Council’s work on behalf of ELLs. Committee materials included a description of work being done to improve and align ELL materials with the common core standards. The goal of this project is to provide publishers with support and guidance in developing aligned, high-quality ELL materials.

Casserly credited the project as one of the most far-reaching and potentially valuable the Council has ever pursued in the area of ELLs. The organization will soon be looking for five to seven districts to pilot the materials developed by the project. Members commended the Council and the ELL team for their outstanding work and leadership in this area.

Finally, Casserly noted that the Bilingual Directors’ Meeting will be held in Charlotte, NC, May 13-16.

Leadership, Governance, and Management

Casserly asked the group to give their input on the future of the KPI venture. One member indicated that the program was very valuable, but moving forward, data-consistency should be addressed. One idea was for the Council to provide some hands-on technical assistance in data reporting for the members. In general, the committee indicated that the KPI initiative was a valuable one, and should be sustained.

Finance

Casserly called the committee’s attention to the application from Atlanta for the financial excellence award.

Strategic and Succession Planning

Executive Committee members requested that a second session of the committee be convened at the legislative conference to address succession planning.

Office Move

Casserly then discussed the Council's upcoming office move. The organization has been at 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue for 22 years now, but we must now move as the building is being renovated. We need to be out by June 30, 2016. We have hired a realtor to help us in our search. We are looking for space at around \$45 a square foot. The Executive Committee has indicated that it doesn't need to be involved in the particulars of the search, but just kept up to date.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

NOMINATIONS

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on Nominations

March, 2015

Goal: To propose a slate of officers each year, to nominate a Secretary/Treasurer, to renew or replace incumbents whose terms on the Executive Committee are expiring, and to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee.

Chair

Valeria Silva, St. Paul Superintendent

Members

Sauda Baraka, Bridgeport School Board

Paul Cruz, Austin Superintendent

Doretha Edgecomb, Hillsborough County School Board

Bill Isler, Pittsburgh School Board

Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Superintendent

Pat Skorkowsky, Clark County Superintendent

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Nominations

The Nominations Committee forwards the following nominations for officer positions in the Council of the Great City Schools and members of the Executive Committee.

Ratify Slate of Officers

1) Be it resolved: That—

- Richard Carranza (San Francisco Superintendent) serve as Chair of the Board beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016
- Felton Williams (Long Beach School Board) serve as Chair-elect of the Board beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016
- Kaya Henderson (District of Columbia Chancellor) serve as Secretary/Treasurer of the Board beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016
- Jumoke Hinton Hodge (Oakland School Board) serve as Immediate Past Chair of the Board beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016

ACTION BY COMMITTEE

- Approved
 Not Approved

AFFIRMED

Chair of the Board

Renewal of Terms

1) Be it resolved: That Cecelia Adams (Toledo School Board) serve a first three year term beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2018.

ACTION BY COMMITTEE

- Approved
 Not Approved

AFFIRMED

Chair of the Board

Confirmation of Appointments

2) Be it resolved: That—

- Juan Cabrera (El Paso Superintendent) serve the unexpired term of Craig Witherspoon (Birmingham Superintendent), whose term expires June 30, 2017
- Darienne Driver (Milwaukee Superintendent) serve the unexpired term of Heath Morrison (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Superintendent), whose term expires June 30, 2017
- Barbara Jenkins (Orange County Superintendent) serve the unexpired term of Winston Brooks (Albuquerque Superintendent), whose term expires 6/30/17
- Bolgen Vargas (Rochester Superintendent) serve the unexpired term of John Deasy (Los Angeles Superintendent), whose term expires 6/30/16

ACTION BY COMMITTEE

- Approved
 Not Approved

AFFIRMED

Chair of the Board

Vacancies

3) Be it resolved: That Paul Cruz (Austin Superintendent) serve a first three year term beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2018.

ACTION BY COMMITTEE

- Approved
 Not Approved

AFFIRMED

Chair of the Board

4) Be it resolved: That Tom Ahart (Des Moines Superintendent) serve the unexpired term of the new Secretary/Treasurer, Kaya Henderson beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016.

ACTION BY COMMITTEE

- Approved
 Not Approved

AFFIRMED

Chair of the Board

Composition of Executive Committee
 FY2015-16 beginning July 1, 2015

Region	Male	Female	Board	Supt	Black	Hispanic	White	Other	Totals
East	5	1	4	2	2	1	3	0	6
Southeast	1	5	4	2	5	0	1	0	6
Midwest	5	1	1	5	2	2	2	0	6
West	4	2	3	3	2	2	2	0	6
Totals	15	9	12	12	11	5	8	0	24

Appointments by the Chair, 2014-15

Subcommittee Chairs and Members

Audit Subcommittee Chair: Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board
Richard Carranza, San Francisco Superintendent
Michael Hanson, Fresno Superintendent
Bill Isler, Pittsburgh School Board
Keith Oliveira, Providence School Board

Bylaws Subcommittee Chair: Kaya Henderson, District of Columbia Chancellor
Jose Banda, Sacramento Superintendent
Meria Carstarphen, Austin Superintendent
Larry Feldman, Miami-Dade County School Board
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Committee
Airick West, Kansas City School Board
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board

Membership Subcommittee Chair: Pam Knowles, Portland School Board
Cecelia Adams, Toledo School Board
JoAnn Brannon, Nashville School Board
Terry Grier, Houston Superintendent
Shanaysha Sauls, Baltimore School Board
Valeria Silva, St. Paul Superintendent

Task Force Chairs

Achievement Task Force

Co-Chair: Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO
Co-Chair: Cecelia Adams, Toledo School Board
Member: Airick West, Kansas City School Board
Member: Laurie Rich Levinson, Broward County School Board

Professional Development Task Force

Co-Chair: Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board
Co-Chair:
Co-Chair: Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College CUNY
Member: Airick West, Kansas City School Board

Bilingual Task Force

Co-Chair: Valeria Silva, St. Paul Superintendent
Co-Chair: Keith Oliveira, Providence School Board

Leadership & Governance Task Force

Co-Chair: Jose Banda, Sacramento Superintendent
Co-Chair: Bill Isler, Pittsburgh School Board

Finance Task Force

Co-Chair: Thomas Ahart, Des Moines Superintendent

Co-Chair: Larry Feldman, Miami-Dade School Board

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

**COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
2015 Conference Schedule**

Executive Committee Meeting

January 23-24, 2015
Omni Hotel, Jacksonville, FL

HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting

February 4-6, 2015
Sonesta Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Legislative/Policy Conference

March 14-17, 2015
Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington, DC

Chief Operating Officers Conference

April 21-24, 2015
Renaissance Hotel, Las Vegas, NV

Bilingual Directors Meeting

May 13-16, 2015
Westin Hotel, Charlotte, NC

Chief Information Officers Meeting

June 2-5, 2015
Loews Philadelphia Hotel, Philadelphia, PA

Public Relations Executives Meeting

July 10-12, 2015
Renaissance Nashville Hotel, Nashville, TN

Curriculum & Research Directors' Meeting

July 15-18 2015
Hotel Allegro, Chicago, IL

Executive Committee Meeting

July 17-18, 2015
Parc 55 Wyndham Hilton Hotel, San Francisco, CA

Annual Fall Conference

October 7-11, 2015
Hyatt Regency, Long Beach, CA

Chief Financial Officers Conference

November 3-6, 2015
Hotel Sorella, Houston, TX

**FALL CONFERENCE
2015**

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

59th ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

**Hosted by the
LONG BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Long Beach, CA**

OCTOBER 7 - 11, 2015

CONFERENCE HOTEL:

Hyatt Regency Long Beach
200 South Pine Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90802
(562) 491-1234

OVERFLOW HOTEL:

Hyatt The Pike Long Beach
255 Bay Street
Long Beach, CA 90802
(562) 432-1234

**GROUP RATE: \$215/night for Single and Double Occupancy
Plus 15.1% tax**

Long Beach is California's 5th largest city and Southern California's newest coastal destination. Attractions include: the Queen Mary, the Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach Museum of Art and the Museum of Latin American Art.

A fun and fast way to get around Long Beach is by AquaBus and AquaLink. These water taxis offer visitors enjoyable transportation to some of the prime spots within the city. AquaBus is a bright red ferry with capacity to 49 passengers, while AquaLink is a bright yellow catamaran for as many as 79 passengers.

Downtown Long Beach's Passport Shuttle is designed to provide a direct connection between Pine Avenue retail and restaurant district and Long Beach Convention Center, Aquarium of the Pacific, Queensway Bay and Shoreline Village waterfront destinations. Shuttles run between these locations as often as every ten minutes, every day.

Surrounding airports include: Long Beach airport; LAX airport; Orange County/John Wayne Airport; and, Ontario Airport.

The Hyatt Regency Long Beach is right next door to the Convention and Entertainment Center where some of the meetings will be held during the conference. The hotel has 528 stylish guestrooms all with water views. It also has 22,000 square feet of function space. From the hotel you can take a stroll along the harbor or play on the beach. It is only steps from major attractions, shops, restaurants and entertainment.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
2015 ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE
LONG BEACH, CA

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2015 WELCOME RECEPTION AT [THE AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC](#)



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2015 RECEPTION AT **THE QUEEN MARY**



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2015 FAREWELL DINNER AT **THE CAFÉ SEVILLA**





CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

An Invitation to Present at the 59th Annual
Fall Conference of the Council of the Great City Schools in
Long Beach, CA

Urban schools have shown remarkable progress in the past few years; test scores are up, attendance rates are improving, and more students are taking college entrance exams. We invite you to submit a proposal for a 10 minute presentation on what's working for you to improve academic achievement for all students through efforts in one of the following areas:

- Improving Achievement and Closing Gaps in Urban Schools
- Urban School Professional Development
- Urban School Finance
- Urban School Leadership and Governance
- Bilingual Education Programs in Urban Schools
- Special Education Programs in Urban Schools
- Other Initiatives

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL FOR PRESENTATION

It is our intent that the Annual Conference serves the membership by providing a forum for the presentation, consideration, and discussion of the needs of urban education. This year discussion groups and concurrent breakout sessions will be arranged to facilitate the exchange of information around increasing academic achievement in urban schools.

We invite you to submit a proposal for presentation that addresses how programs, initiatives and/or practices in the areas of closing achievement gaps, professional development, finance, leadership, and bilingual and special education programming are aligned and related to making a difference in improving academic achievement for all students. We are especially interested in receiving proposals that provide clear, convincing data that the program/initiative is effective in raising achievement and closing gaps between students in core academic subjects, such as reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. You may submit more than one program for presentation.

The title and the 75-100 word description should summarize and accurately reflect the content of what you are proposing for the session. As you develop your proposal, think about real and concrete results, what your urban colleagues most want to know, and how your session can be interactive and involve conference attendees in the session.

PRESENTER ELIGIBILITY

The Council asks that all proposals be approved by the appropriate district superintendent and/or college dean in order to be considered for presentation. Please be sure to check the appropriated box on the application form to confirm that the submitted proposal has been approved.

Additionally, we do not allow for-profit consultants, businesses, or organizations to make presentations at the conference. If one of our member districts would like to submit a proposal that speaks to a vendor's product, we will consider the proposal. If such a proposal is accepted, the presentation must be done by a staff member from the district and representatives from the company may not be on the panel.

PRESENTATION FORMAT

The format for presentations is one of concurrent sessions. Each session will include a panel comprised of one or more presenters from different districts or colleges of education or partner organizations presenting on similar topics. Each session will run for approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. **Presenters are to limit formal presentations to approximately 10 minutes.** This will encourage discussion between the panelists and participants and maximize sharing of important ideas and information. All rooms will be arranged in conference-style to facilitate discussion.

ACCEPTANCE NOTIFICATION

The deadline for submitting a proposal is **April 10, 2015**. The receipt of all proposals will be acknowledged by e-mail within a week of submission. All correspondence will be sent to the presenter(s) acknowledged in the submitted proposals. Accepted and declined proposals will be acknowledged via e-mail by June 19, 2015.

STRAND DESCRIPTIONS

Presentations should be designed to help participants:

- Become more knowledgeable about quality programs and practices that promote student achievement
- Develop a deeper understanding of the principles for effective teaching and learning for all students

Priority in selection will be given to proposals that provide clear and convincing data demonstrating that the program/initiative is effective in raising student achievement.

1. **Improving Achievement and Closing Gaps**

This strand seeks proposals about research-based practices and interventions that are having an impact on learning in the core content areas, systemic levers that accelerate academic performance, effectiveness of accountability systems, and practices that can close the significant achievement gaps existing along racial, ethnic, gender, and economic lines.

2. **Urban School Professional Development**

Proposals submitted under this strand might address how different approaches to the recruitment, preparation, induction, and retention of qualified teachers, principals, and school site leaders have impacted student achievement. Of particular interest are proposals addressing methods for evaluating the effectiveness of professional development and individual teachers on student achievement.

3. **Urban School Finance**

Among the key issues that might be addressed in this strand are managing finances to deal with federal, state and local budget cuts, equitable distribution of funding, cost beneficial ways to allocate district resources to boost student achievement, and meeting special education costs.

4. **Urban School Leadership and Governance**

Critical topics that proposals in this strand might address are the recruitment and preparation of personnel for leadership roles, expanding the capacity of building leadership, role of board members, community relationships, and models of effective urban governance and management systems.

5. **Bilingual Education Programming**

Proposals in this strand might include programs that successfully improve student achievement, especially for recent immigrants, older students and long-term ELLs, comprehensive assessment strategies, and the development of curriculum that impact ELL student achievement.

3. **Special Education Programming**

Proposals in this strand might include programs that successfully improve student achievement, especially for students with mental, emotional and physical disabilities, comprehensive assessment strategies, and the development of curriculum that impact special education student achievement.

**Please submit your proposal online at www.cgcs.org
Or complete the attached form and submit by fax, email, or mail by April 10, 2015**

2015 PRESENTATION PROPOSAL FORM

Our urban district, college of education, or non-profit organization would like to make a presentation on ways in which we are improving student achievement through:

- Improving Achievement and Closing Gaps in Urban Schools**
- Urban School Professional Development**
- Urban School Finance**
- Urban School Leadership and Governance**
- Bilingual Programs in Urban Schools**
- Special Education Programs In Urban Schools**
- Other** _____

Title of presentation:

Name and title of person(s) submitting this presentation:

Name of urban school district, college of education, or organization:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Fax Number:

Email Address:

Brief description of presentation (75-100 words):

- By checking this box you have acknowledged that your proposal has been approved by your superintendent or dean.**

**Please submit your proposal online at: www.cgcs.org by April 10, 2015
or return via fax at (202) 393-2400 or
email to: myorkman@cgcs.org
Attention: Michell Yorkman**

**FALL CONFERENCE
2016**

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

60th ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

**Hosted by the
MIAMI DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Miami, FL**

OCTOBER 19 - 23, 2016

CONFERENCE HOTEL:

InterContinental Miami Hotel
100 Chopin Plaza
Miami, FL 33131
(305) 577-1000

**GROUP RATE: \$235/night for Single and Double Occupancy
Plus 13% tax**

InterContinental Miami Hotel is a 4-star hotel with 641 elegant guestrooms and suites, all of which are equipped with the latest technological features including flat panel TVs and hi-speed internet access. A dramatic marble exterior leads into a newly restyled lobby showcasing an eighteen foot Sir Henri Moore Sculpture that soars towards the sky.

The InterContinental Miami is a waterfront property situated on Biscayne Bay. The 103 Club InterContinental rooms with private club lounge on the 29th floor boasts of a breathtaking panoramic views of the city. The hotel's multiple food and beverage options include two outlets: acclaimed Chef Richard Sandoval's Toro Toro Restaurant and Bar which offers Pan Latin steakhouse featuring small sharing plates and Latin spirits in the hotel's interactive lobby lounge, and Olé Restaurant offering a la carte and gourmet breakfast. By the pool is Blue Water and exclusive dining outside Toro Toro kitchen is the Chef's Table 40. Starbucks is also located in the lobby.

The hotel is just 7.5 miles from Miami International Airport, and just minutes away from Port of Miami. It is 1 mile to the Shops of Mary Brickell Village, 1.5 miles to Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, 10 minutes to South Beach, and 5 miles to the Art and Design Districts. It is also walking distance from Miami's most exclusive restaurants, Bayside Marketplace and the American Airlines Arena, home to the Miami Heat.

FALL CONFERENCE 2017

CMSD to host 2017 urban schools conference

CMSD NEWS BUREAU

10/29/2014

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District has been selected to host the [Council of the Great City Schools'](#) annual conference in October 2017.

The Washington, D.C.-based council represents 67 of the nation's larger urban school systems. The conference, which will be held at the new downtown Convention Center, is expected to draw about 1,000 people.

The council announced the selection at the 2014 conference, held last week in Milwaukee.

"This is a big win," District Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon said. "It says a lot about what's going on in our community."

Cleveland last hosted the conference in the 1960s.

1111 Superior Avenue E Cleveland, Ohio 44114 clevelandmetroschools.org

Chief Executive Officer
Eric S. Gordon

Board of Education
Denise W. Link
Board Chair

Louise P. Dempsey
Vice Chair

Ericka Abrams
Anne E. Bingham
Robert M. Heard, Sr.
Shailetha T. Mitchell
Stephanie Moraes
Willetta A. Milam
Lisa Thomas, Ph.D.

Ex Officio Members
Ronald M. Berkman, Ph.D.
Alex Johnson, Ph.D.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools
Suite 702
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Michael:

One of the highlights of the year for us and for our entire board and senior leadership team is our attendance at the Council of the Great City Schools annual conference. After traveling throughout the country each year to enjoy numerous conferences in other great city schools, we can think of no higher honor than to be selected to return the favor as host to our colleagues in 2017.

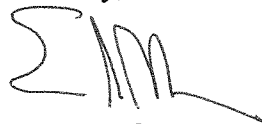
We have put together what we hope will be a persuasive appeal for urban educators and others to travel to the great city of Cleveland, where our city is alive with activities for our colleagues to enjoy.

I hope you will agree that it's time to return to Cleveland to see the transformation of our city school district and the revitalization of our city, especially our lake and vibrant public square that will be the hub of activity for the 2017 conference.

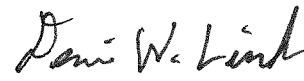
The materials included in our proposal provide only a glimpse of all that Cleveland has to offer to our education colleagues, their staff and their families.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring the 2017 CGCS conference to Cleveland!

Sincerely,



Eric S Gordon
CEO



Denise W. Link
Board Chair

FALL CONFERENCE 2018

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Shanaysha M. Sauls, Ph.D.
*Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners*

Gregory E. Thornton, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

September 15, 2014

Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue
Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004

Members of the Host City Selection Committee:

We welcome the opportunity to submit the enclosed proposal for Baltimore to host the 2017 Annual Fall Conference of the Great City Schools. As a longstanding member of the Council of the Great City Schools, and the winner of the 2010 CUBE Award for Excellence in School Board Governance, Baltimore City Public Schools is uniquely suited to host this annual gathering. Of equal importance, Baltimore is nationally recognized as one of the premier tourist destinations on the East Coast, hosting more than 30 million visitors each year to the city's world famous Inner Harbor.

The Baltimore Convention and Visitors Bureau, in collaboration with Visit Baltimore staff and every level of city government, has the experience and resources to support every aspect of the Council's needs and the commitment to ensure that the Annual Fall Conference is a success. The Baltimore Convention Center boasts 300,000 square feet of contiguous exhibition space and 85,000 square feet of meeting space in 50 meeting rooms, all directly connected to the 750-room Hilton Baltimore. Most important, the Convention Center sits squarely in the middle of Baltimore's Inner Harbor, surrounded by unmatched educational, cultural and entertainment attractions, a wide range of restaurants, and 8,500 additional hotel rooms within easy walking distance.

Baltimore City Public Schools has been recognized for the district's ongoing, progressive commitment to urban education reform, partnership with unions, and our historic program to transform schools and neighborhoods across the city through our \$1.1 billion 21st Century Buildings Plan. At the same time, City Schools has the capacity to assist in the organization of meeting events and provide educational programs of national interest to conference attendees. In summary, Baltimore City Public Schools and the City of Baltimore will collaborate to make the 2017 Annual Fall Conference a memorable, enjoyable, productive gathering for the nation's top urban educators.

Thank you for your serious consideration of our proposal. Please don't hesitate to contact the office of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Shanaysha Sauls, Chair
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners



Gregory E. Thornton, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

**PROSPECTIVE CITIES FOR 2019 ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**

Administrative Offices

VanHoose Education Center
P.O. Box 34020
Louisville, Kentucky 40232-4020
(502) 485-3011

September 4, 2014

Mr. Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Casserly:

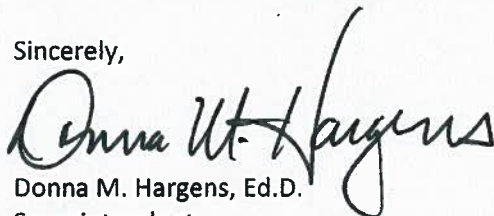
On behalf of the Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) District, I am very excited to submit this proposal to the Council of the Great City Schools to host the 2017, 2018, or 2019 Annual Fall Conference. The attendees will experience our city's unique brand of southern hospitality, spirit, and excitement that has made it one of the top visitor and meeting destinations in the world. From our thriving independent arts and restaurant scene to our world-famous museums and attractions, Louisville is sure to surprise and delight. Partnered with us, we can assure you the Annual Fall Conference will be a huge success!

With JCPS, we fully support the mission of the Council of Great City Schools which states, "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." With more than 14,000 full-time employees including more than 6,400 teachers, we have the capacity to successfully host a national conference. With more than 4,900 business partnerships, and a very engaged, active public education foundation, we are confident that we can garner extensive community support for this event.

Hosting a conference in Louisville provides a great opportunity to share JCPS' journey to becoming the best urban district in the nation, as well as sharing learning and best practices with other large, urban districts around the country. The city of Louisville has many cultural attractions including Churchill Downs, Slugger Museum and Factory, Muhammad Ali Center, Kentucky Center for the Arts, Kentucky Science Center, Waterfront Park, and many more that would be of great interest to conference attendees, as well as their families.

We appreciate the opportunity to share the many great things that make Louisville such a wonderful community and JCPS such a great, urban school district. We look forward to your response to our proposal, and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Donna M. Hargens, Ed.D.
Superintendent

DMH:scf

Diane Porter

Jefferson County Board of Education—District 1
VanHoose Education Center
3332 Newburg Road
P.O. Box 34020
Louisville, Kentucky 40232-4020
(502) 485-3566
porterschoolboard@gmail.com

September 5, 2014

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Casserly:

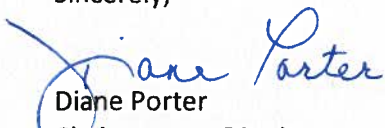
It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the proposal being submitted to the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) by the Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau (LCVB) in collaboration with the Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) District to host the Great City Schools Fall Conference in 2017, 2018, or 2019.

As Chairwoman of the Jefferson County Board of Education, I am excited for the potential opportunity to partner with the Council of Great City Schools to host a conference which focuses on educating the nation's most diverse student body to the highest academic standards and prepare them to contribute to our democracy and the global community. As a large, diverse, urban district, our Board is committed to this same goal as evidenced in our vision, "All JCPS students graduate prepared to reach their full potential and contribute to our society throughout life."

Hosting a conference in Louisville provides a great opportunity to share JCPS' journey to becoming the best urban district in the nation, as well as sharing best practices with other large, urban districts around the country. The city of Louisville has many cultural attractions including Churchill Downs, Ed Hamilton (sculptor) Public Works, Muhammad Ali Center, Kentucky Center for the Arts, Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft, Kentucky Science Center, Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, and many more that would be of great interest to conference attendees, as well as their families. With more than 14,000 full-time employees, JCPS has the staff capable of assisting with this conference.

We fully support the CGCS continuing to lead the effort to meet the challenge of educating all children to prepare them for work and life. We look forward to sharing all the wonderful things in our community and the great things happening at Jefferson County Public Schools.

Sincerely,


Diane Porter
Chairwoman, District 1

DP:scf

COMMUNICATIONS

PRESS RELEASES



Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004
<http://www.cgcs.org>

FOR RELEASE
March 6, 2015

CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427

Urban Schools Coalition Marks Anniversary of *My Brother's Keeper*

Over 60 Major City School Systems Working to Implement Pledge

WASHINGTON -- The Council of the Great City Schools, the nation's primary coalition of large urban public school systems, joined with President Obama and the White House today in marking the first-year anniversary of *My Brother's Keeper*, the Administration's initiative to improve outcomes for the country's males of color.

"This work on behalf of our boys and young men of color continues to be one of President Obama's signature initiatives, and one that the nation's Great City Schools are proud to join," stated Michael Casserly, the Council's executive director.

Since standing with the president last July to pledge to improve a range of educational outcomes for males of color attending the nation's big city public schools, the urban coalition has convened its members to begin working on implementation plans, partnered with both the NBA and the College Board on a series of joint activities, and begun the process of benchmarking its progress over the long-run.

In addition to implementing the work around its pledge, the Great City Schools have also linked up with mayors and other community leaders in their cities, and have held a number of citywide town hall meetings and other forums to ensure broad discussion of and involvement in the critical issues around the joint work. Communities like Long Beach (CA), Albuquerque, Fort Worth, and others have assembled community members and young people to tackle the challenges that President Obama has articulated.

The education of the nation's African American and Hispanic males remains a central priority of our Great City Schools, and the pledge that member school districts in the Council's coalition took entails enhancing early childhood education, improving student achievement, reducing disproportionate suspensions and expulsions, decreasing dropout rates and boosting graduation rates, and other steps.

"The activities that our Great City Schools put into motion will last well beyond this Administration and will be sustained until every one of our students has access to the highest academic standards and attains their full potential," added Casserly. ###



Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004

FOR RELEASE
March 2, 2015

CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427 or hduvall@cgcs.org

Atlanta Public Schools Receives National Recognition For ‘Excellence in Financial Management’

WASHINGTON, March 2 – The Council of the Great City Schools today recognizes the Atlanta Public Schools for attaining the highest standards in financial management, accountability and fiscal control.

The coalition of the nation's big-city school systems presented the **Award for Excellence in Financial Management** to the Atlanta school system for enhancing, safeguarding, and protecting the financial integrity of the district.

This is only the fourth time since the Council initiated the award in 2008 that it has honored a school district with its highest national award for sound financial management. The last award was given to the Miami-Dade County Schools in 2012, with the Houston Independent School District and Florida’s Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale receiving the top financial honor earlier.

“This is a significant milestone for the Atlanta Public Schools,” Council Executive Director Michael Casserly said, honoring the school board, superintendent, chief financial officer and staff for providing exemplary financial management and stewardship of taxpayer dollars. “Citizens and taxpayers in Atlanta should take pride in how well the city’s public schools are managing their resources. Few city school systems can match Atlanta on this front.”

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.

#



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<http://www.cgcs.org>

FOR RELEASE
February. 19, 2015

CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427

Proposal Slashes Federal Funding to Urban Schools

WASHINGTON, Feb. 19 -- The nation's urban public schools stand to lose some \$615 million in federal Title I aid under a congressional proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) according to an analysis conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools.

The losses come from a proposal approved by the House Education and Workforce Committee in H.R. 5 on February 11, 2015. The provision, called portability, would effectively redirect Title I funds for disadvantaged students away from some of the nation's poorest inner-city schools and into more affluent schools and neighborhoods.

The portability provision has two primary effects:

- It would transfer money from school districts with high concentrations of poor children to school districts that are more well off, and
- It would transfer money within a school district from the poorest schools to more affluent schools.

Coupled with the repeal of the current 40 percent poverty threshold for using Title I funds school-wide – thereby allowing Title I allocations to benefit any student within a school – H.R. 5 would diminish the support intended to offset the impact of concentrations of poverty on learning.

The losses could result in a reduction of nearly 7,000 teaching positions across the nation's urban schools, cutbacks in professional development and instructional coaching, less resources for textbooks and instructional materials, a loss of after-school and summer programs, and a decline in counseling and other student supports for urban schoolchildren.

“This provision in H.R. 5 would be a tragic reallocation of scarce federal resources away from the schools and students with the greatest needs,” said Michael Casserly, Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools. “This would dilute the original federal intention of marshalling resources to bolster educational opportunity for poor students.”

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the proposal by the end of February. This proposal would negatively impact nearly all urban school districts and thousands of other high-poverty school districts nationwide. (See attached table for local impact on individual Great City School Districts.) ###

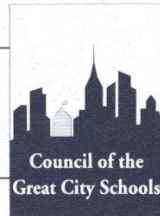
Impact of H.R. 5 Portability Provision on the Great City Schools

Great City School District	Title I Allocation Current Law	Title I Allocation HR 5 - Portability	Difference
Albuquerque Public Schools	\$30,697,171	\$28,685,374	-\$2,011,797
Anchorage School District	\$13,523,559	\$12,452,152	-\$1,071,407
Atlanta City School District	\$33,188,962	\$23,290,422	-\$9,898,540
Austin Independent School District	\$33,226,314	\$31,301,138	-\$1,925,176
Baltimore City Public Schools	\$52,064,995	\$46,368,631	-\$5,696,364
Birmingham City School District	\$15,591,455	\$14,106,799	-\$1,484,657
Boston School District	\$37,639,911	\$29,234,038	-\$8,405,872
Bridgeport School District	\$11,441,229	\$9,903,047	-\$1,538,182
Broward County School District	\$66,751,605	\$62,612,037	-\$4,139,568
Buffalo City School District	\$28,570,487	\$26,497,288	-\$2,073,199
Charleston County School District	\$16,979,124	\$15,600,944	-\$1,378,179
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	\$41,845,349	\$37,635,255	-\$4,210,094
Chicago Public School District 299	\$273,617,947	\$209,415,573	-\$64,202,374
Cincinnati City School District	\$33,812,572	\$28,719,591	-\$5,092,981
Clark County School District	\$90,241,415	\$85,704,683	-\$4,536,732
Cleveland Municipal School District	\$54,694,252	\$40,586,424	-\$14,107,828
Columbus City School District	\$47,071,881	\$35,244,165	-\$11,827,716
Dallas Independent School District	\$88,446,062	\$75,404,376	-\$13,041,686
Dayton City School District	\$15,829,977	\$13,683,992	-\$2,145,985
Denver County School District 1	\$32,784,374	\$26,833,189	-\$5,951,186
Des Moines Independent Community Schools	\$11,465,619	\$9,316,707	-\$2,148,912
Detroit City School District	\$147,012,384	\$96,417,095	-\$50,595,290
District of Columbia Public Schools *	\$43,211,400	NA	NA
Duval County School District	\$39,898,666	\$39,517,779	-\$380,887
East Baton Rouge Parish School District	\$26,429,490	\$24,869,969	-\$1,559,521
El Paso Independent School District	\$28,008,119	\$21,971,273	-\$6,036,846
Fort Worth Independent School District	\$36,111,816	\$33,420,526	-\$2,691,290
Fresno Unified School District	\$46,099,002	\$41,185,074	-\$4,913,929
Guilford County Schools	\$22,551,131	\$20,887,072	-\$1,664,060
Hawaii Department of Education *	\$53,208,513	NA	NA
Hillsborough County School District	\$62,253,863	\$58,659,705	-\$3,594,158
Houston Independent School District	\$99,119,020	\$82,050,263	-\$17,068,757
Indianapolis Public Schools	\$32,447,175	\$25,297,095	-\$7,150,080
Jackson Public School District	\$15,704,764	\$15,248,092	-\$456,672
Jefferson County School District	\$41,864,120	\$35,545,131	-\$6,318,989
Kansas City School District	\$14,501,879	\$12,937,576	-\$1,564,303

Great City School District	Title I Allocation Current Law	Title I Allocation HR 5 - Portability	Difference
Long Beach Unified School District	\$28,390,652	\$26,015,593	-\$2,375,059
Los Angeles Unified School District	\$338,728,729	\$258,056,323	-\$80,672,406
Miami-Dade County School District	\$137,444,611	\$124,851,568	-\$12,593,042
Milwaukee School District	\$75,042,483	\$57,999,510	-\$17,042,974
Minneapolis Public School District	\$23,493,061	\$18,138,307	-\$5,354,754
Nashville-Davidson County School District	\$31,397,369	\$27,899,271	-\$3,498,098
New Orleans Parish School District	\$37,170,692	\$29,849,640	-\$7,321,052
New York City School District	\$716,822,285	\$621,406,823	-\$95,415,462
Newark City School District	\$34,394,644	\$26,505,966	-\$7,888,678
Norfolk City Public Schools	\$12,926,969	\$11,095,392	-\$1,831,576
Oakland Unified School District	\$18,704,916	\$17,767,936	-\$936,980
Oklahoma City Public Schools	\$23,036,569	\$19,647,373	-\$3,389,196
Omaha Public Schools	\$25,435,075	\$20,546,331	-\$4,888,744
Orange County School District	\$60,620,268	\$57,869,238	-\$2,751,029
Palm Beach County School District	\$47,183,722	\$45,869,226	-\$1,314,496
Philadelphia City School District	\$178,502,946	\$133,941,326	-\$44,561,620
Pittsburgh School District	\$17,852,673	\$15,325,838	-\$2,526,835
Portland School District 1J	\$12,639,617	\$11,098,611	-\$1,541,006
Providence School District	\$20,525,868	\$16,973,995	-\$3,551,873
Richmond City Public Schools	\$16,873,882	\$11,778,564	-\$5,095,318
Rochester City School District	\$23,889,615	\$23,451,472	-\$438,143
Sacramento City Unified School District	\$20,770,803	\$19,423,010	-\$1,347,793
San Diego City Unified School District	\$40,678,338	\$36,543,549	-\$4,134,789
San Francisco Unified School District	\$14,003,322	\$13,672,930	-\$330,392
Santa Ana Unified School District	\$18,601,943	\$17,731,354	-\$870,590
Seattle School District	\$11,252,405	\$9,984,293	-\$1,268,113
Shelby County School District	\$62,304,515	\$53,063,071	-\$9,241,444
St. Louis City School District	\$30,343,318	\$21,245,846	-\$9,097,472
St. Paul Public School District	\$22,743,278	\$17,537,090	-\$5,206,188
Toledo City School District	\$24,411,873	\$21,587,478	-\$2,824,395
Wichita Unified School District 259	\$23,923,674	\$18,940,236	-\$4,983,438

Council of the Great City Schools - TOTAL LOSS: -\$615,176,172

* Estimates unavailable for statewide Local Educational Agencies



Council of the Great City Schools

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004

FOR RELEASE
January 30, 2015

CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427 or hduvall@cgcs.org

Urban Schools Show Progress in Federal Program To Turn Around Low-Achieving Schools

WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 – About 70 percent of low-achieving urban schools that have received federal School Improvement Grants (SIG) to spur improvement have shown progress over the past three years, according to a detailed new study by the Council of the Great City Schools.

The study – *School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America’s Great City Schools* – found that SIG-award schools increased the numbers of students at or above Proficient levels of attainment on state assessments in reading and math. SIG-award schools in urban districts also demonstrated significant reductions in the numbers of students in the below-Basic level of performance in both subjects.

In addition, the new study shows that urban high schools receiving SIG funds were able to improve their ability to move students from grade to grade.

However, performance in SIG elementary schools continued to be low even after three years of intervention and support, and not all schools receiving SIG funding improved.

Analyzing data across states for grades three through eight in both math and reading, the study also found that gaps in the percentages of students scoring at or above Proficient between SIG-award schools and peer schools that did not receive grants narrowed steadily over the first two years of the grants, but then leveled off in the third year.

“The results of this study indicate that urban schools have made significant improvements with the federal funds they received through the School Improvement Grants, although they have much further to go,” says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. “The gains suggest that the federal government should retain its targeted and dedicated efforts to improve the nation’s lowest performing schools.”

The report follows another study the Council released in 2012 that showed urban school districts were mounting an unprecedented number of school turnaround efforts with funds from the revamped federal School Improvement Grant program that complemented their ongoing systemwide reform efforts.

In the past three years, the SIG program and the funding behind it “have provided an important opportunity for districts to redesign their support structures for struggling schools; recruit effective teachers and principals; change the climate and expectations for students in these buildings; and engage parents and the community,” says the new report.

School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America’s Great City Schools identifies several features that appeared to propel successful SIG implementation efforts, including:

- A coherent and coordinated district plan for supporting and turning around the lowest-performing schools;
- Interventions focused on instructional improvements with high-quality programming and materials;
- Coordination and integration of instructional interventions and strategies;
- Professional development that built staff instructional capacity;
- Principals who were invested in a vision for improvement and conveyed these priorities to teachers, students, and the community;
- Principals who were given the flexibility to make staff changes or remove ineffective teachers and staff; and
- The ability to leverage data to identify the specific academic needs of struggling students, determine needs for professional development, and decide on intervention strategies.

The unprecedented study also examines reasons behind why some SIG schools did not improve.

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The Council of the Great City Schools is the primary coalition of the nation’s largest urban public school systems. It represents 67 big-city school districts.



Council of the Great City Schools

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004

FOR RELEASE
November 6, 2014CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427

Urban School Superintendents Tenure Slips, Says New Report

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6 – Perhaps one of the toughest jobs in America, the urban school superintendent must unite parents, educators, school boards, as well as business and community leaders around a clear vision to effectively educate inner-city schoolchildren.

Although they run corporation-size operations that are in the business of providing instruction to a disproportionately large number of economically disadvantaged and minority students, today's urban school superintendents are staying in their posts longer than 10 years ago but somewhat shorter than 2010.

The average tenure of current superintendents leading the nation's largest urban public school districts gradually increased from 2.8 years in 2003 to 3.6 years in 2010, but dipped to 3.2 years in 2014, according to a new survey by the Council of the Great City Schools, [*Urban Indicator -- Urban School Superintendents: Characteristics, Tenure and Salary.*](#)

"Urban school superintendents were leading their districts for longer periods of time, but significant turnover this year brought the average tenure down," stressed Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. "This continued churn makes it harder for urban school systems to maintain and accelerate the positive academic momentum that they have created over the last several years."

Nonetheless, several big-city school superintendents have been at the helm for nearly or longer than 10 years, including Christopher Steinhauser of California's Long Beach Unified School District (12 years), MaryEllen Elia of Florida's Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa (nine years), Michael Hanson of California's Fresno Unified School District (9 years) and Carole Smith of Oregon's Portland Public Schools (seven years).

At the same time, urban school districts have lost a number of leaders this year, including superintendents in Albuquerque, Birmingham, Charlotte, and Los Angeles.

The new report is the Council's eighth survey in a series of *Urban Indicator* publications. Highlights of the 10-page report include the demographics of urban school superintendents, showing approximately 45 percent white, 42 percent black and 9 percent Hispanic, as well as 70 percent men and 28 percent women in 2014. Data are also given on previous work experience, accountability, salaries, benefits and bonuses.

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News...News...



News...News...

Council of the Great City Schools

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE

October 23, 2014 (9 p.m., Central)

CONTACT: Henry Duvall

(202) 393-2427 or hduvall@cgs.org

Houston Schools Superintendent Named Urban Educator of the Year

MILWAUKEE, Oct. 23 – Superintendent Terry Grier of the Houston Independent School District tonight won 2014 Urban Educator of the Year honors at the Council of the Great City Schools’ 58th Annual Fall Conference here.

Five big-city school superintendents competed for the nation’s highest honor for urban education leadership, recognizing in alternating years an outstanding superintendent and school board member from 67 of the largest urban school systems in the country.

Urban school leaders recognized Superintendent Grier during the Council’s 25th Annual “Urban Educator of the Year” award banquet, where he received the prestigious Green-Garner Award in memory of two urban school leaders.

Sponsored by the Washington, D.C.-based Council, Aramark K-12 Education and Voyager Sopris Learning companies, the top prize is named for Richard R. Green, the first African American chancellor of the New York City school system, and businessman Edward Garner, who had served on the Denver school board,

Leading the nation’s seventh largest school district since 2009, Dr. Grier is credited with accelerating academic gains to produce a higher graduation rate, especially among African American and Hispanic students, and substantially decreasing the student dropout rate.

His efforts to improve student access to Advanced Placement coursework have paid dividends in a rising number of students participating in AP exams and earning high marks. Also, student participation in the SAT college-entrance exam has jumped significantly.

“Superintendent Terry Grier knows how to confront challenges in urban education, and has the commitment, experience and energy to overcome the odds to provide a quality education for students,” says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly.

As the recipient of this year’s Green-Garner Award, Dr. Grier receives a \$10,000 college scholarship to present to a student.

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STATEMENTS

News...News...



News...News...

Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004
<http://www.cgcs.org>

FOR RELEASE
March 2, 2015

CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427

**Statement by Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools
On the
Passing of Beverly Hall**

On behalf of the Council of the Great City Schools and its member urban school districts, I offer my profound condolences on the passing today of former Atlanta Superintendent Beverly Hall.

Her husband, Luis, her family and many friends, and the extraordinary number of colleagues whose lives she touched have my deepest sympathies.

Beverly Hall was an extraordinary person. An educator of the first rank. A mentor to many. A role model to thousands. And a friend to legions of others across the nation. She was deeply loved by those who knew her and respected for her intellect, her integrity, her passion for children, and her commitment to public education.

I first met Beverly when she was in New York decades ago, and consider myself lucky to have been a comrade in arms over these many years.

To say that she will leave a lasting legacy on behalf of the nation's urban schoolchildren is to state the obvious. Millions of children across the country benefitted from the work she did and the lessons she taught.

Here in Atlanta, Beverly Hall led the public schools on one of the most substantial and important improvement efforts any city in the country has ever seen. To this day, the gains she garnered on the tamper-proof National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and math are unmatched anywhere else in the nation.

I was proud that she was a long-standing member of the Executive Committee of the Council of the Great City Schools and that she received our highest honor, the Richard R. Green Award, the year our organization celebrated its 50th Anniversary—2006.

She was selected by her colleagues across the country for her commitment to excellence and equity for every child, a beacon from which she never wavered.

Few people will ever match her courage or energy. If you ever watched her around children, you knew she was an educator's educator.

Today, Atlanta lost one of its giants. Urban public education has lost one of its great stalwarts. All of us lost one of the best friends anyone could ever have. And America's children lost one of their truest champions.

#



Council of the Great City Schools
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<http://www.cgcs.org>

FOR RELEASE
December 3, 2014

CONTACT: Henry Duvall
(202) 393-2427

**Statement by Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools**

**Reaffirming Pledge on Males of Color in the Wake of the Ferguson
And Cleveland Tragedies**

WASHINGTON -- The Council of the Great City Schools, the nation's premier coalition of large urban public school systems, stands in solidarity with President Obama and his call for action, fairness, and understanding in the wake of the recent Ferguson grand jury ruling and the Cleveland incident.

On the surface, the tragic events in Ferguson and Cleveland concerned the police and the local communities. But ultimately, these are cases about how America's institutions, including our schools, respect the rights, well-being and futures of all our young people. This broader reading of Ferguson and Cleveland extends to how our schools define and mete out justice and ensure that all students have access to the highest standards and opportunities.

Therefore, the Council and its member urban school systems recommit themselves to the pledge on males of color we took alongside the president earlier this summer to boost academic outcomes, reduce disproportionate suspensions and expulsions, and improve graduation rates for all our urban children.

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ARTICLES

Fresno Bee

Poor children in Fresno would lose funds under House education proposal

By Barbara Anderson

The Fresno Bee February 23, 2015

[Fresno Unified](#) officials said Friday the district could lose \$5 million to help educate the most disadvantaged children under a proposal approved by a House education committee.

The proposal would redirect Title 1 funds for poor and disadvantaged students away from the nation's poorest inner-city schools, including Fresno Unified, said Ruth Quinto, deputy superintendent and chief financial officer for the district.

Under the proposal approved by the [House Education and Workforce Committee in H.R. 5](#), funds would be transferred from school districts with high concentrations of at-risk students to school districts and schools that do not serve as many disadvantaged children, Quinto said. Nearly 85% of Fresno Unified students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches because of their families' low income.

Fresno Unified this year received \$40 million in Title 1 funds. Under the proposal, approved by the education committee on Feb. 11, the district would lose about \$5 million, Quinto said. Nationwide, schools stand to lose about \$615 million.

Title 1 funds are used to pay for school instructional coaches to help teachers improve, for summer school and for classroom aides, among other programs, Quinto said. Fresno Unified has allocated about \$8 million to pay for programs that are chosen by school site councils (teachers, parents and administrators) at high-risk schools. "They get to direct those funds and they get to say what they think is most important to improve student achievement," she said.

"Every dollar in resources is precious for our students," Quinto said, "but the resources contemplated for reduction in this case are those that serve students who live in disadvantaged circumstances, so we are very concerned."

Others share her concerns: "This provision in H.R. 5 would be a tragic reallocation of scarce federal resources away from the schools and students with the greatest needs," said Michael Casserly, executive director of the [Council of the Great City Schools](#). "This would dilute the original federal intention of marshaling resources to bolster educational opportunity for poor students."

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the proposal by the end of February.

The National Law Review

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization on The House Floor This Week

Monday, February 23, 2015

The education community continues to analyze H.R. 5, the Student Success Act, which the House Education and the Workforce Committee approved and reported to the House prior to the Congressional recess. Echoing the White House **report** criticizing H.R. 5 released last week, an **estimate** published by the **Council of the Great City Schools** also described the negative effect H.R. 5's Title I portability measures would have on school districts.

In response to the White House's report, Chairman John Kline (R-MN) accused the White House of using "scare tactics and budget gimmicks to kill K-12 education reform." Rep. Kline believes his legislation provides states and families with greater flexibility to meet student needs.

The House Committee on Rules recently announced that it will meet next week to grant a rule that could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 5. The announcement also stated that amendments to H.R. 5 are due to the committee by Monday afternoon. The bill will be brought to the floor for debate on Wednesday and Thursday and a final vote is scheduled for Friday.

Politico

New estimate: Public school choice plan would cost urban districts \$615 million

2/19/15 6:15 PM EST

The Council of the Great City Schools says the House update to No Child Left Behind would strip urban school districts of [\\$615 million](#) because of its provision allowing Title I funds to follow students to the public schools of their choice.

Title I portability "would be a tragic reallocation of scarce federal resources away from the schools and students with the greatest needs," said Michael Casserly, executive director of the [Council of the Great City Schools](#).

This is the third estimate of the provision's effects in recent weeks: [The White House](#) and the [Center for American Progress](#) each ran their own numbers on Title I portability.

Estimates from the Council of the Great City Schools are similar. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District would lose \$80.7 million under the CGCS estimate, \$80.6 million under the White House estimate and \$75.1 million under the CAP estimate if Title I portability was implemented.

Supporters of the policy see it as a potentially powerful school choice tool.

The House's NCLB bill "offers states and families new opportunities to rescue children from failing schools. Encouraging good schools to serve more low-income students is the right thing to do," House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline said recently in response to criticism from the White House. The House is expected to take up the bill next week.

— *Maggie Severns*

Associated Press

Testy Over Testing: More Students Snub Standardized Exams

PHILADELPHIA — Feb 20, 2015, 9:56 AM ET

By KATHY MATHESON Associated Press

When it comes to standardized tests, parents across the country are (a) concerned; (b) demanding change; (c) pulling tens of thousands of children out of the exams; or (d) making themselves heard at the top levels of government.

Answer: all of the above.

The backlash is kicking into high gear this spring as millions of students start taking new, more rigorous exams aligned with Common Core standards. Officials say the high-stakes assessments are crucial to evaluating student progress and competitiveness.

But a growing cohort of parents, students and teachers are rebelling against what they consider a toxic culture of testing. And officials, including U.S. Education Secretary **Arne Duncan**, have begun to listen as the grassroots movement engineers a series of high-profile rebuffs:

— Thousands of Colorado high school seniors walked out on new state-mandated science and social studies tests last fall.

— An Ohio middle school teacher published a letter calling state officials "bullies" for printing a pamphlet that warned of wide-ranging consequences if students sit out exams.

— At least 93 students at a single Philadelphia middle school are declining upcoming tests in a city that saw only 20 students districtwide sit out the exams last year.

The polite phrase for the burgeoning movement is "opt out." But testing opponent Morna McDermott, a Baltimore-area mother of two, puts it more plainly: It's a testing refusal movement — or a boycott.

"We're not doing this willy-nilly because we're a bunch of disgruntled soccer moms," said McDermott, who belongs to the national United Opt Out movement and refuses to let her children participate in Maryland's assessments. "This policy is harmful to our society, to our schools, to our teachers and to our children."

Federal law requires states to test students annually in grades three through eight and once in high school. But schools and districts have layered on their own assessments, leading students to take an average of 113 standardized tests over the course of their K-12 careers, according to preliminary research by the **Council of the Great City Schools**, a Washington-based organization representing large urban districts.

Test results measure student achievement but also can be used in teacher evaluations, overall school report cards and as high school graduation requirements. Opponents say the exams distract from real learning, put added stress on students and staff, waste resources and — especially in poor urban districts, like Philadelphia — contribute to the privatization of public education. Schools that score badly are sometimes turned over to management companies or become charter schools.

Some anti-testers would prefer an exam that samples random students to offer a snapshot without high stakes attached. Others support rating schools through an accreditation process like that used by colleges and universities. Accreditation includes site visits, in-depth analysis and a detailed action plan.

Pennsylvania saw 1,064 students statewide opt out of required math tests last year, a tiny percentage of the 803,000 exams given, but a nearly fivefold increase from 2011, according to the state Education Department.

In New York, about 67,000 students — almost 5 percent — sat out the statewide math test taken by 1.1 million of their peers last year.

Roll Call

The Numerous Tests of No Child Left Behind

- By [Carolyn Phenicie](#)
- Roll Call Staff
- Feb. 9, 2015, 12:33 p.m.

Much of the discontent with the 2001 education law known as No Child Left Behind has stemmed from the rising number of standardized tests children must take every year.

Although the federal government takes much of the blame for this increase, federal law only mandates 17 tests: in reading and math annually in third through eighth grades and once in high school, and in science one time each in elementary, middle and high school.

The **Council of Great City Schools** which represents large urban districts, and the Council of Chief State School Officers, which represents state education secretaries, this fall agreed to review and, if necessary, re-evaluate the number of tests given to students each year.

Research from the city schools group found:

Students in large urban districts take an average of 113 tests over their school careers, and those tests are given for 23 separate purposes.

Eleventh grade is the most heavily tested, taking up 27 days without counting college entrance tests such as the SAT or final tests in Advanced Placement classes.

Eighth graders sit for an average of five days of testing just for state- and locally mandated end-of-course exams.

More tests have been added over the years but they are not providing much in the way of new data.

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Education Week

Did Billions of Dollars in School Turnaround Aid Help?

By [Alyson Klein](#) on January 30, 2015

The U.S. Department of Education has pumped more than \$5 billion into a supercharged version of the School Improvement Grant program that gave grants of up to \$2 million to the lowest-performing schools in the country to try out dramatic turnaround strategies (like turning themselves into charters, or getting rid of half their staff).

Now top Republicans want to get rid of the program altogether in a rewrite of the No Child Left Behind Act currently working its way through Congress. **Under a draft bill introduced by Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn.**, states could direct a portion of their federal funds to turnarounds, if they want to. That would essentially take the feds entirely out of the turnaround equation.

So is that a good idea? Or is SIG working?

A **big report** released Friday by the **Council of the Great City Schools**, which represents urban districts, tries to get at that question. The report took a look at the progress of SIG schools from the 2009-10 school year (the year before schools got their grants) to the 2012-13 school year (when the first schools that entered the revamped program exited it).

The bottom line: 70 percent of schools showed some progress. That's **roughly consistent with the Education Department's own (really flawed)** data on the program, which showed that two-thirds of SIG schools got better, while another third actually slid backward.

The CGCS data has some key differences from the department's, though. For one thing, it shows how schools that actually got the grants performed compared to other schools in the same district that were also eligible for the funding, but didn't get selected, and schools that weren't eligible to begin with. That gets at one of a **number of key, unanswered questions** in the original SIG data.

Overall, SIG schools started off behind the other two groups, but started to close the gaps in the first year of the grants, when presumably a lot of change was happening very quickly. Then things leveled off.

It's worth pointing out another key difference here between the department's data and the council's. Both looked at annual test data in grades 3 through 8. And the department continued to look at annual tests for high school performance.

The council didn't look at the annual high school test data. Instead, it looked at whether high schoolers stayed in school and advanced to the next grade. That's because states don't all necessarily test high schoolers in the same grade. (Sometimes it's in 10th, sometimes it's 11th, and sometimes it's senior year.) The council found that urban high schools that got SIG money showed improvement when it came to the ability to advance students from grade to grade.

On the other hand, when actual test scores were used, the picture looked somewhat different. SIG elementary schools still had low achievement compared to their non-SIG peers even after years of interventions.

Other interesting findings:

- The council couldn't find any major differences in terms of student achievement between schools that used the most-popular SIG model, known as "transformation," (which required teacher performance pay, extended learning time, and an intense focus on data to improve student outcomes), and the second-most-popular model, "turnaround," (which called for getting rid of half a school's staff). Both models required schools to get rid of their principals if that person had been on the job more than three years.

- SIG schools were more likely to get better when the emphasis was on improving instruction, not making sure all the i's were dotted and t's were crossed in grant compliance. But SIG schools didn't always partner with folks who could help improve instruction. For instance, the report says, sometimes schools brought in groups that don't really specialize in instruction, to help with turnaround work, including City Year, Communities in Schools, and the Urban League.

"These are fine groups that are often capable of providing much-needed wraparound and other community supports, but are not always capable of boosting instructional capacity," the report says. "Sometimes more emphasis was put on these groups than on groups or strategies that could enhance academic results."

Losing the grant funding has been a big deal for SIG schools. Plus a lot of the collaboration between the state, the district, and the school that began during the grant implementation started to fizzle.

So what does this mean for the program's (precarious) future?

SIG funding helped, overall, said Michael Casserly, the executive director of the Council. But it wasn't the models, for the most part. It was the money.

"We think having a dedicated pool of money that specifically targets the lowest-performing schools and the schools in need of turnaround [is preferable] to turning this over solely to the states," he said. In the past, when states had a freer hand over turnaround money, "it wasn't always clear to us that the states provided clear and consistent enough direction to the turnaround schools to make this a going venture."

Plus, without a dedicated pot of money for turnarounds, there's likely to be less data collection to show which strategies are actually effective.

For what it's worth, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne had nice things to say about the report. It "offers valuable insights on what works," he said.

Politico

Report: SIG grants for urban schools produce some gains, but results mixed

1/30/15 12:32 PM EST

About 70 percent of low-achieving urban schools that received School Improvement Grants made gains to varying degrees over a three-year period, but other SIG schools saw no improvement at all.

The findings are detailed in [a study](#) released today by the **Council of the Great City Schools**, which looked at student performance in grades three through eight for CGCS schools that received grants between 2009-10 and 2012-13.

The study finds that achievement gaps between some SIG schools and other schools narrowed during the first two years of the grants, but progress sometimes stalled in the third year.

The number of students performing at below basic levels improved faster in SIG-awarded schools, the study also finds. In math, for example, the percentage of 'below basic' students dropped at the SIG schools from about 42 percent to 32 percent between 2009-10 and 2012-13. Improvement was much less significant in schools that were eligible for the grants but didn't receive one and in non-eligible schools.

Still, the gains made by SIG schools varied. Between 2009-10 and 2012-13, about 27 percent of SIG schools saw no improvement in math proficiency rates. Fifteen percent made small gains, 12 percent improved by 5 to 10 percentage points and 46 percent improved by 10 percentage points or more.

The SIG program has historically produced mixed results and in November 2013, Education Secretary Arne Duncan [called progress](#) "incremental."

CGCS notes that its study was hampered by poor-quality data. The group collected data from state education department websites, laying bare the inconsistencies across reporting systems. The group wasn't able to account for percentages of student poverty, English language learners or other student demographics because they weren't consistently reported by states on each school, for example.

"This is unfortunate because federal policymakers are left without a clear and unambiguous picture of whether this major investment in turning around the nation's lowest-performing schools worked as intended," the study says. "Worse, it leaves advocates both for and against the program to argue their positions without the evidence one needs to decide who is correct."

CGCS wasn't able to determine why some schools made progress and others did not. And there's no telling whether it was more effective for schools to use the transformation model, where schools replace the principal and overhaul principal and teacher evaluations, or the turnaround model, where schools implement a completely new governance structure by replacing the principal and at least half of the staff.

That's significant because the Education Department capped the number of schools that could use the transformation model, viewing it as less rigorous, the study says.

"There was no way for us to attribute gains or lack thereof to any single strategy," the study notes. "There often appeared to be a mix of explanations."

In interviews, CGCS sometimes found school- and community-level disorganization or resistance to turnaround efforts. In one district, there were simply "too many turnaround strategies, consultants, state teams, and others who significantly hampered a coherent approach to the reforms." In successful schools and districts, a coherent strategy at the state and local level was key, the study notes.

Also crucial for schools and districts that made gains: Getting the right leadership and staff in place, increasing learning time, boosting school climate and high-quality professional development.

Education Week

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Urban Districts Pledge Progress for Boys of Color

Blacks, Latinos main focus

By Denisa R. Superville

Leaders in some of the nation's big-city school districts say they have new momentum—created by attention from President Barack Obama—to tackle one of the most vexing problems in urban schools: improving academic outcomes for African-American and Latino boys.

But despite the president's high-profile call for action to improve the lives of boys of color in his "My Brother's Keeper" initiative, doing so remains a monumental task for educators. There are no new federal funds to bring to bear, nor is there certainty that the current national focus on the well-being of minority boys will outlast the Obama administration.

Still, 62 big-city school systems—61 of them members of the Washington-based **Council of the Great City Schools**—joined the White House initiative this past summer, with a pledge to ramp up their efforts to steer boys of color to higher achievement, better graduation rates, and more successful lives. In the months since, district leaders from Long Beach, Calif., to Anchorage have been reassessing existing programs, partnering with local businesses and governments, and calling for honest conversations about the role race plays in their policies and practices.

While many of the strategies under way are not necessarily novel, district leaders said the collective impact of dozens of school systems working to improve achievement for boys of color holds promise.

Pledging Support for Boys of Color

Dozens of big-city school districts have committed to a range of strategies aimed at boosting the academic success of African-American, Latino, and Native American boys. The pledge they issued this summer calls for the 62 districts to:

- Implement strategies in early and middle grades to increase the pipeline of minority boys who are on track to do well in high school;
- Keep data, establish protocols, and monitor the progress of boys of color and other students to facilitate early interventions when needed;
- Use proven approaches to cut absentee rates—especially chronic absenteeism;
- Develop retention initiatives to keep males of color in school and reduce disproportionate suspensions and expulsions;
- Increase participation rates in Advanced Placement, honors, and gifted programs;

- Encourage teacher-preparation programs to use curricula that address the academic, social, and cultural needs of males of color and keep data on how their teachers perform with students of color;
- Work to transform high schools with chronically low graduation rates for boys of color, and provide literacy and other engagement initiatives for parents;
- Reduce the number of minority boys in special education classes;
- Improve supports for students to complete college financial aid applications and increase the number of students who do so;
- Spearhead a broader discussion about race, language, and culture in the districts.

SOURCE: Council of the Great City Schools

"It's not just one district that's moving on its own," said Felton Williams, a member of the Long Beach school board. "They are moving as part of a collective whole. The difference with what you're seeing now is synergy. Everybody is rowing the boat in the same direction."

District Strategies

The Toledo, Ohio, school district, for example, has made its pledge to close the academic achievement gap between minority boys and other students part of its official policy manual. Minneapolis hired an achievement officer who is responsible for developing programs and strategies to chip away at the achievement gap in that district.

And before President Obama called improving the lives of young men of color a "moral issue for our country," when he announced "My Brother's Keeper," the Dayton, Ohio, district had already begun its program to do just that.

The new compact calls for districts to increase the number of minority boys who are succeeding both academically and socially; develop early-intervention strategies; increase graduation rates; reduce absenteeism; cut disproportionate suspension and disciplinary rates; and increase participation in Advanced Placement, honors, and gifted classes.

At the council's annual conference in Milwaukee late last month, district leaders used a symposium that focused exclusively on the achievement gap for boys of color to discuss their own strategies, swap ideas, and get advice on how to improve efforts.

The council's own analysis of scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress is one measure of the wide disparity in performance between minority boys and their white peers.

In 4th grade reading, for example, the mean score for black and Latino boys in urban districts was significantly lower than for white students—with African-American boys' scores flatlined at 200 (out of a possible 500 points) since 2009. For white 4th graders, the mean score didn't budge much since 2009 either, but was still higher at 229 in 2013. Michael D. Casserly, the council's executive director, said his team will collect the districts' detailed plans for improving achievement for minority boys and help fine-tune them.

"We have developed a set of statistical indicators on which we will hold ourselves accountable for whether or not the work that we do actually improves performance for African-American and Hispanic males," Mr. Casserly said.

That will include collecting data from the districts on key measures such as 3rd grade reading proficiency, attendance, suspension rates, and course-completion rates, said Raymond C. Hart, the council's research director.

Mr. Casserly urged the group's members to keep their commitment. He is responsible for reporting to the White House on their progress.

But Andy Smarick, a partner at the Washington-based Bellwether Education Partners, called the strategies a "rehash" of earlier attempts that have failed to improve urban schools' performance.

"These efforts are not enough, and I just get frustrated that we continue to play small ball when so many lives are at stake," Mr. Smarick said.

The districts that are forging ahead have reported some successes with previous efforts, but acknowledge they still have work to do. Chief among their challenges: paying for intervention programs and asking school personnel to confront possible personal biases.

Lasting Impacts?

Some districts, like the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system in North Carolina, have set up centers where suspended students can take classes. In the Norfolk, Va., district, high schools have graduation coaches who monitor attendance and course data, enroll students in credit recovery programs, and knock on doors to find out why students aren't coming to school. And the Toledo district formed an ACT task force, extended the school day for junior high school students who were taking classes to prepare for the ACT college entrance exam, and petitioned to have their schools serve as testing centers.

San Francisco's school district uses a blind review process for admission to special education services that strips the applications of students' names, ethnicity, and grade level—a strategy that Superintendent Richard Carranza said is helping drive down disproportionate rates of minority boys in special education.

But there is skepticism about the lasting impacts of some initiatives. Van Henri White, the president of the school board in Rochester, N.Y., said many worthy plans are under way, but he worries about maintaining them given the high turnover in urban school leadership. Further, he said, too many strategies leave out parents.

"If we are going to successfully build that bridge, it has to be properly anchored with teachers and educators on one end and parents on the other," Mr. White said. "Otherwise, you are not going to close that gap."

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Education Week

Houston Superintendent Wins Urban Educator of the Year Award

By Denisa R. Superville on October 23, 2014 9:45 PM

Milwaukee

Terry Grier, the superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, was named the 2014 Urban Educator of the Year at the annual conference of the **Council of the Great City Schools**.

Grier, Houston's superintendent since 2009, is credited with expanding his students' access to Advanced Placement courses and increasing the number of students who now take SAT college-entrance exams, according to the Council of the Great City Schools, the Washington-based group that represents 67 of the nation's big-city school districts.

"Superintendent Terry Grier knows how to confront challenges in urban education, and has the commitment, experience and energy to overcome the odds to provide a quality education for students," Michael Casserly, the council's executive director, said in a statement announcing the award.

Grier said he was surprised at the award and he came without prepared remarks. But, he asked members of "team HISD," who were attending the council's banquet at the Wisconsin Center in Downtown Milwaukee, to stand and participate in the honor.

"This is really about them, it's not about me," he said.

"We have great opportunities in this country, all of us in urban education, to make a difference in the lives of our children," he said. "I often say in Houston that our kids have one time in school, and we have to make sure that they have a great education. Without an education, in today's world, there is no future for our young people."

The district has done some "exciting" and "fantastic work," he said, with one of the best staffs in the country, backed by a supportive community.

"We're that close in Houston," he said. "We're that close to being a breakout urban district, and we're not going to stop until we make that happen."

Under Grier's leadership, the district was awarded the **Broad Prize for Urban Education last year**—becoming, at the time, the first district in the prize's history to win the award twice. The district first won in 2002, which was the Broad Prize's inaugural year.

In recognizing Houston's achievement at the time of the 2013 award, Broad officials cited the district's increase in graduation rate, which grew at a faster rate than other urban districts that were eligible for the prize. Judges for the prize also cited Houston's progress closing the achievement gap between low-income students and their more affluent peers by 40 percent in middle and high school math and science; and overall improvement in college-readiness, particularly among the African-American and Hispanic student population.

With about 213,000 students, Houston is the nation's seventh largest school district.

The other award finalists were Alberto Carvalho of the Miami-Dade County schools, Eric Gordon of the Cleveland district R. Stephen Green of the Kansas City, Mo., district, and Valeria Silva of the St. Paul school district in Minnesota.

Last year's winner was Denise Link, a member of the Cleveland school board.

The award is officially known as the **Green-Garner Award** and is named after Richard R. Green, New York City's first African-American chancellor, and Edward Garner, a businessman and former member of Denver's school board. It comes with a \$10,000 college scholarship that the winner may choose to award to a high school senior in his district or to a student who will graduate from the winner's own alma mater.

Education Week

Urban Educators Debate Testing in National Town Hall

By Denisa R. Superville on October 25, 2014 4:30 PM

Milwaukee -- A national town hall here on testing—on its relevance, frequency, purpose, and whether assessments are the best measures of student learning and teacher impact—left things pretty much the way they were before the event started: unresolved.

The Friday afternoon forum, organized by the **Council of the Great City Schools**, was just the latest examination of assessments in a rapidly expanding debate over their value. It comes as many states and school districts gear up for the new, fully-operational Common Core-aligned tests next spring.

Just this week, Chicago Schools CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett announced that she was seeking a one-year delay on using PARCC tests districtwide in order to continue piloting the assessments. Concerns about overtesting, accommodations for English-learners and the amount of information the tests will provide teachers were also considerations.

The council, whose members have been meeting here all week during its annual national conference, has undertaken an extensive, year-long review of assessments in some of the nation's largest school systems.

Preliminary numbers confirmed what many already knew: students spend a lot of time taking tests.

The data showed 113 different assessments across the council districts—not including those that were given to a sample of the schools' populations. Eleventh graders can take up to 11 different assessments during the year. Eighth and 11th graders can spend about 30 hours on tests during the year, according to the council's data. It will be months before the final report is released.

Friday's town hall panel brought together representatives from groups with a stake in the debate: a school board member, two big-city superintendents, a student, a representative from the Council of Chief State School Officers (the group that represents state education superintendents and education secretaries), and an assessment expert.

Notably missing from the dais were representatives for the testing companies (who took some heat for the quality of the assessments, the designs, and the delays in making the results available to schools) and the teachers. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have both asked for less testing in schools.

Reviewing Assessments

For the most part, panelists agreed there needed to be review of the number of assessments. The most extensive comments were reserved for the relevance of the tests and a discussion on the differences in the American testing regime—developed over the last decade or so since the 2001 No Child Left Behind

Act—and other high-performing countries where students outperform American students but are tested less frequently. At times, it seemed like there were two parallel discussions.

St. Paul, Minn., Superintendent Valeria Silva, who confessed to having a love-hate relationship with tests, said the country needed to figure out which assessments were relevant to students and teachers. She is concerned about the labels that are attached to students and schools with poor performance.

She acknowledged, however, that there was a place for testing.

"If someone would say to me today that [here is] this magic wand, what would you like to do instead of testing. I don't know if I have an answer," she said, "because I also want to know, when my students come in my classroom, as an educator, where they are, where they are moving, and where do they need to end up."

Jaxs Goldsmith, the senior class president at Riverside University High School in Milwaukee, said that there were two state tests, including the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts in Education (WKCE), that he and his friends breezed through. There were no consequences associated with not doing well on them, he said, and no colleges take the scores into consideration.

"I just honestly feel like...some were somewhat a waste of time," Goldsmith said. "ACT and SAT testing, perfect," because colleges took those into account in determining whether a student was a good fit for a particular college.

Chris Minnich, the executive director, of the Council of Chief State School Officers, said Goldsmith's opinion was a valuable part of the debate.

"He talked about relevance," Minnich said of Goldsmith. "And relevance is absolutely critical to our testing systems. If kids are not engaged in what they are doing on these assessments, I don't even really want to use those results to see how we are doing. I think the motivation effects are something we have to think about as we are setting up state testing programs."

But are the tests doing what they are designed to? Marc S. Tucker, the president and chief executive officer of the National Center for Education and the Economy, argued that they were not. In fact, they have had the opposite effects, resulting in a narrower curriculum, low teacher morale, plummeting applications to education schools, and the recruitment of teachers "from the lowest levels of high school graduates," he said.

"There is no evidence that it is contributing anything to improve student performance, much less the improved performance of the very low-income and minority students for which this system was created," he said.

Tucker argued that the United States was the only one among high-performing countries with yearly, high-stakes tests. The frequency of the testing has led the states to use the cheapest—and not necessarily the best—models, he said.

He called for a regime in which each state would test students when they entered 1st grade—not for accountability purposes, but to set a baseline so teachers get an idea of what individual students may need. He proposed accountability tests at the end of 4th and 8th grades, and another in 10th grade—but which also can be taken in 11th or 12th grades— to determine whether students are college- and

career-ready. Sample tests can be taken in grades two and sixth to gauge schoolwide progress and direction, he said.

Minnich said he disagreed with Tucker's premise that the NCLB-driven tests were laden with such negative consequences. They helped to reveal deficiencies that were unknown before, he said, a point on which District of Columbia Chancellor Kaya Henderson agreed.

"For a long time, we let gaps persist, and we didn't have assessments to show us that," Minnich said.

Henderson called for a "reasonable middle" between the low, or no accountability of the pre-NCLB years and the era of "uber accountability and test mania."

"I think the challenge is really the transition from where we are to where we need to be," she said.

"When we figured out that there was a problem, we kind of went whole hog on this... and I think what we learned is that that's not the right approach."

A pilot approach may be the best way to make the transition, allowing a few districts to experiment with a different system, she said. But doing so still left the issue of teacher quality on the table, she said.

"Outside of an infusion of human capital...then it doesn't matter what kind of accountability regimen that we have if we are not equipped to provide the young people that we are teaching with high-caliber teachers," she said.

Silva agreed: "We are wasting time trying to focus on if the test is good or not," Silva said. "We need to focus on why are we testing and how it's affecting the future of the students."

The Council of the Great City Schools and the Council of Chief State School Officers, the organization that Minnich heads, pledged last week to review the number and types of tests that students were taking and work toward reducing the ones found to be redundant.

Michael C. Harris, the principal at Goldsmith's high school, said as an educator he saw assessments as a valuable tool.

"It really should inform the work that we do in our classrooms," he said in answer to a question from Goldsmith on whether he agreed that some of the tests were irrelevant. "It also provides us an opportunity to find out what our students know and are able to do."

The challenge in Milwaukee is that the assessments take away from the time teachers could spend building relationships with children, he said.

He said he values "the fact that we use assessments to inform our instruction. I also value the opportunity it provides us to help our students grow and to set goals for themselves as they move out throughout their high school journey." However, "it's burdensome on the schools, it's attacking teachers, and it doesn't create the environment in which we should be doing the most important work, which is teaching our kids," he said.

Jill Speering, a former teacher who is a member of the Metropolitan Nashville school board; and Jody London, a member of the Oakland Unified school board in California; wanted to know how the panelists

differentiated between high-stakes assessments and those meant to determine whether students were learning the lessons from class.

Tucker said that teachers and schools could develop targeted questions—as is the case in some parts of Asia—that they can ask kids following the class to ascertain whether the students were on track.

Steve Burger, assistant superintendent of instruction and equity at School District U-46, outside of Chicago, wanted to know the panel's opinion on testing English-language learners and whether ELL students should be tested annually to determine whether they can move into mainstream classes.

Silva, who is originally from Chile, said she was philosophically opposed to isolating English-language learners, and that based on her experience in St. Paul, she did not think that one should measure English proficiency in a student who may have left a refugee camp "12 months and a day" before being tested.

Under NCLB, ELLs must take state content assessments in math and reading after they have been enrolled in U.S. schools for a year.

She suggested instead the possibility of testing English-language learners after three years.

"Right now, our ELL students are double-tested, which I don't believe is helping them with their self esteem," she said, "neither is it helping them with the belief that they are ever going to speak English."

Washington Post

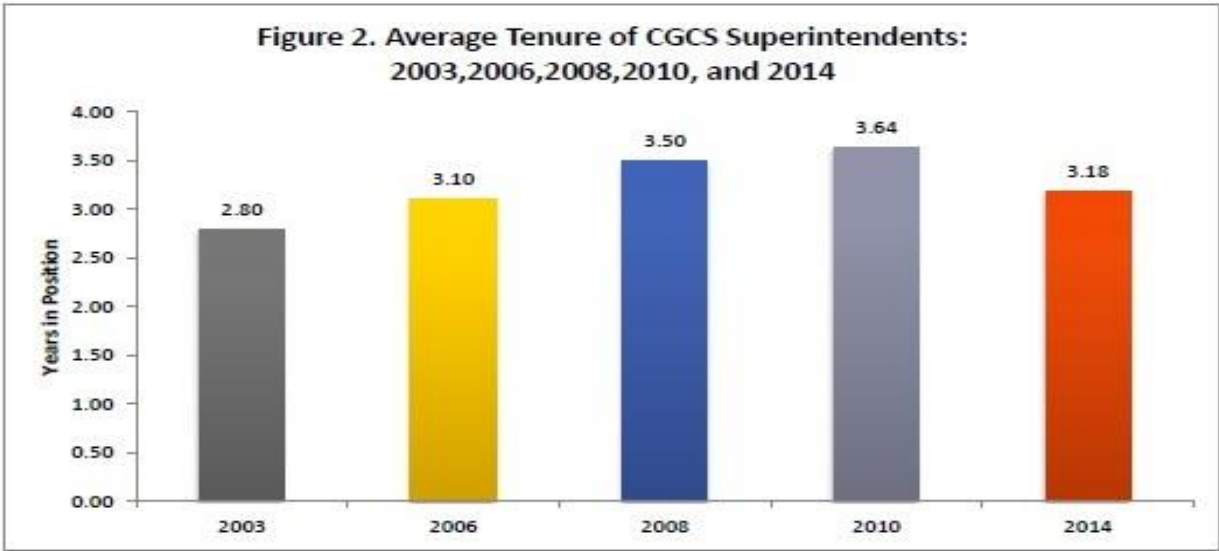
Joshua Starr’s three-year tenure as superintendent on par with big-city national average

By Emma Brown February 3, 2015 at 3:44 PM

Joshua Starr’s resignation after three and a half years as superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools means his tenure will have been shorter than the national average, which is close to six years, according to AASA, a national association of school superintendents.

But Starr’s tenure is typical for the nation’s large urban school systems. The Council of the Great City Schools, an organization of more than 50 of the county’s large urban school systems, found that the average tenure for superintendents fell from 3.6 years in 2010 to 3.2 years in 2014.

“It’s very difficult for the large systems, whether they’re large urban systems or large suburban systems, to retain superintendents over the long haul,” said James Harvey, executive director of the National Superintendents Roundtable, a coalition of about 100 superintendents.



From The Council of the Great City Schools’ 2014 survey on superintendents’ characteristics, tenure and salary

The rapid turnover is driven in part by local politics, as school board candidates often campaign on a platform of pushing out the sitting superintendent or taking the schools in a new direction, Harvey said. Expectations of superintendents have risen quickly during the past decade: At the same time as the federal No Child Left Behind law has required that schools close persistent achievement gaps, the number of low-income and immigrant students has risen, and many states have cut funding for public schools.

“It’s a much more difficult job today than it was even 10 years ago,” Harvey said. “The demand is for superintendents to produce superior results for all students at a time when the intake for schools is much more challenging.”

The superintendent churn gets less attention than turnover among teachers and principals, but it presents a real challenge, according to education observers and policy wonks.

“Communities that are trying seriously to turn around their schools see this as a 10- to 20-year iterative process, where they have bumps on the way, they make changes on the way ... that’s what big, long-term sustainable change looks like,” said Elaine Weiss, a researcher at the Economic Policy Institute and Montgomery County parent who is supportive of Starr. “If you’re out in three and a half years, you have barely made a dent.”

There’s no consensus that superintendents can be credited or blamed for student achievement in their districts. Researchers at the Brookings Institution concluded in 2014, after examining districts in North Carolina and Florida, that superintendents account for less than one percent of student achievement and that student achievement does not improve with superintendents’ longevity.

“Superintendents whose tenure is associated with sizable, statistically reliable changes in student achievement in the district in which they serve, controlling for the many other factors that affect student achievement, are quite rare,” [the researchers wrote](#).

School systems in the Washington area have experienced both revolving doors and stability at the top, but many local systems now have superintendents who have been in the job only a short time.

Former Loudoun County Superintendent Edgar B. Hatrick III retired in 2014 after 23 years, and Prince William County Superintendent Steven L. Walts has

served for 10 years. Karen Garza has only led Fairfax County for 1.5 years, but before she arrived in 2013, Dan Domenech and Jack Dale served nine years and seven years, respectively. D.C. Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson is in her fifth year.

At the other end of the spectrum, [Prince George's County](#) has seen eight superintendents in the past 16 years.

With Starr's departure, Montgomery County enters a competitive market for big-system superintendents. There are more than a dozen major superintendent positions open, including in North Carolina's Charlotte-Mecklenburg district and in Nashville, Tenn.

The school system in Hillsborough County, Fla., — one of the largest school districts in the country — also has a vacancy, after the school board voted last month to fire well-liked Superintendent MaryEllen Elia, who was not only Florida's Superintendent of the Year but a finalist for National Superintendent of the Year. In her decade on the job, Elia had succeeded in helping raise the achievement of low-income students and had won praise from business leaders, fellow superintendents and her local teachers union. In deciding to fire her, the school board cited concerns about racial disparities and special education and said Elia should have worked more closely with the community.

Such leaders can be difficult to find, and superintendents often move between districts.

“I think there are only a limited number of people with the skill set required to lead a very large district successfully,” Harvey said, adding that a successful superintendent has to be an educator, an administrator and a politician. “There aren't very many men and women who have all of that experience to draw on.”

Bill Turque contributed to this report.

Associated Press

Ex-superintendent charged in Atlanta cheating scandal dies

By KATHLEEN FOODY

Associated Press March 2, 2015

ATLANTA — Beverly Hall, the former Atlanta Public Schools superintendent charged in what prosecutors called a broad conspiracy to cheat on state exams, has died without being tried in the case that shocked the school system and reverberated nationwide.

Hall died due to complications of the breast cancer that prevented her from participating in an ongoing trial of 12 other defendants, her legal team said in a written statement Monday. She was 68.

She was among more than 30 APS educators indicted in March 2013. Prosecutors claimed she was part of a widespread conspiracy to inflate state test scores in search of bonuses and other benefits.

Hall was set to be tried with 12 other former educators who had not agreed to plea deals starting in 2014, but her attorneys successfully argued that the former superintendent could not help in her own defense due to the cancer treatments.

"She never doubted that in a fair trial, with the jury hearing the state's contentions and her rebuttal, to include her own testimony, she would be acquitted," her legal team wrote. "In the end, she was not strong enough to go to trial although that had been her earnest hope."

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard issued a statement through his office Monday with no mention of the racketeering, false statements and theft charges Hall still faced at her death.

"The Fulton County District Attorney's Office is sorry to hear that Dr. Beverly Hall has lost her fight against cancer," Howard said. "We extend our heartfelt condolences to her loved ones and offer our thoughts and prayers during this period of grief."

Officials with the school district and Mayor Kasim Reed made similar statements on Monday.

A 2011 state investigation found widespread cheating on annual state exams that were used to determine whether schools met the federal No Child Left Behind law. Test results were tied to extra funding. Investigators reported cheating in 44 schools with nearly 180 educators involved. They said Hall and her top staff "created a culture of fear, intimidation and retaliation."

Hall repeatedly denied knowing of any cheating. She resigned the same year after more than a decade at the helm of Atlanta's public school system, during which she had been praised by the city's business community and recognized by education groups nationwide.

The Jamaican-born Hall began her career in New York City as a teacher, principal and superintendent. After serving in top roles with the New York City and Newark, New Jersey, school systems, she came to Georgia with a reputation for turning schools around. She clashed with some in each district who criticized her management style, but collected awards. Many considered her the Atlanta schools' best chance of improvement when she was hired in 1999.

Michael Casserly, executive director of **Council of the Great City Schools** that honored Hall in 2006, issued a statement Monday focused on her educational career.

"Today, Atlanta lost one of its giants," Casserly said. "Urban public education has lost one of its great stalwarts. All of us lost one of the best friends anyone could ever have. And America's children lost one of their truest champions."

Closing arguments in the case of the 12 remaining defendants are expected later this month. Jeff Brickman, an adjunct professor of law at Georgia State University, said Hall's death shouldn't affect that case, since new evidence cannot be introduced. But lingering questions are a possibility in any trial, he said.

"You can get a verdict and questions are left unanswered," he said. "This was a one-of-a-kind trial but that can happen in any case."

Associated Press reporter Christina A. Cassidy contributed to this report.

Tampa Tribune

School board newcomer Harris held pivotal vote on Elia

By [Erin Kourkounis](#) (Feb. 1, 2015)

TAMPA — As a divided Hillsborough County School Board got ready to cast votes the future of their nationally lauded school superintendent earlier this month, all eyes were on the one member considered the swing vote: Sally Harris.

Even as she sat quietly through hours of public comments, mostly in support of the superintendent, newcomer Harris had already made her decision thanks to a weekend spent clearing her head and skiing with her family in Vail, Colorado.

Harris aligned herself with the three board members who had long signaled their dissatisfaction with MaryEllen Elia. Elia was fired after 10 years on the job in a 4-3 vote, and a firestorm of criticism followed — from state and local officials, business leaders, the teachers union and district principals.

The ruckus has been slow to die down, in part because of the formalities of the vote: Elia wasn't fired for cause, or for any clearly defined wrongful act on her part, but under a provision of her contract that allows termination "without cause."

Because of this, the board's attorney even discouraged members from explaining the reasons behind their decision.

"At this point, everybody is asking why," Harris said.

In the week before the vote, Harris was struggling for direction. Now, she says she found clarity and provided a two-fold explanation. First, while campaigning for her District 2 seat, she heard an overwhelming sentiment for change at the very top, and second — though half the members beside her support Elia — she believes the relationship between the board and the superintendent is irreparably broken.

Still, even after the vote, she wonders why the board didn't seek formal mediation with Elia earlier rather than firing her now and says she might have voted differently had she been in her seat more than two months.

"I absolutely respect MaryEllen," Harris said. "I think she is a fabulous leader and just got lost with the people along the way."

Hillsborough now joins a long list of districts across the country seeking leaders.

As the dust settles across the eighth-largest school district in the country, the school board Tuesday will begin making plans for moving forward. In addition to lining up a process for finding a permanent replacement, the board will need to decide on a temporary leader in the meantime.

“The intent is to get the conversation started so the board as a whole understands what their options are, what the timeline is and what next steps need to be taken,” school board attorney Jim Porter said. “I intend to go over the array of options they have and let the board discuss it.”



Other school districts looking for new superintendents include Volusia County, where Margaret Smith announced that she will retire in June.

In Palm Beach County, schools chief Wayne Gent is stepping down in June, when his contract ends. Gent is a finalist for the St. Lucie County superintendent’s job, which will open after Genelle Yost retires this summer. Indian River County Superintendent Fran Adams is also retiring over the summer.

“In Hillsborough, with the change in the makeup of the board, I think the handwriting was on the wall after the election was over,” said Wayne Blanton, executive director of the Florida School Boards Association.

More than a dozen of the nation’s largest school districts also are looking for new leaders, including Nashville, Baton Rouge, Los Angeles, Buffalo, Boston and Albuquerque. It’s an unusually high number of superintendent vacancies, said Michael Casserly, executive director of the **Council of the Great City Schools**, a coalition in Washington, D.C., of the nation’s 67 largest urban school systems.

That means competition for Hillsborough.

“The biggest problem they are going to face is the number of openings in other major school systems across the country,” Casserly said.

Reasons for superintendent turnover vary, Casserly said, but most leaders leave either because they are retiring or the school board has changed.

Harris, part of that change in Hillsborough, said her vote simply reflects what she was hearing during her campaign for office.

“The voters felt that we needed change,” she said. “That’s what I heard over and over again, everywhere I went.”

They spoke of troubles in the district’s transportation and special education departments and complained about a lack of transparency from the top, all issues Harris acknowledges the district is working to improve.

It was her second time running for school board. She ran unsuccessfully in 2010. Throughout her campaign, the private-school operator and former marriage counselor said one of her main goals was to restore cohesion to the school board.



After the August primary election, the contenders for the seat representing southern Hillsborough County were narrowed down to Harris and Michelle Shimberg, a school volunteer and parent. Harris, the clear underdog in the race, paid her former opponent Mike Weston to do consulting work for her campaign.

Even she was surprised when she beat Shimberg, who had more name recognition and more campaign money — \$150,000 to Harris' \$29,000.

Harris said she wasn't influenced by Weston, a former teacher and Elia critic, in her vote to fire the superintendent.

"I haven't talked to Mike Weston in weeks," she said.

Harris was one of two newcomers elected to the Hillsborough school board [in November](#). April Griffin, who voted to fire Elia, was re-elected. The other new board member, insurance agent Melissa Snively, voted against the superintendent's firing, in part because of the \$1.1 million payout that will go to Elia.

The superintendent's supporters on the board — Snively, Doretha Edgecomb and Carol Kurdell — say the district has made great strides under Elia's leadership.

Elia steered the district through tough financial times, avoiding layoffs even as other local and state government agencies slashed payroll. She secured a \$100 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to craft a new teacher evaluation and peer mentoring system. In addition to being named the state's [top superintendent](#) last month, she's also one of four finalists across the country for the national title.

On the other side of the vote were Griffin, Cindy Stuart and Susan Valdes, who have criticized the way Elia works with her bosses on the board and believe overall employee morale is low.

Some board members also have complained that the form used to evaluate Elia each year is weighted in her favor and needs revision.



Knowing she could be the tie-breaker in the vote to determine Elia's fate, Harris felt the pressure.

"I've never felt so alone in my life," she said.

She was bombarded with phone calls, text messages and emails from people on both sides in the week leading up to the Jan. 20 vote.

She received nearly 100 emails in the week before the meeting, most urging her to vote to keep Elia, who has worked for the school district since 1986. Sixteen of the messages were in favor of firing the superintendent.

She had a meeting with Elia several days before the Tuesday vote and then left for Vail, her ticket a last-minute addition to a weekend trip previously planned by her grown children.

Harris says Elia was the last person she spoke with about the issue before the vote.

“She and I talked about the conflicts on the board and what they have done in the past to try to work things out,” Harris said. “I prayed about it and removed myself from being influenced by other people.”

Harris came back into town the night before the meeting. By the time she entered the board meeting room, she knew where she stood.

“I knew I had to make the decision that best fit the people who elected me and how I felt we could move ahead in our district,” she said.

As Hillsborough begins its search for a new leader, Harris says she knows Elia’s departure comes as a shock to many but that healing is coming.

“It’s an underlying sadness in the climate, but people are being very nice,” she said. “It’s like any loss. If you have a loss in the family, you miss that loss and it doesn’t matter if you liked them or didn’t.”

If the move to fire Elia had come later, and not just two months into Harris’ first term, she might have voted differently, she said. She wonders why the board didn’t seek a mediator outside of the school district to help work through their differences.

“Who knows?” Harris said. “If I’d had more time before this came before us, I really could have helped mediate the tension. That’s what I came to do.”

Elia says she has no plans to retire. Her last work day is March 5, but she will receive pay for unused vacation and sick leave through June 30.

Casserly, of the **Council of the Great City Schools**, says it’s unusual for a superintendent of a large district to stay in the post for 10 years. On average, appointed superintendents in big districts stay for just over three years, he said.

“She has a tenure that is almost three times longer than her colleagues across the country in other big-city school districts,” Casserly said. “It’s a very high-pressure position that is made more difficult by demands and expectations of very diverse communities. Anyone who’s been able to

do it for 10 years in a community as diverse as Hillsborough has done something really remarkable.”

Education Week

After Ferguson Decision, Big-City Districts Recommit To Focus on Minority Boys

By Denisa R. Superville on December 3, 2014 12:50 PM

The **Council of the Great City Schools** weighed in on the Ferguson, Mo., debate Wednesday, affirming its support for President Barack Obama's response to the grand jury decision not to indict a white police officer in the fatal shooting of an unarmed black teenager and reiterating the group's pledge this year to focus on improving educational opportunities for boys of color.

The council—which represents 67 of the nation's largest school districts, and whose student population is mostly comprised of students of color—is a partner with President Obama on his My Brother's Keeper Initiative. The effort aims to boost academic outcomes and other opportunities for minority boys, and 62 districts have since pledged to take up targeted programs—including focusing on reducing suspensions and expulsions, decreasing the enrollment of minority boys in special education programs, and increasing graduation and college-going rates—to accomplish those goals.

In a statement Wednesday, Michael Casserly, the council's executive director, said that his organization stands with the president and "his call for action, fairness, and understanding in the wake of the recent Ferguson grand jury ruling."

"On the surface, the tragic events in Ferguson concerned the police and the local community," Casserly said. "But ultimately, this is a case about how America's institutions, including our schools, respect the rights, well-being and futures of all our young people. This broader reading of Ferguson extends to how our schools define and mete out justice and ensure that all students have access to the highest standards and opportunities."

Last Monday, a grand jury in St. Louis County, Mo., declined to indict Darren Wilson, a police officer with the Ferguson Police Department, who on Aug. 9 fatally shot Michael Brown, an 18-year old African-American man who was unarmed at the time of the encounter. (Wilson has since resigned from the department.)

Responses to both the shooting and the grand jury decision have been widespread and not always peaceful. Acts of looting and arson erupted in Ferguson following the grand jury announcement last Monday. Many demonstrators, however, peacefully marched across the country—from New York City to Los Angeles—to draw attention to what some have decried as unfair and discriminatory police practices in minority communities. Many marched with banners that read: "Black Lives Matter."

President Obama has called for calm in the wake of the grand jury's decision. Mr. Obama has also convened a group of leaders—urban mayors, law enforcement officials, civil rights advocates and clergy—from across the country to discuss police practices and ways to engender trust and cooperation between the police and the communities they serve, particularly communities of color. He has created a task force to review local policing.

Mr. Obama also called for a stricter review of the transfer of military grade equipment to local departments and better training for departments that do receive the equipment. He also called for funds, about \$263 million, to outfit police officers with body cameras.

Michael Brown's family and others have been calling for regulations that would require all local police officers to wear body cameras given the widely divergent and conflicting accounts by witnesses of what actually transpired between Brown and Wilson during the Aug. 9 encounter.

Mr. Casserly said Wednesday that the Council of the Great City Schools will recommit itself to the pledges the districts made over the summer to improve outcomes for the minority students they serve. The districts pledged to "boost academic outcomes, reduce disproportionate suspensions and expulsions, and improve graduation rates for all our urban children."

In October, representatives from many of the districts convened in Milwaukee during the organizations' annual conference for special sessions on the pledges. They traded ideas on how they planned to implement the initiatives. Education Week took a look at some of the early plans, and will check in with the districts during the year as they roll out those programs.

Education Week

Large Districts Use Benchmarking Report to Save Millions of Dollars

By [Michele Molnar](#) on October 23, 2014 10:27 PM|

The latest in a series of benchmarking reports that have helped large districts save millions of dollars was released Thursday.

"Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2014" is a report from the Council of Great City Schools that gives district leaders a way to make decisions based on how their schools measure up in non-academic areas from procurement to school safety efforts, compared to data from other schools. The broad areas evaluated in the report include information technology, finance, business services like facilities and transportation, and human resources. By looking at their districts' performance relative to that of their peers' on hundreds of metrics in these areas, the leaders can decide where their schools have opportunities to improve.

Comparing the data can pay off. Michael D. Casserly, executive director of the council, wrote an [article for *School Business Affairs*](#) explaining specific examples, like economies in bus transportation that amounted to \$1 million in savings in Orange County, Fla., and \$200,000 a year in utilities savings in Albuquerque, N.M.

A common practice in the business world, using key performance indicators—or KPIs— involves identifying, gathering, and reporting the metrics that matter in getting the outcomes leaders want to achieve. For school officials, those measures might be "cost per student of new construction," or "training hours per safety/security personnel," or "transportation costs per rider." Members of the council, a Washington-based organization that now represents 67 of the nation's big-city school districts, have been tracking KPIs for a decade; the council's most recent reports are available [here](#). (Districts' names are not attached to the data that are shared.)

Among the dozens of questions this year's report investigates with its benchmarked data include:

- Are there any signs that your district has a problem with cash flow?
- How much district funding comes from grants?
- How many miles do you report between preventable bus accidents?
- How many drills does the crisis response team complete in a specific time period?
- How many of your buildings are "green," following the federal Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design green certification?
- What is your retention rate among teachers hired five or fewer years ago?
- How many devices (mixed-use computers and tablets) are available per student?
- What is the bandwidth on your network per 1,000 students?

In the introduction to this year's report, Casserly wrote that the council will continue to "develop new performance measures that spur accountability and improvements in urban public school systems."

El Paso Times

EPISD Superintendent Cabrera elected to national education coalition committee

Times staff report

POSTED: 01/28/2015 04:03:32 PM MST

El Paso Independent School District Superintendent Juan Cabrera was elected to the executive committee of a coalition of large, urban public school systems.

Cabrera will serve on the **Council of the Great City Schools**' committee until June 30, 2017, according to a press release from the organization.

The coalition includes 67 of the largest urban public school systems in the country. The organization represents the needs of urban school districts, provides a support network for the districts and advocates for inner-city students, according to its website.

COMMON CORE COMMUNICATIONS

Client: Council of the Great City Schools 100282
 Project: Common Core State Standards Video Script
 Date/Ver: September 11, 2014
 Format: 3:00 video
 Title: "Conversation" (aka Why Common Core)

Voiceover talent notes:

For the adult voiceover, we recommend going with a female, age 35-45, whose voice can sound, by turns, authoritative and approachable, portraying a teacher. While she does get taken aback at the child's interjections, she never gets irritated (e.g., Gabrielle Union, Zoe Saldana, Julia Roberts).

For the child voiceover, we recommend a boy, age 8-10, who sounds endearing and curious without coming across as too cute or saccharine.

VISUALS

AUDIO

<p>A hand slides across an abacus to a calculator, then the camera pulls out to show that they were both on a tablet screen.</p> <p>A backpack rolls into view on an assembly line, followed by a diploma, followed by a briefcase.</p>	<p><i>Adult VO (in a buttoned-up teacher tone: nurturing but authoritative): We live in the age of high-speed information and our children's education needs to keep up. We all need the Common Core State Standards to make sure that students are prepared for college and the real world -</i></p>
<p>As the child's voice interrupts, suddenly the conveyor belt stops and all the objects bunch up and fall off.</p>	<p>Child VO (interrupting): But why?</p> <p><i>Adult VO (taken aback, as if trying to figure out what just happened. She snaps out of announcer mode and sounds warmer, more friendly): Oh, hey there. Uh, why what?</i></p> <p><i>Child VO: Why do I have to prepare? Isn't this the real world now? (pauses) By the way, I'm Eddie.</i></p>
	<p><i>Adult VO (warmly, as if moving from official</i></p>

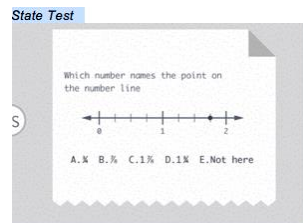
<p>A makeshift time machine made of cardboard sputters around the screen.</p>	<p><i>announcer mode to teacher mode</i>): Well hi, Eddie. You're right – it <i>is</i> the real world. But I'm talking about <i>the future</i>.</p> <p>Eddie VO (<i>Making his own childish leap of imagination</i>): I wanna invent a time machine!</p>
<p>We see a small army of robots cleaning up an incredibly messy kid's room, with a boy supervising.</p> <p>We then yank the entire scene away from the boy, and replace it with college.</p>	<p>Adult VO (<i>Laughs a little, warming to Eddie</i>): Cool! If you used your time machine to go to the future, what would you see?</p> <p>Eddie VO: Robots. That clean my room.</p>
<p>When Eddie asks why, the boy looks out at the screen quizzically.</p>	<p>Adult VO: Awesome. But you'll need more than high school classes to learn how to build that time machine ...or robots.</p>
<p>A bunch of complicated physics formulas fill the screen, with retro time machines and dinosaurs.</p>	<p>Eddie VO: Why?</p> <p>Adult VO: (<i>Bemused, almost thinking aloud to herself in a way Eddie can't understand yet</i>) Well, you'd have to accelerate to the speed of light...</p>
<p>A hand builds a staircase out of blocks.</p>	<p>Eddie VO: Umm, that sounds kinda hard.</p> <p>Adult VO: (<i>Encouraging</i>) See, the new Standards prepare you for taking on hard things...one step at a time. It helps to think of them like a staircase –</p>
<p>When Eddie asks why, the last block tumbles backwards and the hand stops building for a moment.</p>	<p>Eddie VO: Why?</p>
<p>Hand resumes building as the teacher continues.</p>	<p>Adult VO: Because the Standards are like steps that take you closer to your college or career, while teachers like me make sure you really get a topic before you take a "step up." And, that staircase is the same no matter</p>

	<p>where you live. So even if you move, your <i>new</i> teachers know what step you're on.</p> <p>Eddie VO: I'm MOVING?</p> <p>Adult VO: No, no, no! That's only IF you move. It helps keep everything fair...for <i>everyone</i>.</p>
<p>We see a multiple books change into one book with a ton more pages.</p>	<p>Eddie VO: Fair(ness) is <i>good</i>.</p> <p>Adult VO: I think so, too. Your teachers will also now have more flexibility to help you really understand critical ideas.</p> <p>Eddie VO: Why?</p> <p>Adult VO: Well, the Standards make sure you're really exercising your brain when learning things like fractions... or reading and writing about books by famous authors.</p>
<p>A giant peach rolls over the books.</p>	<p>Eddie VO: I'm reading <i>James and the Giant Peach</i>.</p>
<p>A spider drops into view and weaves a web. The giant peach falls into the spider, obscuring it. Suddenly the legs pop out as if the peach has sprouted legs and is now crawling back and forth.</p> <p>A detective character with a magnifying glass inspects a page from a book and pulls a set of keys out from the pages.</p>	<p>Adult VO: And while you read that, a student in another school may be reading <i>Charlotte's Web</i>. But you'll <i>both</i> be learning to read carefully, looking for clues... like a detective.</p> <p>Eddie VO (excited): I'm a good detective! I can always find my mom's keys really fast.</p> <p>Adult VO (laughs): I bet you'll be good at meeting these Standards, too! And we can measure your growth better along the way to find out.</p> <p>Eddie VO: I'm about 4 feet tall.</p>

A big Godzilla monster made of test questions stomps around the screen...

...but suddenly transforms into a fairly cute looking laptop computer.

We see a search box appear on the computer screen. The words "State vs. Common Core question" are typed into the box. The arrow clicks on a search result (the search results don't have to be legible).



A hand (either real or illustrated) scribes the state multiple-choice question.

Adult VO (*with a short giggle*): That's one kind of measurement – but I'm talking about *tests*.

Eddie VO: Eew, I don't like tests.

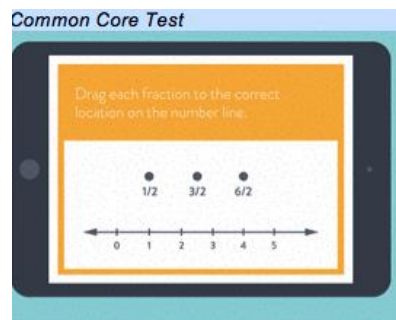
Adult VO (*Understanding tone*): You're not the only one, Eddie. But the new tests are just replacing the ones you already take— with questions that show us whether you really understand things...like fractions.

[sounds of typing]

Here. Take this multiple-choice question—it's the kind you're used to seeing. You could *guess* and still have a 1 in 5 chance of getting it right. Heck, your cat has a 1 in 5 chance of getting it right.

Eddie VO: My cat can't do math!

The same hand scribes the Common Core question. As Eddie attempts to answer the question, it's as if he's taken the mouse over (we see a cursor move onto the screen). The cursor drags the "3/2" halfway between 1 and 2 on the number line.



Adult VO (*laughs*): Now check out this new kind of question.

Eddie VO (*eager*): Oh-oh—can I try?

Adult VO: Sure.

Eddie VO: Hm, three-halves equals...one and one-half. [tentative] That's...here?

Adult VO: Nice! You got that even though the answer wasn't staring you in the face.

We see an owl's huge eyes staring at camera.

Eddie VO (*knowingly*): Staring's rude anyway.

<p>A brain scratches its “head,” or lifts weights.</p>	<p>Adult VO: <i>(she laughs)</i></p> <p>Eddie VO <i>(skeptical)</i>: Wait...does this mean I'm gonna have to do more of that brain exercise?</p>
<p>We see the time machine again, this time looking more professionally built, as a kid enters it and takes off.</p>	<p>Adult VO: Yes. But if we work together, and we're patient, students like you will develop the skills to be amazing inventors someday.</p>
	<p>Eddie VO: Yeah, my mom says it's important to be patient .</p> <p>Adult VO <i>(laughs)</i>: Your mom's a smart woman, Eddie.</p>
<p>Super: [logo] [URL]</p>	

Client: Council of the Great City Schools 100282
Project: Common Core State Standards Video Script
Date/Ver: September 12, 2014
Format: :30 video (cut-down version)
Title: "Conversation" (aka Why Common Core)

:30 CUT DOWN: ENGLISH

Adult VO: We all need the Common Core State Standards to make sure students are prepared for college and the real world...

Child VO: Why?

Adult VO: Well, the Standards make sure you're really exercising your brain when you learn things like fractions... or reading and writing about books by famous authors.

Child VO: I'm reading *James and the Giant Peach*.

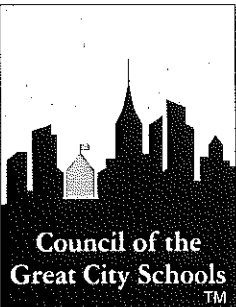
Adult VO: And while you read that, a student in another school may read *Charlotte's Web*. But you'll *both* be learning to read carefully, looking for clues...kind of like a detective.

Child VO (*excited*): *I'm a good detective!*

Adult VO (*laughs*): *I'll bet you are! I know you'll be good at meeting these Standards, too.*

Client: Council of the Great City Schools 100282
 Project: Common Core State Standards Video Script
 Date/Ver: October 14, 2014
 Format: :30 video, Math Version
 Title: "Conversation" (aka Why Common Core)

Animation	VO
Open on custom animation (not borrowed from the 3:00 video)	Teacher: The Common Core State Standards help students develop strong critical thinking skills—
	Boy: Kinda like exercising my brain?
An old-style multiple-choice question appears, and a pencil marks an answer, then crosses it out, then marks another.	Teacher: Yeah! See this old question? It doesn't tell me whether you understand the math, because you can just guess and get it right.
	Boy: Eenie meanie miny mo!
Common Core question	Teacher: Exactly. Now try this <i>new</i> kind of question...
Animation pulling "3/2" to right place on number line.	Boy: Hm, 3/2 equals...one and one half! Hm, 3/2 is the same as 3 one halves; and its located here at one and one half!
Owl with brain then cuts to scene that shows backpack/diploma/briefcase. (Alt: end on scene showing graduation cap surrounded by calculator, pencil, etc.)	Teacher: Right! <i>Now</i> I can see that you really understand fractions... <i>and</i> the number line.
For more on how the Common Core State Standards work, visit xxx.org]	Boy: Do I win anything? [over end card]
[Council for the Great City Schools logo]	Teacher: [laughs]



Council of the
Great City Schools
TM

- Albuquerque
- Anchorage
- Atlanta
- Austin
- Baltimore
- Birmingham
- Boston
- Bridgeport
- Broward County
- Buffalo
- Charleston County
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg
- Chicago
- Cincinnati
- Clark County
- Cleveland
- Columbus
- Dallas
- Dayton
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- Des Moines
- Detroit
- Duval County
- East Baton Rouge
- El Paso
- Fort Worth
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- Kansas City
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- Nashville
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Council of the Great City Schools

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004
(202) 393-2427 ♦ (202) 393-2400 (fax)
<http://www.cgcs.org>

Dear Public Service Director,

Today's students are preparing to enter a world in which colleges and businesses are demanding more than ever before. To ensure all students are ready for success after high school, the Common Core State Standards establish clear, consistent guidelines for what every student should know and be able to do in math and English language arts from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Schools and districts in your state are now implementing them in the classroom, which means aligning curriculum, adjusting teacher training, and developing new assessments that more accurately measure students' ability.

Where a family lives, how much money they make, or their race or ethnicity should not dictate the quality of the education that a child receives or their ability to succeed in college and career. Consistent standards and assessments for students throughout the country mean more students will receive a quality education and have an equal chance to succeed.

We need your help to engage the community as schools work to align curriculum and assessments to the Common Core. We are asking you to air our "30-second" public service announcements, "Conversation" These PSAs explain how the Common Core ensure all students are prepared for college and career success after graduation. They highlight the type of critical-thinking, analytical writing, and problem-solving skills that students will be expected to develop. These PSAs have no end date for use.

The Council of the Great City Schools is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is a collaboration of the largest urban school districts in the country that work together to ensure that all students are educated to the highest standards. The Council is working closely with urban public schools to advance education and, with parents and communities, to create a supportive environment for children in our public schools by providing support, training and resources to help districts and communities with implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

If you have any questions regarding this PSA, please contact our distribution representative at Connect 360 Multimedia, Katarina Sunthorn (1-212-624-9188; ksunthorn@c360m.com).

Thank you in advance for your support of this public service campaign.

Sincerely,

Mike Casserly
Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools

Parent Roadmaps
Council of the Great City Schools' Combined Web Site Statistics

Parent Roadmaps- English Language Arts 6/1/12 to 02/23/15

Page views: 228,783

Page views are defined as number of times a web page was viewed

Unique Page views: 164,484

Unique page views are the total number of unique (individual) visitors to a specific web page during the same session (visit)

Parent Roadmaps- Mathematics 6/1/12 to 02/23/15

Page views: 215,667

Page views are defined as number of times a web page was viewed

Unique Page views: 155,637

Unique page views are the total number of unique (individual) visitors to a specific web page during the same session (visit)

Parent Roadmaps- English Language Arts (Spanish) 6/1/12 to 02/23/15

Page views: 28,403

Page views are defined as number of times a web page was viewed

Unique Page views: 20,115

Unique page views are the total number of unique (individual) visitors to a specific web page during the same session (visit)

Parent Roadmaps- Mathematics (Spanish) 6/1/12 to 02/23/15

Page views: 24,417

Page views are defined as number of times a web page was viewed

Unique Page views: 16,789

Unique page views are the total number of unique (individual) visitors to a specific web page during the same session (visit)

VIMEO

From the Page to the Classroom: Implementing the Common Core State Standards – English Language Arts and Literacy 6/12/12 to 02/24/15

Plays: 13,221

Plays occur when the entire video is watched

Loads: 51,977

Loads occur when the video is just accessed

Top Websites to Access Video on Vimeo

Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays	No. of Loads
Fresno Unified	Beta.fresnounified.org	95	179
Bing	Bing.com	77	141
Boston Public School Curriculum and Instruction	bpscurriculumandinstruction.weebly.com/	57	3,001
Yahoo	Yahoo.com	55	95
Atlanta Public Schools	AtlantaPublicSchools.us	48	2,945

From the Page to the Classroom: Implementing the Common Core State Standards –
Mathematics 6/12/12 to 02/24/15

Plays: 10,141

Plays occur when the entire video is watched

Loads: 57,426

Loads occur when the video is just accessed

Top Websites to Access Video on Vimeo

Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays	No. of Loads
Boston Public School Mathematics	http://bpsmathematics.weebly.com/	244	11,744
Atlanta Public Schools	Atlanta.k12.ga.us	87	2,682
Bing	Bing.com	61	117
Fresno Unified	Beta.fresnounified.org	56	99
Yahoo	Yahoo.com	45	72

Hits for the Three-Minute Common Core Video

VIMEO

Three-Minute Common Core Video in **English** on Vimeo 10/20/12 to 02/24/15

Plays: 756,925

Plays occur when the entire video is watched

Loads: 58,687,139

Loads occur when the video is just accessed

Top Websites to Access Video on Vimeo

Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays	No. of Loads
Common Core State Standards Initiative	Corestandards.org	407,601	58,687,139
Council of the Great City Schools	Commoncoreworks.org	26,883	165,977
Council of the Great City Schools	Cgcs.org	9,797	241,043
Orange County Public Schools	Pdsonline.ocps.net	6,662	11,670
Google	Google.com	5,237	217,115
Arizona Department of Education	Azed.gov	4,026	62,894
Lifehacker	Lifehacker.com	3,505	66,633

Three-Minute Common Core Video in **Spanish** on Vimeo 10/20/12 to 02/24/15

Plays: 16,239

Plays occur when the entire video is watched

Loads: 887,204

Loads occur when the video is just accessed

Top Websites to Access Video on Vimeo

Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays	No. of Loads
Council of the Great City Schools	Commoncoreworks.org	2,372	47,440
Council of the Great City Schools	Cgcs.org	1,424	105,010
Santa Ana Unified School District	Sausd.us	263	40,301
Arizona Department of Education	Azed.gov	215	791
Bing	Bing.com	192	267

Hits for the Three-Minute Common Core **CONVERSATION** Video

VIMEO

Three-Minute Common Core CONVERSATION Video in **English** 01/09/15 to 02/24/15

Plays: 4,788

Plays occur when the entire video is watched

Loads: 952,656

Loads occur when the video is just accessed

Top Websites to Access Video on YouTube

Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays	No. of Loads
Common Core State Standards Initiative	Corestandards.org	2,691	925,096
Council of the Great City Schools	Cgcs.org	524	13,361
Council of the Great City Schools	Commoncoreworks.org	516	4,436

Three-Minute Common Core **CONVERSATION** Video in **Spanish** 01/09/15 to 02/24/15

Plays: 336

Plays occur when the entire video is watched

Loads: 932,844

Loads occur when the video is just accessed

Top Websites to Access Video on YouTube

Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays	No. of Loads
Council of the Great City Schools	Cgcs.org	69	1,537
Common Core State Standards Initiative	Corestandards.org	63	923,747
Council of the Great City Schools	Commoncoreworks.org	32	871

YOUTUBE

Three-Minute Common Core Video in **English** on YouTube 03/15/13 to 02/20/15

Views: 15,828

Top Websites to Access Video on YouTube

Traffic Source: External Video Player		
Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays
Google	Google.com	140
Facebook	Facebook.com	118
Arkansas Department of Education	arkansased.org	62

Traffic Source: Embedded Video Player		
Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays
State of California	Ca.gov	9,970
Hemet Unified School District (Hemet, CA)	Hemetusd.k12.ca.us	1,192
Google	Google.com	141
Higher Ed for Higher Standards	Higheredforhigherstandards.org	112
Bonita Unified School District (San Dimas, CA)	Bonita.k12.ca.us	108

Three-Minute Common Core Video in **Spanish** on YouTube 03/15/13 to 02/20/15

Views: 1,266

Top Websites to Access Video on YouTube

Traffic Source: External Video Player		
Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays
Google	Google.com	145
State of California	Ca.gov	13
Bing	Bing.com	7
Alum Rock Union (San Jose, CA)	arusd.org	5
Van Nuys MS Math and Science Magnet (Sherman Oaks,CA)	vannuysms.org	4

Traffic Source: Embedded Video Player		
Organization Name	Website Domain	No. of Plays
Hemet Unified School District (Hemet, CA)	Hemetusd.k12.ca.us	505
Google	Google.com	43
Davis Joint Unified School District	DjUSD.net	15

COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS

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)

BERNARD HARRIS SCHOLARSHIPS

ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships



**2015
Application
and
Guidelines**



ExxonMobil



Scholarships awarded in June 2015

For questions, please visit www.cgcs.org or call 202.393.2427

ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships

2015 Application Guidelines

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Member School Districts

Albuquerque
Anchorage
Atlanta
Austin
Baltimore
Birmingham
Boston
Bridgeport
Broward County
Buffalo
Charleston
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Chicago
Cincinnati
Clark County
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
Dayton
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
District of Columbia
Duval County
East Baton Rouge
El Paso
Fort Worth
Fresno
Guilford County
Hillsborough County
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Jackson
Jefferson County
Kansas City
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Metropolitan Nashville
Miami-Dade County
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
New Orleans
New York City
Newark
Norfolk
Oakland
Oklahoma City
Omaha
Orange County
Palm Beach County
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Portland, Oregon
Providence
Richmond
Rochester
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
Santa Ana
Seattle
Shelby County (Memphis)
St. Louis
St. Paul
Toledo
Wichita

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

ExxonMobil and Dr. Bernard Harris strongly believe that education is key to progress, development and economic growth in our country. Together, they have developed a partnership to increase awareness about the need for more math and science graduates, especially among underrepresented populations. For the sixth year, this scholarship is part of their efforts to support students of color who plan to pursue math- and science-related degrees.

Four scholarships for two boys and two girls, with a value of \$5,000 each, will be awarded in June 2015 to two Black and two Hispanic students currently completing their senior year of high school in a member district of the Council of the Great City Schools (see list of member districts on left). Applicants must be accepted for full-time enrollment at a four-year college or university in the next academic year and pursuing a degree in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM).

The scholarships, named in recognition of Dr. Bernard A. Harris, Jr., serve under-represented students pursuing careers in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. As a former astronaut, physician and businessman, Dr. Harris is an outstanding role model dedicated to serving as a mentor to the scholarship recipients.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee appointed by the Council of the Great City Schools. Recipients will be selected by Dr. Harris and notified in June. The scholarship will be paid to the university of the recipient's choice and can be applied to tuition and related expenses during the 2015-2016 academic year.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

To apply for the 2015 scholarship, this application must be postmarked on or before April 8, 2015, and should include evidence of the applicant's academic achievement in high school, leadership skills or community service in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics and the applicant's commitment to pursue a career in a STEM field. To be eligible for the scholarship, the applicant must have a minimum 3.0 unweighted grade point average and have been accepted as a full-time student at a four-year institution of higher education.

No person may receive more than one award administered by the Council of the Great City Schools in the same academic year. Employees or immediate family members of employees of ExxonMobil, The Harris Foundation or the Council of the Great City Schools are not eligible to apply for these scholarships.

***All applicants must attend a public school in a Council of the Great City Schools district.**

Go to: www.cgcs.org/Page/211 to find the list of CGCS districts.

ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships

2015 Application

Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Home Phone _____

School _____ CGCS Member School District _____

Gender: Male Female Race: Black Hispanic

Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

College Acceptances: (Attach copies of acceptance letters; Indicate, with asterisk, the college you have chosen to attend)

College/University Name	City, State

Overall Unweighted GPA (Must be at least 3.0) _____ Weighted GPA _____ Class Rank _____

SAT and/or ACT Scores:

SAT:	Overall <small>(reading and math scores combined must be over 1000)</small>		Math		Reading		Writing			
ACT:	Composite <small>(score must be 21 or better)</small>		Math		Reading		Science		English	

Courses Taken: Only list Science, Technology, Engineering and Math courses taken and grades received in those courses. Attach additional page of course list if necessary.

Course	Grade

Course	Grade

ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships
2015 Application

Leadership Skills and Extracurricular Activities:	Please list any extracurricular activities, community service or other experience that demonstrates commitment to pursuing a career in a STEM field.

Additional requirements:

- Official high school transcript
- A photograph of yourself for publication
- Three Letters of Recommendation from a high school principal, teacher, club sponsor or counselor on official letterhead
- Two one-page essays must be typed, single-sided, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman 12-point-font on the topics below:
 1. Why have you chosen to pursue a career in a STEM field and how do you see yourself contributing in that field?
 2. Explain how you have demonstrated leadership both in and out of school.

Application Submission Checklist:

Before submitting your application, complete the following checklist to ensure that you have completed all eligibility requirements to be considered for this scholarship.

- Completed application
- Official high school transcript
- A photograph of yourself for publication
- College acceptance letters
- Three letters of recommendation
- Two one-page essays

****Incomplete applications will not be considered.***

To submit your complete application, please send all items listed above to:

Council of the Great City Schools
Attn: ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship
1301 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004

*2015 scholarship applications ¹³⁰ **must be postmarked by April 8, 2015**

ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships

2015 Partners



The ExxonMobil Foundation is the primary philanthropic arm of Exxon Mobil Corporation (NYSE:XOM) in the United States. The foundation and the corporation ExxonMobil engage in a range of philanthropic activities that advance education, with a focus on math and science in the U.S., promote women as catalysts for development, and combat malaria. In 2013, together with its employees and retirees, Exxon Mobil Corporation its divisions and affiliates, and the ExxonMobil Foundation provided \$269 million in contributions worldwide, of which \$110 million was dedicated to education www.exxonmobil.com.



THE
HARRIS
FOUNDATION

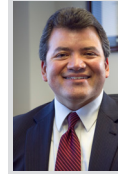
Founded in 1998, The Harris Foundation is a 501 (c) (3), non-profit organization based in Houston, Texas, whose overall mission is to invest in community-based initiatives to support education, health and wealth. The Foundation supports programs that empower individuals, in particular minorities and 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 that students can be prepared now for the careers of the future through a structured education program and the use of positive role models. More than 15,000 students annually participate and benefit from THF programs. www.theharrisfoundation.org



The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools, and is based in Washington, D.C. Composed of 67 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research and media relations. www.cgcs.org

THE URBAN EDUCATOR

IN THIS ISSUE



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- School Dollars Count, p.7
- LEGISLATIVE**
- The ESEA and Ed. Funding, p.10

Education Secretary to Address Council

With a new Congress in Washington, there's much on the agenda for debate over education legislation and policy.

How will the issues affect urban education in America?

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan will address urban school leaders from around the nation at the Council of the Great City Schools' Annual Legislative/Policy Conference, March 14-17, at the historic Renaissance Mayflower Hotel in the nation's capital.

The conference will focus on a range of Obama Administration and 114th Congress topics, including how the nation will be governed under a divided federal government. Urban educators will also discuss the status of the Elementary and Second-



Arne Duncan

ary Education Act (ESEA) and other education reauthorizations.

Waiver renewals for *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) and other Administration initiatives will be addressed as well.

Still other topics will include the final federal appropriations for 2015, new budget and debt-ceiling battles in Congress, and the E-Rate funding increase and new rules.

Conference highlights are on page 9, and registration information can be accessed at www.cgcs.org.

Progress Shown In Turning Around Struggling Schools

About 70 percent of low-achieving urban schools that have received federal School Improvement Grants (SIG) to spur improvement have shown progress over the past three years, according to a detailed new study by the Council of the Great City Schools.

The study – *School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America's Great City Schools* – found that SIG-award schools increased the numbers of students at or above Proficient levels of attainment on state assessments in reading and math. SIG-award schools in urban districts also demonstrated significant reductions in the numbers of students in the below-Basic level of performance in both subjects.

School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America's Great City Schools



February 2015

Progress Shown continued on page 4

Charleston Only School System Named to CyberSecurity Consortium

Vice President Joseph Biden recently announced \$25 million in funding to launch a cybersecurity education consortium that will include 13 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), two national labs, and only one school district – South Carolina's Charleston County School District.

"This is a tremendous honor...that the CCSD would be named the ONLY district in the nation to take part in a grant program that will prepare our students to be on the cutting edge of cybersecurity," said Acting Charleston Schools Superintendent Michael Bobby.

The White House emphasized the need for cybersecurity professionals. "By some estimates, the demand for cybersecurity workers is growing 12 times faster than the U.S. job market, and is creating well-paying jobs," said the Office of the Vice President in a press release.

The U.S. Department of Energy will provide a \$25-million grant over the next five years to support the Cybersecurity Workforce Pipeline Consortium, aimed at creating "a sustainable pipeline of students focused on cybersecurity issues," the White House noted.

Council Offers Scholarships Inspired by a Former Astronaut

In 2010, former astronaut Dr. Bernard Harris Jr., the first African American to walk in space, and ExxonMobil wanted to help underrepresented students pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies, and to increase diversity in the STEM workplace.

They created the ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships for graduating high-school seniors in urban school districts represented by the Council of the Great City Schools.

For the sixth consecutive year, the Council is offering the scholarships to 2015 graduating seniors in the 67 Council member school districts. Four \$5,000 scholarships for two males and two females each will be awarded to two African American and two Hispanic students this spring.

After selecting last year's ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Scholars, Dr. Harris, who is also a physician and businessman, pointed out, "Our country is driven by our ability to create and develop the most advanced technologies and solutions. Engineers and scientists are the catalysts, and by providing these scholarships, we are planting seeds in the minds of these bright



Former NASA astronaut Bernard Harris shows students how to reach the stars.

young students, especially those from diverse backgrounds, to support their interest in the exciting and rewarding careers in STEM."

Last summer, the scholarships were awarded to students graduating from Florida's Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale, the District

of Columbia Public Schools, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and North Carolina's Guilford County Schools in Greensboro.

They enrolled as freshmen in STEM-related degree programs at the University of Florida, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Awards continued on page 3



Council officers

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Board Member, Oakland

Chair-elect

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Superintendent, San Francisco

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A newsletter published by the Council of the Great City Schools, representing 67 of the nation's largest urban public school districts.

Albuquerque	Charlotte	East Baton Rouge	Long Beach	Oakland	Sacramento
Anchorage	Chicago	El Paso	Los Angeles	Oklahoma City	San Diego
Atlanta	Cincinnati	Fort Worth	Louisville	Omaha	San Francisco
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Baltimore	Cleveland	Greensboro	Milwaukee	Palm Beach	Seattle
Birmingham	Columbus	Honolulu	Minneapolis	Philadelphia	Shelby Co.
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Bridgeport	Dayton	Indianapolis	New Orleans	Portland	St. Paul
Broward Co.	Denver	Jackson	New York City	Providence	Tampa
Buffalo	Des Moines	Jacksonville	Newark	Richmond	Toledo
Charleston	Detroit	Kansas City	Norfolk	Rochester	Washington DC
					Wichita

All news items should be submitted to:
Urban Educator

Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Suite 702 • Washington, DC 20004
(202) 393-2427 • (202) 393-2400 (fax)

Find the Council on:



Austin and New Orleans School Districts Name New Superintendents; Tampa, Palm Beach and Minneapolis School Chiefs Departing



Paul Cruz

At the start of 2015, several urban school districts are experiencing changes at the helm.

Texas' Austin Independent School District recently appointed Paul Cruz as the district's superintendent. Cruz has served

as interim leader of the 85,000-student school system since last April, when former superintendent Meria Carstarphen left to head Atlanta Public Schools.

Cruz joined the Austin school district in 2006 as an assistant superintendent for education services. For the past five years, he has been the district's chief schools officer, where he has helped plan and implement the development of programs such as early-college high schools and the Any Given Child initiative with the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, which involves integrating fine arts into everyday lessons.

Cruz is a veteran educator, having worked as a teacher and central office administrator in several Texas school districts, including serving as superintendent of schools for the Laredo Independent School District. He also served as the deputy commissioner for dropout prevention

Awards continued from page 2

na-Champaign, Yale University and North Carolina State University, respectively.

"With the generous support of Exxon-Mobil and Dr. Harris, these young men and women have an opportunity to reach the stars and become innovators and leaders of tomorrow," said Council Executive Director Michael Casserly.

High school seniors in the Class of 2015 can apply for the scholarships online by accessing www.cgcs.org. Deadline is April 8 for submissions.

at the Texas Education Agency.

Also selecting a new superintendent recently was the Orleans Parish School Board, which operates six schools and oversees 14 independent charter schools in New Orleans. Henderson Lewis Jr., a native of New Orleans and superintendent of Louisiana's East Feliciana school district, was unanimously named superintendent of the school system, which has not had a permanent leader at the helm since 2013.

Several Leaders Departing

The Hillsborough County School Board in Tampa, Fla., recently voted to terminate the contract of Superintendent MaryEllen Elia, who has served as leader of the school district since 2005 and is one of the nation's longest-serving urban school superintendents.

Elia was recently named Florida Superintendent of the Year and is a finalist for National Superintendent of the Year.

According to the *St. Petersburg Times*, she will lead the district until March 5.

Elia joined the district in 1986 as a high school reading resource specialist and has served a variety of roles in the district, including as the school system's first magnet schools supervisor, general director of secondary education and chief facilities officer.

Under Elia's leadership, district schools have successively earned more A and B grades each year of her tenure.

Another big-city school district in Florida is also losing a superintendent: the School District of Palm Beach County.

Wayne Gent, who has led the district since 2012, recently announced he was leaving the school system at the end of the school year. He has worked in the school district for 15 years.

The district recently passed a referendum renewing an existing special property levy, and graduation rates have increased each year and continue to outperform the

state's average.

Bernadeia Johnson, the superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools, recently resigned from the 35,000-student school system she has led since 2010.

During her tenure, she established a new office dedicated to the achievement of black male students. She also launched the *Shift* campaign to accelerate academic achievement, including implementing academies during school breaks to increase instructional times.

The district has named chief executive officer Michael Goar as interim superintendent.

Michigan Governor Appoints Manager For Detroit Schools

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder recently appointed Darnell Earley, emergency manager for the city of Flint, Mich., as the new emergency manager of Detroit Public Schools.

Earley reportedly becomes the district's fourth emergency manager in six years as Detroit Public Schools remains under financial emergency provisions. He replaces Jack Martin.

"A thriving public school system is an essential part of Detroit's comeback," Snyder said. "Financial challenges unquestionably hinder efforts to improve academics."

The governor pointed out that community leaders have begun discussions about creating a long-term financial system for the Detroit school district.

Detroit Schools continued on page 9

Chicago District Partners With Colleges to Improve Its Graduation Rate

In an effort to increase the number of students who obtain college degrees, Chicago Public Schools is partnering with 19 local and Illinois colleges and universities in a collaboration called the Chicago Higher Education Compact. The collaboration is dedicated to developing ways to increase college enrollment and completion rates, with the goal of boosting the college graduation rate for Chicago students to 60 percent by 2025.

As part of the collaboration, members

will meet quarterly to share goals and best practices and ensure students receive supports to keep them on track to complete college once they enroll.

Chicago Public Schools CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett noted that while the district's students are making progress with college enrollment and completion rates up, there is still work to do to prepare students to enter the 21st century workforce.

"Under this new partnership, leaders in higher education are joining together to

increase the number of students who graduate and enter the workforce prepared and educated," said Byrd-Bennett.

Colleges and universities in the compact include DePaul University, Northwestern University, Loyola University and the University of Chicago.

The nation's third largest school district is also teaming with a local non-profit to pilot a professional development program for college advisors to better help them prepare students to succeed in college.

Progress Shown *continued from page 1*

In addition, the new study shows that urban high schools receiving SIG funds were able to improve their ability to move students from grade to grade.

However, performance in SIG elementary schools continued to be low even after three years of intervention and support, and not all schools receiving SIG funding improved.

"Turning around chronically low-performing schools is some of the hardest and most important work in education, with direct and enormous impact on the life outcomes of young people," says U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

"I want to praise the Council of the Great City Schools for their thoughtfulness in this report, which offers vitally important insights on what works. There is much to learn from here," he emphasizes.

Analyzing data across states for grades three through eight in both math and reading, the study also found that gaps in the percentages of students scoring at or above Proficient between SIG-award schools and peer schools that did not receive grants narrowed steadily over the first two years of the grants, but then leveled off in the third year.

"The results of this study indicate that urban schools have made significant improvements with the federal funds they received through the School Improvement

Grants, although they have much further to go," says Council Executive Director Michael Casserly. "The gains suggest that the federal government should retain its targeted and dedicated efforts to improve the nation's lowest performing schools."

'Opportunity for Districts'

The report follows another study the Council released in 2012 that showed urban school districts were mounting an unprecedented number of school turnaround efforts with funds from the revamped federal School Improvement Grant program that complemented their ongoing system-wide reform efforts.

In the past three years, the SIG program and the funding behind it "have provided an important opportunity for districts to redesign their support structures for struggling schools; recruit effective teachers and principals; change the climate and expectations for students in these buildings; and engage parents and the community," says the new report.

School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America's Great City Schools identifies several features that appeared to propel successful SIG implementation efforts, including:

- A coherent and coordinated district plan for supporting and turning around the lowest-performing schools;
- Interventions focused on instructional improvements with high-quality programming and materials;
- Coordination and integration of instructional interventions and strategies;
- Professional development that built staff instructional capacity;
- Principals who were invested in a vision for improvement and conveyed these priorities to teachers, students, and the community;
- Principals who were given the flexibility to make staff changes or remove ineffective teachers and staff; and
- The ability to leverage data to identify the specific academic needs of struggling students, determine needs for professional development, and decide on intervention strategies.

The unprecedented study also examines reasons behind why some SIG schools did not improve.

Students Discuss Civil Rights History and Present-Day Reality

In commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, schools often have their students discuss with one another the meaning of his historic "I Have a Dream Speech." But eight schools across the country went one step further and used technology to digitally connect their classrooms in a student town hall webcast that explored the themes of King's most famous speech.

The webinar was sponsored by New York's Rochester City School District in partnership with the Council of the Great City Schools and the Council of Urban Boards of Education and was streamed live by CBS News.

A nationwide audience tuned in as students in grades 8-12 from eight schools in Rochester; New York City; Camden, N.J.; Los Angeles; Tampa, Fla.; Tulsa, Okla.; Pontiac, Mich.; and Ferguson, Mo., explored four themes from King's speech: segregation and discrimination; unearned suffering; unrest, discontent, and demonstration; and his dream. Each participating school was given a specific theme and had to teach listeners about the historical context of the theme, or the current-day reality.

Several students opened up their virtual classrooms through video detailing their research and reaction to the questions set before them. Other participants gave impassioned interviews about progress and even added creative touches such as poetry to express their sentiments about race relations in America.

At Rochester's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. School, a classroom full of young men of color engaged in a lively discussion about how African Americans had been "crippled by chains of discrimination," a metaphor King used during his famed speech.

To spark classroom engagement, Van Henri White, the organizer and moderator of the student town hall webinar, passed around an actual pair of slave pods that once were used to shackle African Americans. White also serves as the president of the Rochester school board.

The students used video to depict discrimination and segregation as it relates to



Rochester school board president Van Henri White discusses slave pods that were once used to shackle African Americans during the student town hall webcast.

issues such as disparities in housing and schools and unlawful arrests of minorities that led to the birth of the civil rights movement. The young men correlated abuses inflicted upon African Americans as clear violations of their human and legal rights.

"I kind of found it disturbing," Abner Vargas, 14, said. "In the video, I tried to point out all the (Constitutional) amendments that were broken."

As audiences jetted from classroom to classroom across the nation, White remarked how webcast participants could just take a digital walk and travel from coast to coast. The high-tech town hall conversation allowed students to be the teachers within a far-reaching digital classroom.

"I think Dr. King would be very pleased," White stated to *Rochester.TWCNews.com*, "as to how we have taken technology and

integrated it into the classroom to achieve what nobody else has been able to achieve on Martin Luther King's birthday in his school."

In Los Angeles' Samuel Gompers Middle School, a mock trial of "The Dream vs. The United States of America" was staged by students to explain exactly what King's dream meant. In addition, the students presented evidence before a jury to determine whether the United States had made King's dream a reality.

To make their case, students created a montage of images of King, famous snippets of his speech, protest pictures and songs to demonstrate who King's dream represented and why the nation must make good on its promise of equality among the races.

Students at McCluer South-Berkeley High School in Missouri's Ferguson-Florissant School District aired a video addressing modern-day race relations and how they stack up against King's dream.

Included in the video was film footage from the 2014 protests in the wake of the shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed 18-year-old black male. During the video, students took the audience along as they staged a massive school walk out after the non-guilty verdict of Darren Wilson, the Ferguson police officer who shot Brown.



Rochester students get an up close look at slave pods.

Back inside the school walls, Ferguson students ended their video segment with interviews of students and administrators reflecting on the progress of race relations locally and on the national stage. The answer was a resounding yes to the question of whether race relations have improved, but students noted that as a nation there is still more that the country can do to achieve Dr. King's dream of racial equality.

Hawaii Teacher Named Finalist For Teacher of the Year

Catherine Caine has taught at Waikiki Elementary School in Honolulu for 23 years, and her love for teaching has expanded to include serving as a mentor teacher as well as school coordinator for both the University of Hawaii and Hawaii Pacific University's teacher development program. And although the National Board certified teacher has served teachers in many capacities, it's her dedication to classroom practice that she believes is her greatest accomplishment.

This dedication is one of the reasons Caine has been selected as one of four finalists for the 2015 National Teacher of the Year award. Sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the program selects outstanding teachers in the nation who have been selected as their respective State Teachers of the Year.

One of the four finalists will be named the 2015 Teacher of the Year in April, spending a year traveling the nation to represent educators and advocate on behalf of teachers.

Caine, Hawaii's 2015 State Teacher, teaches a multiple-subject curriculum for second-grade students at Waikiki and



Catherine Caine, a finalist for National Teacher of the Year, with her second-grade students at Waikiki Elementary School in Honolulu.

is Hawaii's first national finalist for the Teacher of the Year program since 2001.

"We are thrilled and couldn't be more proud of having Catherine represent Hawaii," said Hawaii Schools Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi. "...Her passion for teaching is evident in her classroom and school campus, as well as in her dedication to share her expertise with peers and advance the profession."

In addition to Caine, several other big-city teachers were named State Teachers of the Year, including Los Angeles teacher Lovelyn Marquez-Prueher and Anchorage teacher John Bruce.

All San Francisco High Schools To Offer Ethnic Studies

When Richard Carranza, the superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District, was a teacher in Arizona, he witnessed how Mexican-American studies were stripped from the curriculum even though 95 percent of his students were Mexican American.

So he is extremely proud that all high schools in his district will soon offer students the opportunity to enroll in an ethnic studies class.

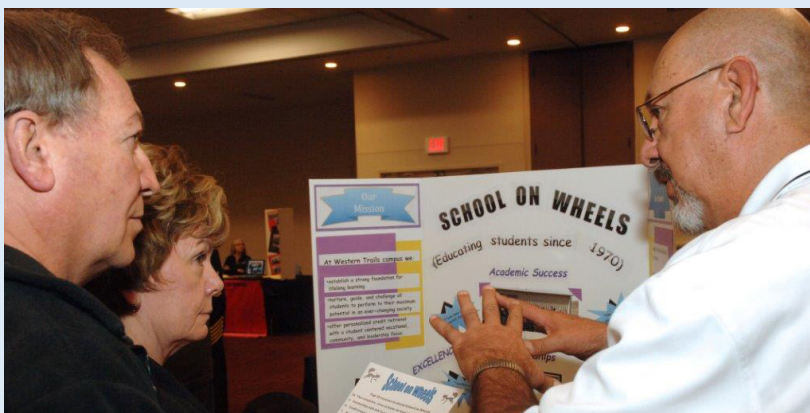
The San Francisco school board recently voted unanimously to provide an ethnic studies course at all high schools beginning in the fall of 2015. Students may take a class in Asian American, African American, Latino/Chicano or Native American studies.

Currently, several high schools in the district offer an ethnic studies course in which students who complete the course in their junior or senior year can receive college credit from San Francisco State University. The new course has also been approved by the University of California as eligible for entrance into the UC system.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the courses will cost the school district \$500,000 to implement. Those costs will include hiring an ethnic studies coordinator to oversee the expansion to all 19 high schools as well as to ensure support for curriculum development and teacher training.

And in addition to offering ethnic studies classes at all high schools, the board also wants to explore ways to make ethnic studies a graduation requirement in the future.

"By affording every high school student the opportunity to take the course, we are doing our share in creating a more cohesive, peaceful world while allowing students to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them," said San Francisco Board of Education president Sandra Lee Fewer.



Albuquerque Holds First School Choice Fair

Stan Pena, right, the principal of School on Wheels in Albuquerque, N.M., showcases his school to parents during Albuquerque Public Schools' first-ever School Choice Fair. The fair was held to help families become aware of programs in the district's 142 schools and 19 locally authorized charter schools.

Nevada's Clark County District, Business Leaders Launch 'Ensuring Every Dollar Counts' Initiative

Nevada's Clark County School District in Las Vegas is just one of many big-city school systems across the nation undergoing financial challenges. So in an effort to ensure that the district is spending taxpayers' money efficiently, the school district has joined forces with local community and business leaders to track the value of its programs and departments to ensure that they maximize the most gains in terms of student success.

"Ensuring Every Dollar Counts" is a unique public/private partnership created to examine if one of the nation's fastest growing school districts is utilizing its \$2.3-billion budget in a way that provides the best possible return, commonly called "return on investment."

District officials believe the initiative is a first-of-its-kind partnership between a school district and community leaders to implement financial best practices. They also believe the initiative is groundbreaking because while work on return on investment has been undertaken in public K-12 education, it has occurred mostly at the district-to-district level – not at the school level, such as Clark County is attempting to do.

The partnership includes community leaders and representatives from organizations such as the Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce; the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance; the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and Wells Fargo Bank; as well as school district leaders.

In May 2014, Clark County Schools Superintendent Pat Skorkowsky convened a team of citizens to serve as an Executive Advisory Group to start examining the re-

turn on investment in the school district.

Subcommittees were then created to examine academic programs and district departments as well as a committee that compared school performance with the amount of money spent on each school.

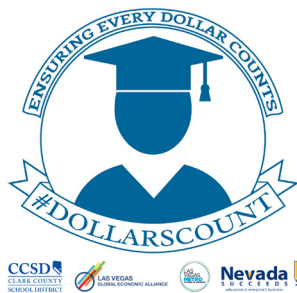
The School Comparison Study compared a school's expenditures and its academic performance. By linking school funding with school performance, the study, which also took into account the make-up of the school population, enabled the district to pinpoint schools that provided better-than-expected value given the resources available to the school.

The preliminary reports from the subcommittees have been posted on the district's web site and the frameworks developed by each of the three subcommittees are being peer reviewed by national experts.

The school district hopes the data from these reports will highlight best practices that can be replicated.

The ultimate goal of the "Ensuring Every Dollar Counts" initiative is to not only reassure the public that its tax dollars are used in ways that directly impact students and classrooms, but to demonstrate that school funds make a difference in terms of student achievement and to advocate for an increased focus on education in the state of Nevada. According to the *Las Vegas Sun*, recent studies have shown that the state lacks a sufficiently educated workforce.

"We also know that we live in an age of accountability," said Schools Superintendent Skorkowsky. "We are ready to meet that challenge with this groundbreaking work examining return on investment of the dollars we spend in our school district. We want to show our community that every dollar makes a difference in the lives of students."



Providence Student Wins \$50,000 Siemens Scholarship

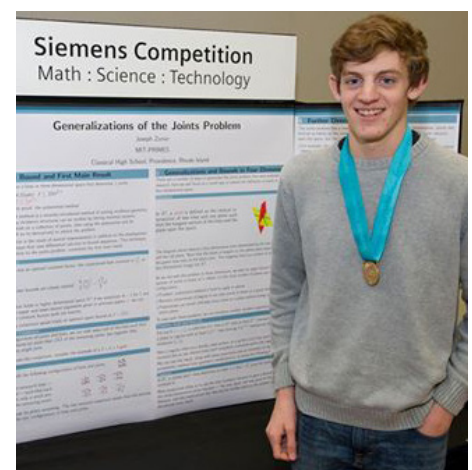
Joseph Zurier, a senior at Classical High School in Providence, R.I., placed second in the 2014 Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology, the nation's premier research competition for high school students.

Zurier's second-place prize came with the added bonus of a \$50,000 college scholarship.

Zurier was one of six finalists participating in the Siemens competition that was recently held in Washington, D.C. His project "Generalizations of the Joint Problem," solved an open math problem in counting the number of intersections of lines and planes in space, improving on previous results.

According to an article published on *BusinessWire.com*, Zurier's project will have implications for digital image processing both in general computer science and medical imaging.

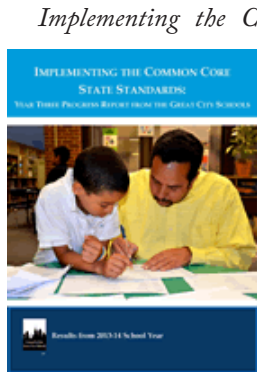
Zurier, who was recently accepted to Harvard University and is also applying to MIT and Stanford University, plans to use his scholarship funds to major either in mathematics, applied mathematics or computer science.



Providence student Joseph Zurier stands in front of the poster summarizing his math research at the Siemens competition in Washington D.C.

Council Releases Two Reports

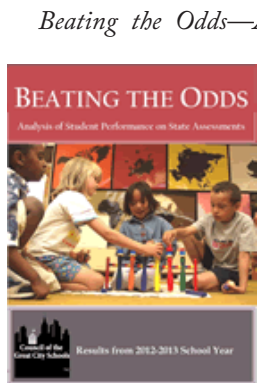
The Council of the Great City Schools recently published two new reports that examine urban school achievement in mathematics and reading and survey the progress big-city school districts are making in implementing the Common Core State Standards.



Implementing the Common Core State Standards: Year Three Progress Report reveals that approximately 87 percent of urban school districts plan to have fully implemented the Common Core State Standards

in reading and mathematics by the 2014-2015 school year.

The survey also covers a wide range of implementation activities in the nation's urban school districts, including professional development and communication methods to inform key community and education stakeholders of district Common Core initiatives and progress.



Beating the Odds—Analysis of Student Performance on State Assessments gives an in-depth look at how urban school districts are performing on the academic goals and standards set by the states.

The report examines student achievement in mathematics and reading from spring 2010 through spring 2013.

This is the 13th edition of *Beating the Odds* the Council has published.

The reports can be accessed on the Council's web site at: www.cgcs.org

Nashville School District Launches Drive To Recruit 100 Turnaround Teachers

Tennessee's Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools recently launched a recruiting drive to find a few good teachers, 100 to be exact. The district embarked on an aggressive campaign to attract 100 of the best teachers into its Turnaround Corps.

Turnaround Corps members will be hired to join the district's mission for rapid improvement at priority and other low-performing schools. New members will be elementary and secondary teachers in core subjects of reading/language arts, math and science.

The application process was extensive and prospective corps members must have at least three years of successful teaching experience in a turnaround setting with evidence to support prior work.

Selected teachers will begin in the summer of 2015. Employment incentives include the opportunity to sign short-term contracts, which can boost base pay and include performance bonuses as well as leadership roles and more.

National recruiting efforts sought to reflect the diversity of the district and the campaign recruited in cities such as New York and Houston. These recruitment cities are recognized for innovation in education and have won the Broad Prize for Urban Education, a prestigious honor.

"If you are passionate about education, Nashville is the place to be."

—Susan Thompson, Metro Nashville's chief human capital officer

The campaign also focused on recruiting events, digital and traditional advertising as well as positioning the city as a national attraction.

"This is not only one of America's hottest cities," said Susan Thompson, Metro Nashville's chief human capital officer, "but there is so much happening in Nashville education right now...If you are passionate about education, Nashville is the place to be."

Miami School Alum Becomes U.S. Surgeon General



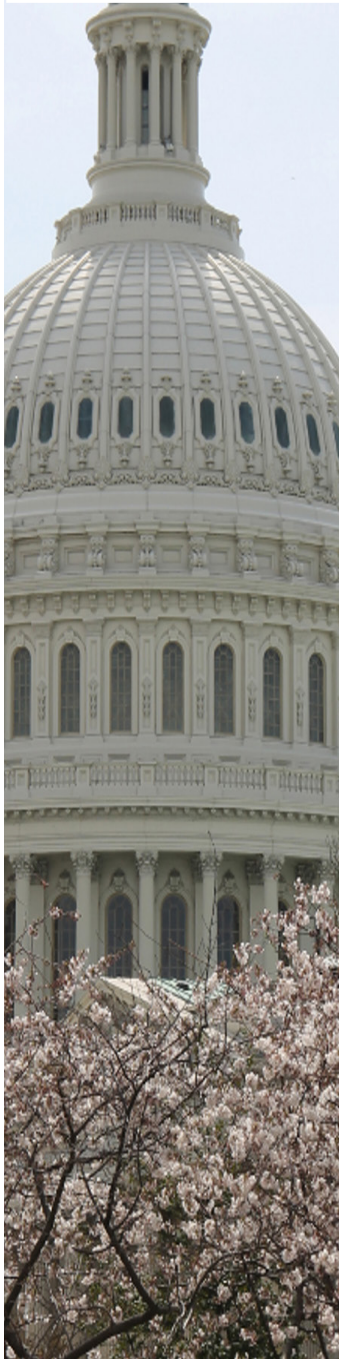
Vivek Murthy, a graduate of Miami Palmetto Senior High School, was recently confirmed as the 19th United States Surgeon General. As America's doctor, Murthy is responsible for communicating the best available scientific information to the public regarding ways to improve personal health and the health of the nation. The son of immigrants from India, he graduated as the valedictorian of the Miami Palmetto Class of 1994, and has a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and an M.D. and M.B.A. degrees from Yale University. He completed his residency training at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, where he later joined the faculty as an internal medicine physician and instructor.

Council of the Great City Schools

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE/POLICY CONFERENCE

March 14-17, 2015

Renaissance Mayflower Hotel • Washington, DC



Saturday, March 14

- Conference Registration
- Fall Conference Planning Meeting
- Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group Meeting
- Meeting of Legislative & Federal Program Liaisons
- Executive Committee Meeting
- Task Force Meetings
- New Members & New Attendees Orientation
- Welcome Reception

Sunday, March 15

- Conference Registration
- Breakfast Buffet
- Board of Directors Meeting
- Great City Colleges of Education Meeting
- Luncheon with Speaker: **U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan**
- Legislative Briefings

Monday, March 16

- Breakfast with Speaker
- Legislative Briefings
- Luncheon with Speaker
- Capitol Hill Visits
- Reception at National Geographic Museum

Tuesday, March 17

- Breakfast and Briefing
- Adjourn

Student Congress In Houston Gives High Schoolers a Voice

High school students in the Houston Independent School District wanted to play a more active role in their education. So a group of juniors and seniors started a student-led, student-run political movement by establishing a Student Congress.

Providing a voice to more than 2,000 students across the district, Student Congress aims to influence district policies by generating a steady stream of real-time feedback to district administrators.

The Student Congress is open to all students in district high schools and now boast more than 300 active members.

The idea for a Student Congress was a direct result of research conducted by Zaakir Tameez, a senior at Carnegie Vanguard High School. After gathering about 20 students to discuss issues that affect teens, such as gang violence, one student participant questioned the lack of student perspective in education issues that affect them daily. This led to more than 125 students from two dozen high schools attending a November school board meeting and trustees approved the Student Congress as an official student group.

“We need your input as to how we can make things better,” Juliet Stieche, Houston’s board president told students at a board meeting.

The Student Congress is working on plans to create their own radio show as well as meet monthly with senior-level district staff.

Detroit Schools *continued from page 3*

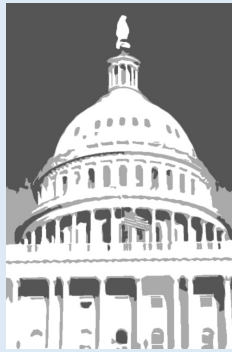
Earley acknowledged the community’s efforts, and said, “Important community discussions are underway about creating a brighter future for education in Detroit. It’s vital for the district to be on firmer financial footing so this work can move forward.

“Education must be a cornerstone of a strong, revitalized Detroit,” he stressed.

The ESEA Reauthorization and a Request For More Education Funding

By Jeff Simering, *Director of Legislation*

The 114th Congress has hit the ground running with its effort to reauthorize the long-delayed Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) issued an ESEA discussion draft in mid-January for committee review and public comment. And House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline (R-MN) introduced an ESEA reauthorization bill (H.R. 5) in early February. The House has scheduled quick committee and floor action during February. The Senate committee is also expected to move its bill this month with floor consideration to be determined later.



The Senate discussion draft presents an ESEA reauthorization that improves a number of provisions over current law, including language that rolls back several current requirements that complicate local program implementation. The Council of the Great City Schools' comments to the Senate committee, however, also outline multiple financial, instructional, and operational problems that need revision. The financial problems include the repeal of maintenance-of-effort, an overhaul of supplement-not-supplant, and a new follow-the-child allocation system that raises serious concerns.

The House ESEA bill is similar to its 2013 version, which passed on a party line vote, but never moved further because no companion bill ever passed the Senate. The House package also pares back a number of federal requirements and provides substantial program flexibility, but it also includes major fiscal and program areas of concern: the repeal of maintenance of effort requirements, a Title I portability allocation proposal, the consolidation of a number of ESEA programs, as well as a new state-controlled flexible block grant.

While Congress focuses on new education legislation, the Obama Administration is proposing a \$3.6 billion or 5.4 percent increase in the Education Department's FY 2016 discretionary budget. The largest increase is requested for the Title I LEA grant program with a \$1 billion proposed increase—wiping out the last vestiges of the 2013 sequestration. The budget request, however, proposes to increase the Title I State administration

set-aside from 1 percent to 3 percent, thereby lowering the proposed Title I funding increase to local school districts by nearly \$300 million.

Dozens of other Education Department programs would also benefit from the FY 2016 budget proposal, including: An \$175 million increase for IDEA Part B formula grants; a \$50 million boost for School Improvement Grants; an increase of \$36 million for the Title III program for English Learners; and an \$180 million increase for the Investing in Innovation program. An additional \$200 million would also be directed to the unfunded Title II-D

Technology Program and \$200 million more would support a new American Technical Training Fund under a new Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. The current Preschool Development Grants would be tripled to \$750 million in conjunction with a \$1 billion increase in Head Start along with increases in the Child Care and Development Block Grant and Home Visiting Program.

Finally, the Administration requested a number of new mandatory-funded programs, including a 10-year Preschool-for-All program at \$75 billion, a 5-year Teaching for Tomorrow program at \$5 billion; a 10-year American College Promise program for free community college education at \$60 billion; and a 10-year College Opportunity and Graduation Bonus program at \$7 billion.

After a two-year respite from Federal budget battles and threats of government shutdowns, the new budget fights are expected to arise quickly and linger well into next fall. The specter of another round of across-the-board sequestrations in FY 2016 could also complicate budget negotiations. The Administration is proposing to avoid sequestration by increasing federal budget ceilings and raising revenue through new tax proposals. Despite this early flurry of activity, the path forward on authorization and budget issues will be difficult, and ultimately they will require cooperation between the legislative and executive branches of government – a commodity that continues to be in short supply.

Council's Males of Color Initiative Advancing in Big-City School Districts

The Fort Worth school system in Texas recently formed a *My Brother's Keeper* Task Force to address challenges facing its students of color.

Florida's Broward County school district has partnered with a local college to create a mentoring program for minority males.

California's Long Beach school system plans a Students of Color Town Hall Meeting to provide information on helping to prepare all students for success.

These three school districts and many other big-city school systems around the nation have embraced the Council of the Great City Schools' call to action following a White House event last summer, when President Obama announced that 60 urban school districts pledged unprecedented support to help boys and young men of color succeed.

The Council led the 60 urban school districts to Washington to support the president's *My Brother's Keeper* initiative, which was launched a year ago to help young males of color reach their full potential.

"We need to include pastors, juvenile services, other elected officials, students, teachers and parents to address this issue," says Ashley Paz, a board member of the Fort Worth Independent School District, in a news release recently announcing the district's *My Brother's Keeper* Task Force.

A *My Brother's Keeper* Summit is scheduled for Feb. 21 in Fort Worth, which will involve community and school district leaders to discuss racial equity, culture and disparity in the school system.

The Fort Worth district reports significant challenges facing its students of color:

- 76 percent of African American students and 80 percent of Hispanic students are economically disadvantaged as compared to 31 percent of white students;
- 41 percent of African American students



Mentors and mentees from a high school in Florida's Broward County participate in a tour and orientation at Broward College.

The program combines peer and group mentoring to high school students and provides Broward College students, under the guidance of a faculty member, the opportunity to help high school students through the transition to college or the workforce.

"This program is a direct link to President Obama's *My Brother's Keeper* initiative aimed at helping young men and boys of color facing tough odds reach their full potential," says Laurel Thompson, the Broward school system's director of student services.

and 55 percent of Hispanic students were successful in state assessments compared to 75 percent of white students; and

- Suspensions for African American and Hispanic males exceeded 11,000 in 2013-14 compared to 1,600 white male suspensions.

Empowerment Initiative

The District of Columbia Public Schools recently launched a new initiative called Empowering Males of Color, aimed at increasing the success of black and Latino male students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Over the next three years, the school system plans to dedicate \$20 million to help improve the outcomes of its males of color by working with the community, identifying strategies to elevate the student experience, and boosting achievement to prepare males of color for college, careers and life.

Local College Partnership

The Broward County School Board in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., recently partnered with Broward College to support and advance its Mentoring Tomorrow's Leaders initiative by creating a mentoring program for minority males attending two high schools.

Implementing Programs

A few months after President Obama in July announced that 60 school districts pledged to improve educational outcomes for boys and young men of color, the Council of the Great City Schools held a two-day conference to turn the pledge into reality. Urban school leaders from around the nation converged in Milwaukee to discuss implementing action plans at the conference titled "United to Make a Difference: Improving the Achievement of Young Men of Color."

Since that October meeting, some 25 big-city school districts have submitted implementation plans to advance the Council's Males of Color Initiative.

The Council has also partnered with the College Board to publish a brief "how to" guide describing how some of urban school districts have expanded participation in Advanced Placement courses among students of color. The booklet also features data on the aggregate number of students of color who are not taking AP even though they qualify for the courses.

Males of Color Events

More than 200 students in Albuquerque recently discussed student discipline

Males of Color continued on page 12



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Males of Color *continued from page 11*

and engagement in an event called *My Brother's Keeper* Community Challenge Student Summit, hosted by the Albuquerque Public Schools.

The forum engaged youth, community leaders, policymakers and community members in a community conversation aimed at assessing needs, setting priorities, and developing concrete goals to improve social and academic outcomes for young men of color.

In Long Beach, Calif., the school system plans what it calls a Students of Color Town Hall Meeting on Feb. 28. Parents will have an opportunity to attend workshops that will enhance effective parenting skills, and community agencies will be available to provide resources and information,

“The Town Hall meeting is one more way our school district is building upon its nationally recognized efforts to help all students succeed, regardless of color, disability and socioeconomic status,” says Chris Eftychiou, public information director at the Long Beach Unified School District.

Council of the Great City Schools 2015 Calendar of Events		
Chief Human Resources Officers Meeting	February 4-6, 2015	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Legislative/Policy Conference	March 14-17, 2015	Washington, DC
Chief Operating Officers Conference	April 21-24, 2015	Las Vegas, NV
Bilingual Directors Meeting	May 13-16, 2015	Charlotte, NC
Chief Information Officers Meeting	June 2015	TBD
Public Relations Executives Meeting	July 10-12, 2015	Nashville, TN
Curriculum & Research Directors' Meeting	July 15-18, 2015	Chicago, IL
Annual Fall Conference	October 7- 11, 2015	Long Beach, CA
Chief Financial Officers Conference	November 2015	TBD

LEGISLATION

ESEA



Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Preliminary Recommendations for Reauthorization

Council of the Great City Schools

January 2015

Member Districts

Albuquerque
Anchorage
Atlanta
Austin
Baltimore
Birmingham
Boston
Bridgeport
Broward County
Buffalo
Charleston County
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Chicago
Cincinnati
Clark County
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
Dayton
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
District of Columbia
Duval County
East Baton Rouge
El Paso
Fort Worth
Fresno
Guilford County
Hillsborough County
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Jackson
Jefferson County (KY)
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 (FL)
Palm Beach County
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Portland
Providence
Richmond
Rochester
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
Santa Ana
Seattle
Shelby County (TN)
St. Louis
St. Paul
Toledo
Wichita

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation’s largest central city school districts, was the only national educational organization to give the “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) Act any measure of support on passage and during more than a decade of implementation. The Council did so to underscore how serious big city school systems are about improving academic performance, narrowing achievement gaps, raising standards, and being accountable for results. The Council also cautioned that the excessive requirements and poorly calibrated gears and levers of NCLB would be unworkable and counterproductive over time. Nonetheless, the Council is convinced that a well-designed reauthorization can support and facilitate substantial gain in the academic performance of disadvantaged students without having to micro-manage it.

The Council of the Great City Schools and its member districts propose that the traditional focus on disadvantaged children and accountability for specified groups of students be retained. But, many of the law’s provisions must be redefined and reoriented in order to place greater emphasis on proven instructional strategies rather than on regulatory compliance and federally-required activities that have shown little promise of improving student achievement.

The Council proposes to streamline and simplify the statute, its requirements and programs. We propose to roll back many of the “588 SEA and LEA compliance requirements” in Title I Part A highlighted in the March 29, 2006 report from the Office of the Inspector General. The 2002 and 2008 Title I regulations further appended a multitude of administrative-created requirements which should be pared back.

The Council’s ESEA proposal would allow school districts to integrate Title I planning and performance management practices into existing local school-level plans and districtwide strategic plans. The proposal calls for targeting intervention and improvement activities designed by local school districts on a workable number of low-achieving schools and student groups based primarily on assessment results and supplemented by other objective measures and indicators. These local program plans and intervention measures would complement their state’s accountability system and can be aligned with any state-identified persistently low-achieving schools under a school improvement grant-type framework, but without the current federally-required models.

The Council’s ESEA recommendations offer organizational, operational, and technical changes to make the law more workable at the ground level. Our recommendations would put greater emphasis on implementing proven instructional strategies, applying research to practice, providing practical classroom supports, and employing performance management techniques, as well as using higher standards and better data systems to help schools raise student achievement and close achievement gaps.

The 114th Congress faces the challenge of not only reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but also passing revisions that represent an improvement over the current ESEA with waivers. While many of the states are chafing under the tedious process of negotiating statewide ESEA waivers, local school systems overwhelmingly support waiver relief from many of the unworkable strictures of NCLB. Yet, merely delegating federal requirements to state regulators is also not an acceptable approach to reauthorization. It is essential that any new law allows school districts to maintain stability in their local instructional programming, and not divert resources and attention to a new regime of statutory and regulatory requirements and accompanying administrative directives from the federal and state level.

Any ESEA reauthorization must be a clear improvement over “current law plus flexibility waivers” in order to garner the support of the Great City Schools. None of the committee reauthorization bills from the 112th and 113th Congresses met this practical standard. Our proposals offer a middle ground between overreaching requirements and unfettered flexibility. The Council is ready to assist the 114th Congress in producing a better ESEA bill.

Academic Standards, Assessments and Data Systems

Retain the basic annual subject and grade requirements of current law regarding state standards, assessments, data systems and reporting (as well as student and classroom identifiers, current 95% subgroup assessment participation, and school-subgroup N sizes no larger than 30), in order ensure transparency in academic performance and to facilitate state and locally-determined accountability/evaluation systems.

Require an assurance that state assessments under sec. 1111 are vertically aligned to facilitate grade- to-grade progress analyses.

Ensure that no statutory barriers are created either to encourage or to impede the development and implementation of State-established college and career-ready standards (including the common core standards) in reading and math. The Council does not support having the U.S. Department of Education or the federal government setting the standards.

Include a Title I limitation that the U.S. Department of Education shall not require additional assessments, measures, or indicators other than those expressly stated in section 1111, which includes traditional and extended graduation rates required for accountability.

Continue to support the development and refinement of state standards and assessments by multi-state consortium, including alternative assessments for low-incidence students with disabilities and English language proficiency assessments, as well as expand the use of the current Title VI grants to support state data systems and interoperability with local data systems.

Allow local school districts to use up to 1 percent of any federal education grant funds for the development, enhancement, and operation of local student data systems (notwithstanding any other fiscal requirements, including supplement not supplant, maintenance of effort, etc.). [GEPA]

Retain the current NAEP participation provision.

Teaching and Learning

Title I – In General

Reinvigorate the regular Title I program in all Title I schools by eliminating provisions in current law that allow out-of-date Title I program plans and needs assessments to continue in perpetuity, and require school-level planning and performance management practices for Title I activities that address subgroup needs, are updated regularly, and are fully integrated into local school and district plans. [sec. 1112, 1114, and 1115]

The LEA Plan and School-Level Plans

Assure -- in the LEA Title I Plan -- that each Title I schoolwide program (SWP) and Title I Targeted Assistance School (TAS) conducts, at least every three years, a needs assessment of the academic and support-service needs of eligible students and establishes measureable achievement objectives with particular attention to student subgroup performance. Retain section 1112(b)(1)(I) to underscore that each individual school-level plan would not be a part of the Title I LEA Plan/application submitted to the State. [Note: school plans would still be subject to state and federal on-site monitoring, but would not require aggregation into 1000+ page submissions to the SEA]. [sec. 1112]

Require a written annual review of performance by each SWP and TAS submitted annually to the LEA (in LEA-determined form and content) based on their school plans including student subgroups, classroom and school results on the state assessments and other measures that are specified in the LEA Plan -- no later than the beginning of the upcoming school year or within 45 days of receiving state assessment results. [sec. 1112]

School Intervention and Improvement Actions, and State Accountability Systems

Ensure alignment with the State Accountability System and any persistently lowest-achieving schools under applicable ESEA SIG requirements. [sec. 1116] (*See Accountability Graphic on next page*)

Clarify in statute the current Department guidance that the LEA can reserve funds from its Title I local allocation to use for school improvement activities without regard to the sec. 1113 rank order provisions. [sec. 1112]

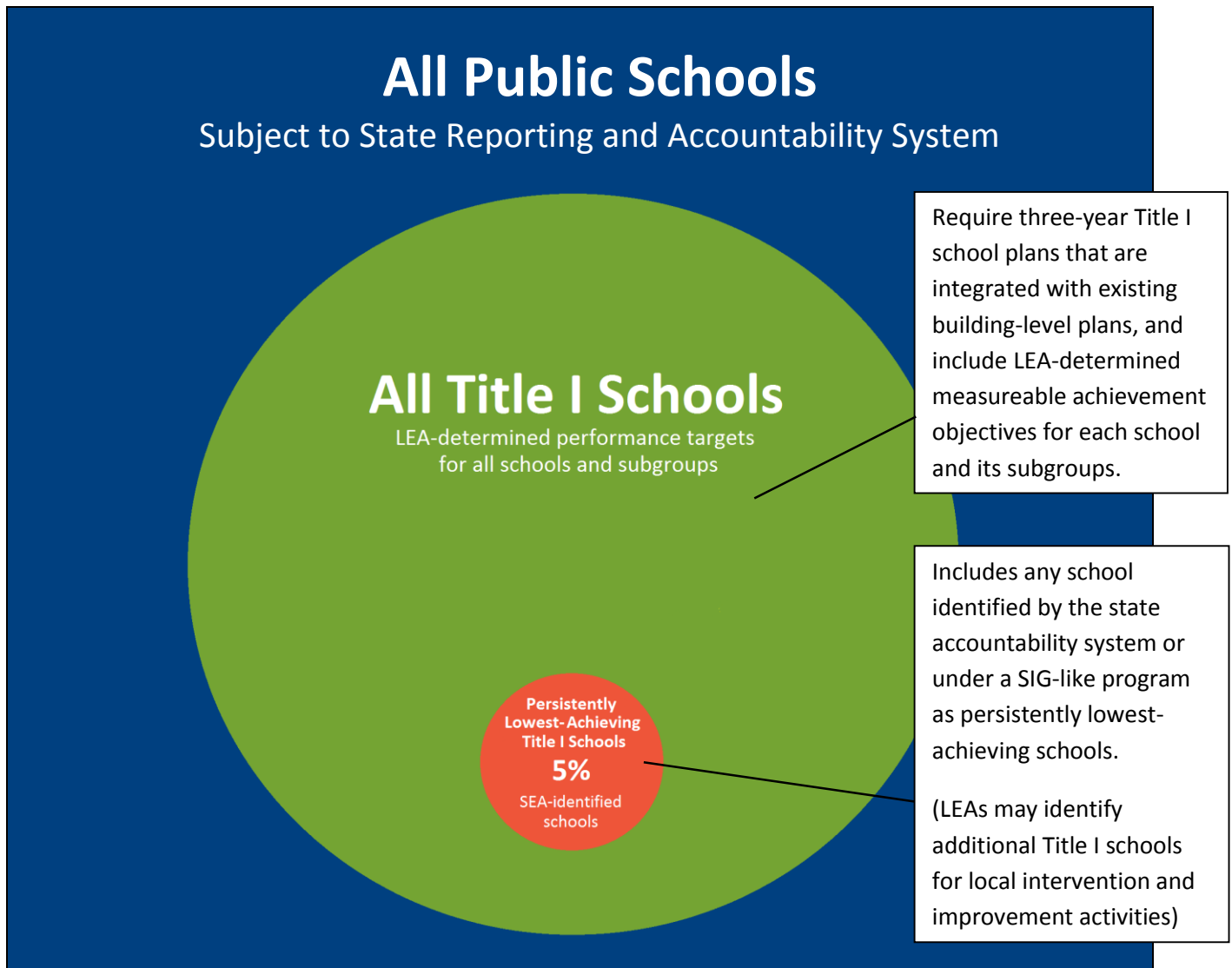
Authorize individual Title I school eligibility for Title I state school improvement grant (SIG) funds as “an incentive” for LEAs to undertake intervention and improvement activities in other underperforming schools – in addition to the persistently low-achieving schools which may be identified by the State under a SIG-type framework or under the State Accountability System. [sec. 1003]

Refrain from specifying particular intervention and improvement activities or models in federal law for schools identified by the LEA, under the state school improvement grants, or the State Accountability System, other than requiring reasonable documentation by the LEA of the effectiveness of the practices to be implemented during the school day and in extended learning time.

Require documentation of progress for schools receiving school improvement grant funding under sec. 1003(g) after three years, in order to qualify for the additional two years of funding allowed under current FY 2015 appropriations language.

Retain the current provision regarding a full school year of student enrollment for school-level accountability purposes. [sec. 1111(b)(3)(C)(xi)]

Eliminate the duplicative LEA Improvement provisions of NCLB. [sec. 1116(c)]



Teacher, Paraprofessional, and Principal Quality

Require States to establish a teacher and principal evaluation system, at minimum, for Title I schoolwide program schools based substantially on student performance on the state academic assessments in at least reading/language arts and math. For these Title I schoolwide programs, the student reading/language arts and math assessment results for the school as a whole would be used as part of the evaluation of all teachers in the school.

Include a rule of construction that nothing in the Act or in the administration of the Act by the Secretary be construed to prevent school districts from exercising their local authority to implement teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Require state data systems to provide longitudinal and disaggregated state assessment results to each LEA, including student and classroom identifiers as well as identification of non-participating and excluded students. Only personally-identifiable information would be excluded from public reporting of state assessment results.

Require teachers in Title I schools to meet state licensure criteria through traditional or alternative certification routes, and eliminate the current federal “highly qualified teacher” requirements and HOUSSE exceptions. [sec. 1119; sec. 9101(23)]

Retain the paraprofessional requirements in current law for Title I schools. [sec. 1119]

English Language Learners (EL)

Fix the contradictory ESEA subgroup and accountability provisions of NCLB that require identified Limited English Proficient (LEP) students paradoxically to be proficient in English language arts and math on tests generally written in English.

EL Student Group: Reconstruct an English Language Learners (EL) subgroup of students to include any student that enters school with limited English proficiency (a concept developed by the EL Working Group of prominent EL researchers). This new subgroup would no longer be constituted, by definition, with students who solely are not currently proficient in English (LEP). The EL students would remain in their schools’ EL subgroup for reporting and accountability during their entire school tenure, thereby appropriately reflecting both EL students who have yet to reach English proficiency and EL students who have reached proficiency in the revised subgroup.

Title I Accountability: Proficiency on the regular state academic assessment of reading/language arts and math would remain the basis for Title I accountability with the reconstructed EL subgroup.

Authorize the use of the ELPA to serve as a proxy for the regular reading/language arts assessment for two additional years for those “newly entering immigrant students who score at the lowest levels of the ELPA”. Participation in math assessments would be with appropriate accommodations.

Codify the current regulatory provision allowing newly entering immigrant students with limited English proficiency not to have to participate in regular state reading/language arts assessment in their first year in U.S. schools, and add the math assessment as well.

Retain the current provisions regarding the allowable use of state assessments in the student’s native language. [sec. 1111(b)(3)(C)(x)]

Retain the requirement for annual English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) as a useful formative assessment to guide instruction.

Pare back a dozen of the duplicative provisions in both Title I sec. 1112(g) and Title III sec.3302, retaining a simple one-time parent notification by the LEA to inform the parent or the identification of a student for participation in a language instructional program, and of the opportunity for the parent to opt-out of the program at any time.

Retain the parent participation provision of both titles [sec. 1112(g)(4) and sec. 3302(e)], and relocate the general non-discrimination provision of both titles [sec. 1112(g)(5) and sec. 3302(f)] regarding admission or exclusion in any federal program due to surname or language minority status to the General Education Provisions Act.

Title III Accountability/Evaluation: For students served with ESEA Title III funds, use the data currently available under Title I assessment requirement to disaggregate the progress of Title III-served students in attaining English language proficiency under the annual ELPA and on the state reading/language arts and math assessments as the primary basis for the biennial evaluation each local Title III subgrant as required under current law. In the Title III biennial evaluation, disaggregate the results of the state assessments in reading/language arts and math for both EL students served who have yet to reach English proficiency and EL students served who attained English proficiency.

EL Reporting: Continue to report the acquisition of English language proficiency for all students required to take the annual state English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA).

- Continue to require annual ELPA administration in all four domains to monitor progress for initial enrollment and at transition points to middle and high school.
- Provide LEAs with the flexibility, except for transition points and initial enrollment, to administer the annual ELPA only in the domains where proficiency has not been attained, in recognition of the length and labor-intensiveness of the tests for speaking and listening.

Add reporting for the number and percentage of long-term limited English proficient (LEP) students [5 or more years according to the state ELPA].

Preschool

Authorize and/or expand federal assistance for serving low and moderate income children ages 3 and 4 with developmental-appropriate preschool programs aligned with state academic standards and focused on improving school readiness, as well as strengthening kindergarten programs, and developing highly qualified staff to provide these services.

Funding and Fiscal Issues

Provide a “such sums” authorization of appropriations, particularly for Title I, II, III, and the Magnet Schools Program, in order to avoid funding cap controversy.

Eliminate the duplicative state 4% set-aside for school improvement [sec. 1003(a)], thereby increasing LEA Title I allocations by the amount of the prior set-aside, and retain the line item School Improvement Grant authorization subjecting the program to annual Appropriations Committee scrutiny [sec. 1003(g)].

Retain current ESEA formula grant provisions; no greater than current state administration set-aside; and retain the current ESEA comparability and maintenance of effort provisions.

Simplification and Rules of Construction

Reduce federal requirements by at least one-third in the main ESEA titles.

Repeal the vast majority of the statutory set-aside requirements in order to provide additional local flexibility to address local needs and to drive a larger amount of appropriated funds to the local level.

Consolidate all set-asides for state administration and state activities into a new formula grant authority for strengthen state capacity, similar to the old Title V of the 1960s and 1970s, and subject to annual appropriations.

Consolidate a number of smaller ESEA programs now under Title II, Title IV, and Title V, including the 21st Century Learning Centers, into a formula grant program to LEAs for Safe, Disciplined, and Successful Schools. [Title IV]

Clarify in statute with a new clause in sec. 1114(a)(2)(A)(iii) that Title I schoolwide programs (SWP) shall not be required to separately track services, activities, personnel, or expenditures of Title I funds once the funds reach the school, provided that the SWP meets the criteria under sec. 1114(a)(2)(B).

Remove the percentage limitations from the Transferability provisions, while protecting the integrity of the Title I (Disadvantaged Children) and Title III (English Language Learners) programs by allowing transferring funds into, but not out of, these two titles. [sec. 6123]

Retain the current state and local waiver provisions [sec. 9401], but include a restriction prohibiting the Education Department from adding further criteria or requirements beyond the specific provisions of this section of ESEA.

Expand the State waiver authority in ESEA -- similar in content to the earlier “Ed Flex” authority of the 90s and early 2000s -- while ensuring that services to disadvantaged students are not diluted or disrupted and continuing the current non-waiveable provisions [sec.9401] under these state-approved waivers as well.

Add a clarifying Rule of Construction to the ESEA General Provisions that nothing in the Act or in the administration of the Act by the Secretary or a state educational agency shall be interpreted to require a local educational agency to expend state or local funds to meet any requirement of this Act, unless this rule is expressly limited or in the case of a non-federal matching requirement in the Act. [Title IX]

Add a clarifying Rule of Construction to the ESEA General Provisions that nothing in the Act or in the administration of the Act by the Secretary or a state educational agency shall be interpreted to restrict or prevent a local educational agency from using formula grant funds under an applicable title of the Act to carry out the requirements or authorized activities of that title, unless this rule is expressly limited or in the case of a non-federal matching requirement in the Act. [Title IX]

Add a new Rule of Construction that “States shall not impose additional requirements for local educational agencies beyond the provisions of the Act and applicable federal regulations, circulars, and accounting requirements. Nothing in this provision shall be interpreted to prevent a State from carrying out state requirements for local educational agencies that are consistent with the Act and established by state law.” [Title IX]

Council of the Great City Schools®

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Toledo
Washington, D.C.
Wichita

February 26, 2015

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

Dear Representative:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, opposes the pending Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization bill, H.R. 5.

Although the Committee made an effort to streamline and simplify this overly prescriptive federal statute, H.R. 5 contains numerous financial provisions that adversely impact the Great City Schools and the disadvantaged students nationwide who rely on these critical programs.

The Council would prefer to be supporting recommendations for improving ESEA rather than opposing the bill outright. We would much rather be suggesting ways to establish minimum federal parameters around state accountability systems or strengthening program planning and management of the Title I program instead of standing against this measure. In fact, we believe there are areas in ESEA that could be pared back beyond what is in the pending bill.

Yet, there is an essential set of ESEA fiscal requirements that separately and together help ensure the integrity and "value-added" benefits of funds generated by specific groups of high-need students that the current bill undermines. For instance, eliminating maintenance of effort requirements would allow states to cut their own state education expenditures without creating a federal compliance violation. In effect, ESEA funds could become merely an offset against reductions in state school aid without providing the additional benefits that federal education aid is designed to provide. There is ample historic precedent to support this concern and the retention of supplement not supplant provisions will not cure the damage from eliminating maintenance of effort.

In addition, the essential targeting of funds to concentrations of high-need students under ESEA is fundamentally eroded in H.R. 5. The Title I portability provision could aggregate poverty-weighted Title I allocations allotted to individual school districts, and then redistribute those funds through a uniform, unweighted per-pupil allocation across each state. Districts with high concentrations of poverty would have their funds redistributed to lower-poverty communities. In fact, there would no longer be Title I schools as we know them, since any school with one or more low-income students would receive the same Title I per-pupil allocation as schools with the greatest concentration of poor students. The result would be a dilution of scarce federal funds and the inability of schools to provide programs of sufficient size and scope to produce results. Ironically, this is the antithesis of local control of Title I funds.

Other provisions in H.R. 5 also skew the benefits of ESEA funds away from students who generated the federal allocations in the first place. For example, programs for migrant students, neglected and delinquent students and English learners would no longer have separate funding authorizations, and would become set-asides under a quasi-consolidated Title I program. Of even greater concern, the “alternative use” authority in section 1002 would allow funds generated by one group of students to be spent on another. For example, funds generated by English learners (currently ESEA Title III) could be used for activities unrelated to meeting their educational needs. In the same manner, H.R. 5 would allow Title I funds generated by disadvantaged students to be spent on general schoolwide activities for all students by eliminating the 40 percent poverty threshold for Title I schoolwide activities, a proposal that exacerbates the problems with the portability provision.

H.R. 5 also reduces local school district formula aid by over three-quarters of a billion dollars annually by increasing the state Title I set-aside for school improvement/direct services grants by 150 percent. And, the Council cannot support a \$2 billion block grant controlled by state departments of education in Title III-B, providing nearly unfettered discretion to states over how these funds will be used and which schools and districts will receive more than a token amount of funds.

Further, H.R. 5 establishes a virtual freeze on ESEA program funding for the remainder of the decade and beyond. Service levels for high-needs students would deteriorate over time and risk the widening of an already cavernous achievement gap. ESEA program funding has virtually no impact on the nation’s long-term structural budget problems, but could provide a real opportunity to solve it.

Additionally, H.R. 5 creates the unusual procedural hurdle of requiring each State legislature to affirmatively accept ESEA grant awards and the conditions accompanying those funds awarded to state and local educational agencies. This provision invites controversy and establishes an unnecessary barrier to the timely receipt and use of critical ESEA funds by the nation’s schools.

Finally, the Council opposes any amendment that would replace the annual grade-by-grade testing in current law. Annual statewide assessments of students are critical to our ability to monitor student progress and close achievement gaps. The Council, therefore, opposes the Goodlatte amendment to supersede state assessments with a variety of local assessments, which would inhibit important district-to-district comparisons of student and subgroup achievement, and contribute to the redundant and poorly aligned local testing that has been highlighted in virtually every review of the over-testing problem nationwide.

The effect of these financial and other proposals justifies the Council’s opposition to passage of H.R. 5 in its current form.

Sincerely,



Michael Casserly
Executive Director

RESEARCH

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



Research Department Overview

March 2015

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

School Improvement Grant Analysis

Overview

In February 2012, the Council of the Great City Schools published a report on the rollout of the School Improvement Grant Awards (SIG) awards in Council districts and across the country in general. The Council is preparing a new report that serves as a follow-up to the Council's original work. The number of identified SIG eligible and award schools that were urban, poor, and enrolling high-minority populations were significantly higher than national averages. The SIG funding specifically targeted the low-achieving schools across the country and a number of schools in Council districts. The purpose of the study is to examine the trends in performance for schools across the country that received SIG awards as a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

The report analyzes key performance indicators for schools receiving grant awards (SIG Award Schools) as compared to:

- 1) SIG Eligible Schools – those schools deemed eligible to receive SIG awards, but not receiving any funding in Cohort 1 or Cohort 2 of the award cycle;
- 2) Non-SIG Eligible Schools – those schools across the country not eligible to receive SIG funding due to higher levels of student achievement.

Update:

The council's research staff has conducted a qualitative analysis of selected school districts whose SIG eligible schools either showed improvement or a decline in their assessment performance. The findings from the schools were published in October 2014 and included an update of school performance from the 2012-2013 school year. The report is now available in hard copy and online.

The Landscape of Student Assessments Across CGCS Districts

Background

As our nation's urban schools prepare to roll out the Common Core State Standards assessments, discussions around the implementation challenges still remain a concern for our nation's school leaders. While many are in support of the new college and career-ready assessments, some are still hesitant about the current assessment practices and policies in our districts.

In October 2013, the Council's board of directors expressed those concerns with our research team and proposed an investigation into the current testing practices and policies within our schools. The board agreed that there is a critical need to provide clarity and draw on the lessons learned from test-based accountability. They requested that the Council's research team reach out to member districts to get a better understanding of the assessments currently in place, how those assessments are mandated, lessons learned from administering those assessments, and the purposes and uses of current assessments across districts.

In addition, the board was interested in understanding parent/community perspectives and their level of comfort with assessments. With the data collected from our member districts, the board suggested that the Council develop a guide for districts to develop a coherent approach to assessments, including the steps districts should employ for ensuring parents and the community understand the purpose and need for assessments.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of how our districts are using their current assessments to better serve their students. This study will look into those policies and practices and how they compare to the implementation of common core assessments. The study hopes to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lessons learned from current assessment practices?
2. Who mandates current assessments?
3. What questions do current assessments answer? What questions are unanswered by current assessments?
4. How are these assessments different from Common Core assessments?
5. How are these assessments used for accountability, instruction, and/or sorting purposes?
6. What are parents' and community leaders' perspectives on assessments?

Proposed Study

As a first step, the Council's research staff has conducted a comprehensive survey of member school districts regarding their planned assessment practices for the 2014-2015 academic year. Preliminary findings from the survey results were published in October 2014.

The Research Team is currently compiling a list of school, district, state and national-level assessments and develop profiles of assessments across the following categories: 1) high school, 2) special education, 3) English language learners, 4) gifted students and 5) local, state, and national system-wide assessments. The team will pull the data from various district and national websites and will also contact several districts to gain a better understanding of how assessments are used. Each profile will answer the critical questions provided in the "purpose of the study" section. In addition to the assessment profiles, the team will develop a comprehensive profile on three case study districts--Boston Public Schools, Fresno Unified School District and Chicago Public Schools. The comprehensive profile will take a further look into how these districts are using each of these assessments and what a typical assessment calendar for a student may look like.

Update:

The results from the assessment survey will be released during the Council's Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. in March 2015. The results will include an analysis of federal, state, and district mandated assessments administered during the 2014-15 school year. The results will also include a comprehensive profile on three case study districts – Chicago Public Schools, Boston Public Schools, and Fresno

Unified School Districts. The case study will include interviews with both principals and teachers in the districts.

Assistant Principal Study

Overview

In partnership with the Wallace Foundation, the Council is conducting a study of the role of assistant principals in the nation's large urban school districts. The focus of the study is to provide information on the roles and skills of assistant principals as well as professional development needed to support them. Moreover, the study will explore the process in which districts recruit prospective assistant principals, provide professional development, and allocate assistant principals to schools within districts.

Update

The Council's research team is currently developing a survey instrument that will be sent to Council member districts in the spring of 2015. District site visits are also underway to various grant recipients.

Update on On-Going Projects

Beating the Odds XI (BTO): An Analyses of Urban Student Performance on State Assessments and NAEP

Overview

Beating the Odds annually documents and analyzes assessment and demographic data for each member district.

Update

The BTO XIII Executive Summary is now available in hard copy and online. The 2014 report includes assessment and demographic data from 2009-10 through 2012-13. Complete information with individual district profiles are also be available online on the Council's website at <http://www.cgcs.org/Research/BTOXIII>.

Secondary NAEP Analysis

Overview

In an effort to provide additional guidance to Council districts as they begin to implement the Common Core State Standards, staff will conduct secondary analyses of NAEP data. This analysis will be broken down in two parts. First, our team will compare the performance of large cities (LC) and TUDA districts with their respective states on 2013

NAEP. This analysis will be unique, however, as it will remove the contribution of the LC and TUDA results from state estimates. Second, the research team will conduct an analysis similar to the *Pieces of the Puzzle Addendum* released in 2011 examining the performance of the 21 participating districts and their changes in student performance from 2009 to 2013. The analyses will focus on how did each district performed:

- compared to the national public sample and the large city populations?
- compared to one another when we control for relevant student demographic background characteristics?
- compared to their expected performance based on relevant student demographic background characteristics?
- across mathematics and reading subscales?
- on selected items on the assessment?

Black Male Initiative

Overview

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.

Update

Fall Pre-conference on Improving the Achievement of Young Men of Color. The Council hosted a meeting titled, *United to Make a Difference: Improving the Achievement of Young Men of Color.* The meeting allowed urban school district leaders share and refine their strategies for addressing the needs of young men of color in their school districts. The Council has continued to work with districts who signed the Pledge to provide updates on implementation plans to improve the educational and social outcomes of Males of Color.

Partnerships. The Council has explored the expansion of partnerships with various organizations across the country to support the implementation of member district

pledges to support Males. This fall, the Council partnered with the College Board to identify and reach out to young men of color who have demonstrated the potential to succeed in AP classes. This spring, the Council partnered with the National Basketball Association (NBA), the NBA Players Association, and the NBA Retired Players Association to begin supporting efforts in districts to support young men of color in NBA cities.

Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Overview

The Council has received \$4.6 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The three-year grant is aimed at promoting and coordinating successful implementation of the new kindergarten to 12th-grade Common Core State Standards in English-language arts and mathematics in big-city public school systems nationwide.

Update

The Common Core State Standards Implementation Survey

In 2014, the Council administered the third annual Common Core Implementation Survey. Thirty-nine urban districts responded to the survey (a response rate of about 70 percent of CCSS districts) and provided insight on districts' current progress and emerging challenges in implementing the Common Core State Standards. The results include responses from curriculum directors, research directors, ELL and special education directors, and communication directors. The survey asks questions related to district strategic planning, professional development activities, attention to specific student groups (including ELLs, students with special needs, and struggling students), data management, and communication with stakeholders. The full report is available in print or online at <http://www.cgcs.org/Research/CommonCoreSurvey2014>.

Key findings include:

- Between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of respondents who rated certified instructional personnel (i.e., certified teachers) as either “very prepared” or “somewhat prepared” increased from 30 percent to about 40 percent.
- Over three-fourths of respondents rated their district’s progress as “excellent” or “good” in terms of providing professional development in ELA (80 percent) and Math (76 percent).
- The percentage of respondents who at least “somewhat agreed” with the statement that ESL teachers are prepared to ensure that ELLs are able to meet the rigor of the CCSS increased by 9 percentage points between 2013 and 2014.
- Approximately 82 percent of responding special education directors agree or strongly agree that their district is successful at identifying students with disabilities – an increase of approximately 11 percentage points from 2013.

However, approximately 55 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that their district highly prioritizes ensuring that students with disabilities are able to meet the rigor of the CCSS – a decrease of 9 percentage points from 2013.

- Between 2013 and 2014, over 80 percent of research directors have rated their district’s progress as either “excellent” or “good” in terms of providing timely access to data for school leaders (80 percent and 87 percent) and creating data systems to store information from multiple departments (95 percent and 88 percent).

Urban Superintendents Survey

Overview

This eighth bi-annual survey is designed to capture the urban superintendents’ characteristics, tenure, and salary.

Update

The survey was distributed to superintendents on January 6, 2014. Survey results and analysis were released this fall. It is available in print or online at <http://www.cgcs.org/Research/SuptSurvey2004>.

Urban School Board Survey: Characteristics, Structure, and Governance of Large Urban School Boards

Overview

This is the fourth in a series of reports on the makeup and structure of school boards in the nation’s large urban school districts. This report details the dimensions of school board operations that include school board governance, benefits, committee structures, campaigns, and training on key issues affecting urban school districts. This report also highlights demographic trends in the makeup of school boards in urban school districts.

Update

The survey will be sent to the Council’s school board liaisons the spring of 2015.

BEATING THE ODDS

BEATING THE ODDS

Analysis of Student Performance on State Assessments



Results from 2012-2013 School Year

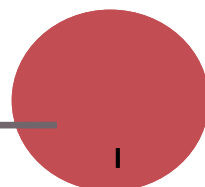
Beating the Odds

Analysis of Student Performance on State Assessments

Results from 2012-2013 School Year

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Acknowledgements

The Council of the Great City Schools thanks our superintendents, school board members, curriculum directors, research directors, communication directors, ELL directors, special education directors, and staff for their courage in producing this report and for their commitment to our urban schoolchildren.

Sources

Data were gathered from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, “Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey,” and “Local Education Agency Universe Survey.” (All data are labeled preliminary by NCES.)

Student achievement data were gathered from State Department of Education websites.

About the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 67 of the nation’s largest urban public school systems. Its board of directors is composed of the superintendent of schools and one school board member from each member city. An executive committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between superintendents and school board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in their improvement. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities in such areas as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, research, and technology. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, and has its headquarters in Washington, DC.

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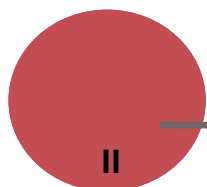
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council of the Great City Schools has prepared this thirteenth edition of *Beating the Odds* to give the nation an in-depth look at how big-city schools are performing on the academic goals and standards set by the states. This analysis examines student achievement in mathematics and reading from spring 2010 through spring 2013. It also measures achievement gaps between cities and states, Blacks and Whites, Hispanics and Whites, and between other student groups. Finally, the report examines district progress. It asks two critical questions: “Are urban schools improving academically?” and “Are urban schools closing achievement gaps?”

Data from this report indicate that urban school districts are making progress. Some outcomes look better than others. Trend lines differ from one city to another. Nevertheless, the data indicate overall movement and progress. In general, *Beating the Odds XIII* shows that the Great City Schools continue to make important gains in mathematics and reading scores on state assessments. The study also presents additional evidence that gaps are narrowing between urban districts and states.

As with other reports in this series, the findings in *Beating the Odds XIII* are to be interpreted with caution. The nation does not have an assessment system that allows us to measure progress relative to the same standard across all school districts in the country. The Council of the Great City Schools is addressing this weakness through the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and we hope this concern will be further mitigated by the implementation of the common core assessments.

For more than a decade, the Council has produced this report on how its major city school systems are performing on the state assessments devised to boost standards, measure progress, provide opportunity, and ensure accountability for results. Data are presented on 67 city school systems from 37 states and the District of Columbia. The statistics are presented year-by-year and grade-by-grade on each state test in mathematics and reading between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013. City-by-city statistics are available on the Council’s website, www.cgcs.org. We also present data by race, language, disability, and income in cases where the states report these publicly. Every effort was made to report achievement data in a way that was consistent with the No Child Left Behind Act—that is, according to the percentages of students above “proficiency.”

The report also presents important demographic data. Included are enrollment data by race, poverty, English language proficiency, and disability status. Statistics are also presented on student/teacher ratios and average school size. Finally, changes in these demographic variables between 2008-2009 and 2011-2012 (the most recent year on which federally collected data are available) are shown. Data are presented for each city and state.

Where We Are Today: Key Findings

To assess student achievement in the Great City Schools, the Council analyzed state assessment data in a variety of ways.

First, we examined the percentage of Great City School students who scored at or above proficiency on their respective state assessment. These data on fourth and eighth graders are reported from 2009-2010 through 2012-2013.

Second, the Council looked at gaps in student scores on state assessments based on race as well as economic, language, and disability status. We wanted to determine the extent to which the Great City Schools have reduced achievement gaps and to discern which grades were making the most progress in narrowing the gaps. Rather than defining the achievement gaps as the difference between the various student groups within each district, we define the gap as the difference between the proficiency rates of a given student group in the district and a comparison group statewide. For example, we compared the proficiency rate of Black students in a given district to White students in the same grade across the state. We also compared other student groups like English language learners in the district to non-English language learners across the state. This methodology eliminates the artificial "zero-sum" game that pits students in the same district against one another, and takes into account the fact that some cities have very few White or economically advantaged students to whom a comparison can be made.

Third, the Council looked at whether the performance of each Great City School district was above or below the average for its state. We did not examine the data school-by-school or "group performance within school" because of the sheer volume of such an analysis.

Six major findings about student achievement in urban schools emerged from this study, *Beating the Odds XIII*.

1. Mathematics achievement on state assessments is improving in urban schools.
2. Urban school achievement remains below state averages in mathematics on state assessments.
3. Gaps in mathematics achievement on state assessments in urban schools appear to be narrowing.
4. Reading achievement on state assessments is improving in urban schools.
5. Urban school achievement is below state averages in reading on state assessments.
6. Gaps in reading achievement on state assessments in urban schools appear to be narrowing.

The movement to reform education in the U.S. is grounded in concerns for improving America’s urban public schools. Conversations about standards, testing, vouchers, charter schools, funding, equity, desegregation, governance, privatization, mayoral control, social promotions, and accountability are discussions—at their core—about public education in the cities. It is a discussion worth having, for nowhere does the national resolve to strengthen our educational system face a tougher test than in our large urban centers. There, every problem is more pronounced, every solution harder to implement.

For many years progress in urban education appeared to be at a standstill. Critics noted that performance was stagnant and urban systems seemed paralyzed by structural problems in governance, labor relations, bureaucracy, resources, management, operations, and politics.

Urban school leadership appeared to have tried everything and come up short: thousands of education programs, hundreds of curricular changes, countless social interventions, and numerous parental involvement strategies—all at a cost of millions of dollars. Among many observers, there was the nagging fear that the struggle was lost and the effort wasted.

What changed the outlook, of course, was the standards movement in the early 1990s. The public reminded educators—particularly those in cities—why we were in business in the first place and what we were being held responsible for delivering. Not only did the priorities of big city schools change, but the prospects for meeting our challenges brightened as well. Urban leaders redoubled their efforts. They improved their support to schools, designed more purposeful professional development, better aligned their curricula to state standards, differentiated instruction, and created meaningful accountability systems; thus bringing forth the first fragile signs that a turn-around in urban education was indeed possible.

Urban schools know that it is not enough to assure people that we are working harder to meet high standards or to say that public education is worth the investment, although both are surely true. We must back up those assurances with results—concrete, verifiable documentation that our efforts to improve education in the cities are paying off and that the public’s money is being well spent.

This report provides a thirteenth look at the performance of the Great City Schools on assessments used by the states to measure student achievement and to hold districts and schools accountable. *Beating the Odds XIII* seeks to answer the questions, “Are urban schools improving?” and “Are achievement gaps narrowing?” This report provides a straightforward picture of urban school progress to the public, the press, policymakers, educators, and everyone with a stake in education reform.

The report is divided into two sections:

- The first section explains the purpose of the report, the methods used to analyze the data, and the limitations of that data. It lays out the main findings emerging from the Council’s analysis of state assessment data and other information. It also presents graphs and bullets showing critical trends in urban student achievement and changes in urban school demographic patterns.
- The second section presents a summary of demographics for all of the Council districts. Print editions of this report from previous years included individual district profiles. This year, because of the sheer volume of the data, the individual city profiles are available on our website at <http://www.cgcs.org>. There, readers have the option of downloading the districts of most interest to them.

The purpose of measuring student performance and reporting it to the public is, of course, to channel help to those students, schools, and communities that need it most— and to honestly confront shortcomings and pursue needed improvements. This report will show the shortcomings and the progress. It also lays out the challenges, for Beating the Odds XIII is not only a report card on urban education— it is also a report card on the nation and its commitment to leave no child behind.

Methodology

This report presents district-by-district reading and mathematics achievement for 67 of the nation's major city school systems. It provides performance data from spring 2010 through spring 2013. It also presents state test data by year, grade, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language and disability status.

These state assessment results were collected by Council staff from a number of sources. Each state's website was searched for information that described its assessments, the grades and subjects in which the tests were administered, the years in which the tests were given, the format or metric in which results were reported, and changes in test forms, procedures, or scales. The decision was ultimately made to include data only on reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, because all states reported results in these critical subject areas. Science results will be added in subsequent reports.

Assessment data were then examined to determine the number of years the state had administered the tests to ensure that the report included only results that were comparable from year to year. Data were eliminated if states changed tests or significantly modified their guidelines about which students to test.

Data were also collected by race where reported by the state. Not all states report their disaggregated data, even if they gather it. Results for Black, Alaskan Native/American Indian, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic and White students are included in this report.

When available, data were also collected on economically disadvantaged students (usually defined as free & reduced-price lunch or Title I eligibility), English language learners (usually defined as limited English proficiency or bilingual), and students with disabilities (usually defined as special education or students with Individualized Education Plans).

The reader should note that data are generally presented in the same way that the federal legislation requires. Every effort was made to report district-wide data on "performance levels" to show the percentage of students who score at or above "proficient" levels as specified in the law. We did not report "at or below basic" categories, as this represents only the inverse of proficiency scores rather than a meaningful category of the lowest level of achievement.

We then calculated the percentage point change between 2010 and 2013 for each district and juxtaposed it against the state's progress over the same period so the reader could compare each district's rate of progress with that of its state. We define the gap as the difference between the proficiency rates of a given student group in a district and their comparison group statewide.

In addition to the data presented for individual districts, aggregate test results are reported for districts. Aggregate district results are generated by counting the number of districts that achieved a particular outcome (e.g., the number of districts that increased or decreased achievement gaps since the earliest year of data reported for their district in this edition of BTO).

Data Limitations

The assessment data presented in Beating the Odds XIII have a number of important limitations that readers should keep in mind. We have not been able to correct many of these problems since our first report was published because states have not always changed how they report their results. The reader should be aware of the following limitations in the data.

1. As a result of the nation's 50-state assessment system, it is not possible to compare assessment data across states. Each state has developed its own test, test administration guidelines, timelines, grades tested, and other technical features. It is not technically sound to compare districts across state lines. Therefore, the report does not rank cities on their performance, nor are test results in one state or city directly compared with any other. Comparisons within a given state can be made but should be done with caution.

2. Student performance considered "proficient" in one state may be "basic" or below in another. In addition, the scale from the highest possible score to the lowest will differ from test to test across states and will affect how close city averages look compared to their states. Moreover, the distance between any two points on a scale may not be the same.
3. Trend lines vary in duration from state to state. Because of differences in testing patterns, data availability, and changes in tests from state to state, some districts have trend lines spanning more years than other districts do. Some may have data for as many as four years (from 2009-2010 through 2012-2013), while others may have data for just one year.
4. No tests of statistical significance were conducted on test score changes on state assessments, nor are standard errors of measurement included in this report. As such, the comparisons in this report are made using point estimates rather than confidence intervals.
5. Tests also vary in their degree of difficulty. This report did not attempt to analyze the difficulty or rigor of state assessments. A state with a challenging test may produce lower district scores, while a state with an easy test may have higher district scores. High scores do not necessarily mean an easier test, however.
6. The data in this report are limited by what each state publicly reports. There may be circumstances where the data in this report are incomplete because the state has not posted all of its findings on its website or has not broadly circulated reports containing the findings by our publication date.
7. One part of the analysis compares specific districts to their respective states in the most recent year of testing: 2012-2013. Districts with 2012-2013 data were only included in the analysis if 2012-2013 data was also available for their state. These calculations are represented in the summary statistics regarding district performance relative to their states.
8. State and aggregate results in the report include data from their respective cities. We have not attempted to remove city data from state or national averages before making comparisons.
9. Some states administer reading tests to their students; other states administer an English language arts test. This report presents both kinds of data under the general "reading" heading. In general, language arts tests include both reading and writing, but states may have such tests with differing mixes of the two areas. In addition, the types of writing included on the state tests may differ from state-to-state and from year-to-year. For instance, one year a state may have a writing component that calls for students to write a narrative, but the next year, the state may have students summarizing information or responding to a literature prompt. Scores can fluctuate accordingly. This report relies mainly on reading tests to summarize our findings, but if language arts tests are available instead of reading tests those results are used here.

Demographic and Staffing Data

To place the academic gains in context, the Council collected additional data on district demographics and staffing. This information came from various surveys of the National Center for Education Statistics that we collected through the Common Core of Data. Trends for each demographic variable are shown for school years 2008-2009 and 2011-2012 (the most recent year for which federal data were available). Thus, the time period for these contextual data is slightly different from the period for which test scores were reported.

DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT ON STATE ASSESSMENTS

I. IMPROVING MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT: A NATIONAL PRIORITY

In April 2010, President Obama reconfirmed the nation’s commitment to strengthen student achievement in mathematics and science. Addressing the National Academy of Sciences, the president announced the beginning of a national campaign to move American students “from the middle to the top of the pack in science and mathematics over the next decade.”

While science scores are not yet reported as widely, *Beating the Odds XIII* examines state assessment results in mathematics to determine whether urban public school systems are making progress toward this goal of increased student achievement. The Council examined mathematics achievement data on state assessments in multiple ways. This report tracks—

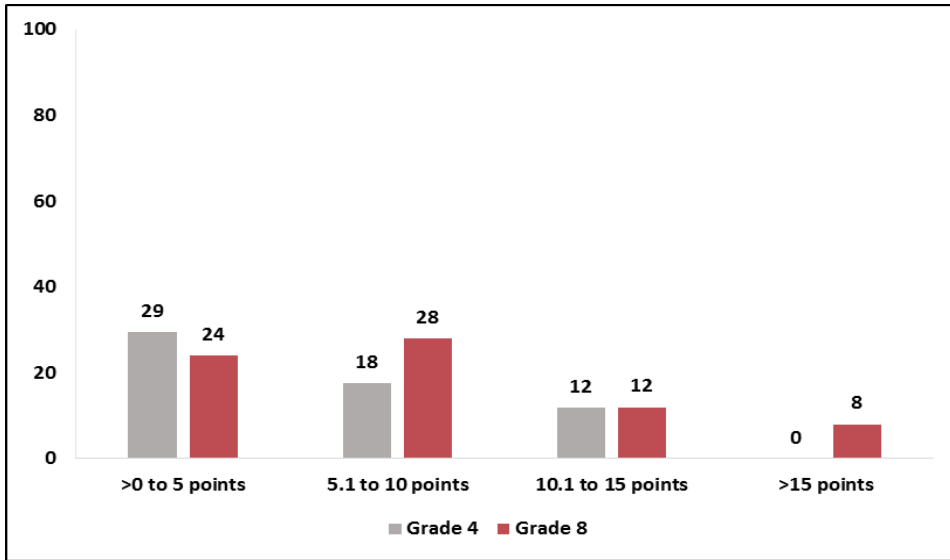
- Trends in mathematics achievement on state assessments,
- District achievement compared to the state, and
- Changes in achievement gaps in mathematics among various student groups.

Trends in Mathematics Achievement at the School District Level

Figures 1 and 2 display these results:

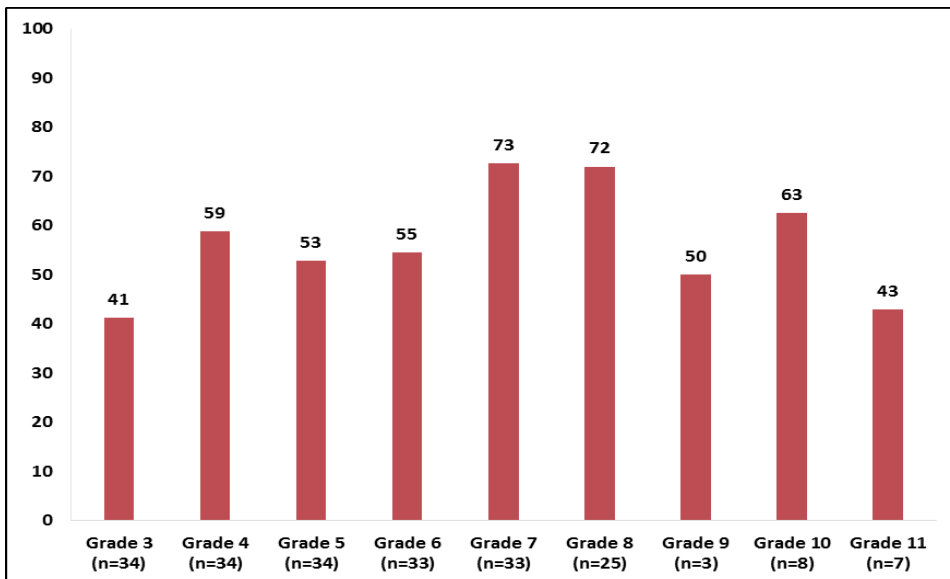
- Fifty-nine percent of districts increased the percentage of fourth-grade students who scored at or above proficient between 2010 and 2013. About 12 percent of districts increased the percentage of fourth graders who scored at or above proficient by greater than ten percentage points (Figure 1).
- Seventy-two percent of districts increased the percentage of eighth-grade students who scored at or above proficient between 2010 and 2013. Approximately two out of 10 (20%) of these districts increased the percentage of eighth graders who scored at or above proficient by greater than ten percentage points (Figure 1).
- Over 40 percent of districts improved in mathematics across all grade levels (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state mathematics assessments between 2010 and 2013*



* Percentage point gains do not sum to 100 percent because not all districts made gains.

Figure 2. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state mathematics assessments by grade between 2010 and 2013



District Achievement in Mathematics Compared to the State

The Council examined how Great City School districts performed in relation to their states on mathematics assessments. These district and state level achievement data were analyzed to determine: 1) the percent of districts with mathematics scores equal to or greater than their respective states; and 2) the percent of districts that increased their mathematics scores at faster rates than their respective states.

Figures 3 and 4 display these results:

- Some 23 percent of districts had fourth-grade proficiency rates that were equal to or greater than their respective states in 2013 (Figure 3).
- Twenty percent of districts had eighth-grade proficiency rates that were equal to or greater than their respective states in 2013 (Figure 3).
- Twenty-nine percent of districts showed changes in students scoring at or above proficient levels that were greater than or equal to their respective states in fourth grade mathematics (Figure 4).
- Forty-four percent of districts showed changes in students scoring at or above proficient levels that were greater than or equal to their respective states in eighth-grade mathematics (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Percentage of CGCS districts with mathematics proficiency rates greater than or equal to state proficiency rates, 2012 and 2013

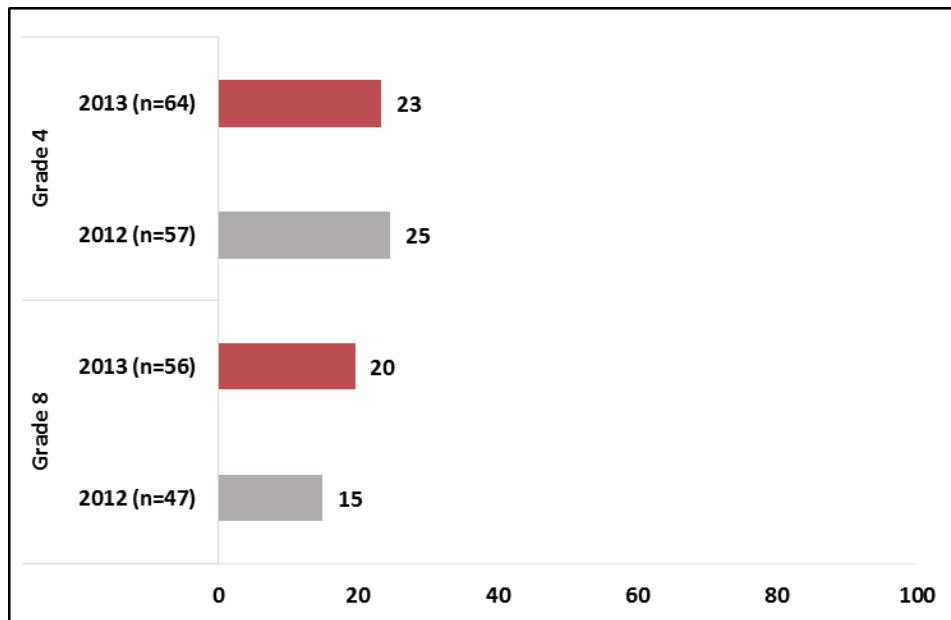
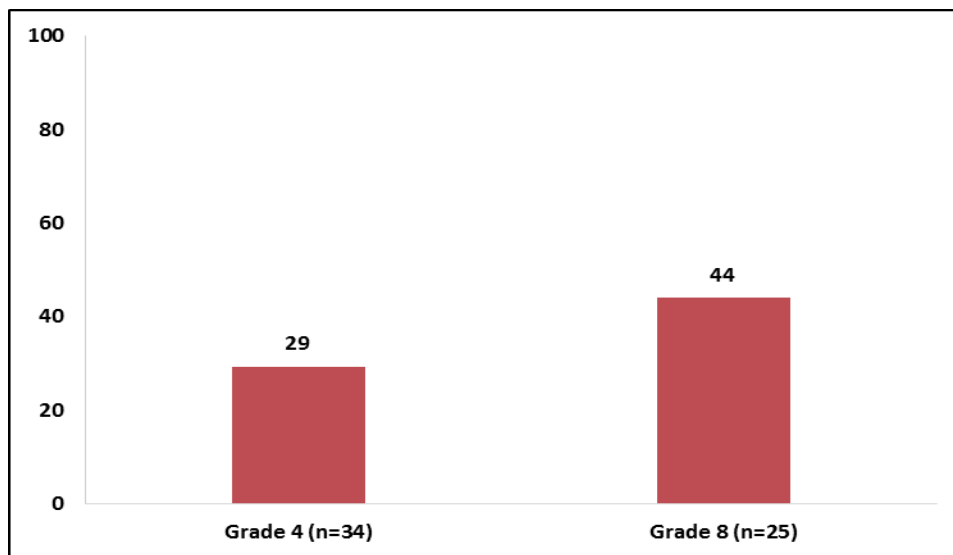


Figure 4. Percentage of CGCS districts showing changes in proficiency levels in mathematics greater than or equal to their respective states between 2010 and 2013



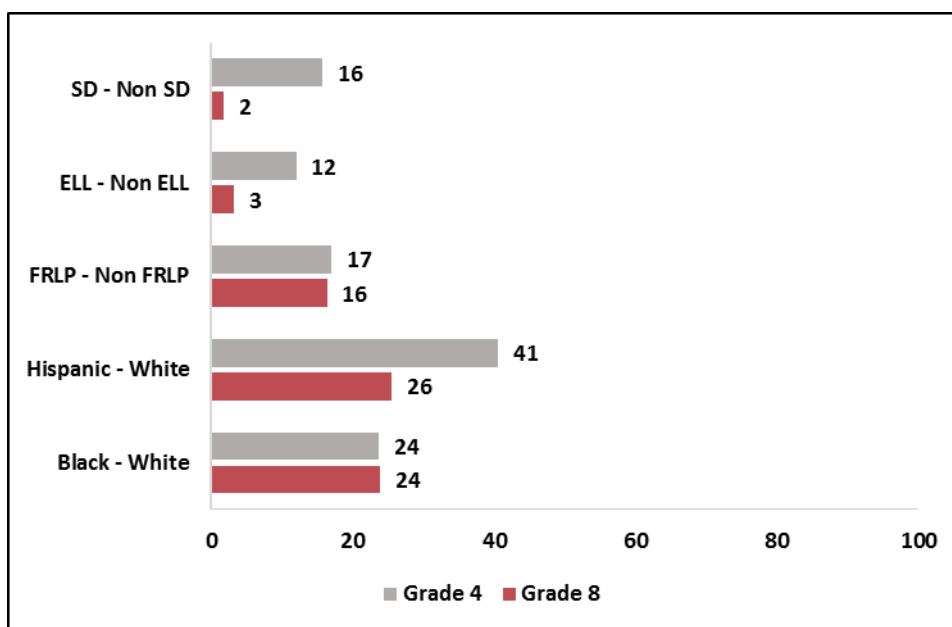
Changes in Mathematics Achievement within Student Groups

Finally, state assessment data were examined to determine whether achievement gaps in mathematics were narrowing in the Great City Schools. Figure 5 displays these results—

- Nearly a quarter of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their Black fourth graders and White fourth graders statewide; nearly 25 percent of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap in mathematics between their Black eighth graders and White eighth graders statewide.
- Over forty percent of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap between their Hispanic fourth graders and White fourth graders statewide; twenty-six percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap in mathematics between their Hispanic eighth graders and White eighth graders statewide.
- Seventeen percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their economically disadvantaged fourth graders and non-economically disadvantaged fourth graders statewide; sixteen percent of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap in mathematics between their economically disadvantaged eighth graders and non-economically disadvantaged eighth graders statewide.

- Twelve percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their English language learners in fourth grade and non-English language learners in fourth grade statewide; three percent of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap in mathematics between their English language learners in eighth grade and non-English language learners in eighth-grade statewide.
- Sixteen percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap in mathematics between their students with disabilities in fourth grade and students without disabilities in the fourth grade statewide; two percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap in mathematics between students with disabilities in eighth-grade and students without disabilities in the eighth-grade statewide.

Figure 5. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state mathematics assessments by student groups, 2013*



*See appendix for group size

II. IMPROVING READING ACHIEVEMENT: A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

In the nation's urban school systems, the polarizing debate over whole language versus phonics has largely given way to a growing understanding of the need to both build foundational literacy skills in early childhood and explicitly support academic literacy development throughout adolescence. However, advancing literacy—particularly at the secondary level—remains a fundamental challenge for local and national education leaders, and the need to raise student achievement in reading has never been more pressing.

"Encouraging students to improve their reading is a key to their success in school and in life,"
Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

To examine reading achievement in the nation's Great City School districts, the Council examined reading achievement data on state assessments in multiple ways. Looking at district results on state assessments for all of the Great City School districts along with statewide results, this report examines—

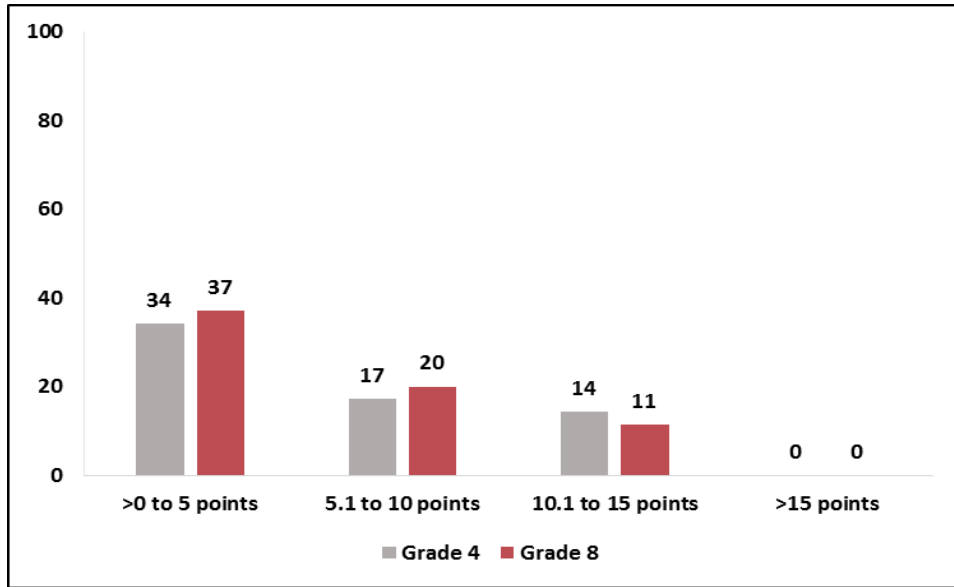
- Trends in reading achievement on state assessments,
- District achievement compared to the state, and
- Changes in achievement gaps in reading among various student groups.

Trends in Reading Achievement at the School District Level

Figures 6 and 7 display these results:

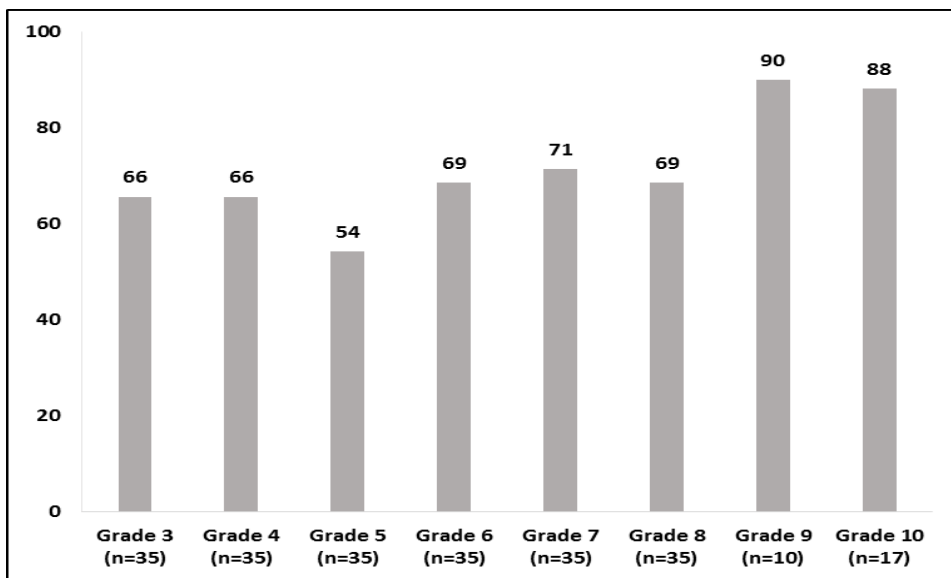
- Sixty-five percent of districts increased the percentage of fourth-grade students who scored at or above proficient between 2010 and 2013 (Figure 6). About 14 percent of districts increased the percentage of fourth graders who scored at or above proficient by greater than ten percentage points (Figure 6).
- Approximately 68 percent of districts increased the percentage of eighth-grade students who scored at or above proficient between 2010 and 2013. Slightly more than one out of ten of these districts increased the percentage of eighth graders who scored at or above proficient by greater than 10 percentage points (Figure 6).
- Districts continue to make progress in reading as more than half made gains on state reading assessments across all grade levels (Figure 7).

Figure 6. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state reading assessments between 2010 and 2013*



* Percentage point gains do not sum to 100 percent because not all districts made gains.

Figure 7. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state reading assessments by grade between 2010 and 2013



District Achievement in Reading Compared to the State

The Council examined how Great City School districts performed in relation to their states on reading assessments. These district and state level achievement data were further analyzed to determine: 1) the percent of districts with reading scores equal to or greater than their respective states; and 2) the percent of districts that increased their reading scores at faster rates than their respective states.

Figures 8 and 9 display these results:

- Some 22 percent of districts had fourth-grade proficiency rates that were equal to or greater than their respective states in 2013 (Figure 8).
- Twenty percent of districts had eighth-grade proficiency rates that were equal to or greater than their respective states (Figure 8).
- Over thirty percent of districts showed changes in students scoring at or above proficient levels that were greater than or equal to their respective states in fourth-grade reading (Figure 9).
- Over forty percent of districts showed changes in students scoring at or above proficient levels that were greater than or equal to their respective states in eighth-grade reading (Figure 9).

Figure 8. Percentage of CGCS districts with reading proficiency rates greater than or equal to state proficiency rates, 2012 and 2013

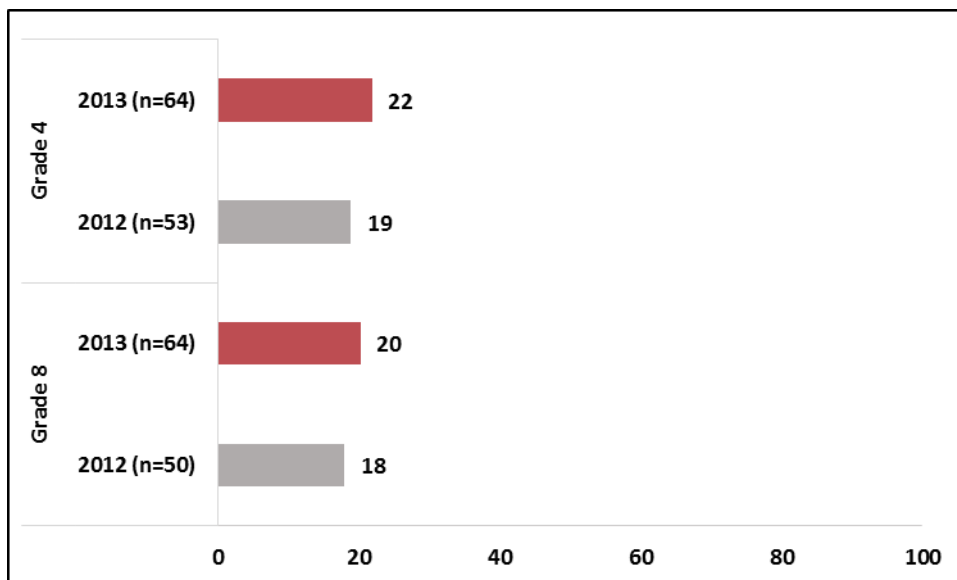
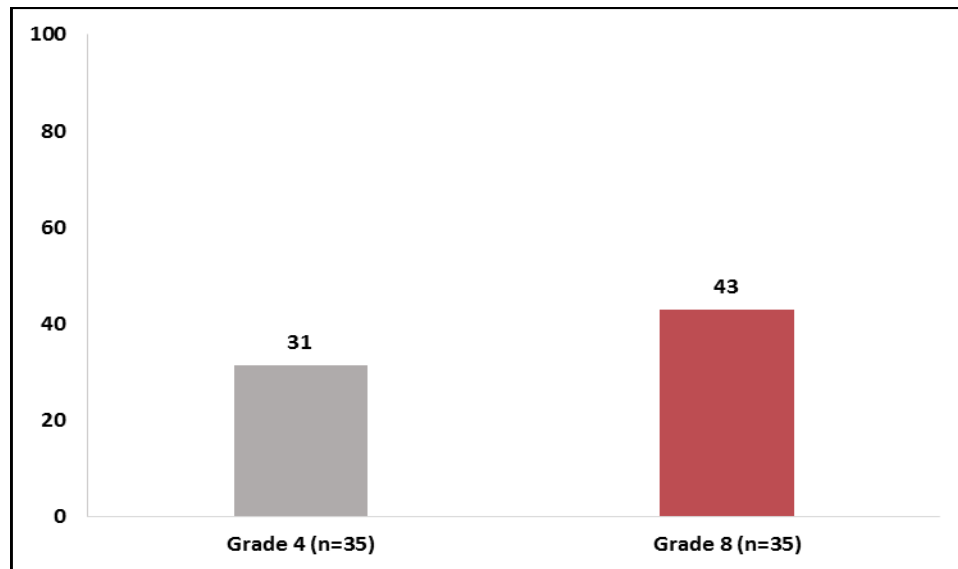


Figure 9. Percentage of CGCS districts showing changes in proficiency levels in reading greater than or equal to their respective states between 2010 and 2013*



Changes in Reading Achievement within Student Groups

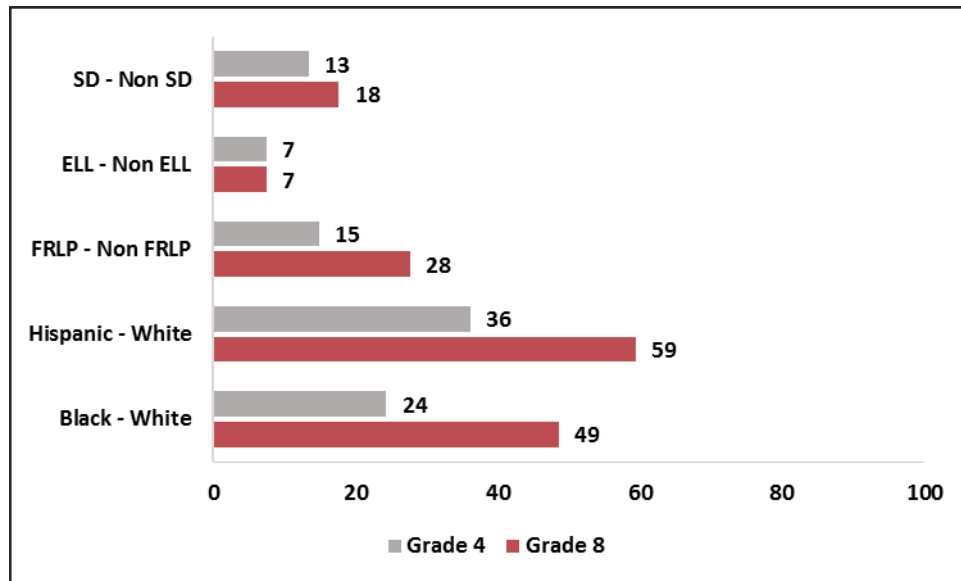
Finally, state assessment data were examined to determine whether achievement gaps in reading were narrowing in the Great City Schools. Figure 10 displays these results —

- Nearly a quarter (24%) of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their Black fourth graders and White fourth graders statewide; nearly half (49%) of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap in reading between their Black eighth graders and White eighth graders statewide.
- Over a third (36%) of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their Hispanic fourth graders and White fourth graders statewide; over half (59%) of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap in reading between their Hispanic eighth graders and White eighth graders statewide.
- Fifteen percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their economically disadvantaged fourth graders and non-economically disadvantaged fourth graders statewide; over a quarter of Great City School districts narrowed the achievement gap in reading between

their economically disadvantaged eighth graders and non-economically disadvantaged eighth graders statewide.

- Seven percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap between their English language learners in fourth grade and non-English language learners in fourth grade statewide; the percentage was the same in eighth grade.
- Thirteen percent of districts narrowed the achievement gap in reading between their students with disabilities in fourth grade and students without disabilities in the fourth grade statewide; eighteen percent narrowed the achievement gap in reading between their students with disabilities in eighth-grade and students without disabilities in the eighth-grade statewide.

Figure 10. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state reading assessments by student groups, 2013*



*See appendix for group size

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND STAFFING

The challenge of the Great City Schools is to increase student achievement in a context far different from that of the average public school system. Urban education is unique, in part, because it serves students who are typically from lower-income families, who are learning English as a second language, and who often face discrimination. The role of urban schools is to overcome these barriers and teach all children to the same high standards.

This chapter examines the context of urban education—a context that should be considered in discussing the achievement data presented in previous chapters. The chapter reviews basic demographic characteristics of the Great City Schools, including student poverty and limited English proficiency, and how they have changed during the period in which state assessments were being implemented.

The reader can find individual city data online. The demographic and staffing data for this portion of the study were gathered from the Common Core of Data at the National Center for Education Statistics. Due to the preliminary and sometimes erroneous nature of some of these 2011-2012 data, the information was supplemented with data from district or state websites.

Student Demographics

The demography of urban education continues to be a subject of enormous public interest. Our student composition is important because research shows that income, disability, and English-language proficiency are strongly correlated with academic achievement.

Student Enrollment in the Great City Schools

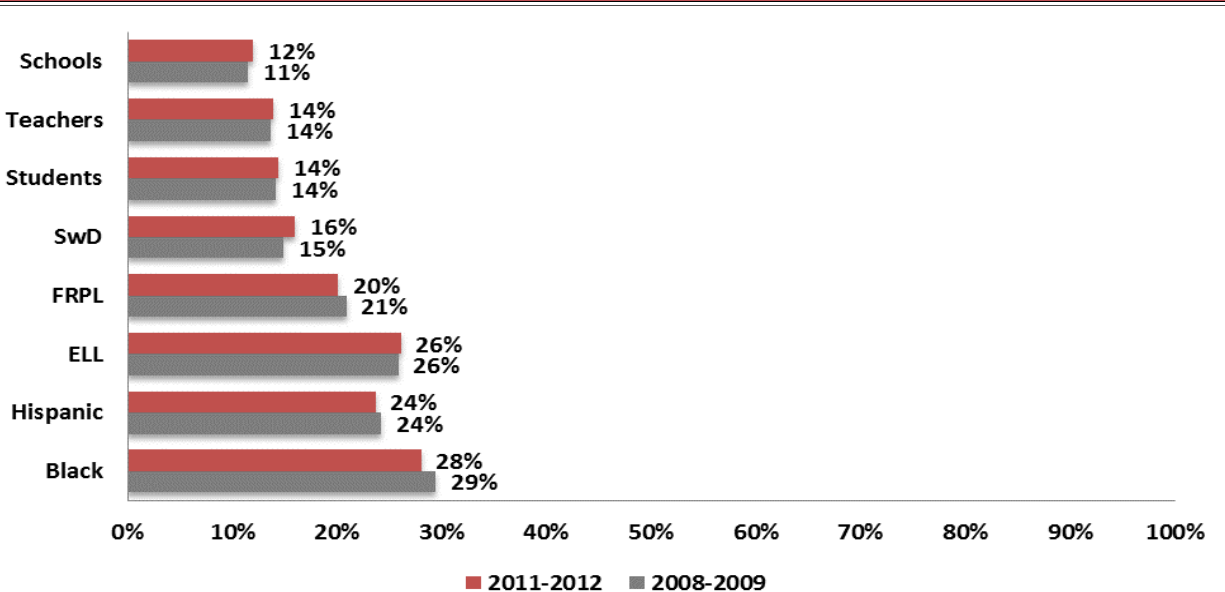
The Great City Schools continue to enroll a significant share of the nation's students (Figure 11). Data from the NCES Common Core of Data show that—

- The Great City Schools enrolled 7,133,116 students in 2011-2012 (the most recent year on which federal data are available), an increase of about two percent over the 6,965,810 students enrolled in 2008-2009.
- During the same period, total public school enrollment nationally increased from 49,265,572 students in 2008-2009 to 49,429,653 students in 2011-2012.

Figure 11. Council of The Great City Schools Demographic Profile

	CGCS		NATION	
	2008-2009	2011-2012	2008-2009	2011-2012
Number of Students	6,965,810	7,133,116	49,265,572	49,429,653
Number of FTE Teachers	443,779	414,976	3,246,705	2,987,042
Student-Teacher Ratio	16	17	15	17
Number of Schools	11,711	12,095	101,979	100,920
Student Groups				
Free and Reduced Price Lunch	65%	68%	44%	49%
Students with Disabilities	13%	14%	13%	13%
English Language Learners	16%	16%	9%	9%
Student Racial/Ethnic Groups				
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%	8%	5%	5%
Black	35%	31%	17%	16%
Hispanic	36%	39%	21%	24%
White	20%	19%	54%	52%

CGCS as a Percent of the Nation's Public Schools



Income and Poverty in the Great City Schools

Students in the Great City Schools are far more likely to come from low-income homes than the average student nationally. A summary of key indicators for the 2011-2012 school year include the following—

- About 68 percent of students in the Great City Schools were eligible for a free/reduced price lunch subsidy, compared with 49 percent nationally.
- About 20 percent of the nation's students eligible for the school lunch program are enrolled in the Great City Schools.

English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities

The Great City Schools also serve a higher proportion of English language learners than the average school system. However, these urban school systems enroll about the same percentage of students with disabilities as the average school district nationally, although the Great City Schools often enroll a greater share of students with high-cost disabilities. Key indicators in the 2011-2012 school year include the following—

- About 16 percent of students enrolled in the Great City Schools are English language learners, compared with 9 percent of students nationally.
- About 14 percent of students in the Great City Schools are classified as students with disabilities, compared with 13 percent of students nationally.

Enrollments by Race and Ethnicity in the Great City Schools

The racial characteristics of urban schools are also significantly different from the average school system nationwide. Approximately 79 percent of Great City School students are of color—primarily Black, Hispanic, Asian American or American Indian—compared with 46 percent nationally.

Key statistics include the following—

- About 31 percent of Great City School students were Black in 2011-2012, compared with 16 percent nationally.

- About 19 percent of Great City School students were White in 2011-2012, compared with 52 percent nationally.
- About nine percent of Great City School students were Asian American or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native in 2011-2012, compared with six percent nationwide.
- The percentage of students in the Great City Schools who were Black declined from 35 percent in 2008-2009 to 31 percent in 2011-2012. (The percentage of students nationally who were Black decreased from 17 to 16 percent over the same period.)
- The percentage of students in the Great City Schools who were Hispanic increased from 36 percent in 2008-2009 to 39 percent in 2011-2012. (The percentage of students nationally who were Hispanic rose from 21 percent to 24 percent over the same period.)
- Approximately 25 percent of all students of color in the nation were enrolled in the Great City Schools in 2011-2012.

Student-Teacher Ratios and Average Enrollments per School

Research suggests that the number of students in a class affects student achievement. In particular, access to smaller classes has been shown to improve achievement for some students, while larger classes have a negative effect on student performance. Moreover, the benefits of smaller classes appear to be greater for disadvantaged and minority students. In order to explore this issue, the Council analyzed two contextual variables: student-teacher ratios and average enrollments per school. Student-teacher ratios are not synonymous with class size, because they include special education teachers and other instructional staff that are often assigned to small and dedicated classes, but the ratios might serve as a convenient proxy.

The Council's analysis showed the following trends in school size in urban districts—

- The average student-teacher ratio in the Great City Schools was 17 to 1 in 2011-2012, compared with the national average of 17 students per teacher.
- The average number of students per school in the Great City Schools decreased from 595 students in 2008-2009 to 590 in 2011-2012.
- The average number of students per school nationally increased from 483 2008-2009 to 490 in 2011-2012.
- The average school in the Great Cities enrolled about 100 more children (590 students) than the average school nationally (490 students) in 2011-2012.

This report represents the thirteenth time the Council of the Great City Schools has examined the status and progress of America’s urban schools on state reading and mathematics tests. The report is imperfect for all the reasons indicated in the methodology section. Data are not comparable from one state to another. Test results are reported in different metrics. Not all states publish their disaggregated results. Test participation rates are not always available. Testing procedures are sometimes not the same from year to year.

Nevertheless, the data in Beating the Odds XIII present the best available picture of how America’s Great City Schools are performing on state tests and suggest they are making some progress in both reading and mathematics.

These results continue to be preliminary but encouraging. The Council is committed to improving its annual reporting of city results on state tests. And the Council will make every effort to continue reporting data in a way that is consistent with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) as long as the law is in place. We want to encourage the public to expect more transparency in urban school data.

City schools, moreover, want to improve their reporting to the nation on other indicators, including course-taking patterns and graduation rates. No single indicator gives the public the entire picture of urban education any more than one Stock Market index adequately describes the economy.

However limited and flawed the state data continue to be, the overall direction of the state numbers is corroborated by the most recent estimates from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The state assessment data indicate that mathematics achievement in the cities has improved by significant margins at both the fourth and eighth grades, and that reading is improving in the cities at the fourth and eighth-grade level.

Mathematics Results

The trends in mathematics performance are unambiguous for the nation and the Great City Schools. Achievement is improving. However, the Council does acknowledge the gains should be faster. Beating the Odds XIII indicates that 59 percent of Great City School districts increased the percentage of fourth graders scoring at or above proficiency between 2010 and 2013. Additionally, 12 percent of the districts increased the percentage of fourth graders that scored at or above proficient by greater than 10 points over that same period. At the same time, 72 percent of districts increased the percentage of eighth graders that scored at or above proficient; and twenty percent had percentage point increases of greater than 10 points.

Reducing racial disparities in academic achievement is also a fundamental goal of NCLB. This report, *Beating the Odds XIII*, indicates that the Great City Schools have made some incremental reductions in the disparities of racial and ethnic gaps in student performance in mathematics between 2010 and 2013. On average a quarter of Council districts are narrowing racial and ethnic gaps in mathematics achievement among fourth and eighth graders. In addition, about 15 percent of the districts are also reducing differences by economic group in achievement at both the elementary and middle school levels.

Reading Results

The data in this report also suggest that reading achievement in the Great City Schools is improving. *Beating the Odds XIII* found gains in the percentage of students who were scoring at or above proficiency levels on their respective state tests. Sixty-five percent of Great City School districts increased the percentage of fourth-grade students who scored at or above proficient between 2010 and 2013. Similarly 69 percent of districts increased the percentage of eighth-grade students who scored at or above proficient during that same time; nearly a third of districts had gains of over 10 percentage points.

Racial achievement gaps in elementary reading achievement also showed signs of narrowing. Over a quarter of urban school districts narrowed the gaps between Black students and White students statewide. Similarly, over a third of districts narrowed the fourth and eighth-grade Hispanic-White achievement gaps. Over fifteen percent of districts narrowed the gaps between economically disadvantaged fourth and eighth graders and their more well-off counterparts statewide.

The Urban Context

Progress in mathematics and reading achievement is occurring in an urban context that is significantly different from other schools. *Beating the Odds XIII* looked at those differences and how they have changed over the last several years. Urban schools enroll about 20 percent of the nation's free-lunch eligible students, 25 percent of all students of color in the country, and disproportionately large numbers of English language learners and economically disadvantaged students. While we embrace and encourage diversity, we understand that large concentrations of these student groups often dictate additional support for these students and their teachers so that all students reach their highest potential. These percentages have remained relatively unchanged in recent years.

Nonetheless, it is clear that student achievement in the Great City Schools is improving. Some of these gains are coming from working harder and smarter and squeezing inefficiencies out of every scarce dollar.

Some of the gains, however, come from cities doing what the nation has agreed is likely to work- higher standards, strong and stable leadership, better teaching, more instructional time, regular assessments, stronger accountability, and efficient management.

The data suggest that gains are possible on a large scale— not just school-by-school. It is now time to determine how the pace of improvement can be accelerated. The Council of the Great City Schools and its member districts are asking these questions and pursuing the answers aggressively.

The nation, for its part, needs to think long and hard about why urban schools have to beat any odds.

Number of Districts Included In Specific Analyses

Figure 1. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state mathematics assessments between 2010 and 2013	Number of Districts Improving	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 4		
0 to 5 percentage points	10	34
5.1 to 10 percentage points	6	34
10.1 to 15 percentage points	4	34
≥ 15.1 percentage points	0	34
Grade 8		
0 to 5 percentage points	6	25
5.1 to 10 percentage points	7	25
10.1 to 15 percentage points	3	25
≥ 15.1 percentage points	2	25
Figure 2. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state mathematics assessments by grade between 2010 and 2013	Number of Districts Improving	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 3	14	34
Grade 4	20	34
Grade 5	18	34
Grade 6	18	33
Grade 7	24	33
Grade 8	18	25
Grade 9	1	2
Grade 10	5	8
Grade 11	3	7
Figure 3. Percentage of CGCS districts with mathematics proficiency rates greater than or equal to state proficiency rates, 2012 and 2013	Number of Districts with Scores Greater than or Equal to State	Number of Districts Reporting
SY 2012-13		
Grade 4	15	64
Grade 8	11	56
SY 2011-12		
Grade 4	14	57
Grade 8	7	47
Figure 4. Percentage of CGCS districts showing changes in proficiency levels in mathematics greater than or equal to their respective states between 2010 and 2013	Number of Districts with Faster Growth than State	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 4	10	34
Grade 8	11	25

Figure 5. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state mathematics assessments by student groups, 2013	Number of Districts Reducing Gaps	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 4		
District SD - State Non SD	8	51
District ELL - State Non ELL	6	50
District FRPL - State Non FRLP	8	47
District Hispanic - State White	15	37
District Black - State White	9	38
Grade 8		
District SD - State Non SD	1	59
District ELL - State Non ELL	2	62
District FRPL - State Non FRLP	9	55
District Hispanic - State White	12	47
District Black - State White	11	46
Figure 6. Percentage of CGCS districts with proficiency gains on state reading assessments between 2010 and 2013	Number of Districts Improving	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 4		
0 to 5 percentage points	12	35
5.1 to 10 percentage points	6	35
10.1 to 15 percentage points	5	35
≥ 15.1 percentage points	0	35
Grade 8		
0 to 5 percentage points	13	35
5.1 to 10 percentage points	7	35
10.1 to 15 percentage points	4	35
≥ 15.1 percentage points	0	35
Figure 7. Percentage of districts with proficiency gains on state reading assessments by grade between 2010 and 2013	Number of Districts Improving	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 3	23	35
Grade 4	23	35
Grade 5	19	35
Grade 6	24	35
Grade 7	25	35
Grade 8	24	35
Grade 9	9	10
Grade 10	15	17
Grade 11	12	17

Figure 8. Percentage of CGCS districts with reading proficiency rates great than or equal to state proficiency rates, 2012 and 2013	Number of Districts with Scores Greater than or Equal to State	Number of Districts Reporting
SY 2012-13		
Grade 4	14	64
Grade 8	13	64
SY 2011-12		
Grade 4	10	53
Grade 8	9	50
Figure 9. Percentage of CGCS districts showing changes in proficiency levels in reading greater or equal to than their respective states between 2010 and 2013	Number of Districts with Faster Growth than State	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 4	11	35
Grade 8	15	35
Figure 10. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state reading assessments by student groups, 2013	Number of Districts Reducing Gaps	Number of Districts Reporting
Grade 4		
District SD - State Non SD	7	52
District ELL - State Non ELL	4	54
District FRPL - State Non FRLP	7	47
District Hispanic - State White	13	36
District Black - State White	9	37
Grade 8		
District SD - State Non SD	9	51
District ELL - State Non ELL	4	54
District FRPL - State Non FRLP	13	47
District Hispanic - State White	22	37
District Black - State White	18	37

PLEDGE ON MALES OF COLOR



A Pledge by America's Great City Schools

- Whereas, some 32 percent of the nation's African American males and some 39 percent of the nation's Hispanic males attend school each day in one of the Great City School systems; and
- Whereas, the academic achievement of Males of Color in the nation's urban school systems and nationally is well below what it needs to be for these young people to be successful in college and careers; and
- Whereas, disproportionate numbers of Males of Color drop out of urban schools and often have low attendance rates; and
- Whereas, Males of Color disproportionately attend under-resourced schools and are taught by the least-effective teachers; and
- Whereas, the nation's Great City Schools have an obligation to teach all students under their aegis to the highest academic standards and prepare them for successful participation in our nation:
- Be It Therefore Resolved that, the Great City Schools pledge to ensure that its pre-school efforts better serve Males of Color and their academic and social development, and
- That the Great City Schools will adopt and implement elementary and middle school efforts to increase the pipeline of Males of Color who are succeeding academically and socially in our urban schools and who are on track to succeed in high school, and
- That the Great City Schools will keep data and establish protocols that will allow it to monitor the progress of Males of Color and other students in our schools and appropriately intervene at the earliest warning signs; and
- That the Great City Schools will adopt and implement promising and proven approaches to reducing absenteeism, especially chronic absenteeism, among Males of Color, and
- That the Great City Schools will develop initiatives and regularly report on progress in retaining Males of Color in school and reducing disproportionate suspension and expulsion rates, and
- That the Great City Schools will develop initiatives and regularly report on progress in increasing the numbers of our Males of Color and other students participating in advanced placement and honors courses and gifted and talented programs, and
- That the Great City Schools will strongly encourage colleges of education to adopt curriculum that addresses the academic, cultural, and social needs of Males of Color, and that the district will maintain data on how these teachers do with our Males of Color, and
- That the Great City Schools will develop initiatives and regularly report on progress in increasing the numbers of Males of Color and other students who complete the FAFSA, and
- That the Great City Schools will work to reduce as appropriate the disproportionate numbers of Males of Color in special education courses, and

- That the Great City Schools will work to transform high schools with persistently low graduation rates among Males of Color and others and to provide literacy and engagement initiatives with parents.
- That the Great City Schools will engage in a broader discussion and examination of how issues of race, language, and culture affect the work of our district.

Council of the Great City Schools

Albuquerque Public Schools	Anchorage School District
Atlanta Public Schools	Austin Public Schools
Baltimore City Public Schools	Birmingham Public Schools
Boston Public Schools	Bridgeport Public Schools
Broward County Public Schools	Buffalo Public Schools
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools	Chicago Public Schools
Cincinnati Public Schools	Clark County (Las Vegas) Public Schools
Cleveland Metropolitan School District	Columbus City School District
Dallas Independent School District	Dayton Public Schools
Denver Public Schools	Des Moines Public Schools
Detroit Public Schools	District of Columbia Public Schools
Duval County (Jacksonville) Public Schools	East Baton Rouge Parish School System
El Paso Independent School District	Fort Worth Independent School District
Fresno Unified School District	Guilford County (Greensboro) Public Schools
Hillsborough County (Tampa) Public Schools	Houston Independent School District
Indianapolis Public Schools	Jackson Public Schools
Jefferson County (Louisville) Public Schools	Kansas City (MO) Public Schools
Long Beach Unified School District	Los Angeles Unified School District
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	Milwaukee Public Schools
Minneapolis Public Schools	Nashville Public Schools
Newark Public Schools	New York City Department of Education

Norfolk Public Schools	Oakland Unified School District
Oklahoma City Public Schools	Omaha Public Schools
Orange County (Orlando) Public Schools	Palm Beach School District
Philadelphia School District	Pittsburgh Public Schools
Portland Public Schools	Providence Public Schools
Richmond Public Schools	Rochester City School District
Sacramento City Unified School District	Saint Paul Public Schools
San Diego Unified School District	San Francisco Public Schools
Seattle Public Schools	Shelby County (Memphis) Public Schools
Toledo Public Schools	

Districts Submitting Males of Color Implementation Plans

	Submitted Plans?	Permission to Share	Notes
Atlanta	Yes	No	
Austin	Yes	Yes	
Baltimore	Yes		
Cleveland	Yes	No	
Columbus	Yes		
Dayton	Yes		
Denver	Yes		
D.C.	Yes	Yes	
Duval County	Yes		
Fort Worth	Yes		
Jackson	Yes		
Jefferson County	Yes	Yes	
Kansas City	Yes	Yes	
Long Beach	Yes	Yes	
Los Angeles	Yes	Yes	
Miami-Dade County	Yes		
Milwaukee	Yes		
Minneapolis	Yes	No	
Nashville	Yes		
Philadelphia	Yes	No	
Portland	Yes	No	Will send after approval from district
Rochester	Yes		
San Francisco	Yes		
Toledo	Yes		



November 19, 2014

Dear Colleague:

As a country, we are leaving far too much talent on the table. Too many high-achieving African American, Latino, and Native American students — students who have demonstrated the potential to do well in Advanced Placement® (AP®) courses — are not enrolling in those courses. This is an enormous missed opportunity for them and for all of us working for a stronger, fairer, and more secure nation.

The ground that's been gained for these students has largely been the result of the inspired and dogged work of superintendents, school board members, staff, and teachers in our major cities. The new partnership between the Council of the Great City Schools, the College Board, and the White House — through its My Brother's Keeper initiative — aims to bolster the good work already under way, share lessons learned as broadly as possible, and dramatically increase the proportion of students of color with AP potential who are enrolled in AP courses. We are pleased to announce that the National Council of La Raza, the National Urban League, and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights will also be joining us in this effort.

But the real success of this effort depends on you, your schools, counselors, and teachers. Success — we have learned from leading districts — is a dynamic mixture of good data and human interaction. Without the data, we can't effectively target outreach and resources. The College Board's AP Potential™ tool provides critical information about which students have demonstrated — by their performance on the PSAT/NMSQT® — potential to succeed in AP. PSAT/NMSQT scores often uncover academic ability that might otherwise be overlooked, and they spotlight those students ready to be successful in AP. And in focus group after focus group, these students tell us that the single most important factor in their decision to take an AP class was the support and encouragement from adults in their school.

You are in the strongest position to make a difference — by establishing a clear districtwide priority, by setting public goals for improvement, by monitoring progress at individual schools, and by providing guidance and support to your principals as they encourage students with AP potential to take these courses.

We at the College Board and the Council of the Great City Schools have found our collaboration to be invaluable, and we believe that you will too. We have asked the College Board's regional vice presidents to set up meetings in December with each of you. The purpose of these meetings is to:

- Review the PSAT/NMSQT data for your districts and schools;
- Set goals for improving AP enrollment of African American, Native American, and Latino students this spring;
- Identify needs that your district will have in meeting these goals; and
- Assess how the College Board and the Council can help you meet these goals.

For reference, we are including a possible agenda for these meetings.

In the next couple of weeks, a member of the College Board staff will be in touch with you about setting up an initial meeting. In the interim, we invite you to view this webinar about the steps you can take to propel our students forward. We hope you will consider sharing it with the principals and counselors in your district as well.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to reach out to Amy Wilkins (awilkins@collegeboard.org) or Ray Hart (rhart@cgcs.org).

Sincerely,



Michael Casserly
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS



David Coleman
PRESIDENT AND CEO
THE COLLEGE BOARD



Letter of Partnership

Dear Colleagues:

The National Basketball Association (NBA), The National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) and the National Basketball Retired Players Association (NBRPA) and the Council of the Great City Schools (the Council) are pleased to announce their partnership to improve the educational and social outcomes of males of color. This partnership is part of President Obama’s *My Brother’s Keeper* initiative and is designed by our organizations as a collaborative effort to help put boys and young men of color on a path to lifelong success.

The Council and 61 of its urban public school district members across the country have signed a pledge that was announced by the president to improve the academic attainment of the males of color who attend their big city school systems; enhance access to advanced placement and honors courses; bolster school attendance and reduce absenteeism; lower disproportionate suspensions and expulsions; increase graduation rates; and other actions that will heighten success for urban students who have historically been left behind.

For its part, the NBA, NBPA and NBRPA made a commitment to provide resources to encourage our young men and boys of color to stay in school, apply themselves to their studies, show up to class every day, do their homework, and serve as leaders in their schools and communities. The NBA family already has a number of initiatives that work in service of these goals.

Enclosed is the contact information for NBA teams as well as school system leaders. Over the next several months, we recommend representatives from the NBA teams and school system leaders in their respective cities reach out to each other to determine how we can better coordinate our efforts, our talents, and our skills to improve the lives of boys and young men beginning during the 2015-2016 school year. In addition, the NBA and the Council will be encouraging our affiliates and members to highlight ways in which individual city school systems and teams are partnering on behalf of our young people.

We hope that all of our teams and all of the urban school systems signing the pledge will work individually and collectively on this important goal that will not only enrich the lives of our males of color, but will help realize the full promise of our great country. Thank you.

Warmest Regards,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Todd Jacobson
Senior Vice President, Social Responsibility
National Basketball Association

COMMON CORE ASSESSMENTS



Implementing Common Core Assessments

Challenges and Recommendations

September 2014

Council of the Great City Schools



Implementing Common Core Assessments

Challenges and Recommendations



September 2014
Council of the Great City Schools

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Introduction

The United States is transforming how it assesses the academic attainment of its schoolchildren. These changes will come, in part, with the implementation of the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia (SBAC) assessments in the spring of 2015, as well as other assessments developed by individual states to measure student performance on the Common Core State Standards or other college- and career-readiness benchmarks.

These tests—selected by the states—will replace the disparate collection of assessments that many states independently develop, administer, and score, and they will give the country a clearer sense of how our children are performing across jurisdictions and compared to students in other countries. Except for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), nothing like a common set of academic standards and assessments has existed in the United States until now.

The assessments will also be different from anything the United States has done before for another reason. The state assessments that currently exist grew largely from requirements by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1994 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, and were meant to be inexpensive and quickly scored. The result was that, in some cases, many of these exams used rather simplistic, multiple-choice questions where students could pick the correct answer from among a number of options.

In contrast, while the new PARCC and SBAC assessments in English language arts will retain some multiple-choice selections, students will also be asked to read from multiple challenging texts, construct both short and extended responses citing information and evidence from those texts, and justify their responses. In math, students will be asked to apply their understanding of key concepts, solve more complicated, multi-step problems, and explain their reasoning.

In addition to the assessments being different for students, their administration will present a number of challenges for school administrators and teachers: (1) Administrators will need to put technology in place for students to access and take the assessments, (2) they will need to create a test-taking schedule based on both technology and human resources and enlist teachers and administrators to supervise the assessments in ways that are different from current assessments, and (3) they will need to explain the results to a public that will not be used to seeing test scores that appear so low—at least initially.

For their part, teachers will be asked to fundamentally shift their instruction in order to equip students with a deeper understanding of content, critical reading and problem-solving skills, and the ability to demonstrate and apply their knowledge in novel ways.¹

It will be important for school districts to ensure the smoothest and most effective possible implementation of these assessments. All school systems and schools want to make sure that students have the best possible experience as their learning is being assessed. In addition, school systems, administrators, and teachers will want to make sure that they are getting the most accurate information possible from the assessments in order to improve programming and instruction.

The purpose of this booklet is to help school districts across the country, particularly those in our major cities, get ready for these assessments. The booklet will briefly summarize important features of both major common core assessments—PARCC and SBAC—outline major challenges that school districts will need to attend to when planning for these assessments, and present proposals and recommendations to school districts to help them in the planning process.

¹ See *Beyond Test Scores: What NAEP Results Tell Us About Implementing the Common Core in Our Classrooms*. Washington, D.C.: Council of the Great City Schools, 2014.

There is a great deal at stake in making sure that the new assessments are administered properly and effectively. Smooth implementation of the assessments will help build the public’s confidence that the nation’s movement toward the Common Core State Standards is a step in the right direction. Conversely, a rocky implementation could be used to fuel opposition to the new standards and undermine their political viability—in common core and non-common core states alike.

This risk is particularly high in America’s Great City Schools. The press is located in our cities and they will look at our schools first in judging whether implementation nationwide is going well. In addition, administration is more complicated in our city school districts because of the sheer scale of operations. Getting these assessments right is critical to our students, to the future of the standards, and to the public’s view of our schools. This booklet is meant to help ensure success.

Summary of the PARCC and SBAC Assessments

PARCC and SBAC are the two state-led assessment organizations established with funds from the federal Race-to-the-Top program to develop and implement tests aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The following briefing describes the two assessment systems.²

PARCC. The purpose of the PARCC assessment system is to increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for success in college and the workplace. It is based on the core belief that assessments should be a tool for enhancing teaching and learning. The state-led PARCC consortium intends for the assessments to help educators increase student learning by providing timely, concrete data throughout the school year to inform instruction, interventions, and professional development as well as to improve teacher, school, and system effectiveness.

The system of aligned diagnostic, interim, and summative assessments is being designed to provide valid, reliable, and timely data; provide feedback on student performance; help determine whether students are college- and career-ready or on track; support the needs of educators in the classroom; and provide data for accountability, including measures of growth.

The PARCC assessment system will consist of five components: a required two-part computer-based summative assessment (a performance-based assessment and an end-of-year assessment); two optional components (a diagnostic assessment and a midyear assessment); and one required non-summative assessment in speaking and listening.

Teachers will have access to an online repository of resources being developed by PARCC, culled from the best products from member states, and professional development modules to support implementation and use of the assessment system. A web-based reporting system is expected to provide teachers, students, parents, and administrators with timely, user-appropriate information about the progress and instructional needs of students.

PARCC will leverage technology across the design and delivery of the system to support student engagement, innovation, accessibility, cost efficiency, and the rapid return of results. (For additional information on PARCC, see the “frequently asked questions” section in the appendix of this report.)

² Source: *Coming Together to Raise Achievement: New Assessments for the Common Core State Standards*. Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS, Updated March 2014, page 6.

SBAC. The state-led Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is expected to be fully functional by the 2014-15 school year.³ This comprehensive system has been designed to strategically “balance” summative, interim, and formative assessments through an integrated system of standards, assessments, instruction, and teacher development, while providing accurate year-to-year indicators of students’ progress toward college and career readiness.

Two of the system’s three components—the year-end summative assessment and the interim assessments available throughout the year—will contain multiple item types, including scenario-based performance tasks. The third component—a web-based set of formative tools and resources—is an instructional resource that will support teachers with their day-to-day, classroom-based assessment activities.

All components will be fully aligned with the Common Core State Standards and will draw upon research-based learning progressions that further define how students acquire the knowledge and skills called for in the standards.

A foundational feature of both the year-end summative assessments and the interim assessment system is that computer adaptive testing will be used to minimize testing time, assure broader coverage of common core standards, and provide greater score precision, particularly for students toward the high or low end of the performance spectrum.

Teachers will have access to an optional suite of online resources and tools to help them provide high-quality instruction using formative assessment processes. Through an interactive electronic platform, Smarter Balanced will provide both standardized and customized reports that can be targeted to a range of audiences for tracking, describing, and analyzing progress. (For additional information on SBAC, see the “frequently asked questions” section in the appendix of this report.)

A guiding principle for states in Smarter Balanced is “responsible flexibility.” The Consortium will make it possible for states to customize system components, while also ensuring comparability of student scores across all participating states on the summative assessments. Exhibit 1 on the next page summarizes and compares the critical features of both testing systems.

³ Source: *Coming Together to Raise Achievement: New Assessments for the Common Core State Standards*. Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS, Updated March 2014, page 17.

Exhibit 1. Key Similarities and Differences of the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia

PARCC	SBAC
Major Similarities	
Summative Assessments	
Online assessments for grades 3-8 and high school, ELA and mathematics	Online assessments for grades 3-8 and high school, ELA and mathematics
Uses a mix of item types, including selected response, constructed response, technology enhanced, and complex performance tasks	Uses a mix of item types, including selected response, constructed response, technology enhanced, and complex performance tasks
Has two components, both given during the final weeks of the school year	Has two components, both given during the final weeks of the school year
Uses both electronic and human scoring	Uses both electronic and human scoring
Is delivered and supported on computers, laptops, and tablets and a limited variety of operating systems.	Delivery supported on computers, laptops, and tablets and a limited variety of operating systems.
Other Assessments, Resources, and Tools	
Has online practice tests by grade and subject	Has online practice tests by grade and subject
Has optional diagnostic and interim assessments	Has optional diagnostic and interim assessments
Has professional development modules	Has professional development modules
Has formative items and tasks for classroom use	Has formative items and tasks for classroom use
Has an online reporting suite	Has an online reporting suite
Has a digital library for sharing vetted resources and tools	Has a digital library for sharing vetted resources and tools
Maintains state ownership and control of student data, like current state assessments	Maintains state ownership and control of student data, like current state assessments
Major Differences	
Summative Assessments for Accountability	
Has summative assessments for grades 3-11	Has summative assessments for grades 3-8 and 11 (states can add grades 9, 10, and/or 12 at an additional cost per student tested)
End-of-year test: Fixed-form delivery, i.e., students take one of several equated sets of items and tasks	End of year test: Adaptive delivery, i.e., students see an individually tailored set of items and tasks
Performance-based assessment: Three ELA performance tasks and one or more mathematics tasks	Performance tasks: One ELA performance task and one mathematics performance task
Reporting results: Student results will be reported as one of five performance levels	Reporting results: Student achievement will be reported as one of four achievement levels
Language translations to be provided at additional cost	Language translation provided at no additional cost in Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokana, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, and Ukrainian
One retake opportunity for grades 3-8 and up to three for high school, with state approval	One retake opportunity, but only for instances of a test administration irregularity

PARCC	SBAC
Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over nine testing sessions:	Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over several testing sessions over several days
Grade 3..... 8 hours	Grades 3-5..... 7 hours
Grades 4-5..... 9 hours 20 minutes	
Grades 6-8..... 9 hours 25 minutes	Grades 6-8..... 7 hours 30 minutes
Grades 9-10..... 9 hours 45 minutes	
Grade 11..... 9 hours 55 minutes	Grade 11..... 8 hours 30 minutes
Paper and pencil version available as accommodation for the 2014-15 school year for schools approved by their state	Paper and pencil version available as an accommodation for three years for schools not ready for online delivery
Assessment Delivery	
States and districts select from a set of four-week testing windows, one for the performance-based assessments and one for the end-of-year assessments	States establish one 12-week testing window for grades 3-8 and one 7-week testing window for grade 11 for summative assessments
A vendor delivery platform will be used through 2014-15 (TESTNAV), after which a PARCC-developed, open-source or fully documented delivery system will be available to member states and their contractors	An open source delivery system is being developed and will be made freely available to states and vendors for delivery of SBAC assessments and other assessment applications
All system components delivered and operational in the 2014-15 school, except for K-1 formative tools, diagnostic assessments, speaking/listening assessment, and PARCC test delivery platform	All system components delivered and operational in the 2014-15 school year
Other Assessments, Resources and Tools	
A diagnostic assessment (grades 2-8) and a mid-year assessment (grades 3-11), with the latter made up primarily of tasks similar to the summative performance-based tasks (optional use)	Interim assessments for grades 3-8 and 11 (optional) will be computer adaptive and include multiple item types, including performance tasks. The number, timing, and scope (all standards or clusters of standards) can be locally determined. Item bank can be accessed by educators for instructional and professional development uses (optional use).
A speaking and listening assessment for grades K-12 (required for grades 3-8 and high school but not used for accountability)	No speaking and listening assessment
K-1 formative performance tasks (optional use)	Exemplar instructional modules, three per grade level in ELA/literacy and mathematics, with teacher training resources; additional instructional resources submitted by educators that meet quality criteria.
(Future) item bank with released summative items and tasks	
State-developed formative and diagnostic tools will be added to the Partnership Resource Center	Formative tools, processes, and practices available in digital library

PARCC	SBAC
Sustainability Model	
Independent non-profit organization governed by chief school officers of PARCC states, PARCC Inc.	Affiliation being established with CRESST at UCLA
Costs	
\$29.50 per student for summative assessments in 2014-15 includes centralized delivery and scoring	\$22.50 per student for summative assessments in 2014-15 includes estimated costs for state-determined delivery and scoring
Costs of additional resources to be announced	Additional \$4.80 per student annually for optional resources

Source: *Key Similarities and Differences of the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia*. K-12 Center at ETS, updated March 2014, pages 20-21.

Challenges in Implementing the New Assessments

School districts across the country, particularly major urban school districts, will face a number of critical challenges this new school year as they implement PARCC, SBAC, and other state-defined college- and career-ready assessments. These challenges fall into five broad areas: leadership and politics; academic preparation; assessment planning, logistics, and sustainability; technology; and strategic communications. For a successful implementation, school district personnel will need to attend to all of them. This section describes those challenges, and the subsequent section will present recommendations for addressing them.

A. Leadership and Political Challenges

The most immediate and overarching challenges facing school systems are the need for district leaders to make implementation of the new assessments a major priority for the district and the need to constructively address the range of political challenges that will inevitably arise. Leadership and political challenges that school districts will need to be aware of include the following—

- ▶ **High-level Strategic Vision.** The foremost challenge that will present itself to school districts involves how well states and their school districts have envisioned what a successful implementation looks like. How well has that vision been articulated by the state and understood by local school districts? Is there a common strategy for implementation across the state and within the district? Does everyone have a clear understanding of what that strategy is and what the benchmarks are for pursuing the strategy?
- ▶ **District Priority.** A related challenge facing school districts is whether their leadership views effective implementation of the assessments as a major priority. Are the superintendent and school board communicating the importance of both the new tests and a smooth implementation to everyone in the district and the community? Are they deploying the personnel, resources, time, and monitoring necessary to signal to everyone that this is a priority?
- ▶ **An Overarching Plan.** A major challenge for school districts in the implementation of the new assessments will involve the development of a comprehensive plan to guide their work. Has the district plotted out the work it needs to accomplish in order to have a smooth and effective roll-out of the assessments? Is this plan comprehensive, well integrated, and coordinated? Has it articulated the roles and responsibilities of key staff, as well as the importance of full organizational participation? Does it clearly lay out procedures, tools, and ultimate outcomes? Has this plan been communicated widely and understood clearly throughout the district?

- ▶ **Staff Communication and Collaboration.** It will also be vital to break down the silos that often define district central offices and to ensure cross-departmental collaboration in the implementation of the new standards and assessments. To undertake such a dramatic shift in teaching and learning, staff will need to communicate and work together closely to ensure that schools are provided with consistent and comprehensive support, resources, and guidance. Staff and teachers will also need to be trained on how to communicate with parents and community members since research shows that most parents prefer to receive information about schools from teachers rather than from other parents.
- ▶ **Change Management.** A fifth major challenge is the need to effectively manage the changes associated with the new assessments. Do parents, teachers, school-based staff, and district-level personnel understand what the changes are and the implications of the new approach to both instruction and assessment? Do staff and parents understand why these changes are being made? Do school personnel and community members understand and embrace their roles in the change process?
- ▶ **Community and Staff Engagement.** A related issue facing school districts in the implementation of the new assessments is whether the community, parents, school staff, and other stakeholders feel engaged in the process of putting the assessments in place and feel a sense of ownership for how well it is done. Has the district effectively communicated with the community, parents, and staff about the standards and assessments and their implications?
- ▶ **Press and Media Scrutiny.** The Great Cities are home to the nation’s media and major newspapers, radio, and television stations. Many of these outlets will be looking for concrete examples of how implementation is going—and opponents of the standards are likely to look specifically for examples of school and district missteps to bolster their claims that the new benchmarks are a boondoggle. This is more than a communications challenge to school districts; it is a strategic and political challenge as well. (See section on communications challenges for further discussion.)
- ▶ **Political Opposition.** As test-time approaches, the level of political rhetoric about the assessments is likely to intensify. A large part of this will be outside the school district’s control, but districts need to be mindful of it and of how their implementation feeds the political rhetoric. There are vocal opponents of the standards and the assessments—from the political right and left—that would like to block implementation or see it go badly. Is the school system cognizant of where this opposition is likely to come from and what their best arguments are? Is the district prepared to address them? How well has this messaging been coordinated with local political and business leaders, other school districts, and allies?
- ▶ **Parental Concerns over Testing Time and Difficulty.** In addition to challenges from various political and ideological forces, parents and others may raise concerns about the length and difficulty of the new assessments. This may be particularly true in school districts whose states have chosen to participate in PARCC. School districts are not fully in control of this situation, but they may be the victims of parent pushback. Districts will need to consider how they conduct outreach and constructively address parental concerns about test-taking time or difficulty.
- ▶ **Lower Test Scores.** Student scores on the new assessments are likely to appear much lower to parents and the public than the results of previous assessments. Is the school system prepared to explain why this is occurring and what it means and doesn’t mean? Is there a plan in place for communication and outreach to the public? (See section on communications challenges.)

- ▶ ***Other Tests Given by the District and Required by the State.*** Compounding the challenge of explaining the time students will spend taking the new test is the fact that some states will be giving both PARCC or SBAC and their old summative assessments—or parts of the old assessments—in school year 2014-15. This is likely to be a temporary situation, but it will not make sense to a lot of people. Are the state and the school system being clear with the public and the press about how these assessments are being sequenced? In addition, districts will be faced with the challenge of articulating how the new assessments fit into the broader testing portfolio of the school system.
- ▶ ***Teacher Organization Concerns.*** Some teacher organizations—national, state, and local—have expressed concerns about the use of assessment results and the amount of testing in general. Some of these concerns are well grounded but others are not. How has the school district addressed these concerns with teachers, their organizations, and the parents who listen to them?
- ▶ ***Decentralization and Non-standardization.*** Many school districts have decentralized and non-standardized approaches to technology budgeting. The result may be an uneven need for devices from school to school depending on the leadership of the principals and their investments in technology. The district may face circumstances where it may be appearing to reward schools for not keeping up to date if the central office makes purchases in support of the new testing. In addition, the lack of standards in purchasing across schools may result in widely different technology without a central understanding of computing capacity to support the testing.

B. Academic Challenges of Preparing Students and Teachers

Successful implementation of the assessments will require more than administering the tests effectively or securing public support and buy-in. It also means ensuring that students are prepared to do well on the new tests. And it means ensuring that classroom teachers are prepared to modify their instruction to meet the new standards. These may be the most difficult and long-term implementation challenges that school districts will face with the new assessments. Academic and instructional challenges that school districts will need to address include—

- ▶ ***Expectations of Students and Their Work.*** A major challenge to the successful implementation of the new assessments involves adult belief systems in what students can do. Many staff members and teachers will be tempted to claim that the tests are too hard and that students are incapable of meeting the new standards and doing well on the new assessments. The district's ability to infuse high expectations and necessary supports into the implementation of the assessments will be critical to their success—and to the success of students.
- ▶ ***Preparing Students to Meet Higher Learning Standards.*** Preparing for new assessments aligned to the common core standards will involve clarifying why the changes conveyed in the new standards are being made, what they entail at each grade level, and what their implementation will look like in classrooms. In addition, teachers will need the time and opportunity to plan for and practice implementing the instructional shifts prescribed in the new standards. Do teachers know how to build and enhance complex language skills and vocabulary among their students? Do teachers and principals know what to look for in student work to determine whether students are making progress developing these skills? Do students have access to complex texts, and are teachers prepared to use such texts to advance learning? Do teachers know how to develop and use text-dependent questions that require students to explain their answers and apply their skills? Are students grappling with ideas, growing in their knowledge, working and conversing with their peers, presenting evidence and justifying their reasoning, being expansive in their responses, and applying their skills to concrete problems? Do teachers have effective strategies to help students fill in gaps in their learning while working on grade-level requirements?

- ▶ ***Preparing Students to Meet Higher Assessment Standards.*** Many students are used only to seeing assessment items on their annual state tests or end-of-course tests that are multiple choice and do not require them to explain their answers or perform a task. An immediate challenge that students will have relates to preparing them and their teachers for the differing formats in which questions may be asked, in contrast to previous state tests. Part of this challenge will involve preparing students to tackle multi-step problems that require them to struggle over an extended period with how to apply a concept they have learned and to write out an explanation of their reasoning. No longer will teachers be asking questions that require students to give one-sentence responses; students will be asked to generate thoughts, justify their thinking, and cite evidence. In addition, the challenge in preparing students will involve having teachers develop and regularly use these types of complex, multi-layered questions in their own classroom work and quizzes rather than using test-preparation worksheets.
- ▶ ***Differentiating Student Preparation.*** Students of differing needs will also present a diversity of challenges to school districts as they implement the new standards and assessments. Students who are learning English as their second language, for instance, may require additional instruction and support on mathematical vocabulary to understand precisely what is being asked of them in math items, and they will need the language skills and grasp of English conventions to effectively communicate their answers. Similarly, students with disabilities will require special preparation, depending on the disability, well beyond what their accommodations specify. In fact, a wide range of students will present unique challenges —students who are eligible for a free or reduced price meal; struggling learners in either reading or math; students who are chronically absent from school or are highly mobile; male students, particularly males of color; Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE); gifted and talented students; and students who are encountering the new standards and assessments at the mid-point in their school career.
- ▶ ***Revisiting and Updating the Curriculum.*** School districts should continue to design and, where necessary, rework or restructure their formal curricula or scope and sequence documents to ensure alignment with the common core and other college- and career-ready standards. But these materials need not only align with the standards; they also need to provide concrete, accessible guidance for classroom instruction and should embed technology in their use. This is critical for ensuring that the standards are well implemented at the ground level and that students have access to the instruction they need to do well on the assessments.
- ▶ ***Securing High-Quality and Aligned Instructional Materials and Texts.*** This challenge is a particularly difficult one for most school systems because of the relentless salesmanship facing staff members who make purchasing decisions. Many publishers claim that their materials, texts, and tools are fully aligned to the common core and other college- and career- readiness standards. This claim is rarely true, so district leaders face the challenge of making such determinations themselves. Has the district reviewed its materials and other instructional tools and guidelines to ensure alignment with the standards? Has the school district offered adequate professional development on the use of those materials and tools? In addition, a major challenge facing district implementation of the standards and the assessments will involve ensuring that the materials, texts, and supports are appropriate for the district’s varying subgroups, i.e., English language learners, students with disabilities, and struggling learners.
- ▶ ***Overseeing and Monitoring Implementation.*** Effective implementation of the standards will also involve the challenge of ensuring that they are being put into place as the district’s leadership intended. How does the district monitor implementation, and how does it know when it is off-track? Has the district developed indicators of successful implementation at the systems, school, and classroom levels? Has the district developed or adopted instructional rounds or look-for protocols that will ensure that the expected instructional shifts are being carried out in classrooms? Do all instructional staff understand the protocols? Does the district have a feedback loop in place by which it can quickly identify and resolve implementation problems?

- ▶ **Professional Development.** This challenge is a multifaceted one and involves going well beyond familiarizing teachers with “what” the standards are to preparing them on “how” to implement them in their classrooms. Has the district defined what professional development is needed to adequately prepare teachers to make the instructional shifts called for in the standards? How has the district changed the focus of its professional development to focus on new academic needs? Has the district put into place appropriate mechanisms to promote teacher use of the standards, student work samples and artifacts, and released items from PARCC and SBAC. (Are they being used by teachers in their professional learning communities and common planning time?) Are teachers using the time to modify their instruction and co-construct lessons that are consistent with the new standards? Is the work embedded in ongoing teacher development? Is it articulated across grades and content areas? Moreover, will the professional development cover use of the technology being deployed to administer the new assessments, e.g., item types, key-boarding skills, drag and drop?
- ▶ **Differentiating Teacher Preparation.** Another issue confronting school districts as they implement the new assessments will involve differentiating professional development according to the experience and expertise of teachers. New teachers may have substantially different needs than mid-career teachers and teachers near retirement—even if they are implementing the same standards and assessments. In addition, elementary and secondary-level teachers will all require differing kinds of preparation for the new assessments. Reading teachers will need preparation that differs from the preparation of math teachers. Moreover, almost all teachers will have English language learners and students with disabilities in their classes who will require differentiated instruction. And teachers in subjects other than reading and mathematics, particularly science and social studies, will require additional preparation on how to build the standards into their respective subject areas.
- ▶ **Pre-service Preparation.** While it may not be feasible for school districts to address this challenge in the 2014-15 school year, over the long run they will face the challenge of whether or not the universities and colleges of education preparing our future teachers are doing so with the new standards and assessments in mind.

C. Operational Challenges

In addition to challenges of leadership, politics, and the academic preparation of students, school districts will be faced with a host of logistical and operational challenges in the implementation of the new assessments. Short- and long-term challenges that school districts will need to address include—

Assessment Systems and Policies

- ▶ **Streamlining Systems of Assessment.** School districts nationwide test students extensively. Unfortunately, many of these assessments were designed well before the common core and other college- and career-ready standards were in place, and they do not necessarily align with the new standards. In addition, many school systems administer tests that have fundamentally similar purposes and are sometimes redundant. One of the fundamental challenges presented by the new assessments involves building a system of tests that fit together and are appropriately aligned with the expectations that the new standards are setting. This challenge will exist in the 2014-15 school year and beyond. Finally, school systems will face the challenge of deciding upon and implementing interim or benchmark assessments and ensuring that they fit with the summative assessments they will be giving.
- ▶ **Test Administration Guidelines.** School districts will also face challenges associated with needing to develop their own test-administration guidelines to accompany and supplement those provided by the states and the test vendors. These may need to include which portions of the day will be devoted to testing, which testing segments can be given when, etc. The district will also need to make decisions about the use of paper-pencil test administration—under what conditions and circumstances, how accommodations are applied, and who approves them.

- ▶ **Accommodations.** Another challenge facing school districts with the new assessments relates to accommodations for English language learners and students with disabilities. These accommodations may be different from the ones that previous state assessments included. School districts will need to ensure that each student needing accommodations gets the appropriate set when taking their technology-based assessments, something that may be difficult if the tests are not proctored by a student’s teachers.
- ▶ **Use of Data.** Districts will also face the challenge of what to do with the data that the new assessments generate. Staff members will need to think about this before the assessments are actually administered. How will the assessment results be disaggregated? Will staff members and teachers be provided with item-by-item results? How will the results be used by the district—and by principals and teachers—to improve instruction? How will the results be used to define and shape professional development of school-based staff? How will the results be integrated into the ongoing work of professional learning communities? How will results be used to focus teachers on next steps in the implementation process to improve student achievement? How will student work samples be integrated into the examination and analysis of results from the new assessments? How will results be used for administrator and teacher evaluations and accountability—and when?

Logistics and Scheduling

- ▶ **Logistical and Operational Details.** School districts will face a series of challenges involving the critical logistical details of administering the assessments that their state has adopted. For instance, has the district clearly and widely communicated information on when the testing windows are, how long the tests are, how test administration can be segmented, and how many devices will be needed? Has the district used this information to determine the number of administrators needed and how many days will be involved in both planning and test administration?
- ▶ **Use and Coordination of Facilities.** Administrators will also need to plan for where students will be tested at each school and whether any accommodations in facilities or special plans need to be made. Will students be tested in classrooms, computer labs, libraries, gymnasiums, or some other facility—or a clearly specified combination? Challenges will also entail making sure that grounds maintenance, building repairs, and other operational considerations do not interfere with or diminish the ability of students to concentrate on their work.
- ▶ **Scheduling.** School districts will face a number of scheduling challenges. These will involve scheduling of both students and staff. If your district does not have a device for every student, how are you planning to rotate students in a way that maximizes their best work and is logistically viable? How will the district schedule both actual testing and retesting due to either student absences or technology failures that nullify a student’s responses or result in testing irregularities? How will staff members be deployed to monitor students when they are not being tested— either because they have already been tested or it is not yet their turn? How many substitute teachers will you need, for whom, and during what time periods? How will the district schedule students who require special accommodations or staff monitoring? How will you handle transportation back and forth to school if there is a need to alter the regular busing schedules? How will students be scheduled into school-lab settings? Will the test administrator be a teacher of record (e.g., homeroom teacher) or a resource teacher assigned as the test administrator in the lab for the entire administration? If the test administrator is not the homeroom teacher, how will the district upload rosters of students that are associated with the test administrator, so that the test administrator can open and close the testing sessions for the selected students? Would the testing of students best be done alphabetically or through some other method?⁴

⁴ In some states, a pre-identification file is sent to the district where a particular student is attached to a particular test, i.e., each record or student can have a ‘class’ identifier to help with management at each school site. Since schools do not typically operate in a 1:1 environment and some districts use test data for teacher evaluation, one fair way to test students would be alphabetically. Teachers testing by homeroom or class sometimes get upset if their students aren’t chosen for morning testing. Some computer programs like Pearson Access show all students alphabetically anyway, so management of this process can be relatively easy. At the same time, it may be hard on young students to be tested in a new room or to be overseen by someone they do not know. Pulling students alphabetically might also mean that regular classroom instruction cannot take place because some students will be missing from class. Districts will need to consider their options carefully.

- ▶ **School-by-School Consistency.** Large school districts, in particular, may face challenges concerning whether and how administration of tests will differ from school to school and how those differences will be managed or sequenced. For instance, has your district determined how much latitude each school has in the test scheduling and administration process? What standard test administration guidelines have you communicated to schools? Will schools need to wait for other schools to test before enough devices can be moved to their campuses for testing? If administration is staggered, how will districts control student transmission of test content through social media?
- ▶ **Deployment and Training of Staff to Administer Tests.** Part of the challenge in preparing for the new assessments will involve how to effectively train and deploy staff to administer assessments, including any interim assessments the district or state has chosen. How should staff teams be defined? What training do they need? How much of the training needs to be done face-to-face and how much can be done online or via video? Who is responsible for what, and how will staff be held accountable for the implementation? How do you need to think about roles both vertically and horizontally in the organization? Will the roles of principal supervisors and principals need to change over the long run in order to be more instructionally oriented?
- ▶ **Real-time Support and Backup Plans.** Districts will also face challenges related to providing real-time support for schools as they begin test administration. How technologically literate are staff members who will be training students to take the tests? Will the district need to set up a “command center” or other centralized or regional space in which to coordinate logistics and resolve problems as they occur? (Is there someone documenting the issues and how they were resolved?) Does the coordinating team include a technology specialist? Is everyone at the school level clear about whom to call, text, or email if a question arises? Who is assigned to answer the questions, how many schools will each person cover, and what training have they had? In addition, districts will need to consider the need for backup equipment—who will have it, and how will it be deployed? Other backup challenges will also need to be considered: What will be done if there are power outages, equipment failures, or bandwidth overloads during the testing cycle that cause students to be knocked offline? What contingencies have the district put into place if emergency situations arise?

Costs and Sustainability

- ▶ **Costs.** The public and press are likely to want to know how much it cost the district to plan, administer, and staff the tests— and where the money is coming from. Of course, this will include the costs of training, technology hardware and software, technology infrastructure and broadband, curriculum and materials, and other items. A lack of understanding about the “true costs” of the assessments—start-up costs, transition costs, and ongoing or “steady-state” costs—could easily trip up a district. Districts will also need to answer questions about the costs of any interim or benchmark assessments it chooses to use.
- ▶ **Funding.** Districts will also face the issue of how to fund the acquisition of devices that are needed and what mix of funding will be handled centrally or in individual school budgets. Rapid deployment of testing purchases will place great pressure on decentralized systems, in particular, where technology purchases are made at the school level.
- ▶ **Sustainability.** Finally, the district will face a number of important challenges related to sustaining the district’s capacity to administer these assessments beyond the first year. Has the district thought about how the devices being acquired or purchased can be used for instructional and other purposes in addition to testing? How will the district store or warehouse the data? Is there a plan for how the data will be analyzed and tracked over time? How will data be disseminated back to the school levels, and how will it be used for accountability and value-added calculations? Have district administrators considered how they could bring together funds from instructional, professional development, assessment, and information technology sources to support the testing

program over time? If the district has decided to move to a 1:1 environment (where each student has a device), is there a plan in place for attaining that goal, sustaining the ratio over time, and increasing the number of staff in order to support the configuration? Building these costs into the general fund after any initial grants expire will also present districts with challenges. In addition, districts will face sustainability challenges related to (1) communicating the value of the new tests and how the information they generate will be used to inform student instruction and supports and (2) understanding the people, environmental factors, and opinion leaders who drive the debate and public opinion about these assessment.

D. Technology and Broadband Challenges

The technology challenges to smoothly implementing new, online assessments are among the most troubling and well publicized. These challenges will not be confined to the technology department but will impact the entire school district. (Comparisons of the technology features of both consortia can be found at www.setda.org.) The challenges that school districts will need to address in this area include but are not limited to—

- ▶ ***Gathering Information on the Current State of Technology in the District.*** The lack of information on what technology the district already has and where it is located school-by-school will present a major challenge in attempting to plan for the new assessments. Are devices currently purchased directly by the schools? Does each school have a dedicated technology support staff? Do larger schools (high schools and middle schools) need additional support staff? Has your district conducted a basic inventory of technology in the district to use as the baseline for planning? Does the technology inventory include facility readiness, such as adequate electrical plugs and circuit capacity? Does the technology inventory extend to peripheral devices, such as keyboards, mice, tracking balls for mice, batteries, and headsets? Does the inventory include all the different versions of the operating system? And does it contain all of the different browsers and versions of browsers? Has your district prepared a gap analysis between the existing state of the technology and the technology specifications in the assessment implementation plan—and what the assessment consortia call for? Does your assessment implementation plan incorporate the technology specifications for the assessment being given in your state? Has the district established minimum technology standards for schools? What is the ratio of technology support staff to schools?
- ▶ ***Determining Equipment Functionality.*** In addition to lack of information on the school district's inventory of technology equipment, a lack of information on the functionality of the equipment will present school systems with a major challenge. Does the equipment fall within the district's technology standards? Will the equipment withstand the service required by the assessment plan? Do wireless devices meet acceptable standards for connectivity? Do devices have the capacity to accommodate the required testing software? Is there a plan in place to upgrade devices (a refresh strategy)? Does the equipment take into consideration the ages of students and grade levels being tested? Are electrical plugs and interface devices (i.e., keyboard, headphone, and a mouse) available and functional for every device? Are backup interface devices available and a streamlined deployment process in place for schools during testing time? Are the monitors large enough to ensure that students can read the test questions? Are the mobile devices stored and charged overnight in a safe location? Do the devices have the battery life to last the entire duration of the tests? The challenge for school systems will be to determine answers to these questions well before the testing date.
- ▶ ***Standardization of FFE.*** Because of past decisions to decentralize budgets in many districts and because of insufficient funds for capital modernization, districts often face the risk of not having standardized fixtures, furnishings, and equipment (FFE) for the learning environment. Does the district have a standard computer contract? Is there a specific operating system being used? Is there a specific feature set? Do desktops or laptops constitute what is a standard device? What type of computing stations will be used? Where will the power run in terms of electrical outlets and/or charging stations?

- ▶ **Strategic Equipment Acquisition.** A related challenge to school districts will involve how they think through their acquisition of new assessment technology to augment the hardware and software they currently have. This set of issues will involve making sure that new technology is compatible with the requirements and standards that PARCC and SBAC have laid out for districts. Does the district have an asset acquisition plan that (1) coordinates the purchase of equipment and applications school by school, (2) ensures that there is a consistency of equipment that will make maintenance and support easier to manage, (3) expedites the purchase of equipment where and when needed, and (3) determines the turn-around time for acquiring the technology? Does the district have a migration strategy for sustaining equipment use by ensuring that it has the functionality for instructional and other purposes after testing is complete? Has the district aligned these decisions with their technology and assessment plans to ensure a smooth implementation and operational environment? Has the district performed reliability analysis to ensure that the devices being acquired and deployed have the highest reliability possible?
- ▶ **Configuration and Deployment Management.** The high volume acquisition of devices may be much larger and different than current incremental technology purchases in terms of the receipt, configuration, and deployment of devices. Such a high volume may place a stress on current processes and capacity to configure and deploy. Has the district assessed its method to configure and deploy devices? Does the district have the capacity with current internal staff to perform this function at the high volume needed? Is there a quality assurance process built to ensure the devices are fully functional at setup?
- ▶ **Network Capacity.** School systems will also have the challenge of making sure that they have the Wide Area and Local Area Network (WAN & LAN) capacity to handle the web-based testing in PARCC or SBAC. Each testing consortium has its own requirements, and districts will have the challenge of determining school-by-school, room-by-room, and device-by-device whether its bandwidth is sufficient to meet testing requirements. Does the district have a network infrastructure plan that will handle the testing requirements? Does the plan account for both wired and wireless capability? Has the district conducted a bandwidth analysis determining the adequacies of supporting the testing environment? Does the district have the necessary tools needed to maintain (manage and actively monitor) the network? Does the district have the tools necessary to manage devices dependent on and independent of the testing environment? These issues are critical to ensuring the viability of the testing environment. Has each school conducted a mock/practice test with pertinent personnel, designated devices, and designated rooms to ensure that the facility and the IT infrastructure (wired and wireless networks) have the capacity to accommodate the concurrent load?
- ▶ **Facilities Adequacy.** Depending on the age of the school building, is the electrical wiring within the school sufficient to support the assessment program? Is access to sufficient electrical outlets adequate? Has the district reviewed fire/life/safety approaches to ensure the electrical connections meet all fire codes?
- ▶ **Asset Management.** Device costs are likely to fall below the threshold for formal asset tagging and accounting in a school district's financial systems. Does the district have an asset management policy for low-dollar assets that is not required by the current financial system? How will the district track the devices acquired if they are below policy thresholds for asset tagging?
- ▶ **Warranty Management.** The new assessment system will introduce a significant number of new devices into the district, and will increase the volume of warranty repair issues as the result. Is the district going to include warranty management within the contract for devices? What contingency threshold will the district have on hand for devices that fail and require replacement within a critically short period of time?

- ▶ **Procurement.** Given the issues of cost and the higher likelihood of decentralized budgets in some districts for technology acquisition, school systems will face an issue of procurement strategy and acquisition planning. Does the district have a central contract for devices, configuration, asset tagging, and deployment? Does the district need to amend current contracts or establish new contracts? Are there other support programs and systems needed to handle warranty, insurance, asset management and others?
- ▶ **Physical Security.** With an increase in the volume of devices and public awareness of the devices, schools will have greater risks of being targeted for theft. Does the district have adequate security systems? What is the district's nighttime asset protection program? What is the relationship with law enforcement to ensure rapid response?
- ▶ **Technology Staffing.** Identifying staff requirements and the distribution and deployment of the talent pool effectively and efficiently will be a major challenge facing school districts before and during test administration. Does the district have a staffing model that will satisfy the assessment plan? Has the district identified the staff that will constitute a cross-functional team responsible for the initial rollout of the testing? Has the district defined the subject-matter experts needed to work with the district's research and technology staff? This will entail identifying the district's best central-office and school-based staff and naming building coordinators and test-security personnel, along with considering how the use of these staff members affects other projects. Decisions will be needed on how the work is coordinated with the district's IT leadership and how it is coordinated with the broader district project team. Personnel considerations will also include how to coordinate with any local technology support that has been independently funded by individual principals.
- ▶ **Service level Agreements.** The speed at which the district can provide support to a school with single or multiple device failures is becoming more important as the move to a fully digital environment continues. Greater reliance on technology means districts must have the ability to rely on and respond to schools to minimize downtime. Time can mean all the difference in the ability of a student to complete the testing requirement. Does the district have service level agreements (SLAs) for response to device issues? Is the response time in the SLA adequate to support and maintain the testing environment? Does the district have the capacity to meet or exceed the SLA with internal staff?
- ▶ **Coordination with Vendors and States.** If school districts have not thought about or set up mechanisms by which they communicate and coordinate with testing vendors, then they heighten the chances that problems will not be resolved in a timely fashion. Has your district verified the platforms that your vendors support or recommend? In addition, has the district included the local and state purchasing protocols in the asset acquisition plan? The lack of a mechanism or a set of protocols to coordinate with the state is also likely to create challenges.
- ▶ **Helpdesk Challenges.** The school district helpdesk(s) will also be challenged to handle the testing environment in conjunction with ongoing operations. Does the district have the capability to prioritize issues by severity tiers? Does the district have the tools necessary to capture information that can delineate problems for future resolution? Does the district have the capability to create a knowledge base that will facilitate user self-resolution? Has the district developed a metric matrix that will help measure the testing process? Are the helpdesk staff and field technicians familiar with the devices, the mobile device management software, and the wired and wireless network access software? Is the helpdesk administrator empowered to ramp up support staff to meet the demand during the testing periods? Is there a process for monitoring the helpdesk? Are the functional and technical support efforts coordinated? Has the district set up a dynamic survey that will check the pulse of students/teachers/administrators before, during, and after testing to help address issues?

- ▶ **Student Familiarity with Technology.** Most students will be taking the new assessments on a computer, laptop, tablet, or other device. The tests will require students to respond electronically, manipulate graphics, drag-and-drop material, utilize touch screen gestures, and other tasks. Does the district have a plan for introducing students to the testing environment? Does the plan include documentation detailing the devices that will be used in the testing environment? Students will need to be familiar with computer features well beyond basic keyboarding skills. Questions will arise about whether students have been prepared for the equipment they will use and whether or not they have had an opportunity to practice on it if it is unfamiliar. For instance, some students who are used to a mouse and keyboard may not know what to do with a touch-screen device or vice versa.
- ▶ **Security and Privacy.** School districts will also be faced with security challenges at both the device and the test levels in order to maintain the integrity of the testing environment. Does the district have a data and network security plan? Does the district have a device management strategy for security and acceptable use? Does it have the ability to manage secure-wired and wireless environments for testing? Has the district developed a strategy for test monitoring and test security? Has the district identified the pool of test proctors and backups? Does the district have a training plan for test proctors to handle onsite technology and other test security issues?
- ▶ **Best Practices.** Another set of challenges in the technology area will involve documenting what worked and what didn't, so that the school system can adjust its practices in subsequent years. Does the district have a knowledge base set up to incorporate documentation of the ongoing testing? Does the knowledge base or documentation include district activities in the areas of technology, logistics, and scheduling, as well as practices in academic instruction? This documentation will be vital for communicating to students, teachers, administrators, parents, press, and the public.

E. Communications Challenges

School districts will also need to think about how to inform and engage the public, the press, and various stakeholders internal and external to the organization. Some of the main challenges in the area of communications will include—

- ▶ **The Messages.** The first major communications challenge the school district will face will be to define what messages you want to send about the new assessments and their likely results. Ensuring that the overall message is uniform, simple, and coherent is key to making it compelling and accessible. In your outreach to the community, you will also need to inform stakeholders about (1) what the new standards are and what they are not, (2) how the new assessments relate to the standards, (3) why the new assessments are so long, (4) the new and higher expectations that the standards set, and (5) what those new standards and expectations mean for the future success of students. The districts may also need to clarify where the standards came from, who developed them and who did not, why the standards matter, what the test results will tell us, and how they relate to concerns being raised in the public about the standards and the accompanying assessments. Moreover, the district will need to have a plan for how it uses social media and its full arsenal of communications tools to make sure the district's messages have broad reach.
- ▶ **The Messengers.** A related challenge will involve determining who the messengers should be, how they will be trained, and how to keep their statements consistent. Matching messengers with targeted audiences will be an important consideration, as will be translating the materials and messages into languages spoken by community members. School board members, the superintendent, and other district-level advocates will also expect to be part of the communications strategy of the district, so districts will need to determine how to strategically build them into the process.

- ▶ **The Audience.** Most big city school districts have very diverse stakeholders with very different perspectives about the meaning and value of standardized testing. Identifying these audiences is a crucial challenge for most school districts. Districts will also face the challenge of how to differentiate their messages for both internal and external audiences. Critical audiences will include the teachers' organization or union, the business community, the press, higher education officials, charter leaders, community organization leaders, faith leaders, and others. Getting the cooperation and buy-in of opinion leaders, advocates, and others who shape community opinion will be particularly critical.
- ▶ **The Results.** Communicating the results of the assessments will be one of the biggest challenges that school districts will face. The public is not likely to understand the apparent drop in student performance, and opponents of the standards and their assessments will use the lower results in an attempt to undermine both. Parents and the public will need help in understanding the metrics in which the results are reported, as well as what the new, likely lower scores mean and don't mean about student achievement.
- ▶ **Using the Results.** Describing how the new assessment results will be used to improve instruction, guide teacher practice, and improve outcomes for students will also be important challenges for school districts. Part of this will entail outlining how the district will differentiate instruction and support struggling students based on test results. Districts might also face challenges in describing how the new assessment results will be used alongside results from other tests like student learning objectives (SLO). One particularly controversial issue that is bound to arise as well is how the results of the new assessments will be used to evaluate teachers and when. Addressing the current public focus on teachers will be a crucial district communications challenge.
- ▶ **Sustaining Communications.** Finally, school districts will face the ongoing challenge of sustaining effective communication with the public about the purpose of the assessments, what they mean, how they are being used, and what they will eventually tell us about district and student progress toward college and career readiness. The challenge will be to sustain the messaging both at the grassroots level and among district and community leaders.

Recommendations for Successfully Implementing the New Assessments

Anticipating the challenges that school districts are likely to face in implementing new college- and career-ready assessments is only the first step. How a district addresses those challenges will ultimately determine the success of implementation. This section presents a series of recommendations and proposals to address the challenges identified in the previous section. These recommendations are meant to help districts be proactive and thoughtful in their approach to implementation in the coming school year and beyond.

A. Recommendations to Meet Leadership and Political Challenges

The recommendations in this section are designed to help school systems set the leadership preconditions and strategies needed to ensure that assessment implementation is successful. These proposals are broad, overarching steps that need to be put into place if the tactical, programmatic actions the district takes are to be successful. In order to address leadership and political challenges, districts should—

- a. Ensure that the board of education and the superintendent send a strong, positive and unified message to staff and the community that implementation of common core standards and assessments are leading priorities of the district. No one should mistake what the leadership thinks on this matter.

- b. Make sure that the implementation of common core standards and the accompanying assessments are incorporated as a centerpiece in the school district’s overarching strategic plan for the year and into the future. Continue to broadcast the district’s commitment well after the first administration of the new assessments
- c. Develop an implementation plan to prepare for and administer the common core assessments districtwide. This plan should articulate how online testing fits into other major district initiatives/priorities and how it aligns with other district assessments. The plan should include the following components—
 - a. Prioritization of the new standards and their assessments
 - b. A description of how district resources will be aligned or realigned for successful implementation
 - c. An estimate of the time it will take the district to ensure all the pieces of the plan are in place (See exhibit 3 on page 37.)
 - d. How steps in the planning and implementation process will be sequenced
 - e. What staff will be deployed, how they will be coordinated, and how the effort will take into account staff’s other duties and responsibilities
 - f. How staff will be held responsible for results
 - g. How technology resources and gaps will be identified school by school and at the district level—and when the inventory will be completed
 - h. A description of the budgetary implications of implementation and how financial resources will be allocated
 - i. A description of who makes budgetary decisions and how they will be made, along with details on the source of funding
 - j. A process for long-term planning, since the assessments will be given each year for the foreseeable future
- d. Review district policies that might present barriers to effective and consistent implementation of the assessments. Examples might include policies around school adoption of differing technology devices, acceptable use policies, and policies around accommodations.
- e. Name a cross-functional executive steering committee to support and oversee the process of implementing the common core and their aligned assessments. This team should incorporate staff from the following offices or areas—
 - Superintendent’s office and cabinet
 - Academics or curriculum and instruction
 - Assessment and testing
 - Technology
 - Special education and bilingual education
 - School leadership and principal supervision
 - Operations and business services
 - Communications
 - Budget and finance
 - Principals and teachers
 - Facilities Services
 - Human Resources

Subdivide into specific work teams to correspond with priority areas of implementation.

- f. Strategically use meetings of leadership and of the superintendent’s cabinet to ensure smooth implementation of the assessments and to gauge progress. Develop a responsibility assignment matrix (RAM), also known as a RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) matrix, delineating responsibilities, accountabilities, and lines of communication, along with a list of individuals who need to be kept up to date on project progress and status.
- g. Develop a school readiness checklist and implementation plan template.
- h. Develop a strategic outreach plan focused on district and school staff, parents, the community, and key local constituencies, emphasizing what the district is doing to implement the assessments well and the objectives of the district in pursuing this work. The purpose of this outreach plan should be to inform the public and build buy-in for what the district is doing.
- i. Proactively address the issue of lower test scores in your communications with parents, the media, and the community. Prepare the public for the apparent “drop” in test scores before the results are released, emphasizing that proficiency rates on new assessments are not comparable to previous assessments and that lower test scores do not mean that students have learned less or fallen behind academically. Reference other state examples for context, and, if you are a TUDA district, look to your NAEP results for indicators of likely district scores and to demonstrate progress over time. If you are able to do so, conduct an equating study on the old and new state assessments to develop comparable trend lines that can better inform the public about progress.
- j. Wherever possible, direct the story toward the strength of the new standards and assessments and what better instruction will mean for the preparation of students for the future.
- k. Create strategic allies in the community to help the district advance understanding of and support for both the standards and their assessments. Be clear about how the district intends to sustain this support over time.
- l. Create strategic alliances with the local teacher unions and associations, if possible, in support of the implementation plan. The best way to do this is to involve them early in the planning process and to involve them in discussions about use of results.
- m. Ensure that each district department that has a role in implementing the new assessments is sufficiently staffed, even temporarily, and has the skills necessary to support the implementation.
- n. Ensure that critical staff members have the knowledge of technology, training, and access to tools and supports they need to oversee and guide the implementation. Promote cross-functional collaboration among the key players.
- o. Document best practices and lessons learned during the planning and implementation process to inform continuous improvement for future assessments.
- p. Document and celebrate key milestones and victories to build momentum past the first year of the test administration.
- q. Establish an accepted approach for the budgeting and acquisition of computer devices needed to support the testing environment. Create the buy-in necessary based on the district’s culture and relationships with school-based staff. There are two general approaches:
 - **Centralize budget and acquisition:** Based on an operational-gap analysis conducted by IT professionals, establish a central budget, contracting, and allocation system. Determine if schools will be “held harmless” in the budgeting approach, or if a charge-back method to off-set costs will be created.

- **Standardize budget and acquisition:** If centralizing is not viable, districts should establish a standardized approach on a per student basis to ensure appropriate investment at the school level. A central contract agreement can be established so all schools are acquiring devices that support the testing requirements.
- r. Establish a specific strategy map in which each representative on the steering committee integrates the strategies their team will be using with a set of specified timeframes. Require each work team to have project management plans that detail the specific actions and deadlines that have to be met. Ensure that the steering committee collaborates on interdependent timelines and actions that cross department lines. (See suggested timeline.)

B. Recommendations to Meet the Challenges of Academic Readiness

A second critical component for successfully implementing the new assessments involves making sure that students are academically prepared to do well on the tests. Much of this has to do with implementing the standards well, but the new assessments are not the standards and special attention needs to be devoted to ensuring that children are ready for and comfortable with an assessment that is likely to look very different from the state tests they have taken in the past. In order to address this challenge, districts should—

- ▶ Ensure that the instructional shifts called for in the common core are being implemented in every classroom and that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and professional development necessary to teach students to the new, higher standards. (The Council of the Great City Schools is in the process of developing indicators to measure district implementation of the standards.) Identify indicators of successful implementation at the system, school, and classroom levels, and adopt look-for protocols based on these indicators. Establish a process for soliciting feedback from schools on issues and challenges and adjusting school supports and resources accordingly.
- ▶ Ensure that teachers of different subjects, grades, and students receive the differentiated professional development they will need to implement new college- and career-ready standards across the curriculum. In its support and communications with teachers and schools, the district should be clear that high expectations and access to the new higher standards apply to all students.
- ▶ Ensure that students are getting experience performing the types of tasks and answering the types of higher-level questions likely to be asked on the new common core assessments and that demonstrate understanding of concepts and skills. This does not mean “test prep” —you cannot drill your way to success on these new assessments. But students should be getting more experience struggling with the kinds of complex, multi-step questions they will encounter on the assessments and providing written explanations and justifications for their answers. (See [Beyond Test Scores: What NAEP Results Tell Us About Implementing the Common Core in Our Classrooms](#).)
- ▶ Ensure that teachers and students have classroom experience with the technology and the devices the students will use when taking the online assessment. They should also have experience with the kinds of commands (e.g., drag and drop, touch screen gestures) that some assessment items might ask of students.
- ▶ Articulate clear roles and expectations for district instructional staff, principals, principal supervisors, and school-based instructional staff concerning implementation of the new standards and assessments. Design professional development that prepares staff at various levels for their implementation roles.
- ▶ Design and provide appropriate and consistent training and preparation of school-based teams to ensure fidelity of test implementation of the curriculum and the use of technology for instruction and assessment. Align the responsibilities of school testing coordinators and technology support staff members.

- ▶ Tap lead teachers to build knowledge, ownership, and buy-in at the school level and in the community for the standards and the new assessments. Pay a stipend for additional work if need be.
- ▶ Ensure that appropriate accommodations are provided in daily classroom instruction for special populations, and that school staff are fully aware of which students are assigned what accommodations for assessment purposes. Each student should be familiar with the types of accommodations they will have and should be able to practice with them prior to the assessment.
- ▶ Establish procedures or benchmarks by which the district and schools are able to determine ongoing student progress toward common core expectations over the course of the school year and ways to address what the benchmarks reveal.
- ▶ Ensure that the district is continuously revisiting and adjusting the curriculum and all instructional materials to ensure that they are aligned with the new standards and provide clear guidance for classroom instruction.
- ▶ Approach the acquisition of new materials supposedly “aligned” to the common core with a critical eye. Conduct an alignment and quality review of all potential new materials using resources such as the Publishers Criteria, IMET, GIMET, and ELL 2.0, and ensure that any new materials, texts, and supports fully meet the needs of all students in a district, including struggling learners, non-native English speakers, and students with disabilities. Provide professional development on the use of any new materials and tools.

C. Recommendations to Meet Operational Challenges

As we saw in the section on challenges, some of the most daunting are in the areas of operations, logistics, and scheduling. In order to address both general logistical and operational challenges and the challenges associated with scheduling students and staff members, districts should—

Planning and Operations

- ▶ Create a specialized logistics team to handle the details of assessment implementation. On the team, include district and possibly state staff with expertise in—
 - a. Technology
 - b. Assessment
 - c. Operations
 - d. Facilities
 - e. Finance
- ▶ Charge principals with naming a school-based team to implement and sustain the common core assessments at the school level. The team should include the following school staff—
 - a. Assessment coordinator
 - b. Technology coordinator
 - c. Special populations staff to handle accommodations and scheduling for special students
 - d. Departmental, grade-level, and instructional staff
 - e. Lead teachers and other teachers
 - f. Principal and assistant principal to handle general scheduling

- g. Develop a plan that maps backward (a “backwards design plan”) from March 2015 to September 2014 and that articulates—
 - a. A detailed test administration schedule, including any practice tests
 - b. The state’s policy for retesting or finishing an already-started assessment.
 - c. Steps for training test administrators
 - d. An inventory of technology by school and the functionality of that technology along with an analysis of gaps in what is needed.
 - e. Policy guidelines governing test administration, data privacy, and transfer of data and records.
 - f. Training documents and/or PowerPoints offered by the state that describe test procedures and other consistent messaging across school systems.
 - g. Test-item security provisions and protocols, including security agreements signed by school staff members handling secure test materials, and provisions to eliminate the potential for students to transmit test content through social media.
 - h. Guidelines for purchasing equipment, technology, and other materials, including reserve quantities to ensure rapid response to emergencies.
 - i. Guidelines for installing applications on devices that might interfere with testing sessions, including operating systems, hardware, and firmware updates (e.g., security locator applications that signal the computer’s location periodically—even during a testing session, which may interrupt the session).
 - j. The process for developing and sharing school-by-school plans for implementation (in early fall, as well as iterations in January/February). These plans should be reviewed by the district to determine immediate concerns at the school level.
 - k. Performance metrics, e.g., network performance data, help desk statistics, incidents, interactions, etc.
 - l. A map of all assessments and how they are sequenced in addition to common core consortia or state assessments
 - m. How the district and schools will use holiday periods and Spring break to move the implementation forward.
 - n. How the district will communicate with schools about scheduling, and how the district and schools can adjust testing dates with state approval.
 - o. A readiness checklist.
- Identify and ensure teacher and administrator familiarity with the accommodations and embedded supports for special populations in the assessment process.

Troubleshooting

- Conduct mock/practice tests to evaluate the readiness of pertinent staff, devices, facilities, and network infrastructure. Include feedback surveys (of students and staff) for the district or state to monitor progress. Report all facilities and technology issues well in advance to allow ample time for the departments to remediate/repair
- In planning for potential crises, identify tiers of issues for each managing entity: state, district, and vendor. For example, tier 1 issues might include immediate testing situations, while a tier 2 or 3 issue might include longer-term considerations, such as ensuring data privacy. Clarify the appropriate resources needed to address these issues within schools, with vendors, and at the district and state levels. Immediate test-day issues should be separated into individual tiers by their complexity: lowest tiers, e.g., resuming a student’s test; middle tier, e.g., fixing a power outage; and highest tier, e.g., recovering a lost log file.

- ▶ Name “troubleshooters” at the district level who can address any problems that individual schools encounter during the testing process.
- ▶ Establish a system for documenting problems and successes at the conclusion of the testing cycle to inform future administrations. Be prepared to share these lessons with the public.
- ▶ Also establish a system for communicating with schools regarding updates, immediate concerns, and lessons learned.
- ▶ Conduct a gap analysis to assess the response time needed to fix devices and/or to address connectivity issues in schools. If internal capacity is not adequate to meet the needed response times, then consider contracted resources to perform this service.

Scheduling

- ▶ Develop districtwide and school-level scheduling plans that include the following considerations:
 - a. Testing time and number and times of testing sessions and duration based on available computers used for testing and the numbers of “to-be-tested” students.
 - b. Number of staff members needed for test administration (given considerations of teacher certification, special needs students, contract limitations, split staff, available outside support for administration—i.e., retired teachers, educational assistants, etc.).
 - c. Whether or not teachers assess their own students and what it means for test security. Consider schedules that allow fourth grade teachers to assess third grade students, etc.
 - d. Cost of staff members and auxiliary and contract staff.
 - e. Devices and peripherals per student and types of devices.
 - f. Fully charged devices with updated operating system.
 - g. Idle computers where class sizes are small. Consider pooling classes or testing by alphabetical order. (Note: testing in alphabetical order may maximize device usage, but may disrupt instruction and student comfort.)
 - h. Number of sessions in a testing day, taking into account lunch, dismissals, and “early-releases.”
 - i. What subject is tested and when. For example, testing one subject at a time, so a child isn’t over-tested on a given day.
 - j. Number of testing environments (e.g., accommodations, extended time, etc.).
 - k. Constraints such as the number of devices vs. available staff.
 - l. Time management, i.e., how staff will need to manage their time in order to oversee test administration in addition to their other responsibilities
 - m. What to do with students who are not in test sessions? Those students might include:
 - Students displaced from class sites.
 - Students left in class because the district scheduled test-takers by alphabetical order.
 - Non-tested grades.
 - Students who finish early.
 - Absent students.
 - Make-up tests.

- Waivered students.
 - Incomplete tests (due to a technology glitch, due time, mobility, etc.).
 - Students in jail, the hospital, or are homebound. How will they be tested and in what format?
- n. School size and grade span, i.e., elementary vs. secondary.
- o. The need for a contingency schedule (if Internet goes down or buffers).
- ▶ Review sample schedules from other districts to inform options.
 - ▶ Train district-level school scheduling staff on multiple scheduling options to help guide and customize scheduling for school sites. Identify:
 - a. Who is on the staff team?
 - b. What areas they are tackling?
 - c. Have they been vetted by principals?
 - d. How successes and failures with the various scheduling options are captured and shared across the district for future reference?
 - ▶ Ensure that staff members are able to respond to such questions as:
 - a. How are we scheduling to optimize the testing environment?
 - b. How are we minimizing disruptions to the regular instructional day?
 - c. How can we accomplish testing within the allotted testing window?
 - d. How have we addressed the needs of special populations?
 - e. How have we addressed test security considerations?
 - f. How are individual test-administration plans aligning with the overarching district plan?
 - g. How are we communicating the testing schedule to parents and stakeholders?

Sustainability

- ▶ Conduct an ongoing needs analysis to inform scheduling and logistical requirements.
- ▶ Monitor the district website and email to ensure awareness of technical and functional issues being experienced by the district and its personnel. Communicate these issues to the testing provider and schedule system maintenance in a timely manner.
- ▶ Quantify the *total* cost of implementation over one, three, and five years, including costs associated with devices (purchase and maintenance), professional development, staff, the time it takes to prepare for and administer tests, etc.
- ▶ Identify likely shifts in sources and uses of funds to maintain support for online assessments aligned with the common core.

D. Recommendations to Meet Technology Challenges

In addition to the operational and logistical challenges of implementing new assessments and sustaining them over time, the *online* nature of the new tests also presents districts with critical technology and broadband challenges. In order to ensure that the technology infrastructure and human resources necessary to successfully administer these tests online are in place, districts should—

Create a special technology team for the initial roll-out and ongoing support of testing (i.e., a “tiger team”). This team should provide oversight and serve as the point of contact to facilitate technology decisions. This team should be selected from the following areas:

- a. Help-desk personnel
 - b. Field technicians
 - c. Network technicians and engineers
 - d. Device management specialists
 - e. Subject matter experts, e.g., reading coordinators and math directors
 - f. Test proctors and monitors
 - g. Assessment department staff
- ▶ Build, enhance, and leverage existing relationships with assessment vendors, and work toward a more strategic role for them in district planning.
 - ▶ Review the district’s existing portfolio of vendor contracts in advance of the implementation to ensure maximum flexibility in purchasing and servicing through a fair and open procurement process.
 - ▶ Conduct an inventory of current devices and peripherals in the district to establish a baseline of technology and determine technology readiness. The inventory should detail equipment by type, age, software versions, and state of functionality. All of this should be detailed by school and location within school. In addition, the inventory should take into account the age and grade of students, e.g., younger and smaller children will need to have smaller earbuds. And the district may want to consider lice-resistant headsets.
 - ▶ Establish a reserve of spare components and devices to minimize downtime, e.g., tablets, earbuds, microphones, and other equipment identified by the cross-functional team and the specialty teams.
 - ▶ Conduct a gap analysis between the baseline inventory of equipment and the minimum standard detailed by PARCC and SBAC to understand where the district stands. This analysis should then be compared to the assessment implementation plan to determine equipment needs.
 - ▶ Be aware that operating systems and browser versions have a huge impact on how the testing environment functions. Both PARCC and SBAC have compatibility criteria that should be taken into account. It is important to note that both entities update these criteria on their websites and districts should be mindful to consult the websites and review the changes. (See exhibit 2 on page 35.) Specific details that districts should be aware of include the following—

Smarter Balanced

- a. Each year, SBAC will release a new set of secure browsers.
 - These browsers prevent students from accessing other applications and copying or creating screenshots.
 - The secure browsers must be installed on each computer used for online testing.
 - The secure browser must be installed on a yearly basis, due to implementation of new features in the test delivery system and to support operating system updates.
 - Standard web browsers can be used to access other components of the assessment package, including test administration tools, student practice tests, and the test administrator interface.

- For data reports, Google Chrome, Safari on IOS (Apple devices), Firefox, and Internet Explorer 8 and above are supported.
- b. The operating systems supported by SBAC include Windows (XP, Vista, 7 & 8), MAC OS (10.4.4-10.9), Linux (Fedora Core 6+, Ubuntu 9-12), Chrome OS (31 or higher), IPAD, (IOS 6&7), Android 4.0.4-4.2).
- c. Although commonly used browsers such as Internet Explorer, Safari, Chrome, and Firefox are supported, only certain versions of the browsers are compatible with the operating system versions of the devices.
- d. Average estimated Internet bandwidth utilized by the Secure Browser for testing is 8 kilobits per second per student.
- e. Network and device requirements and other technical details such as the minimum and recommended operating system and browser compatibility charts are provided on the SBAC website (http://sbac.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/SmarterBaanced_TechnicalSpecificationsManual.pdf)

PARCC

- a. The operating systems supported by PARCC include Windows (XP, Vista, 7&8), MAC OS (10.6+), Chrome OS (33 or higher), iPad (IOS 6&7), Windows Tablets (8&8.1).
 - b. Android tablets are currently being tested, and updated requirements will be posted on the PARCC website.
 - c. Although commonly used browsers such as Internet Explorer, Safari, Chrome, and Firefox are supported, only certain versions of the browsers are compatible with the operating system versions of the devices.
 - d. Minimum specifications may not be adequate beyond the second year of PARCC assessments in 2015-16 and may experience slower performance.
 - e. Recommended specifications can be expected to satisfy PARCC guidelines through the 2018-19 school year.
 - f. PARCC recommends 100 kilobits per second per student or faster for assessment and instruction.
 - g. For schools with limited Internet bandwidth conditions, “caching” provides a secure option for the delivery of the interactive computer-based tests. Schools should plan to have 5 kilobits per second of available bandwidth in their connection to the Internet for each simultaneous test-taker.
 - h. The Technology Guidelines for PARCC Assessments document (http://parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Technology%20Guidelines%20for%20PARCC%20Assessments%20v%204_2%20May%202014.pdf) provides detailed specifications for operating systems and browser combinations, as well as firewall and network configuration requirements.
- ▶ Set up specific times to test all of the devices to be used in the testing environment. All peripheral components (i.e., earbuds, headphones, keyboards, etc.) and special keyboard keys (like CAP locks) should be tested to ensure functionality and compatibility with devices and testing applications. If at all possible, a practice test might be conducted and should reflect as closely as possible the actual testing environment to measure the impact of concurrent sessions.
 - ▶ Ensure that teachers and students have classroom experience with the technology and the devices they will use when taking the online assessment (to the extent possible). They should also have experience with the kinds of commands (e.g., drag and drop, touch screen gestures) that some assessment items might ask of students.
 - ▶ Because there are multiple factors that can have a detrimental effect on the continued service of technology, develop a technology continuity plan to provide a fallback to minimize downtime and network failure. The plan should reflect the contingencies, recoveries, and replacements that could be enacted if a situation arose. Network examples could involve procuring broadband (4G) enabled wireless hotspots as a secondary connection to the network or cloud-managed wireless access points (Instant Access Points) to extend the wireless coverage in testing locations.

- ▶ Utilize the capability provided by PARCC to pre-download—or cache—the encrypted test questions and assessment content locally on a computer to minimize the impact on the schools' network. In addition, districts' IT departments should utilize the technology readiness tools offered by PARCC to evaluate their network readiness. If the capacity metrics do not meet the school needs, then caching can be used to reduce impact on their networks. (PARCC has caching capability that eliminates the dependence on Internet access. SBAC is also working on creating one. School districts that have used the caching are pleased, but they do need a trained testing coordinator who can set things up properly at each school.)
- ▶ Establish an acquisition plan with your procurement department to ensure that the supply chain of devices are purchased, configured, allocated, and set up in time to test the environment prior to student testing dates. Should adequate time not be available to compete, leverage existing contracts that meet state/local competitive bidding requirements and can be combined or extended to provide additional resources. These might include leveraging current contracts, piggyback contracting, consortium purchasing, purchasing-off-the-state bid, and others. This is critical to ensuring a successful start to testing and having resources and equipment ready and available. At a minimum, ensure that the plan articulates the following:
 - a. Technology
 - New devices
 - Equipment upgrades
 - Peripherals
 - Asset etching/tagging
 - Storage and charging devices
 - Configuration services for high volume acquisition and deployment
 - Support capacity for maintenance and support if internal capacity is insufficient.
 - b. Program Support
 - Facilities
 - Electrical wiring and drops
 - Network support
 - Finance
 - Asset management system if needed
 - Asset inventory supplies and support
 - Warranty/insurance support
 - Security
 - Device security equipment
 - School security equipment
- ▶ Ensure that functional and technical support staff are utilizing the same service desk software to manage school issues. This may require centralization of IT technology support staff and standardization of information collected for school needs.
- ▶ Ensure that regular system and technology maintenance does not overlap with the testing period.
- ▶ Be aware of the lag time needed for the installation of necessary components to ensure a stable and effective network infrastructure. This complexity requires the development or augmentation of a network infrastructure plan for both wired and wireless environments that:
 - a. Ensures that schools and rooms where testing will be conducted can support the devices being utilized, i.e., testing rooms have appropriate numbers of electrical outlets, power sources, and facility readiness.

- b. Ensures that district and location network capacity is sufficient to support the published testing standards
- c. Determines the bandwidth adequacies for supporting testing, with an emphasis on concurrent loads on the environment
- ▶ Develop a network and information security plan that maintains the integrity of the testing environment and of student information. The plan should reflect compliance with local, state, and federal laws.
- ▶ In order to effectively manage the testing environment, districts should acquire the appropriate tools to:
 - a. Monitor the school-based local wired and wireless network infrastructure in real time
 - b. Remotely configure and repair network appliances
 - c. Secure network access through authentication/802.11x (Network Access Control)
 - d. Manage device assignment, configuration, and content (Mobile Device Management)
- ▶ Ensure that the technology implementation plan aligns with other department plans, since many district departments will have their own plans that are germane to their respective disciplines but that will have aspects that cross over to other departments. Consider the following—
 - a. Help desk schedules that include testing and ongoing operations
 - b. Training and deployment of pertinent personnel, e.g., temporary staff to support the helpdesk, substitute teachers, field technicians, etc.
 - c. Ensuring student and teacher familiarity with devices
 - d. Metric matrix for monitoring progress and stability
 - e. Needed consultations with collective bargaining units
- ▶ Develop a staffing model to support the implementation in a way that is cognizant of the fact that the testing environment is an added function for staff. The model should reflect the time mandates and labor distribution for ongoing operations and the testing environment, including:
 - a. Funding for full-time location-based technology resources.
 - b. Test proctors and monitors.
 - c. Peak-time help desk personnel.
 - d. Identify staff from other departments that can be brought onboard to support the schools.
- ▶ Monitor and analyze help desk statistics (e.g., wait time, dropped calls, open tickets by type, aging reports) to assign appropriate resources to identified issues.
- ▶ Develop technology training and “digital citizenship” for teachers, students, and support staff.
- ▶ Develop surveys for school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and administer the surveys after every assessment to identify problems and successes. The surveys will serve as a conduit to the testing environment, ensuring that issues can be resolved and processes streamlined to minimize frustration.
- ▶ Conduct daily update meetings with the implementation teams to review common issues, support challenges, and review service desk statistics. Take necessary actions needed to resolve the issues and update the district’s website. Escalate actions as necessary.

- ▶ Consult PARCC, SBAC, and the websites of other districts, especially those districts that participated in the 2014 practice test for technical standards, specifications, and lessons learned documents. Examples include—
 - a. <http://achieve.lausd.net/sbac>
 - f. <http://achieve.lausd.net/cctp>
 - a. <http://www.parcconline.org/>
 - b. <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>
 - c. <http://www.cosn.org/focus-areas/it-management/becoming-assessment-ready>
- ▶ **Facilities Adequacy.** Depending on the age of the school building, the adequacy of the electrical load and the availability of outlets may be insufficient. Districts should have their facilities engineering teams assess schools for electrical capacity, work with school leaders to determine the layout and configuration of testing logistics, and determine if there are appropriate electrical connections. Facilities professionals should ensure solutions meet all current building and fire safety codes. To do this, we recommend that districts assess current internal capacity in the facilities department and current workload requirements for ongoing operations. If there is less than sufficient capacity, districts should consider contracting out for an engineering assessment for electrical adequacy. Further it is recommended, districts do the same to manage rapid execution of any modifications that will be necessary to ensure adequate electrical support and access.
- ▶ **FF&E Standardization.** The district should convene a team to examine standards for fixtures, furnishings, and equipment to support testing. This will not only ensure school staff have defined device types, but the procurement office will have a better chance to rapidly meet needs and the IT office will have a better chance of focusing support and training on a single device and operating system.
- ▶ **Asset Management.** It is likely that some testing devices will fall below the dollar threshold of the inventory requirements in the district's financial system. Therefore, districts should review their asset management thresholds and determine if they need to make adjustments to support test device acquisition, or ensure that low-dollar assets that are not tracked in the district's financial system are accounted for in the asset management system. This is particularly important if the district will be centralizing and/or standardizing technology devices across schools. Districts may also be able to track devices within their textbook inventory systems, but they should assess the adequacy of this option. In the event that devices will not be tracked in the district's main financial system, and the school-based textbook inventory system is not adequate, districts should examine acquiring a lower dollar value asset system that will meet their needs. If districts elect to implement a laptop and cart solution for testing, it is recommended that a component of the contract agreement for configuring devices also include an asset etching component to mark the device as district property.
- ▶ **Warranty Management.** The new testing system will introduce a significant number of new devices into the district, and will increase the volume of warranty issues as a result. Districts should review their current warranty contracts and insurance policies for adequacy, as simple coverage for repair and replacement will not be adequate. Districts should also assess internal capabilities for support and review their warranty contracts to cover any possible gaps in internal staff coverage capabilities. Warranty coverage should have an expediency clause to ensure replacement happens at an acceptable pace to ensure devices are on hand to support student testing.
- ▶ **Configuration and Deployment Management.** Districts should assess internal capacity to configure and deploy testing devices. Most districts will assume that their current systems will be able to handle far larger demand, but the influx of devices and materials may create risks in timelines and quality assurance. District should assess this capacity and risk, and consider using a third party to receive, configure, deliver, set-up and test all devices. This will address both capacity and quality control, and shift risk to a third party.

- ▶ **Physical Security.** There will be greater awareness that district schools have significantly higher volumes of devices on hand, resulting in increased risk of schools being the target of break-ins. Districts should review the following areas of their security program in advance of new devices arriving on campus:
 - a. **Asset Protection:** Districts are familiar with lock-down devices that will deter theft of stand-alone desktop computers. Should districts determine that laptops and carts will be the method used to cover testing, they should identify lock-down rooms or areas to secure the rolling carts and devices.
 - b. **Alarm/Camera Systems:** Districts should review their alarm system adequacy with a team from facilities and security to identify if there are gaps in school coverage. The adequacy of camera system support should also be assessed.
 - c. **Nighttime Security:** Districts should review their nighttime asset protection detail for adequacy. This is particularly important if a district is required to be first to open a school for law enforcement to enter. If there are too few staff and response time is inadequate, nighttime theft risk may increase.
 - d. **Law Enforcement:** District representatives should meet with law enforcement to review the new testing requirements and the volume of devices that will be in schools.

E. Recommendations to Meet Communications Challenges

- ▶ Finally, districts will need to take deliberate and strategic steps to inform and engage parents and the community. Long-term success of college- and career-ready standards and assessments will depend on broad-based support and buy-in for the new tests as a tool for improving teaching and learning throughout the district and the nation. Districts are encouraged to consult [*Communicating the Common Core: A Resource for Superintendents, School Board Members, and Public Relations Executives*](#). In designing a strategic communications strategy, districts should—
 - a. Develop deliberate, positive, and consistent messages designed to communicate to parents and communities the key value of the standards and their assessments. Focus on how they will be used to improve youngsters' knowledge and skills for college and careers. Use the messages when reaching out to parents and staff throughout the organization.
- ▶ Identify three key messages for parents around common core standards. These messages should be tangible, meaningful, and student-focused. Examples might include:
 - a. Students mastering CCSS will graduate from high school better prepared for college and careers.
 - b. Higher standards will benefit all students—no matter where they live.
 - c. The new standards will lessen the need for college remediation.
 - d. The standards will be the same no matter where you move.
 - e. New standards should be given time to work.
 - f. The new standards have students reading the kinds of complex material they are likely to see in college and the workplace
 - g. The new assessments will provide a more accurate assessment of what my child knows and whether he or she is progressing appropriately
- ▶ Identify key messages important to other stakeholders, such as chambers of commerce, government leaders, etc. Examples might include:
 - a. Higher standards will mean a higher return on educational investments.
 - b. Higher standards will lead to greater workforce preparation.

- ▶ Provide specific, concrete information about the tests (e.g., how they will look, how they will be administered).
- ▶ Keep the press informed as you are putting the pieces of the implementation plan into place.
- ▶ Develop compelling messages specific to the new assessments. Key assessment messages might include:
 - a. Assessment is a tool to measure student mastery of standards.
 - b. Assessment will provide data that can improve instruction. Test scores will indicate where progress has been made and where progress is needed.
 - c. Assessments will provide districts with information to make better decisions regarding the allocation of resources and where to provide additional support.
 - d. Testing takes time, but the data provided will be of great benefit to districts and educators, helping them to make informed decisions about resource allocation, instructional planning and practice, etc.
 - e. Testing data will give parents the information they need on how well their children are doing and will empower them to advocate for their children (particularly since proficiency rates may not appear artificially high like they do on some current state assessments).
 - f. New assessments cannot be compared to old assessments.
 - The old tests often measured minimum competency. The new tests hold higher expectations for students.
 - The new, more challenging tests can spur greater student engagement.
 - There will be fewer multiple-choice questions and more student-generated responses on the new tests.
 - While we cannot compare new to old test results right away, we will be able to measure our students' mastery compared to other students across the country (and we want our students to be the best).
 - h. Assessments require technology, but that technology can also be used for instruction and to expand learning opportunities for kids.
- ▶ In crafting messages, lead with points related to teaching and learning, NOT with testing. References to testing often elicit negative responses from parents and the public.
 - a. Emphasize that teaching and learning are the most important things, not preparing students to take tests. Tests are meant to measure how well students are progressing.
 - b. Instruction should not focus on improving test scores, but test scores can improve instruction by underscoring areas of need and prompting teachers to shift their instructional approaches.
- ▶ Utilize a diverse array of communication vehicles, including—
 - a. The district website
- ▶ Print materials
 - a. PTO/PTA/parent meetings, conferences (creating key communicators and advocates among teachers, principals)
 - b. Media pitches/releases
 - c. Social media
 - d. District TV or radio
 - e. Intranet
 - f. Email/texts

- g. District publications (internal and external)
 - h. Board meeting presentations
 - i. One page fact sheets
 - j. City council collaborations (local and state officials)
 - k. Videos and parent roadmaps prepared by the Council of the Great City Schools
- ▶ In identifying effective messengers, remember that parents often look to teachers first to help them make up their minds about educational reforms or approaches. It is therefore critical to build buy-in and ownership of the standards and assessments among educators and equip them with basic talking points and frequently asked questions.
 - ▶ Engage students with specific messages about common core and the benefits to them in informing and preparing them for college and careers.

Exhibit 2. Focus on Technology: Developing a Device Plan

Focus on Technology: Developing a Device Plan

- ▶ Determine the device type that will be deployed.
- ▶ Determine number of devices to be deployed.
 - a. One student per device (1:1)—The advantage is that all testing can happen simultaneously if district bandwidth is available.
 - b. Up to three students per device—The advantage is cost feasibility, can still test one grade level at a time.
- ▶ Determine arrangement of devices.
 - a. Lab arrangement with laptops or desktop computers
 - b. Classroom sets of devices
 - c. Classroom stations for small groups of students
- ▶ Determine number of types of devices to be used.
 - a. Same devices throughout the school system—The advantages are consistency, a similar experience for all students, easier technical support, easier browser-platform compatibility, and easier professional development and support.
 - b. Multiple devices throughout the school system—The advantages are the ability to leverage purchases from previous years (less costly), and ability to create differential arrangements (i.e., labs and mobile devices in classrooms).
- ▶ Assess the features of devices to be used
 - a. Monitor/display size: tablets vs. laptop vs. desktop
 - b. Mouse vs. touchpad vs. touch screen
 - c. Battery life of mobile devices—accessories for recharging, including during a testing period
 - d. Headphone capability
 - e. Separate keyboard
- ▶ Device storage and transportation considerations:
 - a. Do devices need to move from school to school? Will need a storage, delivery, inventory, and security plan.
 - b. Do devices need to move from classroom to classroom? Will need storage carts with rollers.
- ▶ Device preparation considerations:
 - a. Ensure delivery with at least three to six months to unpack, image, meet local technology access guidelines, and practice with the device.
 - b. If the devices are to be used for test administration only, the school or district will need a plan for storing the devices when not in use, and preparing the devices (i.e., charging, updating operating systems and software) as the next testing period approaches.
 - c. If the devices will be used for instructional purposes in between testing periods, the district will need to conduct device maintenance prior to testing, including screen and keyboard review and review of applications that may have been downloaded, which could interfere with device performance during testing or could jeopardize test performance or privacy.

- d. If the device is normally used for instructional purposes, plans will need to be made for how instruction is pursued when the device is being used for assessment purposes.
 - e. The preparation process could take multiple weeks, depending on the condition of the devices and the staff available.
- Naming a district test coordinator
- a. In addition to traditional skills (e.g., organizational, scheduling, managing school coordinator training, ensuring test procedures are followed, etc.), the district test coordinator will need to have skills to assist school coordinators with opening testing sessions, password management, student access to enter in their IDs, and using technology support staff to respond to technological glitches as they occur.
 - b. The district test coordinator also develops summary test administration support documents and indexes for school-level test coordinators.

Exhibit 3. Timeline for Non-Instructional Support Preparations

Month	Function	Strategy
September	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Coordinate with Instruction to develop device and FF&E standards. ▶ Perform gap assessment of each school against the standard. ▶ Review internal configuration and deployment capacity to determine if contracted support is needed. ▶ Review school based device inventory and asset management. ▶ Define requirements for the procurement process.
	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Perform electrical engineering assessment. ▶ Define scope of work for contracting support and project management.
	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Allocate funds based on the gap assessment and needs determination. ▶ Review asset management policies and thresholds and determine if school devices will be inventoried in central financial system or in a school based system. ▶ Review warranty and insurance policies and contracts.
	Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review schools for device security and school envelope security requirements needed for procurement scope.
	Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review all current term agreements and research potential consortium and state contract opportunities. ▶ Define acquisition plan to identify where competition is possible and where consortium contracting is necessary.
	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Finalize annual district assessment calendar ▶ Identify building level assessment coordinators and assessment teams ▶ Conduct initial training for assessment coordinators to include overview of district assessment plan, state guidelines and protocols for testing, and specific training for fall assessments
October	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review internal technical and help desk support capacity. ▶ Review SLAs for schools for sufficiency of response time, and test internal capacity to support them at scale.
	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish project plan and engage program manager if internal capacity is insufficient to meet timeline.
	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Centralize the budget or establish a cost allocation to school budgets. ▶ If a school asset tracking system is needed, establish requirements with Instructional and Technology leadership.
	Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review internal staff capacity for nighttime asset protection. ▶ Review law enforcement agreements for response to alarms.

	Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Acquire through new bids or consortium purchase agreements for devices and equipment. ▶ Acquire additional resources as needed including configuration support, warranty modification, asset management systems,
	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Collaborate with technology on review of school based technology inventory and device readiness for conducting computer based assessments ▶ Ensure teachers and students utilize practice items as part of the normal instructional program to ensure students develop familiarity with college- and career-ready item types including short answer and extended response items and performance based tasks.
November	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify and hire additional support as needed for configuration and deployment, and for technical help to schools (if internal staff is preferred). ▶ Review procedures to support response time defined in SLAs. ▶ Align decentralized support, including staff and issue tracking, to ensure standards will be met for SLAs.
	Facilities	▶ Begin modification of electrical requirements as needed.
	Security	▶ Perform physical security modifications at high priority schools.
	Procurement	▶ Monitor supply chains to ensure vendors are on track to meet device volume requirements.
	Assessment	▶ Develop school based assessment plan for spring testing to include teacher training for spring testing, device deployment and student familiarity with assessment conditions.
December	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Train staff on new procedures to support response time and support standards for testing program. ▶ Establish school roll out plan for delivery and setup. ▶ Establish asset tagging and inventory plan to support device deployment.
	Facilities	▶ Finish electrical modifications.
	Security	▶ Establish any changes to alarm response and law enforcement MOUs.
	Procurement	▶ Monitor supply chains to ensure vendors are on track to meet device volume requirements.
	Assessment	▶ Train teachers and staff on the use of embedded accessibility and accommodations features for computer based assessments and ensure the weekly use of these tools with students.
January	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Receive and deploy new devices and equipment. ▶ Asset tag all new devices and equipment. ▶ Implement the asset management program for schools (if needed) and load all asset information.
	Facilities	▶ Adjust electrical load and access needs as deployment of devices takes place.
	Finance	

	Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Perform concurrent asset risk review to ensure deployed devices have identified theft protection support.
	Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assist Technology team in the accounting for devices received. ▶ Identify any contingency procurement that has to be performed for any areas where shortfalls may exist. ▶ Ensure an overall contingency is established for rapid replacement of devices that fail.
	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct training for school based assessment coordinators on spring testing protocols ▶ Work closely with technology to ensure school based device deployment meets school needs based on school testing plans. ▶ Revise school spring testing plans as needed.
February	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Perform configuration and load tests of the devices and testing labs with Instructional staff.
	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adjust electrical load and access needs as deployment of devices takes place.
	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Begin to check devices daily for necessary refresh of devices and peripherals (e.g., mice, keyboards, etc.) ▶ Ensure school based assessment coordinators re-deliver training for spring assessments to school staff
During Testing	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with assessment staff to establish a command center to quickly address technology and assessment concerns as they arise.
	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with assessment staff to establish a command center to quickly address technology and assessment concerns as they arise.

Council of the Great City Schools

Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 67 of the nation's largest urban public school systems. Its board of directors is composed of the superintendent of schools and one school board member from each member city. An Executive Committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between superintendents and school board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c) (3) organization. The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in the improvement of leadership and instruction. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities in areas such as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, research, and technology. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961 and has its headquarters in Washington, DC.

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**COMMON CORE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT,
YEAR 3**

IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

YEAR THREE PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS



Council of the
Great City Schools

TM

Results from 2013-14 School Year

Implementing the Common Core State Standards:

Year Three Progress Report from the Great City Schools

Results from 2013-14 School Year

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About the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 67 of the nation's largest urban public school systems. Its board of directors is composed of the superintendent of schools and one school board member from each member city. An executive committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between superintendents and school board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in their improvement. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities in such areas as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, research, and technology. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, and has its headquarters in Washington, DC.

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Part I. Implementing the Common Core State Standards

- Three-fourths of respondents rated central office curriculum staff as “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the CCSS, but only about 40 percent of all respondents rated teachers and principals as “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the CCSS. Still, this represents an increase over 2013.
- Approximately 59 percent of respondents rated school principals as “somewhat prepared” or “not very prepared” to implement the CCSS – a 15 percentage point decrease from 2013.
- The majority of all respondents indicated that their district’s progress in implementing the CCSS was either “good” or “excellent.”

Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

- The majority of curriculum directors indicated that the rationale for adopting the CCSS was “often evident” or “sometimes evident” in professional development sessions.
- Over 80 percent of curriculum directors indicated that building a shared understanding of the instructional shifts required by the CCSS in math and ELA was “often evident” in professional development activities.
- Building an understanding of next generation assessments and analyzing student work samples based on grade-level expectations in the CCSS were among the least evident topics in professional development in both ELA and math.
- Over two-thirds of respondents indicated that differentiating instruction for ELLs and students with special needs was “often evident” or “sometimes evident” in their ELA professional development. In comparison, 60 percent indicated that differentiating instruction for ELLs and students with special needs was “often evident” or “sometimes evident” in math professional development.
- When aligning their instructional materials to the CCSS, curriculum directors indicated using PARCC/SBAC sample items, CCSS math progressions, and resources from the Council’s Basal Alignment Project most frequently.
- Over 70 percent of curriculum directors indicated that results from state summative assessments were “often” used to differentiate professional development for teachers in elementary, middle, and high school.
- Results on state summative and interim/benchmark assessments were the most used resources to identify struggling students in elementary, middle, and high school. Furthermore, approximately half of curriculum directors reported using early warning indicators to a “large extent” to identify struggling students at all grade levels.

Executive Summary

- Respondents reported that quarterly monitoring of student growth and the creation of scope and sequence documents to help teachers align instruction to the CCSS were common strategies for addressing the needs of struggling students.

Part III. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for ELLs

- Approximately half of responding ELL directors “agree” that their districts’ English language proficiency *assessments* are aligned with the CCSS – an increase of 24 percentage points from responses in 2013. However, only a third “agree” or “strongly agree” that their districts’ English language proficiency *standards* are aligned with the CCSS.
- Only a quarter of responding ELL directors “agree” that their district highly prioritizes ELLs being able to meet the rigor of the CCSS – a decrease of 7 percentage points from survey responses in 2013. Furthermore, only 17 percent “agree” that ESL teachers are prepared to ensure that ELLs are able to meet the rigor of the CCSS, while no respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that general education teachers are prepared to ensure that ELLs meet the rigor of the CCSS.
- Between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of ELL directors who rated their instructional materials for ELLs as “good” or “excellent” increased.

Part IV. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for Students with Special Needs

- In 2014, over half of responding special education directors “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district prioritizes students with special needs being able to meet the rigor of the CCSS (55 percent). Only 18 percent agreed that general education teachers are prepared to help these students meet the rigor of the CCSS. However, a majority of responding special education directors “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district is successful at identifying students with special needs (82 percent).
- In responses to open-ended questions, special education directors noted the need to raise expectations for students with disabilities and build general education teachers’ ability to help students with special needs.

Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

- There were fewer research directors in 2014 than there were in 2013 who “agree” or “strongly agree” that tracking implementation of the CCSS is a high priority for their district.
- The majority of responding research directors rate their district’s progress as “excellent” in providing timely access to data for school leaders and creating data systems to store information from multiple

departments, but their responses indicate the need to work harder in gathering data to monitor implementation of the CCSS, developing measurable implementation goals, and creating a formal feedback loop on implementation efforts.

- In responses to open-ended questions, responding research directors reported the need to develop metrics and strategies for collecting implementation data.

Part VI. Communicating with Stakeholders

- The majority of responding communication directors “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district is actively engaged in informing stakeholders about the CCSS and building public support for the CCSS.
- Certified teachers, teacher unions, and school boards are among the most *involved in* and/or *informed of* district implementation strategies.
- Some common challenges to communicating with stakeholders about the CCSS included communicating the complexity of the CCSS and coordinating a consistent message throughout the school district.

Introduction

Three years ago, the Council of the Great City Schools embarked on a multi-year initiative to help its member school districts implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Part of this initiative involve annual surveys of progress urban public school districts were making in implementing the CCSS. With the support of The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, this report presents the results from the third year of the project.

Using the same approach as last year's report, the Council's CCSS implementation survey was administered to key curriculum, research, and communications leaders from the 67 Council member districts. Of the 67 Council districts, 56 are in states that have adopted the CCSS. The survey covered a wide range of implementation topics, including professional development activities in English language arts and math; strategies for measuring and collecting data on implementation; and communication strategies to inform stakeholders about the CCSS. Furthermore, the survey asked respondents about the inclusion of English language learners, students with special needs, and struggling students in CCSS implementation efforts.

The survey was sent to curriculum directors, research directors, ELL directors, special education directors, and communication directors in June 2014 and was closed in August 2014. In total, we received 59 responses from 39 districts for a response rate of about 70 percent of CCSS districts. Although this year's response rate was lower than 2013, the report's findings are consistent with previous years. The survey results indicate that over the past three years, districts continue to make progress implementing the new standards but challenges remain.

Interpreting the Data

The reader should note that the findings presented in this study are based on self-reports by survey respondents, so the data are inherently subjective. Moreover, in our effort to capture the perspectives of staff in different positions within each district's central office, we often received varying numbers of survey responses from each city. Therefore, in those sections that present data for all respondents, the analysis may reflect the fact that a large number of respondents were based in the same district or group of districts. In addition, the survey was not administered directly to teachers, but one will find that district estimates of teacher readiness to implement the CCSS are similar to what one sees in results from surveys of teachers conducted by other organizations.

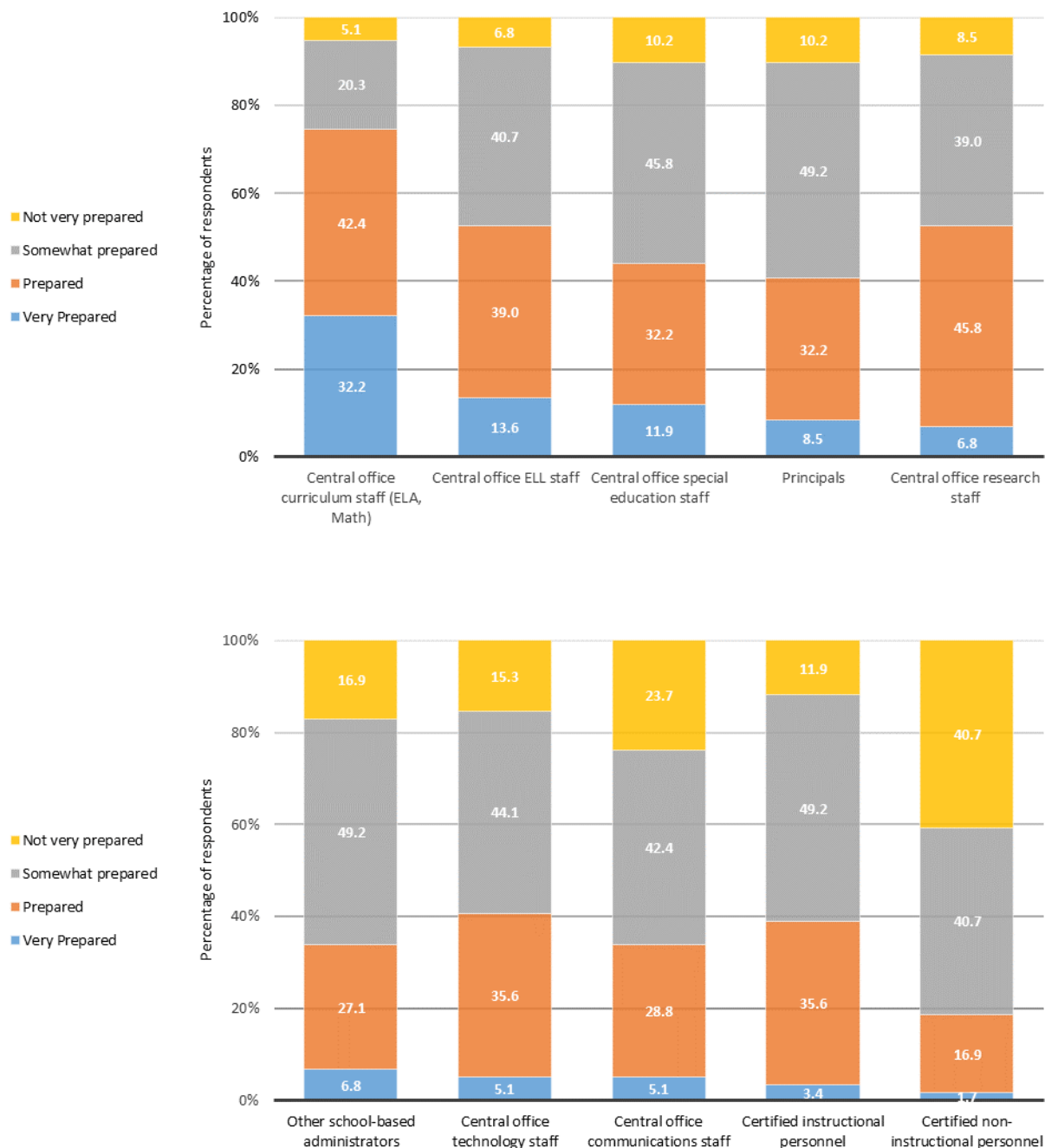
Finally, we saw circumstances where people in the same district answered similar questions much differently. This could reflect either differing perspectives or some uncertainty about where implementation stands. This is not surprising, as we are catching school-district personnel in the middle of a very complicated implementation process. Still, readers should find this report one of the most detailed summaries to date of where common core implementation stands in the nation's major urban school systems, according to senior staff in those systems.

Part I. Implementing the Common Core State Standards

- Survey responses suggest that key curriculum and research staff are “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the CCSS. For instance, approximately 75 percent of all respondents rated central office curriculum staff as “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the CCSS. In addition, over half of respondents rated both central office ELL staff and central office research staff as “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the CCSS (Figure 1).
- About 40 percent of respondents rated certified instructional personnel (i.e., teachers) as “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the CCSS. This represents an increase from the 2013 level of 30.2 percent. Similarly, approximately 41 percent of respondents indicated that principals are “prepared” or “very prepared” to implement the new standards (Figure 1).
- The percentage of respondents who rated their district’s progress in implementing the CCSS as “excellent” or “good” remained relatively consistent with responses in 2013. Over three-fourths of respondents rated their district’s progress as “excellent” or “good” in providing professional development in ELA (80 percent) and Math (76 percent), aligning instructional materials to the CCSS (81 percent), and implementing the CCSS in classrooms for ELA (80 percent) and math (81 percent) (Figure 2).
- Approximately two-thirds of respondents rated their districts’ progress as “good” or “excellent” in adopting computer-based/adaptive assessments (63 percent), addressing the needs of special populations (62 percent), and integrating technology into classroom instruction (69 percent) (Figure 2).
- About 25 percent of respondents reported being “very familiar” with the Next Generation Science Standards. Furthermore, 53 percent of respondents indicated that their district plans to adopt the new science standards (Figures 3 and 4).

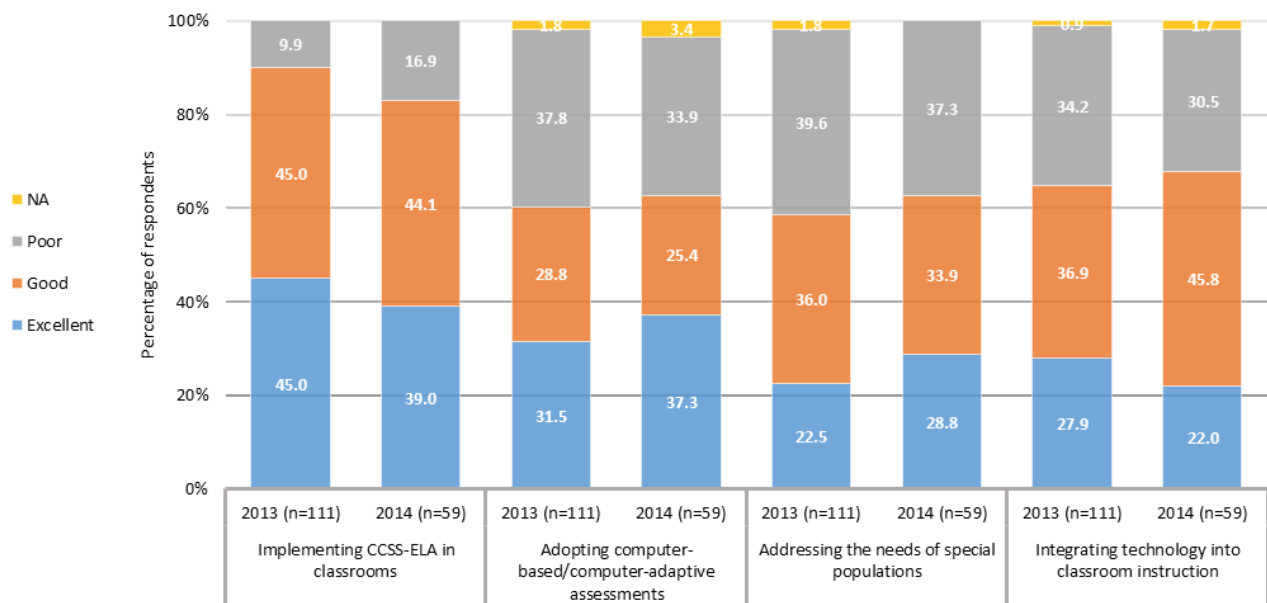
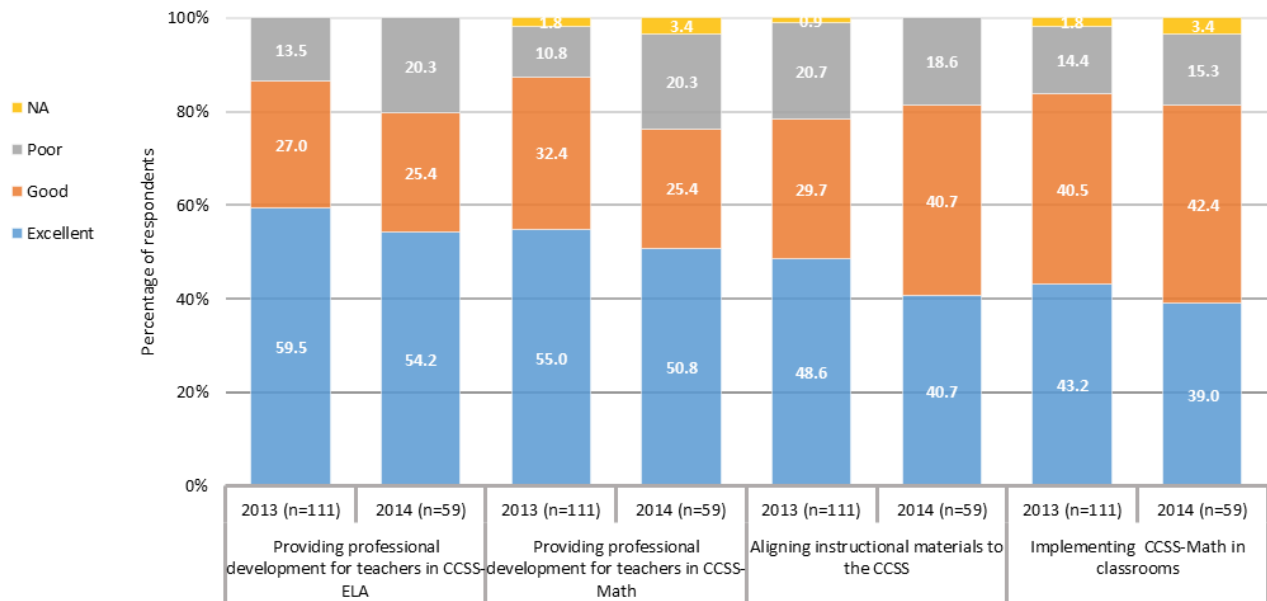
Part I. Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents indicating central office and school-level staff preparation to implement the CCSS, 2014 (n=59)



Part I. Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Figure 2. Percentage of respondents rating the strength of CCSS implementation progress in specified areas, 2013 (n=111) and 2014 (n=59)



Part I. Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents reporting familiarity with the Next Generation Science Standards, 2014 (n=59)

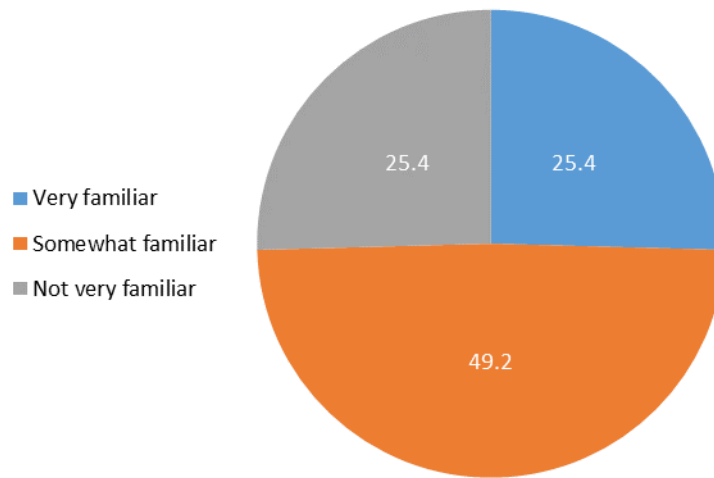
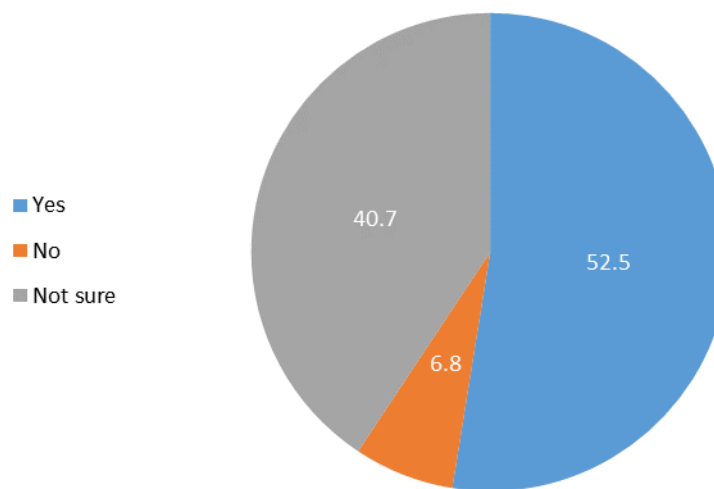


Figure 4. Percentage of respondents planning to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards, 2014 (n=59)



Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

- Over 80 percent of responding curriculum directors indicated the rationale for the CCSS was “sometimes evident” or “often evident” in their district’s professional development sessions. For example, all respondents reported that the importance of using instructional resources aligned with the new standards, the importance of integrating common assessments aligned with the new standards, and the importance of using standards aligned to expectations in college were “sometimes evident” or “often evident” in district professional development (Figure 5).
- Differentiating instruction for specific student groups was among the least evident topics in professional development, according to curriculum directors. In English language arts, differentiating instruction for students with special needs (33 percent) and ELLs (27 percent) was “rarely evident” in district professional development. In mathematics, approximately 40 percent of respondents indicated that differentiating instruction for struggling students, ELLs, and students with special needs was “rarely evident” in district professional development (Figure 6).
- At least 80 percent of responding curriculum directors indicated that building a shared understanding of the instructional shifts in ELA (87 percent), building content knowledge in ELA to teach the CCSS (80 percent), teaching reading and writing across content areas (80 percent), and selecting materials conducive to teaching the CCSS (80 percent) were “often evident” in their professional development. Conversely, understanding language progressions across grade levels (33 percent), analyzing student work samples based on the grade-level expectations of the CCSS (27 percent), and building an understanding of next generation assessments in ELA (27 percent) were the most likely to be “rarely evident” or “never evident” in district professional development (Figure 7).
- In math, 80 percent of respondents indicated that building a shared understanding of the instructional shifts required by the CCSS was “often evident” in professional development. Analyzing student work based on grade-level expectations and building an understanding of next generation assessments were least evident in district professional development (Figure 8).
- Over 60 percent of curriculum directors reported that results from annual summative assessments and interim assessments were “often” used at the elementary, middle, and high school level to differentiate professional development for teachers (Figure 9).
- Integrating technology into classroom instruction was emphasized to a “small extent” or “not at all” in professional development. For instance, about half of curriculum directors (53 percent) reported that using technology to enable students to produce and publish writing was “not at all” provided in professional development activities. However, about two-thirds of respondents (67 percent) indicated that integrating computer-based assessments in the classroom and using computer adaptive assessments to monitor student growth was “often evident” or “moderately evident” in professional development (Figure 10).
- Of the districts who responded to this survey in both 2013 and 2014, over three-fourths have used PARCC/SBAC sample items and progressions in math to align instructional materials to the CCSS. Another 67 percent of districts report using resources from the Council’s Basal Alignment Project – an

Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

increase of 9 percentage points from 2013. A larger percentage of these districts also report using internal district rubrics to align instructional materials to the CCSS (Figure 11).

Identifying and Addressing the Academic Needs of Struggling Students

- Approximately 80 percent of curriculum directors indicate that their school districts use results from annual state assessments to identify struggling students in elementary, middle and high school. All respondents reported using results from interim assessments to at least a “moderate extent” in elementary and middle school to identify struggling students, while 93 percent do so in high school. Approximately half of respondents indicated using early warning indicators such as attendance and disciplinary referrals to a “large extent” throughout elementary (47 percent), middle (47 percent), and high school (53 percent) to identify struggling students (Figure 12).
- School districts were relatively consistent in their approaches to addressing the needs of struggling students in elementary, middle, and high school. In elementary school, 80 percent of respondents indicated that quarterly monitoring of student growth was a “very common” strategy used in the district. Slightly fewer respondents indicated that it was a “very common” practice in middle (60 percent) and high school (53 percent) (Figure 13).
- The majority of respondents indicated that curriculum strategies for addressing the needs of struggling students were either “very common” or “somewhat common.” For example, approximately two-thirds of respondents indicated that they are developing transitional curriculum that addresses gaps between previous standards and the CCSS in elementary (67 percent), middle (67 percent), and high school (60 percent). Furthermore, the creation of scope and sequence documents to help teachers align instruction to the CCSS was “very common” or “somewhat common” in elementary school (93 percent), middle school (79 percent), and high school (79 percent) (Figure 13).

School-level Support for Teachers

- Among districts that responded in both 2013 and 2014, the percentage of curriculum directors who indicated that shifts in teacher practice were reflected in *formal* teacher observation protocols to a “moderate extent” or “large extent” fell from approximately 58 percent to 42 percent over the period. Similarly, a third of respondents in 2014 (33 percent) indicated that shifts in teacher content knowledge are reflected in formal observation protocols to a “large extent” or “moderate extent” – a decrease from 58 percent in 2013 (Figure 14).
- In comparison, *informal* teacher observations reflected the expectations of the CCSS to a larger extent. For instance, 83 percent of respondents indicated that shifts in teacher practice are reflected in informal teacher observation protocols to a “large extent” or “moderate extent” – an increase from 67 percent in 2013. Between 2013 and 2014, three-fourths (75 percent) of respondents reported that shifts in the type and quality of student work was reflected in informal observation protocols to a “large extent” or a “moderate extent” – an increase from 50 percent in 2013 (Figure 14).

Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

- In terms of differentiating instruction for ELLs, fewer than half of respondents indicated that formal (33 percent) and informal (42 percent) observation protocols were aligned with the CCSS to a “large extent” or “moderate extent.” Only a third of respondents (33 percent) indicated that formal and informal teacher observations were aligned to the CCSS to a “large extent” or “moderate extent” for students with special needs (Figure 14).
- In 2013 and 2014, approximately 60 percent of respondents reported that principals are scheduling common planning time for teachers on a daily basis. Another 40 percent of respondents reported that principals are conducting faculty meetings exclusively focused on the CCSS on a monthly basis (Table 1).
- In responses to open-ended questions, curriculum directors expressed continuing challenges in implementing the CCSS amid competing priorities at the district and school-level and the lack of consistent messaging from district leadership about the district’s implementation goals (Appendix A).
- Several responses to open-ended questions highlighted the misalignment between current assessments and the CCSS as a challenge to measuring the implementation of the CCSS (Appendix A).

Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 5. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development, 2014 (n=15)

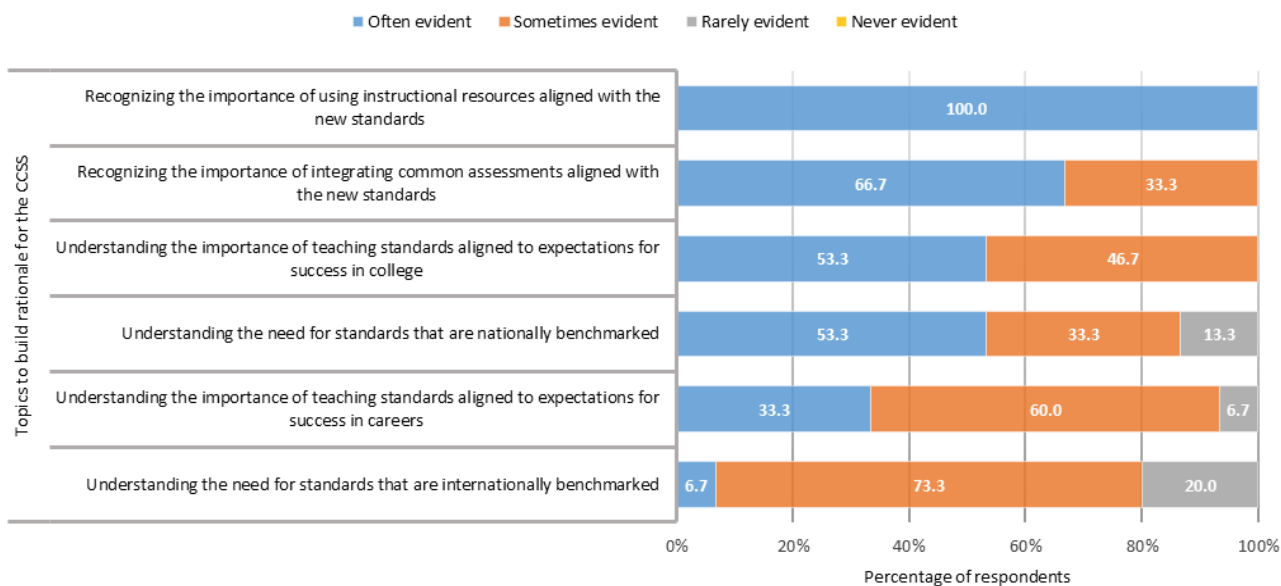
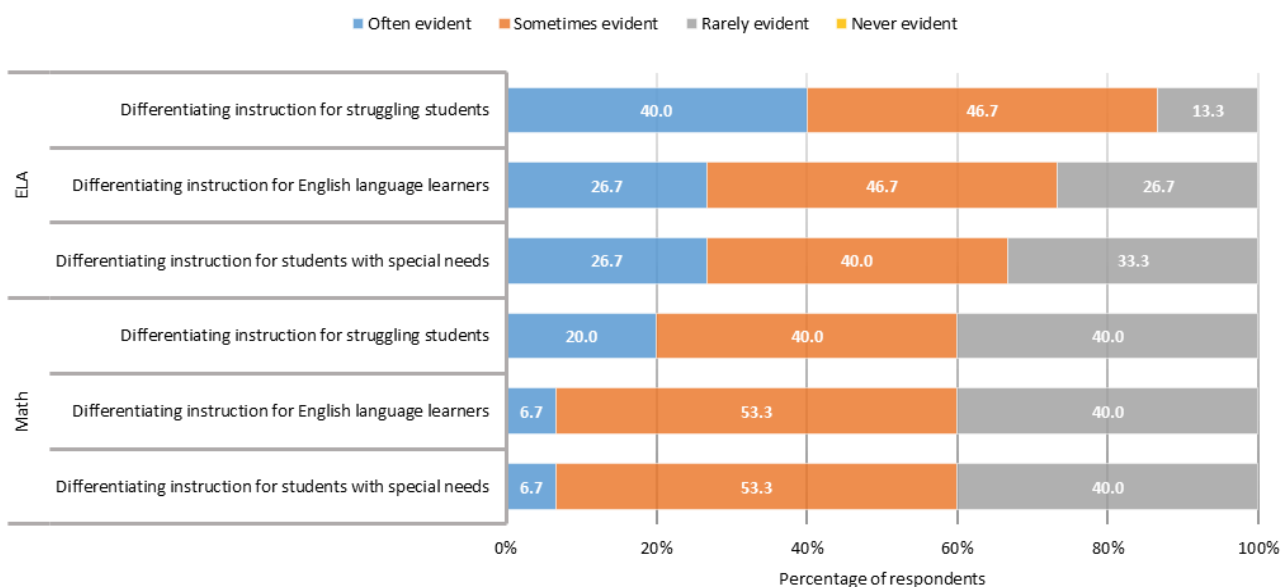
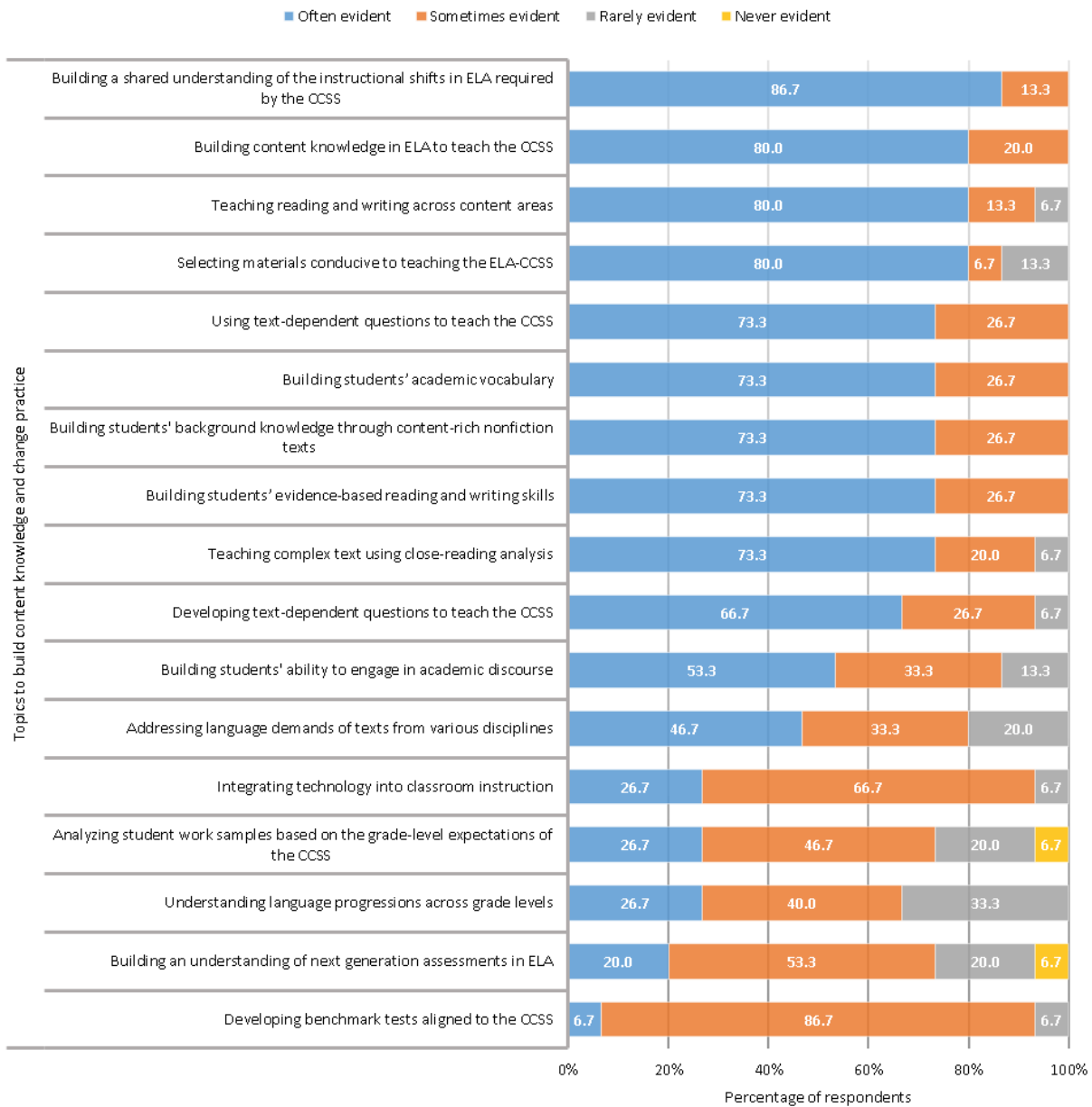


Figure 6. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting that specified topics related to special populations are evident in CCSS professional development in ELA and math, 2014 (n=15)



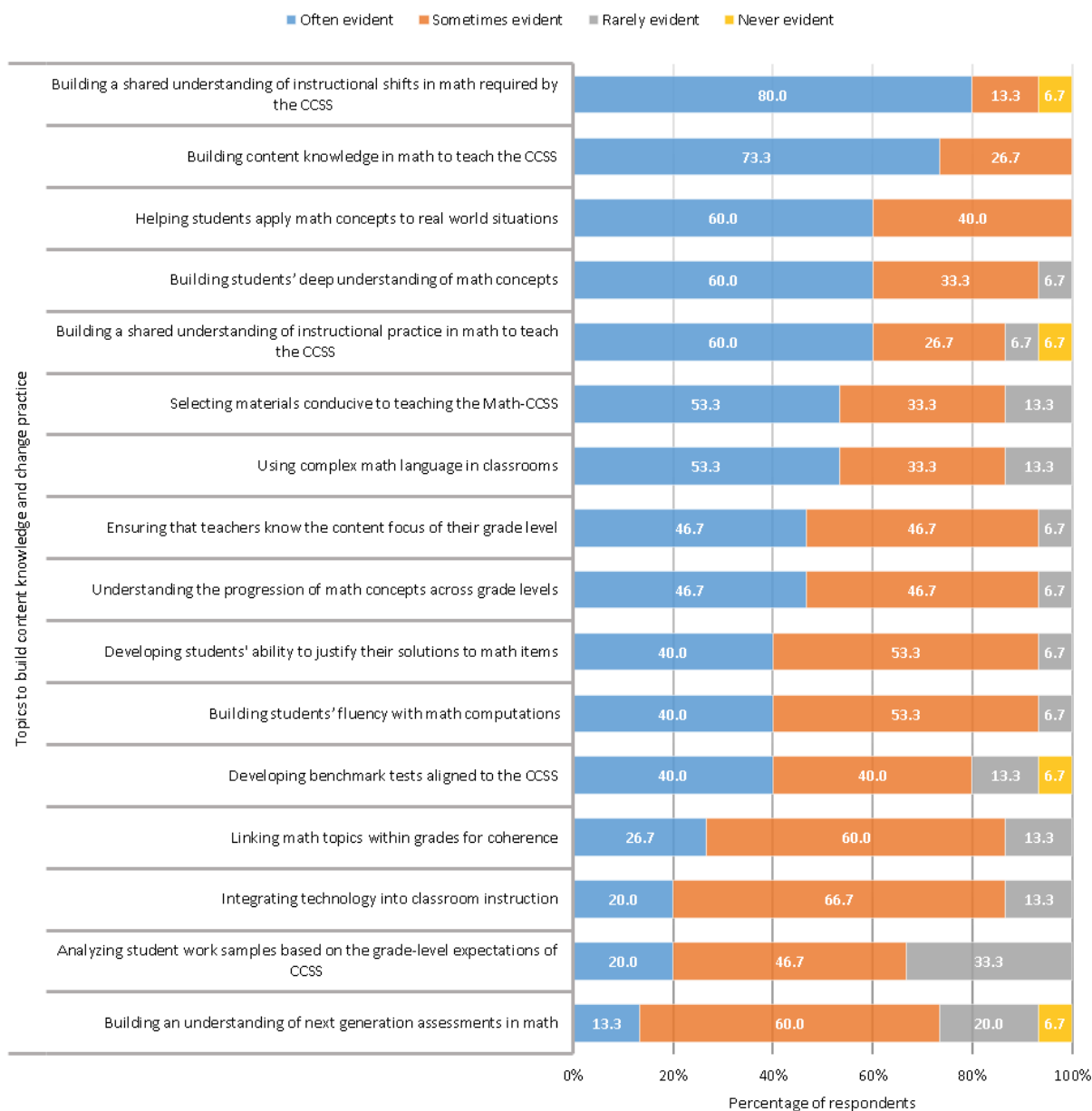
Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 7. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development for ELA, 2014 (n=15)



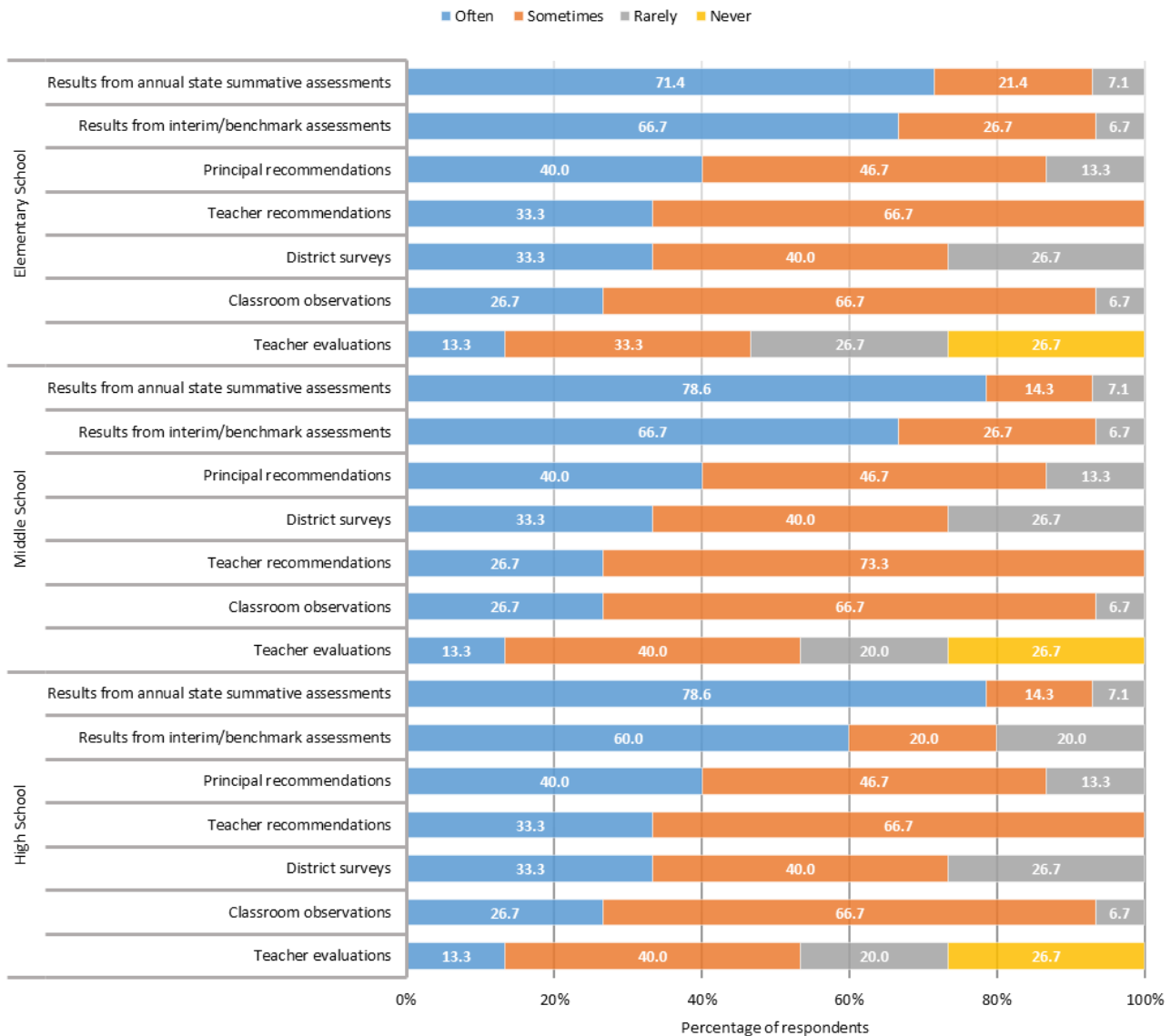
Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 8. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development for math, 2014 (n=15)



Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 9. Percentage of curriculum directors using specified resources to differentiate professional development for teachers in elementary, middle, and high school, 2014 (n=15)



Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 10. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting that specified topics related to technology are evident in professional development, 2014 (n=15)

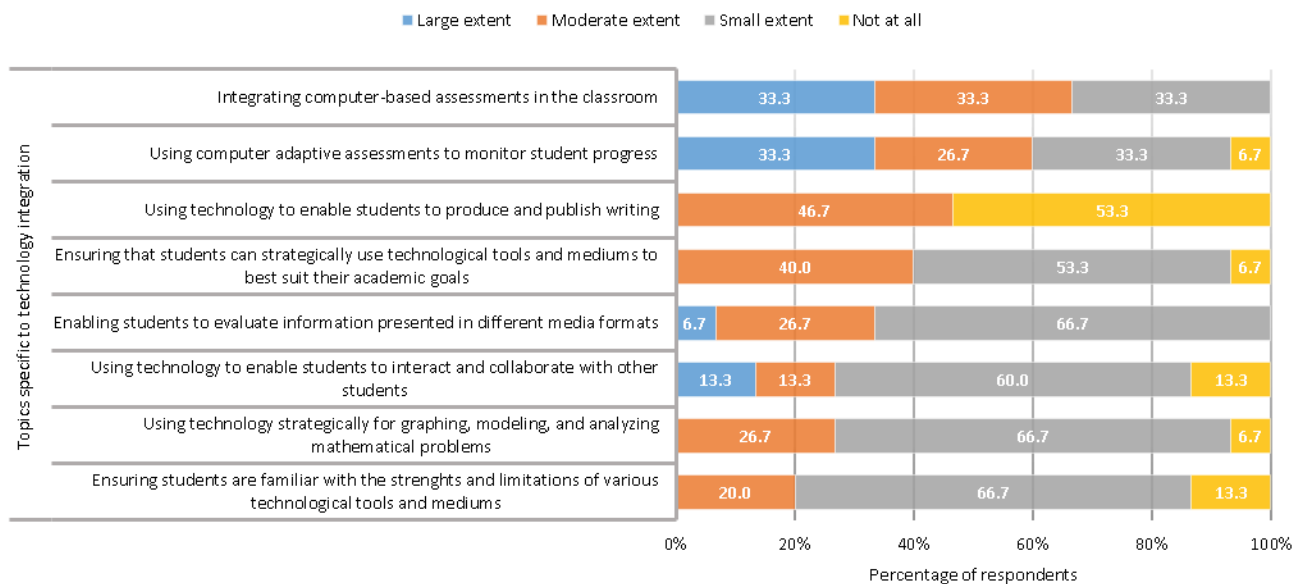
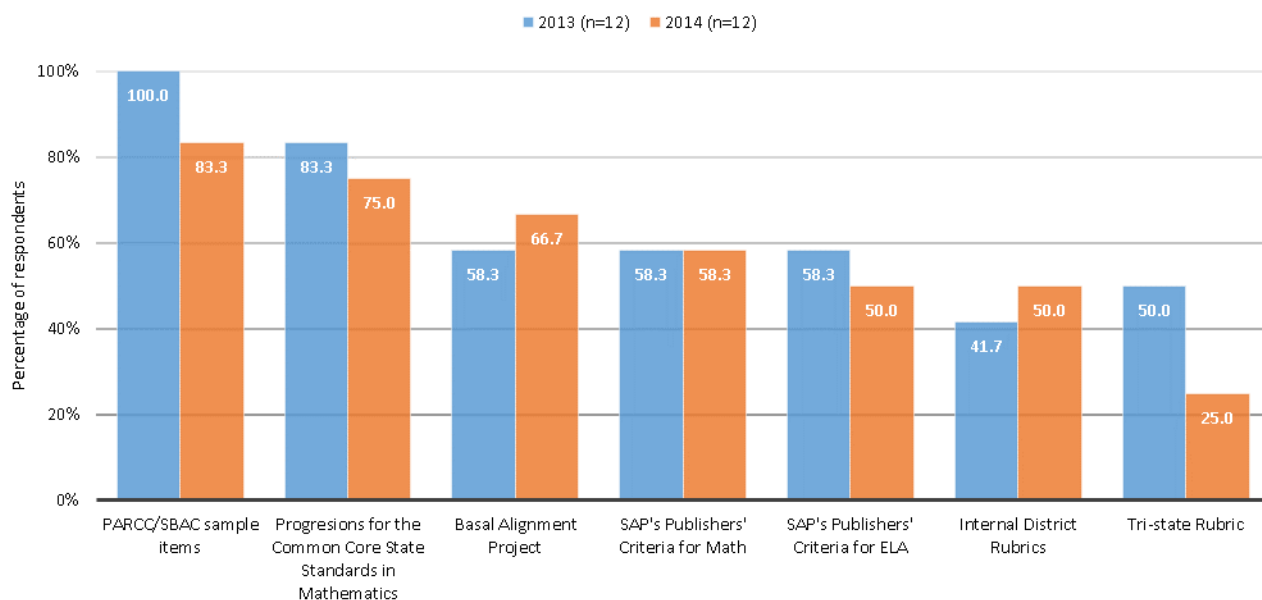
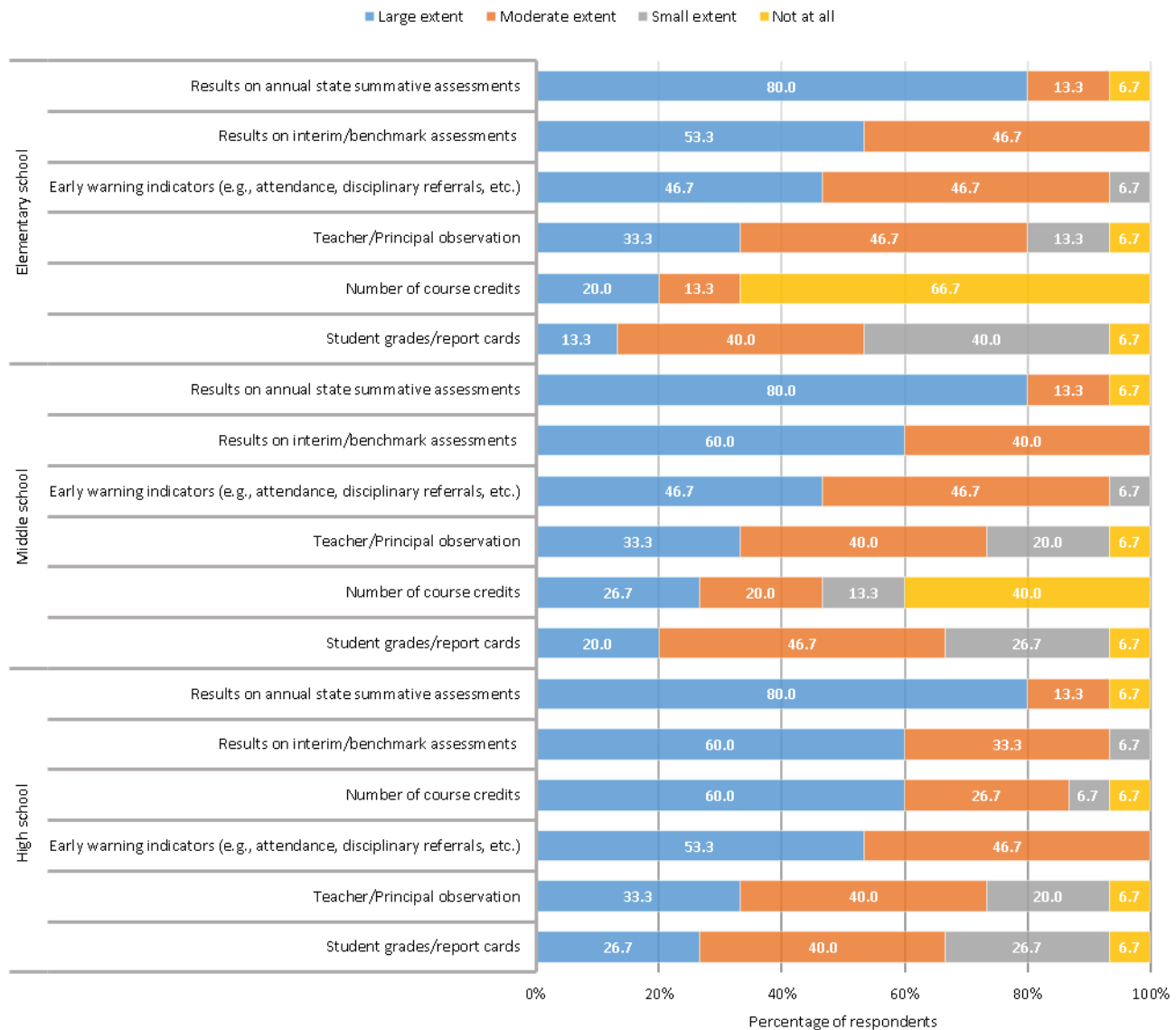


Figure 11. Percentage of curriculum directors using specified resources to align instructional materials to the CCSS, 2013 and 2014 (n=12)



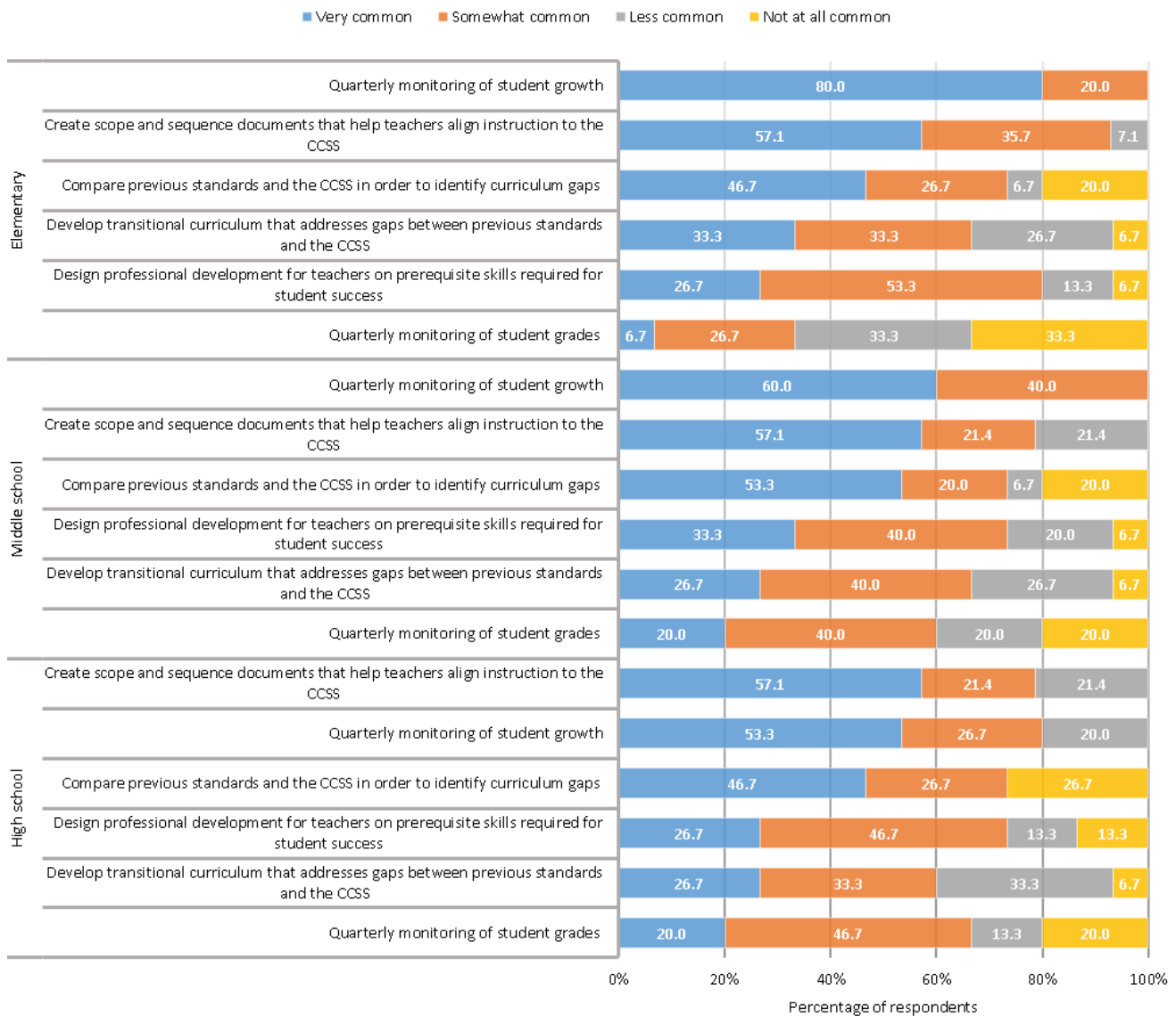
Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 12. Percentage of curriculum directors using specified resources to identify struggling students in elementary, middle, and high school, 2014 (n=15)



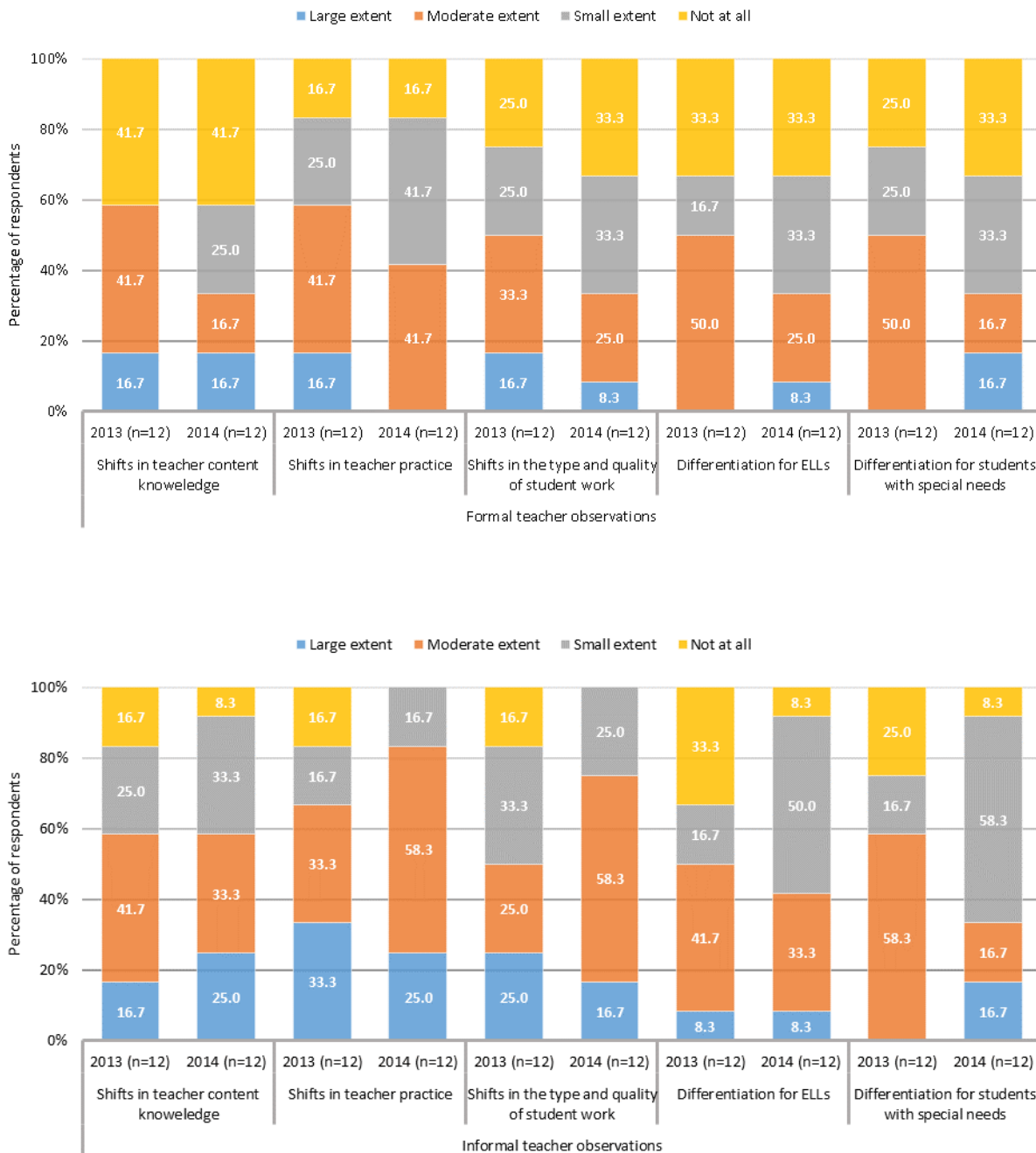
Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 13. Percentage of curriculum directors using specified strategies to address the needs of struggling students in elementary, middle, and high school, 2014 (n=15)



Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Figure 14. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting the extent to which formal and informal observation protocols in specified areas are aligned with the CCSS, 2013 and 2014 (n=12)



Part II. Professional Development and the Common Core State Standards

Table 1. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting how often district and school staff participate in specified CCSS implementation support activities, 2013 (n=43) and 2014 (n=15)

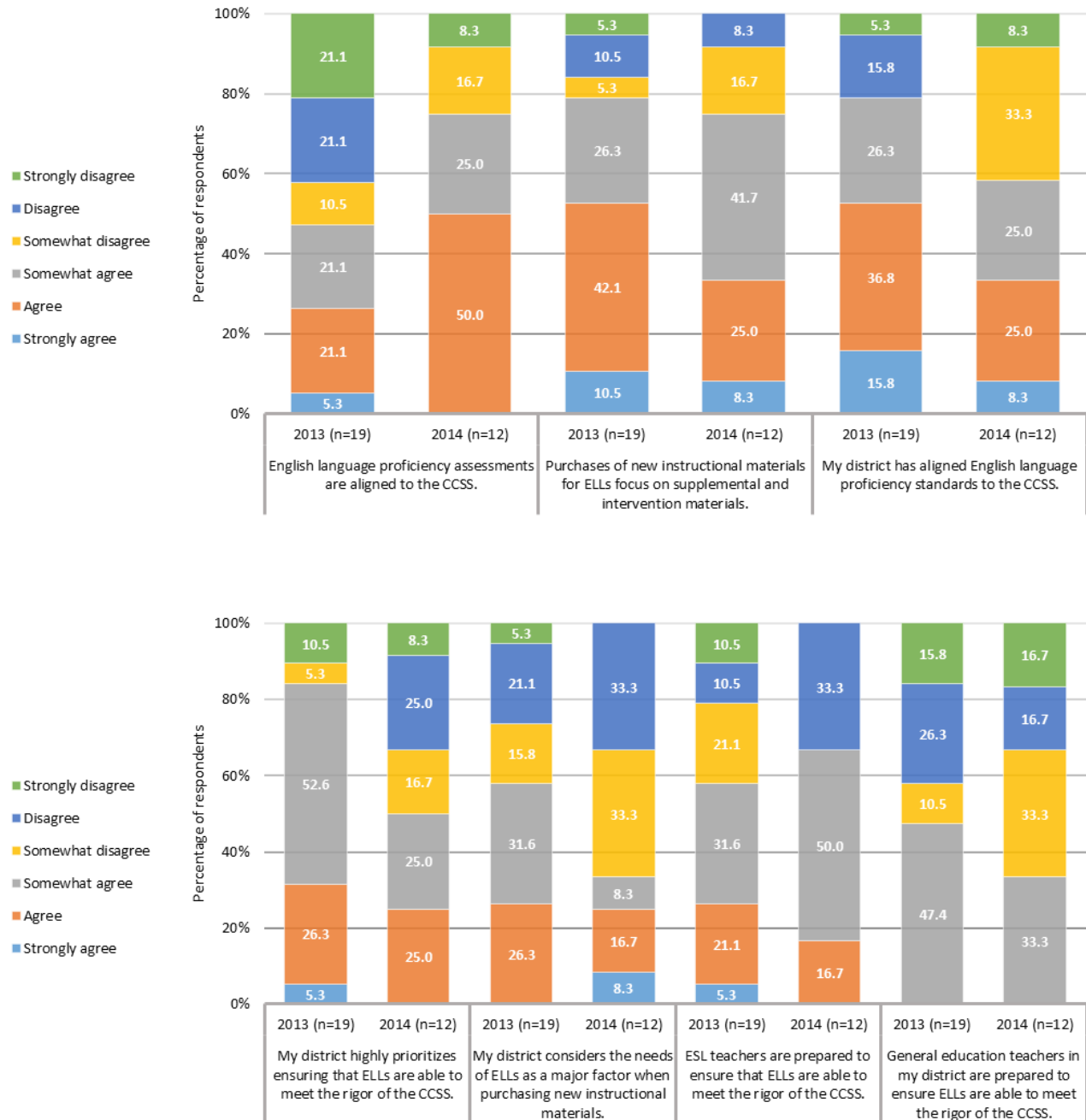
	Daily/Weekly		Monthly		Quarterly		Annually		Not at all	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
Principals conducting faculty meetings exclusively focused on the CCSS		6.7%	39.5%	40.0%	39.5%	20.0%	7.0%	20.0%	14.0%	13.3%
Teachers using online professional development resources aligned to the CCSS	16.3%	13.3%	37.2%	46.7%	27.9%	20.0%	9.3%	6.7%	9.3%	13.3%
Teachers meeting in professional learning communities	41.9%		39.5%	40.0%	16.3%	46.7%			2.3%	13.3%
Principals scheduling common planning time for teachers	60.5%	60.0%	16.3%	20.0%	9.3%	6.7%	9.3%	6.7%	4.7%	6.7%
District leadership convening key stakeholder groups	4.7%		30.2%	13.3%	37.2%	46.7%	18.6%	33.3%	9.3%	6.7%
Teachers discussing the CCSS during parent meetings		6.7%	11.6%	6.7%	48.8%	46.7%	30.2%	33.3%	9.3%	6.7%

Part III. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for ELLs

- Only a quarter of responding ELL directors (25 percent) “agree” that their district places a high priority on ensuring that ELLs are able to meet the rigor of the CCSS. No respondents agreed that general education teachers are prepared to help ELLs meet the rigor of the CCSS while only 17 percent “agree” that ESL teachers are prepared (Figure 15).
- Approximately half of respondents “agree” that English language proficiency *assessments* are aligned to the CCSS – an increase of 24 percentage points over 2013 – but only a third of respondents (33 percent) “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district’s English language proficiency *standards* are aligned to the CCSS (Figure 15).
- Between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of respondents who rated the quality of their basal ESL programs as “good” or “excellent” increased from 26 percent to 75 percent. Similarly, the percentage of respondents who rated materials as “good” or “excellent” also increased for supplemental materials that are not affiliated with a particular basal program (68 percent to 75 percent) and supplemental materials that are packaged with core basal programs (42 percent to 58 percent) (Figure 16).
- Over 80 percent of respondents indicated that the importance of teaching standards aligned to expectations in college, the importance of using instructional resources aligned to the CCSS, the need for standards that are nationally benchmarked, and the importance of integrating common assessments aligned with the new standards were “often evident” or “sometimes evident” in district professional development (Figure 17).
- Approximately 42 percent of responding ELL directors indicated that using text-dependent questions to teach the CCSS and developing students’ reading and writing skills were “often evident” in district professional development. Another third of respondents (33 percent) indicated that building students’ academic vocabulary, teaching complex text using close reading strategies, and building students’ background knowledge using rich non-fiction texts were “often evident” in professional development. In comparison, no one indicated that analyzing student work samples based on grade-level expectations in the CCSS and building an understanding of next generation assessments were “often evident” (Figure 18).
- In math, only a quarter of respondents (25 percent) indicated that selecting instructional materials conducive to teaching the CCSS was “often evident” in district professional development. At least 40 percent of respondents indicated that understanding the progression of math concepts across grade levels (42 percent), linking math topics within grades for coherence (42 percent), developing formative assessments aligned with the CCSS (50 percent), and analyzing student work samples based on the grade-level expectations of the CCSS (50 percent) were “rarely evident” in professional development (Figure 19).

Part III. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for ELLs

Figure 15. Percentage of ELL directors responding to specified statements about readiness to implement the CCSS with ELLs, 2013 (n=19) and 2014 (n=12)



Part III. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for ELLs

Figure 16. Percentage of ELL directors rating the alignment of district instructional materials for ELLs to the CCSS, 2013 (n=19) and 2014 (n=12)

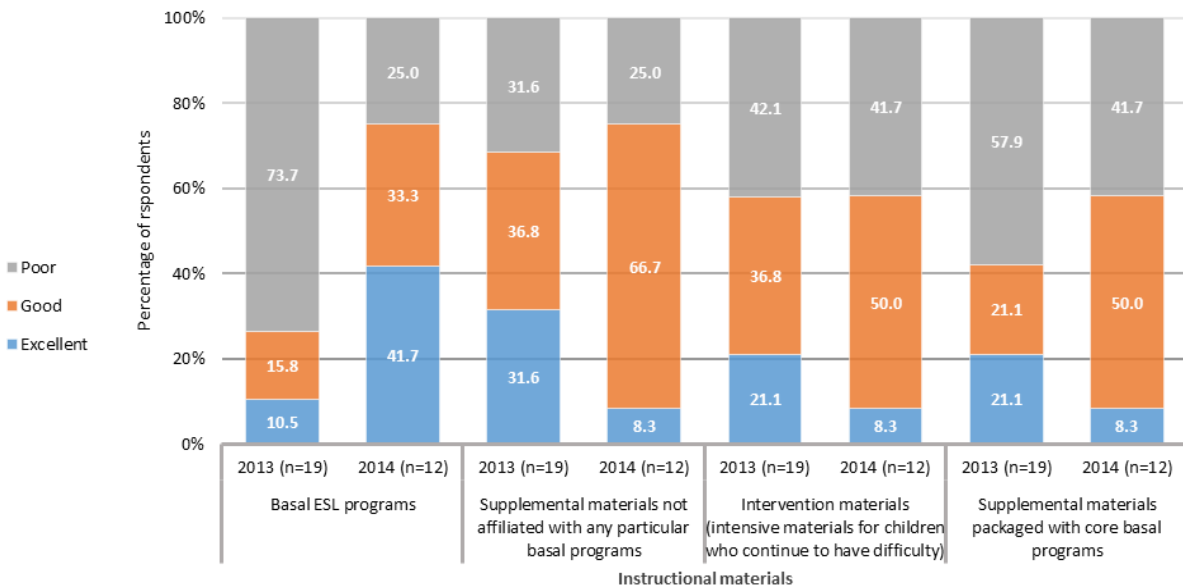
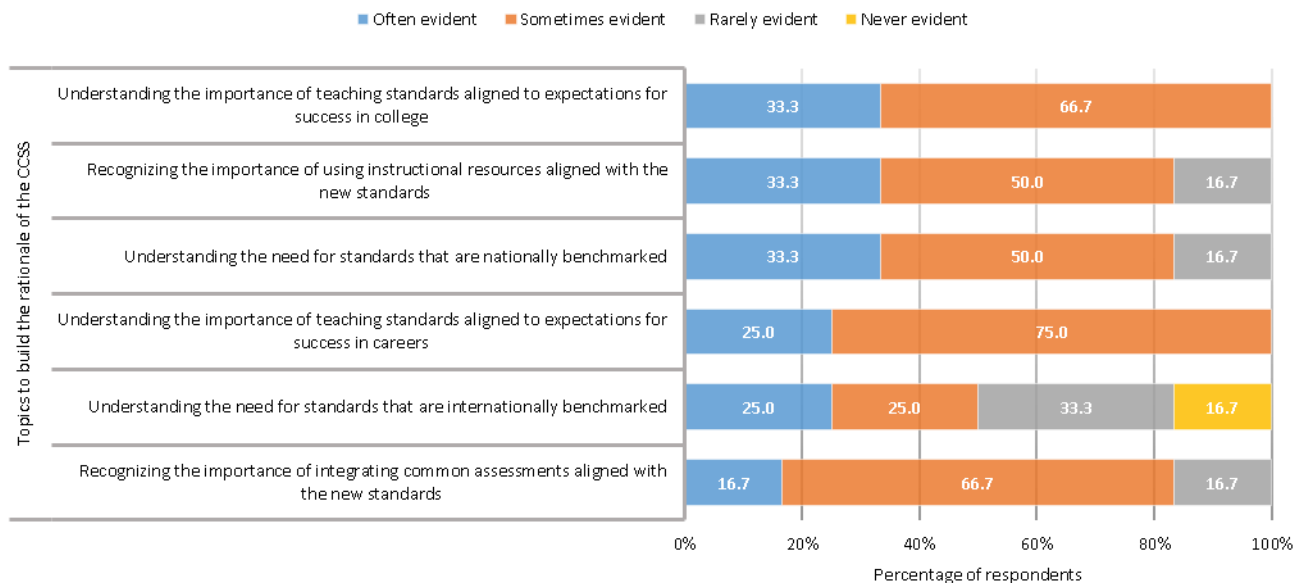
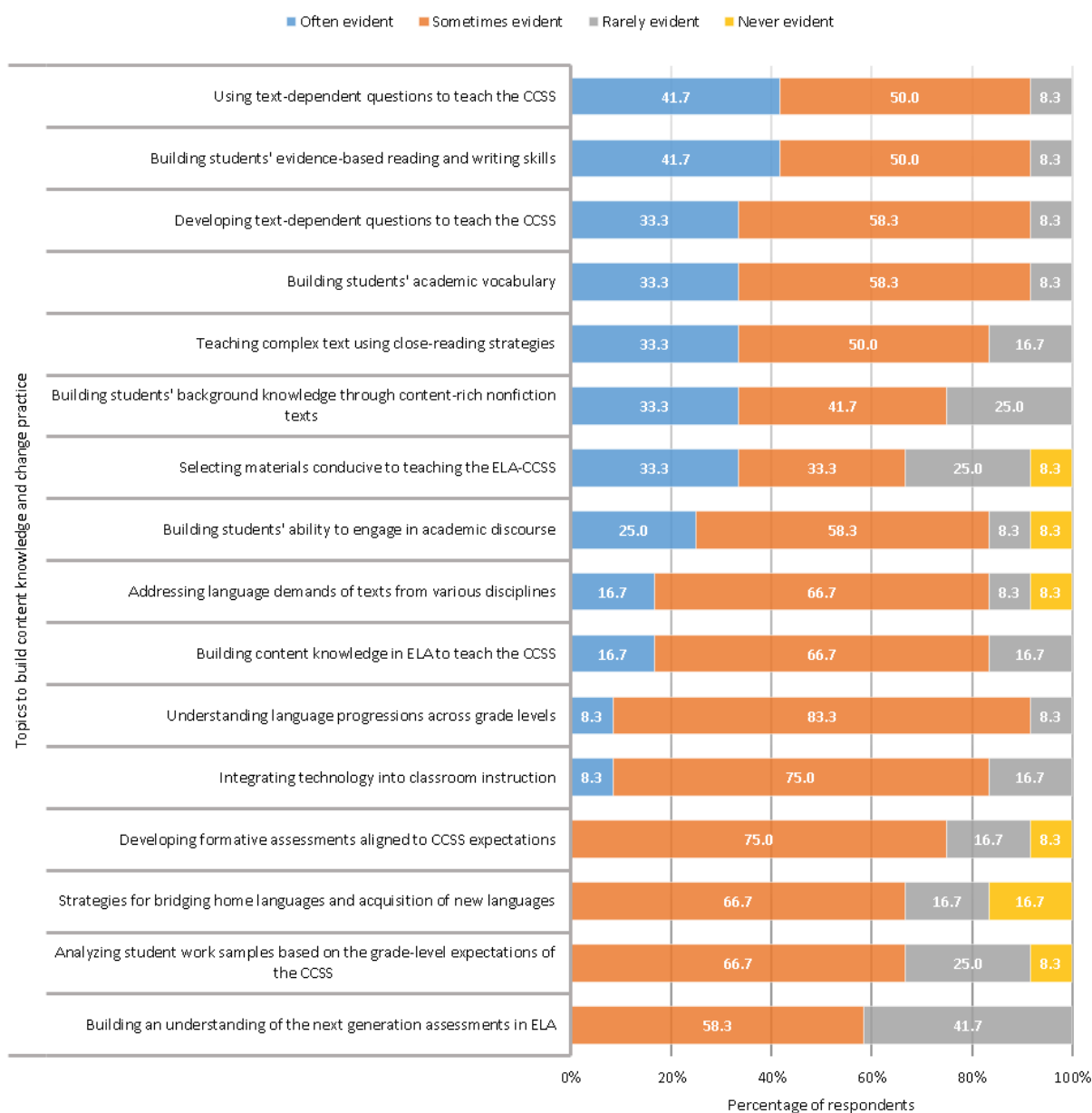


Figure 17. Percentage of ELL directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development, 2014 (n=12)



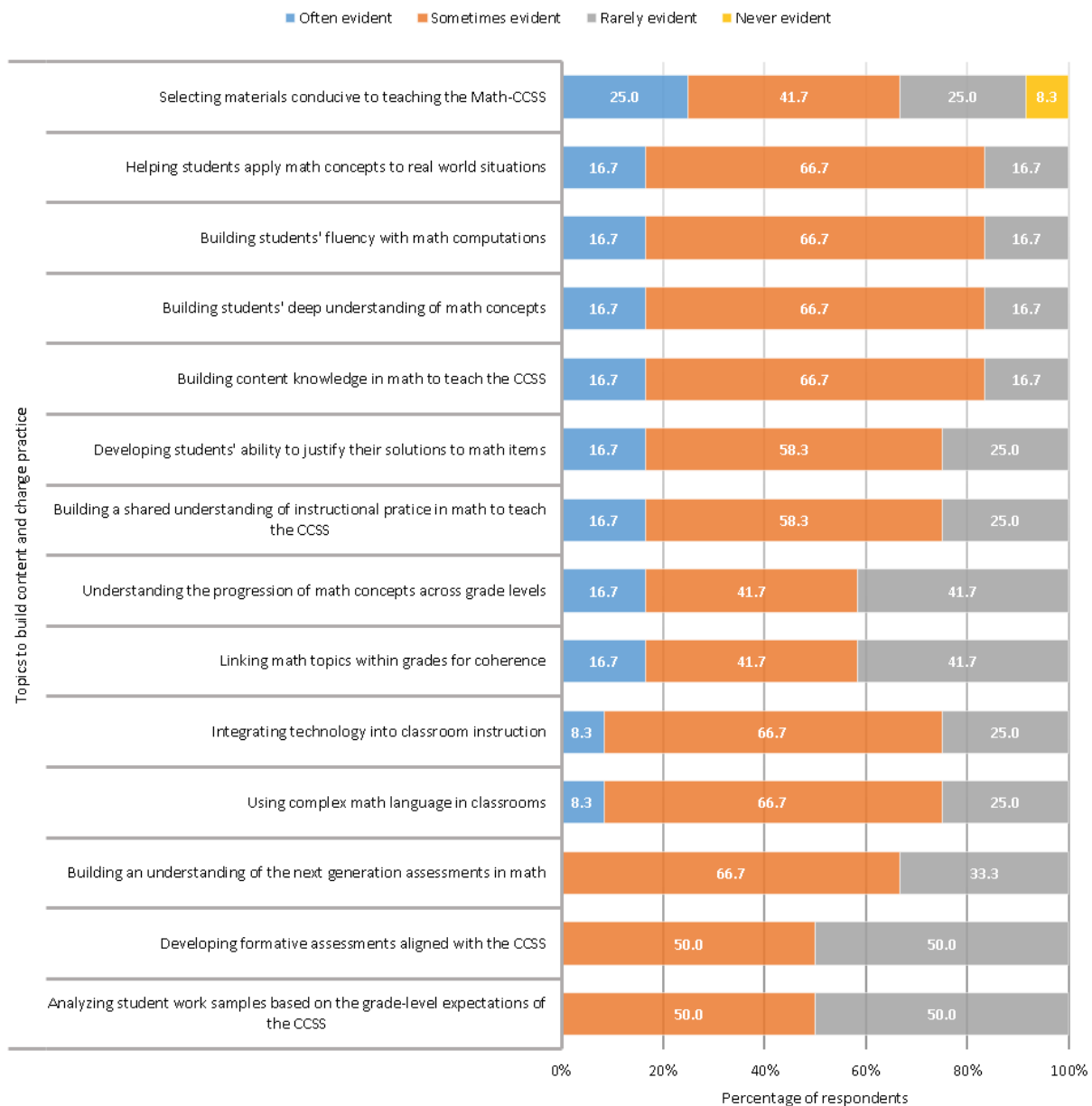
Part III. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for ELLs

Figure 18. Percentage of ELL directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development for ELA, 2014 (n=12)



Part III. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for ELLs

Figure 19. Percentage of ELL directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development for math, 2014 (n=12)



Part IV. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for Students with Special Needs

- In 2014, approximately 55 percent of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district highly prioritizes students with disabilities being able to meet the rigor of the CCSS – a decrease of 9 percentage points from 2013. Furthermore, approximately 82 percent of responding special education directors “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district is successful at identifying students with disabilities – an increase of 11 percentage points from 2013 (Figure 20).
- Roughly a third of responding special education directors indicated that topics meant to communicate the rationale for adopting the CCSS, such as recognizing the importance of using instructional resources aligned with the CCSS (36 percent) and recognizing the importance of integrating common assessments aligned with the new standards (36 percent) were “often evident” in district professional development (Figure 21).
- Approximately 36 percent of special education directors indicated that building students’ evidence-based reading and writing skills was “often evident” in district professional development in ELA. An additional 64 percent of respondents reported that building an understanding of next generation assessments in ELA and building students’ ability to engage in academic discourse were “rarely evident” or “never evident” in professional development activities (Figure 22).
- Less than 20 percent of responding special education directors indicated all topics were “often evident” in district professional development in math. Approximately 36 percent of respondents indicated that building a shared understanding of instructional practice in math to teach the CCSS was “rarely evident” or “never evident” in professional development (Figure 23).
- In responses to open-ended questions, special education directors noted the need to raise expectations for students with disabilities and to build general education teachers’ ability to help students with special needs (Appendix A).

Part IV. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for Students with Special Needs

Figure 20. Percentage of special education directors responding to specified statements about readiness to implement the CCSS for students with special needs, 2013 (n=14) and 2014 (n=11)

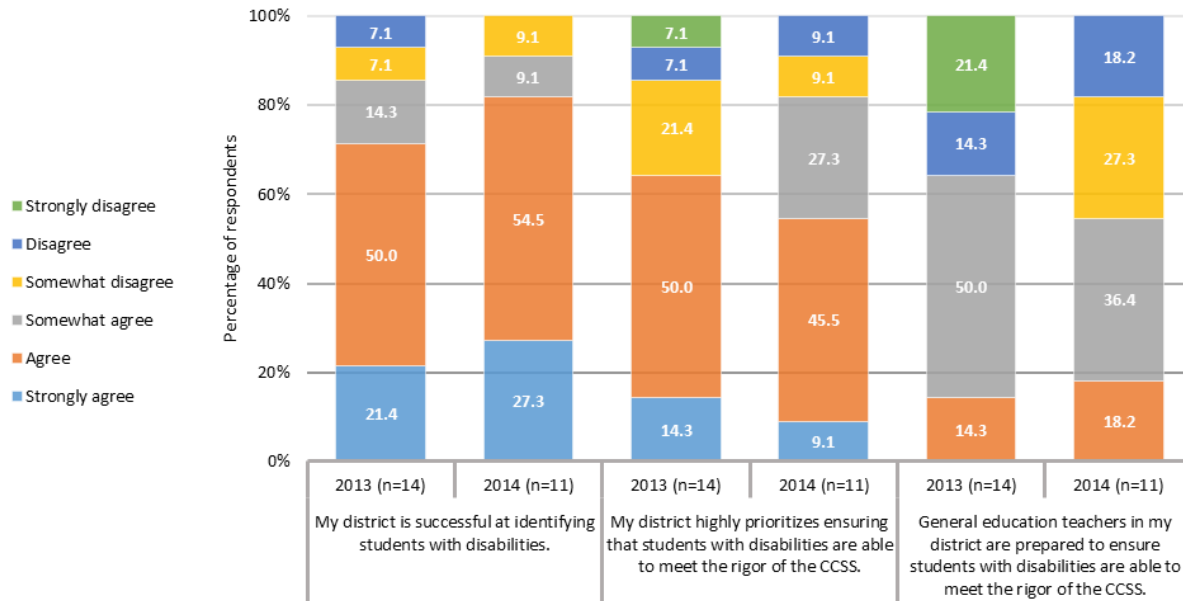
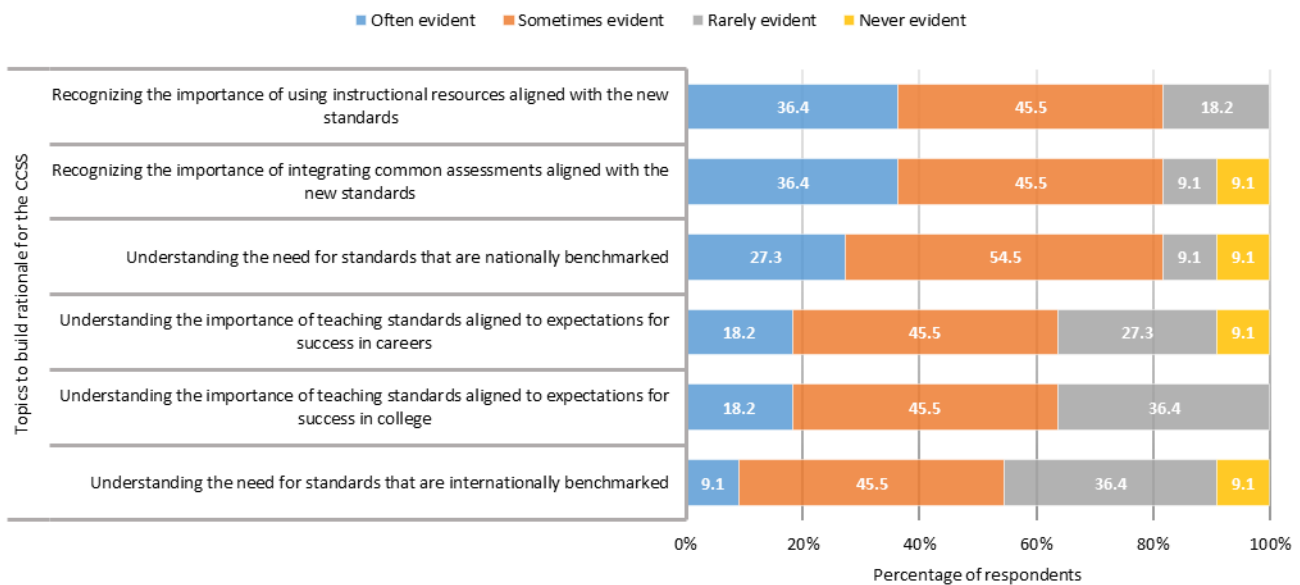
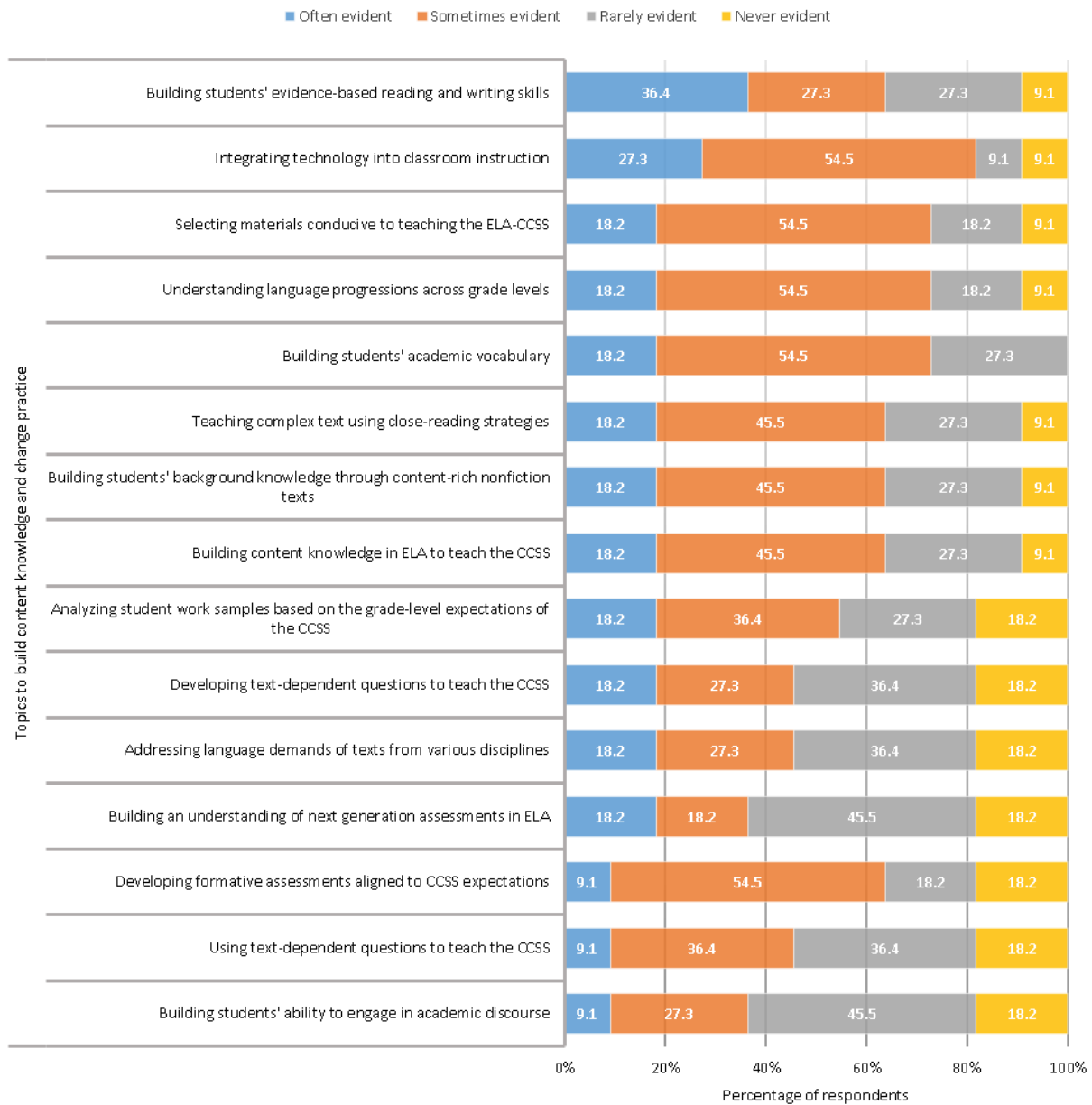


Figure 21. Percentage of special education directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development, 2014 (n=11)



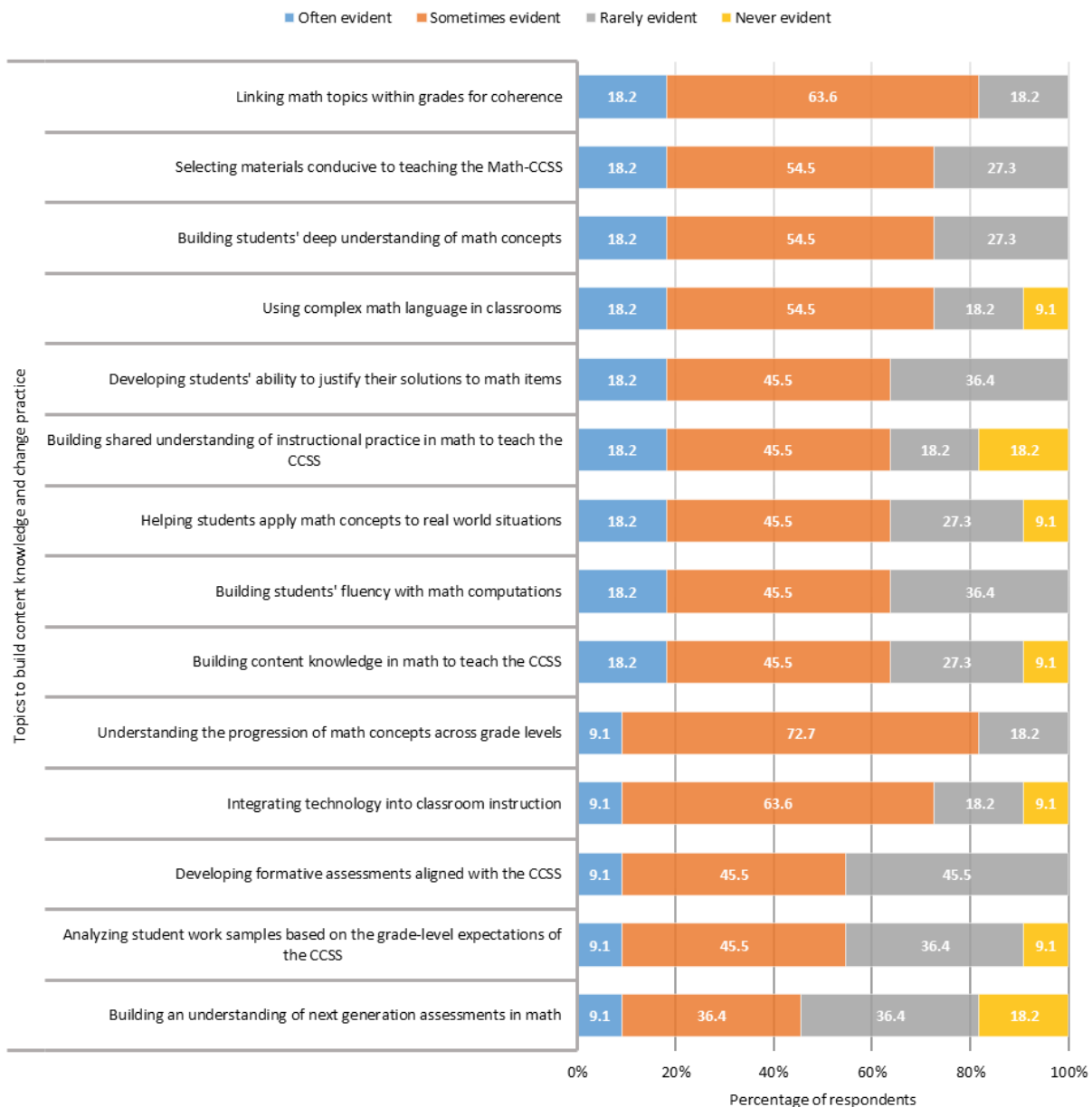
Part IV. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for Students with Special Needs

Figure 22. Percentage of special education directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development for ELA, 2014 (n=11)



Part IV. Ensuring Access to the Common Core State Standards for Students with Special Needs

Figure 23. Percentage of special education directors reporting that specified CCSS topics are evident in professional development for math, 2014 (n=11)



Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

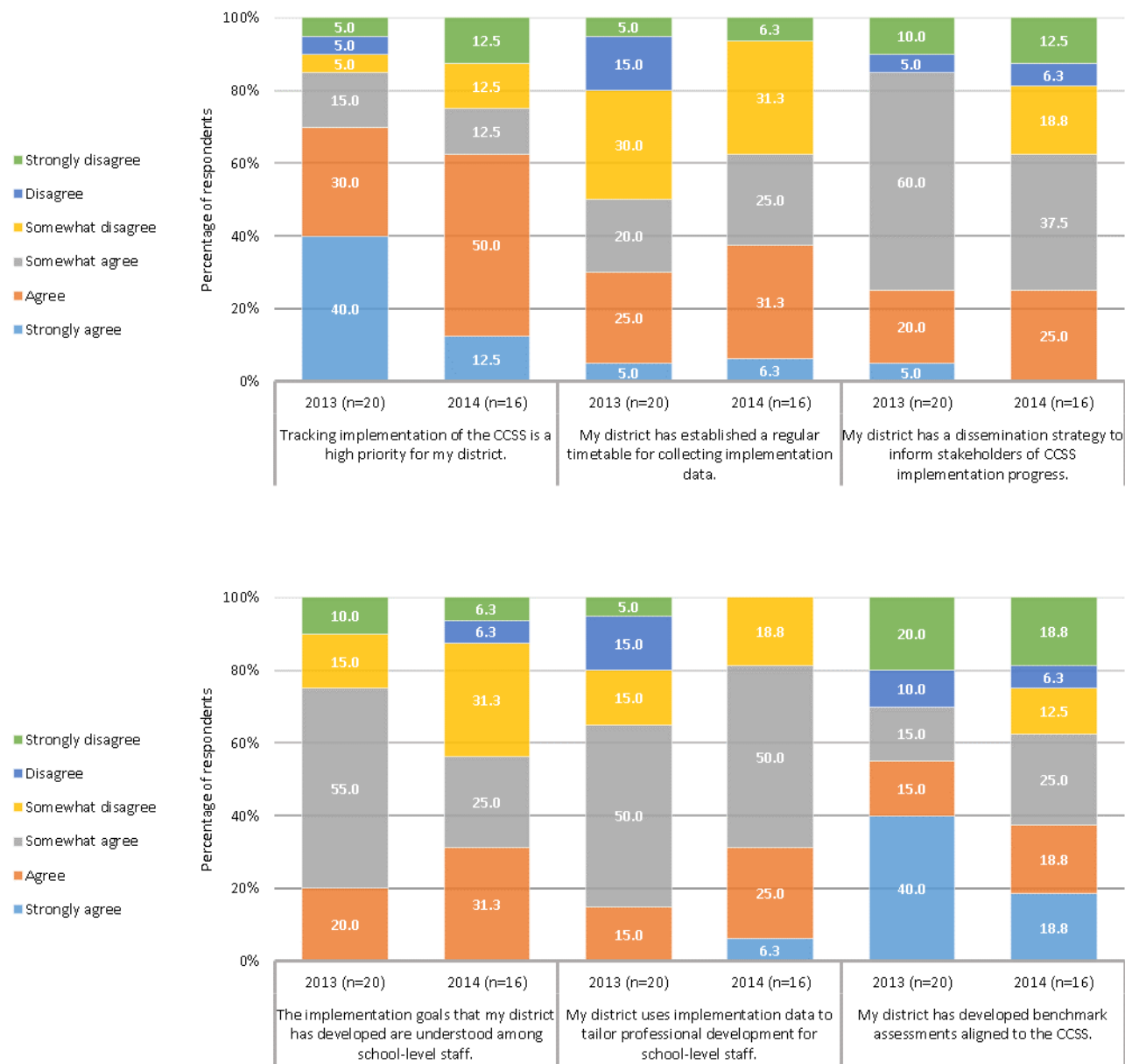
- The percentage of responding research directors who “agree” or “strongly agree” that tracking the implementation of the CCSS is a high priority for their district declined from 70 percent in 2013 to 63 percent in 2014. About 38 percent of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district has a regular timetable for collecting implementation data, which is an increase of 8 percentage points over 2013 (Figure 24).
- About a third of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their districts’ implementation goals are clearly understood by school-level staff (31 percent) and that their districts’ use implementation data to tailor professional development for school-level staff (31 percent) (Figure 24).
- In 2013 and 2014, over 80 percent of respondents rated their district’s progress as either “excellent” or “good” in terms of providing timely data for school leaders (80 percent and 88 percent, respectively) and creating data systems to store information from multiple departments (95 percent and 88 percent, respectively). Furthermore, approximately 80 percent of respondents rate their district’s progress as “excellent” or “good” in providing professional development on the use of data to support classroom instruction (Figure 25).
- Between 2013 and 2014, there has been an increase in the percentage of respondents who “sometimes use” or “often use” student work samples (23 percentage point increase) and teacher observation instruments aligned to the CCSS (24 percentage point increase) to monitor classroom implementation of the CCSS. There has also been a 14 percentage point increase in respondents who indicate that districts “sometimes use” or “often use” technology surveys to assess progress toward meeting minimum requirements for next generation assessments (Figure 26).
- There has been an increase in the percentage of respondents who report that districts “sometimes use” or “often use” principal surveys to assess instructional leadership aligned to the CCSS (6 percentage point increase) and assess principal understanding of the CCSS (18 percentage point increase) (Figure 26).
- ELL directors report a 14 percentage point increase between 2013 and 2014 in the use of student work samples to monitor the implementation of the CCSS for ELLs to a “large extent” or “moderate extent.” There was also an increase in the percentage of respondents who use classroom observations (9 percentage points), student performance on interim assessments (14 percentage points), and the movement of ELLs into higher English proficiency levels to assess CCSS implementation (4 percentage points) to a “large extent” or “moderate extent” (Figure 27).
- Between 2013 and 2014, special education directors report a decrease in the use of state-mandated modified assessments and results on interim assessments to a “large extent” or “moderate extent” (33 percentage points and 20 percentage points, respectively). The use of classroom observations, state-mandated alternative assessments, student work samples, and placement in advanced courses to a “large extent” or “moderate extent” also declined (Figure 28).

Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

- Between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of respondents who “sometimes use” or “often use” high school graduation rates (9 percentage points), end of year student achievement scores (9 percentage points), and enrollment and performance in advanced placement courses (14 percentage points, respectively) to assess CCSS implementation declined somewhat (Figures 29).
- In responses to open-ended answers, research directors reported the need for metrics and strategies for collecting implementation data. Some research directors highlighted the lack of information on what successful implementation looks like in practice (Appendix A).

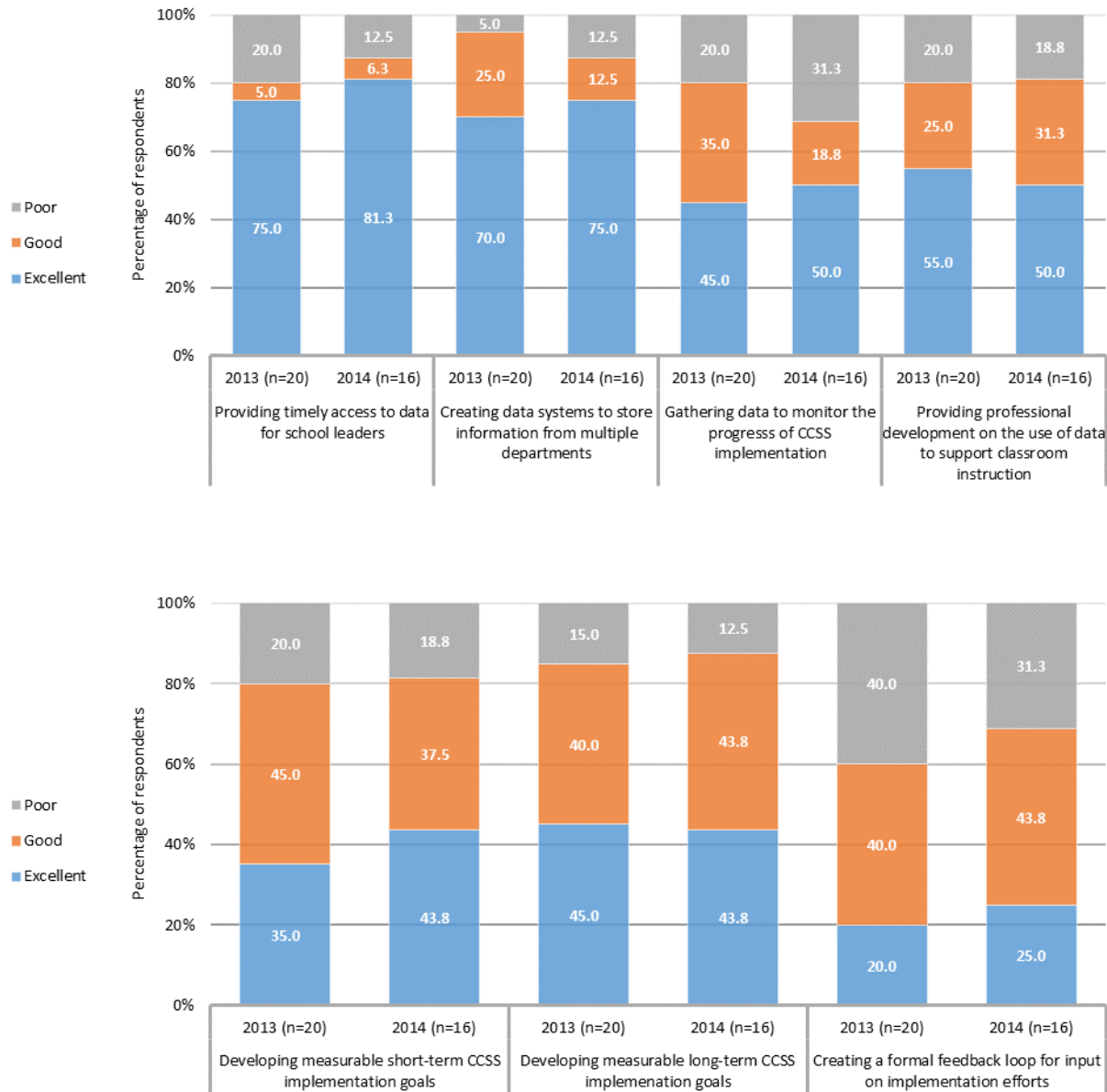
Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

Figure 24. Percentage of research directors responding to specified statements about readiness to implement the CCSS, 2013 (n=20) and 2014 (n=16)



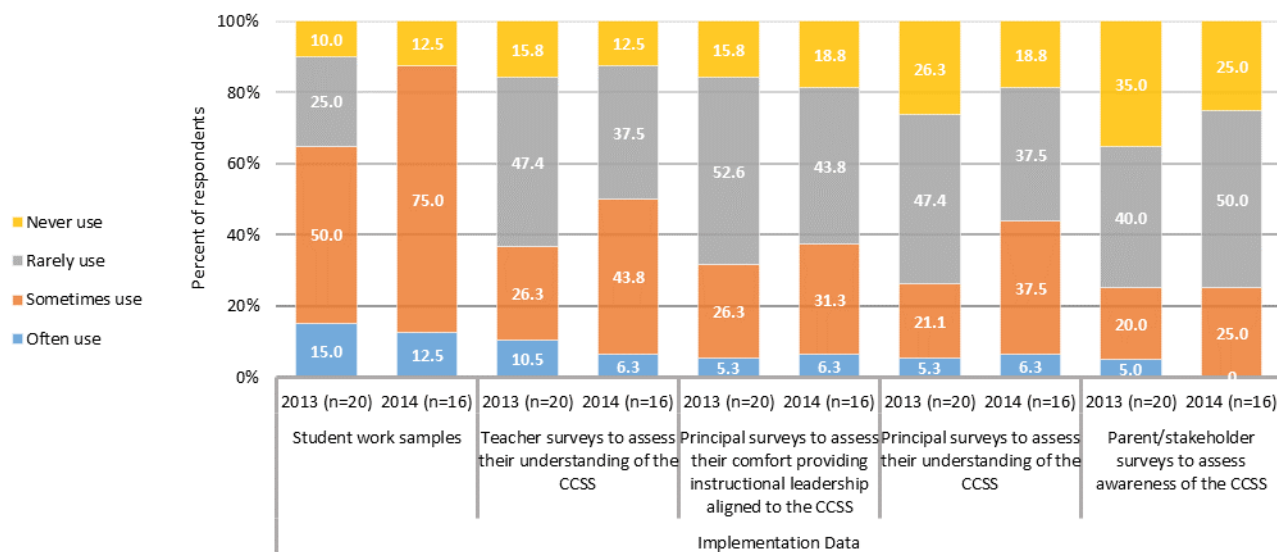
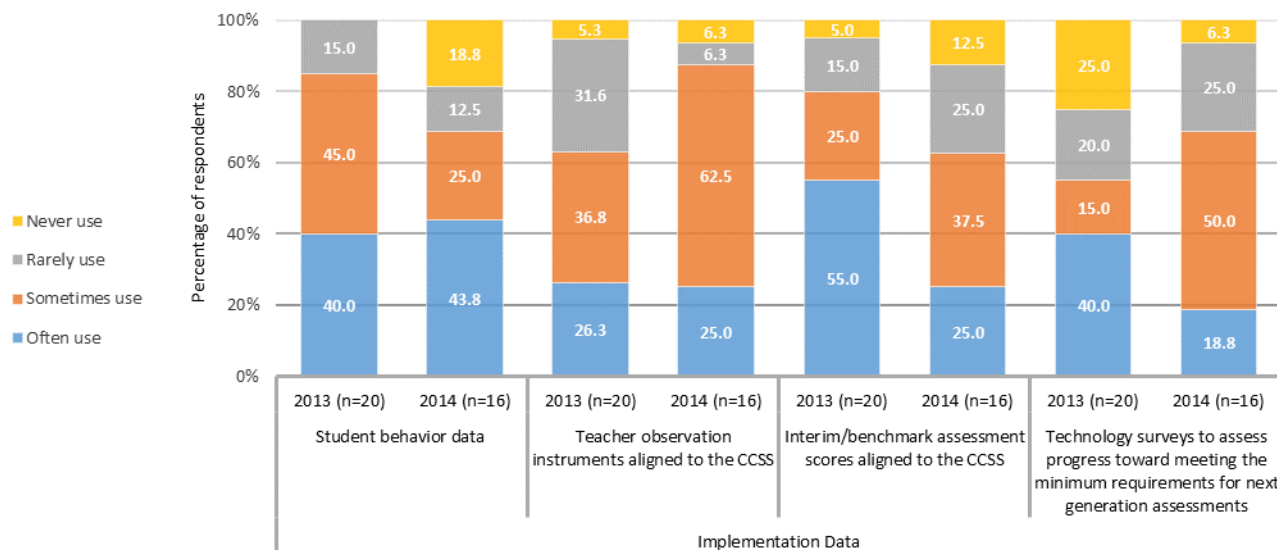
Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

Figure 25. Percentage of research directors indicating the strength of progress in specified areas of CCSS implementation, 2013 (n=20) and 2014 (n=16)



Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

Figure 26. Percentage of research directors reporting use of specified data to measure implementation of the CCSS, 2013 (n=20) and 2014 (n=16)



Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

Figure 27. Percentage of ELL directors reporting use of specified data to measure implementation of the CCSS, 2013 (n=19) and 2014 (n=12)

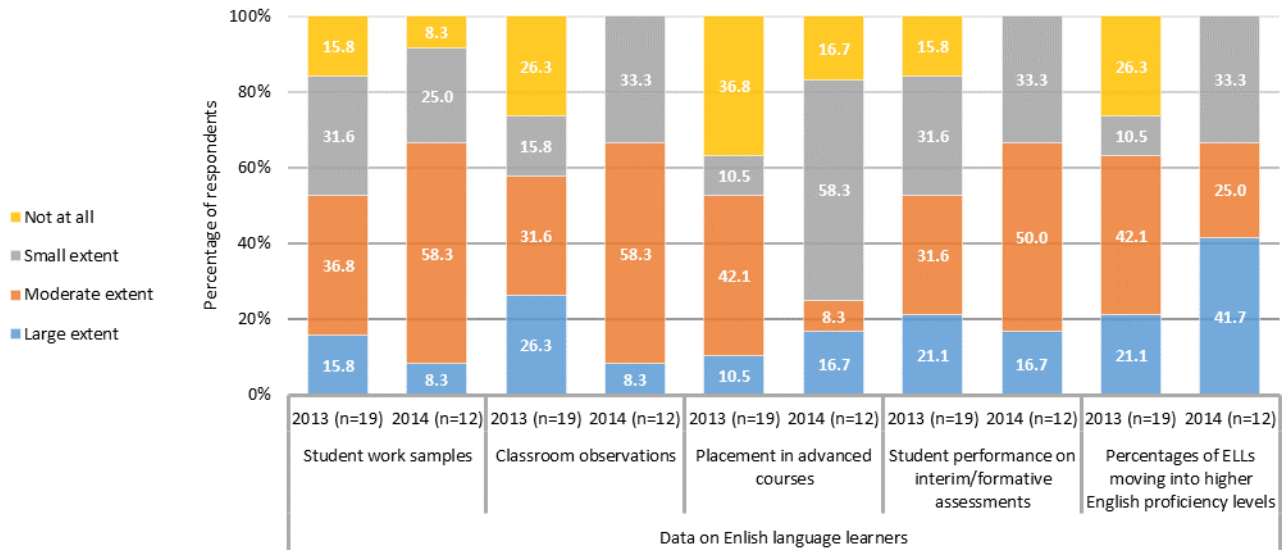
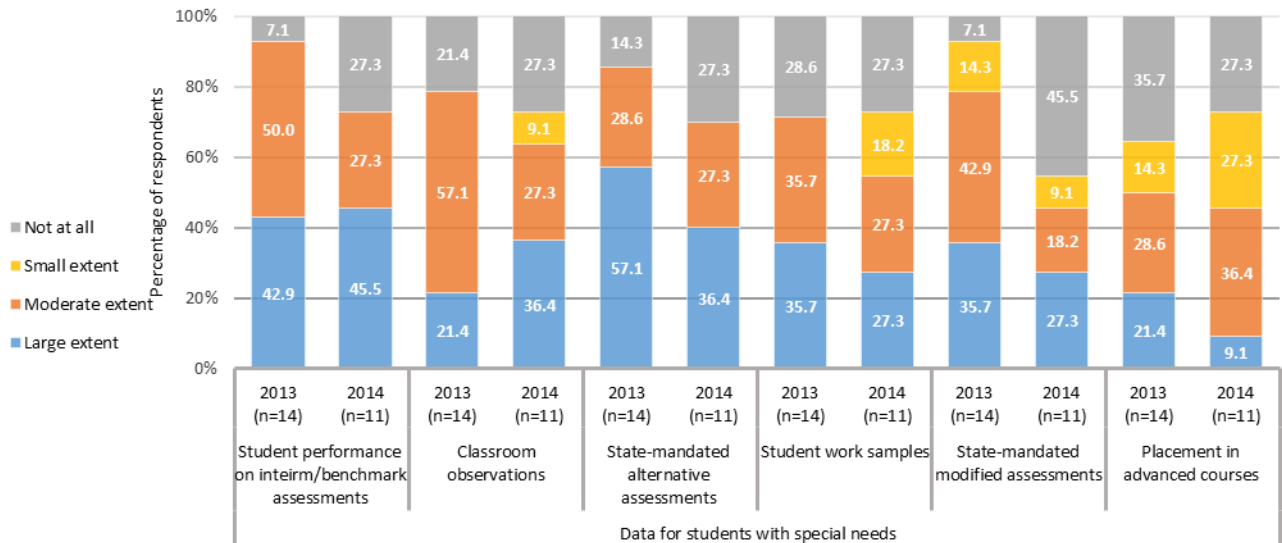
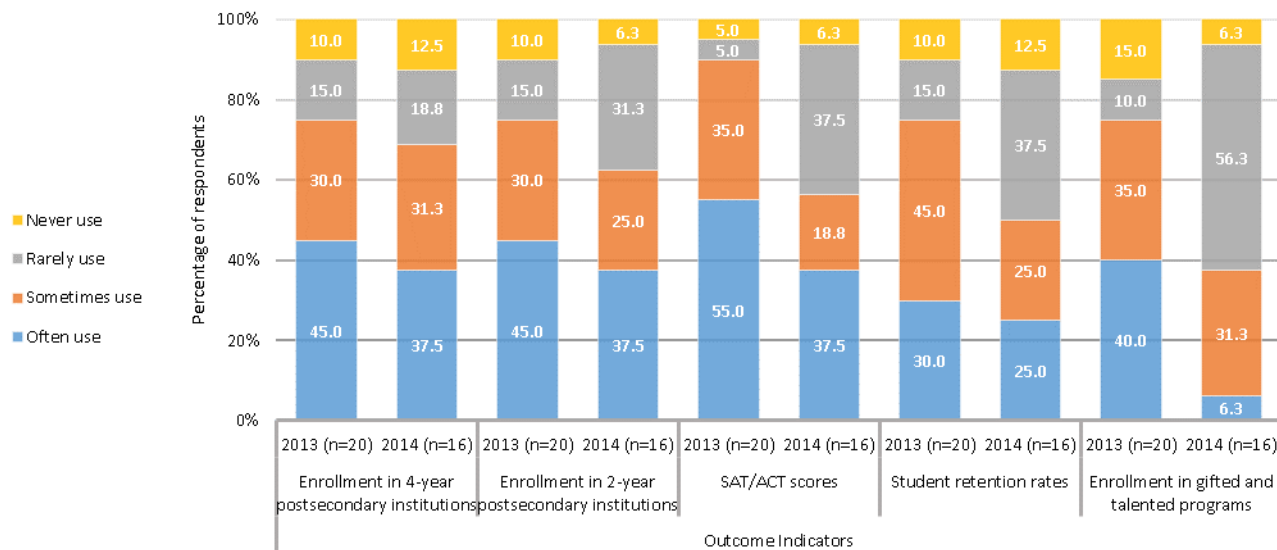
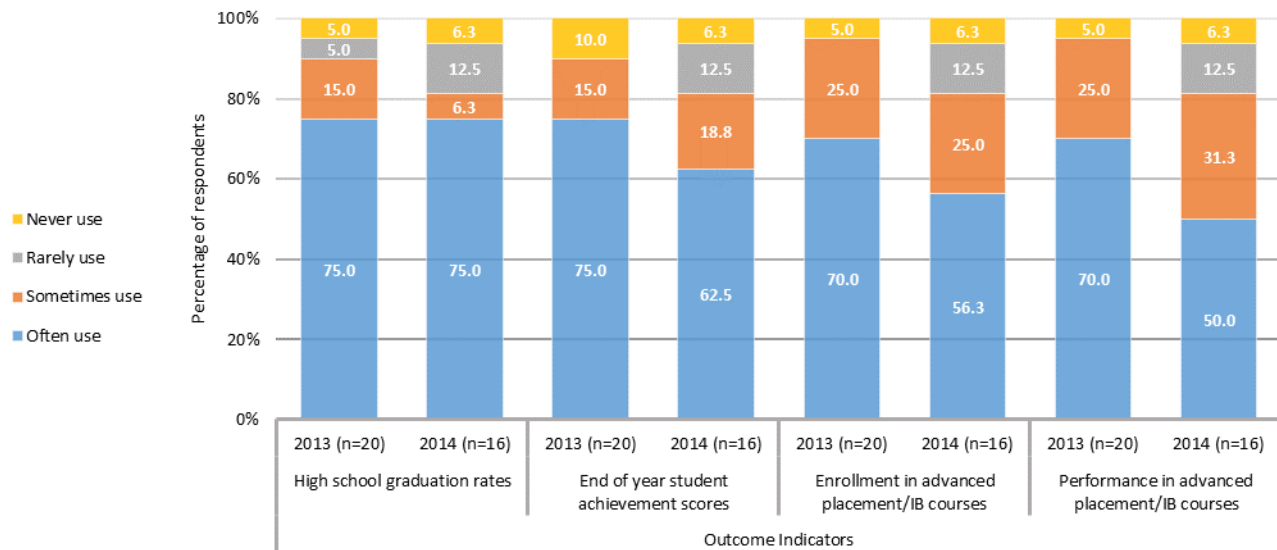


Figure 28. Percentage of special education directors reporting use of specified data to measure implementation of the CCSS, 2013(n=14) and 2014 (n=11)



Part V. Measuring Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

Figure 29. Percentage of research directors reporting use of specified outcome data to measure implementation of the CCSS, 2013 (n=20) and 2014 (n=16)

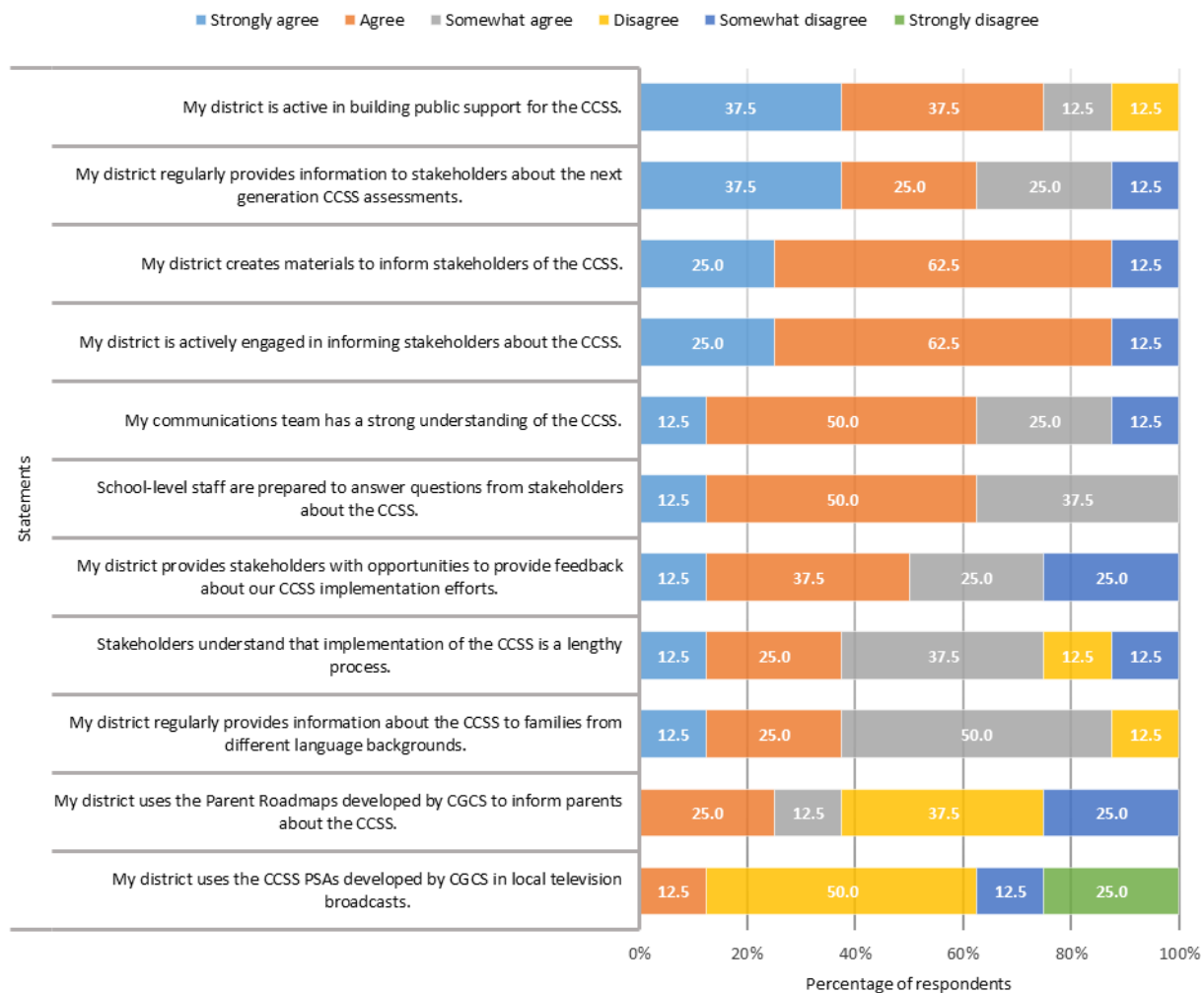


Part VI. Communicating with Stakeholders

- Seventy-five percent of responding communications directors “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district is active in building public support for the CCSS. Another 88 percent of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district is actively engaged in informing stakeholders of the CCSS and creating materials to inform stakeholders of the CCSS (Figure 30).
- Approximately 63 percent of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district regularly provides stakeholders information about next generation assessments, that school-level staff are prepared to answer questions about the CCSS, and that their communications team has a strong understanding of the CCSS (Figure 30).
- Responses also suggest areas of needed improvement in district communications and messaging strategies. For instance, only 38 percent of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that stakeholders understand that implementation of the CCSS is a lengthy process and that their district regularly provides information about the CCSS to families from different language backgrounds (Figure 30).
- According to *all respondents*, the stakeholder groups most likely to be *involved in* and/or *informed of* their school district’s CCSS implementation strategy are certified teachers, teacher unions/organizations, local school boards, and state departments of education. Conversely, the stakeholder groups least likely to be *involved in* and/or *informed of* their district’s CCSS implementation strategy are faith-based organizations, business leaders, elected city officials, and community-based organizations (Figure 31).
- The communication mediums used most frequently to interact with stakeholder groups are the school district’s website, local newspapers, and Twitter. The mediums used most frequently to communicate with parents and community leaders are Facebook, Twitter, and informational brochures. For school-based staff, the most commonly used communication mediums are intranet staff sites and internal staff communications (Table 2).
- In responses to open-ended questions, communications directors indicated that common challenges to communicating with stakeholders about the CCSS include the complexity of the CCSS and coordinating consistent messages throughout the school district (Appendix A).

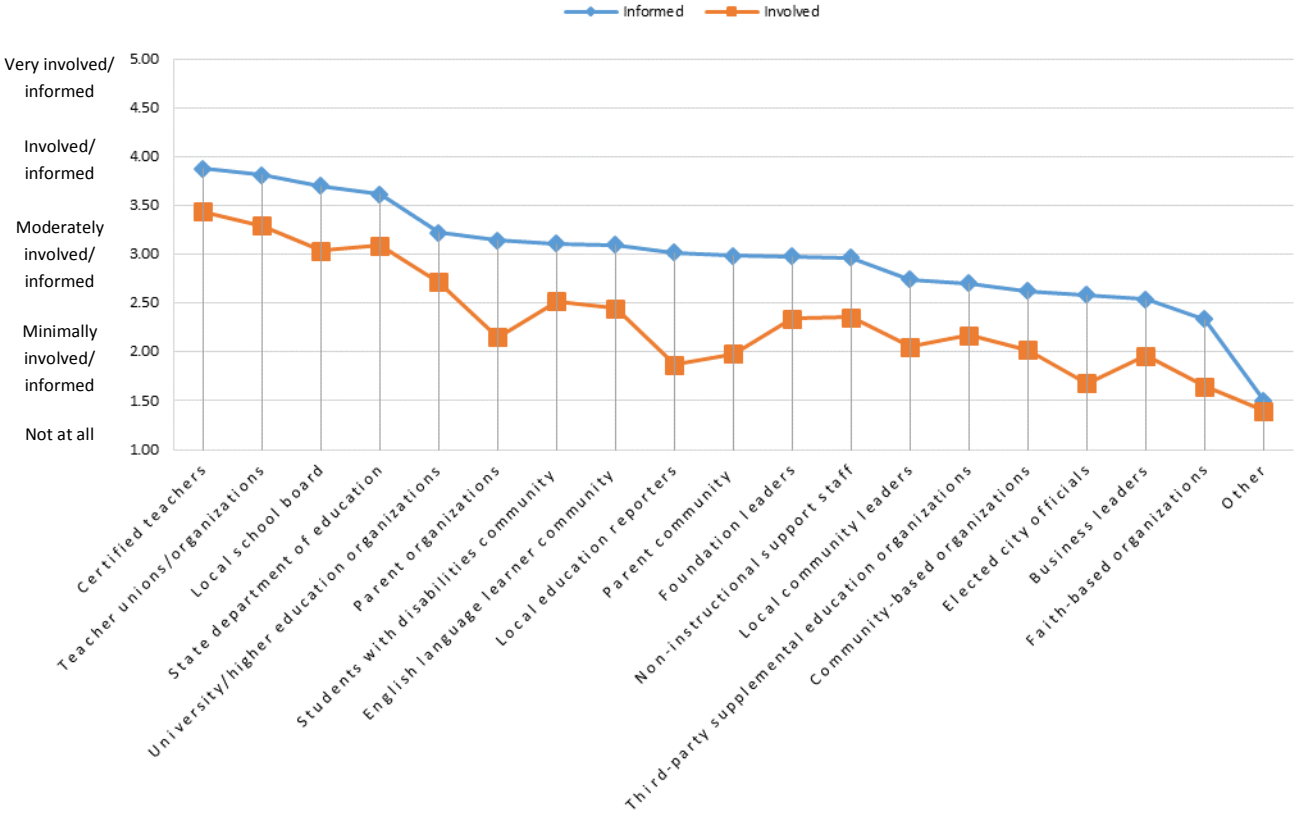
Part VI. Communicating with Stakeholders

Figure 30. Percentage of communications directors responding to specified statements about readiness to implement the CCSS, 2014 (N=8)



Part VI. Communicating with Stakeholders

Figure 31. Extent to which respondents indicate specified stakeholders are involved in or informed of CCSS implementation strategies, 2014 (n=59)



Part VI. Communicating with Stakeholders

Table 2. Percentage of communication directors reporting the mediums used to communicate with specified stakeholder groups, 2014 (n=8)

	Teachers	School administrators	Parents	Community leaders	Non-instructional support staff	School board
Local television stations	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
School district television station	50%	37.5%	50%	50%	37.5%	37.5%
Local newspapers	62.5%	62.5%	62.5%	62.5%	62.5%	62.5%
Radio	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Editorials	50%	50%	62.5%	62.5%	50%	62.5%
Informational brochure	50%	37.5%	87.5%	62.5%	25%	37.5%
Parent guides	37.5%	37.5%	62.5%	25%	12.5%	12.5%
School district website	100%	100%	100%	87.5%	87.5%	87.5%
Internal staff communications	100%	100%	12.5%	12.5%	87.5%	87.5%
Intranet staff site	75%	75%			50%	25%
Public Service Announcements	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%
Twitter	50%	50%	87.5%	87.5%	50%	62.5%
Facebook	37.5%	37.5%	87.5%	87.5%	37.5%	50%
Edmodo	-	-	-	-	-	-

The results of the third year of the Council of the Great City School’s common core implementation survey reveal that progress is underway in our nation’s urban school districts as many districts prepare to fully implement the common core standards and adopt assessments aligned to the new standards ahead of the 2014-15 school year. The majority of all respondents rated their district’s implementation progress as “good” or “excellent,” particularly in providing professional development and implementing the ELA and math standards – results which are similar to findings from 2013. Survey responses also reveal that districts have a lot of work to do in order to prepare certified instructional personnel, principals, and other school-based administrators to implement the CCSS.

In addition, survey responses generally indicate that districts’ professional development in ELA and math has largely focused on building a shared understanding of the instructional shifts required by the new standards, as well as building teachers’ content knowledge in English language arts and math. When deciding how to differentiate professional development for teachers, about two-thirds of curriculum directors use results from state summative assessments and interim/benchmark assessments in elementary, middle, and high school. Also, over 80 percent of respondents rate their districts’ progress in aligning instructional materials to the CCSS as “good” or “excellent.” In fact, a majority of respondents report using PARCC/SBAC sample items, common core math progressions, and resources from the Council’s Basal Alignment Project to align instructional materials to the CCSS. And teachers, principals, and central office staff across districts report participating in a variety of daily, weekly, and monthly activities to support implementation of the CCSS, including common planning time for teachers, participating in professional learning communities, making use of online professional development resources aligned to the common core, conducting faculty meetings focused on the common core, and convening key stakeholder groups.

However, survey responses suggest that there is a need for better alignment between districts’ expectations of teachers and common core implementation. Curriculum directors report that *informal* teacher observation protocols were more likely than *formal* teacher observations protocols to reflect shifts in teacher practice, shifts in teacher content knowledge, and shifts in the type and quality of student work required by the new standards. Responses to open-ended questions further highlighted that accountability systems not aligned to the common core and competing priorities at the district and school-level often divert attention away from implementing the standards.

Districts also appear to be struggling with addressing the needs of special populations. Roughly 37 percent of respondents rated their districts’ progress in this area as “poor” – similar to survey responses in 2013. In fact, only a quarter of ELL directors and about half of special education directors “agree” or “strongly agree” that their districts highly prioritize the needs of these students and fewer than 20 percent of either ELL or special education directors believed that general education teachers were prepared to serve these students. Open-ended responses also point to the need for support in developing implementation strategies to address the academic needs of diverse student populations. Yet only about a quarter of curriculum directors report

Discussion

that differentiating instruction for ELLs and students with special needs are “often evident” in district professional development.

More broadly, respondents suggested the need for additional support for struggling students as districts transition to the common core. In open-ended responses, curriculum directors indicated major challenges involving students who are moving to higher standards without ever receiving common core aligned instruction in previous grades, and building students’ prerequisite knowledge and skills. While these gaps in student learning would disproportionately affect struggling students, only about a third of respondents reported that professional development for teachers on prerequisite knowledge and skills for student success and on developing a curriculum that addresses the gaps between previous standards and the common core was a “very common” strategy for addressing the needs of struggling students. That said, the majority of respondents did report that differentiating instruction for struggling students was at least “sometimes evident” in district professional development.

Survey results also indicate that districts need more support in preparing for online common core assessments and integrating technology into the classroom. About a third of respondents rated their districts’ progress in these areas as “poor” although that is a slight improvement from responses in 2013. In fact, integrating technology into classroom instruction remained among the least evident topics in district professional development. However, at least 60 percent of curriculum directors reported that using computer adaptive assessments to monitor student progress and integrating computer-based assessments in the classroom was evident to a “moderate extent” in professional development.

Furthermore, survey results underscore the need to reassess the ways that common core implementation is measured and communicated within school districts. Over 80 percent of research directors rated their district’s progress as “good” or “excellent” in developing short- and long-term implementation goals, yet only a third of research directors “agree” that their district’s implementation goals are clearly understood among school-level staff. Also, while over 80 percent of respondents “often use” teacher observation instruments aligned to the common core and student work samples to measure the implementation of the common core, less than 40 percent “agree” or “strongly agree” that their district regularly collects implementation data. Open-ended responses indicate that districts are still in the process of developing reliable indicators of what successful implementation should look like in practice.

Finally, survey responses highlight areas of needed improvement in districts’ communication strategies around the common core. While the majority of respondents report actively building public support for the common core, survey results suggest that districts need to better communicate to stakeholders that implementing the common core is a long-term process, and need to better communicate with families from different language backgrounds. Moreover, since 2013, parents have remained among the least involved and/informed stakeholders of district common core implementation plans.

In sum, survey results over the last three years show that districts are making strides toward implementing the Common Core State Standards, but the dimensions of this challenge are great. To continue the momentum, districts will need to redouble their efforts in a number of key areas, including aligning their curriculum with the common core across all grade levels, addressing the learning requirements of students with special needs, helping schools integrate technology into classrooms and prepare for online assessments, measuring implementation success using classroom observations and student work, and more actively informing and engaging parents and the community. Over the next few years districts should also begin integrating other major reform initiatives into their implementation efforts. For example, the lack of alignment between teacher observation protocols and the common core suggests that more should be done to ensure that policies and practices aimed at recruiting and retaining teaching talent reflect the new college- and career-ready standards. In short, districts appear to be on the right path in their implementation of the common core, but they have much further to go before the promise of shared, rigorous academic standards is realized in our nation's big city schools.

Appendix A. Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Responses to open-ended questions to curriculum directors about their major challenges in implementing the CCSS and major challenges in measuring implementation

What are the major challenges in implementing the CCSS in your district? (Curriculum directors)	What are the major challenges in measuring the implementation of the CCSS in your district? - Open-Ended Response (Curriculum directors)
1) Time to work with teachers. 2) Finding student work that reflects higher levels of learning based on teaching to CCSS. 3) Funding to purchase materials that are adequately aligned to CCSS. 4) Tea Party. 5) How teachers will be assessed and consequences during transitions.	1) Funding. 2) Knowing which off-the-shelf products are adequately measuring CCSS. 3) Lack of test design and item specs in a State that is not using PARCC or Smarter Balance.
Competing demands for attention divert focus from CCSS implementation, both at the district office and in schools.	Again, competing demands for implementation monitoring in school sites interfere with robust implementation monitoring.
Developing implementation plan that addresses the need of diverse student population.	Assessments that effectively measure basic skills and critical thinking, integration of technology, finding the right balance in terms of tight and loose in terms of curriculum implementation guidance.
District leadership does not understand the steps needed to effectively implement the CCSS and does not want to provide the time to truly impact teachers' and leaders' learning about the shifts. Our leadership addresses the surface level, but does not dig deeply to truly support educators' understanding of the CCSS so that they can effectively teach and assess student learning. District leaders refused to make CCSS training mandatory for principals and instructional coaches, despite our efforts to demonstrate the importance of such.	Lack of open source, common tasks that are aligned to PARCC- like tasks. We try to create them, but it takes time away from other types of supports for schools.
Ensuring a consistent message that reaches all staff.	Need a tool that will support this.
Ensuring that all schools get the same messaging and understanding of the standards and resources that have been developed to support the implementation of the standards.	Our district leaders did not want the SAP tools introduced to principals. Our district leaders do not understand that the CCSSs are a huge shift in thinking, teaching, assessing and practice.
Insufficient staff at the district (central) office to provide professional development and ongoing support for all teachers. Successfully moving from theory to practice in the implementation of the instructional shifts across all classrooms. Transitioning to computer-based applications.	The current assessment is not aligned with CC; therefore, teachers feel they must teach the old standards due to their evaluation being tied to the students' performance on the misaligned test.

What are the major challenges in implementing the CCSS in your district? (Cont'd)	What are the major challenges in measuring the implementation of the CCSS in your district? - Open-Ended Response (Cont'd)
<p>Our state went through a process of public comment this past school year, which resulted in a change in standards and summative assessments. That process and ultimate decision to adopt a new set of standards and assessment has created a sense of unease or lack of confidence that the state will be appropriately prepared to administer the new assessment during the 2014-15 school year. Providing clear messaging to all stakeholders about the commitment to the new standards and assessment along with strong instructional support teachers and students are receiving continues to be a challenge. Our core content areas (social studies and science) provide a challenge in integrating the content literacy standards into daily instruction as teachers are still wary of how that shift will impact their end-of-course or summative assessment scores which has a major impact on their annual evaluations. Finally, we continue to search and create supports for our teachers in how to differentiate on-grade-level instruction for ELL and students with special needs.</p>	<p>The fact that our district moved to the CCSS and the state did not makes measuring and comparing with national data problematic.</p>
<p>Shifting teacher practice.</p>	<p>The size of our district in terms of the number of schools and classrooms. Limitations on the number of district staff (central office) staff to follow-through with school site support. Engaging school curriculum leaders to take the leadership of monitoring the implementation of standards in all classrooms.</p>
<p>Supporting teacher understanding around the instructional shifts and aligning learning objectives to standards. Teachers still struggle with the differences between resources and curriculum.</p>	<p>Tools, manpower.</p>
<p>The gaps for students who have suddenly moved to higher standards without the prerequisite knowledge from past years have proven to be a challenge for both teachers and students.</p>	<p>We adopted a new assessment mid-year after focusing on the information from our previous consortium partner, PARCC, for the past two years. All stakeholders are concerned about what the outcome measures will measure and how they will be measured. As more information becomes available, the challenge is to get information into the hands of the stakeholders (site-based administrators, teachers, parents, and students) to best prepare for the spring 2015 assessment.</p>
<p>The shift from the old standards and the gaps. People fighting about the standards. Aligning the assessment with the standards is the biggest concern at this time.</p>	<p>We have used a survey to measure the implementation of the CCSS in our district, but it was sent primarily to ELA and mathematics teachers.</p>

Appendix A. Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Responses to open-ended questions to directors of special education about how their districts communicate with families about the CCSS and their major challenges in ensuring that students with special needs meet the rigor of the CCSS

How is your district communicating with families of students with special needs about the CCSS?	What are the major challenges that your district faces in ensuring that students with special needs are able to meet the rigor of the CCSS?
Director of Schools held community meetings for all families across the district.	Ability of teachers to differentiate instruction and make necessary accommodations to ensure access.
In IEP meetings.	Changing the mind set of many teachers that students with disabilities are not able to achieve.
Parent support team, electronic communication, IEP meetings, website, school-based presentations, and parent organizations.	Getting student with disabilities into general education instruction in the common core. Giving access to the core through adoptions.
Parents are informed through principals at the building level based on what other students receive about the CCSS implementation.	Major challenges are changes a culture in which teachers believe students with disabilities CAN achieve and succeed. We are working towards building higher expectations within the classroom, along with providing a variety of resources to meet the individual needs of our students.
Parents receive newsletters and calls home along with encouraging attendance at Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings and Parent University Meetings in order to understand the shifts and demands of the new CCSS.	Planning time for teachers.
The special education department has provided information to parents regarding common core roll-out and implementation at meet-the-director town hall meetings. Information is also available on the department's website. The [State] Bureau of Exceptional Student and Student Services presented at the Districts ESE Family Forum on Common Core and SWDs.	Strengthening instruction practices, teacher comfort and expertise with content as well as the CCSS in special education, separate or pull-out classes to ensure students achieve and reduce the gap. Redefining how instruction is delivered in special education settings.
This year we reviewed understanding common core standards to our parents at one of our special education local advisory meetings. Also, we are aligning our IEP goals to common core and reviewing in IEP meetings.	Teacher's capacity to meet the needs of all students providing appropriate accommodations and collaboration between the general education and special education teachers.
Through IEP meetings and standards-based IEPs. Present Levels of Performance - at least annually and additionally at conferences and in progress reports.	The district has been focused on compliance with federal and state laws. Common Core PD is open to all teachers, but the special education department has never been asked to collaborate on these PDs.
	We need continued training for teachers on how to effectively deliver instruction to meet the needs of all students in the general education classroom. This is especially true for midlevel and high school teachers. Figuring out how to write effective IEP plans that meet the needs of students and address the CCSS is another issue. As a state that has continued to require both goals and objectives in the IEP, it is difficult to utilize what has already been created by other states. We are having to make our own adjustments and create our own system, including trainings, to support our teams.

What are the major challenges in measuring the implementation of the CCSS in your district? - Open-Ended Response

Availability of benchmark assessments.

Communication. I think our curriculum department has done a fantastic job of getting going with the implementation but it is probably focused on that area and not filtered to the rest of the district. We have a good understanding of standards, probably just not the meaning of the new standards.

Establishing metrics and strategies for collecting the data. It is difficult when there is not a common understanding of what "implementation looks like" to then establish metrics, so you end up using outcomes only.

Measuring classroom implementation of the CCSS via observations in a calibrated manner.

Monitoring day-to-day implementation in classrooms at scale. Is our work penetrating the instructional core in our classrooms?

Resources to measure the qualitative aspects of instruction and alignment with the CCSS. Getting agreement on instrumentation and then calibrating use.

Scoring of non-standard test items. Pacing/roll out of new interim assessments. Uncertainty about what Smarter Balanced will offer in terms of interim assessments. Uncertainty around the reporting ALDs by Smarter Balanced (i.e., categories, cut points, etc.).

The current lack of interim and summative assessments that are clearly aligned to CCSS/[State] Standards presents a challenge in measuring student performance and teacher effectiveness.

The training has been wide and shallow.

Varying leadership in 90+ schools.

We have a small program engaged in implementation of CCSS. We have not engaged in broad PD specific to CCSS. We are in the process of revamping our PD work to better address this issue.

We haven't had multiple years to compare results on the same measurements. This was first year of CCSS summative assessments and it is without results so baseline measurements won't be available until the end of next year.

Appendix A. Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Responses to open-ended questions to communications directors about their major challenges in communicating with stakeholders about the CCSS

In the space below, please describe the biggest challenges your district is facing in terms of communicating with stakeholders about the CCSS - Open-Ended Response (Communication directors)
Complicated issue that is hard to communicate easily. Lack of understanding about the standards -- how they are new and why they are needed -- among non-instructional staff. Lack of bandwidth/resources in Communications Office.
Consistency of message.
Explaining [State] Standards and why they are different from CCSS.
In [State], CCSS has been politically charged. Our state has made minor revisions, but changed the name. That has caused some confusion.
Information lives in various experts across the organization and coordination among various departments is limited based on lack of time and resources.
Misalignment with statewide assessments and recent legislation.
Stakeholders taking the time to read and understand information provided to them in a mix of so much content competing for their time.
Understanding how student learning should look like in a classroom, being provided guiding questions versus being told the answer.

Appendix B. Participating Districts

Albuquerque Public Schools	Long Beach Unified School District
Anchorage School District	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Atlanta Public Schools	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Baltimore City Public Schools	Milwaukee Public Schools
Boston Public Schools	Minneapolis Public Schools
Buffalo City School District	Oakland Unified School District
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Omaha Public Schools
Chicago Public Schools	Orange County Public Schools
Clark County School District	Pittsburgh Public Schools
Cleveland Metropolitan School District	Providence Public School District
Dallas Independent School District	San Diego Unified School District
Dayton Public Schools	San Francisco Unified School District
Des Moines Independent Community School District	Shelby County Schools
Detroit Public Schools	St. Louis Public Schools
District of Columbia Public Schools	St. Paul Public Schools
Duval County Public Schools	The School District of Palm Beach County
Fresno Unified School District	The School District of Philadelphia
Guilford County Schools	Toledo Public Schools
Hillsborough County Public Schools	Wichita Public Schools
Houston Independent School District	

PROPOSED TESTING TASK FORCE

Potential Names for the Testing Working Group
Of the
Council of the Great City Schools¹

External Representatives

John Easton, President
Spencer Foundation, and former
Commissioner of the Institute for Education Sciences

Mark Tucker, President
National Center for Education and the Economy

Peggy Carr, Associate Commissioner
National Center for Educational Statistics

Michael Cohen, President
Achieve

David Thissen, Professor of Psychology
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Eugene Garcia, Professor Emeritus
Arizona State University

Tom Hehir, Professor of Education
Harvard University

Lorrie Shepard, Dean
College of Education
University of Colorado, Boulder

Mitchell Chester, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Education

Yue Yin, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology
University of Illinois, Chicago

Bob Pianta, Dean
College of Education
University of Virginia

¹ Individuals on this list have not yet agreed to participate.

Teacher

Teacher

Member Representatives

Richard Carranza, Superintendent
San Francisco Unified School District

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, School Board
Oakland Unified School District

Eric Gordon, CEO
Cleveland Municipal School District

Airick West, School Board
Kansas City (MO) Public Schools

Darienne Driver, Superintendent
Milwaukee Public Schools

William Sublette, School Board
Orange County (Orlando) Public Schools

Mike Miles, Superintendent
Dallas Independent School District

Doretha Edgecombe, School Board
Hillsborough County (Tampa) Public Schools

Kamal Chavda, Chief Data and Accountability Officer
Boston Public Schools

Ritu Khanna, Assistant Superintendent for Research, Planning and Accountability
San Francisco Unified School District

Bob Rodosky, Chief of Data Management, Planning, and Program Evaluation
Jefferson County (Louisville) Public Schools

Ex Officio Members

Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Chris Minnich, Executive Director
Council of Chief State School Officers

Ray Hart, Director of Research
Council of the Great City Schools

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

School Improvement Grants:

Progress Report from America's Great City Schools



February 2015

Council of the Great City Schools

School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America's Great City Schools

February 2015

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Executive Summary

This report measures trends in performance among urban schools receiving federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) awards as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Additionally, we aim to document how member districts of the Council of the Great City Schools implemented SIG and specifically what effects the program had on student test scores and school “holding power” – the ability of high schools to move students through the system on a timely basis.

Finally, based on interviews with district and school-based staff in several case study districts, we identify and describe the common characteristics of successful and unsuccessful implementation of the SIG program in Council schools and districts.

Quantitative Results

Results of our analysis across states for grades three through eight in both math and reading indicate that the gaps in the percentages of students scoring at or above Proficient on state assessments between SIG-award schools and the two comparison groups (SIG-eligible schools that did not receive grants and non-SIG-eligible schools) appear to have narrowed steadily over the first two years of the grants, and then leveled off in the third year.

Moreover, the findings suggest that SIG-award schools also reduced the percentage of students in the lowest proficiency levels on state assessments. In many respects, this measure could be considered the most relevant assessment of the impact of the SIG investment, as more than one out of every three students in SIG-award schools were classified in the lowest performance level on state assessments.

In addition, while the performance of fourth and eighth graders on NAEP and changes in high school enrollment trends cannot be directly attributed to the SIG investment, the data generally reinforce the SIG findings. In elementary and middle grades, the percentage of students in the lowest performance category is at its lowest level since these data were collected.

And in high school, the data show that school districts have improved their ability to promote students from one high school grade to the next, which resulted in less of a “pile-up” in the ninth grade and higher percentages of students in the final two grade levels of high school.

Interestingly, when looking at these achievement outcomes for the two most commonly used SIG intervention models implemented by schools—the transformation model and the turnaround model—the analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in their rates of improvement.

Qualitative Results

In addition to looking at state and national assessment data and high school enrollment trends, the Council conducted a qualitative review of selected urban districts and schools to determine how they used their SIG funds. The updated SIG program and the significant funding behind it have provided an important opportunity for districts to redesign their support structures for struggling schools; recruit effective teachers and principals; change the climate and expectations for students in these buildings; and engage parents and the community.

Moreover, funds were used to foster partnerships with external organizations to support schools, provide counseling, health, and mentoring services to students; and enhance teacher capacity to analyze data and improve practice. The funds, and how they were distributed and tracked, have allowed people to gauge—to some degree—what worked and what didn't in ways that the old SIG program did not.

Based on this review, we were able to identify several features that appeared to lead to more successful implementation efforts. These included:

- A clear, coherent, and coordinated district plan for supporting and turning around the lowest-performing schools—and strong commitment for comprehensively executing this plan.
- Interventions that were focused on *instructional* improvements and provided schools with high quality instructional programming and materials.
- The coordination of instructional interventions and strategies that complemented each other.
- Professional development that built staff instructional capacity.
- Principals who were invested in a vision for improvement and were able to communicate these priorities to teachers, staff, students, and the community.
- Principals who were given the flexibility to make staff changes or remove ineffective educators.
- The ability to leverage data to identify the specific academic needs of struggling students, determine needs for professional development, and decide on intervention strategies.

Looking forward, a major challenge facing all SIG schools will be the need to sustain academic gains after the substantial amounts of federal support go away. Urban district and school leaders interviewed for this project voiced both optimism and concern for the future. The SIG program provided districts with opportunities for intensive reform and collaboration to meet the needs of struggling schools. Whether these improvements are sustainable will ultimately determine the value and impact of the endeavor.

Introduction

In February 2012, the Council of the Great City Schools (Council) published a report on the rollout of the federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) program in the organization's member districts that received awards as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).¹

This 2014 report serves as a follow-up to the original work and attempts to measure trends in performance among urban schools receiving the initial grants. This new report also seeks to better understand how member districts of the Council implemented SIG and specifically what effects the program had on student test scores and school "holding power," i.e., the ability of schools to retain their high school students grade-by-grade and move them through the system on a timely basis. To accomplish this, we analyzed key performance indicators on the first cohort of schools receiving grant awards (SIG-award schools) and compared those indicators to:

- 1) SIG-Eligible Schools – those schools deemed eligible to receive SIG awards, but not receiving any funding in Cohort 1 *or* Cohort 2 of the award cycle, and
- 2) Non-SIG-Eligible Schools – those schools across the country not eligible to receive SIG funding due to higher levels of student achievement.

SIG funding specifically targeted low-achieving schools across the country, which were often poor and high-minority, and included a large number of schools in Council-member districts. Consequently, the Council was interested in answering the following research questions in this study:

- 1) How did SIG-award schools perform compared to SIG-eligible and non-SIG-eligible schools as measured by:
 - a) changes in the percentage of students scoring at or above the Proficient level on state *reading and mathematics* exams in grades three through eight, , and
 - b) changes in the percentage of students scoring at the lowest levels in reading and mathematics, generally the below Basic level, on state exams in grades three through eight?
- 2) What were the changes in the percentage of students enrolled in each high school grade (i.e., grades nine, 10, 11, and 12) in Council-member districts?
- 3) What were the trends in performance, particularly at the below Basic level, in reading and math among students in large city schools on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)?
- 4) What were common characteristics of successful and unsuccessful implementation of the SIG program in Council schools and districts?

The first research question was addressed quantitatively by comparing three groups of schools (i.e., SIG-award schools, SIG-eligible schools that did not receive grants, and non-SIG-eligible schools) across the country and within each state over time. The second research question was answered by analyzing enrollment data by grade

¹ Lachlan-Haché, J., Naik, M., & Casserly, M. (2012, February). *The School Improvement Grant Rollout in America's Great City Schools*. Retrieved from the Council of the Great City Schools website:
<http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/SIG%20Report.pdf>

and year among Council-member districts with SIG grants. The third question used NAEP results, particularly results among students scoring below Basic, to corroborate state test results. Finally, the last research question was answered through interviews with district and school-based staff in several case study districts.

Background

Funding for SIG was initially authorized by Congress in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and amended by *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) in 2002. States were able to apply to the U.S. Department of Education directly to receive funds under Section 1003(g) or take a percentage of their total Title I, Part A funds to provide local educational agency (LEA) sub-grants under Section 1003(a). Prior to ARRA, the investment in SIG was difficult to ascertain because states and districts could set aside a percentage of their Title I, Part A funding for the program and they did not have to report the amounts back to the Department. A direct line-item appropriation for SIG funding was introduced by Congress in 2007 when \$125 million was authorized for the program.

The federal appropriation for SIG was increased to \$546 million in 2009, but at the request of the Obama Administration, the amount of funding for the SIG program was increased significantly by Congress as part of the ARRA allocation in FY 2009. The ARRA appropriation added \$3 billion of additional funds for the program, bringing the total investment in turning around the nation's poorest performing schools to just over \$3.5 billion for the year.

As a result of the additional dollars, the U.S. Department of Education established new criteria for identifying schools that were eligible to receive funding.² The new requirements emphasized the identification of "persistently lowest-achieving" schools across a state. These schools, once identified, were divided into three tiers and priority for funding went to schools in Tier I and Tier II. Each state was required to create its own definition of "persistently lowest-achieving" schools and criteria were provided as guidance in the identification process. Specifically, Tier I schools could be any school that:

- a) Is among the lowest-performing five schools, or lowest-performing five percent of schools (whichever is greater) that are Title I-participating, and is identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under NCLB; or
- b) Is a high school that has a graduation rate lower than 60 percent.

States could also identify additional schools for Tier I status if the school:

- 1) Is an elementary school that is at least as low-achieving as the highest-achieving of the above schools, and either has not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for at least two consecutive years, or has a reading and math proficiency rate in the lowest quintile in the state (can be Title I-participating or Title I-eligible).

Tier II schools can be any secondary school that:

² Meléndez de Santa Ana, T. (2010, January). *Letter to Chief State School Officers*. Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Education website: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/dcl.pdf>

- a) Is among the lowest-performing five secondary schools that are Title I-eligible (but not participating), or are in the lowest-performing five percent of schools, whichever is greater; or
- b) Is a Title I-eligible (but not participating) high school that has a graduation rate lower than 60 percent over a number of years.

States could also identify additional schools for Tier II status if the school is a Title I participating school and it:

- 1) Either is at least as low-achieving as the highest-achieving of the above schools or has a graduation rate of less than 60 percent over a number of years; and
- 2) Either did not make AYP in the last two consecutive years or has a reading and math proficiency rate in the lowest quintile of the state.

Additional criteria were provided for the identification of Tier III schools such that a Tier III school could be a school that does not meet the requirements for Tier I or Tier II and is either:

- a) A Title I-participating school identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring; or
- b) A Title I-eligible (including Title I-participating) school that has not made AYP in the last two years, or has a reading and math proficiency rate in the lowest quintile of the state.

The table below summarizes the total number of SIG-award and SIG-eligible schools in each tier.

Table 1. SIG-eligible and SIG-award Schools by Tier and Grade-span Served

	Total Eligible & Awarded Schools		Total Tier 1 Eligible & Awarded Schools		Total Tier 2 Eligible & Awarded Schools		Total Tier 3 Eligible & Awarded Schools		Total Elem-Middle eligible & Award (PK-8) Schools		Total HS (Grade 9-12) Eligible & Award Schools	
	SIG Eligible	SIG Awarded	SIG Eligible	SIG Awarded	SIG Eligible	SIG Awarded	SIG Eligible	SIG Awarded	SIG Eligible	SIG Awarded	SIG Eligible	SIG Awarded
Schools in States with CGCS Members	14,090	1,032	998	467	951	275	12,141	290	11,749	637	2,247	386

In addition, school districts receiving SIG funds were required to select an intervention model for every school they included in their application that was a Tier I or Tier II school. The four intervention models were—

- 1) **Turnaround Model:** Schools replace the principal and at least half of their staff; implement teacher recruitment and retention strategies; provide embedded professional development aligned with the turnaround effort; adopt a new governance structure, perhaps by making the school accountable to a central turnaround office; increase use of student data to improve curricular program and student

outcomes; increase learning time; and provide social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students. Additional strategies are also permitted.

- 2) **Transformation Model:** Schools replace the principal; reform principal and teacher evaluations and reward the most effective teachers and leaders for increasing student achievement; provide embedded professional development aligned with the turnaround effort; implement teacher recruitment, incentive, and retention strategies; increase learning time; increase use of student data to improve curricular program and student outcomes; and provide operational flexibility and sustained support. Additional strategies are also permitted.
- 3) **Restart Model:** School converts or closes and then reopens under a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CM), or an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected through a rigorous review process. A restart model must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.
- 4) **Closure Model:** LEA closes the low-performing school and moves students to a nearby school with higher performance. These schools may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available.

Finally, the selection process for Tier 1 and Tier 2 schools resulted in a set of schools that was substantially different from schools nationally (see Table 2). For instance, the percent of students in SIG schools that were eligible for a free or reduced price lunch or were African American or Hispanic was substantially larger than the percent of these students nationwide. Moreover, the majority of schools awarded SIG grants were in cities rather than in suburbs, towns, or rural areas.

Table 2. Percentage of Schools Awarded Tier 1 and Tier 2 SIG Grants in 2010-11

	All Schools	SIG Schools
Student Characteristics		
Percent free lunch	39.2	68.7
Percent free or reduced lunch	47.0	76.2
Percent Black or Hispanic	38.0	76.6
Locale		
City	24.9	57.2
Suburb	28.1	16.6
Town	14.1	7.0
Rural	32.9	19.1
Grade Level		
Primary grades	56.4	24.0
Middle grades	17.8	20.5
High school grades	20.0	48.4
Other	5.7	7.0

Methodology

In 2013, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) released a report, *School Improvement Grant State Summaries: Cohort 1 Schools* (School Year 2010-11 Data),³ highlighting state-level performance of SIG schools (Cohort 1 schools began implementing SIG models in the 2010-11 school year). The ED report also provided aggregate state data for Cohort 1 SIG schools on several student demographic variables and other indicators, including adjusted-cohort graduation rates, average school year minutes, student and teacher attendance, high school advanced course-taking rates, and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or higher on state assessments in reading and mathematics.

The details of the ED report will not be duplicated in this Council analysis. However, readers are encouraged to reference the ED report for more detailed descriptions of student characteristics in SIG schools across states, types of SIG schools by school intervention model (transformation, turnaround, etc.), and the locale of SIG schools (urban, suburban, rural, or town).

The Council's 2012 report also provided a detailed description of the characteristics of SIG schools but the unit of analysis was urban school districts and schools rather than states. This new 2014 report also focuses on urban schools but analyzes a slightly different set of school-improvement indicators to see if we can get a better sense of how these schools did with SIG funding. A description of the methodology for the analyses is presented below.

Measuring Test-score Performance in Grades Three through Eight

NCLB stipulated that all states were required to assess students annually in reading and mathematics in grades three through eight. This new Council report analyzes changes in these grades on state-test results from the baseline year (2009-10—the year before new SIG funds were available) through the 2012-13 school year. Council researchers compared changes in the percentage of students at or above each state's proficiency levels who were enrolled in one of three types of schools (i.e., SIG-award schools in each state, a random sample of SIG-eligible but non-award schools in each state, and a random sample of non-SIG eligible schools in each state). The research team only collected data from the 38 states in which a Council-member district was present.

In addition, the Council research team was interested in any decline in the percentage of students in the lowest performance level in states where there were at least two performance levels below the Proficient designation. For example, many states identify four performance levels where Level 1 and Level 2 are not considered Proficient and Level 3 and Level 4 are considered Proficient or above. Our analysis examined changes over time in the percentage of students at Level 1. Other states identify students in three levels only, where Level 1 is not considered Proficient and Level 2 and Level 3 are considered Proficient or above. Our analysis did not include students in the lowest performance level in these states since the changes in Level 1 are reflected in changes in Level 2 and Level 3. The Council examined trends both within state and across states.

³ U. S. Department of Education (June, 2013). *School Improvement Grant State Summaries: Cohort 1 Schools* (School Year 2010-11 Data). Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/sig_state_data_summary_sy10-11.pdf.

The analysis also aggregated results across grades at the elementary school level but not at the high school level. The research team was keenly aware of problems in analyzing changes in student achievement across grade levels, across years, and across states with very different assessments and very different standards of rigor. Ho, Lewis, and MacGregor⁴ note that any interpretation of growth across grade, time, and states is largely dependent on the rigor of the proficiency cut scores set on individual state exams. They note that two states with the same student achievement baseline, that adopt the same student growth model at the same time, and who have similar increases in student achievement will likely have different proportions of students Proficient on state exams. Other studies have reached similar conclusions.⁵

To be as cautious as possible, then, comparisons over time were not reported where the state assessment, state proficiency levels, or cut-scores changed during the four years in question (i.e., school years 2009-10 through 2012-13). For example, Florida transitioned from the FCAT to the FCAT 2.0 in 2011, so scores on districts and schools in Florida were not included in the four-year longitudinal analysis contained in this report because they were not fully comparable from year to year. A full list of states that were excluded from the analysis for these reasons is presented in Table 3. Nonetheless, student performance in Council-member districts in these excluded states are provided in Appendix A so the reader can see the data, but they are not included in aggregate comparisons in the body of the report.

In addition, states conducting annual testing in the fall have been excluded from the longitudinal analysis. In these states, the content of the assessments generally reflected the prior year's curriculum. For example, grade three fall assessments measure progress on the second grade curriculum. In the Council's judgment, the misalignment between curriculum and grade levels in these states invalidates the assessment results for the purposes of this analysis. These states included Rhode Island, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Moreover, the Council team drew its data directly from state websites or through direct requests to state research departments, but states were excluded from the analysis if the team was unable to obtain electronic results from either source. These states included Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Washington, D.C. - although data were obtained for the District of Columbia Public Schools (see Table 3).

In some states - Alaska for example - data were provided, but the format did not allow a comparison to other states. For example, Alaska's data were reported in rate categories or bands (e.g., >90%, 10% or less, etc.) rather than as nominal rates. Oklahoma provided data as Adobe Acrobat files only, and requests to the state department of education for electronic files that could be manipulated were unsuccessful. Results for the District of Columbia Public Schools were available on the local education agency website, but efforts to obtain data for the entire city were unsuccessful.

⁴ Ho, A. Lewis, D., & MacGregor-Garris, J. (2009). The dependence of growth-model results on proficiency cut scores. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 28(4), 15-26. doi:10.1111/j.1745-3992.2009.00159.x

⁵ See for example: Koretz, D. & Hamilton, L. (2006). Testing for accountability in K-12. In R. Brennan (Ed.), *Educational Measurement* (4th Ed., pp. 531-578). Westport, CT: American Council on Education/Praeger. or Heck, R. (2006). Assessing school achievement progress: Comparing alternative approaches. *The Journal of Leadership for Effective & Equitable Organizations*, 42(5), 667-699. doi:10.1177/0013161X06293718

In addition, this report looks at the numbers of SIG schools that made progress on state test scores in various ranges of improvement and the numbers of SIG schools that made no progress. Ultimately, the analysis of state test score data on SIG schools was conducted on schools in 15 states and 27 Council-member school districts.

Table 3. Council of the Great City Schools State and District Participation

State	District	Electronic Data Available	Changed Assessment in 2010-11		Changed Assessment in 2011-12		Changed Assessment in 2012-13	
			Math	Reading/ ELA	Math	Reading/ ELA	Math	Reading/ ELA
AK	Anchorage School District	No						
AL	Birmingham City Schools	Yes						
CA	Fresno Unified, Long Beach Unified, Los Angeles Unified, Oakland Unified, Sacramento Unified, Santa Ana Unified, San Diego Unified, San Francisco Unified	Yes						
CO	Denver Public Schools	Yes					Yes	Yes
CT	Bridgeport Public Schools	Yes						
DC	District of Columbia Public Schools	District Only						
FL	Broward County Public Schools, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Duval County Public Schools, Hillsborough County School District, Orange County Public Schools, The School District of Palm Beach County	Yes	Yes	Yes				
GA	Atlanta Public Schools	Yes						
HI	Hawaii State Department of Education	No SIG Schools						
IA	Des Moines Public Schools	No						
IL	Chicago Public Schools	Yes					Yes	Yes
IN	Indianapolis Public Schools	Yes						
KS	Wichita Public Schools	No						
KY	Jefferson County Public Schools	Yes			Yes	Yes		
LA	East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, Orleans Parish School Board	No						
MA	Boston Public Schools	Yes					Yes	Yes
MD	Baltimore City Public Schools	Yes						
MI	Detroit Public Schools	Fall Test						
MN	Minneapolis Public Schools, St. Paul Public Schools	Yes	Yes					Yes

State	District	Electronic Data Available	Changed Assessment in 2010-11		Changed Assessment in 2011-12		Changed Assessment in 2012-13	
			Math	Reading/ ELA	Math	Reading/ ELA	Math	Reading/ ELA
MS	Jackson Public Schools	Yes						
NC	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Guilford County Schools	Yes					Yes	Yes
NE	Omaha Public Schools	No						
NJ	Newark Public Schools	Yes						
NM	Albuquerque Public Schools	Yes						
NV	Clark County School District	Yes		Yes				
NY	Buffalo Public Schools, New York City Public Schools, Rochester City School District	Yes					Yes	Yes
OH	Cincinnati Public Schools, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Columbus City Schools, Dayton Public Schools, Toledo Public Schools	Yes						
OK	Oklahoma City Public Schools	No						
OR	Portland Public Schools	Yes	Yes			Yes		
PA	The School District of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh Public Schools	No Results for 12-13						
RI	Providence Public School District	Fall Test						
SC	Charleston County School District	Yes						
TN	Shelby County Schools, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	Yes						
TX	Austin Independent School District, Dallas Independent School District, El Paso Independent School District, Fort Worth Independent School District, Houston Independent School District	Yes			Yes	Yes		
VA	Norfolk Public Schools, Richmond Public Schools	Yes			Yes			Yes
WA	Seattle Public Schools	Yes						
WI	Milwaukee Public Schools	Fall Test						

Finally, the research team selected a random sample of SIG-eligible but not funded schools and non-SIG-eligible schools in each state to compare to all SIG-award schools in that state and across states. And the research team

compared the trends of both turnaround schools and transformation schools to see if there was a difference in their respective rates of change.

Measuring High School Enrollment by Grade

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2002 also mandated annual student achievement tests once in high school. However, student achievement assessments at the high school level occur at varying grades from state to state (i.e., some states assess students at ninth grade and others at 10th, 11th or 12th). As a result, measuring changes in student performance on state assessments in high school is problematic because not everyone is testing the same grades as they do in grades three through eight.

In addition, state assessments administered in grades 10, 11, and 12 often exclude students who fail to gain the necessary high school credits for promotion into the next grade(s). Consequently, any analysis of state performance in the upper grades sometimes excludes the lowest-performing students in high school. This concern is exacerbated in a report like this that is looking particularly at trends among the lowest-performing schools.

For these reasons, the research team decided not to analyze test scores at the high school level like it did at the elementary level. Instead, the team elected to analyze the proportion of students enrolled annually in grades nine, 10, 11, and 12 relative to the total high school population as a measure of a school's "holding power" at the high school level and a "leading indicator" of graduation. A number of studies⁶ have identified timely movement of students from one grade to another as a key predictor of high school completion. Measures of success in ninth grade, for instance, including on-time promotion to 10th grade, the number of failing grades (Fs) in core courses, and the number of course credits earned have been consistently linked to high school success and graduation.

As a result, the Council's research team elected to use the number and percent of students enrolled in grades nine through 12 as an indicator of progress toward graduation.

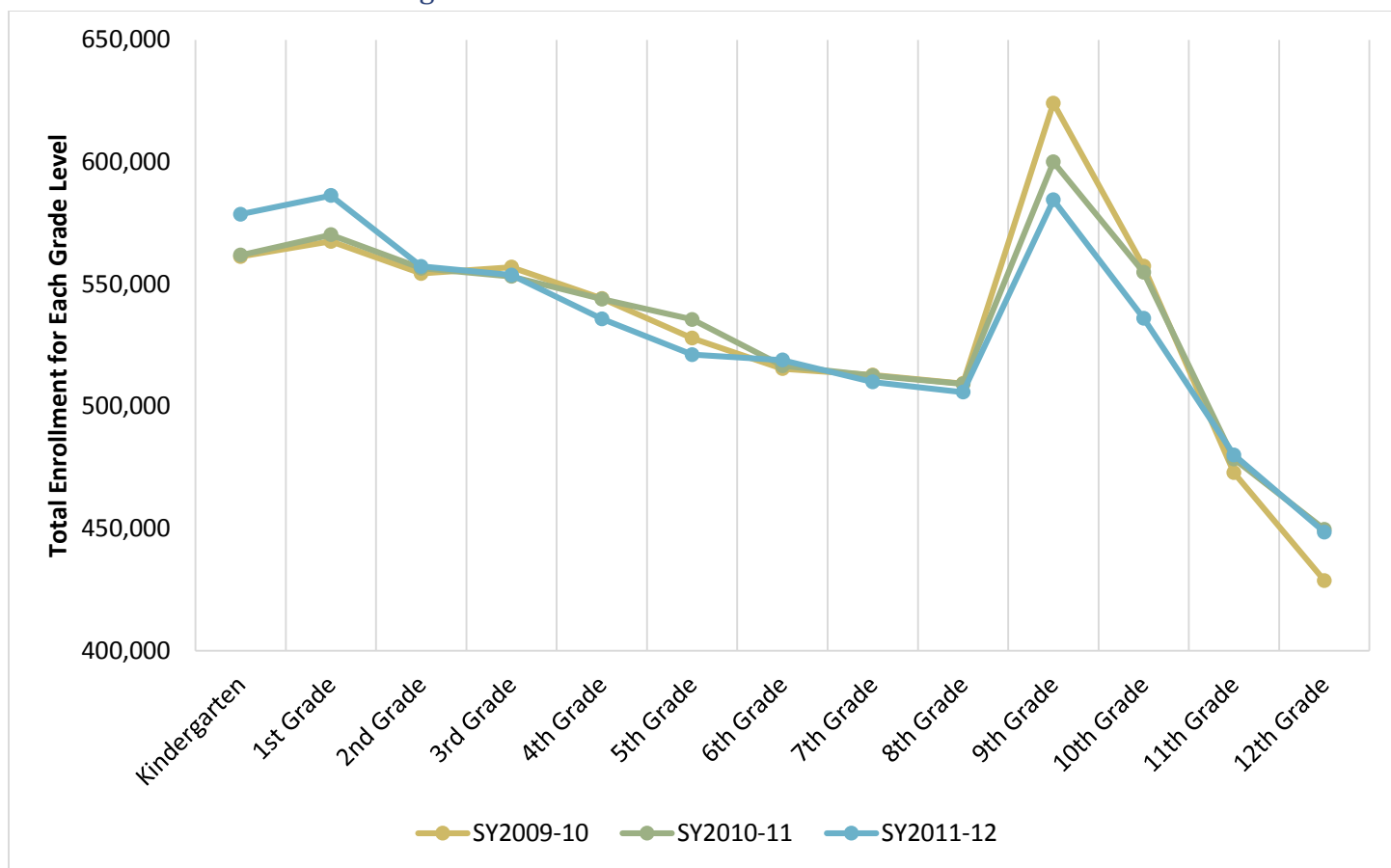
In particular, we hypothesized that the number of retained (repeat) ninth graders would decline as schools improved instruction and academic supports for students. As a result, the proportion of 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students enrolled should increase over time (changes could also be due to policy changes). As an example, Figure 1 illustrates the actual enrollment pattern by grade across all Council districts nationwide. This study assesses changes in this pattern at the district level—not the school level--before and after the SIG investment.

Clearly, the proportion of ninth grade students enrolled is significantly higher than the proportion of 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students. The data show a common and long-standing enrollment pattern with which many readers may not be familiar. What one is looking at are large numbers of ninth graders who are stacking up because they have not passed core courses and have not accumulated sufficient credits to move to subsequent grades. Smoothing out this distribution is one possible effect that SIG might have on urban school systems.

⁶ See for example Allensworth, E. & Easton, J. (2005). The on-track indicator as a predictor of high school graduation. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago. Retrieved from <http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/p78.pdf>

However, Council researchers did not apply this measure to individual schools because district decisions regarding open enrollment, magnet programs, and the like make school-level enrollment patterns inconsistent. District-level enrollment patterns were more stable, and provided a better indicator of improvement although the methodology meant that we necessarily included schools that were not associated with SIG and may not have been low-performing.

Figure 1. CGCS K-12 District Enrollment Profile



NAEP Data

The Council’s research team also looked at NAEP data to see if it corroborated results we were seeing on state tests. Unfortunately, NAEP results are not provided on a school-by-school basis, but the team’s hypothesis was that district-level trends on NAEP, particularly among the lowest-achieving students, might reflect some of the SIG-award trends since there were disproportionate numbers of these low-performing schools in large cities. This is not a direct measure of SIG’s effects, but we would expect to see trend lines among SIG-award schools and large city schools generally moving in the same directions. To see if that was true, we looked at changes in performance levels on NAEP, especially changes in the percentages of students in large city schools who scored below Basic levels of performance in reading and math.

Qualitative Data

Finally, the research team interviewed district and building-level staff from urban school districts that showed substantial test-score gains in their SIG schools and districts whose SIG school showed little to no improvements. Approximately 50 individuals were interviewed from eight districts: Cleveland, Columbus, Denver, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Seattle. Interviewees included superintendents, SIG program directors, principals, and teachers in SIG schools.

Limitations of the Study

The Council attempted to answer a number of critical questions about the federal SIG program, but found that one's ability to do so was seriously hampered by the quality of the data. Other analysts will run into the same problems. This is unfortunate because federal policymakers are left without a clear and unambiguous picture of whether this major investment in turning around the nation's lowest-performing schools worked as intended. Worse, it leaves advocates both for and against the program to argue their positions without the evidence one needs to decide who is correct.

Still, we wanted to present as much data as possible but with a clear understanding of some of the limitations in this study. First, as was discussed earlier, data were retrieved for this study from state departments of education or from their websites. This meant that there were inconsistencies in how and what data were reported. For instance, many states reported the percentage of Proficient students across grade levels without reporting the number of students tested in each grade level. As a result, the Council's research team was unable to calculate a weighted proficiency level for schools based on the number of test takers at each grade level. In schools where the number of students assessed was reported, the research team compared the difference between the mean performance calculations and the weighted mean performance based on the number of students tested. These differences were not statistically significant.

Moreover, we could not adjust trends by percentages of student poverty, English language learners, or other student demographic data. Data on these variables were not consistently reported by states on each school. And we were not able to access any longitudinal student-by-student trends. All data are cross-sectional across grades.

In addition, school performance measures did not correct for differences in state accountability or "n-size" rules for excluding students from school assessment results. For example, state procedures sometimes exclude students from state reports when they do not meet minimum guidelines for being enrolled for a "full academic year." In addition, states may classify some students as "Out of District" or "Out of State" test takers. Students in these categories may not be included in building-level reports, and our analysis, as a result, may not include all students tested in SIG schools.

Furthermore, to maintain consistency across states, a mean annual performance was calculated as an average of the proficiency rate across all grade levels within a school. But, the number of grade levels included in a school's analysis varied according to the number of grades served by the schools. Nonetheless, we think that most of the anomalies are consistent from year-to-year and wash out across districts.

Also, we were not able to say anything about the relative effects of the restart or closure models because they were used so infrequently.⁷ Consequently, little from our results can be gleaned about the effectiveness of private turnaround contractors or the merits of turning schools into charters.

We have also made every attempt to sort out why some SIG schools made progress and others did not, but there was no way for us to attribute gains or lack thereof to any single strategy. There often appeared to be a mix of explanations. We devote considerable narrative in this report to laying out some of these explanations.

Finally, state - and by default district - attrition was a significant limitation in the study. The Council's research team excluded a number of states and districts from the study for various reasons. Changes in state assessments were noted earlier as a reason to exclude states from the analysis, a situation that applied not only to our study but to the study by the Department of Education. For all intents and purposes, the effectiveness of the federal government's initiative to turn around the nation's lowest-performing schools was left to the mercy of states' constantly changing testing practices.

Results

Quantitative Results

School Performance in Grades Three through Eight on State Assessments

Results of our analysis across states for grades three through eight are provided in Figure 2 (math) and Figure 3 (reading/ELA). As expected, the percentage of Proficient students in SIG-award schools before the grants were administered was lower than the proficiency rates of a random sample of schools that were eligible to (but did not) receive SIG funding, as well as a random sample of schools across the country that were not SIG-eligible. In the 2009-10 baseline year, SIG-eligible schools not awarded grants had a proficiency rate in mathematics that was 21.7 percentage points higher than SIG-award schools, and non-SIG-eligible schools had a proficiency rate that was 37.2 percentage points higher. In reading, the differences were 16.9 and 34.1 percentage points, respectively. In other words, the targeting of funds to the very lowest-performing schools appears to have been accomplished.

In general, the achievement gaps between SIG-award schools and the two comparison groups appear to have narrowed steadily for the first two years, and then leveled off in the third year. Two years after the initial SIG awards (2011-12), the proficiency gap in math between SIG-award and SIG-eligible schools was reduced to 14.9 points. And the gap between SIG-award schools and the non-eligible state sample was reduced to 30.1 points. The gaps remained about the same in 2012-13 at 14.6 points and 29.9 points, respectively. In reading, there was a similar trend. The mean difference in proficiency among SIG schools in the 2011-12 school year was reduced to 14.5 points compared to SIG-eligible schools and 30.5 points compared to the random sample of non-eligible schools. In the 2012-13 school year, the gaps between SIG-award and SIG-eligible schools was reduced to 13.8 points and to 29.7 points compared to the sample of non-eligible schools across states.

⁷ By and large, school districts did not use federal SIG funds when they closed schools.

The Council's research team was also interested in the movement of students out of the lowest performance category in states that had at least two performance levels below Proficient. In many respects, this measure could be considered the most relevant assessment of the impact of the SIG investment, as more than one out of every three students in SIG-award schools was classified in the lowest performance level on state assessments - 41.9 percent in math and 33.7 percent in reading. Figure 4 (math) and Figure 5 (reading/ELA) suggest that SIG-award schools did reduce the percentage of students in the lowest proficiency levels on state assessments. The gap in mathematics between SIG-funded schools and SIG-eligible schools was 17.8 percentage points in the baseline year and between SIG-funded and non-SIG schools was 25.5 percentage points. By the 2011-12 academic year, the gap between SIG-funded and SIG-eligible schools was 9.7 percentage points and between SIG-funded and non-SIG schools was 17.3 percentage points. In 2012-13, the gaps remained about the same.

In reading, similar changes were observed. The gap in reading between SIG-funded and SIG-eligible schools was 11.0 percentage points in the baseline year and between SIG-funded and non-SIG schools was 20.2 percentage. By 2011-12, the gap between SIG-funded and SIG-eligible schools was reduced to 7.6 percentage points and between SIG-funded and non-SIG schools was 15.4 percentage points. The 2012-13 differences were similar to those in 2011-12.

Figure 2. Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing At or Above Proficient in Mathematics by SIG Group from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

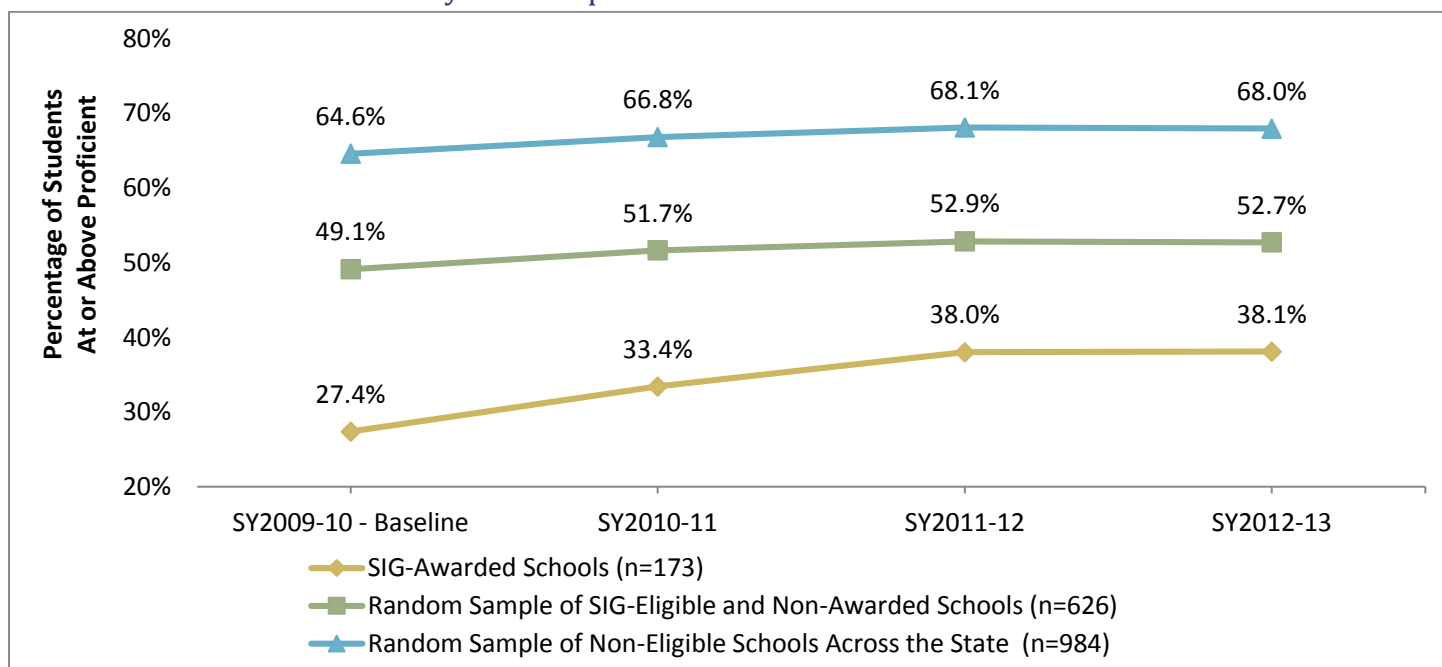


Figure 3. Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing At or Above Proficient in Reading by SIG Group from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

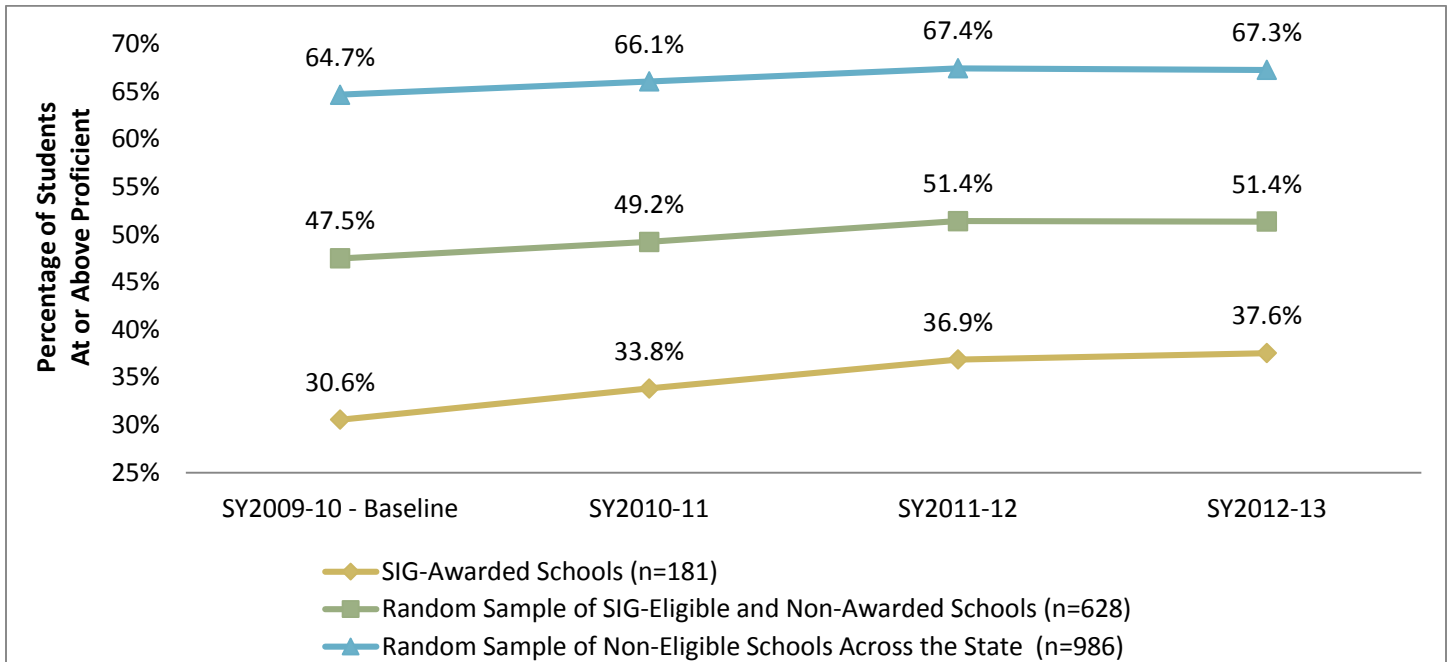


Figure 4. Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing Below Basic in Mathematics by SIG Group from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

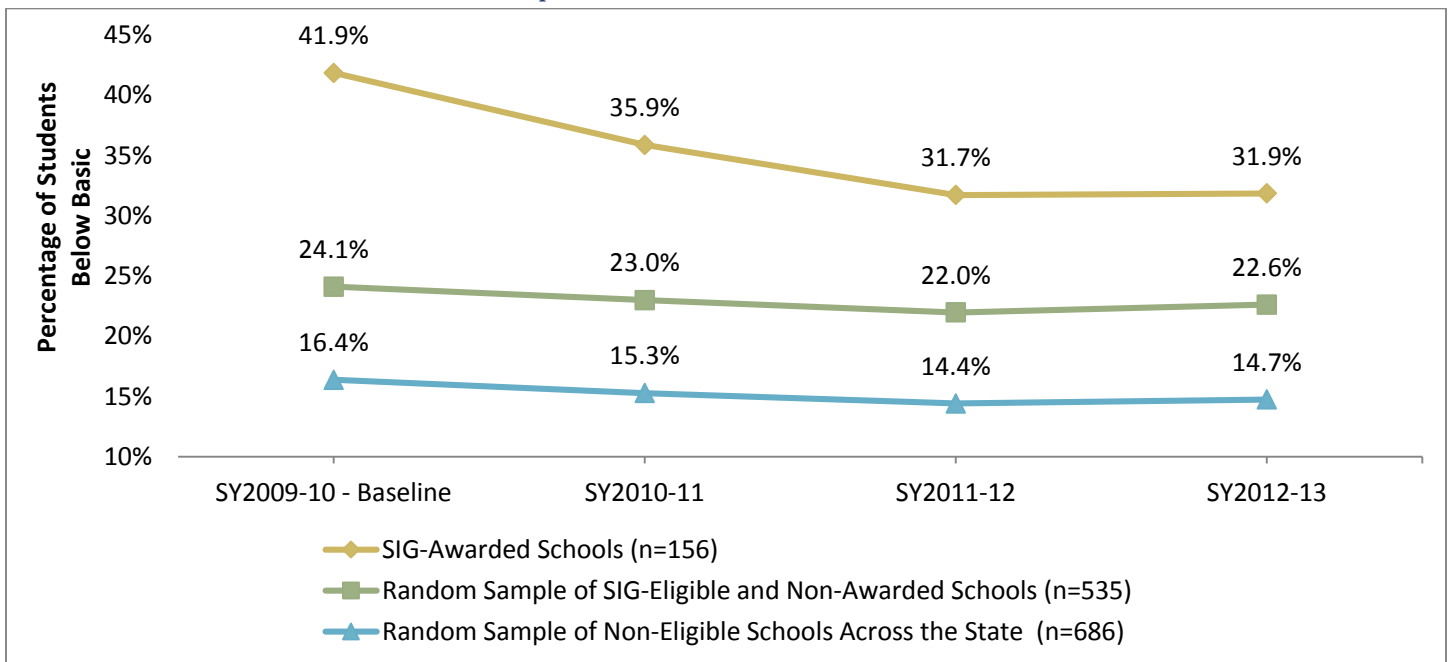
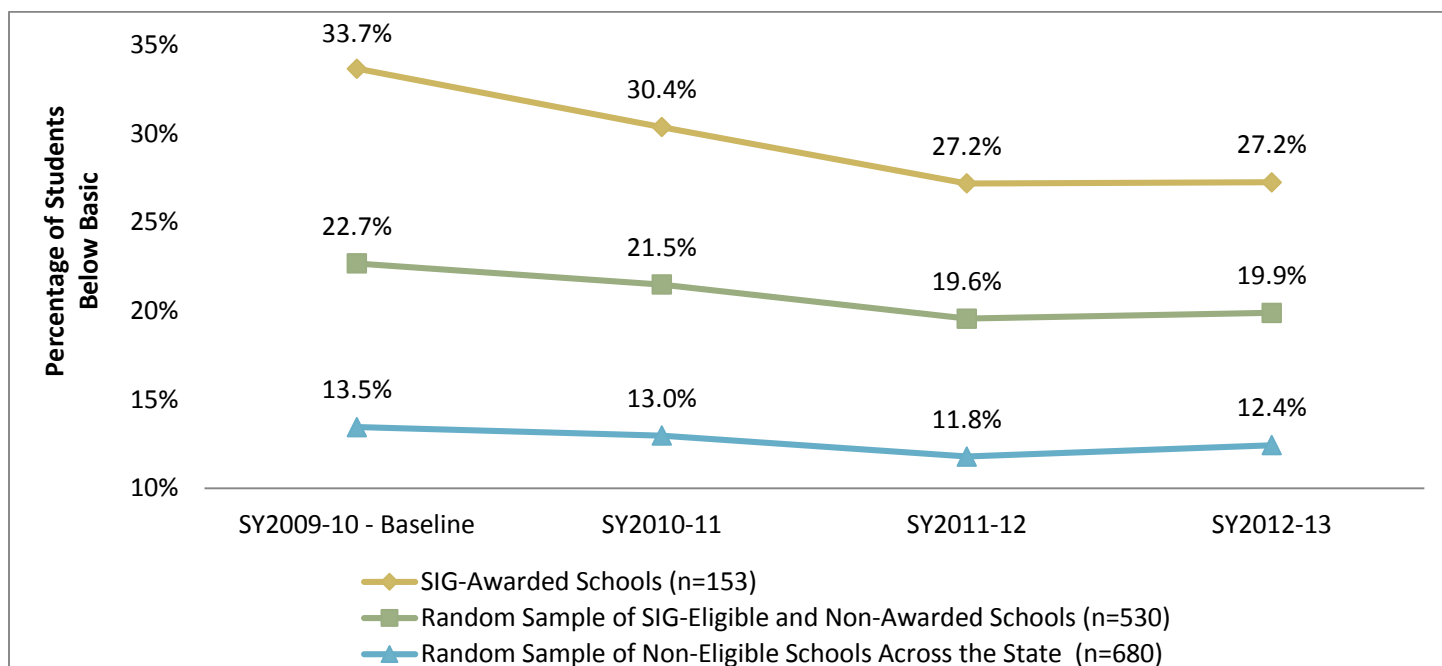


Figure 5. Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing Below Basic in Reading by SIG Group from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13



The research team also examined the numbers of SIG schools in each sample that made improvement. We did this because looking at average proficiency scores alone does not tell one about how many schools were affected. The results are displayed in Figures 6 and 7. The results indicated that 45.9 percent of SIG-award schools in Council districts made gains greater than 10 percentage points between 2009-10 and 2012-13 in math. In addition, some 12.2 percent of these schools made gains between five and 10 percentage points, while 27.0 percent of these SIG schools showed no improvement (see Figure 6). In some cases, SIG schools in Council districts made more progress in math than other SIG-funded schools, SIG-eligible but not funded schools, and non-SIG schools; in other cases they did not.

In reading, the results indicated that 29.9 percent of SIG-award schools in Council districts made gains greater than 10 percentage points between 2009-10 and 2012-13. In addition, some 22.1 percent of these schools made gains between five and 10 percentage points, while 23.4 percent of these SIG schools showed no improvement (see Figure 7). Again, in some cases, SIG schools in Council districts made more progress in reading than other SIG-funded schools, SIG-eligible but not funded schools, and non-SIG schools; in other cases they did not.

Figure 6. Percentage of Schools in Grades 3-8 Improving in Math by Category and School Type from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

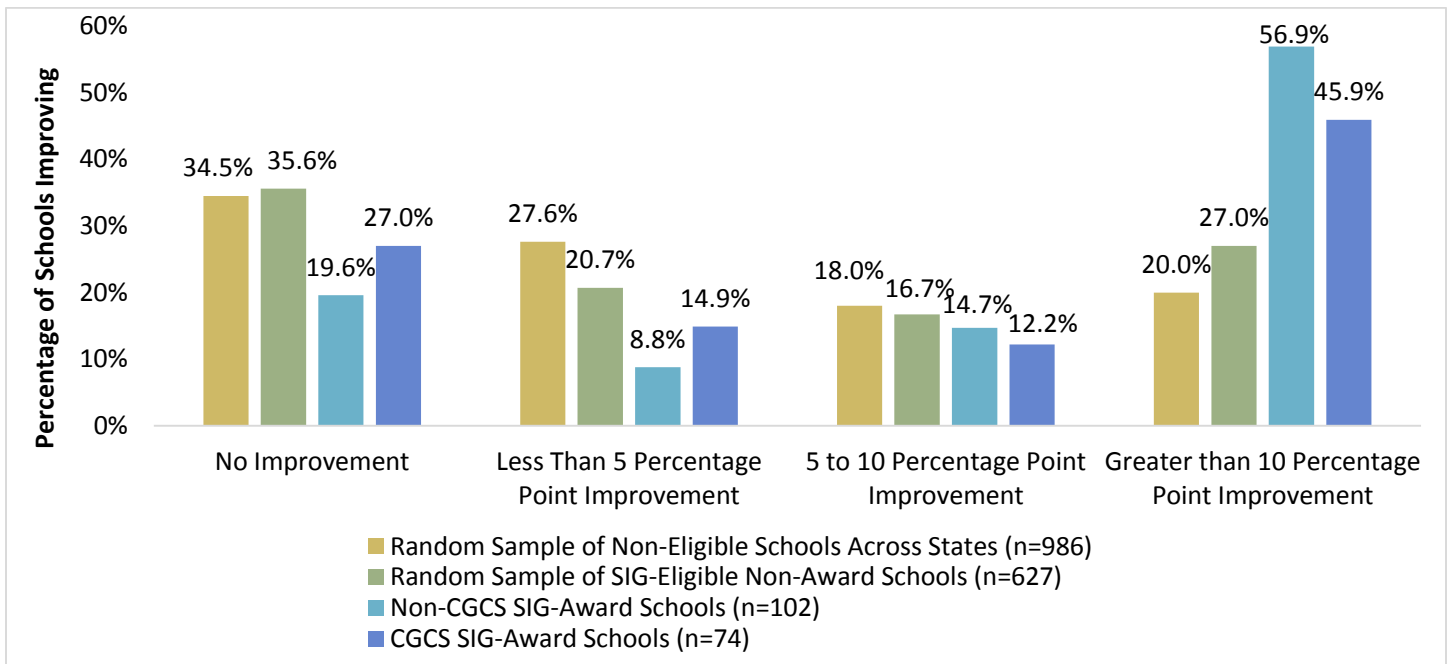
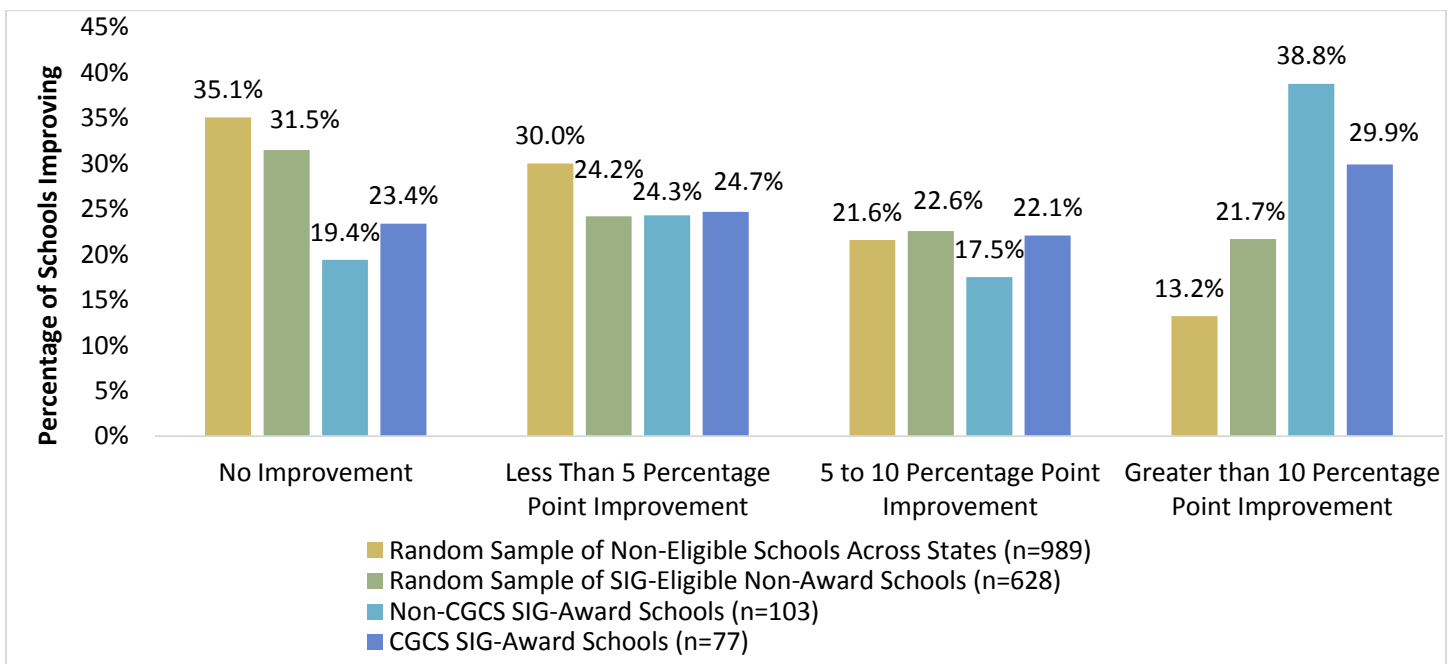


Figure 7. Percentage of Schools in Grades 3-8 Improving in Reading by Category and School Type from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13



Transformation vs. Turnaround Schools

As described earlier in this report, schools were required by the U.S. Department of Education to select a SIG intervention model to implement as part of the improvement process. The Council's research team conducted a statistical comparison of the two most commonly used intervention models and their relative improvements. Few districts chose to close low performing schools with their SIG dollars, and only a small number of schools selected the restart model. Since the sample size for these two models was small, they were not included in this analysis.

Most of the schools participating in the SIG intervention chose either the transformation or turnaround intervention models. Figures 8 and 9 show changes for the two main models in the percentages of students Proficient or above in reading and math over the four year period.

Figures 10 and 11 show changes for the two models in the percentage of students performing below Basic in reading and math. For all four analyses, there were no statistically significant differences between the transformation and turnaround SIG intervention models in their rates of improvement.

Figure 8. Transformation Compared to Turnaround Model Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing At or Above Proficient in Mathematics from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

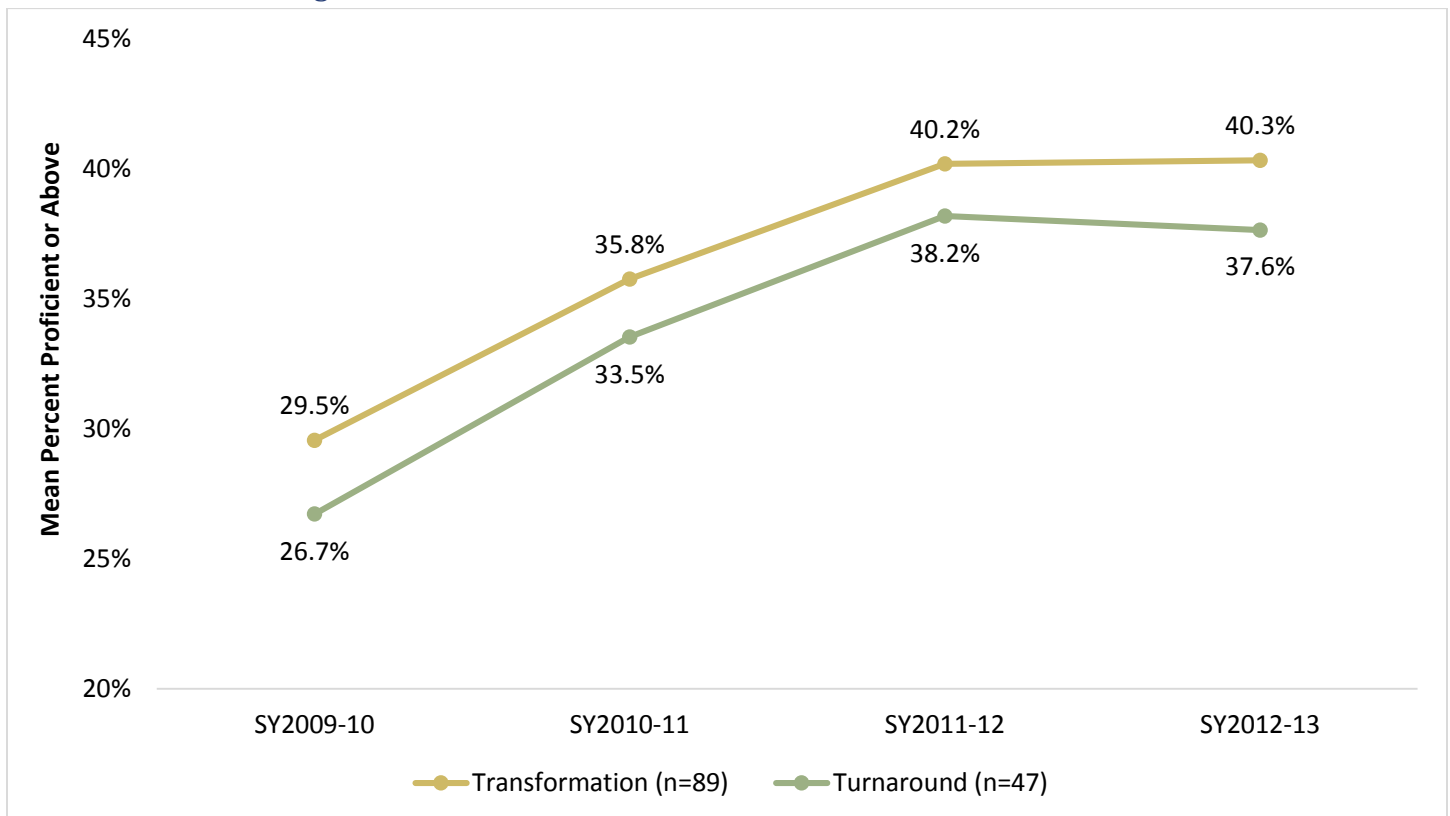


Figure 9. Transformation Compared to Turnaround Model Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing At or Above Proficient in Reading from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

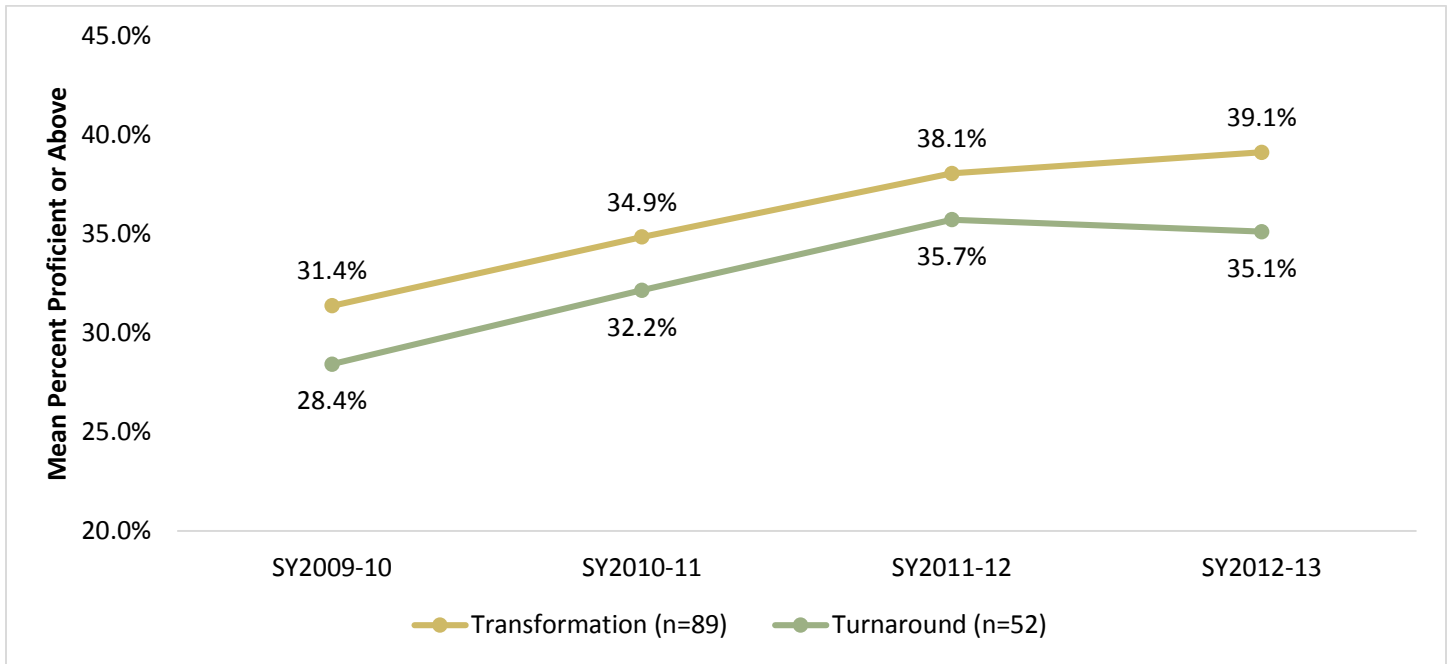


Figure 10. Transformation Compared to Turnaround Model Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing Below Basic in Math from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13

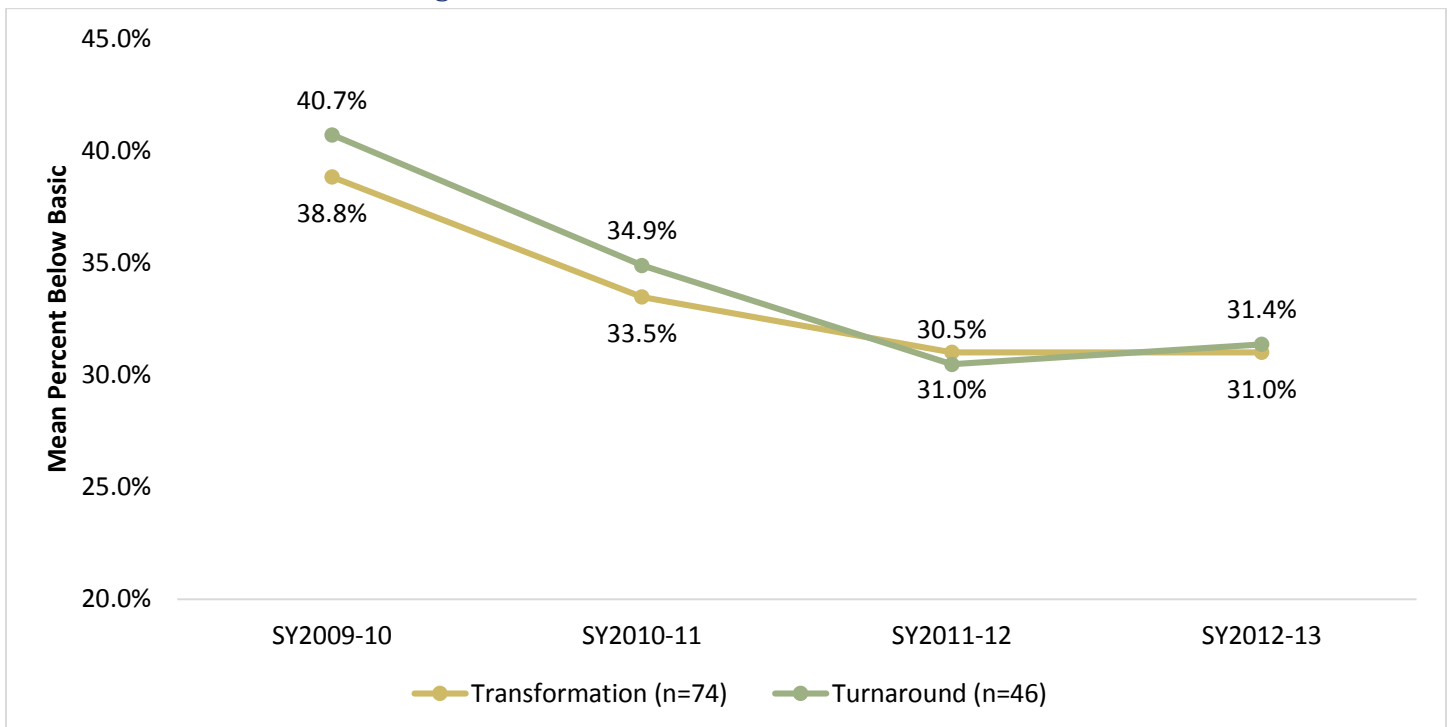
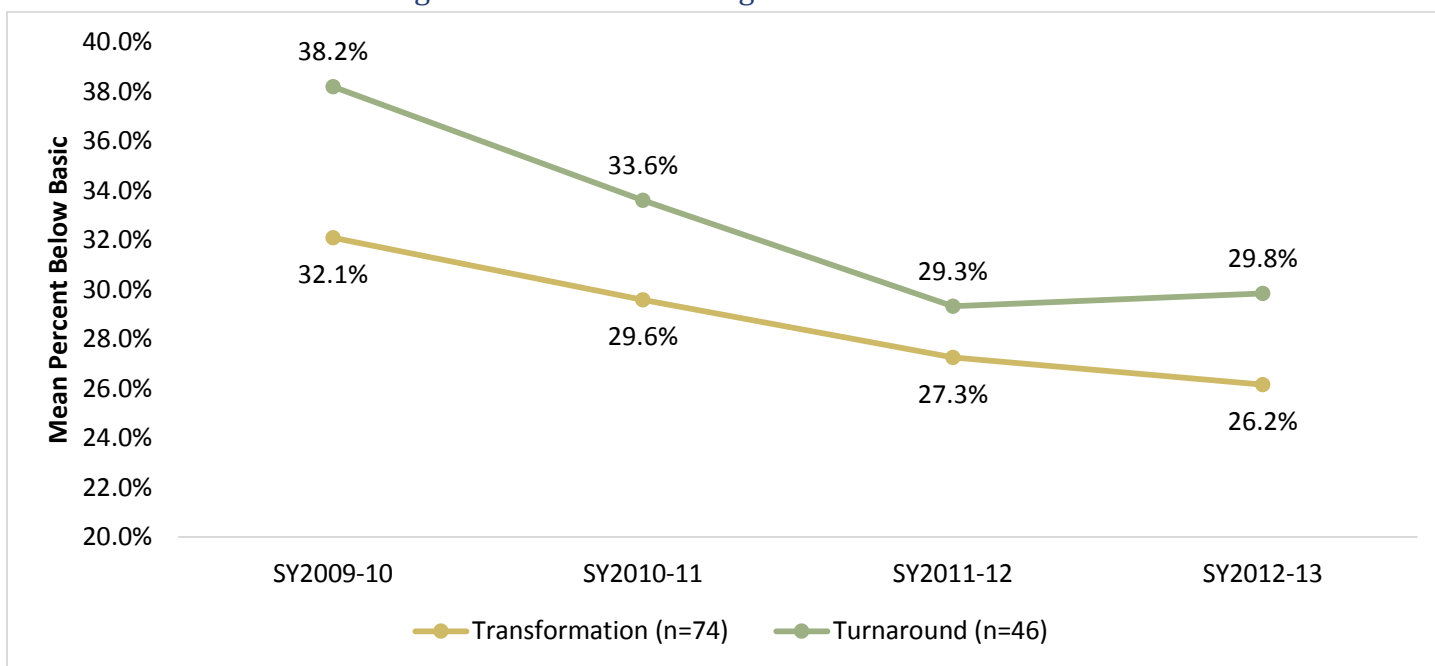


Figure 11. Transformation Compared to Turnaround Model Mean Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Performing Below Basic in Reading from SY2009-10 to SY2012-13



This lack of difference between the two models in their rates of improvement is somewhat unexpected because there was a presumption that the transformation model might not have as pronounced an effect as the turnaround model. In fact, the Department of Education capped the percent of schools that could use the transformation approach because it was viewed as the least rigorous (and possibly least effective) and therefore most likely to be used by school officials. The Department of Education prohibited an LEA from using the transformation model in more than half of its SIG schools if nine or more Tier I and Tier II schools were included in the district's application. The main difference between the two models was that turnaround schools were supposed to replace at least half the staff and adopt a new governance structure, while transformation schools had no such requirements.

The interviews for this project, however, suggested that there was more variation in practices *within* each reform model than between them. It could have been the case that a school's new staff were not significantly different or better than the staff they replaced. It could also have been that the new governance models weren't any better than the original ones, or that governance as defined by these models has no real impact on student achievement. In addition, both models were permitted to use additional strategies that were not always clearly specified. It could be that these strategies, along with the allowable uses of funds that were identical from one model to another, produced similar results.

Student Performance on the NAEP Assessment

We also examined results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to see if these data corroborated what we saw with the state-test data. Again, the reader should keep in mind that NAEP does not

measure the progress of specific and identifiable schools – these data are simply an indirect indicator of whether the lowest-performing students in urban schools are improving.

Figures 12 through 19 show changes since 2003 in fourth- and eighth-grade NAEP reading and mathematics performance levels for both Large Cities and the National Public sample.

For both groups (Large Cities and the National Public sample), the data show consistent declines in the percentage of students in the lowest performance category (below Basic). While these trends were evident prior to the new SIG investment (2003 – 2009), the trends after the new SIG grants were implemented showed continued progress and are consistent with findings from the state assessment data presented in the previous section.

We did not see a discernable difference in the biennial rates of change among students who were below Basic before and after the new SIG program went into effect.

Still, the 2011 and 2013 NAEP results were attained after the new version of SIG was implemented and improvement was evident. In fourth grade reading, the percentage of students in the Large Cities sample who scored below the Basic performance level declined from 46.1 percent in 2009 to 42.7 percent in 2013 (see Figure 12). Over the same period, the percentage of large-city school fourth graders scoring at the Basic level remained fairly steady at around 31 percent, and the percentage of large city students scoring at or above the Proficient level increased from 22.7 percent to 25.9 percent.

Similarly, the national sample (which included the large cities) saw declines in the below Basic group over the same period and increases in the percentage of students scoring at the Proficient level, but both the increases and decreases were somewhat smaller at the national level than at the large city level (see Figures 12, 13).

At the eighth-grade level in reading, the percentage of large city students scoring below Basic dropped from 37.1 percent to 31.9 percent or 5.2 percentage points between 2009 and 2013. During the same period, the percentage of large city students scoring at the Proficient and Advanced levels increased 4.5 percentage points. Nationally, the pattern of change was similar between 2009 and 2013, with those scoring below Basic declining 2.9 points and those scoring at Proficient or Advanced levels increasing 3.8 percentage points.

Again, the overall improvements were somewhat larger in the large cities (where a disproportionate number of SIG schools are concentrated) than nationally (see Figures 14, 15).

In math, fourth graders in large cities were also improving. The percentage of large city students scoring below Basic dropped 3.3 points between 2009 and 2013, and the percentage of students at or above Proficient increased 4.5 points. At the national level, the percentage of students below Basic dropped by 1.1 points, while the percentages at or above the Proficient level increased by 3.0 points (see Figures 16, 17).

In eighth grade, the percentage of large city students scoring below Basic in math dropped 5.0 percentage points between 2009 and 2013, while the percentage at or above Proficient increased by 3.1 points over the same period. At the national level, the percent of students scoring below Basic dropped 1.7 points, while the percentages at or above Proficient increased by 1.9 points (see Figures 18, 19).

Figure 12. Percentage of Students in Large Cities in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 4 Reading from 2003 to 2013

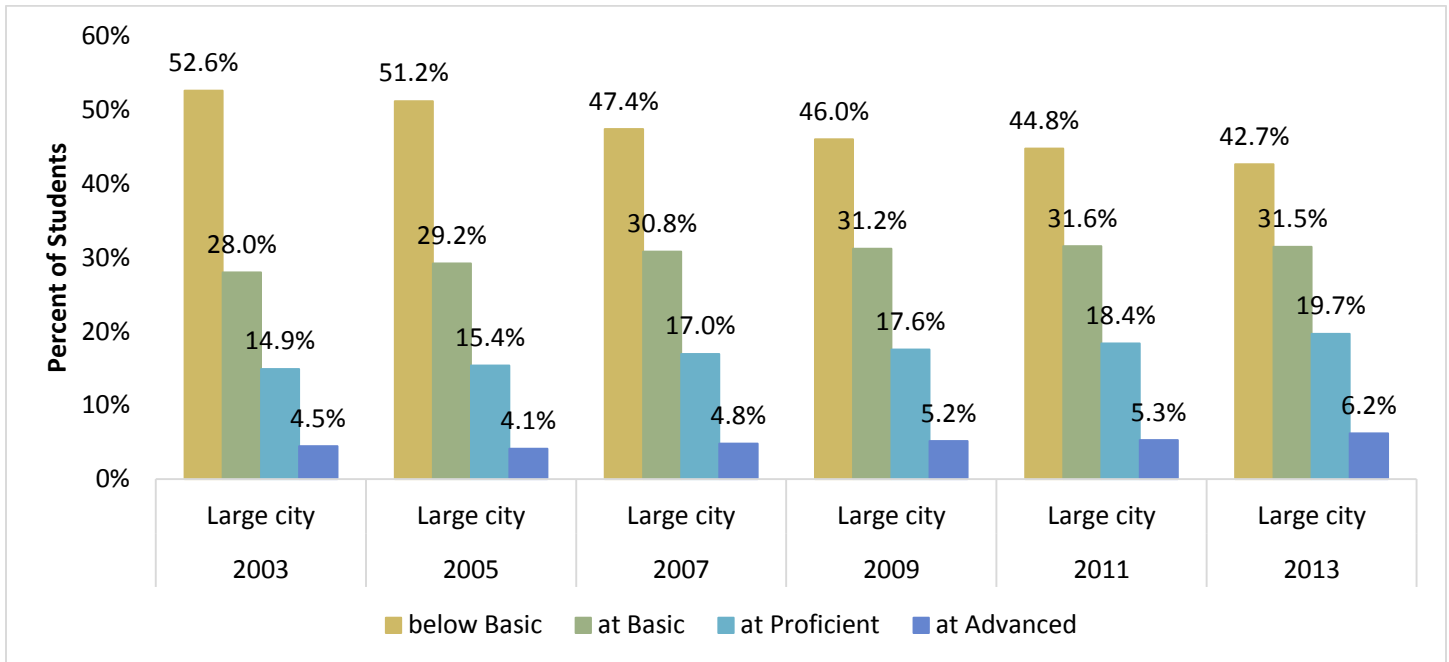


Figure 13. Percentage of the Nation's Public School Students in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 4 Reading from 2003 to 2013

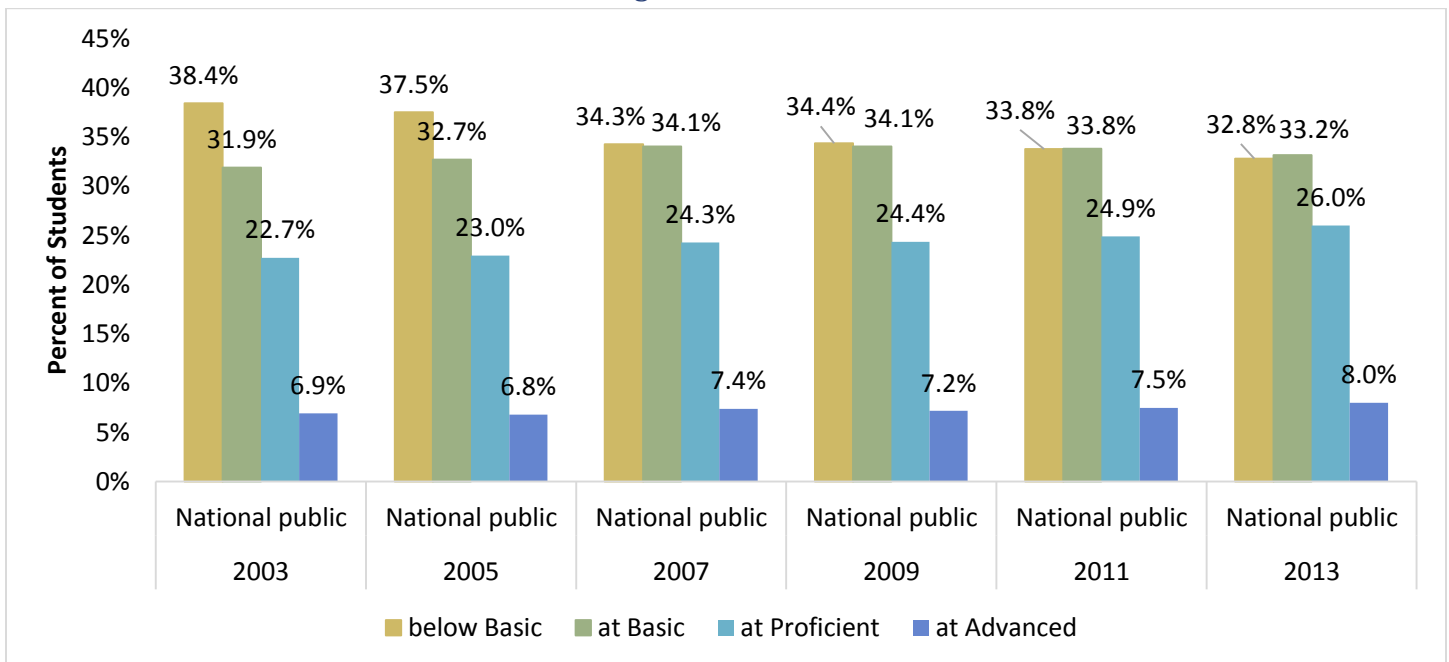


Figure 14. Percentage of Students in Large Cities in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 8 Reading from 2003 to 2013

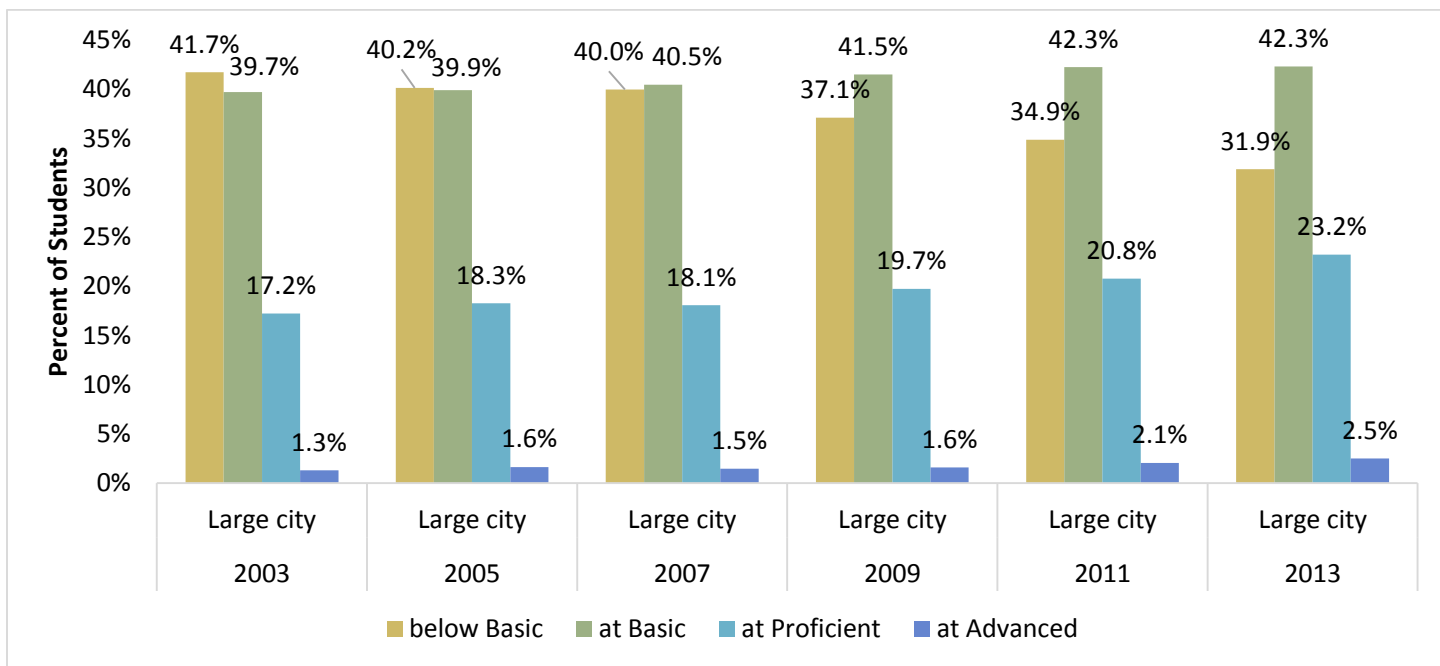


Figure 15. Percentage of the Nation's Public School Students in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 8 Reading from 2003 to 2013

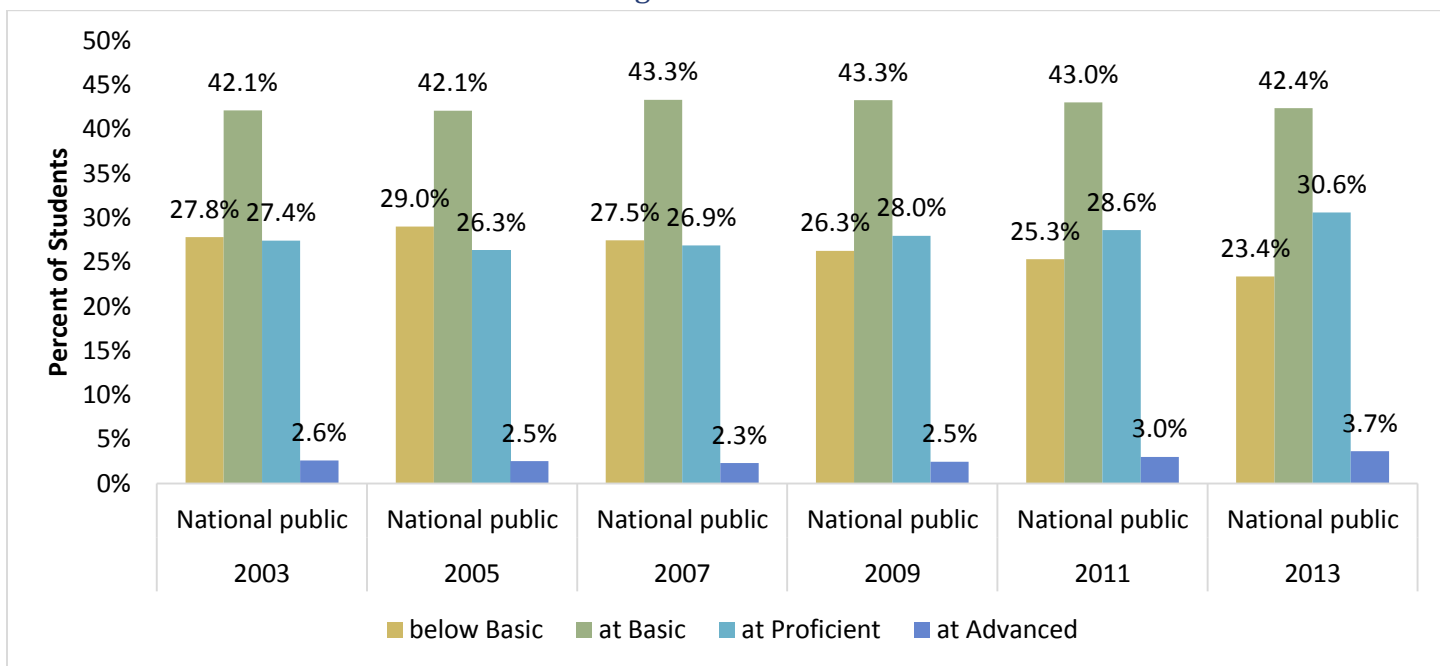


Figure 16. Percentage of Students in Large Cities in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 4 Mathematics from 2003 to 2013

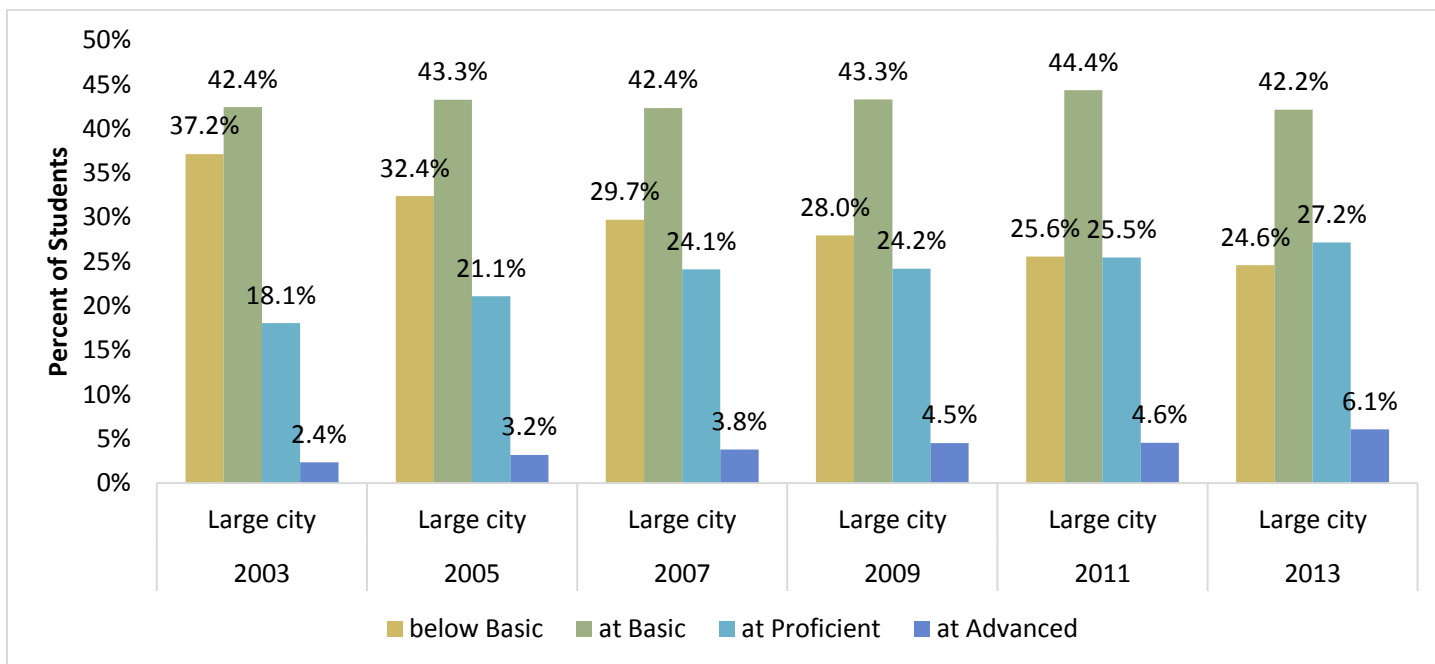


Figure 17 Percentage of the Nation's Public School Students in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 4 Mathematics from 2003 to 2013

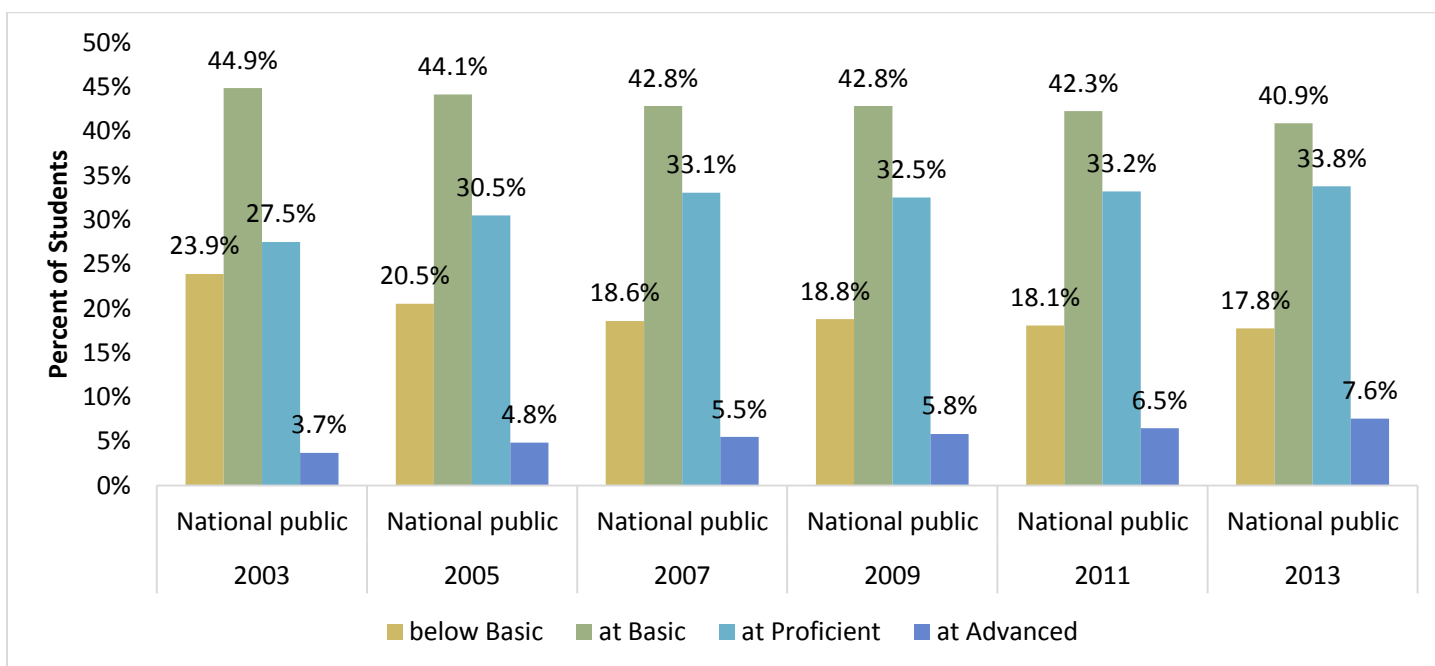


Figure 18. Percentage of Students in Large Cities in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 8 Mathematics from 2003 to 2013

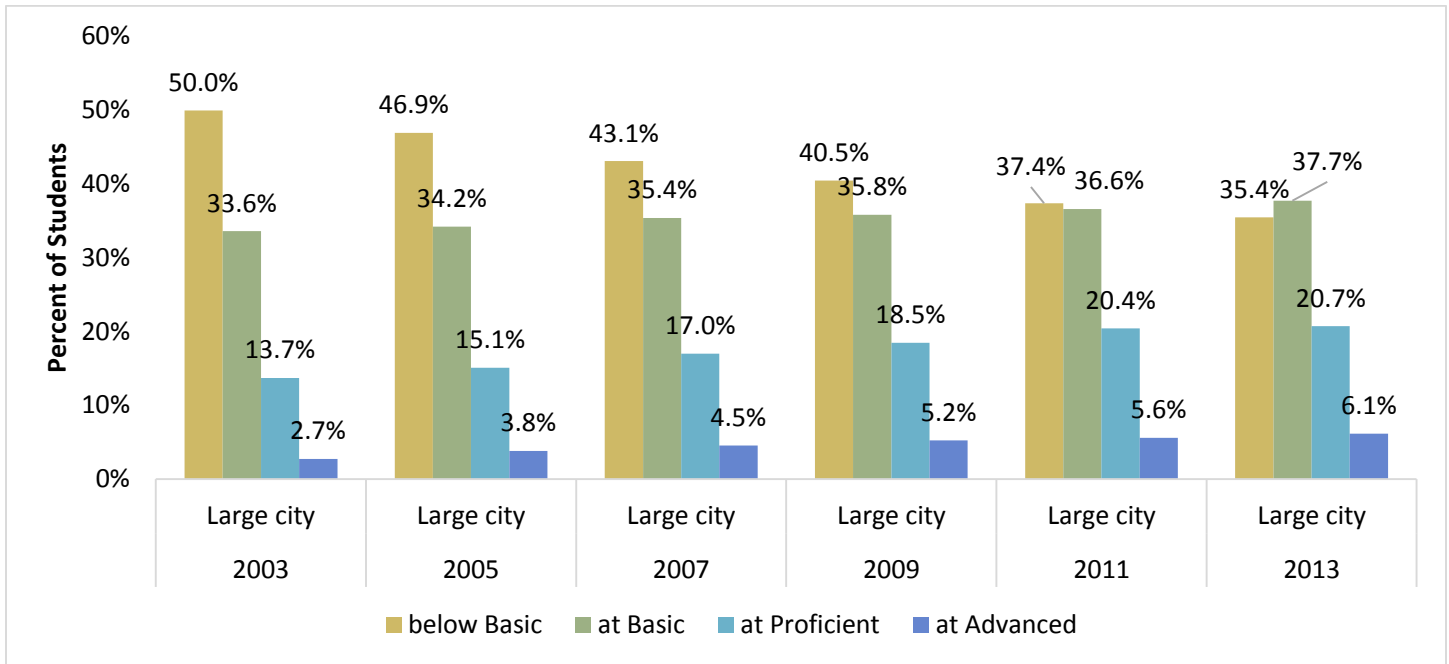
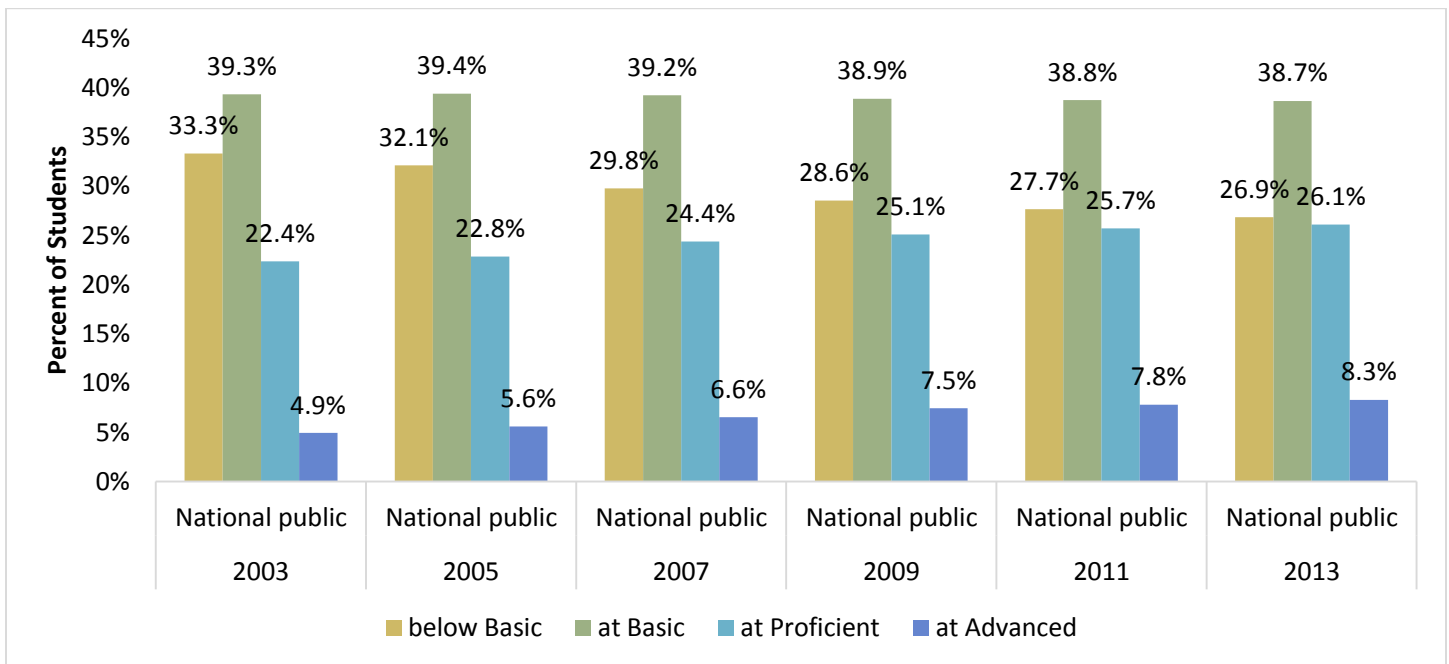


Figure 19 Percentage of the Nation's Public School Students in each NAEP Performance Level on Grade 8 Mathematics from 2003 to 2013



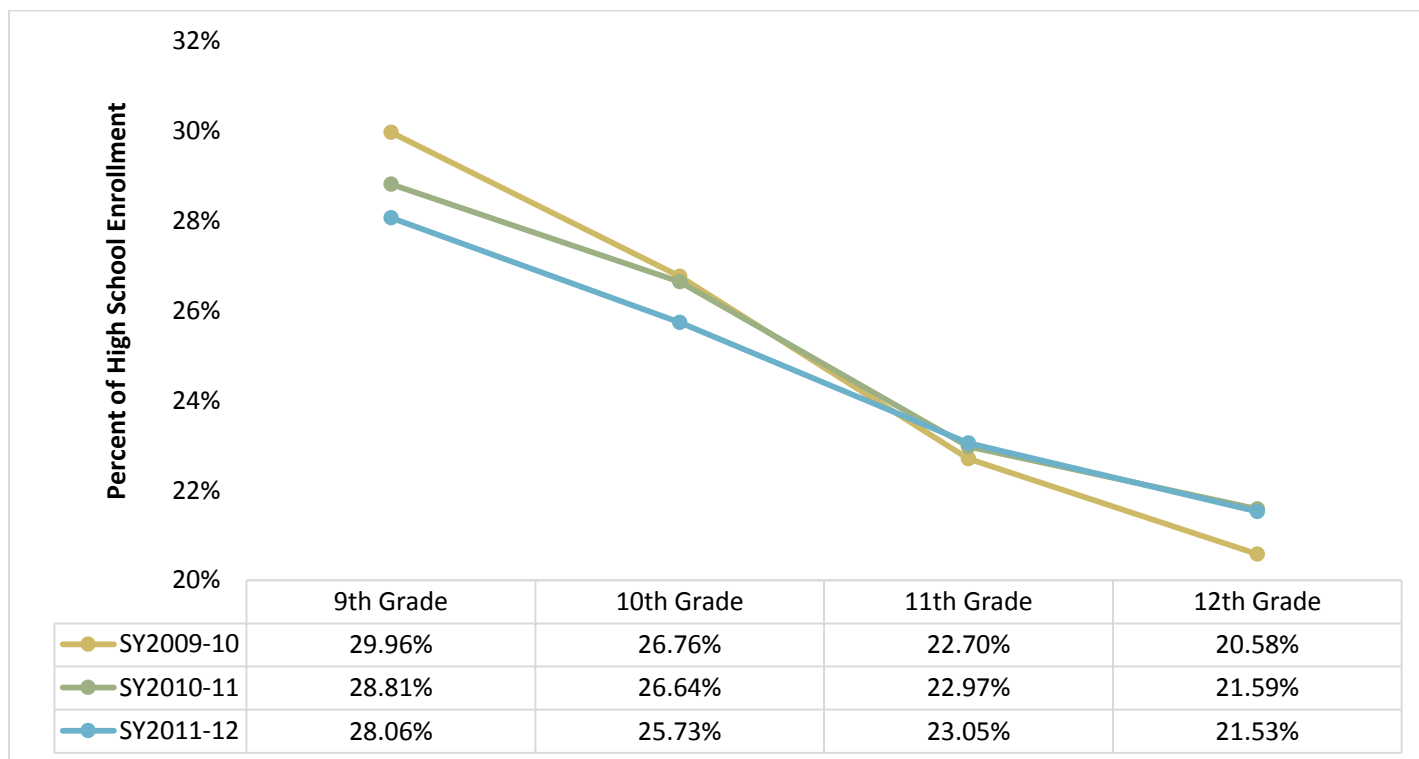
High School Enrollment Trends in CGCS Districts

We also examined trends in grade-by-grade enrollment in the Great City Schools to see if there were any indications that schools were improving their “holding power”—which would be evident if the percentages enrolled in each high school grade were beginning to look more similar. All things being equal, we would expect the percentage of students at each grade level to be roughly the same (25 percent). Again, this is an indirect indicator that could be affected by any number of factors other than SIG. However, data indicating that grade-level enrollment was not smoothing out might suggest that SIG was not having any broad effects on urban schools.

Figure 20 shows changes in the percentage of students at each high school grade level in the aggregated Great City Schools over two years of the SIG grant period and the year before the new SIG program went into effect. It is important to note that the overall high school enrollment remained the same (2.083 million students) between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

As the graph illustrates, the percentage of ninth grade students dropped or improved slightly over the study period while the percentage of students in 11th and 12th grade showed some gains or improvements. In other words, urban school districts did appear to improve their ability to promote students from one high school grade to the next, which resulted in less of a “pile-up” in the ninth grade and higher percentages of students in the final two grade levels of high school.

Figure 20. Percentage of Students Enrolled in High School across CGCS Districts by Grade from SY2009-10 to SY2011-12



Quantitative Summary

Taken individually, each of the analyses presented in this report may not provide a compelling argument for improvements in the lowest-performing SIG schools across the country. However, taken collectively, these data provide convincing evidence that the investment in the lowest-performing schools improved educational outcomes for students in participating schools in Council districts. While the most frequently used intervention models (i.e., transformation and turnaround) appear to produce similar results, the changes in the percentage of students scoring below Basic and at or above Proficient levels on state assessments show that gaps between students in SIG schools and schools across the state decreased significantly.

In addition, while the performance of fourth and eighth graders on NAEP and changes in high school enrollment trends cannot be directly attributed to the SIG investment, the data generally reinforce the SIG findings. In elementary and middle grades, the percentage of students in the lowest performance category is at its lowest level since these data were collected. And in high school, the data show preliminary signs that schools are moving more students into the 11th and 12th grades. It is likely that this trend is a leading indicator of improvements in high school graduation rates.

Qualitative Results

Uses of SIG Funds

In addition to looking at state and national assessment data and high school enrollment trends, the Council conducted a qualitative review of selected urban districts and schools to determine how they used their SIG funds.

Districts and schools were chosen for this qualitative portion of the study based on state math and reading test results. Some urban districts were chosen because their SIG schools demonstrated an increase in performance on their state assessments, and others were chosen because they showed no change or decreased performance.

Research staff from the Council then interviewed central office employees and school-based personnel (including principals and teachers) who were involved in the design and/or implementation of the SIG grants between 2009 and 2013.

Case Study Questions

The purpose of the interviews was to determine how SIG schools used their federal grant funds and to identify common patterns or themes that might explain why some schools improved and others did not. The interviews with district staff members, principals, and teachers focused on the following questions:

- What was the political and organizational context of the district during the SIG implementation?
- What were the districts' instructional areas of focus during the study period?

- What were the schools' goals and objectives during that period, and what was the process for setting and monitoring progress toward those goals?
- What kinds of interventions were put into place to turn around academic performance in SIG schools?
- How were SIG-funded schools held accountable for improving student achievement? What methods or measures were used?
- What professional development was available for teachers and administrators to address the academic needs of students and special populations in SIG schools?
- What plans did schools and districts develop for sustaining programs and processes implemented with SIG funding?

The results of the interviews are summarized in the sections below.

Political and Organizational Context

Urban school districts often faced conflicting demands around how to use their SIG dollars with their lowest-performing schools. These districts also faced challenges in determining what the central priorities of the SIG program were and how they were expected to use their funds. In addition, many SIG-eligible schools were subject to turnaround efforts before the new SIG program—sometimes multiple turnaround efforts—with uneven results. How districts experienced and dealt with these uncertainties and conflicting demands, and what lessons they learned from their previous turnaround results, sometimes affected how they thought about their challenges and how they used their new SIG funds.

The Council's 2012 report on SIG discussed a number of challenges that districts faced over the years in attempting to improve these schools, including difficulties with the removal and recruitment of staff, community and union resistance to school changes or closures, the ability to secure and retain sufficient resources to launch and sustain the turnaround efforts, and conflicting demands from various stakeholders.

Interviews with district and school staff for this report confirmed that these issues continued to plague reform efforts under the new SIG program. One district indicated that it received ongoing pressure from its state to close the lowest-performing schools, while at the same time there was pressure from parents and others to keep the schools open. In another district, the turnaround work had been going on for about eight years and the system had learned a great deal about what worked, while another district had just started its reform efforts. Some districts enjoyed relatively stable personnel over the grant period, while others saw major staffing changes both before and during the SIG period.

In addition, many personnel interviewed for this project reported that their SIG schools were in disarray prior to the grant, resulting from a lack of strong district support for low-performing schools and a mechanism to coordinate work in these schools. One district reported that increasing decentralization over the years had weakened central-office capacity to help struggling schools, leaving many individual schools to do what they

thought best without much direction or coordination. Another district added that school-level leadership was often a challenge, citing one SIG school whose previous principal was constantly away or out sick, leaving school personnel to fend for themselves. There were also cases where the opposite dynamic was at play. That is, the district had too many turnaround strategies, consultants, state teams, and others who significantly hampered a coherent approach to the reforms.

A number of districts also indicated they struggled with what organizational structures to put into place to support the school turnarounds. Many thought the best way to serve these schools was to group them into specialized administrative units or “regions” that receive dedicated and concentrated support. Many superintendents worked with their school boards and the public on the benefits of creating these zones, highlighting the tailored services and supports that the schools would receive.

In one district, a new superintendent pushed for more centralization prior to SIG, and the grant funding helped to propel the district’s reorganization. But other districts encountered school-level resistance to this type of centralized support. Sometimes schools had the wherewithal to handle the autonomy, but sometimes they did not, resulting in uneven reform efforts among schools depending on personnel capacity and expertise.

Goals and Objectives

To receive funds under the program, school districts submitted applications to their states on behalf of the turnaround schools. Applications required districts to articulate formal written goals and objectives, along with what intervention model was being chosen and what improvement strategies were being put into place. Sometimes these goals were very clear and were accompanied with definitive indicators of success, and in other cases the goals were more overarching and generalized.

In addition, the exact nature of the districts’ roles in defining school improvements differed substantially from site to site. Sometimes goals and objectives were set by the district and in some cases they were set by the schools—or they were set in tandem. Interviewees did not report to the Council’s research team that states provided strong technical assistance to districts and schools in setting goals and objectives, but this situation no doubt varied from state to state and from one applicant to the next.

Supporting SIG Schools. A critical component of district plans to turn around their lowest-performing schools involved ensuring that adequate supports for SIG schools were in place – both at the central office and building levels. These supports varied from site to site. One district built a team of instructional supervisors and curriculum specialists with SIG funds to conduct school-level reviews and develop plans to improve instructional delivery. Another district indicated that they hired instructional specialists in reading, math, and science, and divided workloads among eligible elementary and middle schools and the high schools.

Another district had central-office staff members look at common concerns and deficiencies at each SIG school, and worked with principals and school staff to produce common instructional procedures. One district provided each SIG high school with its own reading and math coach. Some districts used SIG dollars to boost the capacity of their central offices to provide technical assistance and support to schools; others placed the support more

directly into the schools. And, as indicated earlier, a number of districts established their own “superintendent’s district” or specialized administrative units to support SIG schools.

Teacher Buy-in and Ownership in the Turnaround Process. Interviews also revealed that districts knew significant changes in these schools would require strong support and commitment from teachers and their organizations. To build that support, one district began the SIG work by articulating that the district would be setting higher expectations and stronger accountability for results at all levels, beginning with the superintendent and school board. This sense of commitment from the top of the system helped convince staff members in SIG schools that the turnarounds would require special dedication and effort.

In other districts, teachers were made aware of necessary changes before the SIG transition began and were given the opportunity to transfer. The central office in one district worked with its teacher union to ensure that remaining teachers worked longer hours but received extra pay for the extra time—an extra 30 minutes a day. Another district developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with teachers stipulating that they attend all professional development offered as part of the turnaround work, undertake specified initiatives and interventions to transform the school, and give a three-year commitment to ensure continuity. If the school met its goals, teachers would receive a \$2,500 performance-based stipend with SIG funds.

Data and Data Use. One of the most consistent ways that districts leveraged their SIG dollars involved the use of data to inform teaching and learning. In one district, teachers at SIG schools met in August for 20 hours to analyze data from the prior year and set achievement goals for the upcoming year. In another district, every school was assigned a SIG monitor or facilitator responsible for collecting and inputting data into an online data tool, and tracking student assessment results.

In fact, one of the most common uses of SIG funds involved more regular assessment of student progress. One district, for example, used monthly formative tests created by teachers to assess mastery of the most recently covered instructional material. And another district began using quarterly assessments in SIG schools along with their end-of-year assessments to measure progress, providing teachers with faster feedback on results and additional guidance on how to interpret scores and modify classroom instructional practice.

School Climate and Morale. Some districts also emphasized improving school climate as a way to boost academic attainment since research points to the importance of students feeling safe, respected, supported, and engaged. In one district, SIG schools used their funds to hire a full-time social worker, counselor, and nurse. Another district focused on the arts in order to provide students with new ways to express themselves. One school worked to infuse project-based learning across subjects to keep students engaged in classroom instruction, and a number of schools used SIG funds to provide Positive Behavior Supports to better monitor and reward appropriate classroom conduct.

Parents and the Community. Districts with SIG schools also used program dollars to engage families and communities in improving student achievement. One district hired community-relations specialists with program resources to improve parent and community engagement throughout the school system. A number of districts also

held community meetings prior to SIG implementation to let families know what was required by the grants and what the school system would be doing.

In one district, a newly chosen principal at a SIG school organized focus groups of teachers and parents to provide input on SIG planning. Another district created a parent advisory program at each SIG location so families could better personalize learning for their children and strengthen communications with the school's family specialist. And another SIG school decided to partner with local organizations to create art residencies that allowed local artists to teach at the school and gave local business leaders a way to invest in turnaround efforts.

Personnel and Staffing

A major part of the turnaround effort with new SIG resources involved getting the right principal and teachers into place to do the difficult work. Many school systems were able to capitalize on SIG funding to bolster and target their recruiting efforts, offering both salary bonuses and pay-for-performance incentives. Districts also incentivized new principals by offering central office supports such as professional development, uniquely designed interventions, and the opportunity to select the turnaround model and define the programmatic initiatives they thought would work best.

In addition to recruiting principals, districts used SIG funds to provide bonuses for teachers to work in SIG schools. A number of districts extended the school day, offering teachers a supplemental contract and pay for the additional time. Other districts formulated Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with teacher organizations that outlined additional teacher responsibilities.

Terms of one sample MOU included stipends for teachers who taught at SIG schools, common planning time, and professional development during the day when master schedules didn't otherwise allow for the time. An MOU in another district allowed for the creation of uniquely designed instructional pacing guides and required the district to develop templates for new lesson plans.

In order to recruit the best teachers with SIG dollars, one new principal worked with the union to allow the school to hire outside the state. The same principal also worked with the union on teacher effectiveness measures, as well as terms allowing the SIG principal to remove teachers if they were rated ineffective on the district's teacher evaluation system. The work done by this principal also helped another SIG school in the same district in their recruiting and personnel efforts.

Districts also sought teachers who understood the need for changes in school culture and who were willing to demonstrate effective instruction and teamwork. One SIG school used their district's Innovation Awards to create both monetary and professional incentives, encouraging teacher teams to be evaluated on their instructional innovations. Many teachers interviewed by the study team recognized that SIG funding brought changes they had long been seeking, including unique administrative structures for low performing schools, additional supports from the central office, and more resources for instructional supervisors and coaches, content area specialists, social workers, and counselors.

Finally, districts and principals sought teachers with SIG dollars who would excel despite a school's challenges, be accountable for their work, identify problematic practices, and help the school develop solutions to long-standing challenges. Some districts indicated that replacing ineffective staff members was not a significant obstacle because SIG schools already experienced significant teacher churn every year. In other districts, teachers eventually left on their own accord because they were unwilling to undertake the school's challenges or increase their hours as part of a new extended day. It was clear in some cases that the significant new work that was required in SIG schools, along with the new scrutiny that SIG funding brought from the district and state, helped some ineffective or uncommitted instructors realize that a turnaround school was not the best assignment for them.

Interventions

Interviews also revealed that increased instructional time, often in the form of an extended school day, was a key use of SIG funds. In fact, districts that added a class period during the regular school day with SIG funds reported that the extra time helped improve student achievement. For example, the additional instructional time allowed SIG schools in one district to introduce block schedules, giving teachers the opportunity to double up on math lessons for struggling students. Other teachers interviewed by the research team used the extra time to create more personalized and differentiated instruction and provide more opportunities to work with families.

In some places, SIG funds were used to create additional instructional time outside the school day. In one district, SIG schools used part-time literacy tutors as part of the reading intervention for students. Regular-day classes focused on small group work and more individualized attention, while after-school time focused on tutoring. In addition to an extended-day program, one school created a ten-week Saturday academy with SIG funds for middle school students, a seven-week academy for high school students, and a literacy academy for students in grades six through nine.

In other districts, the additional time was coupled with a new and more rigorous curriculum and programming, often with a literacy focus. A number of districts used their SIG funds to purchase or develop new instructional materials and specialized interventions to address the instructional needs of students in the targeted schools.

SIG funds were also used to target struggling students in turnaround schools. For instance, some SIG schools hired specialists to work specifically with English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD). During the day, specialists would use their free period to work with ELLs and students with disabilities in specific grade bands. In other schools, ELL and SWD specialists co-taught with general education teachers. Both ELL and SWD students were scheduled in clusters, allowing more individualized attention and lower teacher-student ratios in core classes. And in one SIG school with disproportionately large numbers of ELLs, officials put specific interventions into place schoolwide that addressed the needs of these students.

Schools also used a variety of Response-to-Intervention (RTI) systems, pull-out approaches, or push-in models for students needing dedicated instructional or behavioral support. Instructional assistants were used for small group instruction in some SIG schools, while others pulled out students for up to 90 minutes a week to work with

a reading specialist. Schools also used RTI clinics, providing extra help and support for students before they were returned to the regular classroom.

In addition, schools used SIG funds to purchase new materials, technology, and instructional programs for low-performing student groups. One example involved the acquisition of instructional programs with lesson plans and software specifically designed for ELLs and professional development for ESL teachers. In another district, SIG schools introduced an aggressive, research-based instructional program for ELLs at the lowest English proficiency levels. Some SIG schools also provided interventions in both English as well as students' native languages to ensure that instructional time was devoted to both content acquisition and language development. Other schools used SIG funds to purchase online assessments specifically designed for ELL students.

Moreover, some schools used SIG funding to make changes in academic instruction and educational approaches. One school moved to project-based learning for all students and began using an online portal that could be accessed by teachers, students, and parents. SIG schools in another district implemented student-centered learning methods that involved safety, social-emotional-behavioral supports, and wrap-around services. Grant funds also allowed schools to hire social workers, nurses, student advisors, and parent coordinators, and some SIG schools reported that turnaround efforts created new opportunities to partner with external groups such as AVID, City Year, College Summit, Peace Corps, and Communities in Schools and to contract with outside consulting organizations and groups for specialized services.

Professional Development

Many districts also understood that the success of their SIG interventions would rely heavily on training and professional development. While there was only a short period between when the first round of SIG funds were awarded and when the initial school year started, many districts began professional development immediately. In one school system, the low-performing schools targeted for SIG funding participated in summer academies with professional development on the specific overhaul models that would be undertaken in their schools. Teachers who were unable to attend the academies were allowed to attend weekend sessions. In addition, SIG schools implementing Positive Behavioral Supports provided staff with training on this strategy. In another district, SIG schools began the school year with very young and inexperienced staff, and the district worked with them over the summer to build a literacy program from scratch.

This example of professional development began before the initial start of school, but the significant instructional changes that SIG required also prompted a sustained investment of time and SIG dollars for teacher training throughout the school year. All of the districts interviewed by the research team provided embedded professional development once school was in session, with required training such as off-campus retreats to work on specific problem areas, twice-weekly meetings for collaborative planning time, and Friday professional development sessions. Newer teachers were often paired with veteran or "effective" teachers. And schools used flexible scheduling to accommodate common planning time during the day or after school. Some SIG schools also developed their own professional development for instructional coaches and assistant principals to help them

support teachers. In one district, for instance, literacy coaches funded with SIG dollars met with content specialists twice a month for training.

SIG schools also worked to make sure that professional development was appropriate for the specific needs of their students. For instance, teachers received training on ways to measure academic progress and assess student Lexile levels, as well as ways to differentiate instruction and determine appropriate instructional interventions. In some schools, training was realigned to help teachers with ELLs and students with disabilities.

Schools also targeted professional development on specific academic weaknesses or subjects of concern. Math and literacy coaches worked with educators during planning time, as well as in classrooms to provide one-on-one support and supplemental instructional assistance. Coaches in SIG schools were also available to facilitate discussions among teachers on how to improve classroom practice. Many teachers in SIG schools were also visited in their classrooms by principals, sometimes on a weekly basis, and received feedback during weekly instructional meetings supported with SIG funds.

Data use was also a key part of the ongoing training that teachers received in SIG schools. Most districts examined by the research team ensured that teachers in SIG schools were provided professional development on data analysis, interpretation, and use. Districts and schools also provided regular data reports that monitored student performance levels, language proficiency, and special education classification, while teachers were provided training on resources to address identified student needs.

One district articulated an expectation that teachers in SIG schools were to spend part of each day analyzing student data. Another district reported that SIG teachers met after school for 90 minutes every Monday throughout the school year, and at least half of the time was devoted to data analysis. Some SIG schools had weekly departmental meetings to review data and develop short-cycle assessments based on performance levels. Other schools conducted weekly data discussions to analyze trends in math and reading performance. Teachers used results from these data sessions to discuss effective instructional practices, something that some interviewees indicated was not common before SIG.

Accountability

Finally, there were multiple ways in which districts and schools were monitored and held accountable for results under the SIG program. A widespread practice was the use of walkthroughs and classroom observations to monitor new instructional approaches. Many states sent representatives to visit classrooms and review student-performance data. All district-level staff members interviewed for this project also made site visits to SIG schools to review instructional practices, observe student behavior, and provide feedback to teachers, principals, and district leaders. In one school system, central office assistant superintendents visited SIG schools on a daily basis to monitor teaching and professional development, meet with building principals and instructional leaders, and discuss progress and resource gaps. The district's content specialists also visited schools, observed classroom instruction, and met with academic coaches. This same district also had observation periods dedicated solely to the instruction of ELL students.

In another district, regional support teams scheduled visits to teacher meetings and classrooms in their assigned SIG schools. The regional teams would note instructional practices and collect data during their classroom visits, bringing the results to weekly meetings of the district's regional teams. These weekly meetings identified strengths and weakness, outlined professional development possibilities at both the regional and school levels, and discussed necessary interventions.

The on-site work of academic coaches in some SIG schools also helped create and preserve a culture of high expectations and keep schools focused on improving achievement. In most cases, academic coaches funded by SIG were in classrooms working with teachers to improve instructional strategies and provide continual feedback to help teachers improve. In one school system, all school-based academic coaches had a meeting every two weeks to report how their schools were doing with SIG reforms, based on each coach's daily or weekly classroom visits.

Visits to schools by central office staff helped keep SIG schools accountable, and kept district leadership focused on finding resources to improve instructional practices. In one district, the central office conducted instructional reviews with staff members from its transformation office, a school site leadership team, and other support staff. A representative from the teachers union would also attend. These visits helped district leaders and principals assess needs at each school in a comprehensive manner and design interventions and supports.

In a number of cases, districts hired non-profit organizations with SIG funds to turn around their low-performing schools. In one such instance, the group helped develop the school's reform strategies, and was key in planning and implementing strategy along with monitoring school improvement efforts. The group observed classrooms every week, and conducted data reviews every month. The group also provided a leadership liaison who managed a caseload of teachers and performed two formal reviews during the school year.

A number of districts also had teacher evaluation systems that provided another layer of accountability in SIG schools. Regardless of whether the districts had a formal evaluation system in place, all of them used performance data and assessment results to improve classroom instruction and tailor interventions for struggling students. In a number of districts, student assessments were conducted almost weekly to monitor performance and identify instructional practices that yielded better results. In another district, formative assessment results were used to group students by achievement level, with each group re-evaluated every two weeks and provided new lesson plans to meet their evolving needs.

This extensive use of performance data represented a major shift for some teachers and administrators. In some SIG schools, this was the first time teachers and administrators learned to interpret data on student performance, keep track of individual achievement results, use the results to inform instruction, and stay accountable for results.

What Worked and What Didn't

Our analysis of state-test data on the first cohort of SIG schools found overall positive results in over seventy percent of Council schools. As is often the case, however, there were also substantial numbers of schools with

mixed outcomes. Our goal in conducting this review was to determine the extent of improvement and to ascertain why some SIG schools seemed to improve academically and others did not.

A *first* major theme that distinguished SIG schools that improved from SIG schools that did not was the coherence of the overall district and state strategy for supporting and turning around their lowest-performing schools—and how well these plans were executed. More successful SIG schools benefited from plans that clearly articulated how a turnaround school's instructional program was to be enhanced, how professional development on the instructional program was to be delivered, and how the school would be supported. In each case, the turnaround strategies that were created and supported in a collaborative, coordinated manner, with staff in schools, the district, and the state working together, tended to be more cohesive and more easily implemented than strategies built on contradictory advice or those that met with interference from multiple state or local authorities and external partners.

There were clearly situations where state and local authorities did not work together and the result was less coherent and effective programming. For example, a lack of coordination of instructional interventions among state, local, and school officials resulted in SIG schools having multiple intervention strategies of mixed quality or interventions that clashed instructionally with one another foisted on them. We saw this situation repeatedly when looking at SIG schools that had not made progress.

In other instances, states bypassed the district and worked directly with schools on their turnaround approaches, at times encouraging SIG schools to opt out of their districts' curriculum. However, these schools often did not have the know-how to determine what should replace the district's instructional guidelines. The result of this state advice was that strategic direction at the district level was undermined, little academic support was provided by either the state or the local school system, and little improvement was seen. In other words, an important factor in improving and sustaining SIG outcomes appears to be the active direction, involvement, coordination, and support of the LEA.

Strategic coordination and planning also drove the success—or failure—of district restructuring efforts. Many districts, for instance, created some form of “superintendent's district” to address the needs of their lowest-performing schools. This often required the naming of a senior administrator who reported to the superintendent and was given authority to intensify instructional strategies in the system's lowest-performing schools. This structural fix seemed to work in some places but not in others. Where it worked, one could see well-coordinated and high-quality interventions being put into place in the lowest-performing schools pursuant to a comprehensive districtwide turnaround strategy. By contrast, where the results were not as strong, SIG schools reported that they experienced inconsistent direction and guidance, weak instructional interventions, inconsistent meddling, and the lack of a coherent turnaround plan. The result appeared to be disconnected and disjointed efforts at the school level where success depended almost entirely on the capacity and skills of those working in the school. In fact, this lack of districtwide strategy at times led to the schools in the specialized grouping receiving less coherent, well-coordinated support than other schools throughout the district.

In addition, a dynamic that appeared to affect a district's ability to provide strategic support to its lowest-performing schools involved its history of site-based management. We have little evidence to suggest that more centrally-managed school districts produce fewer low-performing schools than decentralized systems or vice versa, but interviews conducted for this report suggest that decentralized systems may have relinquished some of their capacity to help individual schools when they get into trouble.

A *second* factor driving the success of SIG schools was the extent to which the support they received was focused on *instructional* improvements. SIG schools that saw academic progress often reported that they were supported in a way that directly enhanced instructional delivery. On the other hand, less effective SIG schools were more likely to report that the support they received from either state or local entities emphasized grant compliance, auditing requirements, or job protection. For instance, one school reported being frustrated by the priority that both state and district administrators gave to grant compliance rather than academic intervention efforts.

Of course, the quality of the instructional programming—and the professional development and supports that came with it—was critical. Our research team saw two major dynamics here. The first involved states, districts, and schools who used SIG funds to develop or purchase instructional materials or interventions that research clearly indicated could improve academic outcomes for students in struggling schools. Sometimes this also meant extending instructional time, implementing individualized tutorials, or rescheduling the school day in a way that allowed for more academic exposure and permitted time for teachers to review strategies and improve practice. Where these tactics were done well, SIG schools had a better chance of improving.

On the other hand, sometimes states, districts, or schools used SIG funds to retain organizations and supports that were not likely to improve academic outcomes on their own. For instance, there were examples of organizations like City Year, Communities in Schools, the Urban League, and others being brought into schools as part of the overhaul process. These are fine groups that are often capable of providing much needed wrap-around and other community supports, but are not always capable of boosting instructional capacity. Sometimes more emphasis was put on these groups than on groups or strategies that could enhance academic results.

Some of this dynamic may also explain why the two main reform models did not seem to produce differing effects. The two models were probably too much alike on the instructional strategies that could really make a difference academically and only different on things that were not likely to matter much.

A *third* overriding impression that our research team came away with was the fundamental importance of school staffing. Having an effective principal is a well-known prerequisite for an effective school, and this long-standing finding is even more valid when turning around a chronically-underperforming school. Schools and districts saw more positive results when principals were invested in a vision for improvement and were able to communicate these priorities to teachers, staff, students, and the community than when these dynamics were not present. Leaders who were able to energize, inspire, and motivate teachers were a key ingredient of turnaround efforts in the more effective SIG schools. In addition, more effective SIG schools invested part of their resources in boosting the capacity of the principals to lead and support the overhauls.

Consequently, principals who were effective in turning around SIG schools reported that they were provided professional development and were given flexibility to make staff changes or remove ineffective educators. Principals reported that the flexibility to hire and recruit teachers willing to invest greater energy and time in the school helped all aspects of the reform effort. These principals sought teachers who had a clear understanding of the challenges they were about to encounter and had the commitment needed to meet those challenges and thrive in otherwise difficult settings. Effective principals took it upon themselves to support and develop the skills of their teachers, which enhanced staff morale and built a more positive culture in the school.

School leaders at both the district and school levels who had difficulty removing ineffective staff, hiring stronger teachers, or supporting the turnaround work found that their vision for improvement was difficult or impossible to achieve. Sometimes the inability to hire and manage staff was the result of district decisions to limit this authority at the building level, but in most cases both the district and SIG schools had difficulty removing low-performing staff or they found themselves having to move less-effective staff from SIG schools to other schools in the same district.

In other cases, teacher and administrator organizations and unions fought or watered down the dismissal of staff even when it was clear that the staff had not been able to improve conditions at the schools. In such instances, the emphasis of the SIG program was on protecting and funding jobs rather than on improving student results. The ambiguity at the federal level about whether the SIG grants were meant to reform the schools or to bolster staff positions as part of ARRA contributed to this tension and added to the uncertainty in the field about what the program was meant to accomplish.

Another staffing issue in SIG schools that struggled to improve was the mismatch of people who developed the turnaround plans and those who had responsibility for carrying out the plans. In some cases, the staff members who wrote the school-level portion of the SIG application were displaced by new staff in order to meet the requirement that half or more of school personnel be replaced. The result was that new staff who were charged with carrying out the turnaround plan did not buy into the plan in the same way that the original staff did.

A *fourth* factor that appeared to distinguish more effective school turnaround efforts from less effective ones involved the use of data. By itself, the presence of data was not the determining factor in the improvement of these schools, but places where SIG appeared to boost outcomes were able to leverage the data they had in order to identify the specific academic needs of struggling students, determine needs for professional development, and decide on intervention strategies.

SIG schools that were less adept at the use of data did not appear to improve as fast. In addition, less effective SIG schools appeared to make little effort to evaluate what they were doing or to assess why some interventions worked and others did not.

Finally, a major challenge facing all of SIG schools was the need to sustain any academic gains after the substantial amounts of federal support went away. In some interviews conducted for this project, staff members were optimistic about the path forward. For instance, one district indicated that the literacy coaches supported by

the grants provided strong professional development to teachers that would be sustained long after the grant funds ran out. Others voiced optimism around the new skills teachers developed around data and their use of it to improve classroom practice.

Nonetheless, interviews also revealed doubts about the future with SIG. These concerns are valid, given the substantial leveling off of gains in reading and math scores in the third year of the program among cohort 1 schools. Staff members in one school indicated that they no longer received SIG funds and that there were no discussions about transitioning or sustaining the work before the funds were actually gone. As a result, once funds expired, the school began struggling as a number of grant-funded coaches, teachers, and tutors moved on.

It is clear that, while grant funding provided a temporary solution in some schools, it did not solve long-term and larger systemic issues. In order to continue SIG interventions, districts and schools are now forced to make difficult financial decisions, and many are unconvinced that there are sufficient funds that could be redeployed within the district to make up the difference.

Other districts explained that as SIG funding dwindled, there were fewer opportunities for collaboration and support from one school to another or from district and/or state leaders. Staff in another district indicated that preserving the improved school climate was going to be the hardest thing to sustain, as students continue to have social, emotional, and behavioral needs long after their social workers, counselors, and nurses disappear. One stated simply that, "You can't go from \$1 million to \$70,000 and think that's going to get the job done." It was clear from the interviews that few policymakers at the federal, state, or local levels had given much thought to how to sustain program gains after the funds began to run out.

In sum, the case studies revealed that there were multiple ways that chronically low-performing schools could be improved, but there were an even greater number of ways in which their failure could be perpetuated.

Conclusions and Discussion

Most large city school districts were pursuing school turnaround strategies of one kind or another well before ARRA and the new SIG program were put into place. Still, it was not always clear that districts and schools learned broad lessons from that previous work about what was effective and what wasn't. To be sure, the federal government did not evaluate the previous version of SIG in a way that could have more effectively guided the new version. Much of what *was* learned at the federal level about turning around low-performing schools was gleaned from research of questionable quality about the sanctions implemented as part of *No Child Left Behind*. Other research has been conducted over decades about what makes a school effective, but it was not clear how the lessons from this work were applied to SIG implementation at federal, state, or local levels.

Nonetheless, the data from this study of state test score trends on cohort 1 schools under SIG indicates that a significant portion of (although not all) schools receiving SIG grants improved. These improvements were generally greater at the below Basic level of performance than at the Proficient level and above. In other words, there was particularly strong progress among the lowest-achieving students in these SIG schools.

However, it should be noted that performance in these SIG schools continued to be low even after three years of intervention and support. In fact, on average, the percentage of students who were Proficient and above in these schools after three years of the program remained below eligible schools that were not funded. It was also discouraging to note that performance gains leveled off after three years at relatively low levels.

That being said, we think there is reason for cautious optimism from what we saw—if the federal government, states, and local school districts learn from initial lessons articulated in this and other research reports. In particular, if the improvement trends observed in the analysis provided here could be maintained, then additional progress is possible and SIG could become part of an ongoing scalable strategy to improve urban schools. We learned from SIG, however, that a considerable investment of funding and energy are required to support the nation's lowest performing schools.

The updated SIG program and the significant funding behind it have provided an important opportunity for districts to renew their efforts to improve individual schools. The funding also helped districts recruit effective teachers and principals; change the climate and expectations for students in these buildings; and engage parents and the community. Moreover, funds were used to foster partnerships with external organizations to support schools, provide counseling, health, and mentoring services to students; and enhance teacher capacity to analyze data and improve practice. The funds, and how they were distributed and tracked, allowed people to gauge—to some degree—what worked and what didn't in ways that the old SIG program did not.

To that end, this report provided data from a variety of sources at national, state, and city levels to better understand what effects the federal SIG program had on chronically low-achieving urban schools. The data included state assessment trends, NAEP results, district-level enrollment figures by grade, and interviews with teachers and administrators. The research design for this analysis, of course, does not satisfy the rigors of a causal research study, but the trends suggest that progress has been made over the past few years in schools and districts receiving SIG funding. Moreover, while this report cannot attribute the changes identified solely to activities related to SIG awards, the evidence—both direct and indirect—suggests that schools implementing the grants showed progress, compared with peer schools that did not receive funding.

The variables presented in this report will continue to be monitored by the Council to assess whether or not the improvements observed here are sustained. In addition, we may look at other cohorts of grantees to see whether lessons were being learned and applied, and if the trajectory of academic gains differs from the first cohort.

Nonetheless, one's ability to track progress among these schools is being made much more difficult by the constant changing of state assessments from year to year. This is unfortunate because the nation is left without a way to gauge whether an important policy change and financial investment is effective. This void is likely to leave the public debate in a place where people argue for and against this important program without adequate data to back up their points. At the very least, Congress and the Department of Education should require some kind of long-term evaluation to see how sustainable the improvements are and why. Only at that point will we have a clearer understanding of why some of these schools improved and others didn't. We hope this report is a step in that direction.

Appendix A

Reading and Math School Means for at or above Proficient and Below Basic by District

Alabama

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	56.12	(10)	60.21	(10)	63.02	(10)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	71.90	(32)	73.02	(32)	76.16	(32)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	80.94	(37)	83.59	(37)	84.69	(37)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	45.38	(10)	49.51	(10)	50.37	(10)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	64.03	(32)	64.44	(32)	69.15	(32)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	76.72	(53)	79.70	(53)	83.33	(53)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	2.77	(10)	0.87	(10)	1.30	(10)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	0.92	(32)	0.82	(32)	0.56	(32)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	1.05	(33)	0.58	(33)	0.81	(33)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	1.31	(10)	0.62	(10)	0.60	(10)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	1.84	(32)	1.97	(32)	1.24	(32)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	2.02	(53)	1.63	(53)	1.10	(53)		

CALIFORNIA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Fresno Unified	22.17	(3)	30.17	(3)	37.92	(3)	39.42	(3)
Los Angeles Unified	19.28	(6)	19.67	(6)	25.28	(6)	26.39	(6)
Oakland Unified	22.56	(3)	25.00	(2)	32.17	(2)	26.50	(2)
San Diego Unified	32.83	(2)	35.17	(2)	38.00	(2)	38.67	(2)
San Francisco Unified	27.27	(8)	32.33	(8)	39.21	(7)	38.76	(7)
Santa Ana Unified	26.50	(2)	30.33	(2)	33.33	(2)	31.67	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	27.53	(42)	32.43	(41)	36.82	(39)	36.19	(43)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	39.43	(310)	41.35	(307)	44.63	(297)	42.48	(314)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	53.71	(300)	55.43	(305)	58.36	(306)	56.35	(360)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Fresno Unified	28.08	(3)	34.42	(3)	39.00	(3)	42.17	(3)
Los Angeles Unified	22.31	(6)	23.39	(6)	28.53	(6)	26.78	(6)
Oakland Unified	27.50	(3)	25.25	(2)	27.75	(2)	22.83	(2)
San Diego Unified	49.17	(2)	59.50	(2)	67.00	(2)	62.50	(2)
San Francisco Unified	28.25	(8)	35.55	(8)	49.28	(7)	54.89	(7)
Santa Ana Unified	23.00	(2)	28.33	(2)	28.00	(2)	23.50	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	32.15	(42)	40.45	(41)	48.11	(39)	46.55	(43)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	46.11	(309)	48.55	(306)	50.00	(297)	49.16	(314)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	57.81	(303)	59.87	(302)	61.06	(300)	60.85	(358)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Fresno Unified	42.83	(3)	32.50	(3)	25.17	(3)	20.33	(3)
Los Angeles Unified	48.94	(6)	48.22	(6)	41.50	(6)	38.89	(6)
Oakland Unified	41.89	(3)	39.67	(2)	35.00	(2)	32.00	(2)
San Diego Unified	33.17	(2)	31.33	(2)	24.00	(2)	26.50	(2)
San Francisco Unified	40.05	(8)	33.75	(8)	28.74	(7)	26.88	(7)
Santa Ana Unified	40.00	(2)	34.83	(2)	31.50	(2)	28.67	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	37.54	(42)	32.40	(41)	28.37	(39)	28.13	(38)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	27.28	(310)	26.13	(307)	23.17	(297)	23.54	(292)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	18.46	(300)	18.05	(305)	15.69	(306)	16.09	(303)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009- 10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010- 11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011- 12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012- 13(n)	
Fresno Unified	41.25	(3)	41.50	(3)	38.08	(3)	28.25	(3)
Los Angeles Unified	51.42	(6)	51.36	(6)	45.19	(6)	48.33	(6)
Oakland Unified	41.17	(3)	41.50	(2)	39.75	(2)	46.00	(2)
San Diego Unified	20.83	(2)	16.33	(2)	14.83	(2)	15.83	(2)
San Francisco Unified	44.93	(8)	35.40	(8)	25.29	(7)	20.42	(7)
Santa Ana Unified	47.50	(2)	38.17	(2)	38.83	(2)	44.08	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	39.03	(42)	32.84	(41)	26.48	(39)	32.63	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	27.14	(309)	25.80	(306)	24.80	(297)	25.47	(292)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	20.18	(303)	18.51	(302)	17.78	(300)	17.71	(296)

COLORADO

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Denver Public Schools	32.27	(6)	29.96	(4)	25.86	(3)		
All State SIG Award Schools	42.63	(8)	41.28	(8)	49.48	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	50.85	(22)	45.15	(24)	45.13	(23)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	65.54	(45)	64.62	(49)	66.00	(49)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Denver Public Schools	23.22	(6)	20.71	(4)	15.59	(3)		
All State SIG Award Schools	30.71	(8)	34.37	(8)	36.34	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	47.48	(22)	41.96	(24)	40.29	(23)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	66.81	(48)	64.45	(49)	65.44	(51)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Denver Public Schools	34.41	(6)	31.89	(4)	36.66	(3)		
All State SIG Award Schools	23.23	(8)	23.15	(8)	18.38	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.66	(22)	22.45	(24)	20.69	(23)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	13.31	(45)	12.68	(49)	12.42	(49)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Denver Public Schools	42.13	(6)	40.84	(4)	52.16	(3)		
All State SIG Award Schools	30.21	(8)	30.04	(8)	25.79	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.71	(22)	24.03	(24)	24.04	(23)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	9.20	(48)	9.83	(49)	9.55	(51)		

CONNECTICUT

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Bridgeport	35.38	(1)	41.93	(1)	43.47	(1)	47.32	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	31.72	(7)	34.98	(8)	48.09	(8)	39.79	(8)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	56.94	(25)	61.29	(23)	64.66	(23)	64.67	(25)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	78.79	(36)	79.05	(35)	81.00	(34)	79.11	(38)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Bridgeport	58.27	(1)	55.77	(1)	57.43	(1)	52.35	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	48.77	(7)	48.14	(8)	50.23	(8)	44.46	(8)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	70.87	(25)	73.27	(23)	71.28	(23)	70.48	(25)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	83.84	(38)	85.95	(35)	84.31	(35)	81.78	(37)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Bridgeport	47.05	(1)	42.73	(1)	36.22	(1)	37.55	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	53.69	(7)	48.71	(8)	37.11	(8)	44.24	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	29.99	(25)	26.50	(23)	21.94	(23)	22.42	(22)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	12.78	(36)	13.40	(35)	11.14	(34)	12.60	(31)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Bridgeport	58.27	(1)	55.77	(1)	57.43	(1)	27.02	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	27.20	(7)	28.40	(8)	27.89	(8)	32.63	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	12.91	(25)	11.58	(23)	12.73	(23)	13.23	(22)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	6.71	(38)	5.78	(35)	6.63	(35)	8.84	(35)

DISTRICT of COLUMBIA (DCPS Schools Only)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
DCPS	17.52	(3)	20.78	(3)	16.96	(3)	22.07	(3)
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	38.90	(7)	36.52	(7)	33.38	(7)	39.46	(7)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	41.91	(7)	39.66	(7)	41.44	(7)	37.99	(7)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
DCPS	25.58	(3)	29.81	(3)	20.41	(3)	25.96	(3)
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	42.83	(7)	33.77	(7)	36.64	(7)	41.66	(7)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	40.09	(7)	46.65	(7)	48.45	(7)	43.23	(7)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
DCPS	37.30	(3)	37.41	(3)	42.10	(3)	41.12	(3)
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	20.24	(7)	22.71	(7)	22.52	(7)	18.45	(7)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	14.47	(7)	15.05	(7)	16.03	(7)	18.96	(7)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
DCPS	31.53	(3)	26.33	(3)	39.24	(3)	33.68	(3)
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.85	(7)	24.08	(7)	22.06	(7)	19.24	(7)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	17.66	(7)	16.41	(7)	15.30	(7)	19.51	(7)

FLORIDA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Broward			18.50	(2)	39.00	(2)	39.00	(2)
Duval			30.60	(5)	38.73	(5)	38.73	(5)
Hillsborough			45.00	(1)				
Miami			31.25	(8)	40.88	(8)	40.88	(8)
Orange			46.00	(1)	31.67	(1)	31.67	(1)
Palm Beach			20.00	(1)	31.67	(1)	31.67	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools			33.06	(16)	33.06	(17)	33.06	(17)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded			17.07	(87)	25.56	(89)	25.56	(89)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible			65.72	(121)	55.66	(120)	55.66	(120)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Broward			56.17	(2)	32.33	(2)	32.33	(2)
Duval			46.47	(5)	34.33	(5)	34.33	(5)
Hillsborough			35.00	(1)				
Miami			47.79	(8)	34.95	(8)	34.95	(8)
Orange			40.00	(1)	30.33	(1)	30.33	(1)
Palm Beach			20.00	(1)	29.67	(1)	29.67	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools			33.06	(16)	40.08	(17)	40.08	(17)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded			17.07	(87)	29.24	(89)	29.24	(89)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible			65.30	(133)	52.93	(130)	52.93	(130)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Broward			18.50	(2)	39.00	(2)	39.00	(2)
Duval			30.60	(5)	38.73	(5)	38.73	(5)
Hillsborough			45.00	(1)				
Miami			31.25	(8)	40.88	(8)	40.88	(8)
Orange			46.00	(1)	31.67	(1)	31.67	(1)
Palm Beach			20.00	(1)	31.67	(1)	31.67	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools			33.06	(16)	33.06	(17)	33.06	(17)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded			17.07	(87)	25.56	(89)	25.56	(89)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible			15.09	(118)	18.54	(120)	18.54	(120)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009- 10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010- 11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011- 12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012- 13(n)	
Broward			18.50	(2)	37.17	(2)	37.17	(2)
Duval			30.60	(5)	34.87	(5)	34.87	(5)
Hillsborough			45.00	(1)				
Miami			31.25	(8)	34.94	(8)	34.94	(8)
Orange			46.00	(1)	43.67	(1)	43.67	(1)
Palm Beach			20.00	(1)	29.67	(1)	29.67	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools			33.06	(16)	40.08	(17)	40.08	(17)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded			17.07	(87)	29.24	(89)	29.24	(89)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible			13.74	(127)	22.98	(130)	22.98	(130)

GEORGIA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	83.40	(21)	86.14	(21)	88.68	(21)	91.76	(21)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	89.62	(78)	90.73	(79)	92.45	(75)	95.17	(80)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	63.33	(21)	69.45	(21)	69.81	(21)	74.30	(21)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	77.51	(68)	83.75	(64)	80.98	(64)	85.22	(70)

ILLINOIS

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
	All State SIG Award Schools	66.70	(1)	64.00	(1)	58.50	(1)	19.65
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	58.47	(83)	61.64	(74)	61.84	(72)	37.43	(109)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	77.46	(159)	78.41	(162)	78.59	(163)	58.36	(228)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
	All State SIG Award Schools	61.45	(1)	74.50	(1)	63.00	(1)	38.40
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	71.26	(83)	73.38	(74)	73.32	(72)	40.01	(109)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	85.35	(133)	86.05	(120)	86.06	(120)	59.52	(178)

INDIANA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Indianapolis Public Schools	23.82	(2)	32.66	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	47.21	(2)	56.11	(2)	61.95	(2)	57.57	(5)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	64.28	(39)	68.11	(37)	68.39	(38)	71.05	(41)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	73.75	(67)	77.53	(69)	78.77	(68)	79.67	(84)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Indianapolis Public Schools	30.30	(2)	38.28	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	48.53	(2)	50.10	(2)	62.81	(2)	60.48	(5)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	65.30	(40)	69.12	(37)	69.41	(38)	75.22	(41)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	77.99	(62)	81.14	(62)	83.78	(62)	84.75	(81)

MASSACHUSETTES

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Boston	23.26	(9)	27.44	(9)	29.06	(9)		
All State SIG Award Schools	33.67	(1)	31.00	(1)	36.67	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	55.81	(51)	54.76	(51)	55.24	(49)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	61.74	(58)	60.19	(56)	59.22	(57)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Boston	22.44	(8)	29.19	(9)	30.28	(9)		
All State SIG Award Schools	10.33	(1)	12.67	(1)	17.33	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	47.10	(51)	45.16	(51)	45.85	(49)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	54.31	(81)	55.09	(79)	55.70	(78)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Boston	29.93	(9)	26.61	(9)	28.81	(9)		
All State SIG Award Schools	24.00	(1)	26.67	(1)	22.00	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	10.47	(51)	11.07	(51)	13.37	(49)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	8.80	(58)	9.17	(56)	9.88	(57)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Boston	41.44	(8)	32.19	(9)	33.37	(9)		
All State SIG Award Schools	55.67	(1)	59.67	(1)	51.67	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.87	(51)	20.25	(51)	20.80	(49)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	15.13	(81)	14.10	(79)	15.42	(78)		

MARYLAND

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Baltimore City	49.92	(6)	48.58	(5)	48.21	(5)	52.92	(6)
All State SIG Award Schools	57.16	(4)	59.35	(4)	56.42	(4)	62.25	(4)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	73.76	(8)	70.22	(8)	67.79	(8)	66.59	(8)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	84.66	(50)	85.46	(51)	85.23	(50)	84.00	(52)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Baltimore City	57.48	(3)	62.58	(3)	61.59	(2)	36.04	(6)
All State SIG Award Schools	29.00	(1)	37.50	(2)	40.80	(1)	40.74	(4)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	79.61	(7)	71.72	(8)	77.07	(7)	58.82	(8)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	84.65	(52)	84.24	(53)	84.22	(53)	76.12	(59)

MICHIGAN

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Detroit Public Schools	17.20	(3)	23.32	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	29.09	(7)	37.07	(8)	42.07	(8)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	31.75	(4)	31.99	(4)	32.46	(8)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	58.90	(101)	61.23	(97)	64.71	(94)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Detroit Public Schools	2.94	(3)	3.57	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	7.85	(7)	13.50	(8)	12.43	(8)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	10.49	(4)	10.26	(4)	8.31	(8)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	33.68	(110)	33.51	(109)	39.96	(103)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Detroit Public Schools	52.28	(3)	43.76	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	40.14	(7)	32.15	(8)	25.97	(8)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	42.22	(4)	39.85	(4)	31.22	(8)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	16.78	(101)	14.61	(97)	12.89	(94)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Detroit Public Schools	84.11	(3)	84.48	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	71.30	(7)	66.11	(8)	67.64	(8)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	71.38	(4)	71.78	(4)	76.11	(8)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	40.65	(110)	39.91	(109)	38.20	(103)		

MINNESOTA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Minneapolis Public Schools	24.15	(3)	28.66	(3)	30.13	(3)		
St. Paul Public Schools	22.98	(1)	31.20	(1)	34.58	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	46.10	(7)	49.17	(7)	51.75	(8)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	61.11	(38)	66.40	(35)	66.79	(32)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	72.49	(57)	72.30	(57)	75.24	(53)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Minneapolis Public Schools	47.78	(3)	41.35	(3)	39.42	(3)		
St. Paul Public Schools	42.00	(1)	40.98	(1)	44.00	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	27.72	(7)	24.45	(7)	22.67	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	19.10	(38)	14.59	(35)	15.72	(32)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	10.48	(57)	11.15	(57)	10.12	(56)		

MISSOURI

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Kansas City Public Schools			19.38	(2)	14.40	(2)	17.55	(2)
St. Louis Public Schools	11.56	(10)	12.07	(10)	14.16	(10)	12.32	(10)
All State SIG Award Schools	21.80	(13)	22.32	(11)	23.31	(10)	24.85	(13)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	36.08	(56)	38.53	(50)	38.61	(50)	39.55	(57)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	52.00	(82)	51.06	(80)	52.73	(80)	49.25	(88)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Kansas City Public Schools			13.75	(2)	18.73	(2)	13.33	(2)
St. Louis Public Schools	9.27	(10)	11.24	(10)	13.13	(10)	11.62	(10)
All State SIG Award Schools	20.31	(13)	20.17	(11)	23.28	(10)	26.11	(13)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	36.50	(56)	39.83	(50)	41.69	(50)	41.52	(57)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	51.72	(78)	52.26	(76)	55.70	(75)	54.32	(80)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Kansas City Public Schools			27.53	(2)	29.75	(2)	26.10	(2)
St. Louis Public Schools	37.50	(10)	35.38	(10)	32.94	(10)	35.23	(10)
All State SIG Award Schools	20.15	(13)	18.07	(11)	16.38	(10)	15.96	(10)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	14.39	(56)	12.54	(50)	13.37	(50)	12.13	(50)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	6.95	(82)	6.79	(80)	6.21	(80)	7.57	(82)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Kansas City Public Schools			44.03	(2)	38.30	(2)	44.33	(2)
St. Louis Public Schools	44.96	(10)	43.03	(10)	37.56	(10)	39.94	(10)
All State SIG Award Schools	34.71	(13)	33.67	(11)	28.67	(10)	25.82	(10)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	13.94	(56)	11.48	(50)	11.07	(50)	10.81	(50)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	9.07	(78)	7.48	(76)	6.93	(75)	7.70	(71)

MISSISSIPPI

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	25.27	(3)	24.89	(3)	31.96	(3)	35.12	(3)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	32.21	(19)	33.73	(20)	40.46	(19)	42.74	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	48.44	(28)	50.59	(27)	51.78	(27)	51.81	(29)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	23.08	(3)	35.87	(3)	41.46	(3)	50.17	(3)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	39.92	(19)	40.99	(20)	45.19	(19)	51.85	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	56.86	(30)	61.61	(31)	63.76	(31)	69.27	(30)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	27.61	(3)	26.18	(3)	22.88	(3)	23.33	(3)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	23.02	(19)	21.42	(20)	20.25	(19)	22.95	(20)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	15.10	(28)	13.82	(27)	14.75	(27)	16.02	(26)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	39.40	(3)	30.09	(3)	23.71	(3)	24.64	(3)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	26.55	(19)	26.93	(20)	22.79	(19)	19.47	(19)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	16.76	(30)	13.84	(31)	12.56	(31)	10.79	(27)

NORTH CAROLINA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13 (n)	
Guilford County Schools	33.73	(1)	47.77	(1)	49.67	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	28.43	(7)	28.64	(8)	27.78	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	57.43	(80)	58.55	(81)	58.86	(78)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	68.69	(89)	70.60	(92)	69.91	(92)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13 (n)	
Guilford County Schools	59.37	(1)	79.47	(1)	87.07	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	38.46	(7)	36.37	(8)	39.78	(7)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	73.44	(80)	43.94	(81)	74.74	(78)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	78.80	(74)	78.96	(75)	80.83	(75)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13 (n)	
Guilford County Schools			28.15	(1)	19.50	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	36.60	(3)	26.56	(4)	26.50	(2)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	16.10	(76)	15.26	(76)	14.97	(73)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	11.80	(85)	10.79	(89)	10.36	(90)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13 (n)	
Guilford County Schools	14.73	(1)	5.60	(1)	5.00	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	15.33	(6)	6.31	(4)	9.83	(5)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	6.42	(79)	6.15	(80)	5.93	(76)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	6.73	(74)	5.79	(73)	6.29	(75)		

NEW JERSEY

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13 (n)	
Newark Public Schools	20.25	(2)	22.02	(1)	17.70	(1)	24.33	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	30.79	(4)	33.68	(4)	29.49	(3)	27.97	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	35.23	(26)	34.72	(26)	33.34	(26)	35.71	(29)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	61.85	(71)	62.36	(72)	62.29	(73)	63.71	(97)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Newark Public Schools	35.18	(1)	35.38	(1)	35.78	(1)	34.00	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	26.53	(4)	33.52	(4)	42.84	(3)	39.50	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	40.54	(26)	45.51	(26)	44.57	(26)	47.46	(29)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	77.64	(93)	79.92	(94)	78.55	(96)	79.12	(115)

NEW MEXICO

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Albuquerque Public Schools	30.30	(2)	28.08	(2)	34.22	(2)	30.93	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	28.69	(4)	27.47	(4)	31.99	(4)	33.13	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	32.47	(10)	33.70	(10)	33.13	(10)	32.88	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	54.26	(33)	50.44	(32)	51.92	(32)	50.12	(47)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Albuquerque Public Schools	12.94	(2)	19.75	(2)	27.68	(2)	22.60	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	18.64	(4)	21.24	(4)	26.34	(4)	25.16	(7)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	22.98	(10)	26.53	(10)	25.89	(10)	22.84	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	44.28	(33)	45.30	(33)	47.43	(32)	46.23	(43)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Albuquerque Public Schools	19.47	(2)	33.77	(2)	27.00	(2)	27.35	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	23.16	(4)	29.53	(4)	32.07	(4)	29.03	(4)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	22.11	(10)	27.92	(10)	26.74	(10)	24.87	(11)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	11.30	(33)	16.73	(32)	16.51	(32)	15.61	(32)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Albuquerque Public Schools	21.54	(2)	40.53	(2)	32.11	(2)	36.99	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	22.57	(4)	30.44	(4)	29.19	(4)	31.63	(4)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	17.45	(10)	31.80	(10)	27.25	(10)	27.02	(11)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	10.39	(33)	17.77	(33)	17.62	(32)	18.33	(32)

NEVADA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)	
Clark County School District	32.23	(1)	46.70	(1)	65.53	(1)	65.53	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	51.15	(7)	45.92	(7)	53.58	(8)	53.58	(8)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	49.78	(22)	44.55	(23)	48.32	(23)	48.32	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	61.96	(20)	58.36	(21)	63.48	(21)	63.48	(21)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)	
Clark County School District	44.20	(1)	63.40	(1)	68.50	(1)	68.50	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	58.68	(8)	66.77	(8)	71.31	(8)	71.31	(8)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	52.06	(22)	58.28	(23)	59.09	(23)	59.09	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	65.46	(16)	68.04	(17)	72.13	(17)	72.13	(17)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)	
Clark County School District	17.23	(1)	25.80	(1)	15.93	(1)	15.93	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	7.99	(7)	26.73	(7)	22.74	(8)	22.74	(8)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	9.76	(22)	28.90	(23)	26.20	(23)	26.20	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	5.84	(20)	21.00	(21)	17.10	(21)	17.10	(21)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)	
Clark County School District	31.67	(1)	19.00	(1)	7.30	(1)	7.30	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	12.97	(8)	10.57	(8)	7.18	(8)	7.18	(8)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.46	(22)	16.18	(23)	13.48	(23)	13.48	(23)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	12.39	(16)	11.02	(17)	8.36	(17)	8.36	(17)

NEW YORK

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Buffalo Public Schools	13.50	(1)	12.83	(1)	12.67	(1)		
New York City Department of Education	19.33	(1)	28.33	(1)	17.33	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	16.28	(3)	11.39	(3)	16.00	(3)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	29.08	(45)	29.82	(45)	32.54	(41)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	53.34	(135)	53.24	(138)	55.79	(139)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Buffalo Public Schools	13.67	(1)	15.17	(1)	16.83	(1)		
New York City Department of Education	31.67	(1)	54.00	(1)	34.00	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	16.92	(3)	14.99	(3)	19.28	(3)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	34.44	(45)	37.80	(45)	41.02	(41)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	60.39	(156)	62.26	(153)	64.51	(150)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	40.36	(3)	41.87	(3)	37.72	(3)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	22.69	(45)	21.26	(45)	19.94	(41)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	9.67	(135)	8.86	(138)	9.16	(139)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13 (n)	
All State SIG Award Schools	12.39	(16)	11.02	(17)	8.36	(17)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.89	(45)	18.11	(45)	18.24	(41)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	7.72	(156)	7.13	(153)	7.05	(150)		

OHIO

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Cincinnati City	38.57	(4)	54.12	(4)	60.65	(5)	60.41	(5)
Cleveland Municipal	38.80	(5)	39.24	(5)	38.76	(5)	34.53	(5)
Columbus City School District	34.33	(4)	42.18	(4)	42.72	(4)	49.49	(3)
Dayton City					48.70	(1)	41.10	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	60.81	(5)	61.73	(6)	65.84	(6)	76.29	(10)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	63.77	(81)	66.14	(81)	67.26	(81)	68.66	(107)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	81.57	(117)	83.68	(114)	83.79	(117)	84.19	(169)

District Name	Mean Reading Math Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Cincinnati City	30.28	(4)	45.25	(4)	53.46	(5)	44.17	(5)
Cleveland Municipal	23.21	(5)	25.03	(5)	23.34	(5)	21.88	(5)
Columbus City School District	20.82	(4)	34.94	(4)	36.20	(4)	30.55	(3)
Dayton City					33.70	(1)	27.70	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	53.06	(5)	55.58	(6)	58.00	(6)	71.94	(10)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	56.61	(81)	59.13	(81)	59.84	(81)	57.47	(107)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	74.10	(108)	75.45	(108)	75.72	(109)	73.81	(155)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Cincinnati City	30.15	(4)	20.99	(4)	16.55	(5)	17.41	(5)
Cleveland Municipal	35.40	(6)	33.80	(6)	33.65	(5)	36.85	(5)
Columbus City School District	34.77	(4)	28.09	(4)	30.25	(4)	24.89	(3)
Dayton City					30.80	(1)	33.00	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	18.46	(5)	15.38	(6)	14.23	(6)	11.51	(4)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.49	(92)	15.25	(84)	15.26	(81)	15.03	(81)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	8.13	(117)	6.74	(114)	6.90	(112)	7.34	(112)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009- 10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010- 11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011- 12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012- 13 (n)	
Cincinnati City	39.38	(4)	21.73	(4)	20.79	(5)	22.45	(5)
Cleveland Municipal	44.85	(6)	42.02	(6)	42.54	(5)	49.41	(5)
Columbus City School District	47.07	(4)	29.91	(4)	29.53	(4)	37.79	(3)
Dayton City					30.55	(1)	26.90	(1)
All State SIG Award Schools	22.21	(5)	20.70	(6)	17.22	(6)	14.18	(4)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	22.28	(92)	18.51	(82)	18.10	(81)	20.25	(81)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	11.93	(114)	10.94	(108)	10.23	(107)	12.48	(104)

OREGON

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools					54.69	(5)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded					58.19	(56)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible					73.73	(39)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
All State SIG Award Schools			53.85	5	49.64	(5)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded			52.47	57	52.19	(56)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible			63.91	51	65.94	(52)		

PENNSYLVANIA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13 (n)	
The School District of Philadelphia	27.85	(12)	34.16	(6)	29.04	(5)		
Pittsburgh Public Schools	35.50	(2)	37.45	(1)	37.60	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	42.88	(14)	45.12	(14)	43.42	(14)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	53.53	(53)	55.04	(52)	48.96	(52)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	72.07	(98)	72.83	(98)	70.76	(99)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
The School District of Philadelphia	35.10	(12)	44.33	(6)	31.97	(5)		
Pittsburgh Public Schools	35.69	(2)	40.43	(1)	35.40	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	46.72	(14)	48.73	(14)	48.11	(14)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	61.95	(53)	63.60	(52)	56.79	(52)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	82.45	(93)	82.99	(92)	79.41	(93)		

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
The School District of Philadelphia	49.46	(12)	39.43	(6)	50.45	(5)		
Pittsburgh Public Schools	43.19	(2)	39.27	(1)	35.68	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	32.78	(14)	32.38	(14)	34.42	(14)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	25.27	(53)	24.22	(52)	29.88	(52)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	13.39	(98)	12.59	(98)	14.03	(99)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
The School District of Philadelphia	42.99	(12)	34.47	(6)	44.57	(5)		
Pittsburgh Public Schools	44.38	(2)	34.23	(1)	37.15	(1)		
All State SIG Award Schools	31.76	(14)	29.78	(14)	29.79	(14)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	18.35	(53)	18.78	(52)	22.32	(52)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	6.37	(93)	6.58	(92)	7.83	(93)		

RHODE ISLAND

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Providence	33.67	(2)	33.25	(2)	32.50	(2)		
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	49.69	(23)	49.15	(24)	50.63	(20)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	75.33	(9)	75.39	(9)	75.02	(9)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Providence	20.00	(2)	21.00	(2)	24.17	(2)		
All State SIG Award Schools								
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	36.17	(22)	38.75	(23)	42.18	(19)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	67.19	(9)	63.79	(9)	66.34	(9)		

SOUTH CAROLINA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
	Charleston	33.33	(1)	34.33	(1)	42.27	(1)	49.53
All State SIG Award Schools	44.81	(12)	46.44	(12)	46.55	(12)	49.74	(12)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	45.58	(6)	45.54	(6)	44.50	(6)	55.69	(6)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	74.53	(42)	73.84	(42)	73.86	(42)	76.66	(42)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
	Charleston	34.47	(1)	44.80	(1)	46.20	(1)	50.47
All State SIG Award Schools	41.52	(12)	44.40	(12)	43.47	(12)	44.22	(12)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	41.80	(6)	46.49	(6)	48.51	(6)	52.39	(6)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	69.51	(41)	73.34	(41)	72.46	(41)	70.84	(41)

TENNESSEE

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Davidson County	20.76	(12)	25.68	(12)	28.85	(12)	28.87	(12)
Memphis	10.93	(6)	12.10	(6)	14.56	(6)	15.28	(6)
All State SIG Award Schools	35.74	(9)	40.39	(9)	40.74	(9)	42.76	(11)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	23.11	(2)	22.71	(2)	28.59	(2)	36.30	(2)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	44.73	(61)	47.16	(61)	49.37	(61)	50.48	(65)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Davidson County	9.54	(12)	17.83	(12)	27.00	(12)	27.09	(12)
Memphis	6.22	(6)	9.44	(6)	13.60	(6)	17.12	(6)
All State SIG Award Schools	23.52	(9)	31.64	(9)	36.59	(9)	38.27	(11)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	29.11	(2)	29.00	(2)	37.52	(2)	44.37	(2)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	34.10	(68)	40.03	(65)	45.75	(66)	49.24	(71)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Davidson County	33.84	(12)	27.82	(12)	23.33	(12)	26.66	(12)
Memphis	46.75	(6)	45.42	(6)	40.23	(6)	40.30	(6)
All State SIG Award Schools	19.72	(9)	17.05	(9)	18.14	(9)	19.73	(9)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	34.45	(2)	29.00	(2)	25.22	(2)	18.83	(2)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	13.90	(61)	12.49	(61)	11.15	(61)	11.58	(60)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Davidson County	62.39	(12)	47.82	(12)	34.06	(12)	35.30	(12)
Memphis	68.38	(6)	62.17	(6)	52.74	(6)	45.66	(6)
All State SIG Award Schools	40.93	(9)	31.76	(9)	28.42	(9)	26.09	(9)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	34.13	(2)	29.06	(2)	20.23	(2)	18.52	(2)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	24.82	(68)	19.71	(65)	15.44	(66)	14.45	(64)

TEXAS

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Fort Worth ISD	75.17	(2)	67.67	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	77.19	(14)	68.67	(13)				
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	83.83	(156)	82.35	(154)				
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	88.79	(253)	87.10	(262)				

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Fort Worth ISD	66.67	(2)	70.67	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	56.37	(14)	57.85	(13)				
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	77.82	(156)	78.90	(154)				
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	85.52	(248)	86.20	(246)				

VIRGINIA

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Norfolk City	73.27	(2)	69.70	(2)	71.01	(2)		
Richmond City	76.26	(2)	73.55	(2)	78.95	(2)		
All State SIG Award Schools	79.84	(47)	81.66	(47)	82.81	(46)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	69.50	(1)						
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	88.60	(60)	87.98	(61)	88.33	(60)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Norfolk City	60.40	(2)	46.66	(2)				
Richmond City	66.73	(2)	65.11	(2)				
All State SIG Award Schools	81.13	(47)	82.24	(46)				
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	78.58	(1)						
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	88.09	(82)	86.32	(80)				

WASHINGTON

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Seattle Public Schools	28.17	(2)	44.17	(2)	46.58	(2)	60.50	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	42.11	(13)	43.49	(12)	48.37	(12)	49.79	(15)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	56.30	(55)	57.32	(55)	59.92	(55)	63.10	(62)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	64.59	(68)	64.71	(66)	66.57	(66)	70.08	(92)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
Seattle Public Schools	19.33	(2)	31.40	(2)	40.50	(2)	52.65	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	26.22	(13)	34.12	(12)	40.54	(12)	43.29	(15)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	43.86	(55)	48.94	(54)	52.22	(55)	53.63	(62)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	56.51	(78)	59.46	(77)	61.94	(79)	62.53	(105)

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Seattle Public Schools	32.18	(2)	22.42	(2)	18.10	(2)	14.25	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	23.30	(13)	22.51	(12)	20.21	(12)	19.86	(12)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	14.18	(55)	13.02	(55)	11.30	(55)	12.66	(55)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	10.27	(68)	10.30	(66)	8.93	(66)	10.43	(65)

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
Seattle Public Schools	60.73	(2)	37.43	(2)	40.38	(2)	28.85	(2)
All State SIG Award Schools	47.55	(13)	42.97	(12)	36.99	(12)	36.14	(12)
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	31.33	(55)	29.16	(55)	26.13	(55)	25.16	(55)
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	21.88	(78)	21.10	(78)	19.44	(79)	19.51	(80)

WISCONSIN

District Name	Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
MILWAUKEE	47.62	(24)	48.58	(24)	43.95	(22)		
All State SIG Award Schools	73.00	(1)	71.33	(1)	67.00	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	45.78	(10)	57.02	(6)	62.50	(5)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	79.61	(50)	81.33	(51)	81.11	(55)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Proficient or Above AY 2012-13(n)	
MILWAUKEE	36.29	(24)	34.63	(24)	32.92	(22)		
All State SIG Award Schools	84.00	(1)	67.00	(1)	65.50	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	37.88	(10)	54.25	(6)	61.80	(5)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	77.90	(49)	79.32	(59)	80.12	(60)		

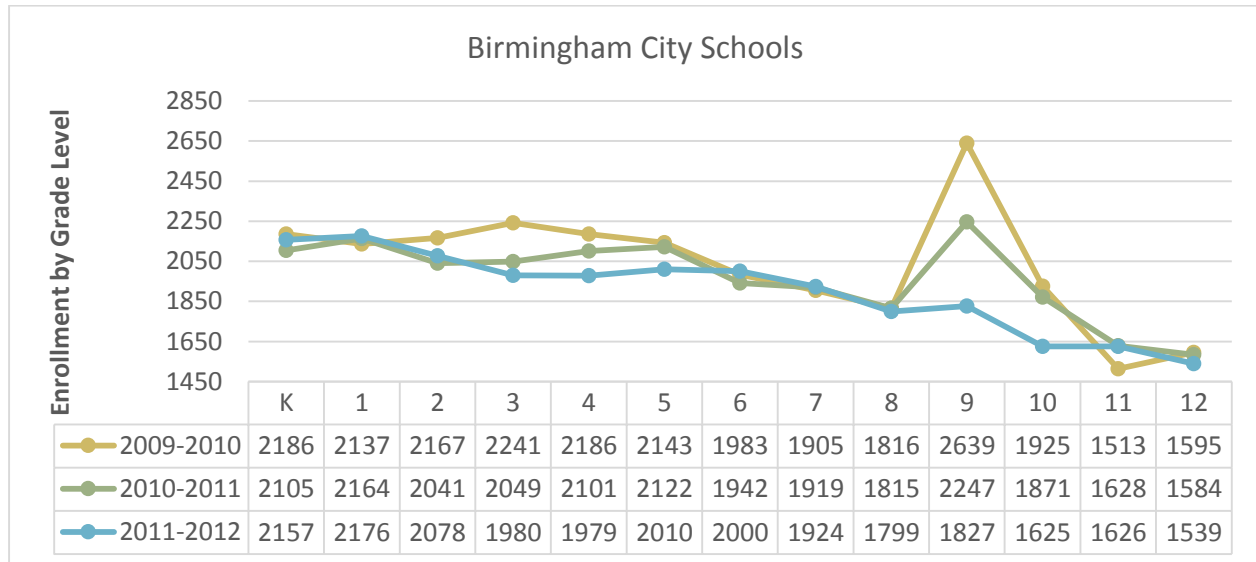
District Name	Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Reading Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
MILWAUKEE	20.26	(24)	19.09	(24)	22.27	(22)		
All State SIG Award Schools	1.00	(1)	3.00	(1)	5.00	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	22.26	(10)	13.91	(6)	11.03	(5)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	5.43	(50)	4.65	(51)	5.56	(55)		

District Name	Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2009-10 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2010-11 (n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2011-12(n)		Mean Math Percent Below Basic AY 2012-13(n)	
MILWAUKEE	39.77	(24)	43.37	(24)	44.72	(22)		
All State SIG Award Schools	6.50	(1)	12.00	(1)	12.50	(1)		
State SIG eligible but Not Awarded	43.68	(10)	29.78	(6)	23.23	(5)		
State Random Sample of Non-SIG Eligible	10.22	(53)	10.49	(59)	9.60	(60)		

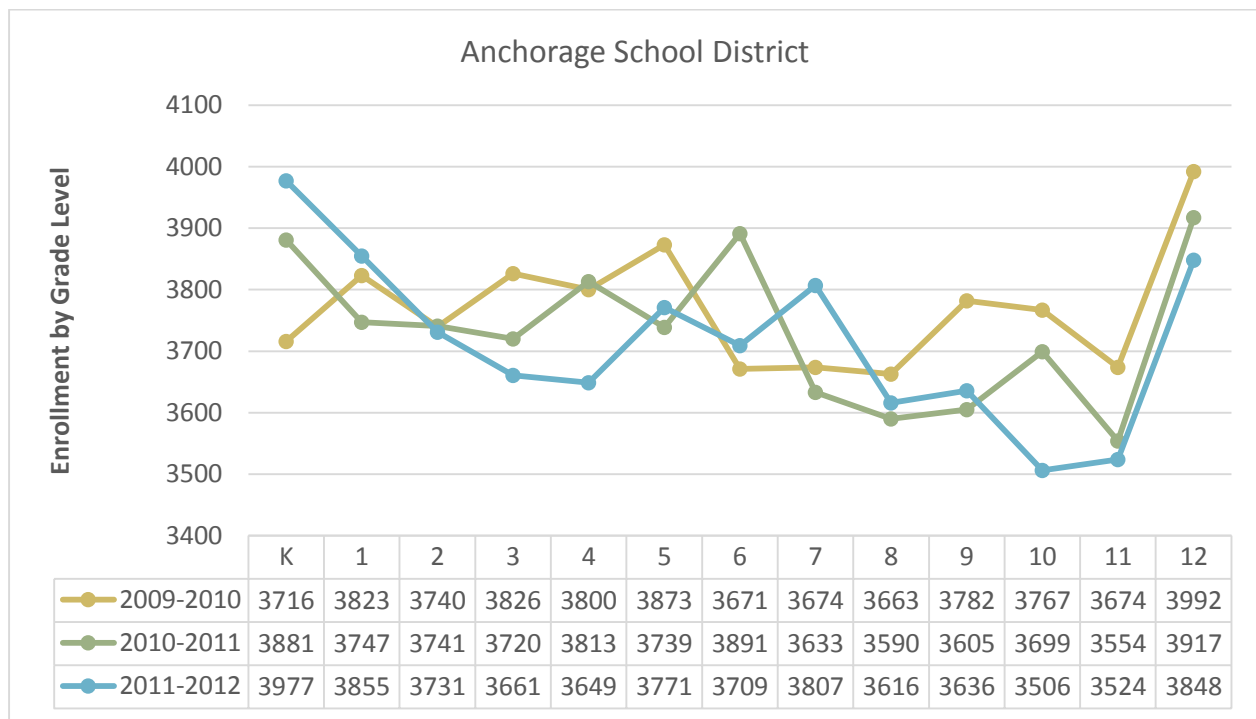
Appendix B

High School Enrollment Trends by District

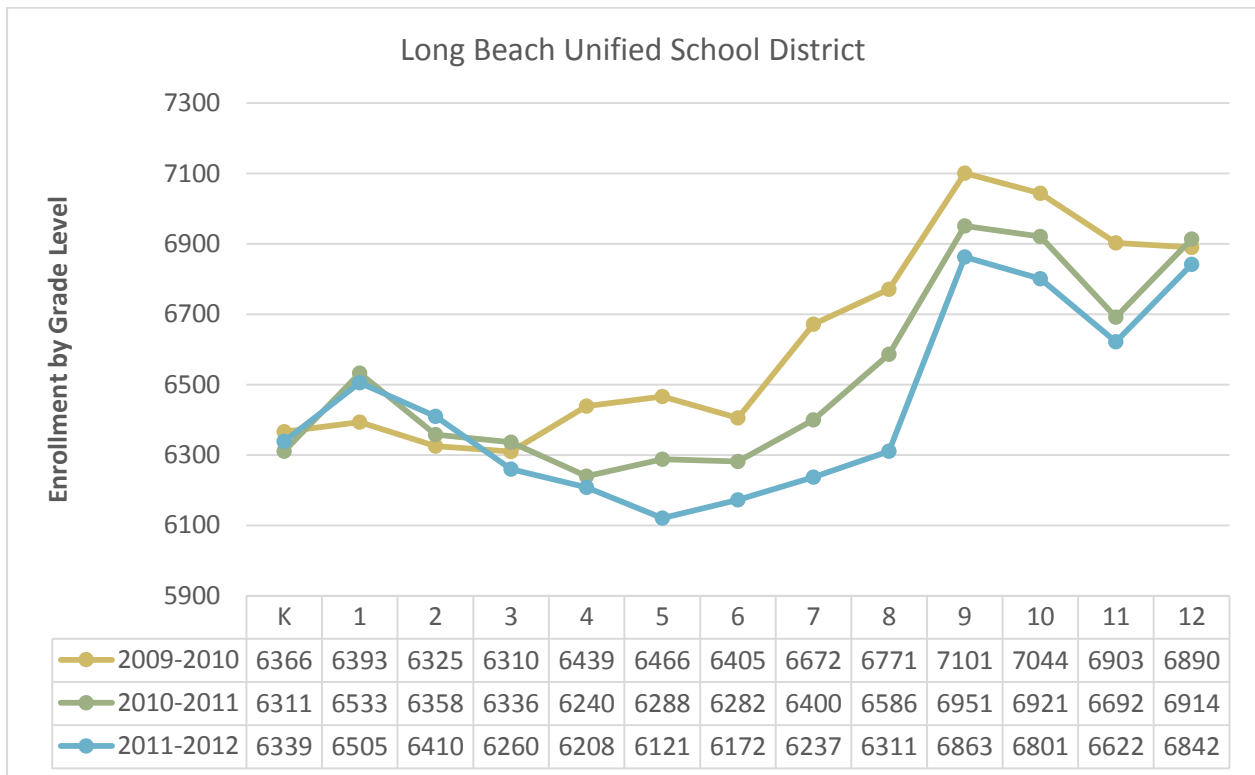
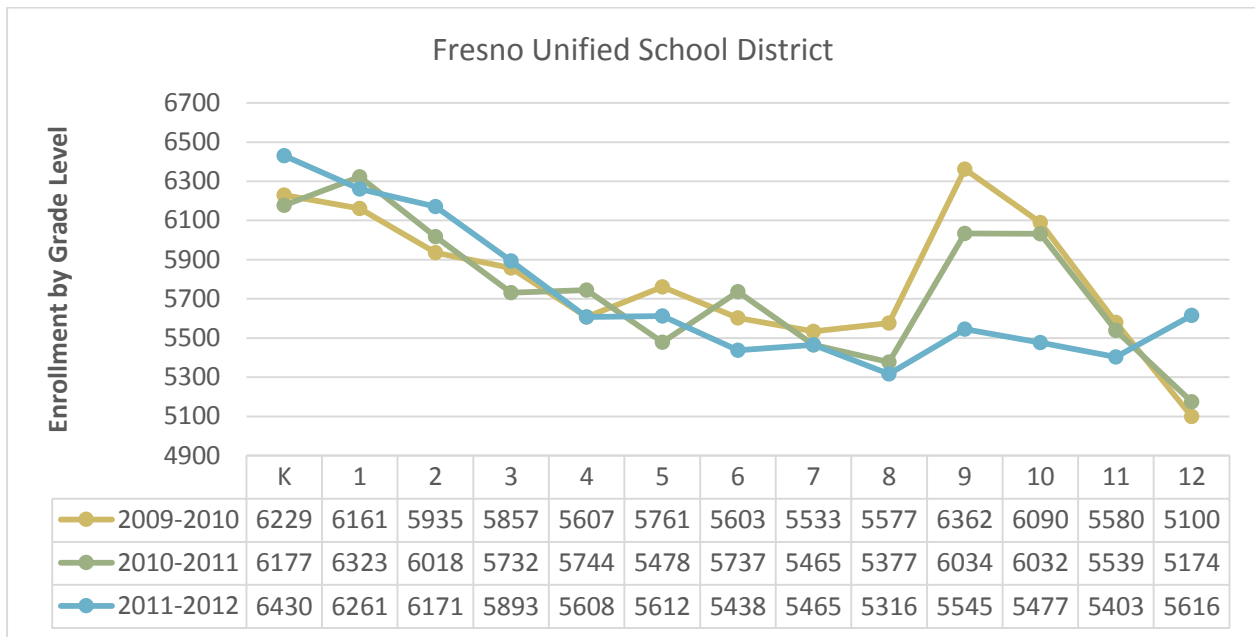
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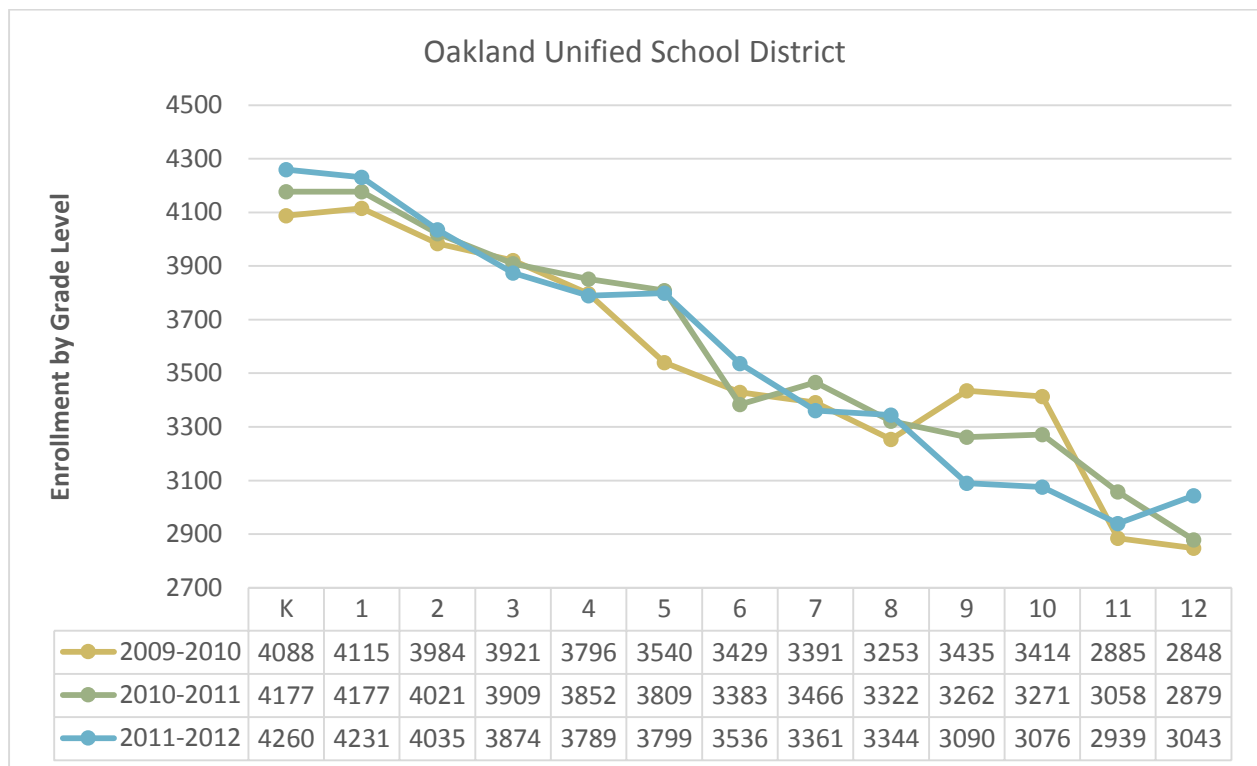
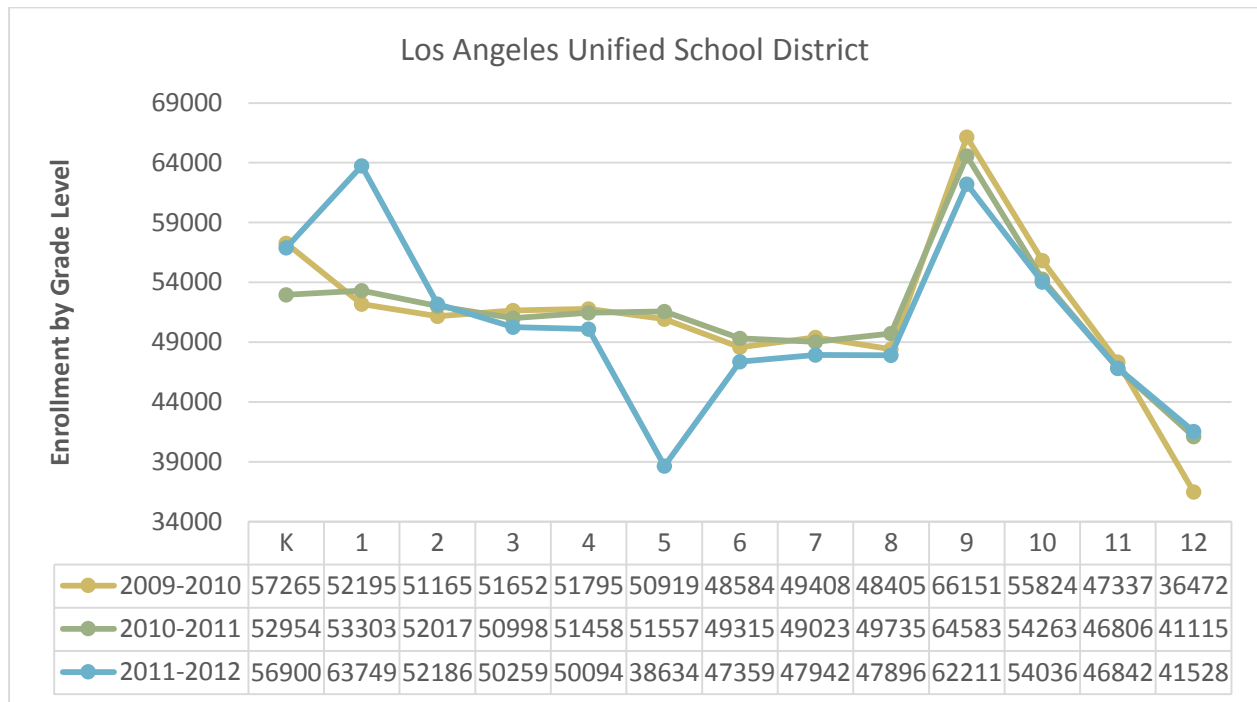


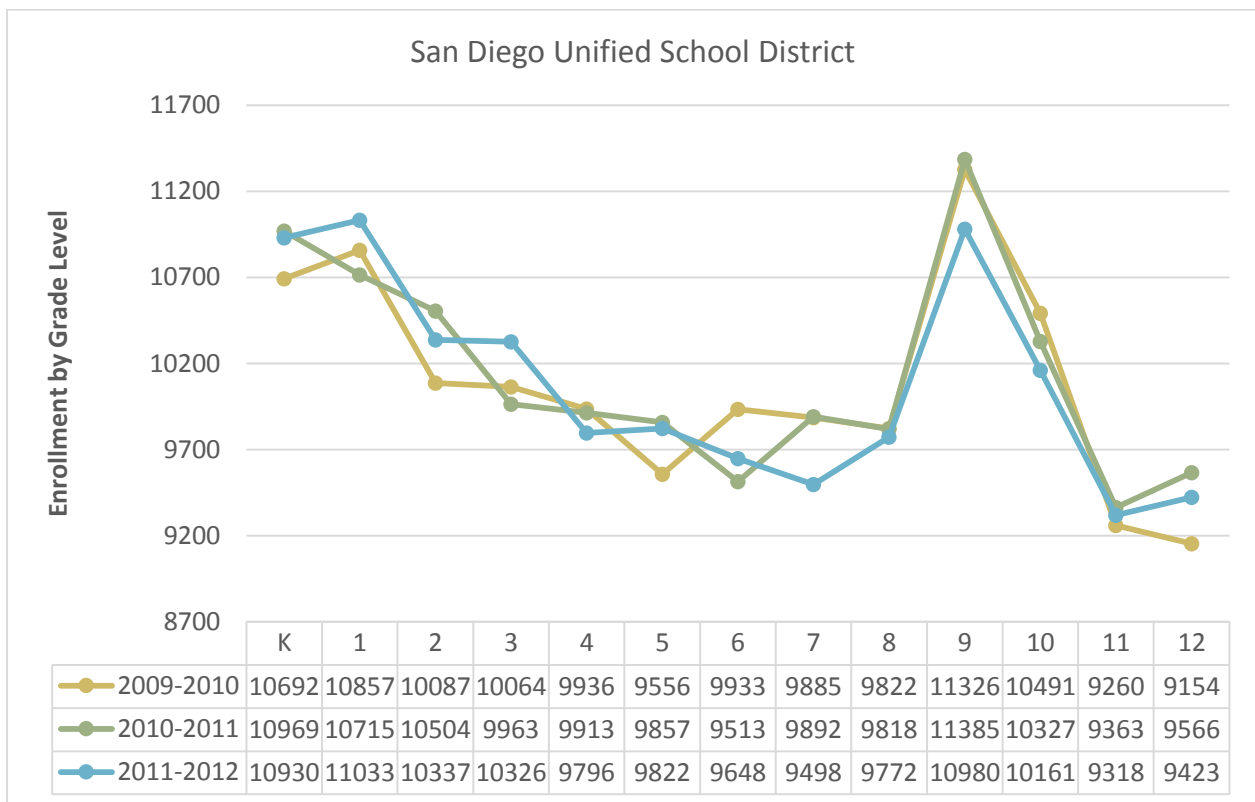
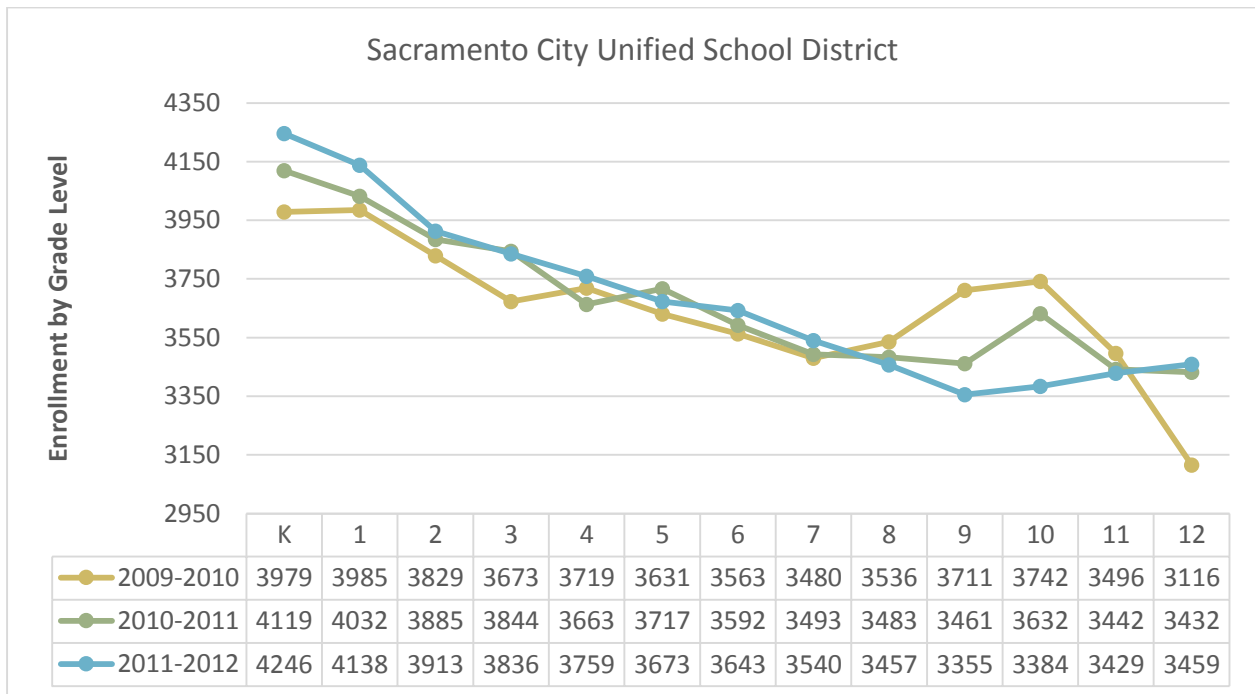
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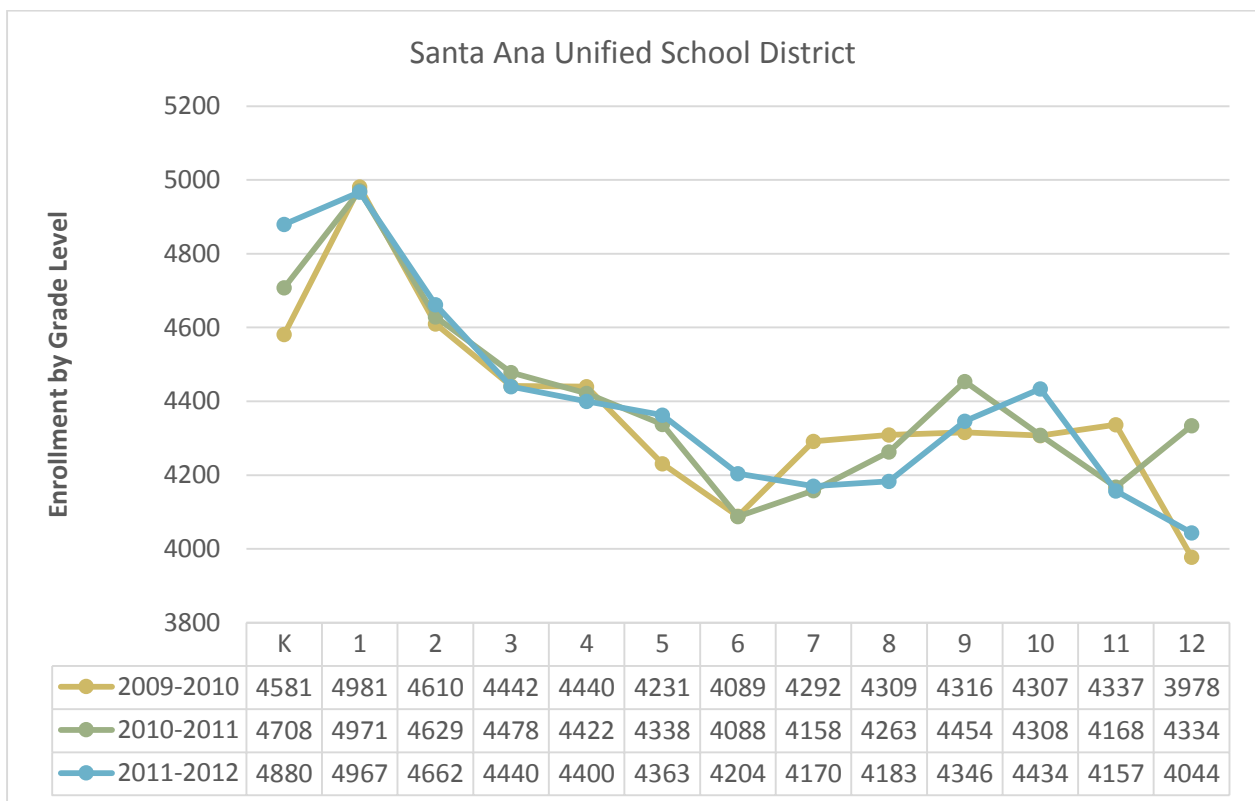
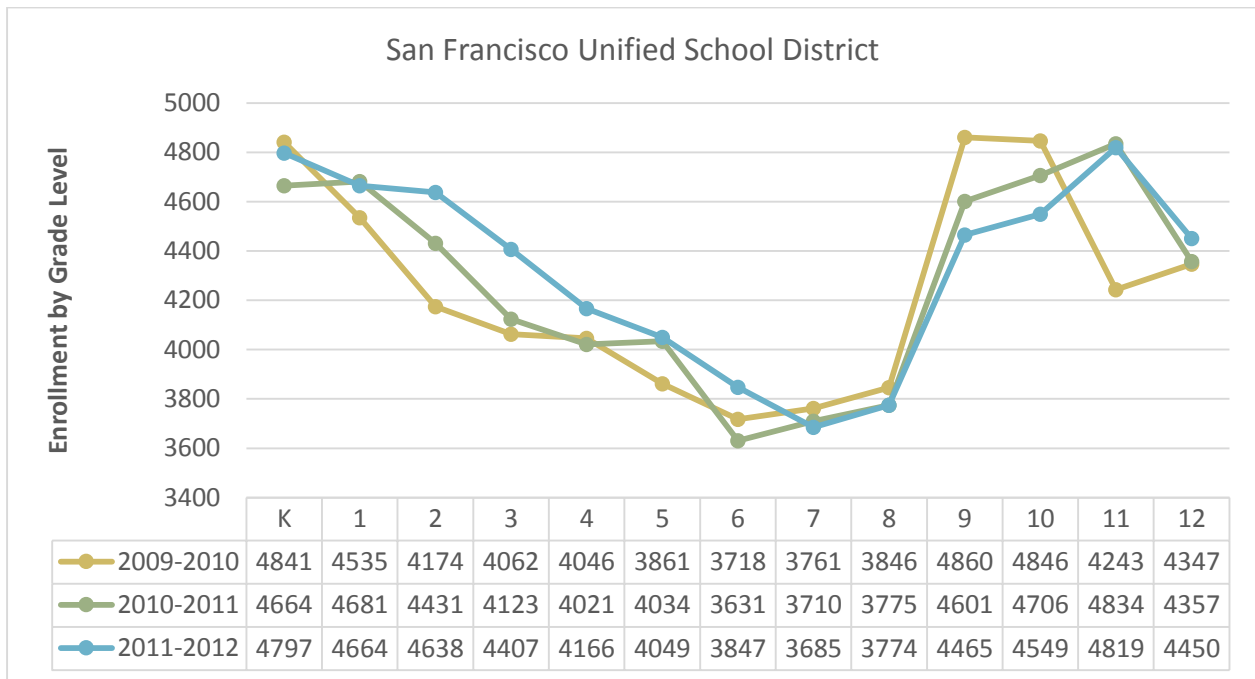


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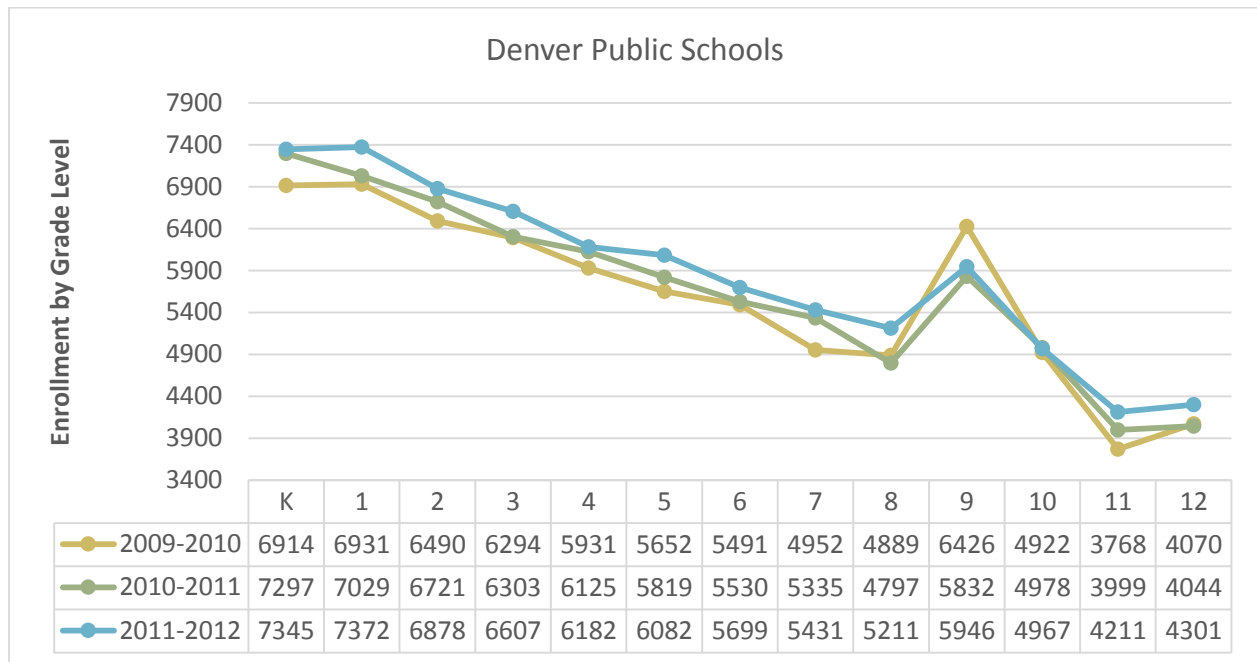




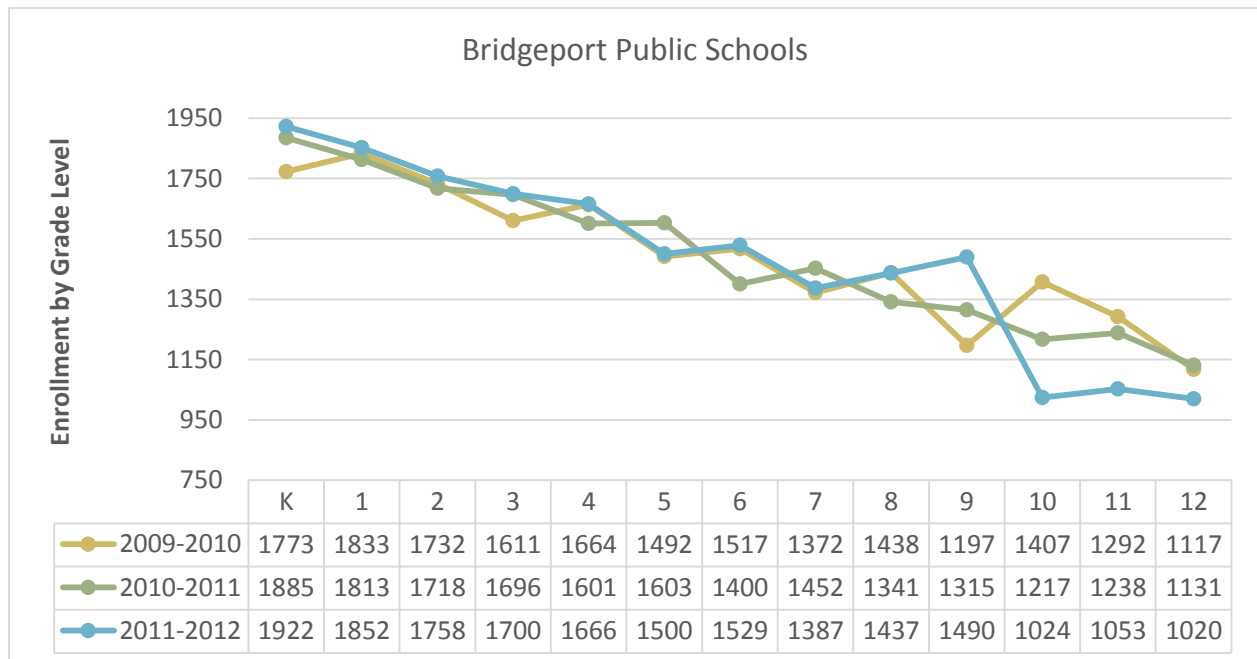




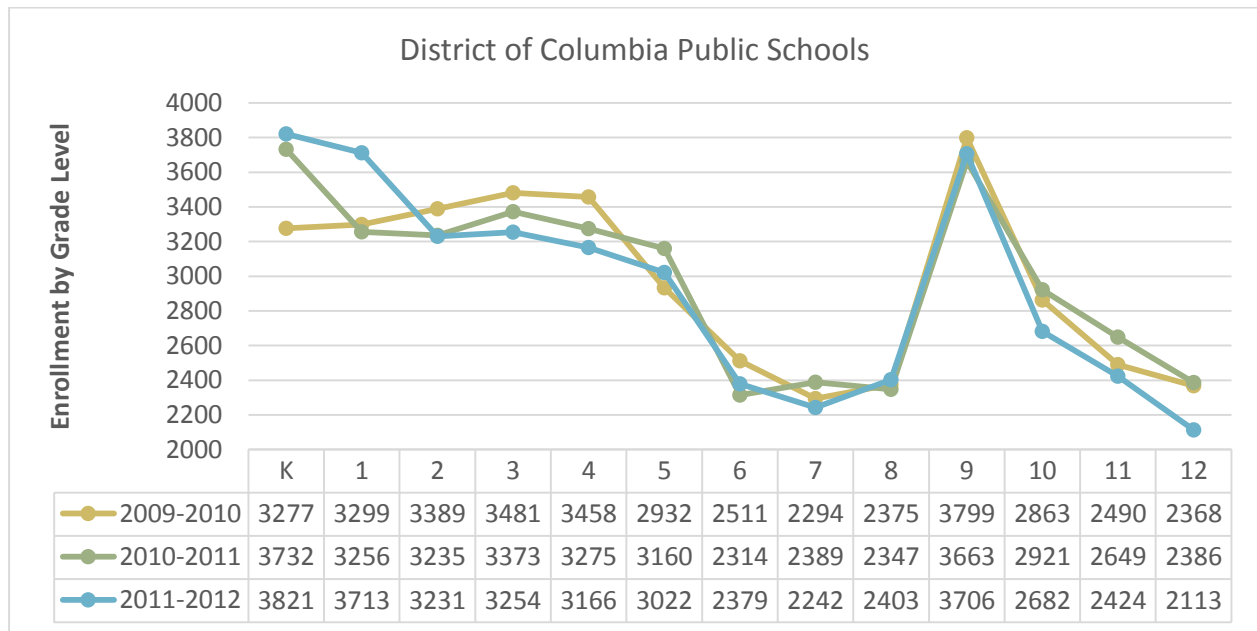
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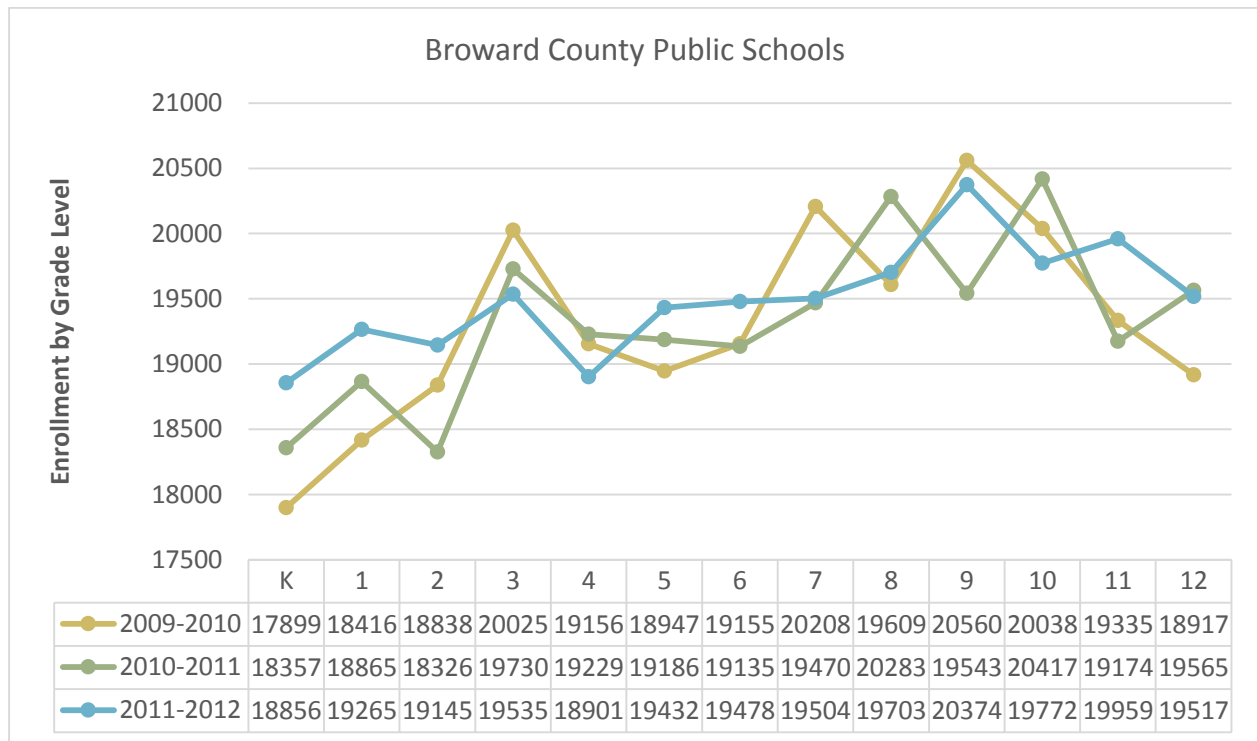
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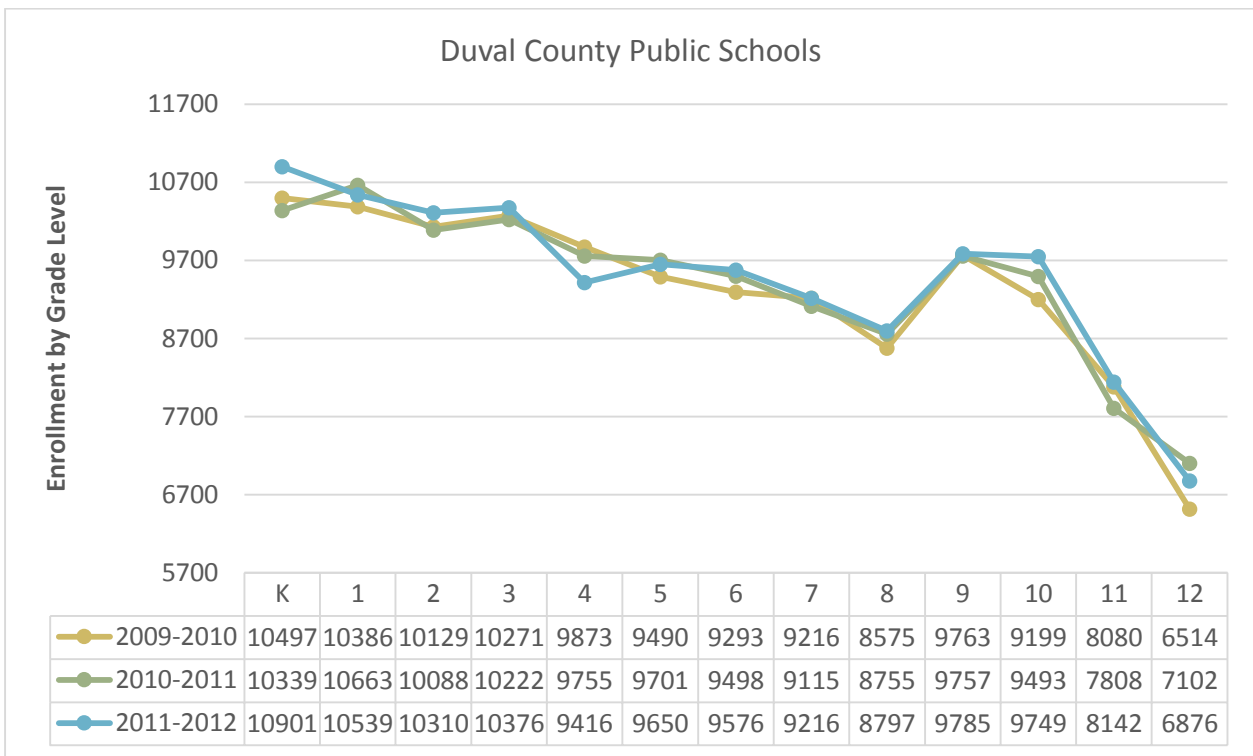
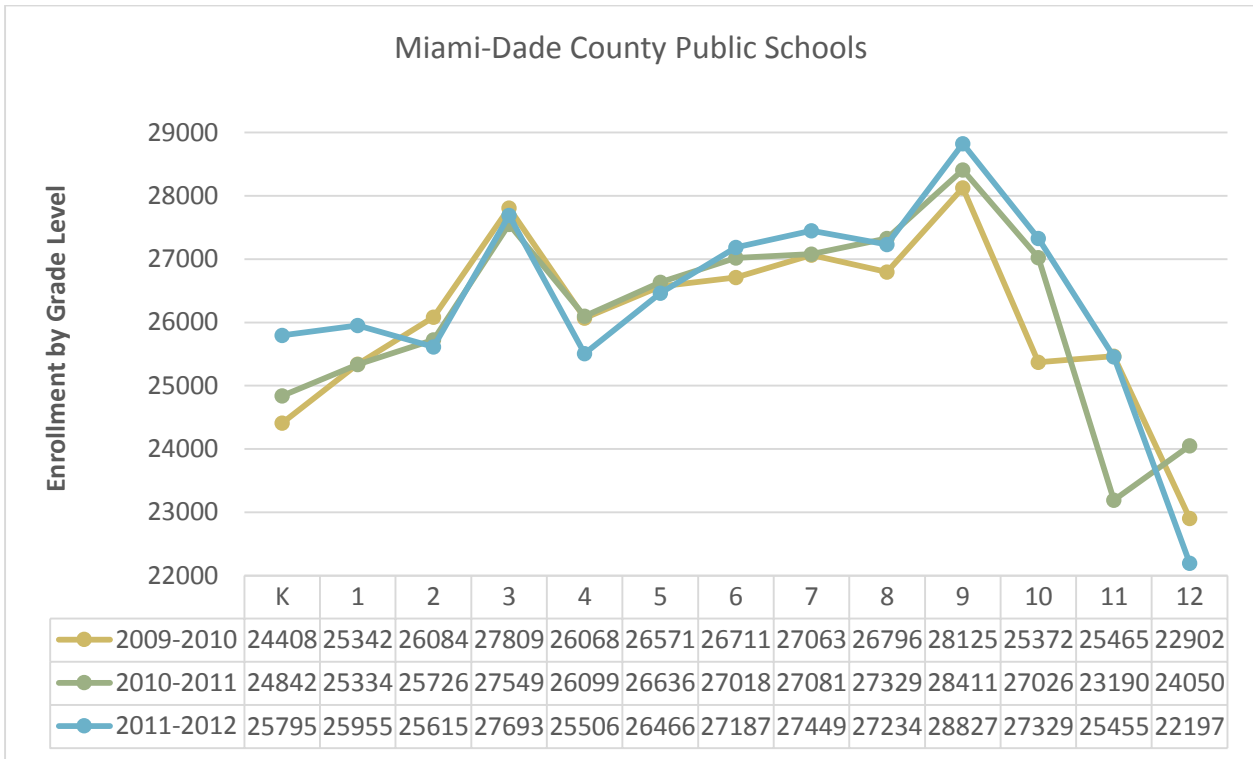


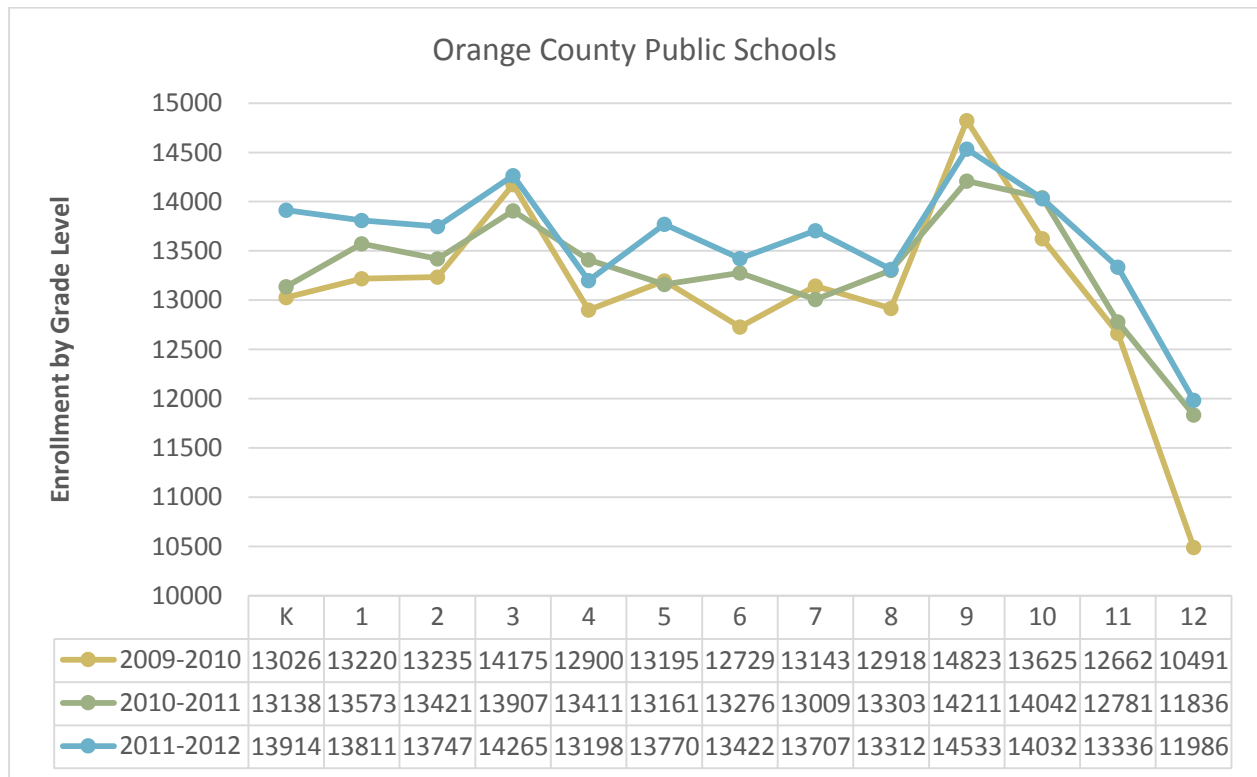
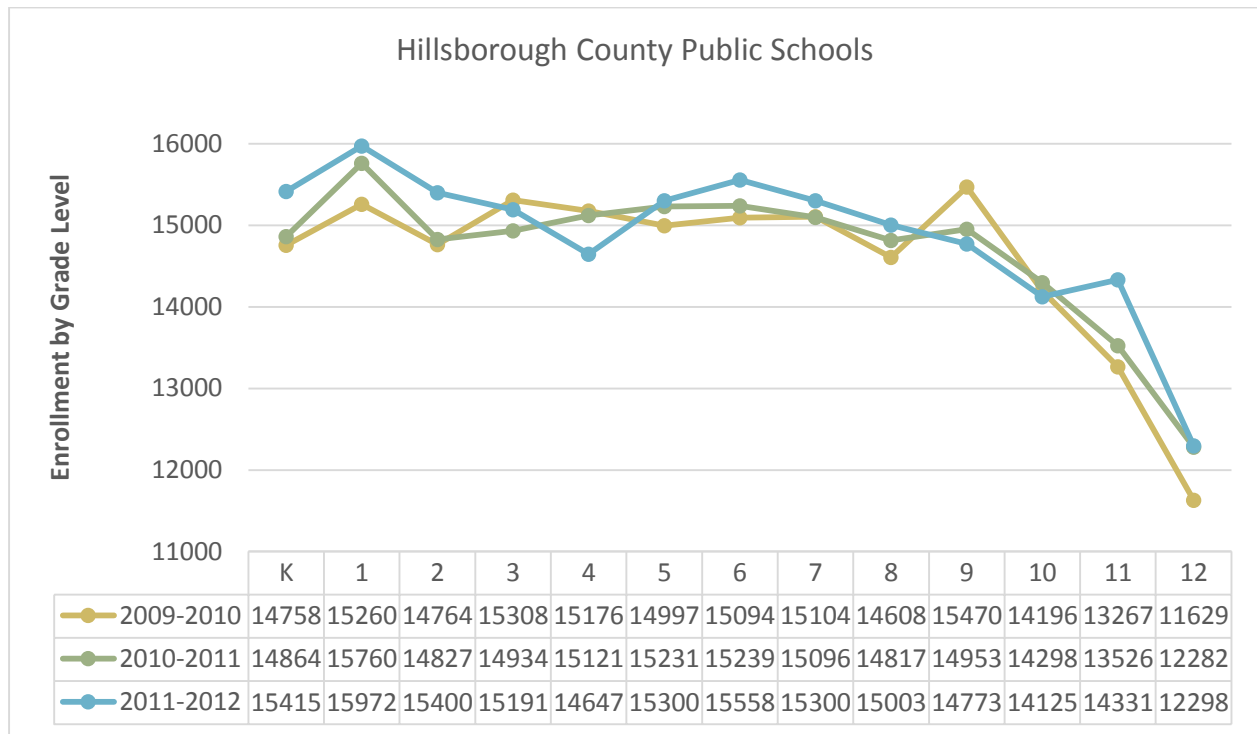
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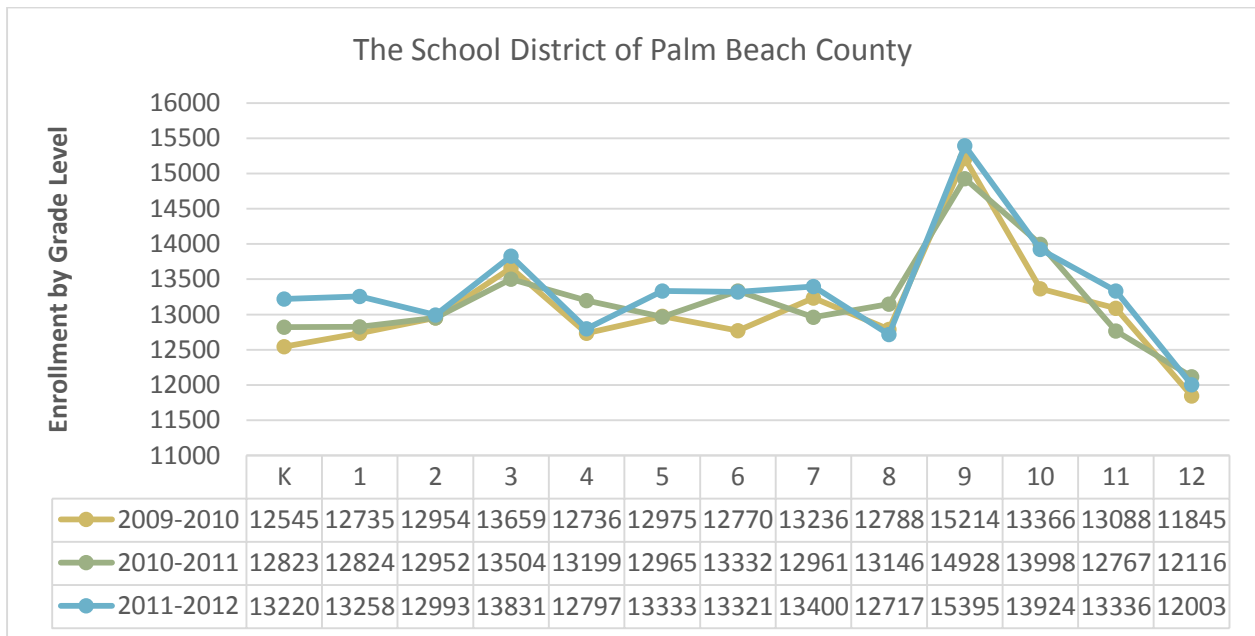


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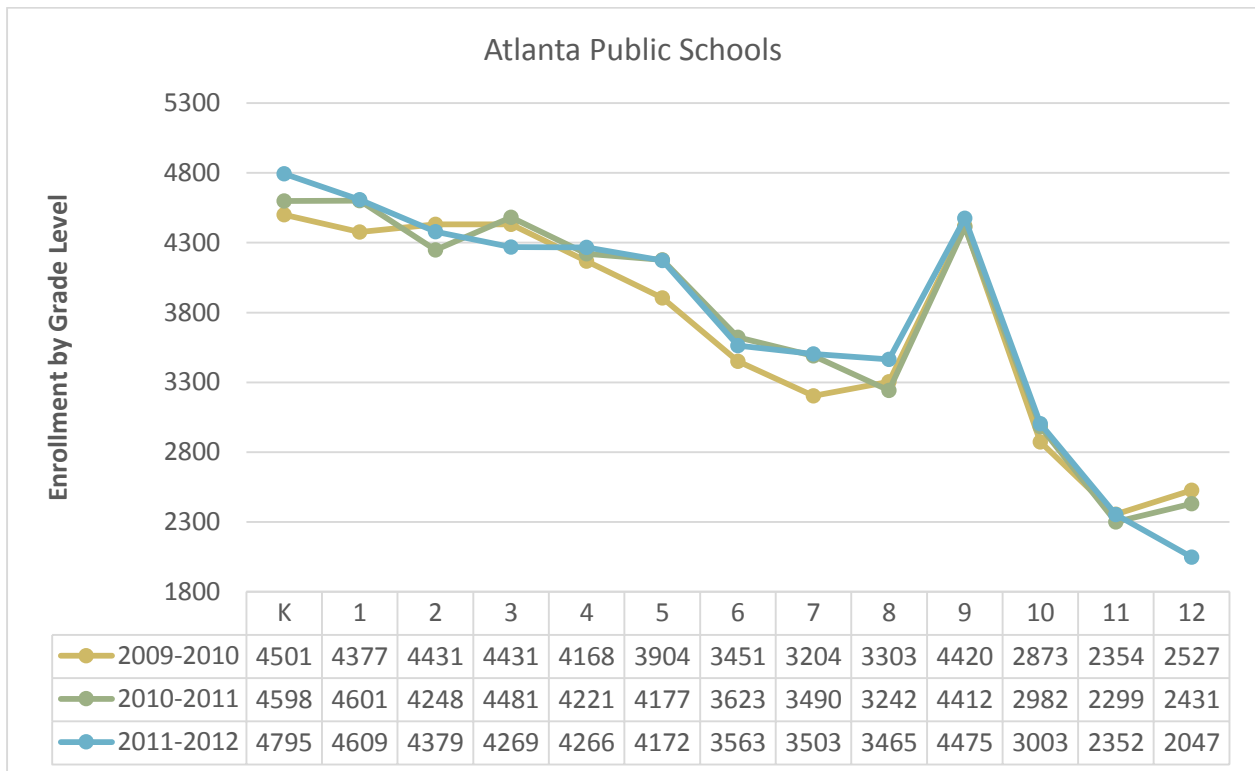




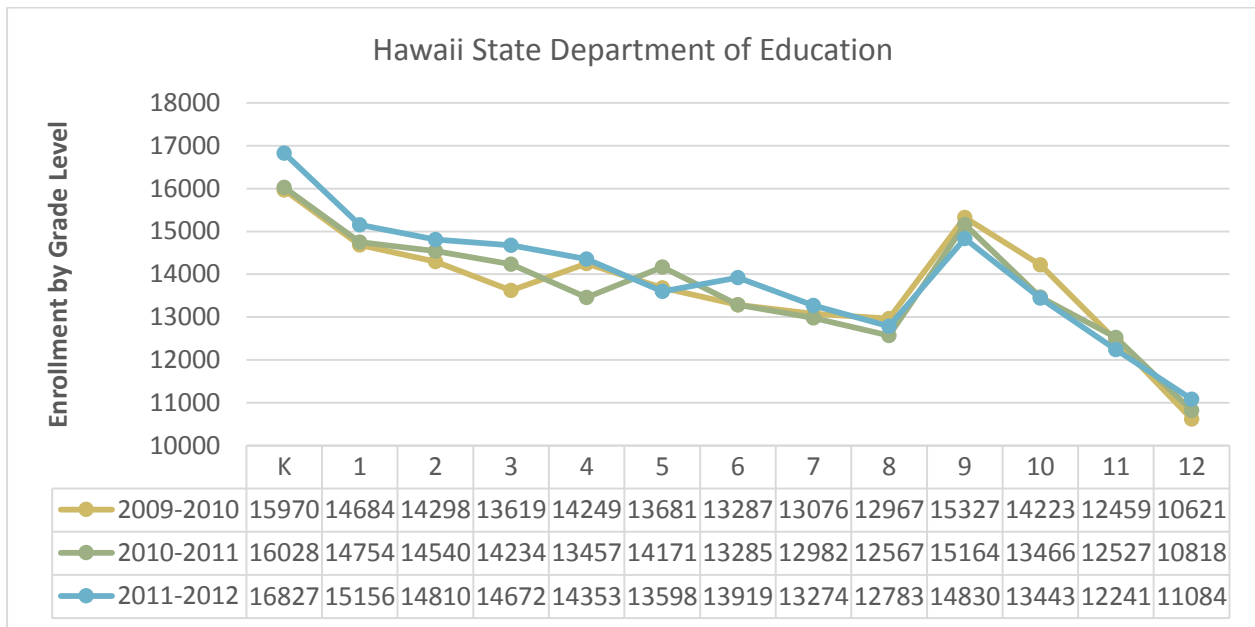




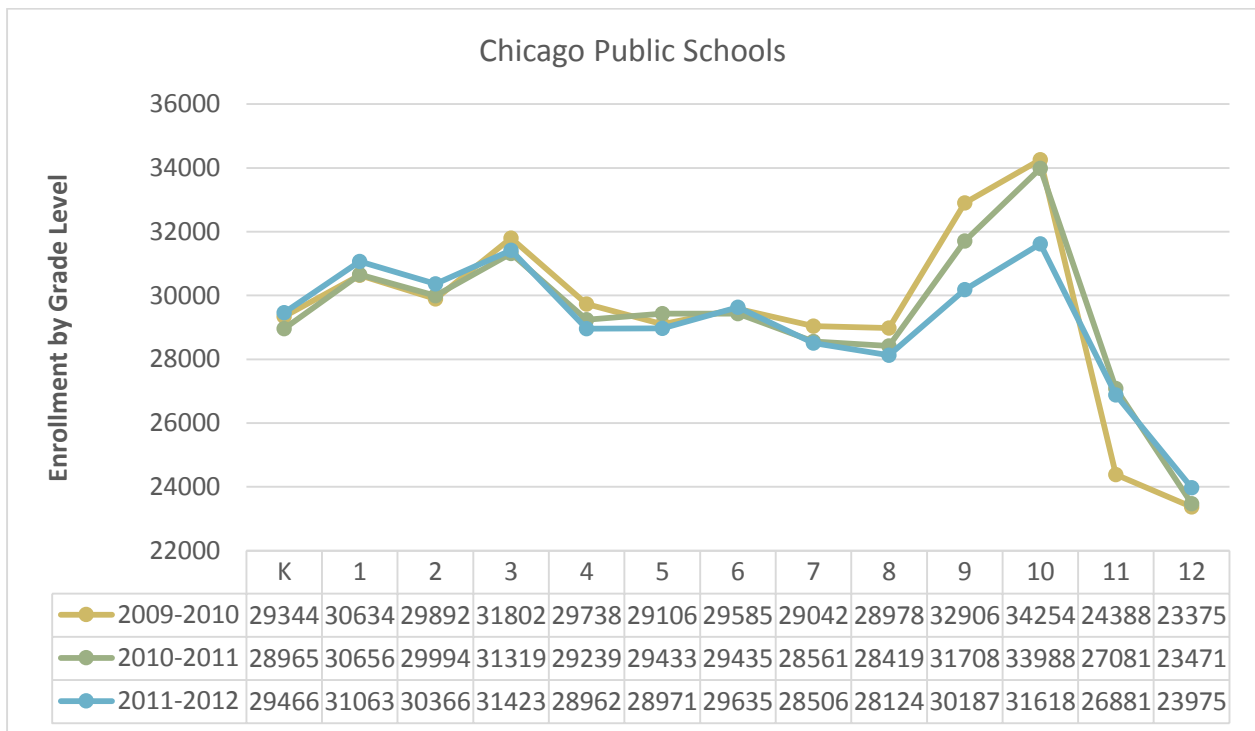
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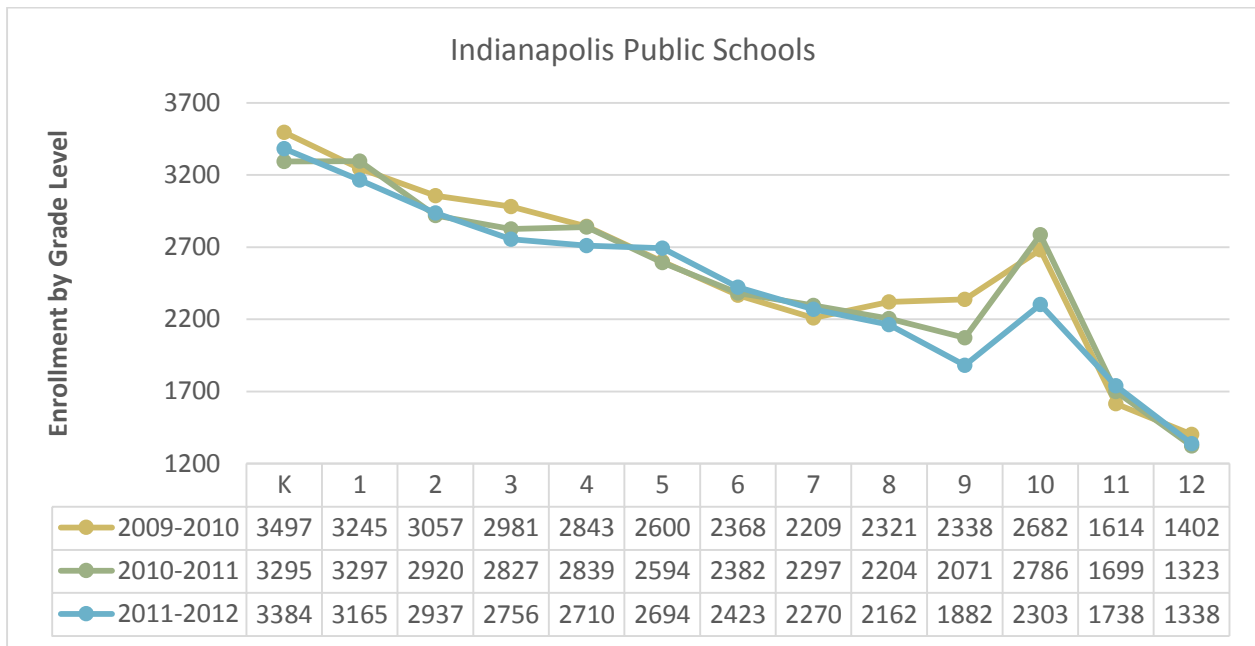
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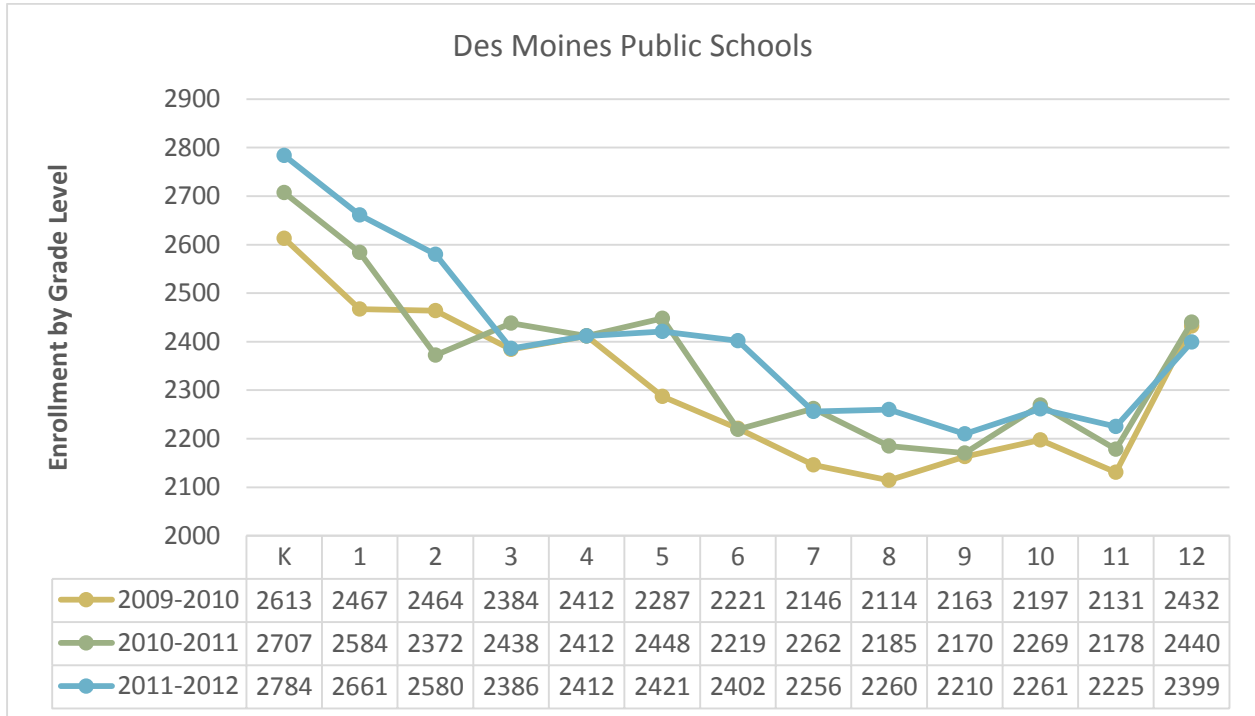
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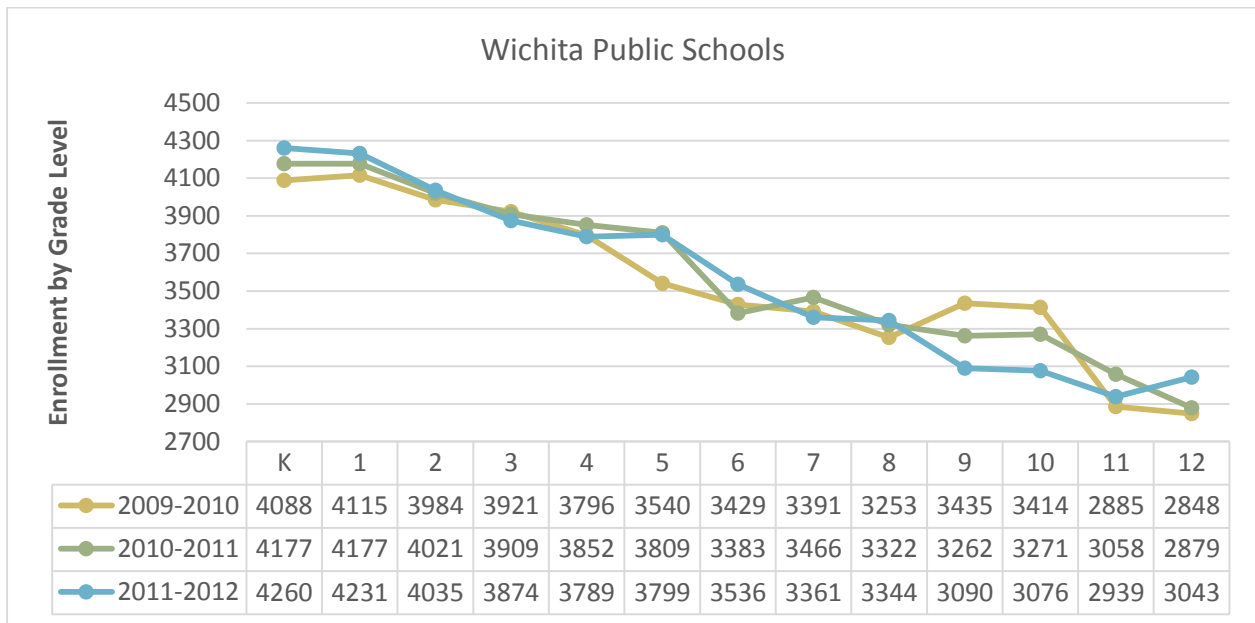
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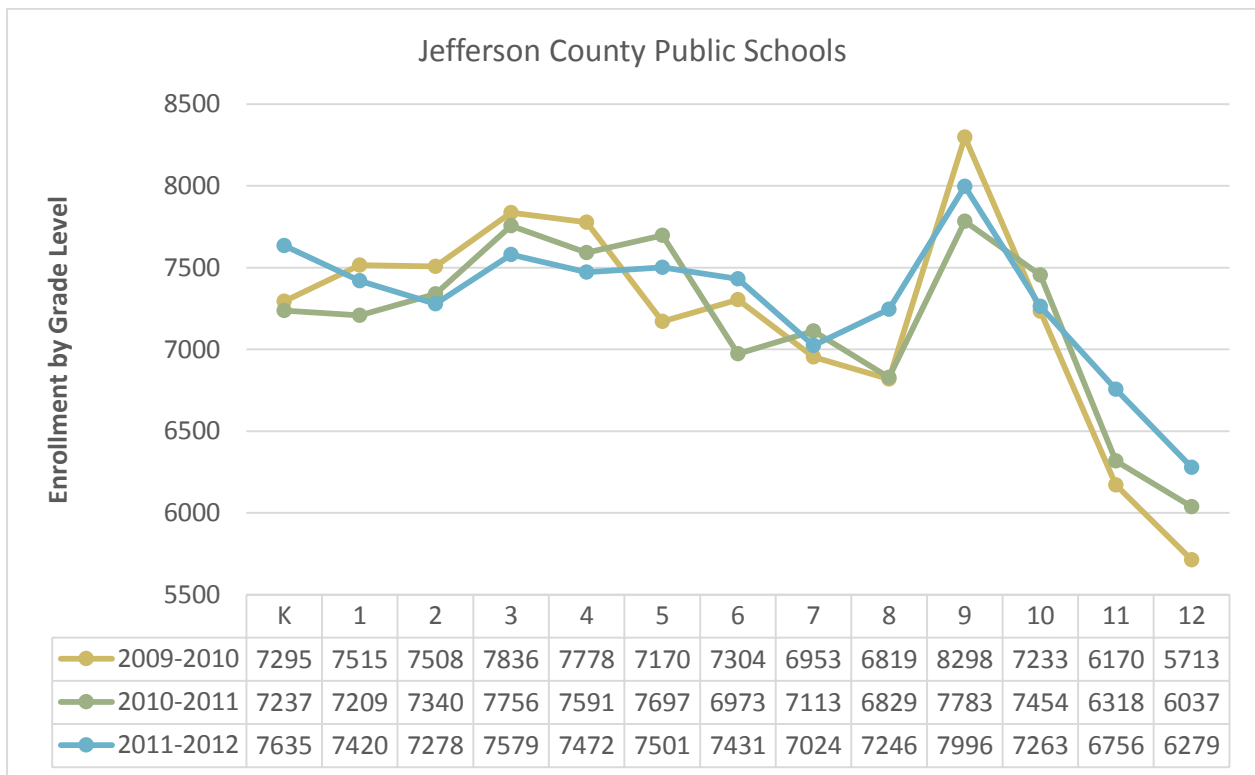
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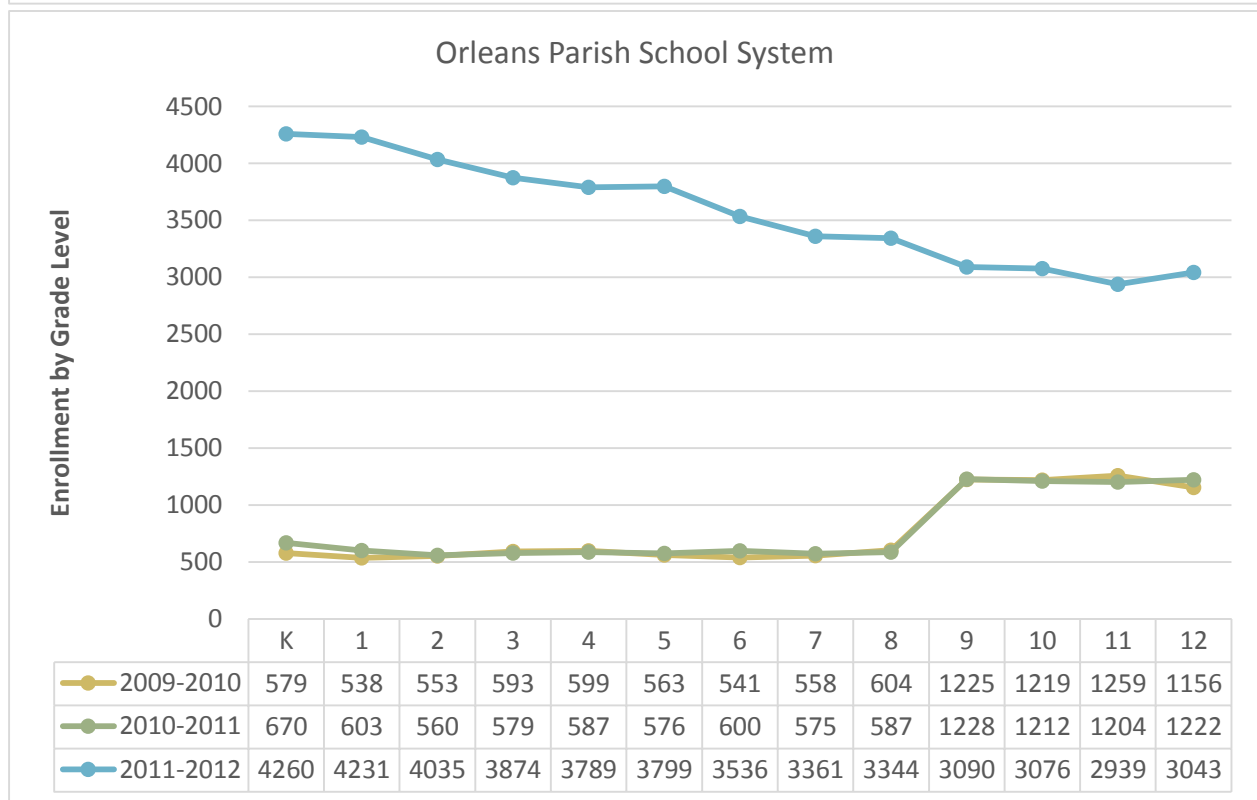
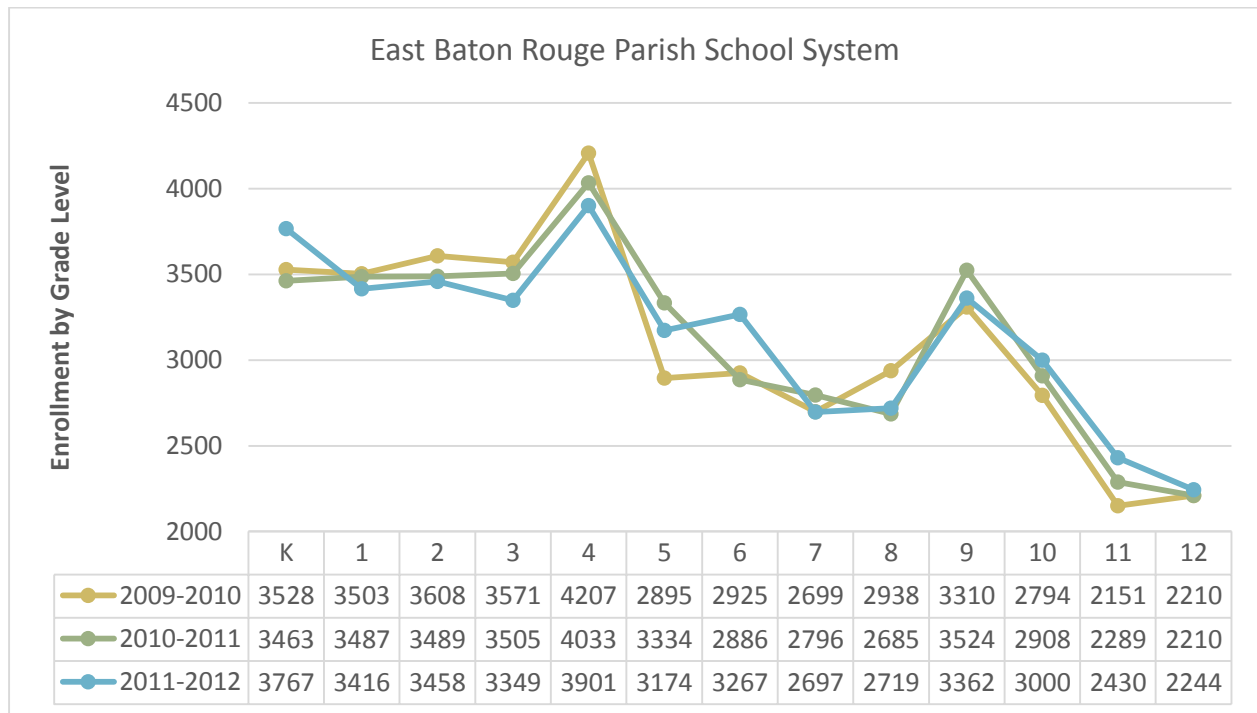
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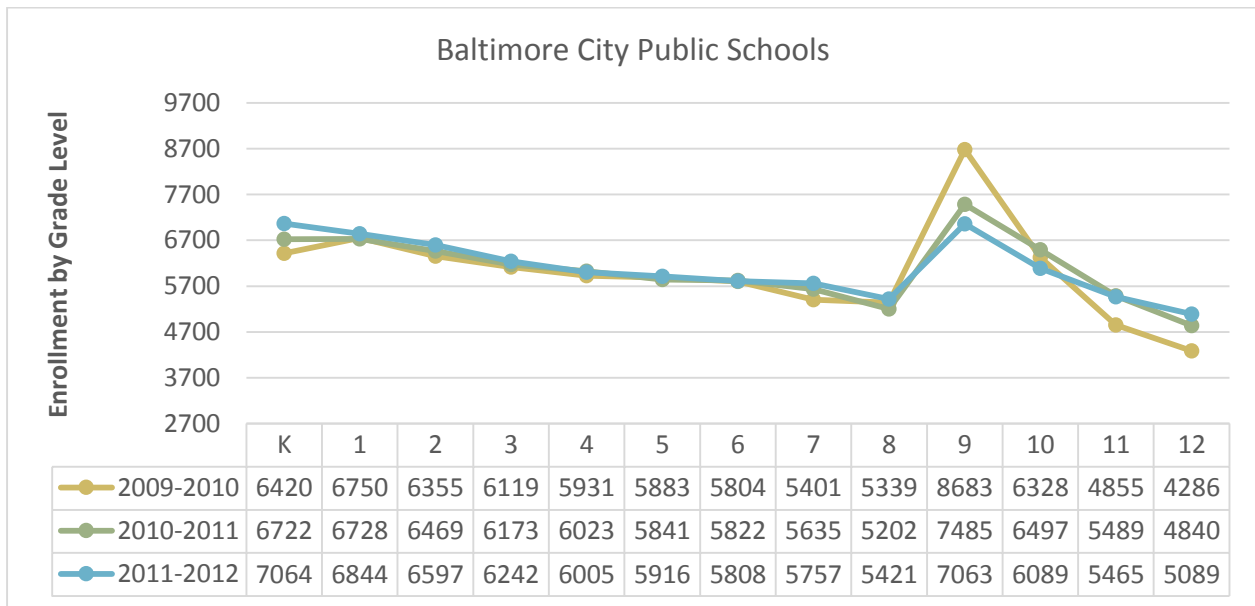
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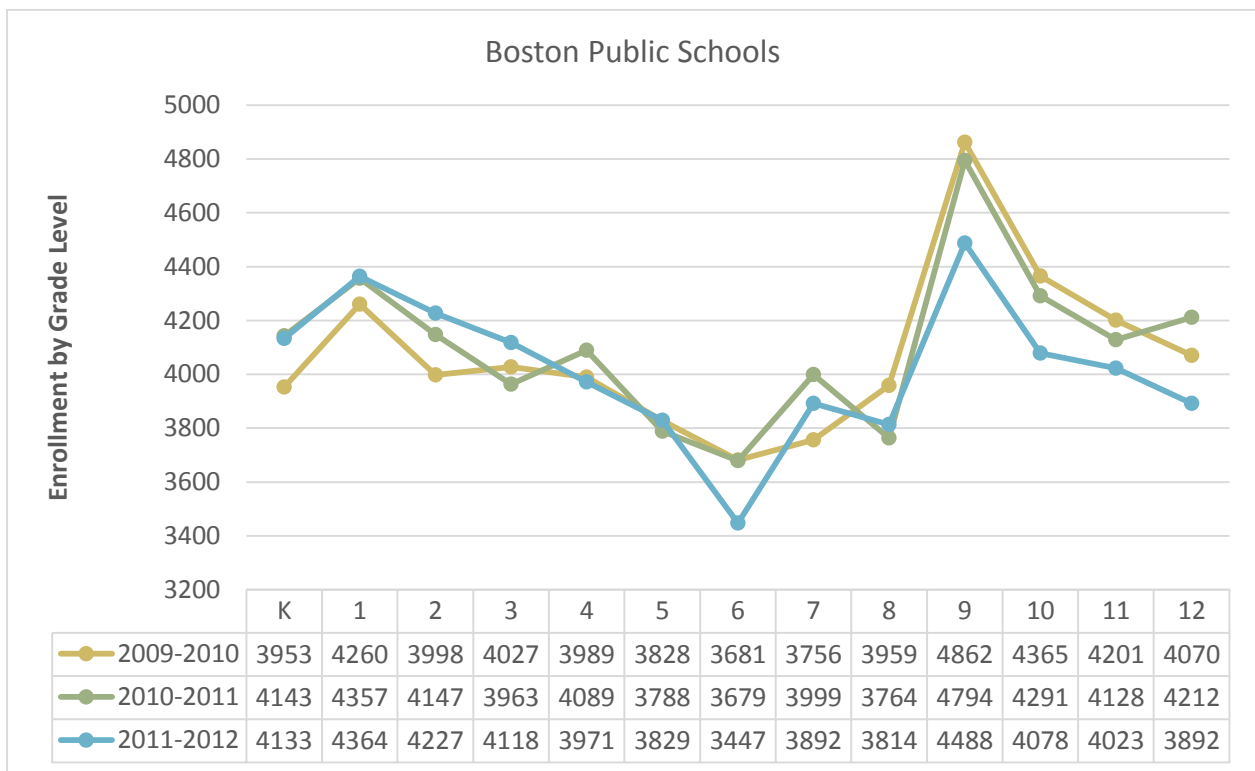
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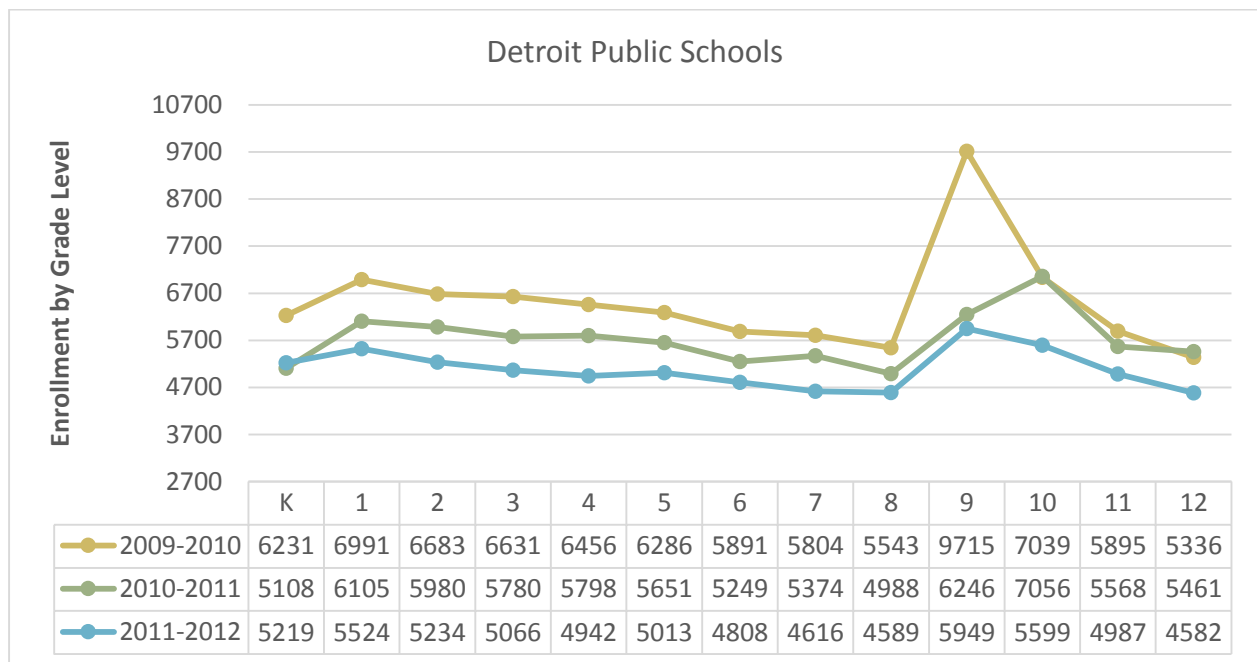
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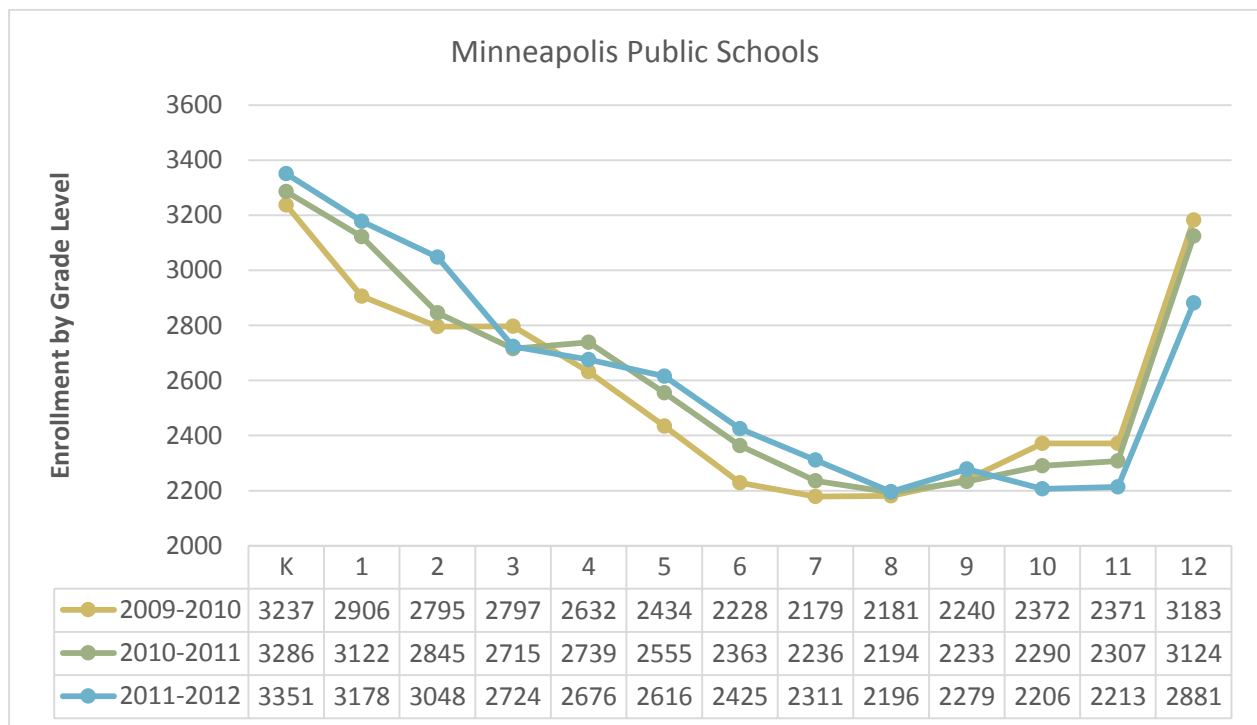
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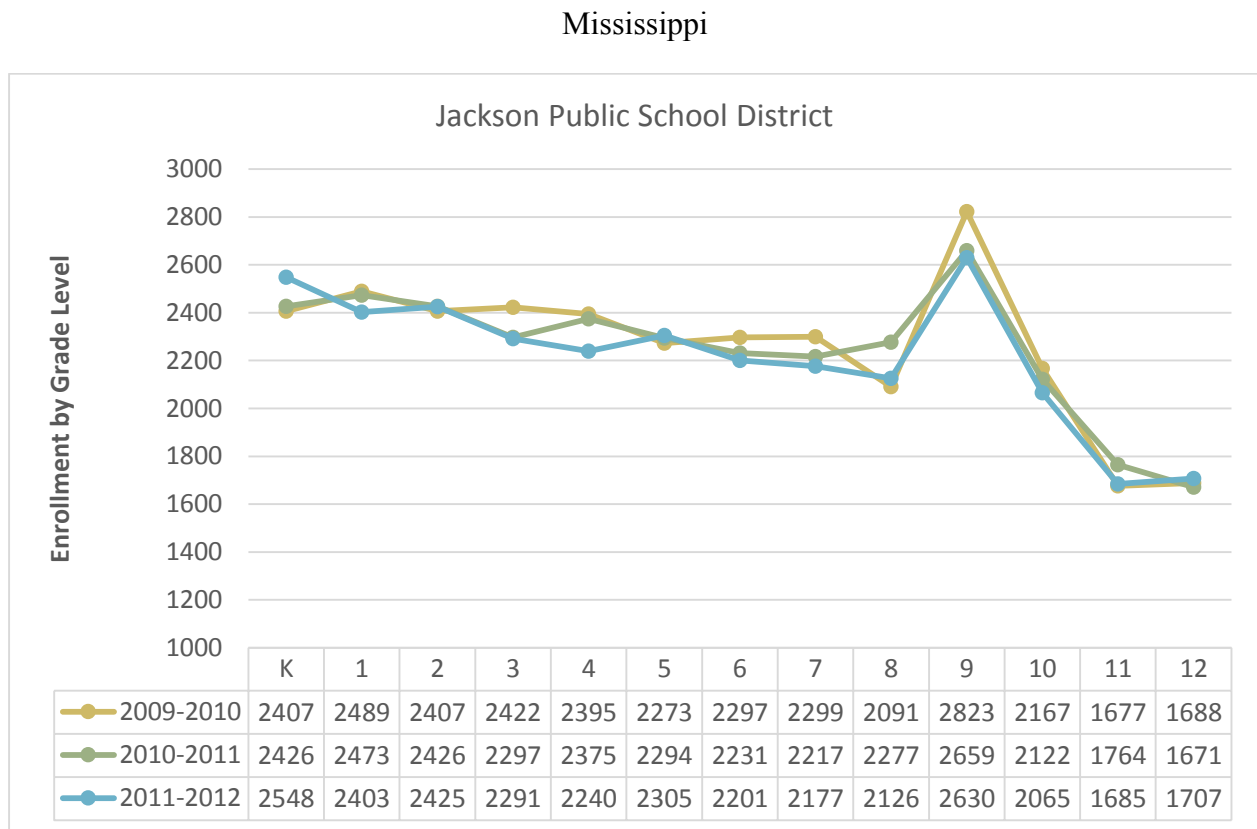
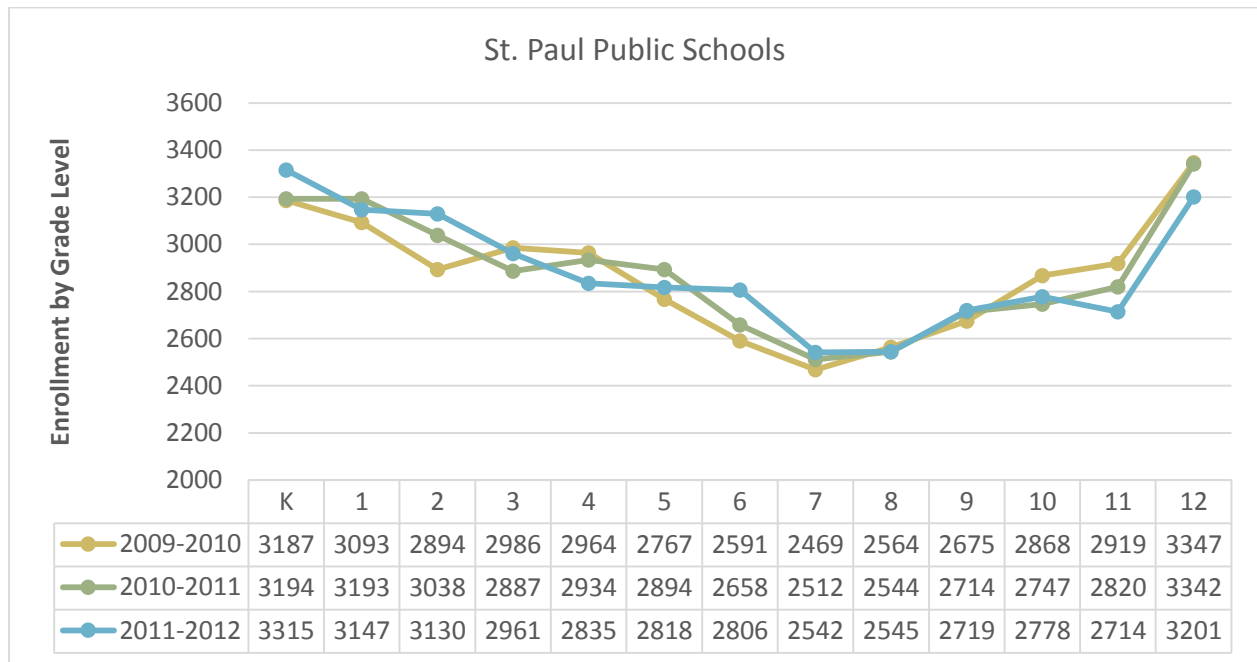


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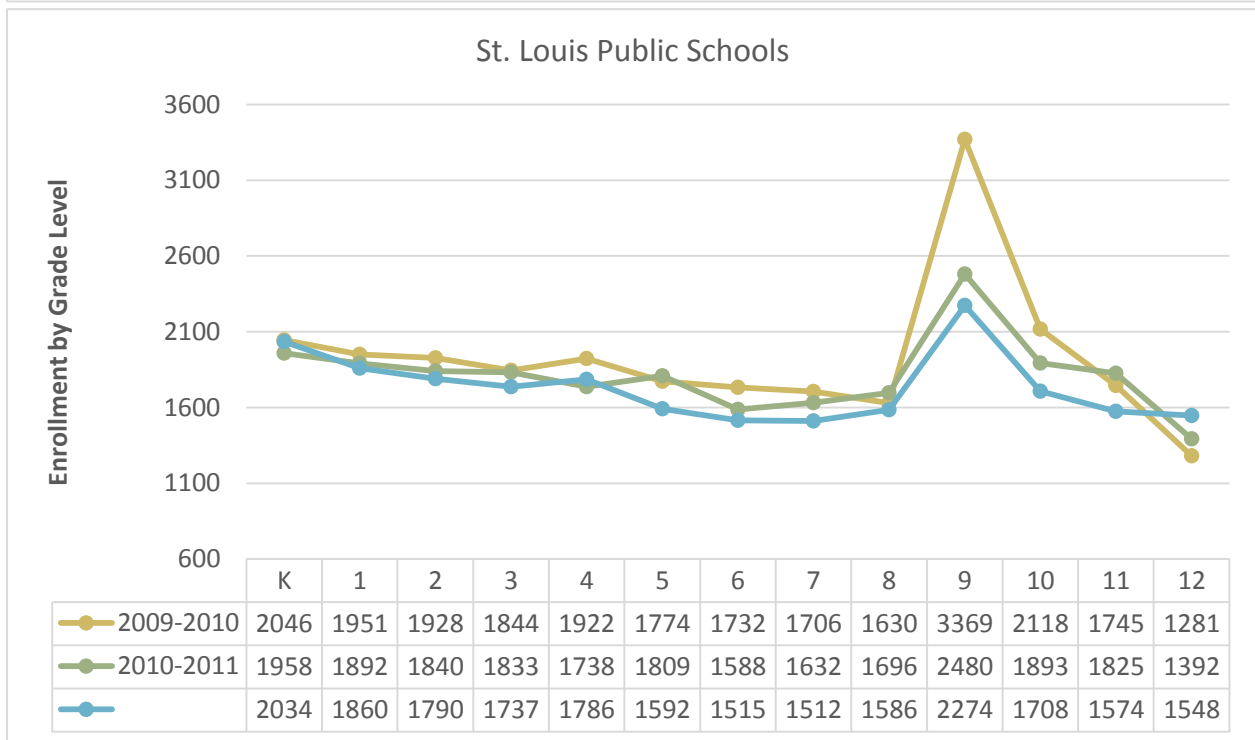
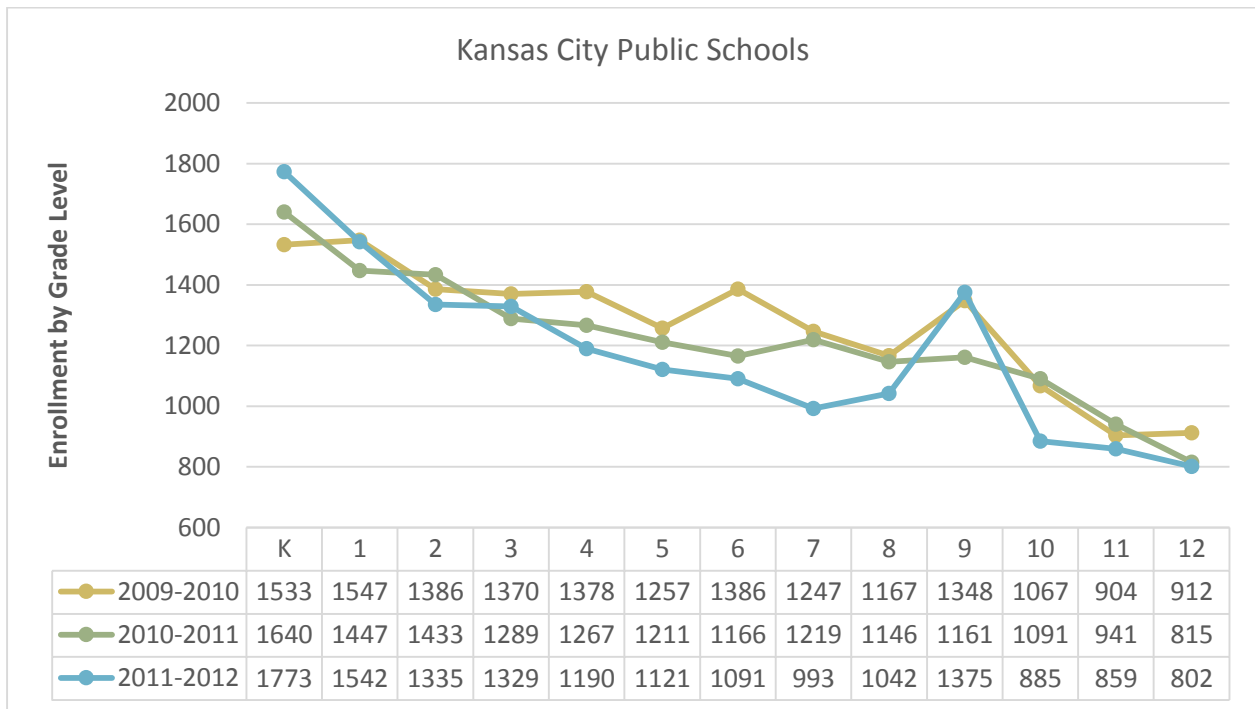


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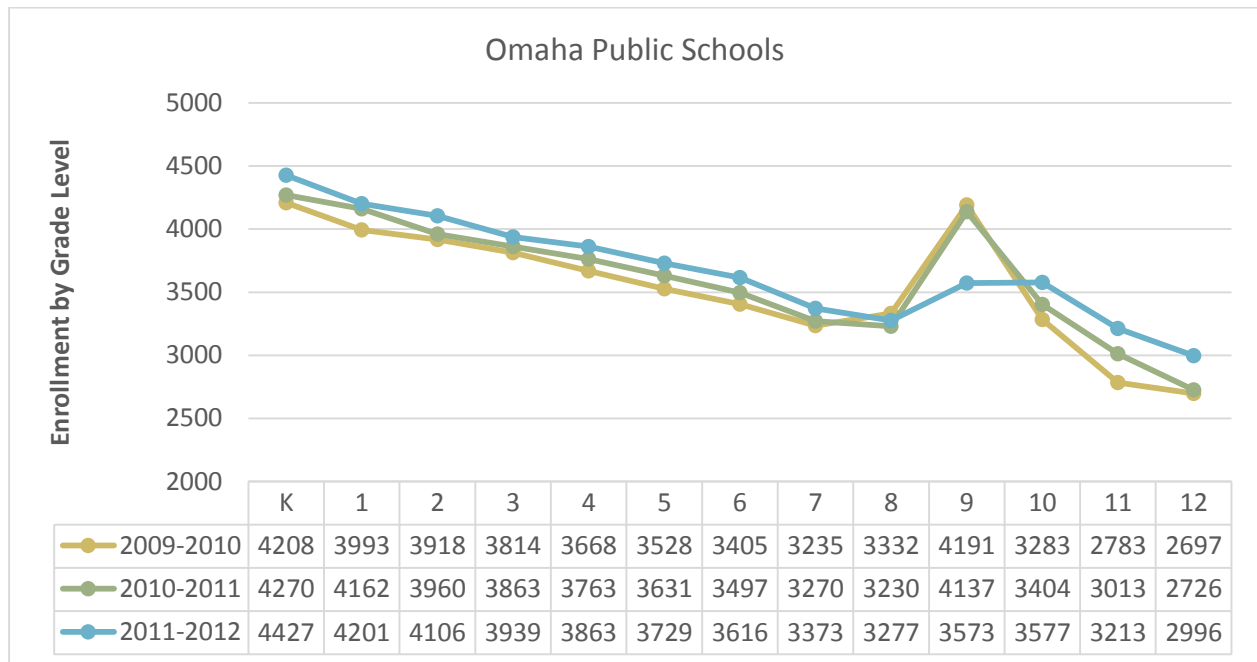




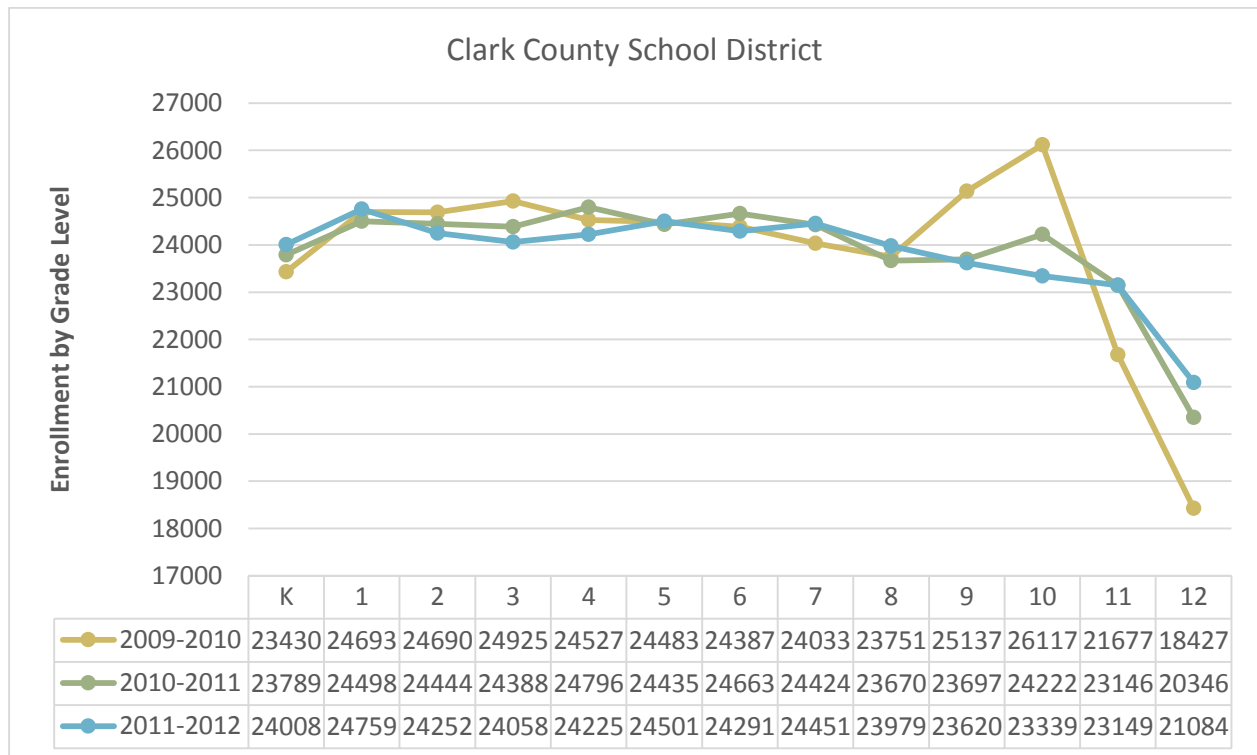
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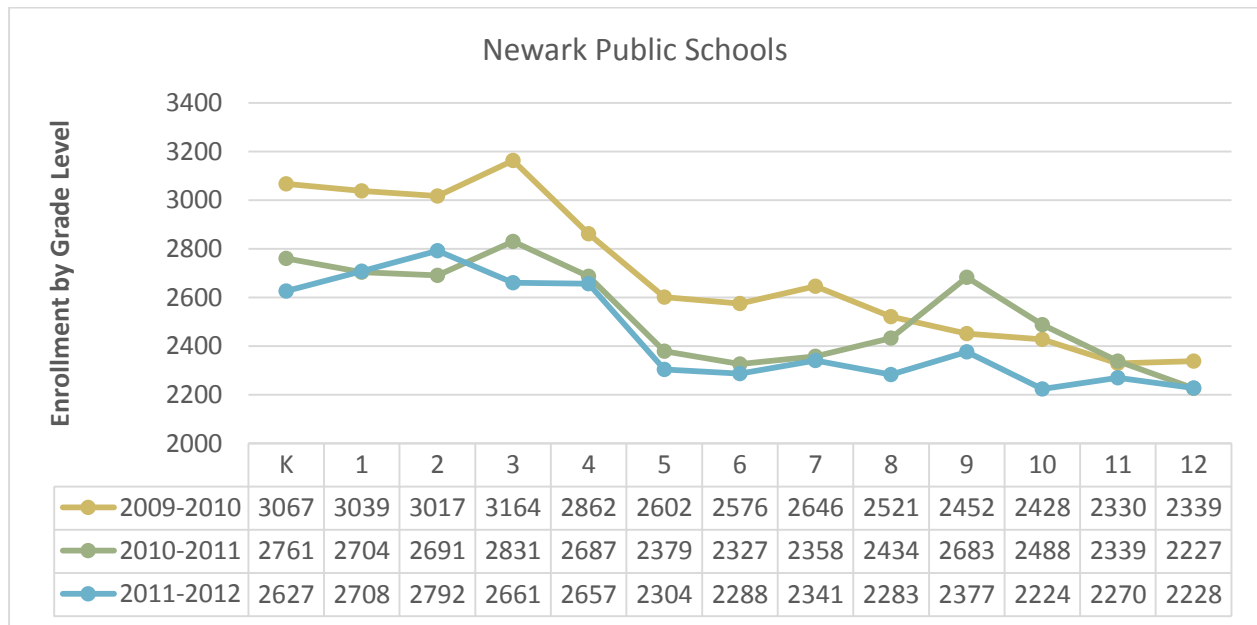
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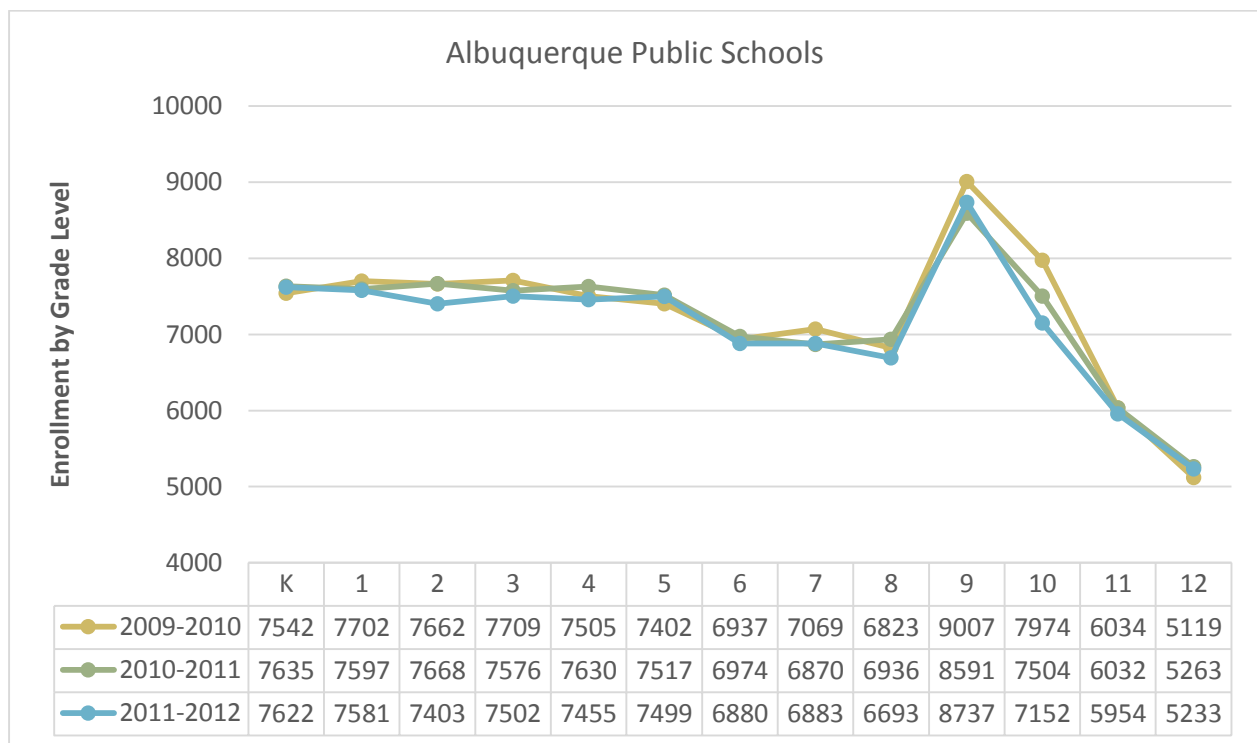
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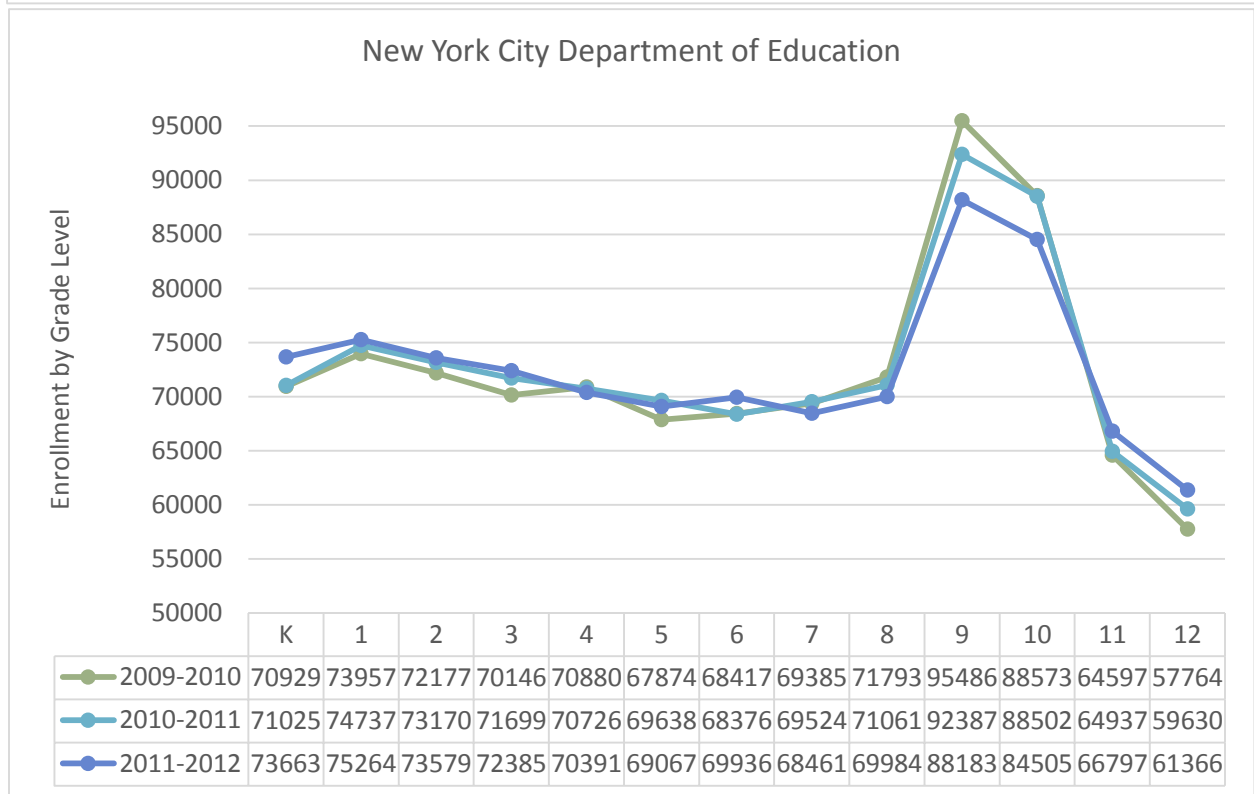
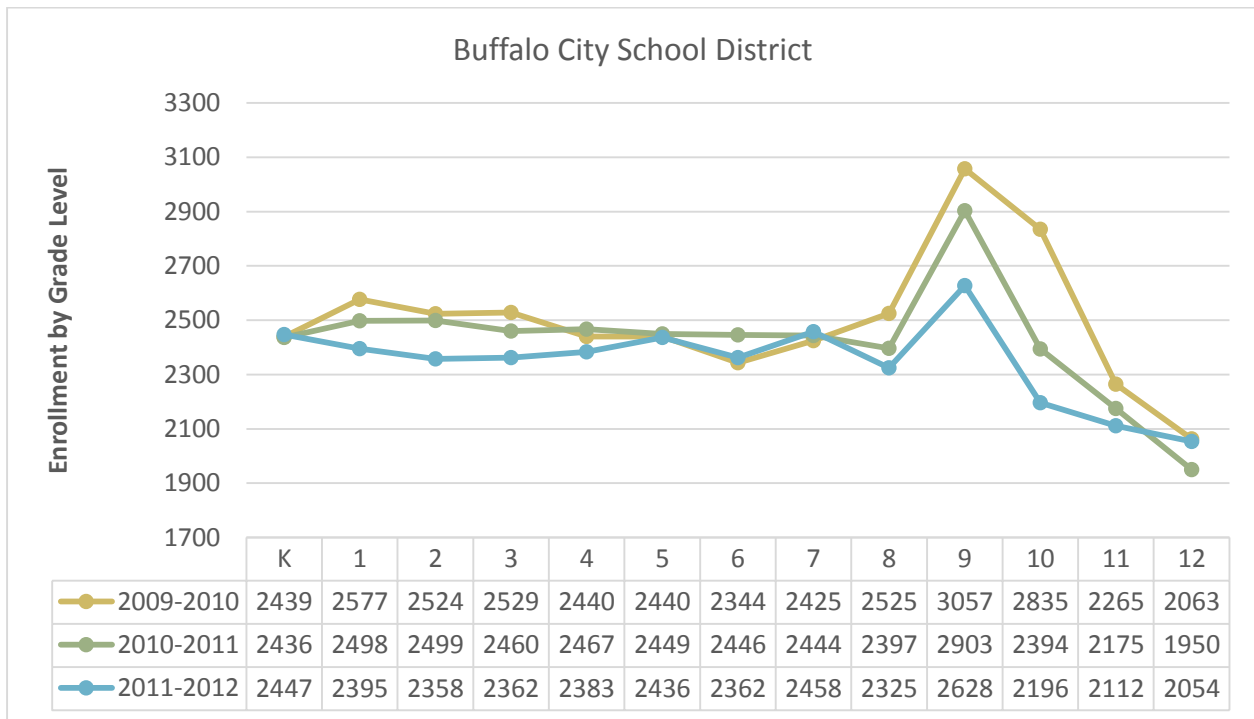
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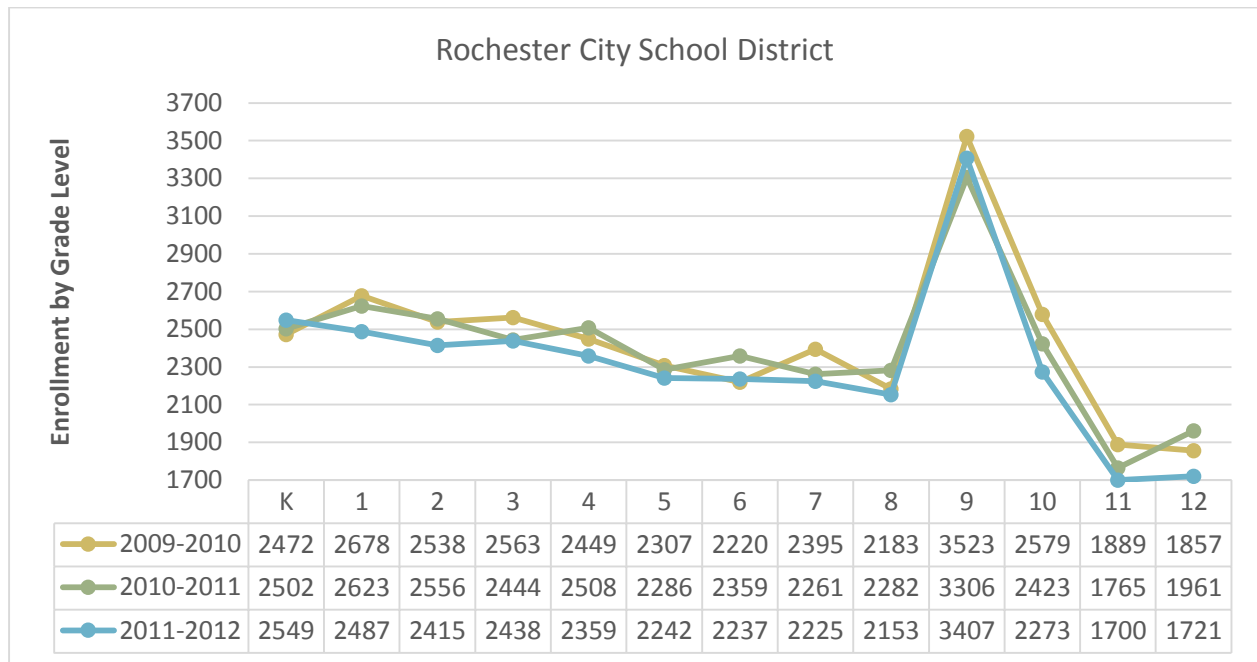


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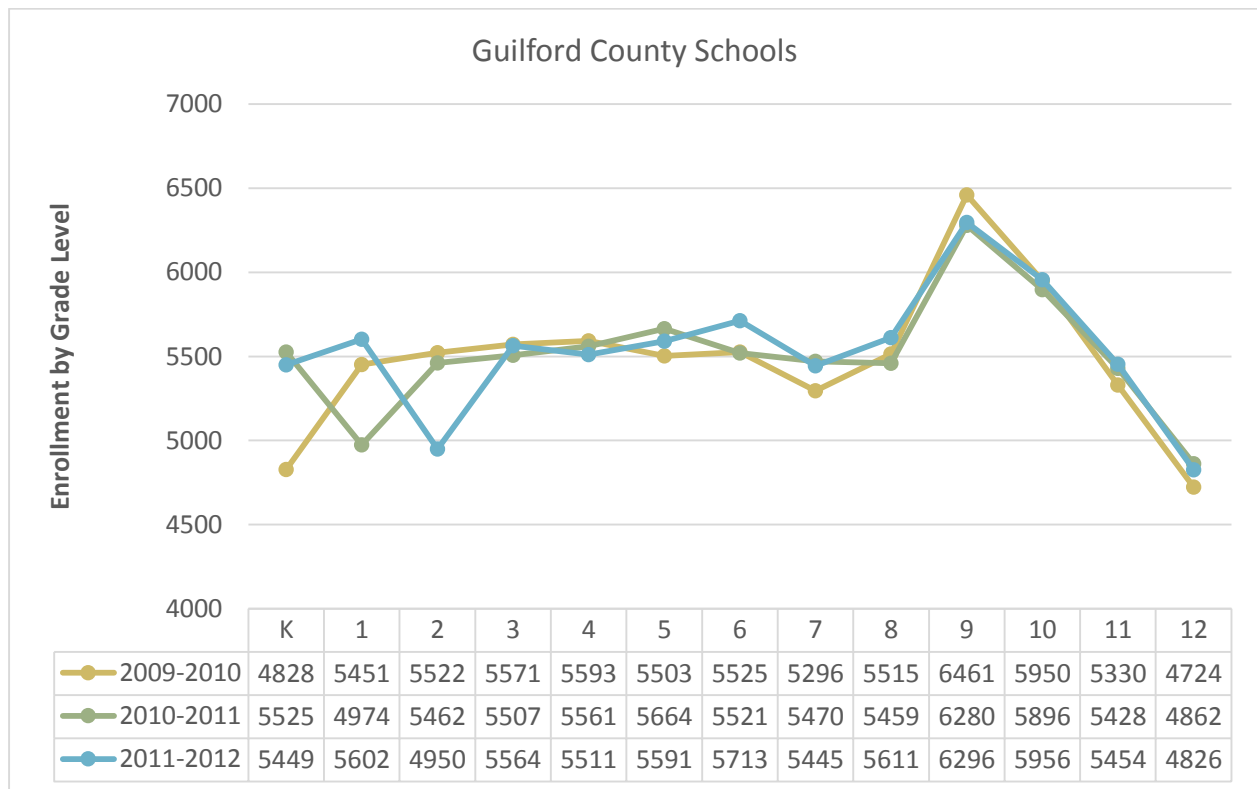


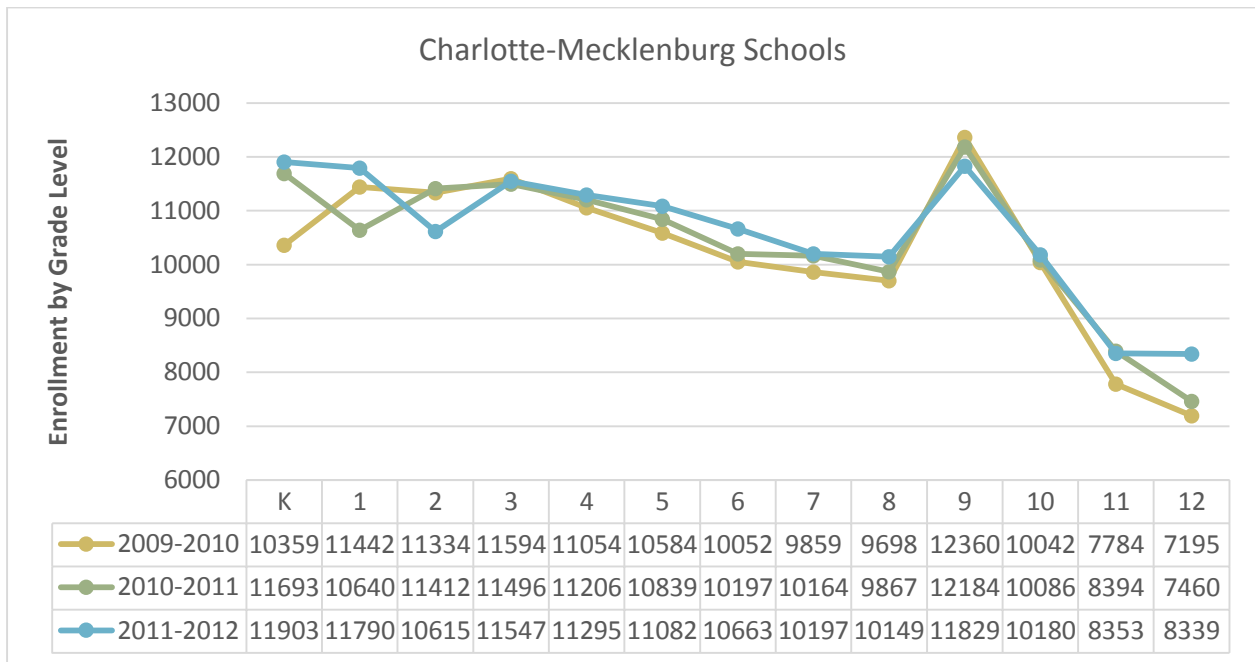
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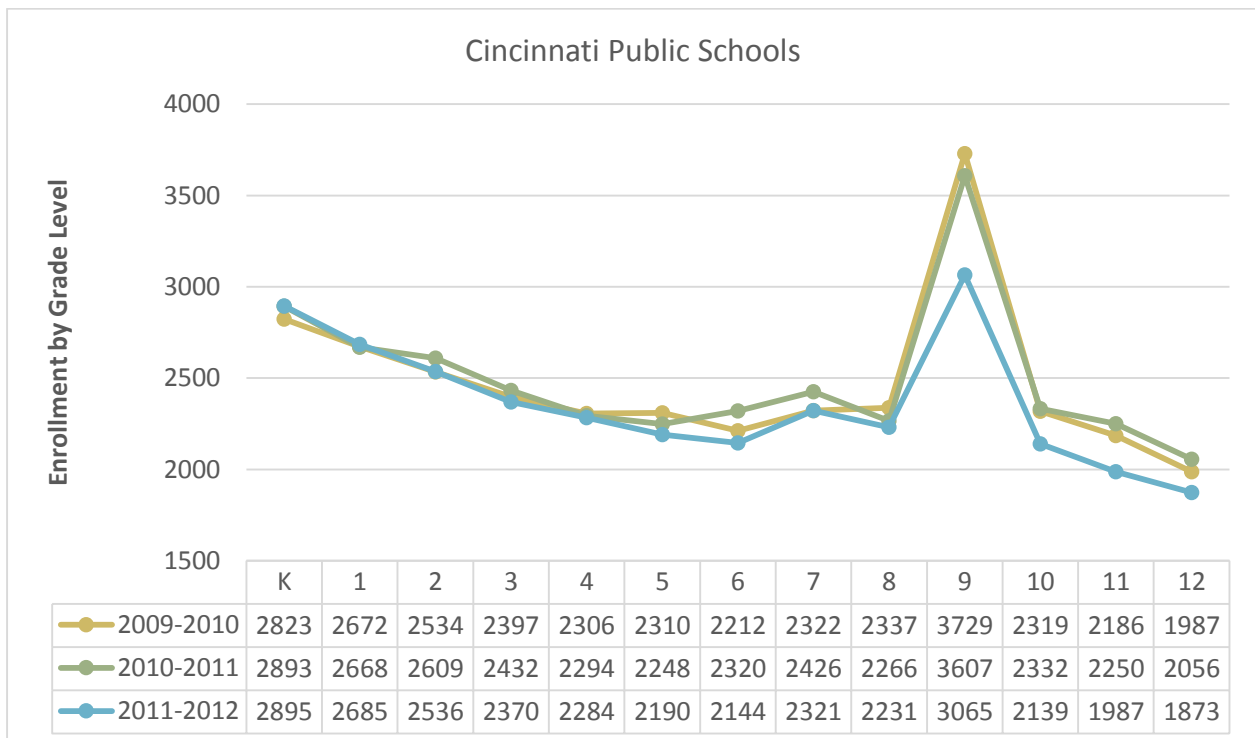


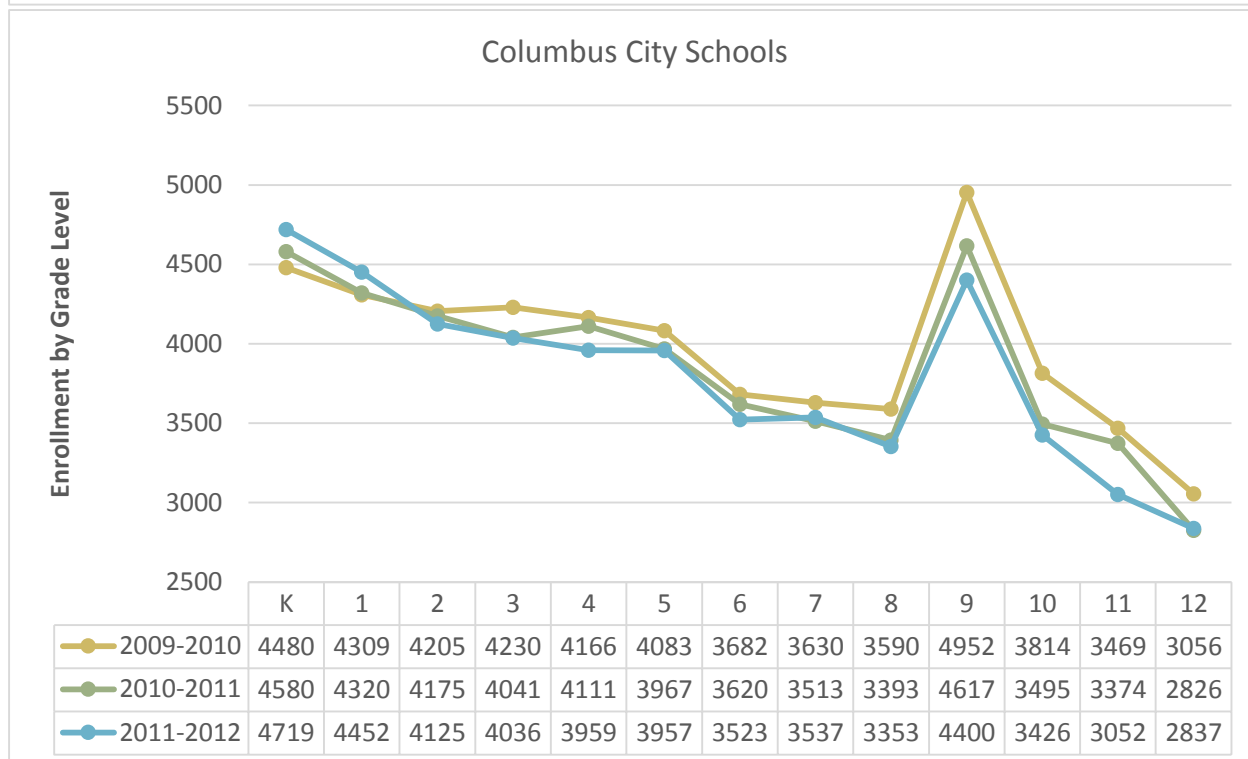
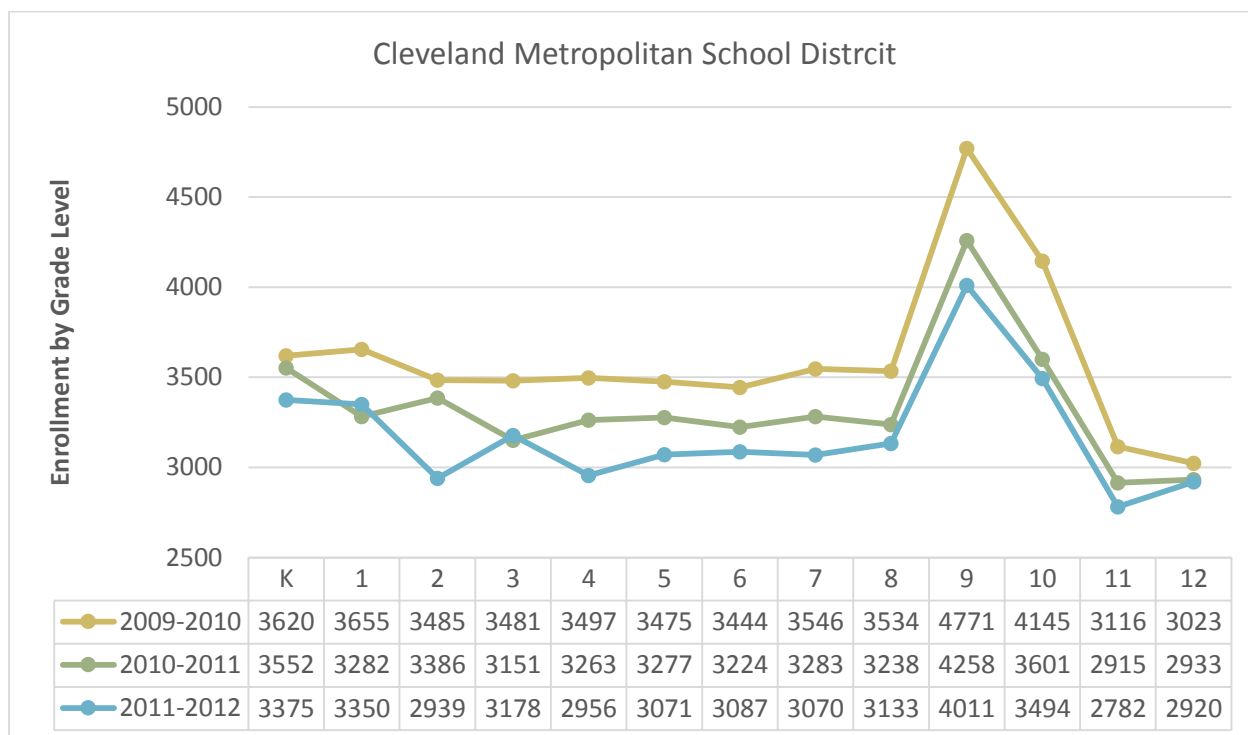
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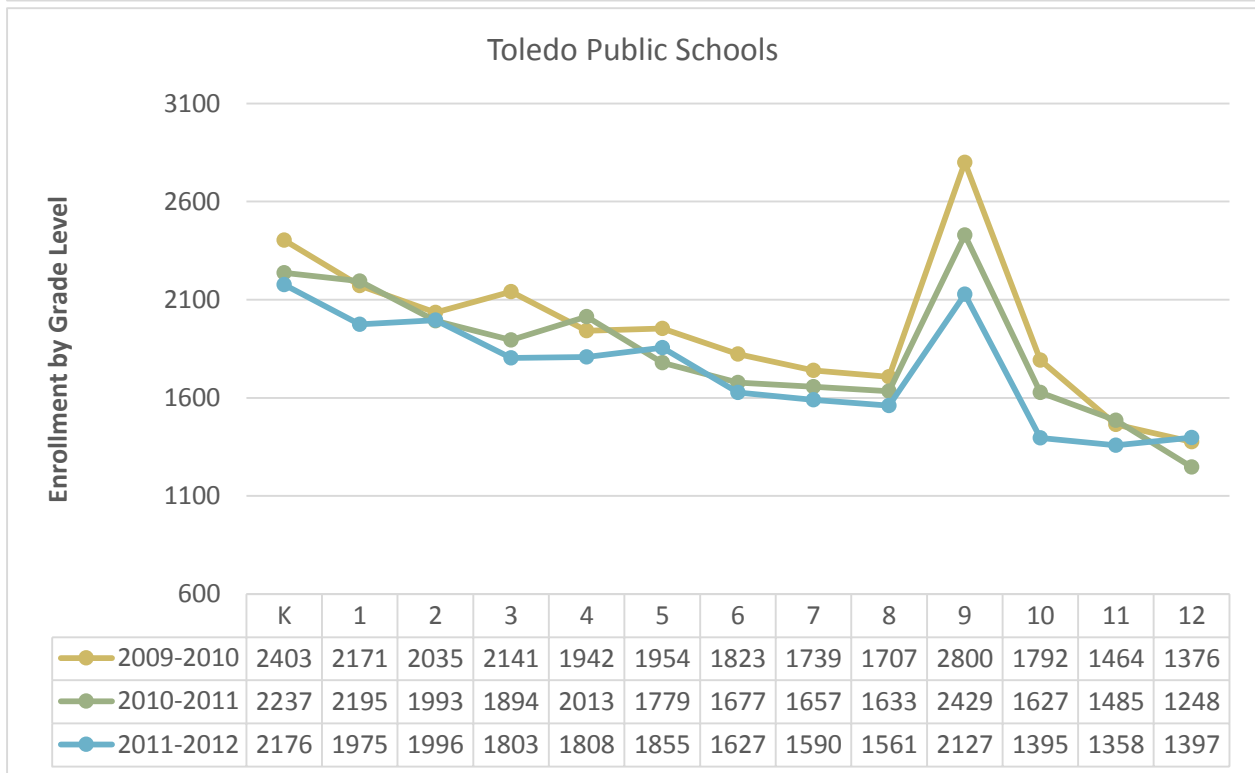
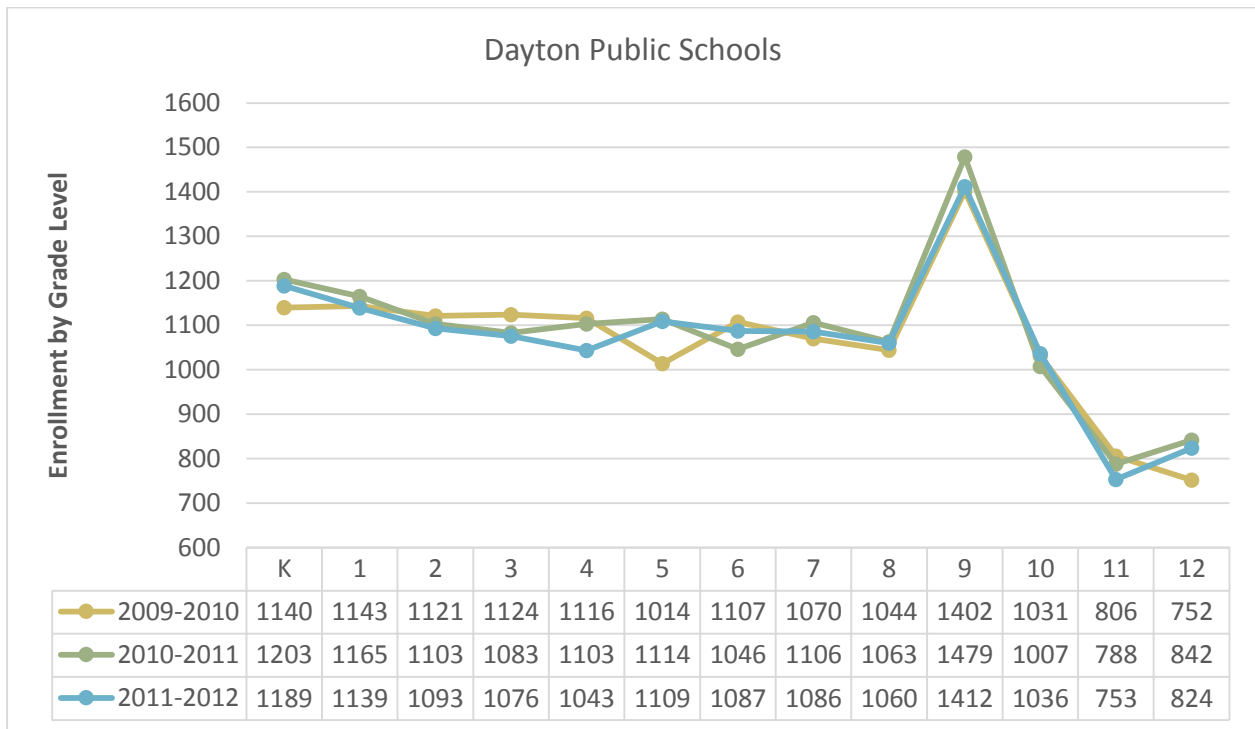




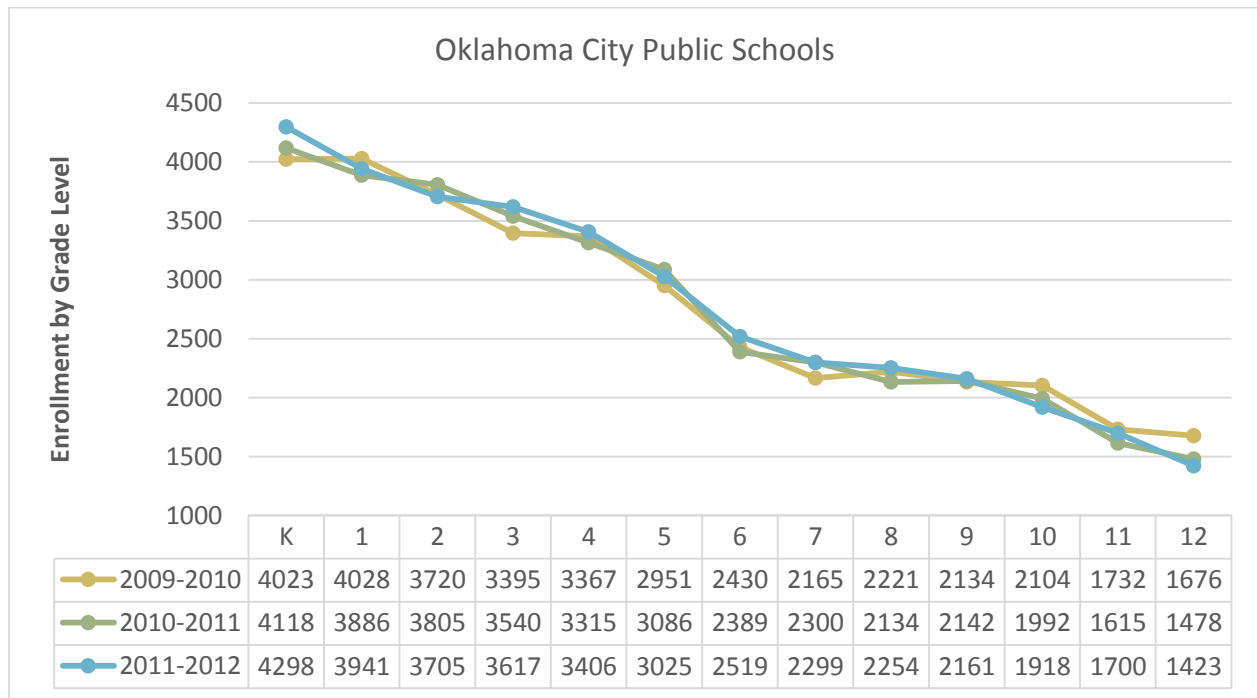
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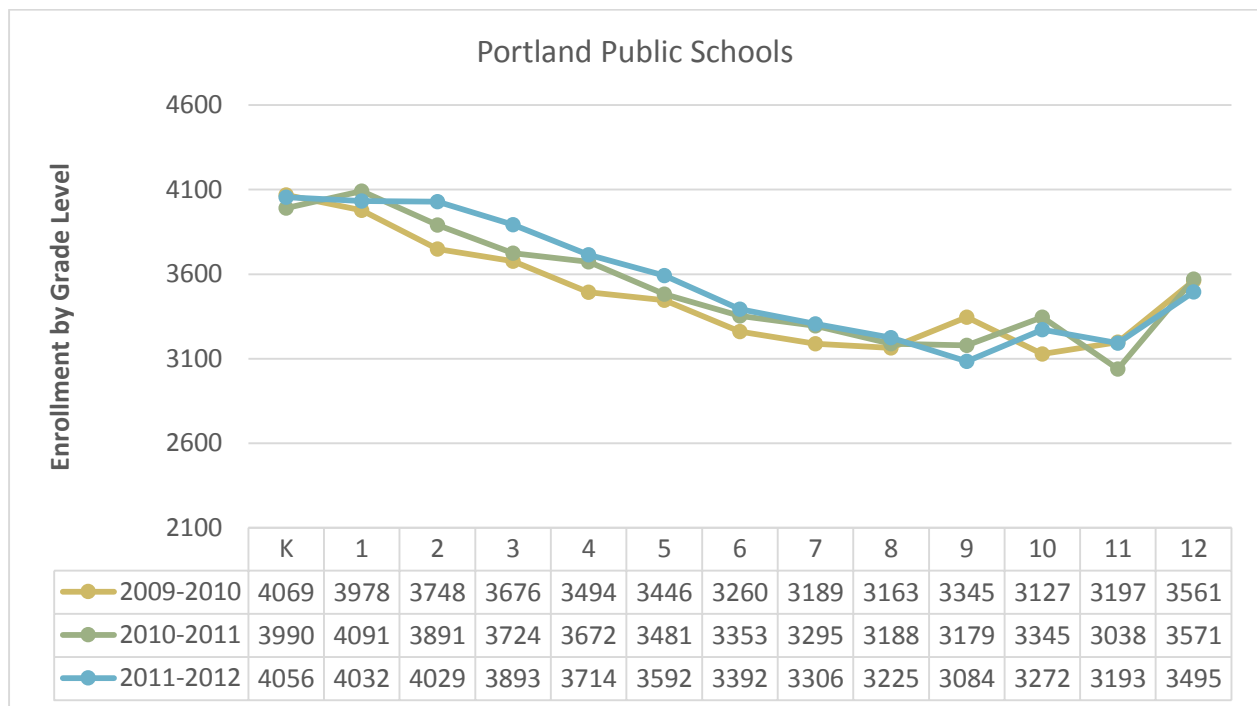




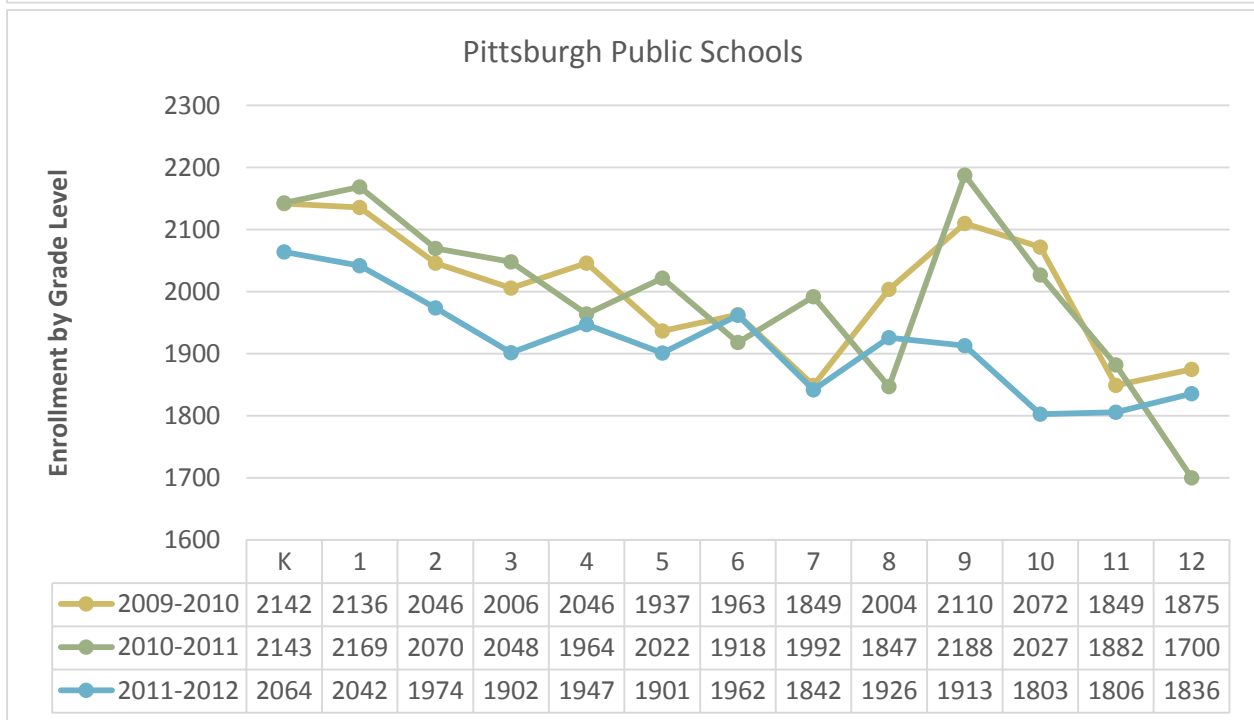
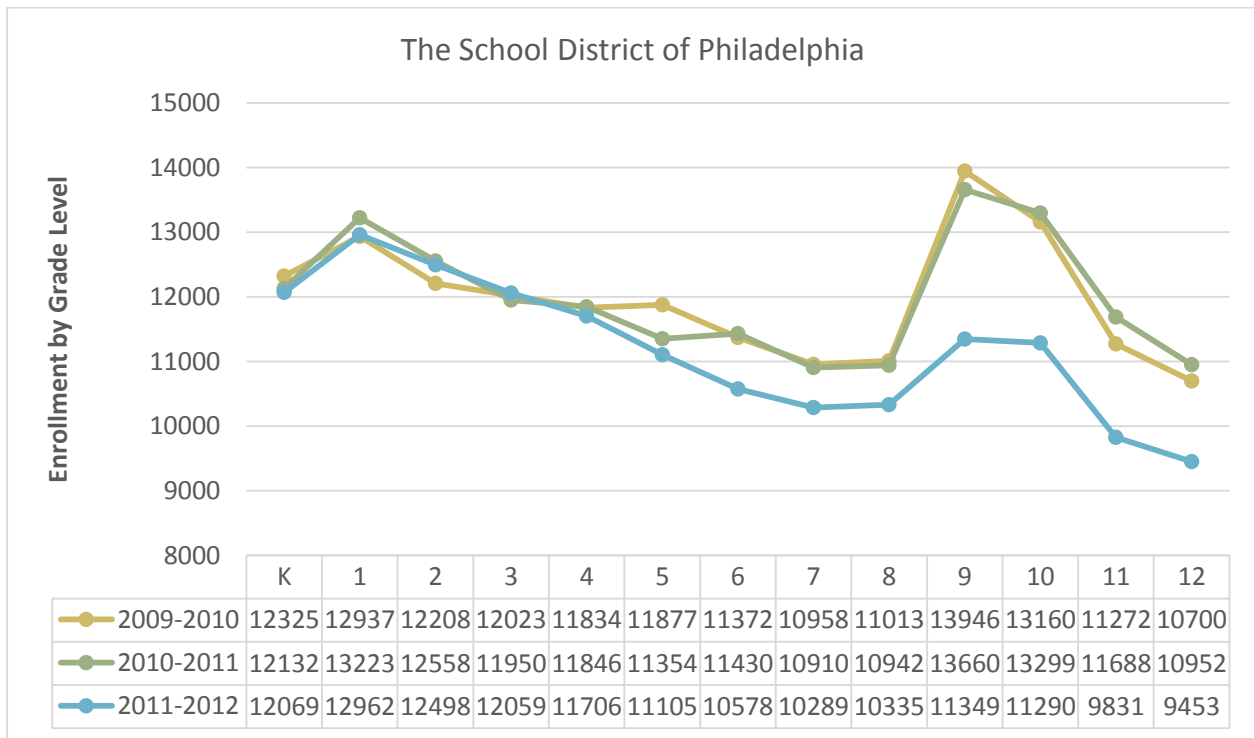
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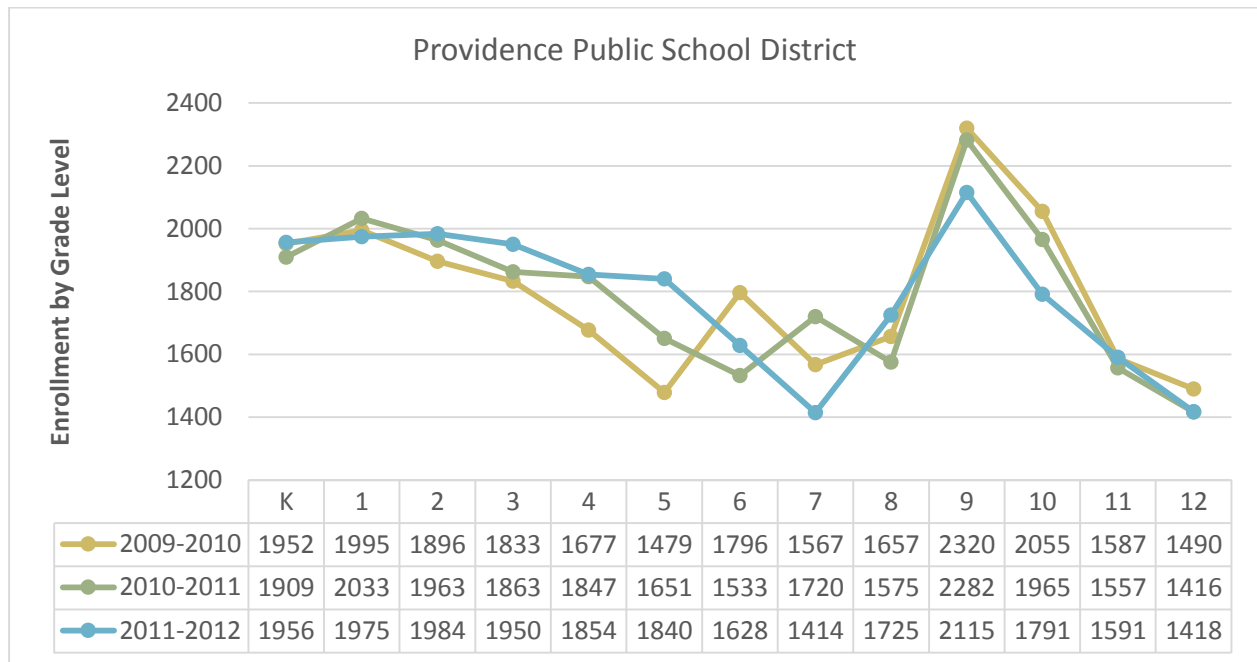
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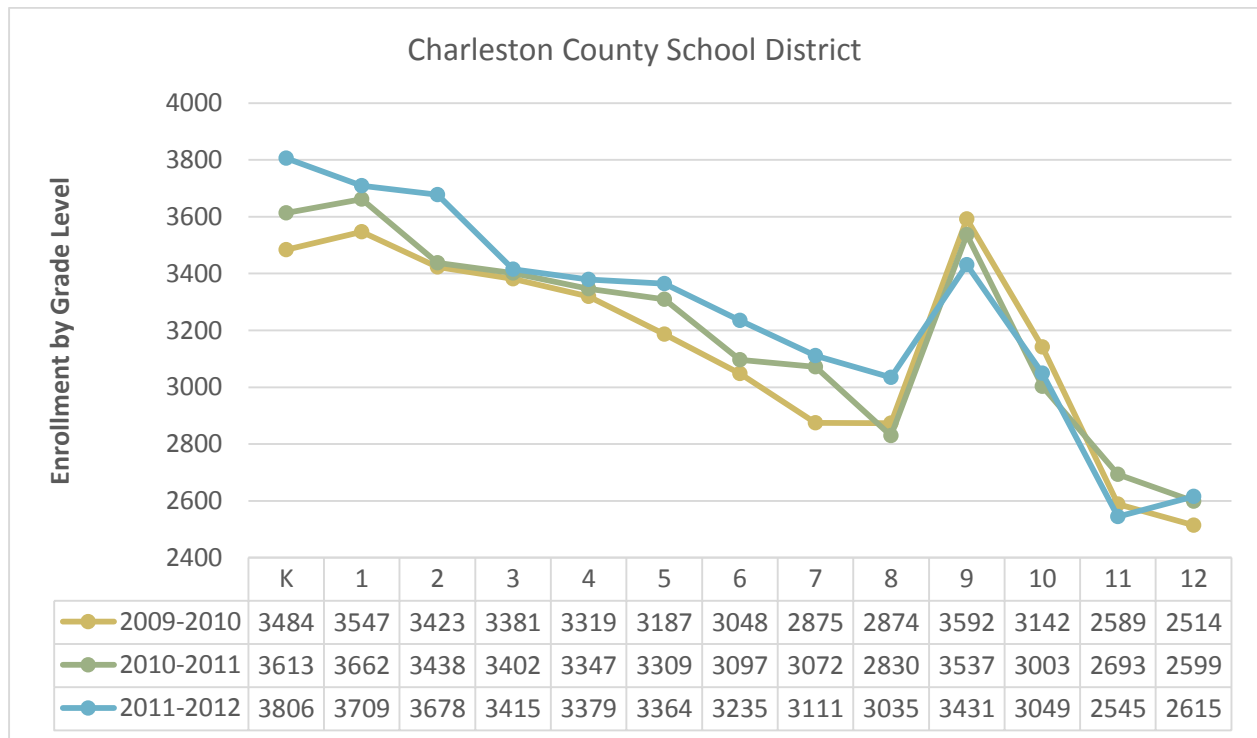
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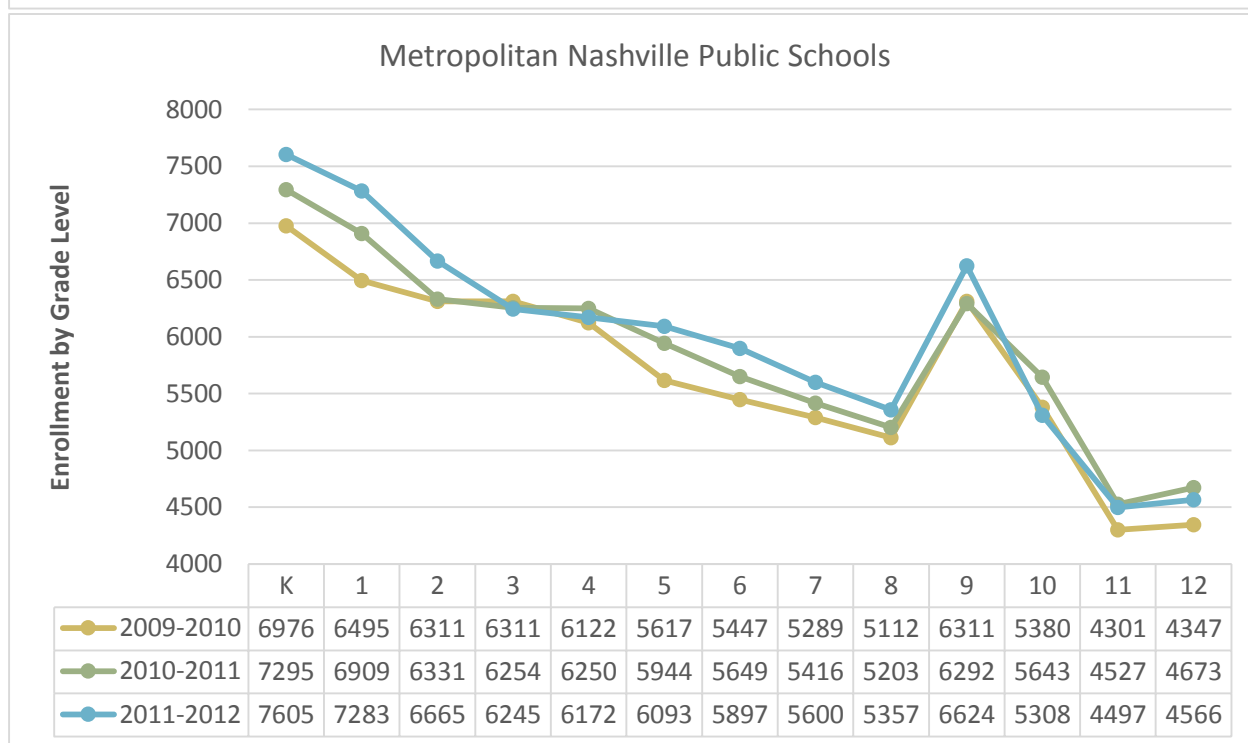
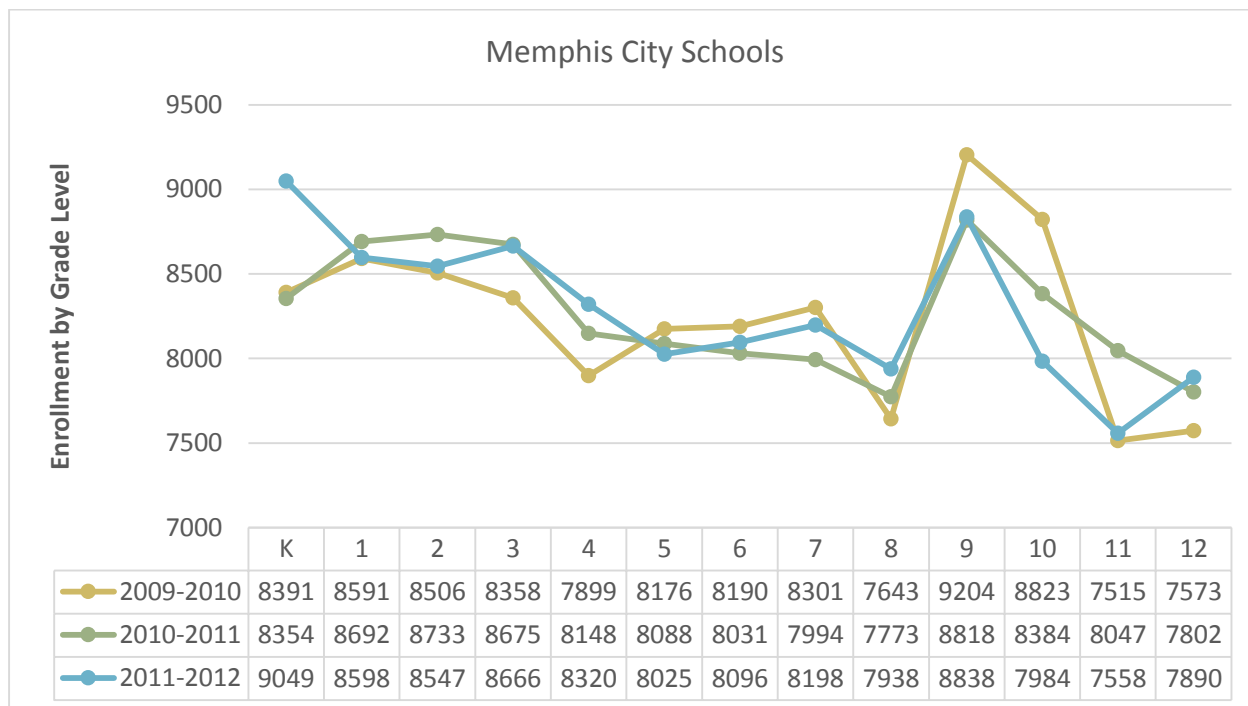
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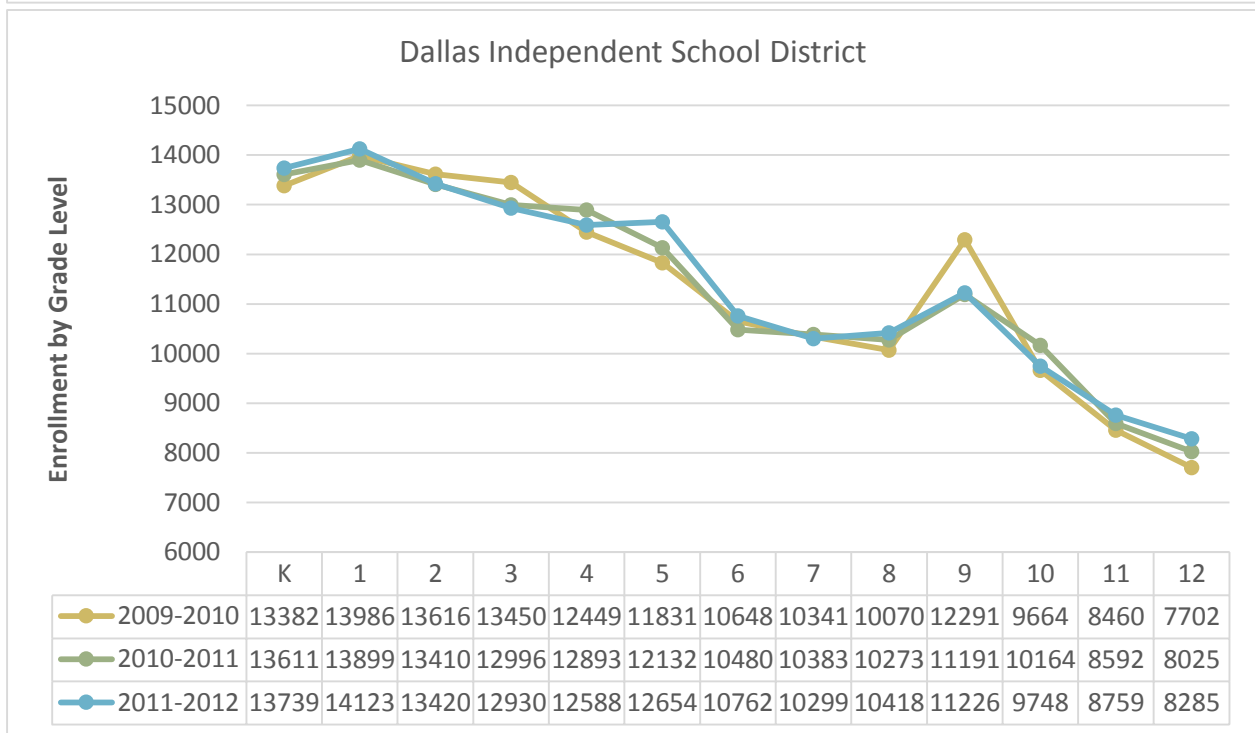
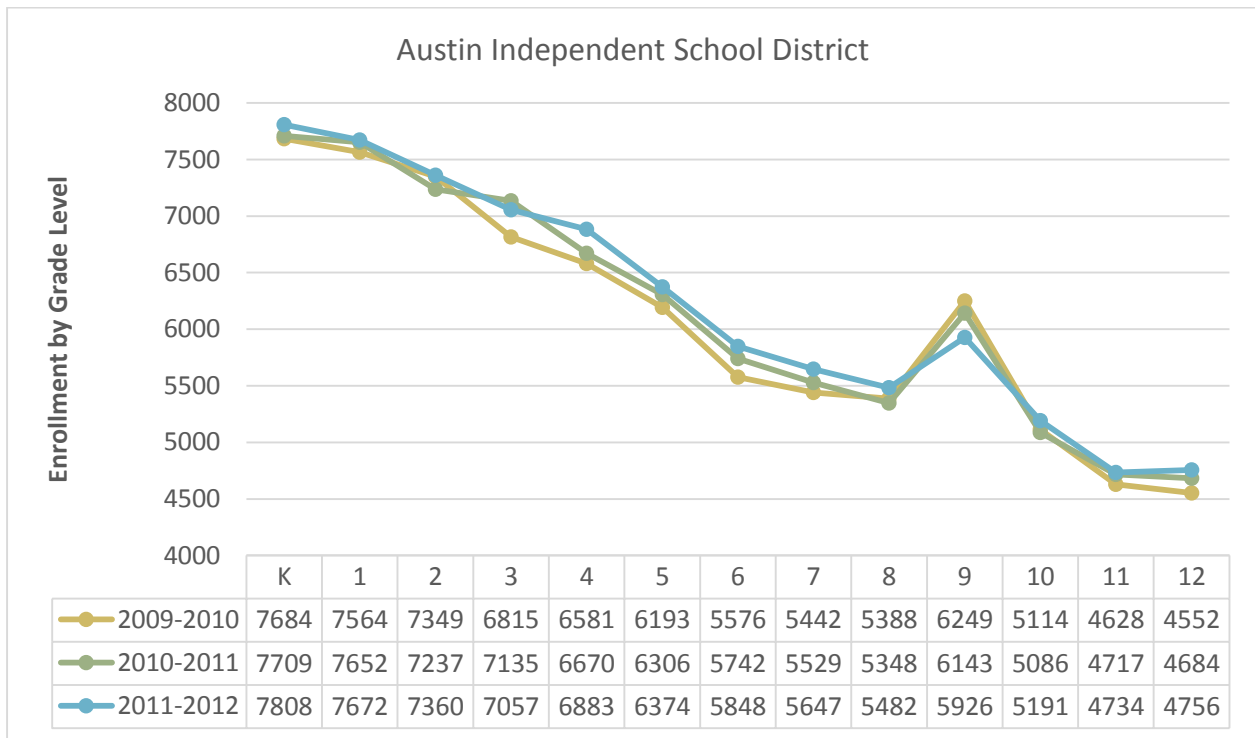
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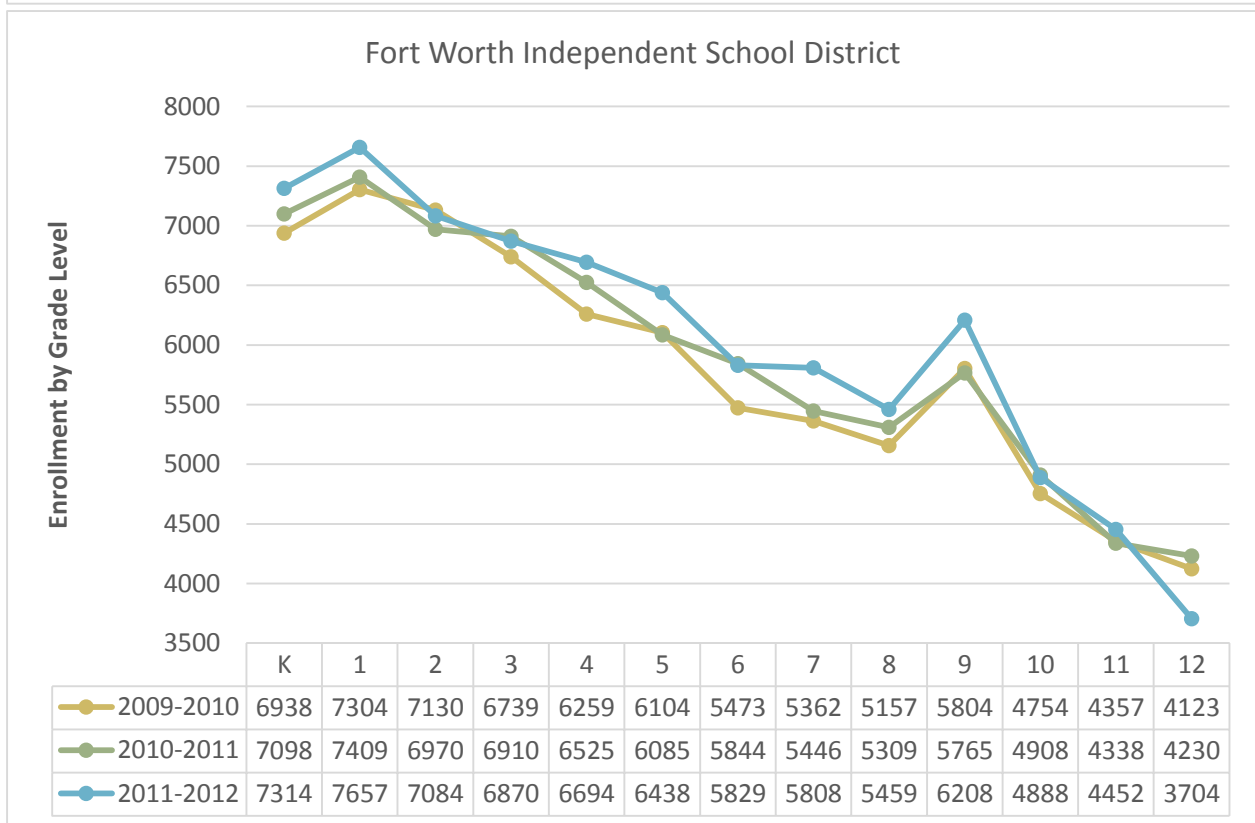
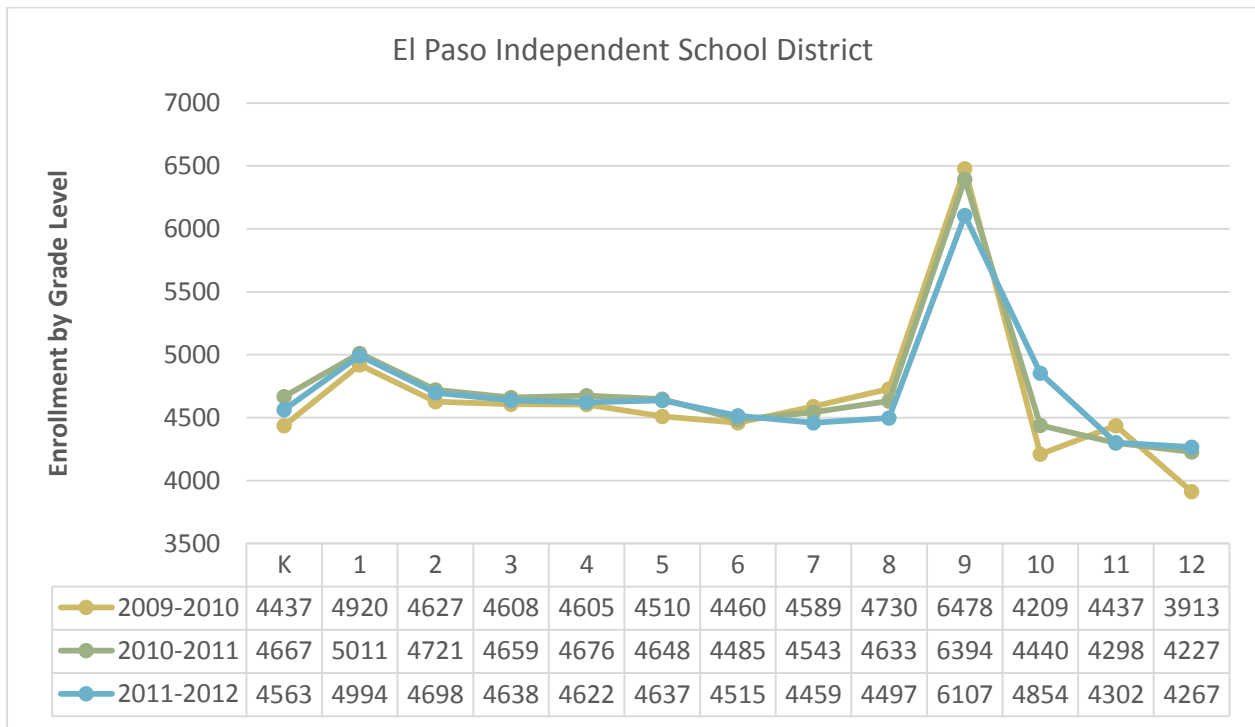


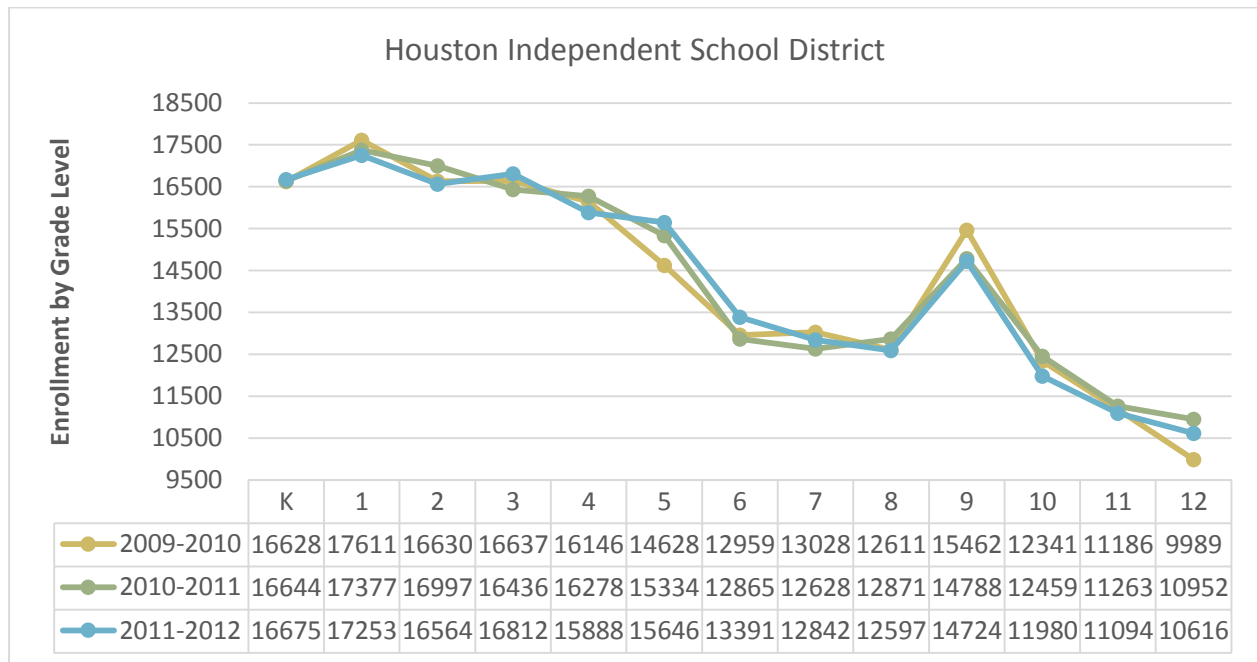
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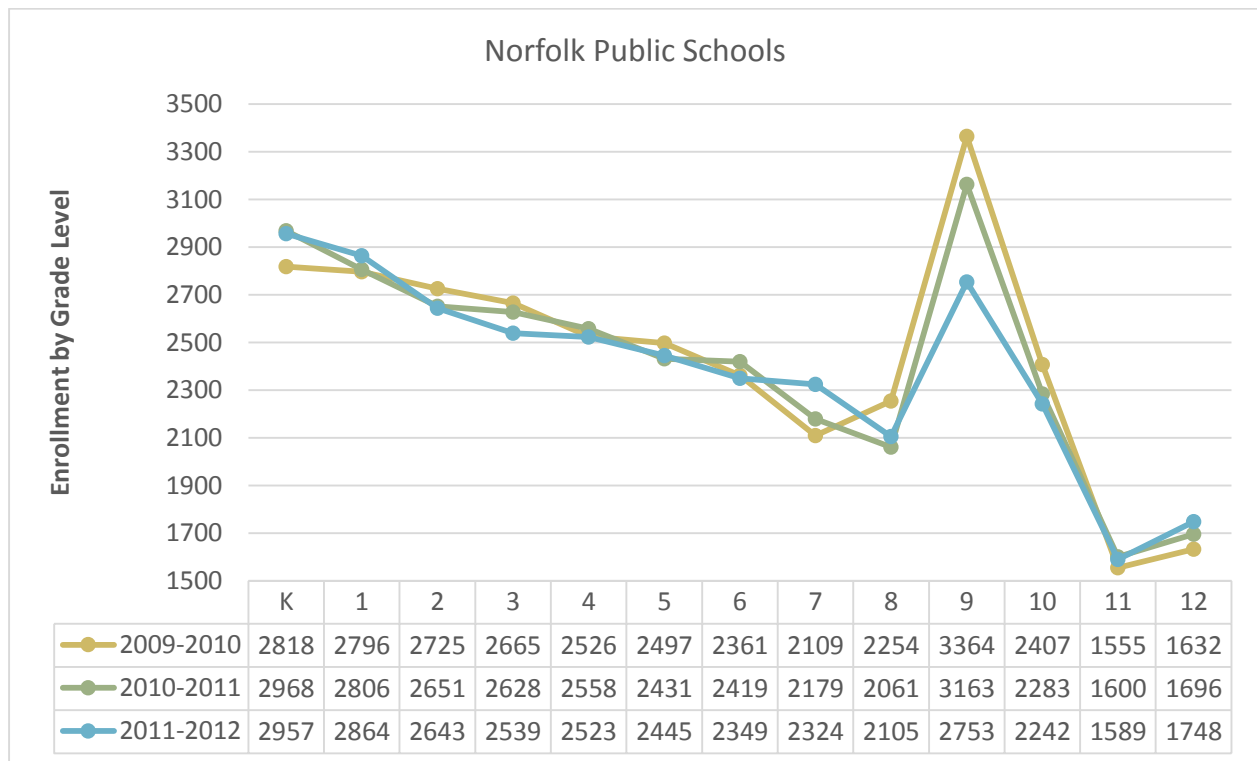
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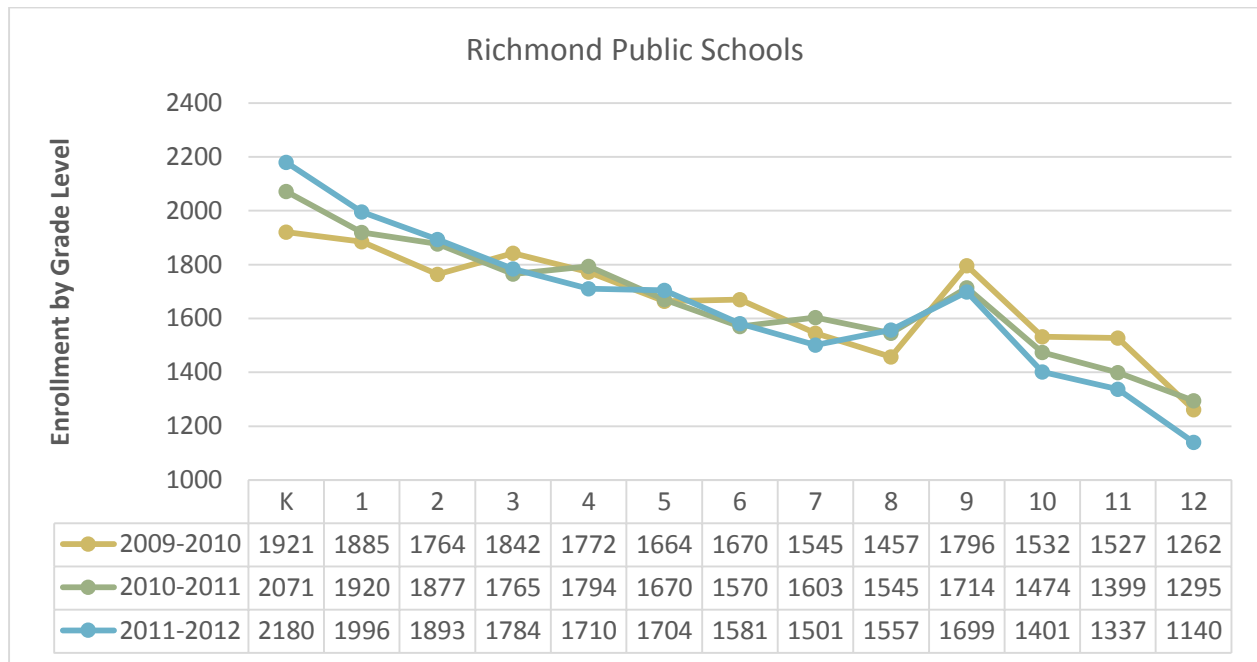




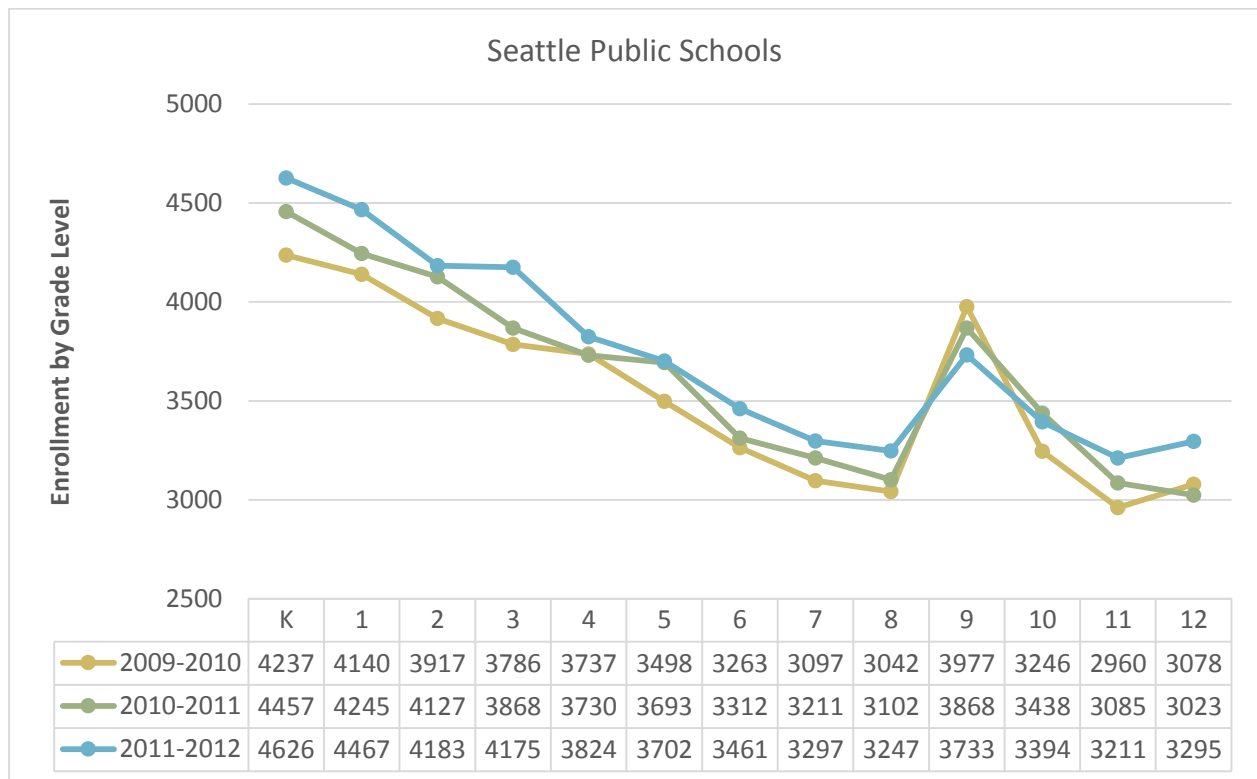


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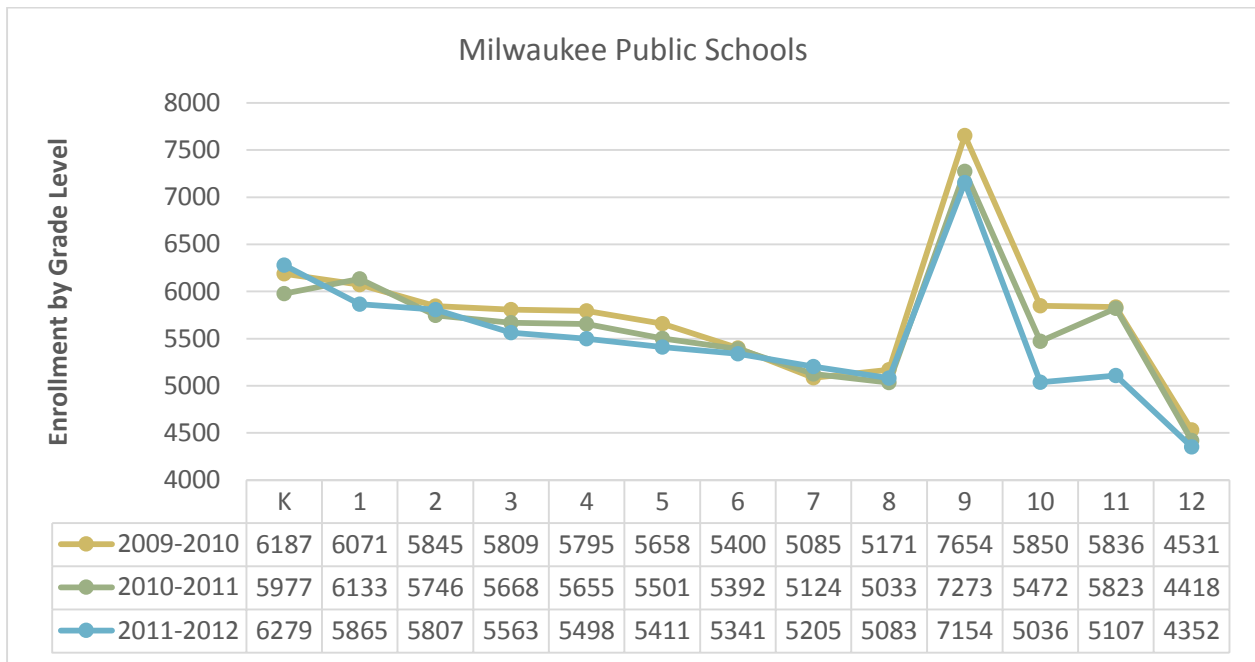




Washington



Wisconsin



Albuquerque	East Baton Rouge	Oklahoma City
Anchorage	El Paso	Omaha
Atlanta	Fort Worth	Orange County
Austin	Fresno	Palm Beach
Baltimore	Guilford County	Philadelphia
Birmingham	Honolulu	Pittsburgh
Boston	Houston	Portland
Bridgeport	Indianapolis	Providence
Broward County	Jackson	Richmond
Buffalo	Jacksonville	Rochester
Charleston	Kansas City	Sacramento
Charlotte	Long Beach	San Diego
Chicago	Los Angeles	San Francisco
Cincinnati	Louisville	Santa Ana
Clark County	Miami-Dade	Seattle
Cleveland	Milwaukee	Shelby County
Columbus	Minneapolis	St. Louis
Dallas	Nashville	St. Paul
Dayton	New Orleans	Tampa
Denver	New York City	Toledo
Des Moines	Newark	Washington, DC
Detroit	Norfolk	Wichita
	Oakland	



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Suite 702
Washington, D.C. 20004
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ACHIEVEMENT TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Achievement

2014-2015

Task Force Goal

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.

Task Force Chairs

Cecelia Adams, Toledo School Board
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO

Members

Laurie Rich Levinson, Broward County School Board
Airick West, Kansas City School Board

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



Academic Department Overview

March 2015

Overall Academic Department Goals/Priorities

The goal of the academic department is to support the work of urban districts 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 share high-leverage information through videos and publications, and we provide on-site strategic support teams, webinars, job-alike conferences and workshops. Additionally, we 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-ready standards, testing the functionality of academic key performance indicators, providing additional opportunities for regional networking as districts implement college and career readiness standards, and piloting tools for alignment of instructional materials.

Update on Activities/Projects

➤ *Academic Key Performance Indicators*

Overview

The Council received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop 20-25 academic key performance indicators (KPIs). The process is similar to the one used to develop operational KPIs. Three sub-committees have met to engage members in drafting KPIs for general education, special education, and English language learners.

Update

The list of potential KPIs has now been prioritized and indicators, where possible, link to costs and/or outcomes. A pilot survey form gathered district data from volunteer districts checking the clarity of data requests and the usefulness of initial academic key performance indicators. Draft reporting data graphs will be presented to the achievement Task Force at the March Legislative Conference.

➤ *Implementing the Common Core State Standards and College and Career Readiness Standards*

Overview

The Council has long advocated for shared standards across states. The Council has received several grants to assist our members in implementing the new standards. In

August 2011, CGCS received a three-year grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support implementation of the Common Core State Standards. While this grant is nearing completion, we have received additional grants that will be described below. The Council is working with member districts and strategic partners to coordinate and deepen successful implementation of the new K-12 standards in mathematics, English language arts and literacy, and science. The Council uses grant funding to enhance its academic support to members and to create and share a powerful selection of tools and videos for internal and external stakeholders.

Update

Gates 2011 Grant

The Council conducted an analysis of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) items that are aligned to the level of work required by the Common Core. The analysis reveals that our students are not yet performing at the level required by the Common Core. To support our members, the Council developed the booklet, “**Beyond Test Scores: What NAEP Results Tell Us About Implementing the Common Core in Our Classrooms.**” This booklet analyzes selected released 2013 NAEP items and responses together with their implications for classroom instruction and for central office action. The academic team provided professional development on ways to use this document to refine district plans, coach and support teachers and other instructional staff, and make the necessary shift of focus from what the standards are to how to help students achieve them.

Hewlett Grant for the development of Grade-Level Instructional Materials Tool-- Quality Review (GIMET-QR)

In August 2013, CGCS received a two-year grant from the Hewlett Foundation to develop grade-by-grade rubrics to further operationalize the Publisher’s Criteria in English language arts and literacy and in mathematics. Student Achievement Partners used the Publisher’s Criteria to design its Instructional Materials Evaluation Tools (IMET). Those rubrics address spans of grade levels and include a set of non-negotiables and alignment criteria.

We believe there will never be a perfect textbook that meets all the needs of every district. Once a textbook series meets the non-negotiables in the IMET, districts will still need to examine the screened materials for the level of alignment within each grade level and the quality with which the materials address the learning aligned to the standards. The Council used Hewlett funding to develop grade-by-grade rubrics consistent with textbook adoption procedures used in urban districts. For each grade level, these rubrics amplify selected non-negotiable areas and alignment criteria so that districts can discriminate which textbook or sets of materials best fit the needs of the district. They will also help districts determine priority areas to support the use of the classroom materials the district decides to adopt. The rubric, called the *Grade-Level Instructional Materials Tool-Quality Review (GIMET-QR)*, dovetails with the set of requirements for English language learners, *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*, concurrently developed under the leadership of Gabriela Uro.

GIMET-QR was developed by a group of expert curriculum leaders. The kindergarten prototypes were shared with Student Achievement Partners, and their feedback was incorporated into refinements in the documents.

In December 2014, the CGCS English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Advisory Committee reviewed the most recent prototypes of the GIMET-QR and tested them on selected instructional materials. This process and subsequent feedback led to additional improvements to the rubrics that will be piloted later this year. The GIMET-QR tools will be on www.commoncoreworks.org by the end of March and be included in a toolkit published by Student Achievement Partners.

Gates Working Groups Grant

The Council was the recipient of a 2014 grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help districts align common core implementation with other key reforms in effective teaching, as well as with efforts to prepare for new online assessments aligned to college and career-ready standards. The project brings together cross-functional teams of academic, research, assessment, technology, and operations staff from member school systems supported by Council staff. The Council also identified experts in key areas that could advance the work and an external consultant for project management.

The first working group met June 9-10, 2014, to build recommendations for districts that will be administering on-line tests this spring for PARCC or Smarter Balanced. The product of this working group was the draft document, *Implementing the Common Core Assessments: Challenges and Recommendations*. This draft provides a summary of the PARCC and SBAC assessments, challenges in implementing the new assessment, and recommendations for successfully implementing them.

On October 1-2, 2014, the second working group convened to collaboratively discuss and inform the development of implementation tools and make recommendations for steps districts might take to integrate, collaborate on, and monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of their multiple reform efforts.

➤ *Common Core Website*

The Council launched a website where districts and organizations can share high quality materials. The academic team presented the prototype for a secure portal of the Common Core website to the English Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics advisory committees. The committees provided feedback on the content, formatting, and functionality of the secure portal. Currently, the academic team is collaborating with the communications department to incorporate this feedback into the design of the portal.

CGCS has placed many materials on its website to support district implementation of the Common Core.

- A series of questions about on-going Common Core implementation called a “Calendar of Questions” arranged by month, focusing on particular aspects of implementation for staff roles at various levels of the district, as well as for parents and students.

<http://cgcs.org/Page/409>

- A resource guide “*Communicating the Common Core State Standards: A Resource for Superintendents, School Board Members, and Public Relations Executives*”, that helps district leaders devise and execute comprehensive communication plans to strengthen public awareness about and support for college and career-readiness standards.
- Two 30-second Public Service Announcements (one in English and one in Spanish) that tells the public what the Common Core Standards are.
<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/Page/379>
- Two three-minute videos (one in English and one in Spanish) that explains the Common Core in a slightly longer form. This is particularly good for presentations to community and parent groups.
<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/Page/378>
- Two three-minute videos for 2015 (one in English and one in Spanish) to 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.
<http://www.cgcs.org/Page/467>
- Two 30-second Public Service Announcements (one in English and one in Spanish) to increase public awareness regarding Common Core 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 for Mathematics.
<http://www.cgcs.org/Page/468>
- 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.
<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/domain/127>
- 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.
<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/Page/345>
- A series of parent roadmaps to the Common Core in English languages arts and literacy, grades k-12 in English and grades k-8 in Spanish.
<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=330> (English)
<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=365> (Spanish)

- A series of parent roadmaps to the Common Core in mathematics, grades k-12 in English and k-8 in Spanish.

<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=366> (English)

<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=367> (Spanish)

- 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):

<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/domain/112>

- Classroom tools and videos for teaching fractions across grades three through six.

<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/domain/120>

- 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. “Common Core State Standards and Diverse Urban School Students: Using Multi-tiered Systems of Support”

<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/domain/146>

- 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 as students study the metamorphosis of butterflies.

<http://www.commoncoreworks.org/domain/135>

Note: Other organizations have also linked our materials to their websites including the Council of Chief State School Officers, National Governors Association, Math Forum, Student Achievement Partners, and NBC’s Education Nation.

➤ *Building Awareness and Capacity of Urban Schools*

The department focuses strategically on projects that will benefit our members as they move forward with common core and with improving student achievement. First, we worked directly with the writers 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 regarding major implementation systems, including professional development, assessments, instructional resources, and student work products.

English Language Arts Writing

- The Council convened a **two-day writing conference** in Portland, Oregon on **August 25-26, 2014**. This session will repeat on **April 22-23, 2015, with a new component to address mathematics as well**. The literacy component focuses on practical approaches for teaching argumentative writing, deepening the knowledge

of writing instruction that has been presented at previous writing retreats.

- The Council and Student Achievement Partners co-sponsored the launching of the Text-Set Project in Chicago, IL on **September 16-17, 2014** to focus on how to use multiple reading selections on a theme or subject designed to deepen student understanding of the world, build vocabulary and knowledge of language structure. A subsequent Text-Set conference was held in **Baltimore, MD on December 8-9, 2014, Providence on January 22-23, 2015**, and in **Clark County on February 26-27, 2015**.

Additional training dates facilitated by Student Achievement Partners and CGCS have been set in response to requests from members wanting to host sessions in their cities. The first, hosted by **Milwaukee**, will take place **March 30-31, 2015**. **Jefferson County** will host a session in **early June**, and the third offering will take place in **Portland, June 26-27**. Any member district is welcome to send teams to those sessions by registering through the Council.

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 set effectively, and how to support students in building knowledge about the world, words, and language structure as they read the texts for themselves. District teams will produce text sets that are comprised of annotated bibliographies, suggested sequencing of texts, as well as suggested 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.

Expert reviewers will work with each production team remotely to review the materials and coach the team until the Text Sets are ready to be published free of charge on line.

Read-Aloud Project (RAP) for K-2

- As an outgrowth of the Basal Alignment and Anthology Alignment Projects, the Council together with Student Achievement Partners launched the Read-Aloud Project (RAP) for grades K-2. 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. This training includes how to locate, select and evaluate good informational articles and books to group as sets to connect to the read-aloud anchor. Vetted RAP resources are currently posted on Edmodo as they are written and reviewed in the same manner as BAP and AAP materials. Additional units are being added within RAP, BAP, and AAP project groups as they are vetted. To date, the Basal Alignment Project Group has grown to over 40,000 members with over 300 revisions to the questions currently published for textbook readings posted on Edmodo. The AAP group has over 9,000 members with approximately 200 AAP revisions posted. The first wave of more than 80 RAP lessons have been vetted and are posted on Edmodo. The RAP group has grown to nearly 3500 members.

Mathematics and Science

- In December through March of 2014, the Council notified members of a newly-released mathematics progression. “Commentary and Elaborations on the Standards for Mathematical Practice, Grades 6-8”. This progression along with a similar one released in March 2014 for Grades K-5 provides clarification about how to incorporate mathematical practices along the 6-8 continuum.
- The Council is partnering with a University of Chicago team at the Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education to review and provide feedback on a toolbox for K-12 teachers, administrators and district leaders. In December 2014, the Mathematics advisory committee met with representatives from the University of Chicago to provide feedback on proposed components of the toolbox. This toolbox, available by March 2015, will help urban districts make decisions about improving computer science education at scale.
- The Council is partnering with the Vermont Writing Collaborative and the Lawrence Hall of Mathematics and Science to conduct a two-day professional learning experience in **Portland, OR** on **April 22-23, 2015**. The topics for this meeting include:
 - Argument Writing: The Apex of Deep Understanding
 - Using The Three Reads to Support Close Reading and Problem Solving in Mathematics, which includes attention to ELL students and students with gaps in their learning.

➤ *Curriculum and Research Directors Conference*

The Curriculum and Research Directors Conference met in **Los Angeles, CA** from July 23-26, 2014. Discussions covered common core implementation, summative and formative assessments, analysis of selected 2013 NAEP items aligned with common core and their implications for classroom instruction, tools by which to determine the alignment with new standards and the quality of instructional materials, selecting materials for ELLs, new general education key performance indicators, progress on turnaround schools, disproportionality, and other topics.

The next Curriculum and Research Directors’ Conference will be held in **Chicago, July 14-18, 2015**. The department will be working with an ad hoc committee to gather input for topics that instructional leaders want to discuss in depth to address challenges they are facing. This year, the Council will extend invitations to the lead principal supervisor so that we can jointly discuss developing and maintaining productive communications across teaching and learning and school divisions that will lead to improved student achievement.

**GRADE-LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
EVALUATION TOOL**

ELA/Literacy Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool

Quality Review



Textbooks and their digital counterparts are not only vital classroom tools but also a major expense, and it is worth taking time to find the best quality materials for students and teachers. While there is no perfect set of materials or textbooks, this Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review (GIMET-QR) is designed for use by professionals as a framework for evaluating the quality of instructional materials and choosing materials that are best suited to provide a coherent learning experience for students.

The district should begin its textbook adoption process by screening an entire publisher series with the Instructional Materials Evaluation Toolkit ([IMET](#)), developed by Student Achievement Partners, to see which ones are worthy of deeper consideration. The IMET, built on the [Publishers' Criteria](#) for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, has two major non-negotiable sections and seven alignment sections. The GIMET-QR mirrors that structure, providing key criteria for each individual grade. But rather than providing an exhaustive list of grade-level standards, GIMET-QR focuses on the most distinctive, key features of the standards by grade, allowing for more in-depth analysis of the quality of the content and the instructional design of the materials—the rigor called for in the [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)-English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#).

This document contains Guiding Statements along with references to the CCSS. In response to each Guiding Statement, reviewers are asked to cite specific supporting evidence from the materials themselves, rather than relying on the table of contents or the topic headings. Evidence should include scaffolding to support ALL students including [English language learners](#), students with identified disabilities, and struggling readers with the expectation that they learn and achieve the grade-level standards. This supporting evidence can then be used to rate whether and to what degree the criteria have been met. In some cases, reviewers will want to click on the reference links to obtain more detailed information from the Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands of the CCSS, as well as the CCSS Appendices.

The review process culminates with a summary in which reviewers cite strengths and weaknesses of the product, thus providing explicit details for the overall assessment. The summary may also indicate any areas that district curriculum leaders may need to augment or supplement prior to making a recommendation for purchase.

Please note: [Acrobat Reader](#) or Adobe Acrobat is required to complete this form electronically and save any data entered by users.

NON-NEGOTIABLE 1: TEXT COMPLEXITY

*Assessing text complexity in kindergarten and grade one is more a qualitative than quantitative process. The guiding statements provided in this section will examine text complexity in order to differentiate quality and richness among the texts—particularly anchor texts—your district is considering for adoption. Anchor texts are materials designed to serve as the central unifying tool for the development of reading comprehension. While evaluations of text complexity formally begin with grade two student reading materials, texts, and other materials in kindergarten and grade one need to create the conditions for rich and robust discussion and writing for ALL students (struggling readers, students with identified academic disabilities, *English language learners*, students who are performing at grade level, and advanced students).*

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Literature and Informational Text</p> <p>NN1a. The texts present rich and embedded relationships between and among characters, ideas, and concepts that are conveyed through masterful style and structure. (See exemplars in CCSS, Appendix B.)</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>NN1b. The materials consistently include short, challenging, and complete texts that contain rich content, ideas, and academic language worthy of <u>close</u> reading. (See exemplars in CCSS, Appendix B.)</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

NN1c. The materials consistently provide opportunities to read both literary and informational texts. For student reading materials in kindergarten and grade one, refer to the *Alignment Criteria for Foundational Skills* (4a-4d of this document). Read-aloud anchor texts should fall within or above the grades two through three text complexity band.

4) extensive
3) sufficient
2) some
1) weak
Rating Pending

OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):

NON-NEGOTIABLE 2: QUESTIONS AND TASKS

At least 80% of all questions in the submission are high-quality text-dependent and text-specific questions. The overwhelming majority of these questions reference specific text and draw students' attention to the text they are reading. This requirement is already met if the district used the IMET screen. Text-dependent questions that address the kindergarten and grade one standards will be described in greater depth in Alignment Criterion II.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION I: RANGE AND QUALITY OF TEXTS

Materials must reflect a wide range of text types and genres, as required by the standards. In kindergarten and grade one, and across all other grade levels, there should be ample texts on topics that can support sustained study. Knowledge built at one grade level should be expanded in other grade levels. Topics should take into account individual student academic needs and interests in order to foster independent reading. It is also imperative that the included topics and themes are compelling enough to read multiple times and are aligned to district needs. Pay particular attention to the guidance provided in [Appendix B](#) of the Common Core State Standards.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Literature and Informational Text</p> <p>1a. The range of materials, both print and digital, allows teachers and students to explore content that coherently and systematically builds knowledge and vocabulary across subjects, themes, and topics. This applies especially to texts read aloud by the teacher, which should promote speaking and listening about topics under study in kindergarten and grade one. (See CCSS Appendix B for examples of grade-level knowledge demands.) Text sets also address a wide variety of student interests, and are likely to foster independent reading.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>1b. Text sets include a diverse range of high-quality, culturally-responsive, and appropriate topics and themes. Texts from diverse cultures reflect the same high-quality features that are demanded of all texts.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
1c. Materials include a rich and diverse sampling of literary texts, including poems and stories with relevant illustrations.		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending
1d. The range of informational texts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two selections on the same topic • Selections with various text features such as headings, tables of contents, glossaries, and illustrations 		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending
1e. Student reading materials contain a range of increasingly challenging selections that allow teachers to build students' ability to comprehend complex text and expand vocabulary throughout the school year.		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending
OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence		
SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION II. QUESTIONS AND TASKS SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

Questions posed to students in the materials under review should support student learning in building reading comprehension, in finding and producing the textual evidence to support responses, and in developing grade-level academic language (*IMET*). Texts for kindergarten and grade one students must include text-dependent questions that require the use of higher order thinking skills. There should be a range of questions that require students to attend to the author’s language as his/her vehicle for conveying meaning, as well as to support specific inferences with explicit details from the text. Most questions should require that the student refer to the text in several places in order to devise an answer—rather than asking only literal, “right there” types of questions (*CCSS*).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Literature and Informational Text</p> <p>2a. <i>Key Ideas and Details</i>. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking and answering questions about key details in the text • Retelling familiar stories, including key details • Identifying and describing characters, settings, and major events in a story • Identifying the main topic of a text • Describing the connection between two individuals, events, or ideas in a text 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>2b. <i>Craft and Structure</i>. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining the meanings of unknown words and phrases in stories, poems, and informational texts • Recognizing and explaining the differences between common types of text both literary (such as storybooks and poems) and informational • Naming the author and illustrator and describing their roles in telling the story or presenting ideas • Recognizing and using various features in informational texts (such as headings or glossaries) to locate information 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>2c. <i>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</i>. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing and contrasting the experiences of characters in stories • Describing the key ideas conveyed in illustrations • Identifying reasons authors give to support points and the similarities between two texts on the same topic 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION III. WRITING TO SOURCES AND RESEARCH

The writing standards for each grade level highlight distinctive expectations about student writing. In kindergarten and grade one, students perform age-appropriate writing tasks and assignments with support and guidance from the teacher. For details on text types and purposes, production and distribution of writing, research to build and present knowledge, and the range of writing in kindergarten and grade one, see the [Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy](#). The metrics below show key characteristics to look for in your review of materials.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>3a. Writing assignments are explicitly connected to what students are reading, and materials are organized to elicit responses to sources in age-appropriate ways. This might include activities such as dictation or making pictures to express thoughts in addition to writing, with support from the teacher.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>3b. Text-dependent questions generally create the foundation for students to address culminating writing tasks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinion writing, in which students introduce a topic or name a book, state an opinion, and supply a reason for the opinion (using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing at the kindergarten level) • Informative/explanatory writing, in which students name a topic and supply facts about the topic (using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing at the kindergarten level) • Narrative writing, in which students recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, including details about what happened (using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing at the kindergarten level) 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>3c. Reading materials can serve as models to explore writer's craft and support student production of grade-level opinion, informational, and narrative writing.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>3d. Materials include explicit support to teachers, either in the teacher’s edition or classroom materials, for writing instruction linked to the kindergarten and grade one writing standards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on a topic, responding to questions from peers, and adding details to strengthen writing as needed • Exploring and starting to use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>3e. Materials provide opportunities and resources for students to participate in shared research and writing projects, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling information from experiences • Gathering information from provided sources 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION IV: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Effective instruction on foundational skills in kindergarten and grade one includes explicit and systematic lessons and diagnostic support in concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, phonics, phonological awareness, vocabulary development and word recognition, syntax, and reading fluency. Students must be able to recognize and pronounce words fluently in order to focus on the major goal of reading, which is comprehension. Building these foundational skills must be contextualized within the materials.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>4a. Materials provide teachers with guidance and support for explicit and systematic instruction of the kindergarten and grade one Reading Standards for Foundational Skills (CCSS), including concepts of print, phonological awareness, letter recognition, phonics, word recognition, and reading fluency in a research-based and transparent progression. (Refer to CCSS Appendix A for the research detailing the advancement of foundational reading skills.)</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>4b. Materials include a variety of opportunities that allow for systematic and frequent practice of all foundational skills through such features as engaging texts, games, digital materials, etc..</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
4c. Materials provide regular practice in encoding (spelling) and decoding (reading) the sound symbol relationships of English.		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending
4d. Materials guide students in reading emergent reader texts for kindergarten and grade-level texts for grade one with purpose and understanding, making frequent connections between the acquisition of foundational skills and access to the meaning of texts (including a set of text-dependent or text-specific questions to check for understanding).		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending
OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence		
SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION V: LANGUAGE

The Common Core State Standards for language focus on ensuring that students gain adequate mastery of a range of language skills and applications. Students are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and knowledge (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Conventions of Standard English</p> <p>5a. There is evidence that grade-level grammar and conventions are addressed using an integrated and contextualized approach in daily instruction. Materials and tasks in kindergarten and grade one are designed to help build student understanding and use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper- and lower-case letters • Question words • Recognition and use of end punctuation • Frequently occurring nouns in kindergarten, and common, proper, and possessive nouns by grade one • Frequently occurring verbs in kindergarten, and use of verbs to convey past, present, and future actions in grade one • Complete sentences in kindergarten, and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in grade one • Capitalization of the first word in a sentence in kindergarten, and of dates and names of people in grade one • Correct spelling, by sounding out simple words phonetically in kindergarten and applying common spelling patterns to spell words in grade one <p>Grade One</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular plural nouns, with matching verbs • Personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns • Conjunctions and determiners, such as articles or demonstratives • Frequently occurring adjectives 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</p> <p>5b. The materials provide context, support, and strategies for teaching vocabulary acquisition skills, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying new meanings for familiar words in kindergarten • Using sentence-level context clues to unlock the meaning of words in grade one • Using frequently occurring inflections and affixes as clues to the meaning of words • Using root words (such as look) and their inflectional forms (looks, looked, looking) in grade one 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>5c. The materials provide embedded opportunities for students to encounter and develop an understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION VI: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

To be CCSS-aligned, speaking and listening must be integrated into lessons, items, and tasks. These must reflect a progression of communication skills required for eventual college- and career-readiness, as outlined in the standards (see *IMET*). If kindergarten and grade one students are able to listen to others, discuss what they are learning, and voice their own confusion or misunderstandings, their learning becomes deeper and more meaningful. They are exposed, at this level, to points of view that may differ from their own, and they learn how to agree and disagree, express their own thoughts, and ask questions when they don't understand or need more clarification.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>6a. <i>Comprehension and Collaboration</i>. Materials provide a frame that guides student participation in academic conversations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreeing on rules for discussion, taking turns speaking • Confirming understanding of texts read aloud • Asking and answering questions to clarify and gather information 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>6b. <i>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</i>. Materials include tasks that promote oral responses in a range of collaborative discussions, and support students in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing people, places, things, and events • Using visual displays to add details • Speaking audibly and completing sentences 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

ALIGNMENT CRITERION VII: SCAFFOLDING AND SUPPORTS

*While scaffolds are not a part of the standards themselves, it is important to support teachers in meeting the needs of the range of students in their classrooms.¹ In order to meet the reading, speaking, and writing needs of **all** kindergarten and grade one students, the materials must include supports for students to apply concepts of print, phonics, vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency in comprehending texts. Supports and scaffolds should draw students back to the text and provide strategies for vocabulary acquisition. All scaffolding and supports require ongoing formal and informal assessments that provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency and inform instruction.*

As stated in the IMET, scaffolding is not just intended for struggling students, but also for students who are ready for above grade-level work. As text complexity increases, and tasks get increasingly challenging, the need for appropriate scaffolds for above grade-level access is equally important.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>7a. The texts promote differentiated instruction and instructional conversations about text to support student learning of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic language • Linguistic frames • Repeated grammatical structures and language 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>7b. The materials include student supports such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple digital and media versions of texts • Illustrations • Graphs and charts • Maps and photographs • Visual cues/notes that draw attention to words in the text that signal sequence or offer clues to meaning (such as where, when, and how key events occur) 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

¹ For additional considerations for ELLs, see *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>7c. The materials are designed to support teacher instruction by use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit instructional directions accompanied by materials that are clearly aligned to stated goals and objectives and that build student ability to read and comprehend grade-level text • Strategies to gradually increase difficulty as students' skills strengthen • Strategies to support student acquisition of knowledge supporting specific common core standards • Clear and detailed teacher directions and guidance for introducing new concepts and skills • Clear guidance for documenting student progress toward meeting grade-level standards 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>7d. The materials provide support for students with varying learning styles and modalities (i.e., there are provisions for print, digital, and other multimedia sources for information attainment).</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>7e. The materials include developmentally-appropriate materials and instructional sequences specifically designed for students in the primary grades (such as role play, songs, games, etc.).</p>		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
<p>7f. The materials include assessments along with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for next steps to address a spectrum of performance levels and needs based on assessment results • Opportunities for students to demonstrate their expertise through the use of performance tasks • Pieces of challenging and complete text that can be used to assess student understanding and next instructional steps • Reading selections and questions that progress in a logical sequence for gradual release² • Enrichment tasks for students who are on target for meeting grade-level expectations • Steps to take when evidence suggests that students are starting to fall behind 		<p>4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak Rating Pending</p>
<p>OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence</p>		
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):</p>		

2 Gradual release: scaffolding of instruction so that students develop the ability to read and complete tasks and assignments independently and proficiently.

DECISION RECORDING SHEET

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Based on the substantial evidence collected and the analysis you have done as you reviewed these materials, complete the following form. Please add comments about what influenced your decision in each of the areas listed below.

RUBRIC SECTION	QUALITATIVE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE	RATING
Non-Negotiable 1: Text Complexity		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Non-Negotiable 2: Questions and Tasks		meets does not meet
Alignment Criterion I: Range and Quality of Texts		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion II: Questions and Tasks Support Student Learning		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion III: Writing to Sources and Research		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak

RUBRIC SECTION	QUALITATIVE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE	RATING
Alignment Criterion IV: Foundational Skills		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion V: Language		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion VI: Speaking and Listening		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
Alignment Criterion VII: Scaffolding and Supports		4) extensive 3) sufficient 2) some 1) weak
OVERALL RATING: 4) extensive evidence 3) sufficient evidence 2) some evidence 1) weak evidence		
GENERAL COMMENTS:		

ADOPTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM

Based on the substantial evidence collected, please rank all the kindergarten and grade one materials you reviewed in the order in which you would recommend them for adoption. The program or materials with your highest recommendation should be listed as number one below. Please provide any comments you deem pertinent. Include answers to the following questions based on the evidence cited in your materials review:

- **What are the top three strengths of this text?**
- **What areas need improvement?**
- **What additional supports would be needed to implement the textbook series or digital materials?**

RECOMMENDED	
PROGRAM NAME/EDITION:	COMMENTS:
1	
2	
3	

continued >

NOT RECOMMENDED

	PROGRAM NAME/EDITION:	COMMENTS:
1		
2		
3		

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Mathematics Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool

Quality Review

Textbooks and their digital counterparts are vital classroom tools but also a major expense, and it is worth taking time to find the best quality materials for students and teachers. While there is no perfect set of materials or textbooks, this Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review (GIMET-QR) is designed for use by professionals as a framework for evaluating the quality of instructional materials and choosing materials that are best suited to provide a coherent learning experience for students.

The district should begin its textbook adoption process by screening an entire publisher series with the Instructional Materials Evaluation Toolkit (IMET), developed by Student Achievement Partners, to see which ones are worthy of deeper consideration. The GIMET-QR can then be used to evaluate materials *for each individual grade*. But rather than providing an exhaustive list of grade-level standards, GIMET-QR starts with the progression to algebra continuum as the major area of focus, allowing for the in-depth review of a smaller set of mathematical concepts covered in the Common Core State Standards Mathematics (CCSS-M) at each grade level.

The GIMET-QR focuses on both the quality of the *content* and the instructional *design* of materials—with a specific focus on evaluating whether materials contain a balance of the three components of rigor, conceptual understanding, applications, and fluency, called for in CCSS-M. Unlike many tools that evaluate the presence or absence of required content, the GIMET-QR prompts reviewers to ask, “How *well* do the materials and assignments reflect and support the rigor of the CCSS-M?”

To answer this question, GIMET-QR contains Guiding Statements along with references to the CCSS for each statement. In response to each Guiding Statement, reviewers are asked to cite specific supporting evidence from the materials themselves, rather than relying on the table of contents or the topic headings. This supporting evidence can then be used to rate whether and to what degree the criteria have been met so that all students have access to a quality mathematics program.

It is important to keep in mind that quality is not defined as “compliance” or a mere checklist of topics. The GIMET-QR aims to help schools and districts choose materials that will provide the best overall learning experience for their students. The distinctive features of instructional materials, like style and appeal that contribute to engaging students in mathematics should therefore be considered along with the mathematical content and cognitive demand.

The review process culminates with a summary in which reviewers cite strengths and weaknesses of the product, thus providing explicit details for the overall assessment. The summary may also indicate, prior to making a recommendation for purchase, any areas that district curriculum leaders may need to augment or supplement.

Please note: [Acrobat Reader](#) or Adobe Acrobat is required to complete this form electronically and save any data entered by users.



The *GIMET-QR for Mathematics* is divided into four sections:

I. “CCSS-M” clusters and standards along the “progression to algebra continuum” for kindergarten

This first section focuses on the content of the materials under review and on the quality of the explanations and connections that develop the concepts and skills for the algebra continuum in kindergarten. This section features “guiding statements” that require reviewers to examine the quality of the materials, as well as the assignments that address the level of rigor in CCSS-M. The statements about materials and assignments are similar, but their focus is different. While the materials statements ask the reviewer to show evidence about the quality of how concepts and skills are attended to in the text or digital resource under review, the assignments statements ask the reviewer to cite evidence that students are given the opportunity to apply their understanding of those concepts and skills.

The statements in bold print in GIMET-QR refer to the CCSS-M clusters, i.e., K.CC.1-3, for reviewers to use in considering the quality of materials and assignments. The reviewer may notice that the wording of the cluster heading is somewhat different than what is written in CCSS-M. This was done to address what materials and assignments could offer. However, the essential wording of the clusters heading is maintained. The standards indicated within GIMET-QR are listed as written in CCSS-M. In kindergarten, the “CCSS progression documents”, from the Institute of Mathematics¹, were used to provide additional specificity and clarity about what to look for in “Counting and Cardinality and Operations and Algebraic Thinking” for the reviewers. This progression information within the document is indicated using an indentation and preceded by ►).

II. Decision Recording Sheets based on Quality Criteria for Conceptual Understanding, Applications, and Fluency, with an accompanying rubric for high quality/exciting materials and assignments

The second section asks the reviewer to reflect on the findings from the first section to answer the question of how well the materials reflect and support the rigor of the CCSS-M. Reviewers are asked to consider how well the materials support teachers and engage students. Judgments are made after organizing the evidence around each of three dimensions of rigor—**conceptual understanding, applications, and fluency**. Reviewers assign one of three ratings: **High Quality/Exciting, Good Quality or Minimal Quality**. The section also includes a rubric which describes high quality/exciting materials and establishes criteria for both materials and assignments.

III. Adoption Recording Sheets

The third section, to be completed after reviewing multiple submissions for adoption, is an *Adoption Recording Sheet*. This provides reviewers with an opportunity to list their top three choices and cite specific strengths and weaknesses for all of the materials being reviewed.

IV. Appendix

The fourth section is an Appendix that includes two items: *The Progression to Algebra Continuum* and a table of *Common Addition and Subtraction Situations*.²

GIMET-QR does not attend to all the kindergarten standards but rather only those listed within the progression to algebra continuum. GIMET-QR does not attend to coherence across grade levels but does look for coherence within a grade when considering the quality of materials and assignments. Similar to CCSS-M, GIMET-QR operates at a very fine grain size, while individual lessons and units under review might work across clusters. GIMET-QR is not a checklist that would fragment the CCSS-M, rather the “fine grain size” deliberately focuses on “how well the materials reflect the intent of the CCSS-M.

1 University of Arizona Institute of Mathematics, <http://ime.math.arizona.edu/progressions/>

2 From pages 89-90 of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. Adapted from Box 2-4 of Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood, National Research Council (2009, pp. 32-33).

GETTING STARTED

Completing the GIMET-QR entails a five-step process. Raters are expected to read through each of the steps and their explanations, and locate all the pertinent tables and pages before you start. Then complete each step.

Step one – Individual reviewers will evaluate how well the materials and their accompanying assignments develop the algebra continuum content for each grade level. Use the tables that start on page four to capture the evidence of how and where the materials do this. The purpose for noting specific examples as evidence is to contribute to discussions with other reviewers in steps two through four. Cite specific examples of the explanations, diagrams, and pictorial representations in the materials and assignments that prompt students to show their understanding. Additionally, reviewers should consider the interaction of students with the materials in two areas: 1) students as receptive learners (interactions with the explanations and illustrations in the materials) and 2) students producing and showing their understanding (interacting and completing the assignments in the materials).

Step two – Discuss your findings and evidence with other reviewers. Reviewers should discuss the evidence cited and use it to confirm or assist you (individually) in reviewing and revising your findings.

Step three – Next, reviewers need to consider the interaction of students and teachers with the content of the materials along three dimensions of rigor—**conceptual understanding**, **applications**, and **fluency**—to assign a judgment of quality to each dimension. Reviewers should answer the question: How well do the materials overall reflect and support the rigor of the CCSS-Mathematics? Beginning on page 10, reviewers will use the guiding questions found in the **Decision Recording Sheets** together with the rubric describing **high quality** to assign ratings. Consider the totality of the collected evidence along the dimensions of rigor and record your rating at the bottom of each table.

The highest level of quality is described using the words “**High Quality/Exciting**.” We use these words to indicate a high degree of excitement about the materials and the assignments. As you consider the descriptors, keep in mind that, this criteria applies to each dimension of rigor for both the materials and the assignments they present to students. To earn this rating, the evidence must demonstrate grade-level rigor of the CCSS-M in an engaging way.

The other levels represent varying degrees of quality. For example, “**Good Quality**” indicates that the materials and assignments are workable or sufficient. “**Minimal Quality**,” meanwhile, indicates that the materials are sufficient on their own, but would not be conducive to motivating students.

These descriptions will be used for rating the overall quality of the program.

Step four – Discuss your findings and conclusions with other reviewers. Include the following questions as a part of the discussion:

- What are the top three strengths of the texts?
- What are areas needing improvement?
- What additional supports would be needed to implement the textbook series or digital materials?

Step five – After discussion, reach consensus and make final recommendations on the **Adoption Recording Sheet**.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.CC.1-3. Materials connect multiple representations of numbers to their number names and explain how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a variety of representations to count to 100 by ones and by tens. ■ Count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence (instead of having to begin at 1). ■ Write numbers from 0 to 20 and explain how a number of objects can be described with a written numeral 0–20 (with 0 representing a count of no objects). 	
<p>K.CC.1-3. Assignments ask students to know number names and the count sequence by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prompting students to count to 100 by ones and by tens using a variety of materials/representations and mentally. ■ Asking them to count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence (instead of having to begin at 1). ■ Writing numbers from 0 to 20 and representing a number of objects with a written numeral 0–20 (with 0 representing a count of no objects). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Represent numbers in multiple ways (e.g., counters, drawings, manipulatives, numbers). 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.CC.4-5. Materials represent numbers in multiple ways and explain how to count to tell the number of objects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Materials explain the relationship between numbers and quantities, connect counting to cardinality, and demonstrate how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Say numbers in the standard order when counting objects, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object. ● Understand that the last number said tells the number of objects counted and that the number of objects is the same regardless of their arrangement or the order in which they were counted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The materials show how to count objects arranged in a line—the easiest arrangement, then in more difficult arrangements, such as rectangular arrays (students need to ensure they count each object in every row or column and do not repeat rows or columns), circles (students need to stop just before the object they started with), and scattered configurations (students need to make a single path through all of the objects). ▶ Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger. ■ Materials demonstrate for students how to count to answer “how many?” questions about as many as 20 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 10 things in a scattered configuration; and, given a number from 1-20, how to count out that many objects. 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.CC.4-5. Assignments ask students to count to tell the number of objects by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Asking students to show their understanding of the relationship between numbers and quantities and of the connection of counting to cardinality (i.e., asking them to move from saying the counting words to counting objects). ■ Prompting students to count objects, saying the number names in the standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object. ■ Requiring students to demonstrate that they know that the last number said tells the number of objects counted and that the number of objects is the same regardless of their arrangement or the order in which they were counted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assignments ask students to count objects arranged in a line—the easiest arrangement; then with more practice, students are asked to count objects in more difficult arrangements, such as rectangular arrays (they need to ensure they reach every row or column and do not repeat rows or columns), circles (they need to stop just before the object they started with), and scattered configurations (they need to make a single path through all of the objects). ▶ Pushing students to show they understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger. ■ Asking students to count to answer “how many?” questions about as many as 20 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 10 things in a scattered configuration; and, given a number from 1-20, asking students to count out that many objects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assignments ask students both perceptual and conceptual “subitizing questions” [i.e., students come to quickly recognize the cardinalities of small groups without having to count the objects; this is called <i>perceptual subitizing</i>. Perceptual subitizing develops into <i>conceptual subitizing</i>—recognizing that a collection of objects is composed of two subcollections and quickly combining their cardinalities to find the cardinality of the collection (e.g., seeing two subsets of two and saying “four”)]. 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.CC.6–7. Materials show and explain multiple ways to compare numbers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Showing how to identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group, e.g., by using matching and counting strategies. ■ Comparing two numbers between one and 10 presented as written numerals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Compare the two numbers using a variety of ways—with real objects, drawings, counting, subitizing, etc. 	
<p>K.CC.6–7. Assignments ask students to use and explain multiple ways to compare numbers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Asking students to compare two numbers between one and 10 presented as written numerals in a variety of ways. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Examples could include real objects, drawings, counting, subitizing, etc. ▶ Asking students to create two groups of objects in which one is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in the other group. ▶ Prompting students to match the objects in the two groups to see if there are any extra and then to count the objects in each group and use their knowledge of the count sequence to decide which number is greater than the other (the number farther along in the count sequence). ▶ Later, asking students to demonstrate that even if one group looks as if it has more objects (e.g., has some extra sticking out), matching or counting may reveal a different result. 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.OA.1–5. Materials present addition as putting together and adding to, and subtraction as taking apart and taking from, by showing and demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How to represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds (e.g., claps), acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The materials include written expressions (e.g., 3–1) to represent operations, as well as written equations that represent the whole situation before the solution (e.g., $3 - 1 = \square$) or after (e.g., $3 - 1 = 2$). Expressions like 3-1 or 2+1 show the operation, and it is helpful for students to have experience just with the expression so they can conceptually chunk this part of an equation. Equations with one number on the left and an operation on the right (e.g., $5 = 2 + 3$ to record a group of 5 things decomposed as a group of 2 things and a group of 3 things) allow students to understand equations as showing in various ways that the quantities on both sides have the same value. ▶ The materials help students develop the academic language of addition and subtraction. For example, using the term “total” in addition problems instead of the term “sum.” “Sum” sounds the same as “some,” but has the opposite meaning. “Sum” is used to describe problem situations with one or both addends unknown, so it is better in the earlier grades to use “total” rather than “sum.” Formal vocabulary for subtraction (“minuend” and “subtrahend”) is not needed for kindergarten. 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>(continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How to solve a range of addition and subtraction word problems and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent addition and subtraction problems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Add To/Take From situations are action-oriented—they show changes from an initial state to a final state. These situations are readily modeled by equations because each aspect of the situation has a representation as number, operation (- or +), or equal sign =. In Kindergarten, students work with the following four types of addition and subtraction situations: Add To with Result Unknown $A + B = \square$; Take From with Result Unknown $C - B = \square$; and Put Together/Take Apart with Total Unknown; $A + B = \square$ and Both Addends Unknown $C = \square + \square$ (see the dark shaded types in Table 2 included as Appendix B). ■ How to decompose numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $5 = 2 + 3$ and $5 = 4 + 1$). ■ For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation. ■ How to practice adding and subtracting within 5, leading to fluency. 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.OA.1–5. Assignments ask students to add by putting together and adding to, and to subtract by taking apart and taking from by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Representing addition and subtraction in multiple ways including with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds (e.g., claps), acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, and/or equations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ This may include explaining correspondences among different representations. ■ Solving a range of addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ “Add To with Result Unknown”; “Take From with Result Unknown”; and “Put Together/Take Apart” with “Total Unknown” and “Both Addends Unknown” (see the dark shaded types in Table 2 included as appendix B). Add To/Take From situations are action-oriented; they show changes from an initial state to a final state. These situations are readily modeled by equations because each aspect of the situation has a representation as number, operation (- or +), or equal sign =. ▶ Mathematizing a real-world situation (MP4), focusing on the quantities and their relationships rather than non-mathematical aspects of the situation. (“Mathematizing” means turning everyday issues into mathematical problems and using mathematics to solve them.) ■ Decomposing numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $5 = 2 + 3$ and $5 = 4 + 1$) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Creating and using “Putting Together/Take Apart” situations with “Both Addends Unknown.” These play an important role in Kindergarten because they show how students understand various compositions that make each number. ▶ Using assignments to lay the foundation for operations and algebraic thinking as students explicitly show the connections between different compositions that make each number. ■ For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation. ■ Adding and subtracting within 5 with accuracy and reasonable speed. 	

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS
<p>K.NBT.1. Materials demonstrate working with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value by explaining and showing how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compose and decompose numbers from 11 to 19 into ten ones and some further ones, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each composition or decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $18 = 10 + 8$); understand that these numbers are composed of ten ones and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine ones. ▶ This is a vital first step kindergarteners must take toward understanding base-ten notation for numbers greater than 9. (See the NBT Progression.) 	
<p>K.NBT.1. Assignments require students to work with numbers 11-19 and to explain their understanding of place value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Composing and decomposing numbers from 11 to 19 into ten ones and some further ones, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each composition or decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $18 = 10 + 8$). ■ Showing understanding that these numbers are composed of ten ones and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine ones. 	

DECISION RECORDING SHEET

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Use the evidence that you collected for kindergarten to begin the process of initially judging the overall quality of the program. Begin by answering the overarching question: **From the evidence collected, how well do the materials reflect and support the rigor of the CCSS-M?** Use the accompanying rubric which contains the criteria for high quality/exciting materials and assignments that support teachers and engage students.

Rigor requirement (balance): A program that emphasizes only fluency is not rigorous. Likewise, a program that only focuses on conceptual understanding or applications is not rigorous. For a program to be rigorous, there must be a balance of all three (conceptual understanding, applications, and fluency). By the end of kindergarten, there are specific fluency requirements (adding and subtracting within five) and standards addressing procedural skill (procedural skill refers to knowledge of procedures, knowledge of when and how to use them appropriately, and skill in performing procedures flexibly, accurately, and efficiently). While procedural skill is not as prevalent in kindergarten, it will be more important in later grades.

Criteria for Rigor and Quality in Conceptual Understanding, Applications, and Fluency

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING: CONNECTIONS

Materials:

- How well do the materials develop conceptual understanding of operations and algebraic thinking as defined in the CCSS-M and in the *Progression to Algebra (Appendix A)*?
- How well do the materials connect to and extend prior knowledge?
 - The materials present and describe explicit connections to prior knowledge, connections among mathematical ideas, and connections among different mathematical representations, using appropriate academic language (see rubric on the following page).
- How well do the materials develop academic language (including words, phrases, and sentences using symbols, graphs, and diagrams)?

Assignments:

- How well do the assignments prompt students to produce explanations and viable arguments?
- The set of assignments challenge students to use their mathematical knowledge, academic language, and skills to solve problems and formulate mathematical models in a variety of contexts (see rubric on the following page).
 - How well do the assignments ask students to make explicit connections to prior knowledge, connections among mathematical ideas and connections among different mathematical representations?

RATING – Compared to the listed criteria above, the materials I have just reviewed would be considered:

3) High Quality/Exciting

2) Good Quality

1) Minimal Quality

CONNECTIONS: CRITERIA FOR MEETING THE RATING OF “HIGH QUALITY/EXCITING”

	<p>Materials</p> <p><i>The materials present and describe explicit connections to prior knowledge, connections among mathematical ideas, and connections among different mathematical representations, using appropriate academic language.</i></p>	<p>Assignments</p> <p><i>The assignments in the materials encourage and challenge students to use their mathematical knowledge, academic language, and skills to solve problems and formulate mathematical models in a variety of contexts.</i></p>
Student	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials, my students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ comprehend the concepts and connections in the materials. ■ make sense of the mathematics. ■ be excited to try the problems and learn from working on them. ■ want to learn the mathematical concepts and gain confidence that effort to learn will pay off. 	<p>Using high quality/exciting assignments, my students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ engage in the challenge of comprehension and discussion. ■ make sense of the mathematics. ■ be excited to try the problems and learn from working on them. ■ want to learn the mathematical concepts and gain confidence that effort to learn will pay off.
Teacher	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials will help me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ see and understand the mathematical goals of the lesson/unit. ■ understand better the mathematics that I am teaching, learn more mathematics from the materials, and want to learn more from interacting with students. ■ be excited about teaching the lessons and see how students respond to the connections in the lesson/unit. ■ focus students’ efforts on the mathematical connections and give them feedback on how to do better. ■ anticipate typical misconceptions, missing connections, and which struggles will be most productive for students. ■ be confident students will be motivated to learn from, and connect the mathematics as well as gain confidence that their efforts to learn will pay off. 	<p>Using high quality/exciting assignments will help me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ want to learn more from interacting with students, analyzing their work on assignments, and re-engaging them in the concepts related to the assignments. ■ use students’ responses to focus their efforts on the mathematical connections and give them feedback on how to do better. ■ anticipate typical misconceptions, missing connections, and which struggles will be most productive for students. ■ know students will be motivated to learn from and connect the mathematics as well as gain confidence that their efforts to learn will pay off.

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING: EXPLANATIONS

Materials:

- How well do the materials provide example explanations connecting different representations to show why a statement or steps in an argument or solution is true and under what conditions it is true?
 - The materials provide example explanations, using appropriate concepts and academic language for the grade level, to show how a way of thinking about a problem makes sense using several representations and explicitly identifying correspondences across representations (see rubric on the following page).
- How well do the materials use abstractions and generalizations to communicate the mathematical structure that organizes seemingly scattered individual events or results?

Assignments:

- How well do the assignments require that student provide explanations using appropriate content and grade level academic language?
- The set of assignments requires students to use appropriate content and grade level academic language to explain why reasons and justifications for steps in a solution or an argument are valid and how the mathematical structure represents generalizations about a problem situation (context) mathematically to their peers and the teacher (see rubric on the following page).
 - How well do the assignments ask students to use the mathematical structure to organize individual seemingly scattered statements or results to represent generalizations mathematically to their peers and the teacher?

RATING – Compared to the listed criteria above, the materials I have just reviewed would be considered:

3) High Quality/Exciting

2) Good Quality

1) Minimal Quality

EXPLANATIONS: CRITERIA FOR MEETING THE RATING OF “HIGH QUALITY/EXCITING”

	<p>Materials</p> <p><i>The materials provide example explanations, using appropriate concepts and academic language for the grade level, to show how a way of thinking about a problem makes sense using several representations and explicitly identifying correspondences across representations.</i></p>	<p>Assignments</p> <p><i>The assignments require students to use appropriate grade level concepts and academic language to explain why reasons and justifications for steps in a solution or an argument are valid and how the mathematical structure represents generalizations about a problem situation (context) mathematically to their peers and the teacher</i></p>
Student	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials, my students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ comprehend the explanations presented in the materials. ■ make sense of the mathematics of the lesson/unit. ■ be excited to try the problems and learn from working on them. ■ want to learn the related mathematical concepts and gain confidence that effort to learn will pay off. 	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials, my students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ engage the challenge of comprehension and explanation with their peers and with me. ■ make sense of the mathematics of the lesson/unit. ■ be excited to try the problems and learn from working on them. ■ want to learn the related mathematical concepts and gain confidence that effort to learn will pay off.
Teacher	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials will help me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ see and understand the mathematical goals of the lesson/unit. ■ understand better the mathematics that I am teaching, learn more mathematics from the materials, and want to learn more from interacting with students. ■ be excited about teaching the lessons and see how students respond to the explanations in the lesson/unit. ■ focus students' efforts on the mathematical explanations and give them feedback on how to do better. ■ anticipate typical misconceptions, struggles that are most productive for students, and ways to help students to revise their explanation. 	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials will help me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ want to learn more from interacting with students, analyzing their work on assignments, and re-engaging them on the concepts related to the assignments. ■ use the student's responses to focus their efforts on the mathematical connections and give them feedback on how to do better. ■ anticipate typical misconceptions, struggles that are most productive for students, and ways to help students revise their explanations. ■ know students will be motivated to learn from and connect the mathematics as well as gain confidence that their efforts to learn will pay off. ■ prompt students to make their explanations public in a way that others can understand it and critique it.

APPLICATIONS

Materials

How well do the materials develop students' expertise in the application of concepts appropriate for kindergarten?

- The materials show how to use mathematics to analyze problem situations, appropriate for the grade level, and provide examples of deploying the Standards for Mathematical Practice to make sense of problems (see rubric on the following page).
- How well do the materials support students' understanding of how to analyze problem situations, showing how to use mathematics to help make sense of problems?

Assignments

How well do the assignments develop a students' application of concepts?

- The assignments prompt students to use mathematics and the Standards for Mathematical Practice to help them make sense of a variety of problems and formulate mathematical models of real world phenomena, appropriate for kindergarten.
- How well do the assignments support students' understanding of how to formulate mathematical models of real world phenomena including explaining assumptions and explaining why the model serves its purpose in a reasonable way.

RATING – Compared to the listed criteria above, the materials I have just reviewed would be considered:

3) High Quality/Exciting

2) Good Quality

1) Minimal Quality

APPLICATIONS: CRITERIA FOR MEETING THE RATING OF “HIGH QUALITY/EXCITING”

	<p>Materials</p> <p><i>The materials show how to use mathematics to analyze problem situations, appropriate for the grade level, and provide examples of deploying the Standards for Mathematical practice to make sense of problems.</i></p>	<p>Assignments</p> <p><i>The assignments prompts students to use mathematics and the mathematical practice standards to help them make sense of a variety of problem, appropriate for kindergarten, by asking students to formulate mathematical models</i></p>
Student	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials, my students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ apply the concepts and connect them to each other and their different representations. ■ make sense of the mathematics of the lesson/unit. ■ be excited to try the problems and learn from working on them. ■ understand how to formulate and mathematically model problem situations. ■ gain confidence that their effort to learn will pay off. 	<p>Using high quality/exciting assignments, my students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ be challenged to use their mathematics to comprehend, analyze, and make sense of the problem situation. ■ make sense of quantities and their relationship in the math problem. ■ represent the problem concretely and pictorially and represent it as an equation and explain how the two representations relate to each other. ■ identify important quantities in a practical situation and map their relationships using such tools as concrete models, diagrams, and equations. ■ formulate and model mathematically problem situations. ■ engage in discussions with their peers and the teacher to make sense of the problem and learn from them. ■ be excited to try the problems and learn from working on them. ■ gain confidence that their effort to learn will pay off.
Teacher	<p>Using high quality/exciting materials will help me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ see and understand the mathematical goal of the lesson/unit. ■ understand better the mathematics that I am teaching, learn more mathematics from the materials, and want to learn more from interacting with students. ■ be excited about teaching the lessons and see how students respond to the problems/tasks in the lesson/unit. ■ be confident he or she can focus students' efforts on the mathematical tasks/problems and give them feedback on how to do better. ■ anticipate typical misconceptions, missing connections, and which struggles will be most productive for students. ■ be confident students will be motivated to learn. 	<p>Using high quality/exciting assignments will help me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ prompt students to make their thinking public in a way that others can understand it and critique it. ■ want to learn more from interacting with students, analyzing their work on problems/tasks, and re-engaging them on making use of concepts related to them. ■ use the student's responses to focus their efforts on strategic thinking and give them feedback on generalizing to other related applications. ■ anticipate typical misconceptions, missing strategies, and which productive struggles will be most beneficial for students. ■ gain confidence that their efforts to learn will pay off.

FLUENCY

Materials:

- How well do the materials focus on developing critical procedural skills and fluency for adding and subtracting within five?
 - Materials show how procedural skills and the kindergarten standard for fluency work. Materials provide consistent opportunities for students to practice using the algorithm or procedure.

Assignments:

- How well do the assignments focus on developing critical procedural skills and fluency?
 - The set of assignments prompts students to develop and demonstrate fluency by recalling with accuracy and reasonable speed addition and subtraction within 5.

RATING – Compared to the listed criteria above, the materials I have just reviewed would be considered:

3) High Quality/Exciting 2) Good Quality 1) Minimal Quality

FLUENCY: CRITERIA FOR MEETING THE RATING OF “HIGH QUALITY/EXCITING”

	Materials	Assignments
	<i>Materials show how the standard for fluency, adding and subtracting within five, works and provides opportunities for students to practice using the algorithm, procedure or formula.</i>	<i>The set of assignments prompts students to develop and demonstrate fluency by recalling with accuracy and reasonable speed addition and subtraction within five.</i>
Student	Using high quality/exciting materials, my students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ have a variety of different ways to practice using an algorithm, procedure, or formula to develop fluency. ■ self-assess areas of weakness and strengths for adding and subtracting to five and receive feedback on which area(s) to improve. 	Using high quality/exciting assignments, my students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ build skills in adding and subtracting to five flexibly, accurately, efficiently, and appropriately. ■ gain confidence that their efforts to learn will pay off.
Teacher	Using high quality/exciting materials will help me: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ see and understand how the work on procedural fluency supports the mathematical goal of the lesson/unit. ■ be confident he or she can focus students' efforts on building fluency, that is see how to assist students understand and correct their mistakes. ■ be confident students will be motivated to learn. 	Using high quality/exciting assignments will help me: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ want to learn more from interacting with students. ■ use the student's responses to focus their efforts on building fluency and give them feedback on how to do better. ■ see how to assist students understand and correct their mistakes. ■ be confident students will be motivated to learn.

ADOPTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM

Based on the substantial evidence collected, please rank all the kindergarten materials you reviewed in the order in which you would recommend them for adoption. The program or materials with your highest recommendation should be listed as number one below. Please provide any comments you deem pertinent. Include answers to the following questions based on the evidence cited in your materials review:

- What are the top three strengths of this text?
- What areas need improvement?
- What additional supports would be needed to implement the textbook series or digital materials?

RECOMMENDED	
PROGRAM NAME/EDITION:	COMMENTS:
1	
2	
3	

continued >

NOT RECOMMENDED

PROGRAM NAME/EDITION:	COMMENTS:
1	
2	
3	

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX A: PROGRESS TO ALGEBRA IN GRADES K–8

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Know number names and the count sequence		Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction		Represent & solve problems involving multiplication and division					
Count to tell the number of objects		Understand and apply properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction	Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction	Understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division	Use the four operations with whole numbers to solve problems	Understand the place value system	Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions		
Compare numbers		Add and subtract within 20	Add and subtract within 20	Multiply & divide within 100	Generalize place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers	Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and decimals to hundredths	Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers	Apply and extend previous understanding of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers	Work with radical and integer exponents
Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from		Work with addition and subtraction equations	Understand place value	Solve problems involving the four operations, and identify & explain patterns in arithmetic	Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic	Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions	Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems	Analyze proportional relationship and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems	Understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations
Work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value		Extend the counting sequence	Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract	Develop understanding of fractions as numbers	Extend understanding of fraction equivalence and ordering	Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to multiply and divide fractions	Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems	Analyze and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations	
		Understand place value	Measure and estimate lengths in standard units	Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time, liquid volumes, & masses of objects	Build fractions from unit fractions by applying and extending previous understandings of operations	Geometric measurement: understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition	Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions	Define, evaluate, and compare functions	
		Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract	Relate addition and subtraction to length	Geometric measurement: understand concepts of area and relate area to multiplication and to addition	Understand decimal notation for fractions, and compare decimal fractions	Graph points in the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems*	Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities	Use functions to model relationships between quantities*	
		Measure lengths indirectly and by iterating length units					Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables		

From the K, Counting and Cardinality; K–5, Operations and Algebraic Thinking Progression p. 9

APPENDIX B: COMMON ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION¹

	RESULT UNKNOWN	CHANGE UNKNOWN	START UNKNOWN
ADD TO	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	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? $? - 2 = 3$
	TOTAL UNKNOWN	ADDEND UNKNOWN	BOTH ADDENDS UNKNOWN ²
PUT TOGETHER / TAKE APART³	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 the red vase and how many in her blue vase? $5 = 0 + 5$, $5 + 0 = 1 + 4$, $5 = 4 + 1$, $5 = 2 + 3$, $5 = 3 + 2$
	DIFFERENCE UNKNOWN	BIGGER UNKNOWN	SMALLER UNKNOWN
COMPARE	("How many more?" version): Lucy has two apples. Julie has five apples. How many more apples does Julie have than Lucy?	(Version with "more"): Julie has three more apples than Lucy. Lucy has two apples. How many apples does Julie have?	(Version with "more"): Julie has three more apples than Lucy. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have?
	("How many fewer?" version): Lucy has two apples. Julie has five apples. How many fewer apples does Lucy have than Julie? $2 + ? = 5$, $5 - 2 = ?$	(Version with "fewer"): Lucy has 3 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have? $5 - 3 = ?$, $? + 3 = 5$	(Version with "fewer"): Lucy has 3 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have? $5 - 3 = ?$, $? + 3 = 5$

Source: <http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Content/mathematics-glossary/Table-1/>

1 Adapted from Box 2-4 of Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood, National Research Council (2009, pp. 32, 33).

2 These take apart situations can be used to show all the decompositions of a given number. The associated equations, which have the total on the left of the equal sign, help children understand that the = sign does not always mean, makes or results in but always does mean is the same number as.

3 Either addend can be unknown, so there are three variations of these problem situations. Both addends Unknown is a productive extension of the basic situation, especially for small numbers less than or equal to 10.

4 For the Bigger Unknown or Smaller Unknown situations, one version directs the correct operations (the version using more for the bigger unknown and using less for the smaller unknown). The other versions are more difficult

ACADEMIC KPI PROJECT

Academic Key Performance Indicators in America's Urban Public Schools

ACADEMIC INDICATORS (20 OUTCOME)

Early Childhood

Percent of Students Advancing from Pre-K to K, by Subgroup

Percent of 3rd Graders Proficient in Reading Assessment

Algebra I/Integrated Math I Achievement

Algebra I/Integrated Math I Completion Rate for Credit by Grade 9, by Subgroup

- Percent Completed Algebra I/Integrated Math I in Grade 7, by Subgroup
- Percent Completed Algebra I/Integrated Math I in Grade 8, by Subgroup
- Percent Completed Algebra I/Integrated Math I in Grade 9, by Subgroup

High School On-Track

Ninth Grade Course Failure Rate - One Core Course, by Subgroup

Ninth Graders with B Average GPA or Better, by Subgroup

Student Attendance

Absence Rate, by Grade Level + Subgroup

Student Suspensions

Suspension Rate, by Subgroup

Instructional Days Missed per Student Due to Suspensions, by Subgroup

Graduation Rate

Four-Year Graduation Rate, by Subgroup

Five-Year Graduation Rate, by Subgroup

ELP Acquisition

ELP Acquisition for ELLs, by Initial ELP Level, Grade, and Time in Program

Credit Recovery Options

Credit Recovery Success Rate for High School Summer School, by Subgroup

Pass Rate for High School Summer School, by Subgroup

Credit Recovery Success Rate in Virtual Courses, by Subgroup

Pass Rate in Virtual Courses, by Subgroup

Credit Recovery Success Rate through Reenrollment, by Subgroup

Advanced Programs and Early College

AP Participation Rate, by Subgroup

AP-Equivalent Participation Rate, by Subgroup

AP Exam Pass Rate, by Subgroup

Early College Enrollment in High School, by Subgroup

COST INDICATORS (18)

Early Childhood

Early Childhood Education Costs per Student

Class Size Reduction

Class Size Reduction Cost per Student for Grades 1-3

Professional Development

New Teacher Induction Program Cost per Participant

Credit Recovery Options Costs

Cost per Student for High School Summer School Credit Recovery Programs

Summer School Cost per Student for High School

Cost per Student of Virtual Courses for Credit Recovery

Advanced Programs and Early College Costs

AP Course Costs per Passing AP Score

Early College Costs per Participant

Intervention/Extended Time

Cost of Extended Learning Time Initiatives as Percent of District Budget

Cost of Intervention Programs as Percent of District Budget

Instructional Coaches

Instructional Coaches Cost as Percent of District Budget

Supplemental Educational Services

Cost of Supplemental Educational Services as Percent of District Budget

Cost of Supplemental Educational Services per Student Served

Cost of Supplemental Educational Services per Student Served – District-Operated

Cost of Supplemental Educational Services per Student Served – Contractor-Operated

Cost of Substitute Teachers

Cost of Substitute Teachers as Percent of District Budget

ELL Central Office Costs

ELL Central Office Costs per ELL Student

ELL PD Costs for Central Office per ELL Student

SPED-SPECIFIC INDICATORS (13 COST, 7 OUTCOME)

General SPED Costs

SPED Budget - Cost per Student with IEP

SPED Budget - Percent of District Expenditures

Professional Development Costs as Percent of SPED Budget

SPED Educational Setting

Percent of Students Placed in Each Educational Setting

- Receiving education inside general education more than 80% of the time
- Receiving education inside general education between 40% and 80% of the time
- Receiving education inside general education less than 40% of the time
- Placed in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital

Private/Separate School Placement Costs as Percent of SPED Budget

Private/Separate School Placement Costs per Student

Percent of SWDs Placed in Private/Separate Schools

SPED Evaluations and IEP Meetings

SPED Evaluations - Percent of Referrals that Result in Evaluations

SPED Evaluations - Percent of Evaluations that Result in Eligibility

SPED Evaluations - Percent of Referrals of ELLs that Result in Evaluations

SPED Evaluations - Percent of Evaluations of ELLs that Result in Eligibility

SPED Evaluations - Average Cost per Initial Evaluation

SPED Evaluations - Cost of Initial Evaluations per New IEP

SPED Reevaluations Cost as Percent of SPED Budget

SPED Reevaluations - Average Cost per SPED Reevaluation

IEP Meetings - Average Cost for IEP Meetings as Percent of SPED Budget

IEP Meetings - Average Cost per IEP Meeting

SPED Litigation and Due Process

Total Litigation/Due Process Costs as Percent of SPED Budget

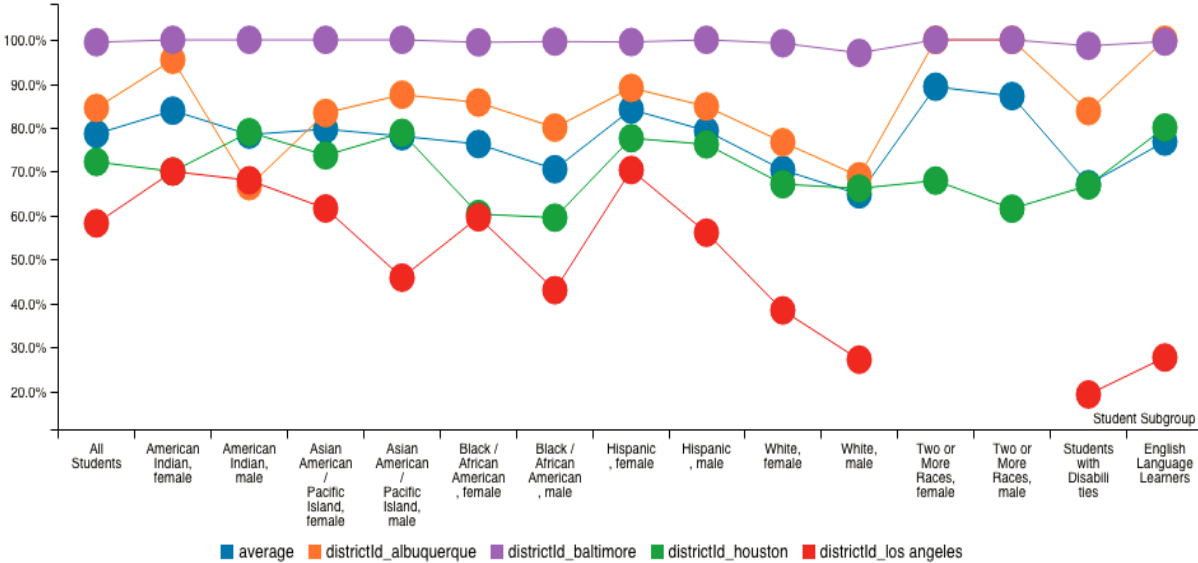
Litigation/Due Process Administration Costs as Percent of SPED Budget

Litigation/Due Process Awards, Concessions & Settlements Costs as Percent of SPED Budget

Preliminary Pilot Data on Academic Predictor KPIs By the Council of the Great City Schools

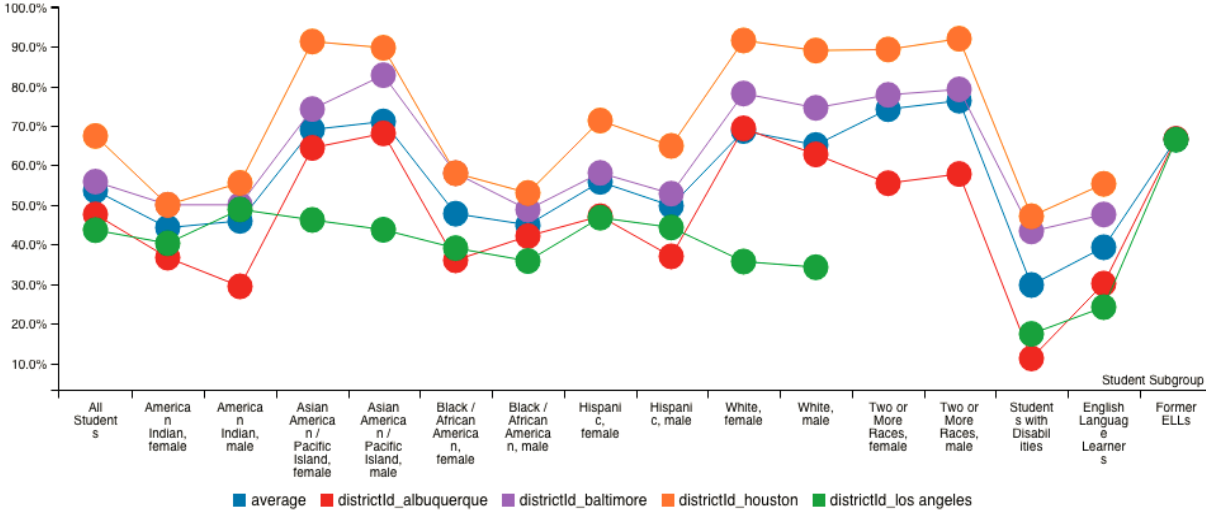
Percent of Pre-K Advanced to K, by Subgroup

This is filtered by **Survey Year**. Click within the chart to set the **Subgroup** filter.



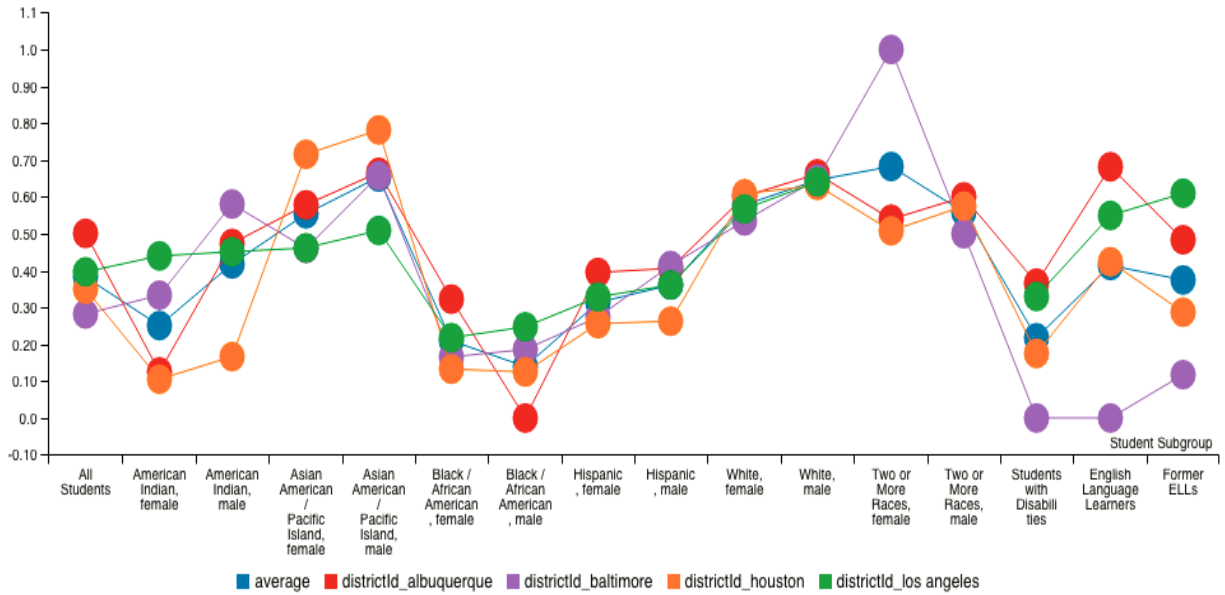
Percent of 3rd Graders Proficient in Reading, by Subgroup

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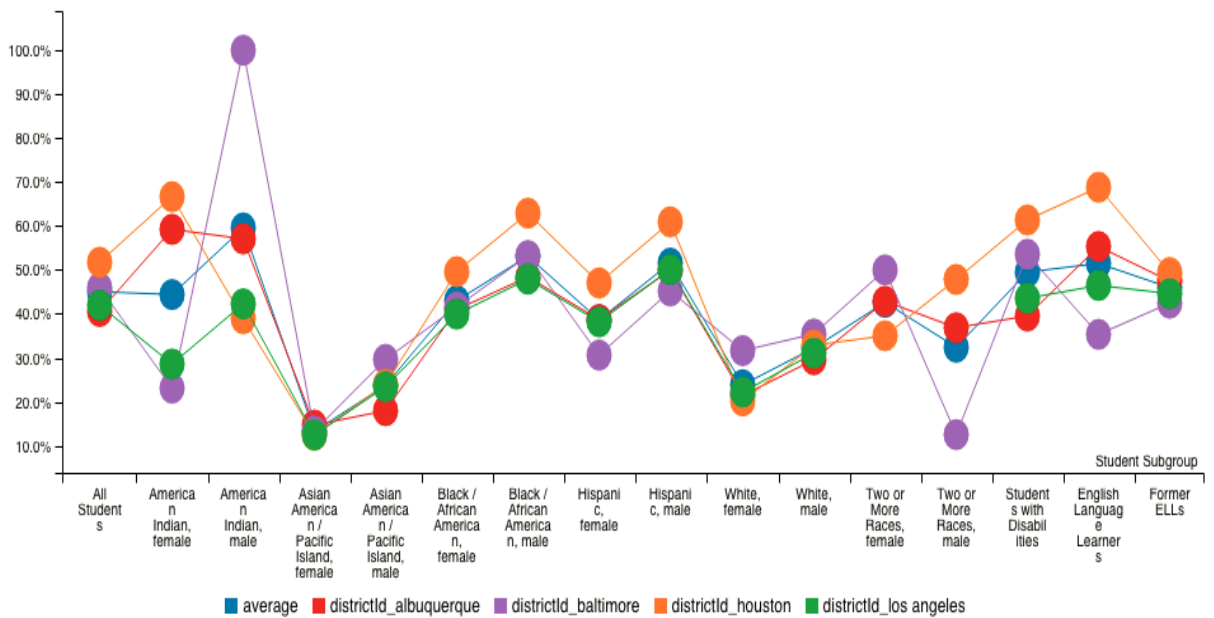
Instructional Days Missed Due to Suspensions, by Subgroup

This is filtered by **Survey Year**. Click within the chart to set the **Subgroup** filter.



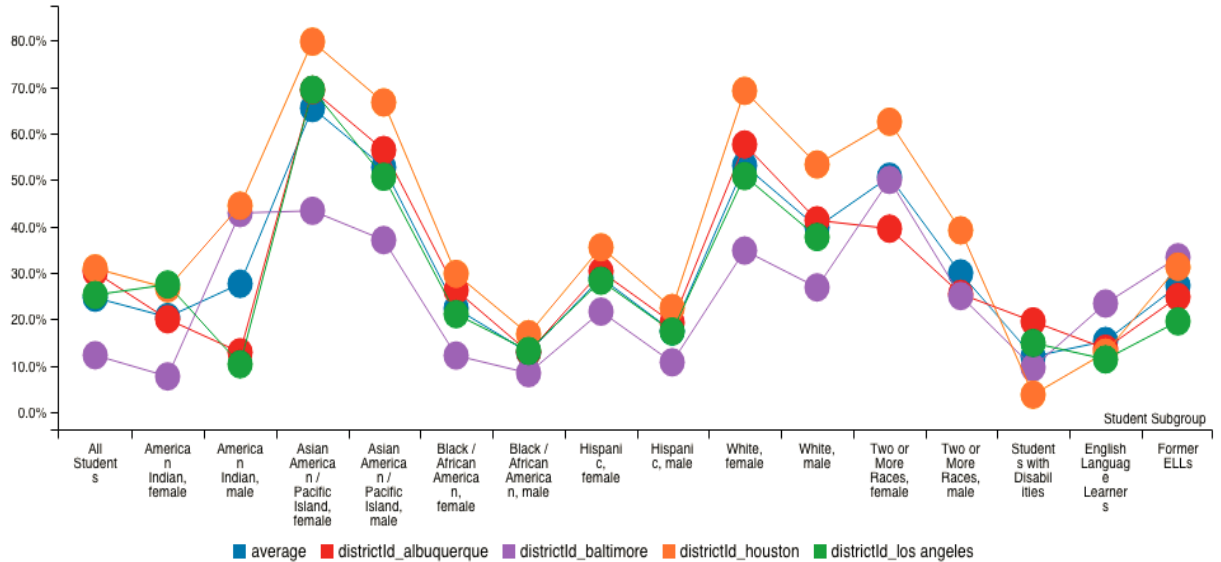
Ninth Grade Core Course Failures, by Subgroup

This is filtered by **Survey Year**. Click within the chart to set the **Subgroup** filter.



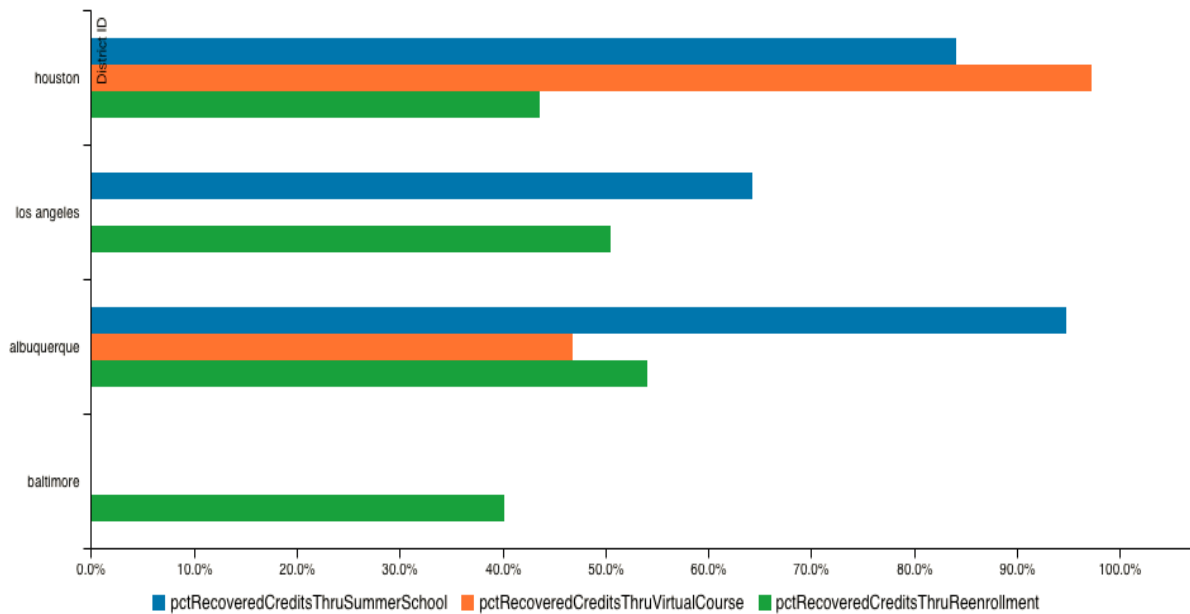
Ninth Grade B Average GPA, by Subgroup

This is filtered by **Survey Year**. Click within the chart to set the **Subgroup** filter.



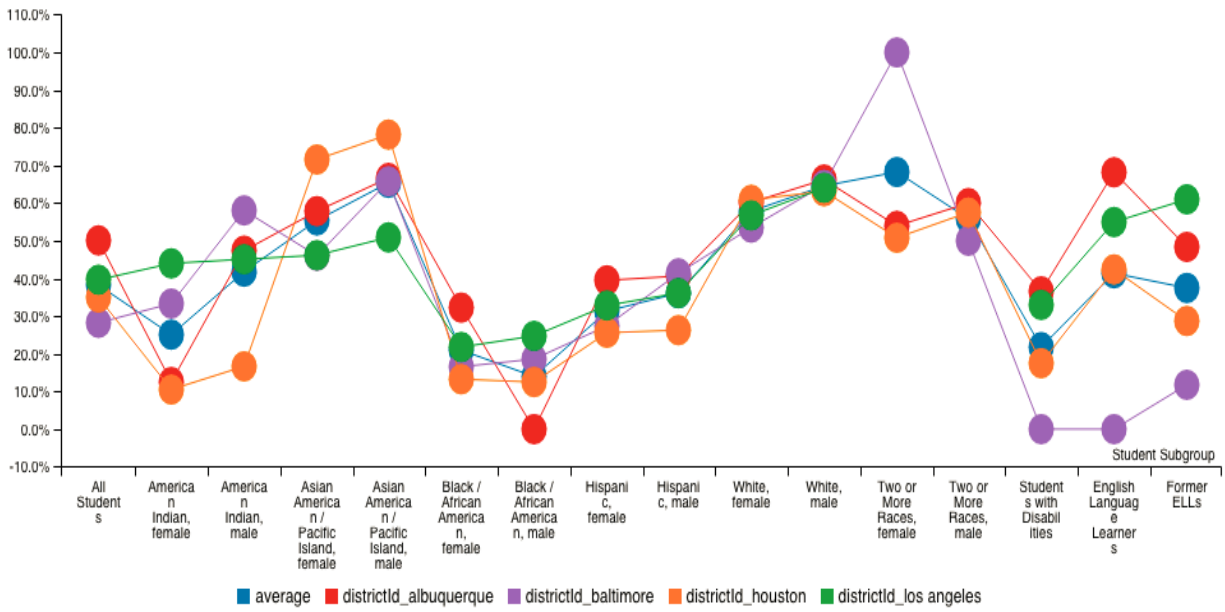
Credit Recovery Rates - Summer School vs Virtual Courses vs Reenrollment, by District

This is filtered by **Survey Year** and **Subgroup**. Click within the chart to set the **District ID** filter.

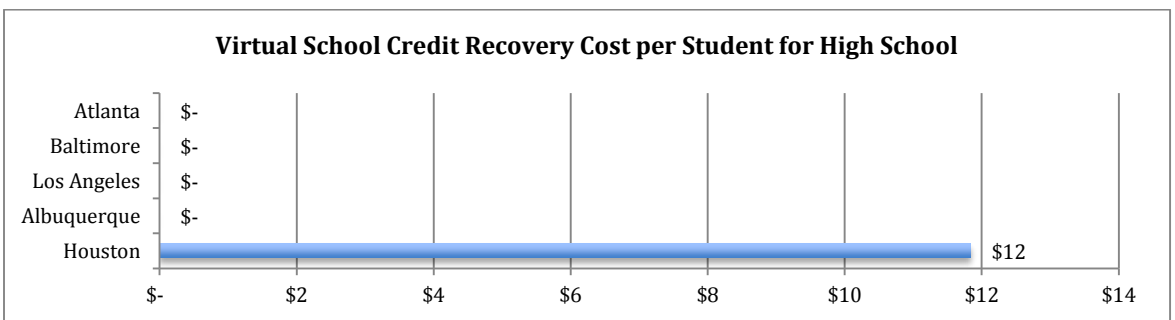
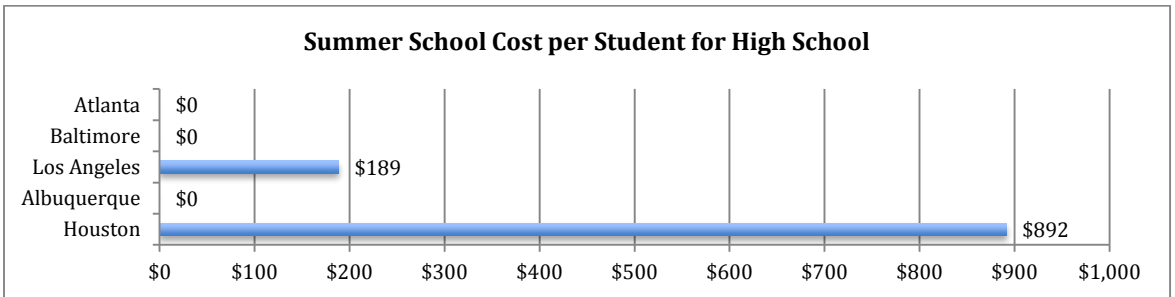
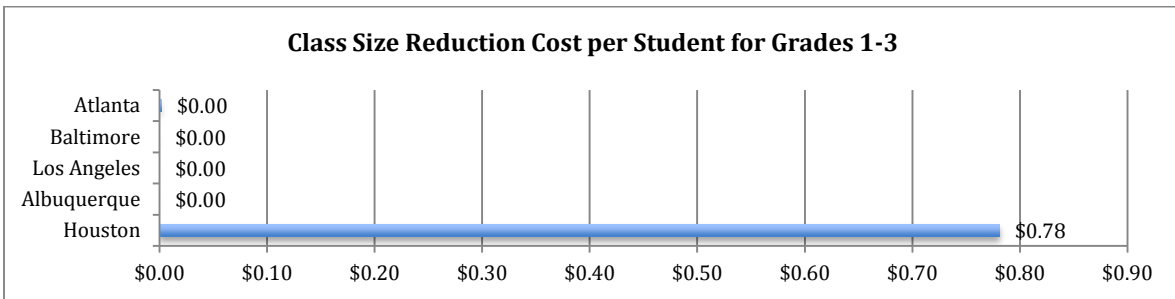
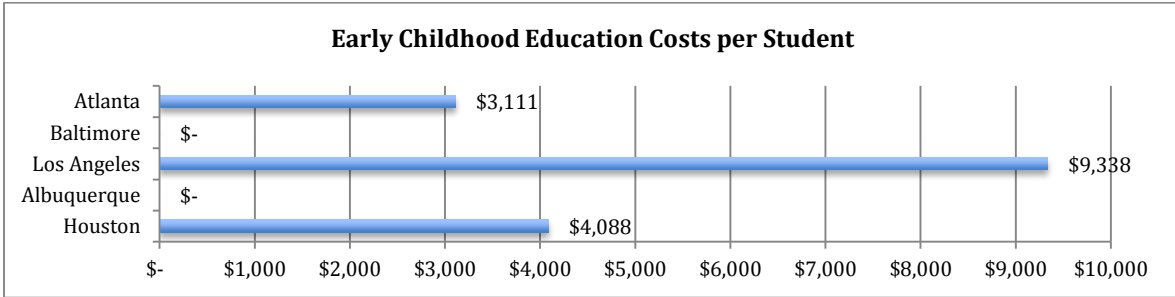


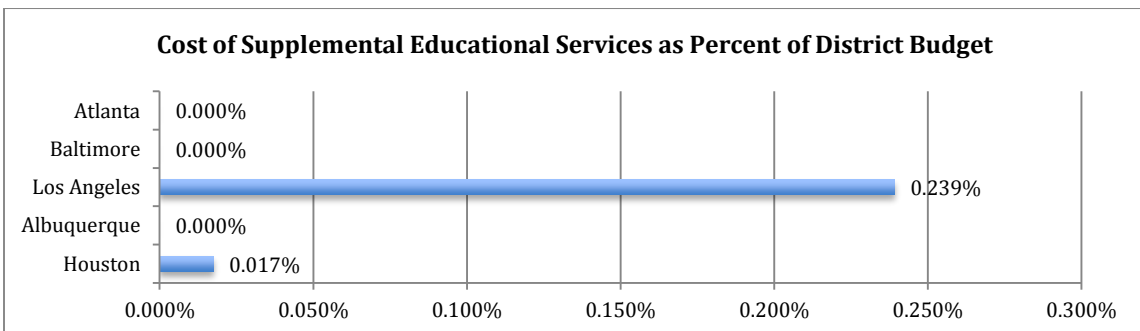
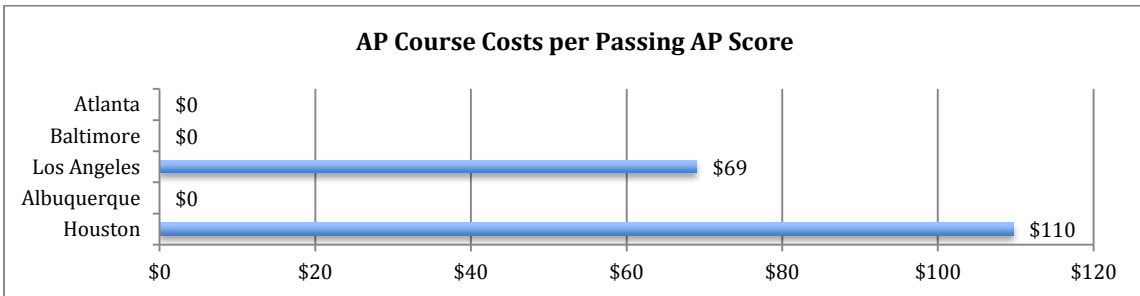
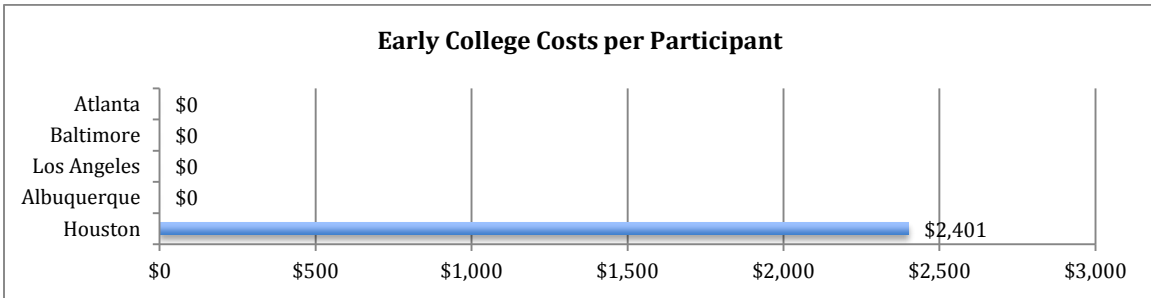
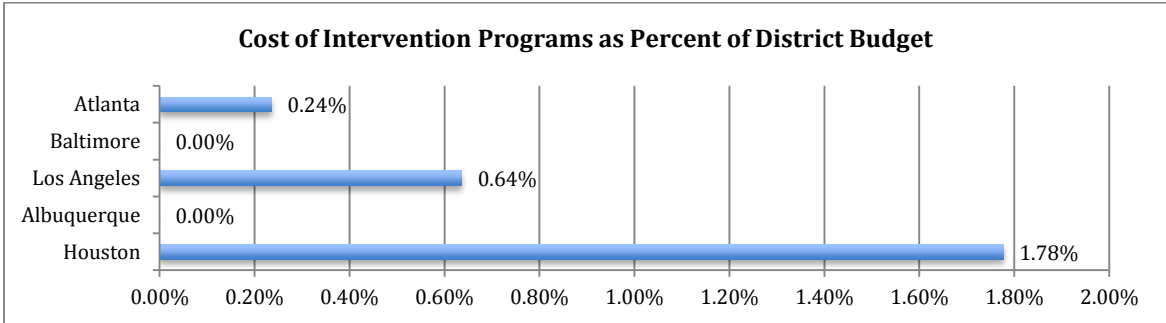
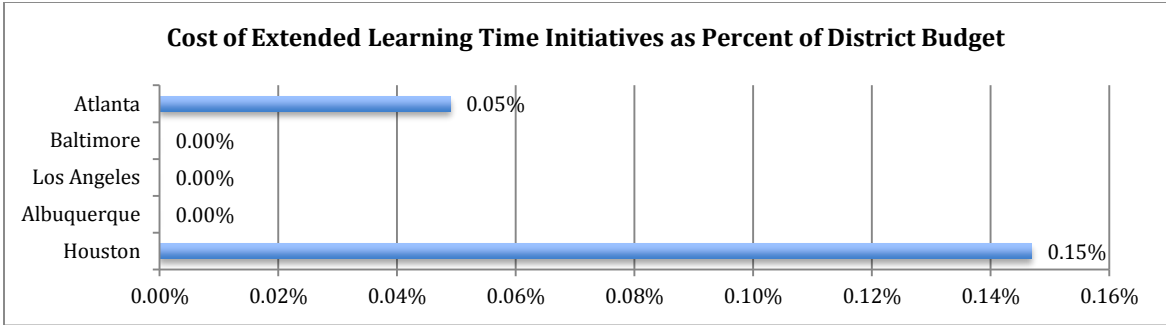
AP Exam Pass Rate, by Subgroup

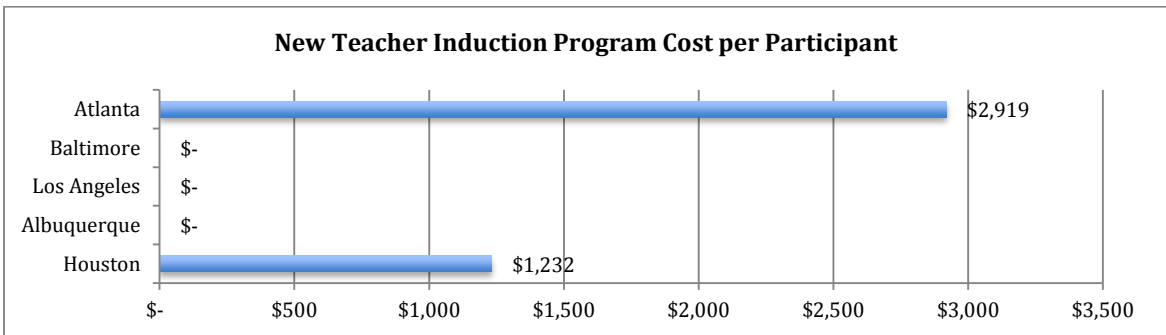
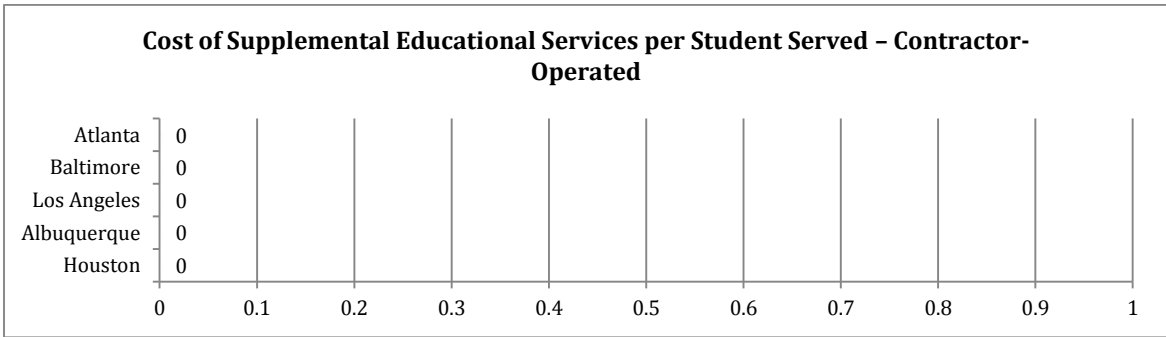
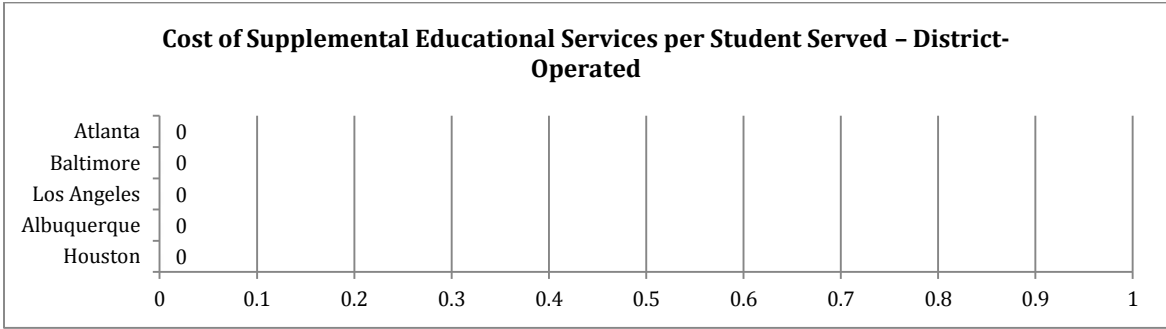
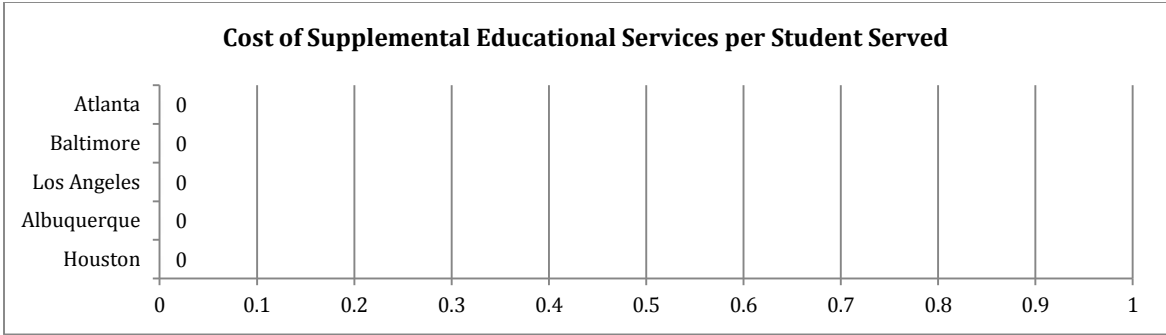
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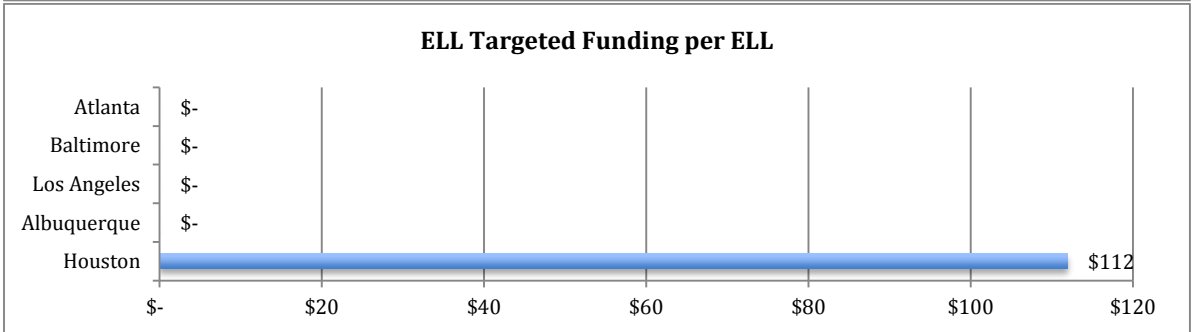
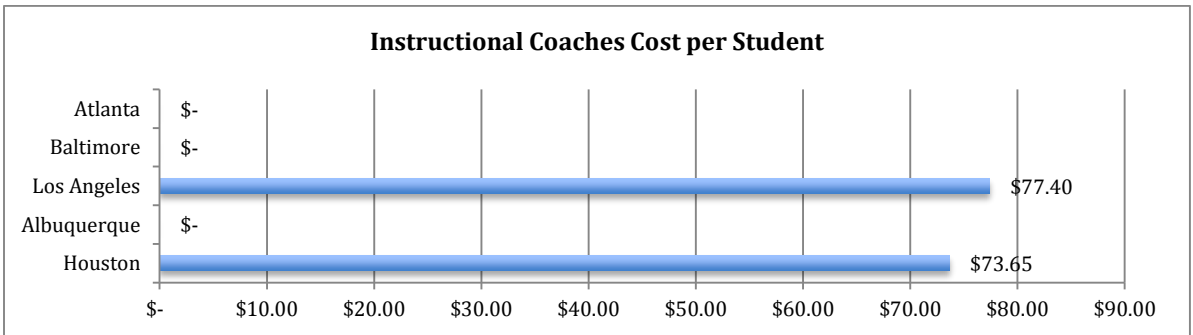
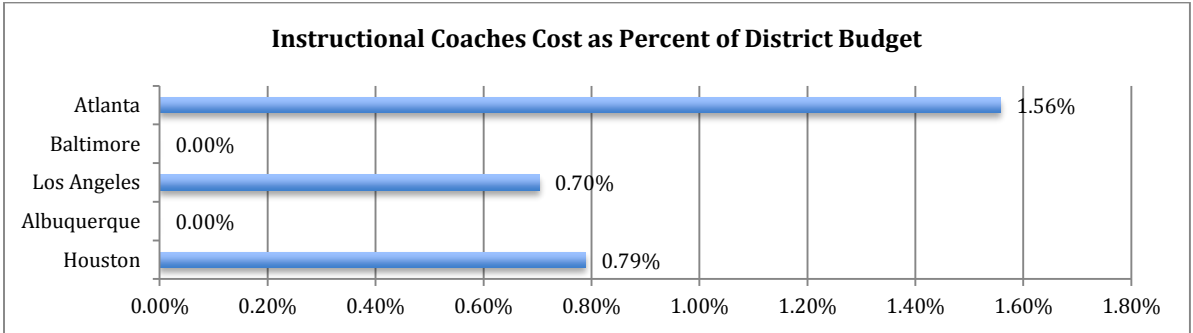
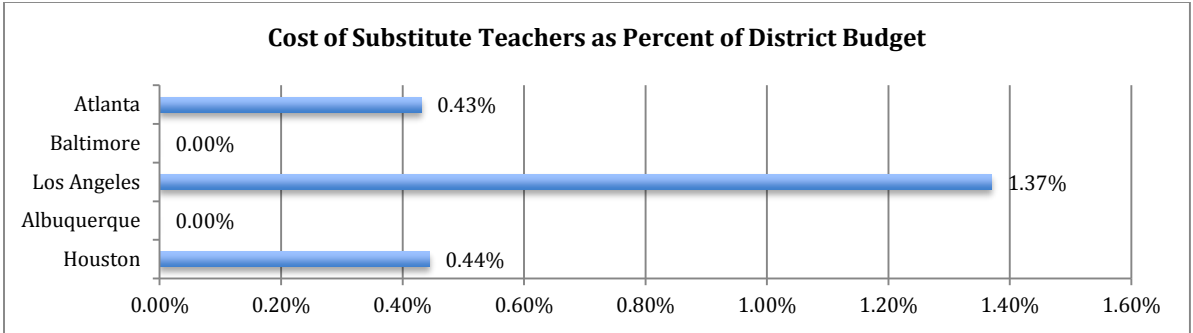


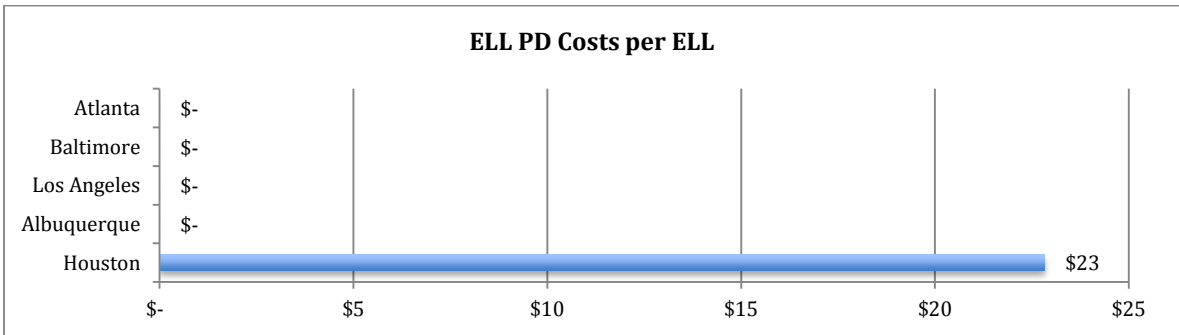
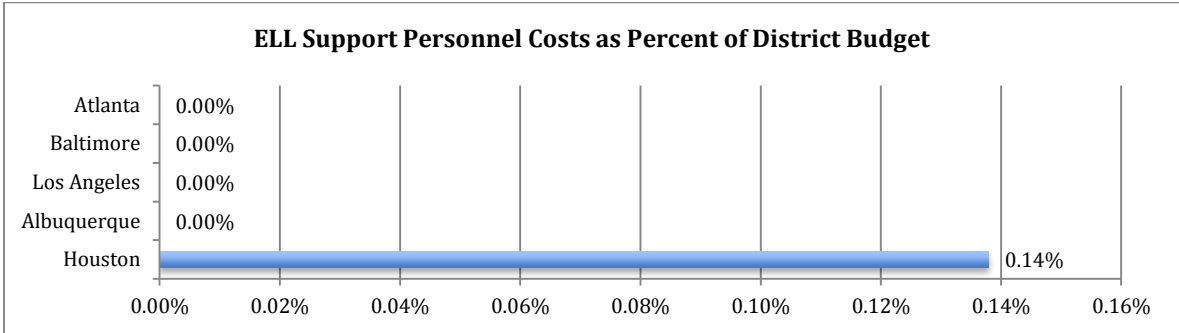
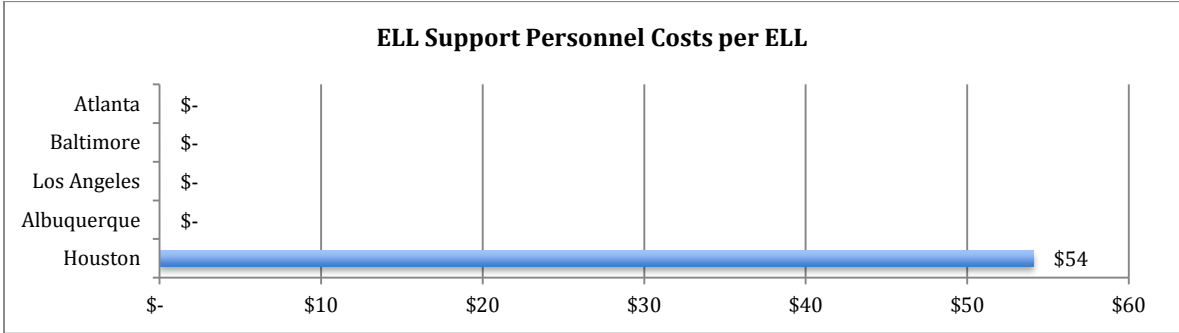
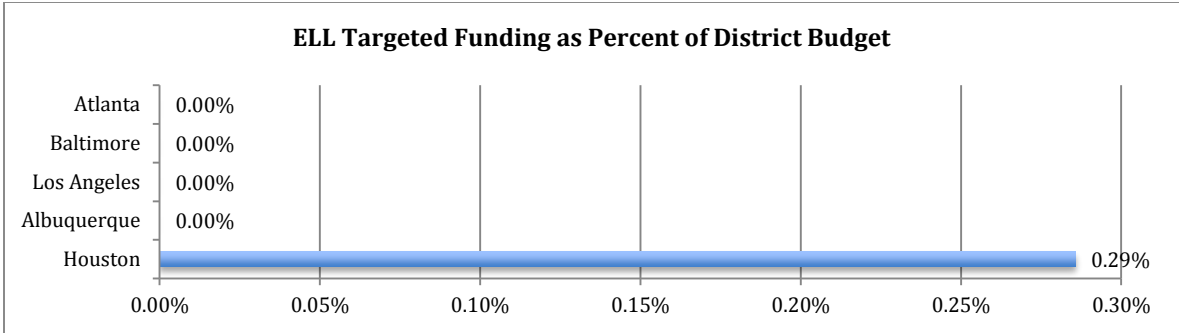
Preliminary Pilot Data on Academic Cost KPIs By the Council of the Great City Schools

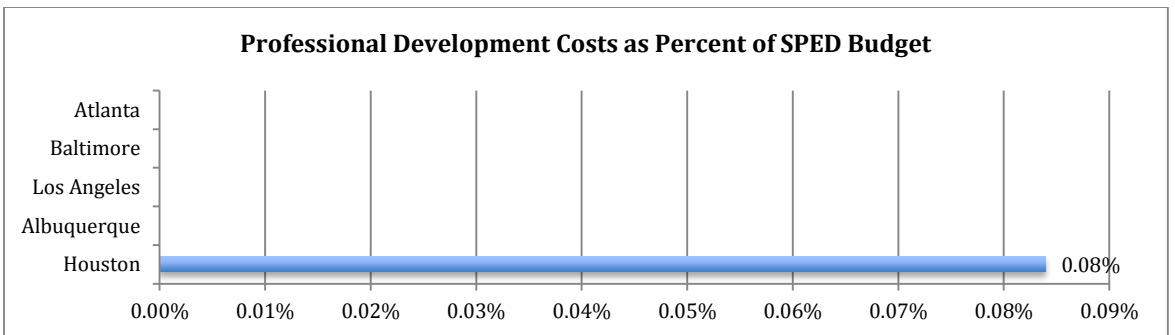
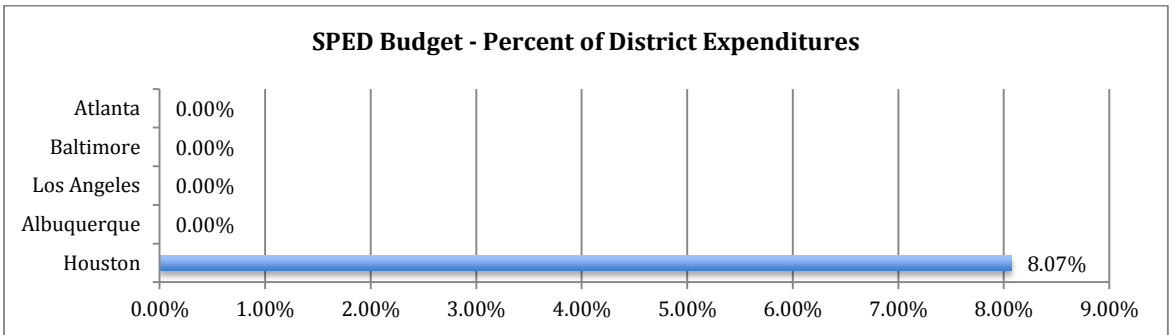
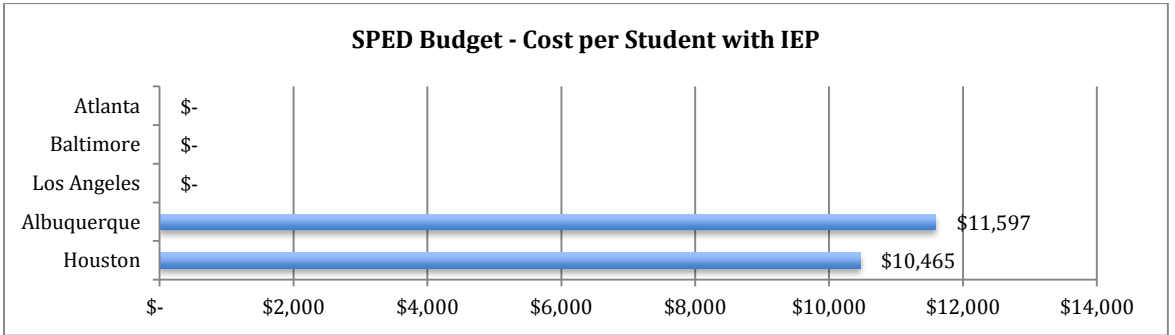
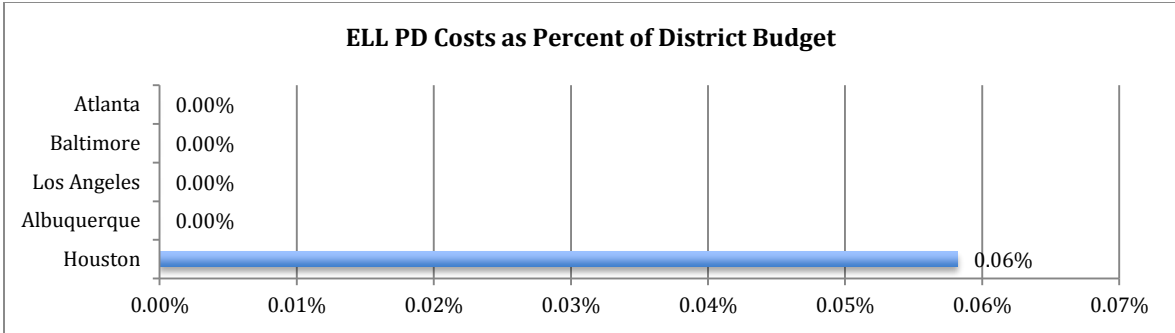


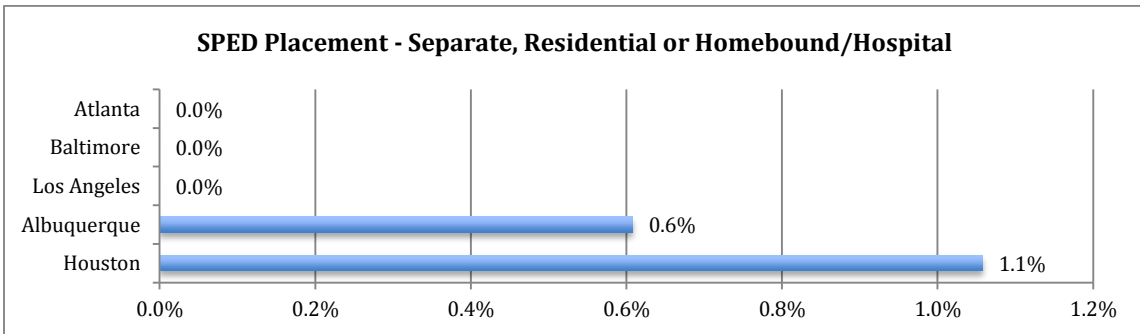
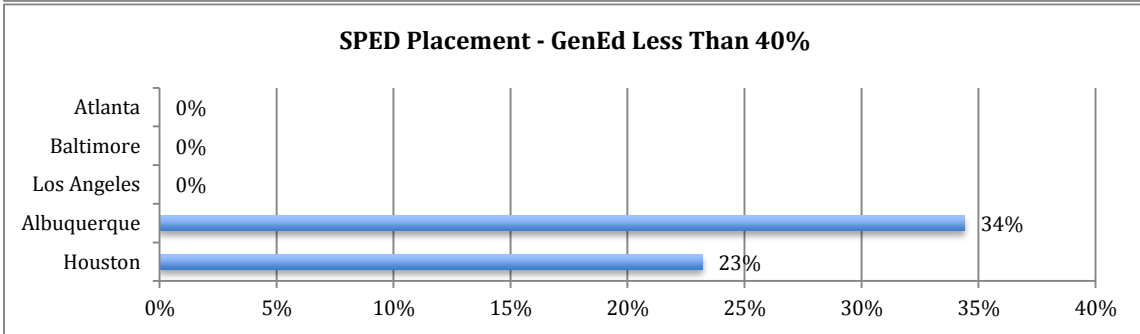
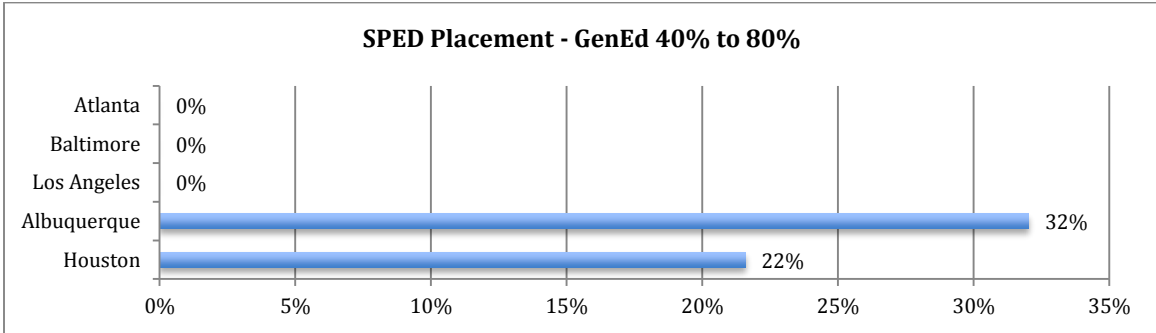
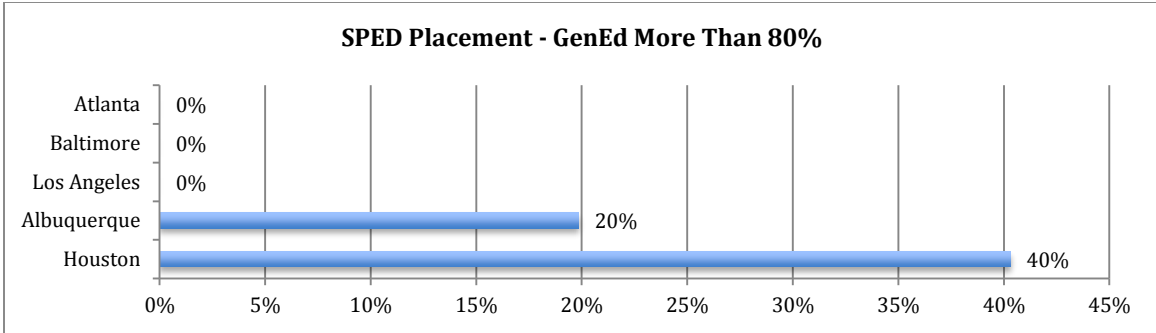


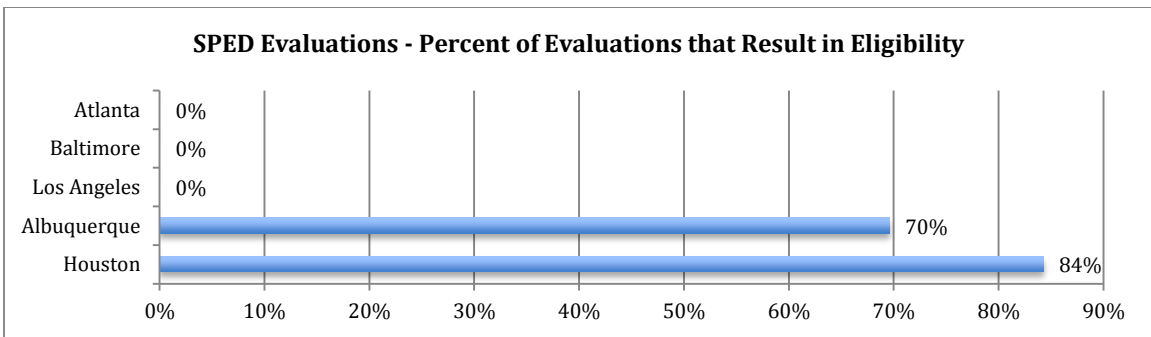
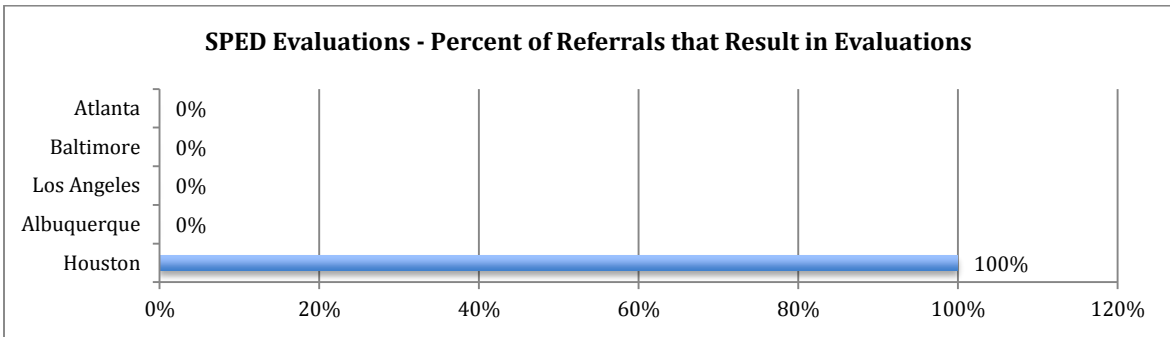
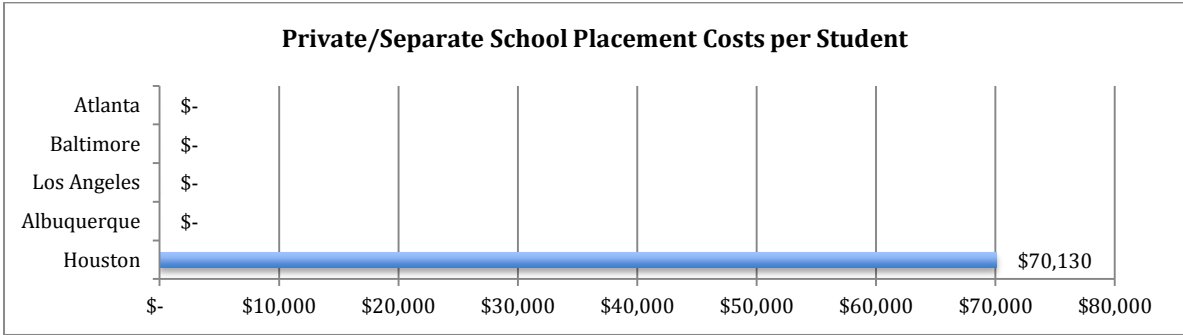
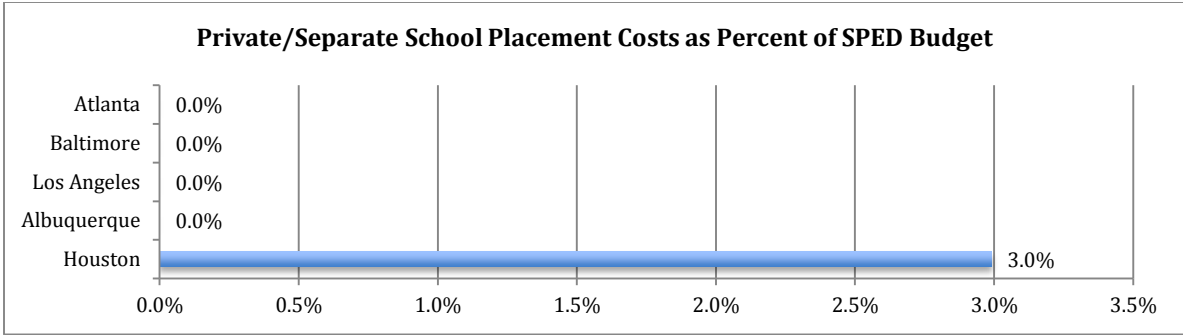


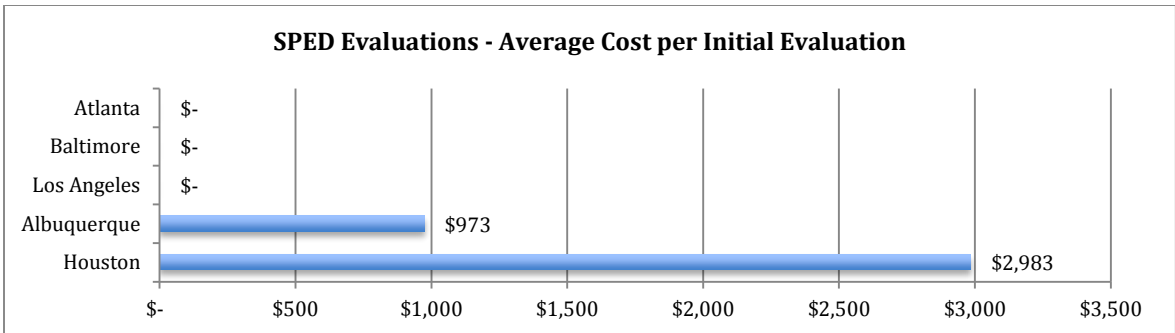
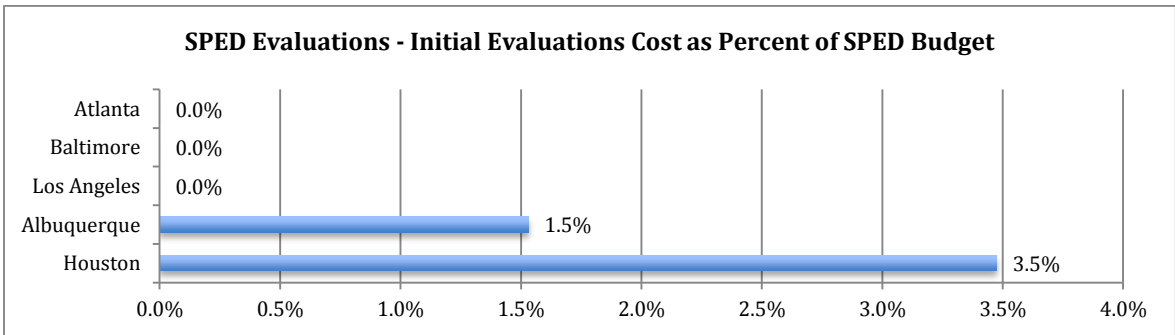
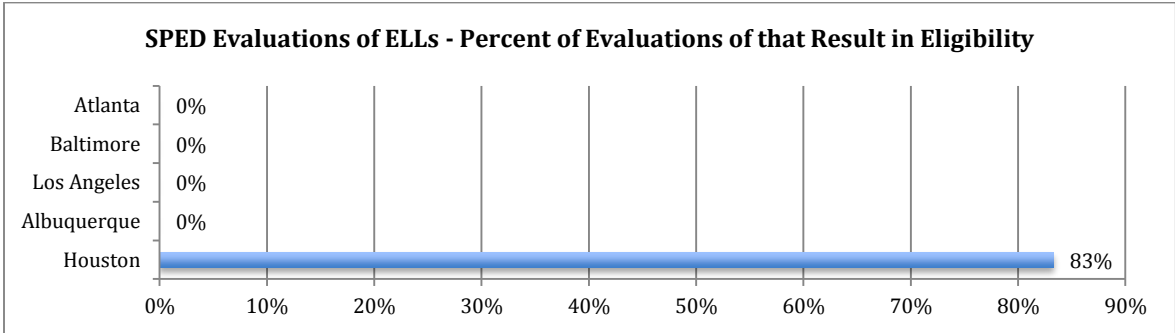
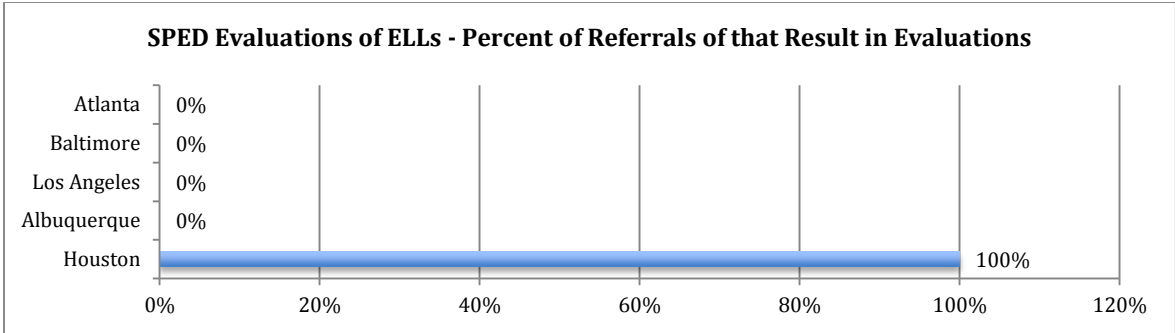


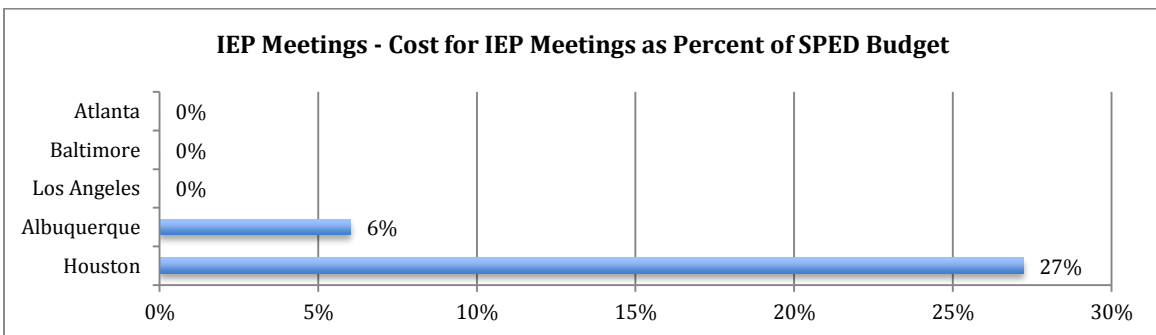
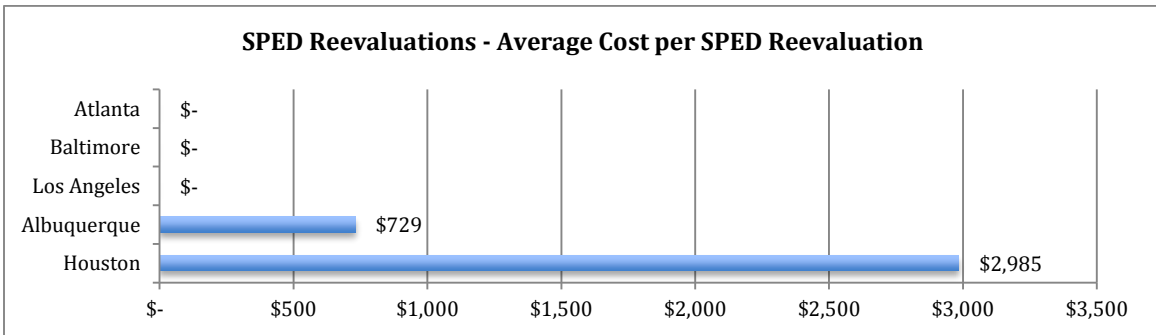
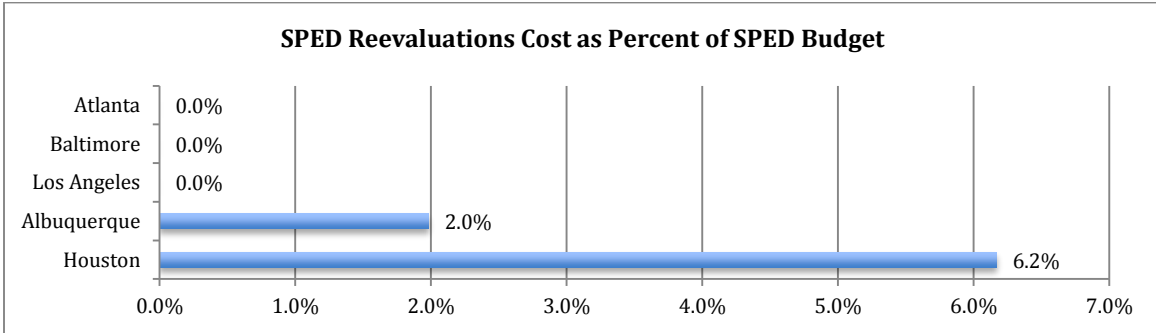
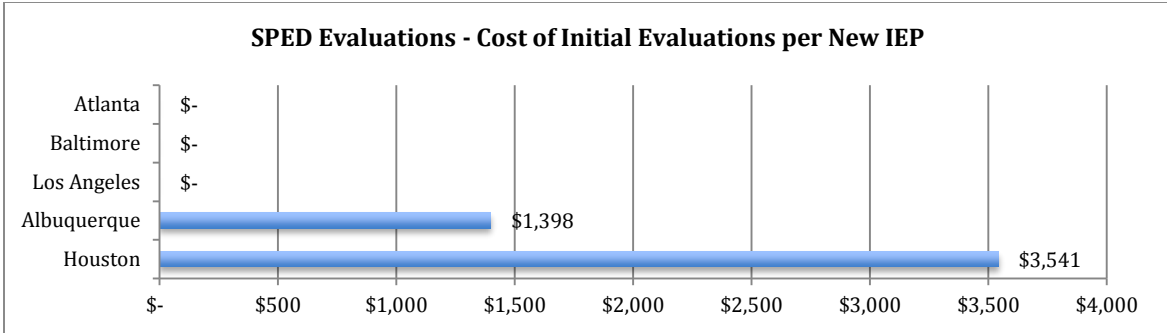


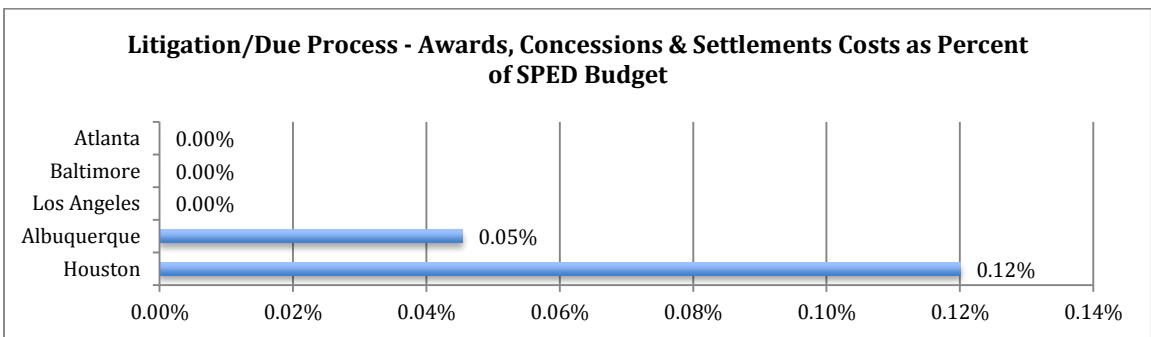
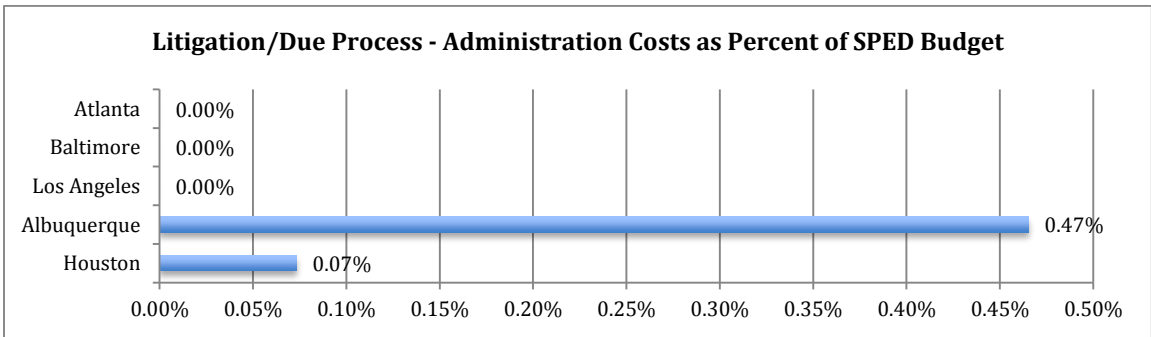
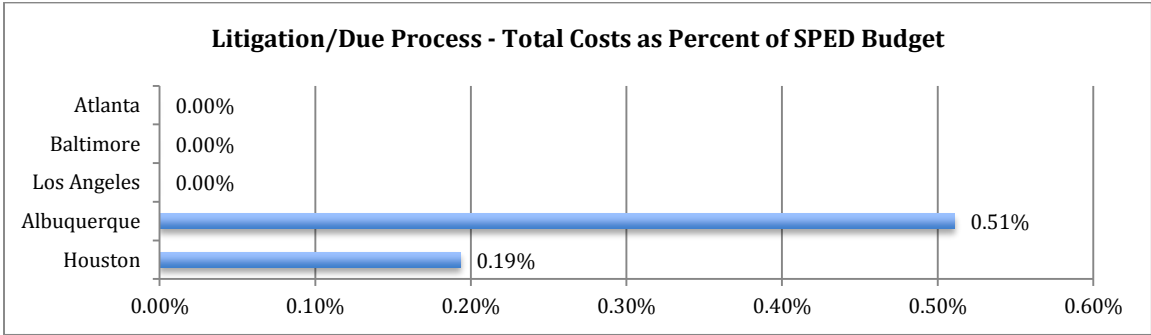
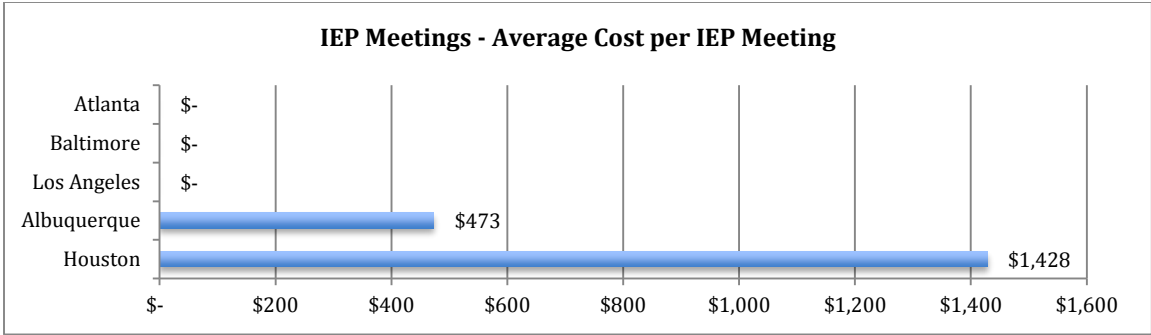












**WALLACE FOUNDATION PRINCIPAL
SUPERVISOR INITIATIVE**

**SCOPE OF WORK
PRINCIPAL SUPERVISORS INITIATIVE**

GRANTEE OF RECORD: Council of the Great City Schools

SCOPE PERIOD: July 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

GRANT AWARD: \$300,000

I. Wallace's initiative goal

The initiative is trying to determine if principal supervisors in urban districts shift from overseeing compliance to shaping principals' instructional leadership capabilities, and if they (both incumbents and aspirants) are provided with the right training, support and number of principals to supervise, would this improve the effectiveness of the principals with whom they work?

II. Program and strategy summary

Educators are increasingly recognizing that the effectiveness of district principal supervisors – the people who manage, evaluate and provide professional development for principals – is crucial to improving principal performance. Six urban districts are embarking on making major systems changes in five areas:

- Revising the position descriptions for principal supervisors to transform the position from monitoring compliance to supporting principals in improving teaching and learning;
- Expanding the capacity of those currently in the position to coach, mentor and provide professional development and learning communities for principals;
- Developing a system for the identification and training of new principal supervisors (a succession of leaders ready to step into the position);
- Reducing the number of principals supervised by each incumbent; and
- Strengthening the central office structures to support all the above.

The strategy is to perform an analysis of the principal supervisor position in the six Principal Supervisor Initiative districts and thereby assist them in strategic planning for years 2-4 of the initiative. In addition, the Council will update the October 2013 "principal supervisor" report with the new information from these six districts and any new perspectives gained. Recommendations from that report will be confirmed or updated. In addition, the Council will work with Wallace on various communications strategies to be determined.

The aspects covered in the analysis will be the same as that done in 2013 for the "principal pipeline districts:

- How long this position has been in existence in the district and main changes in the last couple of years (if any). The principal supervisors' roles – official and informal;
- The skills and knowledge required to perform these roles;

- The structure of these roles in the context of the districts' central offices;
- The preparation incumbents have for these roles (and hiring criteria); and
- The professional development needed vs. what is received and planned for those in this position.

Main activities to reach the goals

III. Activities and Timeline

1. Develop a framework by which to analyze the principal supervisor position in the six principal pipeline districts. (September 2014)
2. Gather the relevant data from the six districts, using data already obtained via the Council's district audits combined with new data capture. (September – November 2014)
3. Meeting with each district to assist their strategic planning for the PSI (November – December 2014)
4. Draft update of the 2013 report analysis of the principal supervisor position across sites with a brief report for each of the six districts. (January 2015)
5. Wallace review of the draft (February 2015)
6. Presentation of the results of the analysis at a PSI PLC meeting
7. Various communications projects – TBD
8. Finalizing the analysis/report as needed (January –June 2013)

IV. Wallace network activities: Participate in:

- Wallace convenings and professional learning community activities as appropriate;
- Regularly-scheduled conference calls with the Wallace contact; and
- Presentation of the results of the analysis at the Wallace PLC meeting in 2015.

V. Deliverables

- Discussions and data for each of the six districts
- Update of the 2013 report (draft in January 2015)
- An interim financial report due to Wallace on January 30, 2013 and a final financial report in June 2013 (guidelines to be sent six weeks in advance).

VI. Publications intended for distribution

The report is planned as an update to the 2013 publication. Wallace reserves the right to review and comment on drafts prior to publication as defined in the grant agreement.

Wallace Principal Supervisor Initiative

Updated Activities Timeline

1. Schedule site visits and gather relevant documentation from the six PSI Initiative districts (November 2014 – January 2015)
2. Conduct combination research/technical assistance site visits (January – April 2015)
 - a. Broward County, January 25-27, 2015
 - b. Cleveland, February 2-3, 2015
 - c. DeKalb County, February 10-11, 2015
 - d. Des Moines, February 16-17, 2015
 - e. Long Beach, February 18-19, 2015
 - f. Minneapolis, February 24-25, 2015
 - g. Washington, DC March 18-19, 2015
 - h. Tulsa, April 7-8, 2015
3. Present findings at Wallace Meeting (March 16-17, 2015)
4. Present findings at Wallace Meeting (April 13-14, 2015)

PORTLAND WRITING CONFERENCE



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ARGUMENT WRITING: THE APEX OF DEEP UNDERSTANDING

**PLANNING FOR DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF CONTENT AND CONCEPTS USING ALL
THREE COMMON CORE WRITING TYPES**

APRIL 22-23, 2015

**PORTLAND, OREGON
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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

TO WRITE A SUCCESSFUL, EFFECTIVE, THOUGHTFUL ARGUMENT – EVEN AT THE LOWER GRADES – STUDENTS NEED TO HAVE BOTH A SOLID BASE OF INFORMATION/KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT AT HAND, AND A NUANCED SENSE OF MORE THAN ONE SIDE OF AN ISSUE. THEY NEED TO BE ABLE TO HOLD BOTH OF THESE SIDES UP FOR CONSIDERATION AS THEY THINK THROUGH THEIR OPINION OR CLAIM, AND EXPLAIN THEIR THINKING – USE REASONING – AS THEY DEVELOP THEIR ARGUMENT.

PARTICIPANTS WILL ENGAGE IN AN INTERACTIVE WALK-THROUGH OF A THREE- STAGE MODEL SEQUENCE THAT INCORPORATES SEVERAL IMPORTANT LITERACY STANDARDS – WITH A PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO TYING IN ALL THREE TYPES OF WRITING (INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY, NARRATIVE, AND ARGUMENT) TO BUILDING AND DEMONSTRATING STRONG CONTENT UNDERSTANDING ON A SELECTED TOPIC.

**PRESENTERS: DIANA LEDDY, VERMONT WRITING COLLABORATIVE
JOEY HAWKINS, VERMONT WRITING COLLABORATIVE**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Professional Development

2014-2015

Task Force Goal

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

Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College CUNY Dean
Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board

Member

Airick West, Kansas City School Board

HARVARD UNIVERSITY/CGCS INSTITUTE

**Seminar for New Superintendents presented by the Harvard Graduate School of Education in
collaboration with the Council of Great City Schools**

New Superintendents

What You Will Learn

Productive, articulate, responsive leadership is expected as soon as a new superintendent, chief executive officer, or chancellor assumes office. Multiple institutional pressures do not always permit the luxury of learning on the job. The Harvard University-Council of the Great City Schools Institute provides a practical and conceptual orientation to the superintendency, particularly in large urban school systems. It familiarizes new superintendents with the opportunities and hazards they will likely face and prepares them to respond to the many responsibilities and constituencies of their new roles.

Program Overview

In sessions ranging from leadership to financial management, the Institute focuses on the critical issues of the first months and years of the superintendency. It provides a chance for new school superintendents to reflect on their own situations and to consult with experts about their special concerns and circumstances. Most importantly, the five-day Institute introduces superintendents to an extraordinary peer group of colleagues from across the country.

Program Objectives

Intensive, interactive sessions address key topics critical to the first year of the school superintendency, including:

- *Leadership* explores the importance of core values and beliefs; moral conviction and its application to achievement gaps; theories of action and how one knows what will be most effective; managing the change process; the uses and limits of power and authority; when to go it alone and when collaboration is imperative; accountability and how to define and apply it; how to best communicate with the public and internal stakeholders; crisis management (including crises of one's own making) and strategic communications; the politics of the superintendency; establishing norms and expectations; how to tell when things are going off track and how to reestablish equilibrium; and innovation, its promises and limitations.
- *The Context of Leadership* takes on issues of organizational culture and traditions; the legacy of prior leaders and what to keep and what to change; the demographics of faculty, staff, and students and how they affect your theory of action; school board expectations and why you were hired; key stakeholders inside and outside the organization and how to build coalitions; organizational and community needs and what happens when they are out of sync; managing parent and community meetings; and how to pick your fights and which ones to avoid.
- *Governance* addresses differing models of school district governance and their implications; working with elected versus appointed school boards; collaborating effectively with the board on its priorities and your joint theory of action; how to manage and communicate with your board ("managing up"); keeping the board focused on the district's main goal: improving student achievement; how to deal with turnover among board members and outliers on the board; working with the board on meeting agendas; how to keep the board from consuming your time;

helping the board provide constituent services; and managing the school board's relationship with administrative staff.

- *Strategic Planning* investigates the merits and liabilities of strategic planning; what good strategic plans look like, what they include; what they aim to accomplish, who to involve, and how they are used; how to look at previous strategic plans; developing a first-year plan of action; balanced scorecards and other indicator systems to assess how your new district is doing; and evaluating the effectiveness of plans.
- *Building Your Administrative Team* introduces new superintendents to such topics as recruiting, onboarding, and supporting strong individuals and teams; how to decide who to keep and who to move; dealing with the school board politics of staff selections and deployment; talent versus loyalty; dealing with staff who seem immune to change; holding staff accountable; effective organizational structures and designs; using cross-functional staff teams on major priorities; hiring, retaining, and firing issues; how to delegate responsibility and distribute and enhance staff leadership; deciding who and how many people to bring with you to the new district; defining your cabinet; and avoiding your own ego in staff selections.
- *Unions and the Media* deals with relations with organized labor and the press. It covers the differing imperatives of the superintendent and union leadership and the press; the relationships and interactions of the school board, the unions, and the media; ongoing communications with the unions and the press; managing change with a reluctant union; handling grievances; collective bargaining and contract negotiations; planning and strategy for negotiating multiple contracts with differing unions; compliance with the contracts and how to manage that compliance; negotiating strategy; sustaining contract gains; and securing concessions and their costs.
- *Academics and Instructional Leadership* presents lessons on moving a school district forward academically and improving student achievement; defining your academic theory of action; building capacity among district and building level staff and teachers to improve outcomes for students; high leverage instructional strategies and what the research says about what works and what doesn't; measuring your instructional progress and the use of data; working with your chief academic officer; and why some school systems show academic gains and some don't.
- *Financial and Operational Management* focuses on the role of the superintendent in ensuring effective management and stewardship of the district's financial resources and operations. It covers how to look at and manage financial data along with cost and revenue indicators; strategies for improving efficiencies and effectiveness; transparency with the public, parents, taxpayers, and elected officials; short-term and long-term budgeting; going to the voters for a bond issue or levy increase; how to manage bond proceeds and the bonding agencies; risk management; tradeoffs with scarce resources; and working with your chief financial officer. It also explores how to effectively manage your operating systems, including your transportation, food services, information technology, and security operations.
- *Managing Your Life as a Superintendent and Issues of Ethics* is devoted to work-life balance; keeping your sense of perspective and sanity; handling family time and expectations; being a public figure; crafting and managing your own contract; defining how and when you will be evaluated, by whom and on what; salary negotiations and the limits of propriety; relationships with peers and direct reports; personal assets and flaws and knowing oneself—the inner work of

decision-making; the ethics of outside consulting, conflicts of interest, confidentiality, and relations with vendors; organizations, networks, and people to rely on for advice, support, and camaraderie; and knowing when to exit.

Who Should Attend

- First-time superintendents
- Superintendents who have just been appointed to a new district or are in their first year on the job
- Enrollment is limited to approximately 50 new superintendents

Dates and Duration

- The program is expected to launch around June 21, 2015
- The new superintendent program would last five days

**Seminar for Aspiring Chief Academic Officers presented by the Harvard Graduate School of
Education in collaboration with the Council of Great City Schools**

Aspiring Chief Academic Officers

What You Will Learn

Effective, informed, and responsive leadership is expected as soon as a new chief academic officer assumes office. Unfortunately, there are few opportunities for aspiring chief academic officers and curriculum and instructional leaders to prepare for the job and learn what it entails to succeed. The Harvard University-Council of the Great City Schools Institute provides a practical and conceptual orientation to the chief academic officer position, particularly in large urban school systems. It is designed to prepare aspiring instructional leaders to move into these positions effectively and helps school districts build a pipeline of future leaders.

Program Overview

In sessions ranging from leadership to instructional budget preparation, the Institute focuses on the critical issues of the first months and years of the chief academic officer position. And it provides a chance for new chief academic officers to reflect on their own situations and to consult with experts about their special concerns and circumstances. Most importantly, the four-day Institute introduces aspiring chief academic officers to an extraordinary peer group of colleagues from across the country.

Program Objectives

Intensive, interactive sessions address key topics critical to the development of aspiring chief academic officers and leaders, including:

- *Leadership* focuses on what chief academic officers do and how it differs from other instructional staff positions; how to define an instructional vision and theory of action; how to conceive of an instructional theory of action and how to determine whether it matches the needs and capacities of district staff, teachers, and students; how to judge what to do with legacy programs; how to manage change; the role of chief academic officers in working with stakeholders, parents, and community organizations and building support for reform and improvement; how chief academic officers work in tandem with their superintendents to improve academic achievement; what systems thinking looks like at the CAO level; managing instructional crises; and how to navigate the political challenges of the job.
- *Organization and Staffing* addresses effective organizational structures within the offices of chief academic officers; the pros and cons of managing principal supervisors and school chiefs; hiring, retaining, and firing staff along with how and when to do each; managing subject-matter staff and content experts; how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of current staff; building staff capacity to do the work; evaluating staff and principals; staff deployment and teaming; how to delegate responsibilities; defining and implementing districtwide academic accountability; creating learning communities; and strategies for effectively interacting and working with other departments.
- *Managing the Instructional Program* deals with preparing and assessing the effectiveness of district curriculum and whether you need one; implementing college and career-ready standards; assessing the effectiveness and suitability of commercial products and how to tell whether or not

they align with standards and curriculum; ensuring the seamlessness of programs; judging the effectiveness of legacy programs; achievement gaps and high-leverage strategies for reducing it; using supplemental and intervention programs effectively and appropriately; universal design principles; opportunities for early “wins” in improving academic achievement; defining and evaluating effective professional development and what it looks like; monitoring classroom instruction and principal support of it; research on what works in improving student outcomes and what doesn’t; understanding why the instructional program has the effects it has; interacting with and collaborating with information technology leaders and staff; and textbook adoption and procurement.

- *Preparing and Managing Budgets* handles the all-important task of financial management responsibilities of the chief academic officers. It includes issues related to working with the chief financial officer; budgeting; selling your budget to the superintendent and school board; managing your budget over the course of the school year; federal and state financial and program compliance; and return-on-investment strategies.
- *Use of Data* is devoted to how to use data to inform instructional practice, shape decision-making around professional development, supplemental needs, and academic interventions; how to coordinate the instructional work with research and assessment staff; using program evaluation to improve academic effectiveness; managing assessment systems; and knowing when the instructional program has stalled or going off track.
- *Managing Your Life as Chief Academic Officer and Issues of Ethics* undertakes how to manage your personal life during periods of high professional stress; knowing your strengths and weaknesses and how not to let the former get in your way and how to compensate for the latter.

Who Should Attend

- Senior curriculum and instruction staff, content directors, principal supervisors, and others who aspire to become chief academic officers of their districts.
- New chief academic officers who have just been appointed to a new district or are in their first year on the job
- Enrollment is limited to approximately 50 individuals

Dates and Duration

- The program is expected to launch around August 5, 2015
- The new superintendent program would last four days

LEADERSHIP FOR AMERICA'S URBAN SCHOOLS

January, 2015

**LEADERSHIP FOR AMERICA'S URBAN SCHOOLS: A Proposal by Carol Johnson, Senior Fellow,
Harvard University**

BACKGROUND:

Urban school districts serve the most economically, racially and linguistically diverse populations in our nation. The Council of Great City Schools, an organization founded in 1956, to bring together the nation's urban public school systems in a coalition dedicated to improving the educational opportunities for students in urban communities, reported in 2014 that, overall the students in these 60 plus school districts are 70% black and Latino, 68% eligible for free or reduced priced lunch and serve a disproportionate number of students in their states that are English Language Learners and receive special education services. Despite some progress across the nation and in these districts (as evidenced by NAEP scores, proficiency, graduation rate increases and reductions in the number of students dropping out of high school), significant achievement and performance gaps persist. These districts are disproportionately impacted by high mobility, homeless families and new arrivals to this country, as well as frequent turnover in district leadership.

It is true that too many of the students in these communities enter school without the prerequisite early learning experiences that middle income and affluent families routinely offer their children, skill development that leads to early reading success; too many are the first in their family, in some cases to complete high school and enter and complete post-secondary and too often these same families are ill-equipped to navigate the educational system's bureaucracy or provide the advocacy necessary to ensure their child's opportunity to learn. But it is also true, that time and time again, public education has proven its' capacity to overcome the conditions of poverty and family circumstance, to bring students who would otherwise have no future, a pathway to college, careers and the fulfillment of the American dream. Nothing is more important to our overall wellbeing, our democratic form of government, our economic prosperity and community safety than eliminating the barriers that stand in the way of our children's access to a great education.

Recent reform efforts have focused on a combination of structural and instructional changes; school size (small high schools), more tests, higher standards (Common Core & PARCC/Smarter Balance), effective teaching (MET study), added time (extended learning and summer learning loss), competition/governance and autonomy (charters, mayoral control) and universal design (inclusion, two way bilingual). Indeed, there is evidence across the country that some and combinations of these interventions have made a difference and shifted the conversation to a more intentional and deliberate focus on outcome and not just inputs. We are more attentive to who is and isn't learning, from curriculum to rigorous content, from what is actually taught to how students are able to use and apply knowledge in more

integrated ways. We have better data and know more than ever before about why some schools fail while others succeed, how to observe and document good teaching, how to more effectively design schools for the diverse learners who arrive, and how to create alternative and blended learning opportunities through technology. We are also growing in our knowledge and understanding of the connections between learning and the development of the brain through neuroscience.

This work, the most important undertaking in America's history, to educate all at high levels, requires a sustained and focused effort. The local demand and the international competition require school districts, particularly our urban districts, serving the most vulnerable of our students, to make rapid and significant academic improvements, build strong coalitions with non-profit partners, politicians, corporate leaders, and philanthropists, and be accessible and responsive to a community filled with competing interests. Byrk, et al (Chicago,2010) delineated 5 key elements to successful schooling that include leadership, professional capacity, instructional guidance/ curriculum, student-centered climate, and strong parent and community support/ties. In reviewing hundreds of schools, this research found that schools that have strong indicator reports of these elements were up to (10) times more likely to improve students' reading and mathematics performance than schools where (3) or more of these indicators were weak. Similarly another analysis (Chenoweth, 2007) of disparate schools nationwide, serving many poor, students of color with unexpectedly high student achievement found that those schools shared similar characteristics.

While these elements seem to make common sense, creating the necessary sustained and concentrated drive to produce these conditions and put the elements in place, requires persistent, prepared and focused leadership and even then, any number of contextual changes can make success difficult. Urban school communities are flush with a myriad of intermediate distractions, including constant public and media scrutiny, diminishing resources, and changing governance structures and leaders. Realistically our urban school communities will always be dynamic and filled with distractions and the value we place on our public institutions will continue to demand elected representation, opportunities for community-wide input from a diverse stakeholder base, and resolving alignment disputes and conflicts between state, federal and local policies and policy makers.

What we are more likely to control in an immediate and consequential way, is to ensure that we develop, recruit, support and sustain the district leadership, prepared to effectively lead a complex academic enterprise, where the outcomes for the most important customers (our students) are as consequential to both them as individuals now and to us as a nation in the future.

Numerous research studies document the positive link between student achievement and district leadership, (McREL,Alsbury, 2008, Waters & Marzano, 2009, Ansingh, 2012). A more recent study (Brookings, 2014) failed to create a direct correlation between the role of school district superintendents and student achievement, however the study acknowledges that

Superintendents occupy one of the most complex and demanding leadership positions. Despite the study's conclusions, most educational research concludes that while no individual variable improves performance alone, leadership is always included in the list of variables that when combined with other elements produces results, and effective leadership is absolutely required to coordinate and facilitate the other elements. The Harvard Business Review (November, 2014) reported that among the best performing corporations in the world, the majority of CEOs on the list, 55% have served 12 to 20 years and the median term for all CEOs studied was 7 years. This stands in stark contrast to the tenure of urban school superintendents.

CURRENT APPROACH:

Data from the Council of Great City Schools (2014) suggests that less than 25% of urban school superintendents remain in their leadership roles for more than five years. In fact, the average tenure dropped in 2014 from a high over the last decade of 3.6 years to 3.2 years. Few superintendent leadership programs are designed for the urban context, and what is more typical is a series of courses offered by local higher education institutions that upon completion provide the "Superintendent's Licensure," and endorsement usually required by the state for leaders to serve in the position. Most of the approximately 15,000 school superintendents across the nation (exception, elected superintendents, in some states) self-select to acquire this endorsement and maybe placed without any prerequisite "induction" or preparation process similar to what we would normally even require for teachers (student teaching). Many may have served in district level assistant superintendent or director level positions prior to their appointment, others come to the position through non-traditional routes, superintendent preparation or doctoral/ leadership programs (i.e. the former Harvard Urban Superintendents' program, Vanderbilt and Columbia Universities). Current efforts like the Broad Institute, the Aspen Leadership Group have provided targeted support, particularly to recruit non-traditional leaders, and in the case of the latter, support to superintendents after being selected. The impact has only been for a small select group of districts.

Over the last decade, the Harvard Business School and the Graduate School of Education have partnered to host seminars "PELP" to develop urban district leadership teams and work on problems of practice identified by the district. Funders like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Wallace Foundation, Annenberg and Carnegie have brought together district leaders based on project specific efforts, small schools, extended learning, arts, organizational improvement, etc., and indeed these have created learning opportunities and strengthened teams of district leaders. But these efforts rely heavily on selected district partnerships versus a comprehensive strategy for transforming the overall leadership landscape. The American Association of School Administrators and their local affiliates, as well as NWEA, Proact/Superintendents' Academy offer leadership development opportunities, but they are often general rather than specific or one-time meetings versus over an extended period of time. Statewide efforts tend to be more generally aligned to the states reform efforts but are not intentionally designed for urban districts. While these examples are all noteworthy,

they have limited capacity to impact in a more intentional way the “constant churn” of leadership in urban districts, and the real time entry level support that is so critically needed in the first one to three years in the position.

What is required is a new and different structure to support newly appointed urban school superintendents early in their career trajectory. Superintendents need access to a network of experienced mentors from a broad array of fields who are able to assist them as they navigate the academic, the fiscal, community and political dynamics of the position. We have accepted as intractable and normal the notion that urban district leadership will always be mobile and have the “constant churn”. Without a doubt there are clearly political and mismatch realities that may limit a more lengthy tenure. But we have too often attributed these frequent transitions to ineffective board leadership, elected governance structures and not always to how we better recruit, prepare, develop, and support those with potential to lead this critically important and consequential work. This assumption is not meant to underestimate the formidable challenges of competing interests like those we have most recently witnessed in cities like Los Angeles, Birmingham or Albuquerque, nor to dismiss or ignore that some governance structures maybe more or less effective. Rather, it affirms the need to have effective and strong representative governance, and also affirms that there are specific and highly complex leadership skills and “know-how” associated with staying long enough to effectuate meaningful changes and implementation of a reform agenda that will ensure educational opportunity for all.

Newly appointed school superintendents (first one to three years) face many challenges. Without the support necessary to promote a sustained focus on academic achievement, build productive community collaborations and create a leadership team to help navigate the tumultuous and ever changing context of labor relations, legislative priorities, competition and deal with the financial constraints of operating efficiently, these leaders will be poorly positioned to demonstrate their competence or effectiveness. Constant changes in urban school district leadership work against improvements in academic performance and a sustained focus on closing achievement gaps. Without new and different support, progress will be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Over the last decade (2000-2010), the United States population grew from approximately 281 to 308 million people and as of May, 2014, the census reports that there are 318 million Americans. America is growing and the face of America is projected to become more diverse by 2050. Eighty-two percent of the United States’ population live in cities and surrounding metropolitan communities, and urban communities have the greatest density of the population. Between 2000 and 2010, the overall population of the United States grew by slightly less than 10%, but the Hispanic and Asian growth was 43% each, and the Black and White populations were 12% and 5% respectively. Today, approximately 25-30% of Americans are children, but the majority of children under age one are children of color. By 2020 more than 50% of all

students in the United States will be students of color and 20% of the nation's population under age 5 come from households where another language other than English is spoken at home. In many urban school districts across the nation, like Boston (45%) that rate is double. The United States Census projects that by 2050 the share of the United States population by 2050 will shift from a majority white population of 64% to 46%, while the Hispanic/Latino population currently at 16% will almost double. These facts have particular significance since a large share of these growing populations are in urban cities and many of these students have been under-represented in the positive outcomes of graduation rates, college entrance and completion rates and over-represented in the negative outcomes of drop outs, youth unemployment, and corrections/incarcerations.

Ensuring a robust and sustainable economy is only possible, if we as a nation maximize the human talent represented by all, not just some, of our students. Analysis by the Center for American Progress (CAP) suggests that by closing racial gaps, we would raise overall incomes by eight percent and increase GDP by 1.2 trillion. They further suggests that "equity, inclusion, and fairness are no longer moral imperatives, they are also economic ones. America needs a new growth model that is driven by the twin goals of both equity and excellence." Developing the next generation of leaders to move a bold and more aggressive agenda for educating well a more diverse student population, (that has been traditionally under served in our schools) is critical.

The growing and more diverse population of the United States does not mirror the population of our current education workforce. In 1990, the majority of US teachers were 71% female and 29% male. Data from 2011 reports that the teaching workforce is 84% female and 16% male. In 1990, the teaching workforce nationally was 92% White, 5% Black, 2% Hispanic and 1% other. By 2011, teachers were 84% White, 7% Black, 6% Hispanic and 4% other (includes Asian, Native American). There has been a shift from traditional teacher education programs, to alternative routes to teaching, but 2/3 of teachers are still prepared in traditional higher education programs. Of those becoming teachers through alternative routes, 53% Hispanic, 39% Black, and 18% White. There are also significant disparities in the representation of superintendent leaders in the United States by gender and race. As of 2011, while over 84% of all teachers in America were women, in the approximately 14,000 school districts in this country, the percent of female superintendents has hovered between 15-20%. Even in the sixty largest urban districts where women have moved more quickly into leadership positions, 72% are male and 28% female. There is currently only one Hispanic female among the sixty largest urban superintendents and less than 2% of urban superintendents are Hispanic and Asian. Superintendents in the Council of Great City Schools are more racially diverse, 47% White, 41% Black, 15% Hispanic, but gender gaps persists and given the student demographic shifts, Hispanic, Native Americans and Asians will still be under-represented. The tenure of Black superintendents is much lower than it is for their White superintendent peers.

This effort will undertake a strategy for developing and diversifying the leadership pool of superintendents and providing the networking opportunities that prepare them to be

successful in roles where they have been traditionally under-represented. The potential pool of candidates most likely will come from many of the district level leaders in the urban districts with the greatest racial and gender diversity, but more has to be done to identify and nurture this untapped and under-developed talent. As the student population becomes more diverse, the need to recruit, develop and retain diverse leaders will increase.

ACADEMIC CHALLENGES

The Common Core Standards (CCSS) initiative was launched in 2009 by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Its purpose is to establish consistent educational standards across states in Grades K-12 and to ensure that students graduate from high school prepared to enter credit-bearing courses in post-secondary institutions or to enter the workforce. The team charged with developing the standards has as its stated purpose to "...provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so that teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them." Additionally, "...the standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers" (NGA Center for Best Practices, 2010), thereby, enabling American students to compete in a global economic.

In an effort to align assessments with the new standards, two consortia were established to develop CCSS assessments. Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) have designed and tested assessments that will not only provide a more accurate measure of students' knowledge and skills in English Language Arts and Mathematics, but also facilitate comparisons of achievement data across students, schools, districts and states.

The introduction of CCSS and the related assessments have resulted in the most substantive changes in teaching and learning in decades and will transform classrooms across the nation. The research and evidence based standards have altered both the content (what is taught) and the strategies (how content is taught). In ELA, for example, the standards focus on the use of critical types of content – classic myths and stories, historical documents, and seminal works – to introduce increasingly complex text, academic vocabulary, and from which students cite evidence to demonstrate their understanding and apply their knowledge of the content. The mathematics standards provide a deeper focus on fewer topics at each grade level and stronger coherence of topics across grade levels. In addition, the standards require that the instruction focus equally on conceptual understanding; procedural skills and fluency; and application. In addition, the use of technology, both in instruction and assessment, has created a need for enhanced teacher development, improved infrastructure, and additional resources.

The Council of the Great City Schools embarked upon a multi-year initiative to support its member districts in implementing CCSS and a CGCS Survey (August 2013), curriculum directors indicated the following:

- Approximately 90% respondents stated that their districts planned to fully implement CCSS during last school year (2013-14);
- The majority of those responding indicated that their district's progress in implementing CCSS as either good or excellent; and
- The areas that were most likely to be rated "poor" included addressing the needs of special populations (39.6%); adopting computer-based and computer-adaptive assessments (37.8%), and integrating technology into the classroom (34.2%).

Neither the programs for preparing superintendents, nor the current models of teacher training have kept pace with the seismic shifts in what educators must know and be able to do to meet the demands that are required to effectively implement the more rigorous standards. The capacity of school district leaders to understand the contextual implications of the standards reform and the ability to manage the shifts in policy, curriculum, instruction, and resource allocation are critical to ensuring both the effectiveness of the CCSS implementation, but more importantly, the success of all students.

PROPOSED PROJECT:

If urban school district leaders were provided early mentoring support and guidance, and assisted to build leadership teams and supportive networks focused on developing human capital and creating schools of excellence and equity, they will be able to provide concentrated and sustained leadership, thereby resulting in improved student performance and the closing of achievement gaps.

ASSUMPTION:

Few superintendent leadership development programs provide sufficient preparation in real-time entry level support to ensure that urban district leaders are able to successfully lead and navigate the academic, community, fiscal and political demands of the position. This lack of preparedness results in high turnover, constantly changing priorities, personnel changes, and an inability to create a sustained focus on academic achievement. The proposal assumes a shift from a reactive mode of support to one that identifies and provides planning, coaching and technical assistance in the predictable areas that create challenges for newly appointed urban superintendents and limits their long-term tenure and success in student achievement and threatens any chance of school improvement.

STRATEGY:

Target Audience: Urban school district superintendents, cabinet level leaders or non-traditional leaders in the nation's largest urban school districts who are newly appointed are in their positions for less than three years.

PURPOSE:

To provide a network of pre-and entry-level support and technical assistance to newly appointed school superintendents, to ensure early assessments and actions that build on the assets of the existing context, maximize the leaders' talents, and assist the leadership team to move forward an aggressive and productive academic agenda, while building a collaborative environment for district progress and leadership stability.

To support school districts in developing talent and assembling a team of leaders to build internal coherence and alignment, and professional capacity to transform systems and structures for academic success.

To assist school leaders in developing and executing a theory of action that increases the likelihood that students' academic performance will improve and achievement gaps will close.

To offer newly appointed superintendents access to an ongoing cadre and network of experienced leaders who serve as advisers, critical friends and mentors and offer feedback and counsel to newly appointed leaders in urban districts.

These networks will provide a confidential and safe space to problem solve, think out loud, innovate and experiment with new ideas, address problems of practice and exchange successful strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE:

The Council of Great City Schools brings together the nation's largest urban school systems in a coalition dedicated to the improvement of education for children in the largest city communities. The organization does its work through advocacy, legislation, communications, research and technical assistance. It also helps to build capacity in urban educational programs, to boost academic performance and narrow achievement gaps, improve professional development, district leadership governance and management. The Council accomplishes its mission by connecting urban school district leaders across the country and upon request, from districts also conducting strategic reviews in particular areas of work including curriculum and instruction, operations, fiscal and operational areas, and services to special populations of students (i.e., special-education English language learners). The Council's Board of Directors is composed of the Superintendent and one member of the Board of Education from each member district, making the Council the only national educational organization so constituted and the only one comprised of district leaders and policymakers.

The Council of Great City Schools is recognized as a leader in urban education and has a long and distinguished history of working effectively with superintendents, elected and appointed school board members from the nation's largest districts. The organization has provided strategic reviews related to district challenges, hosted annual job-alike seminars in topical areas such as teacher effectiveness and benchmarking district operations, and provided

leadership federal initiatives (CCSS, RTTT, My Brother's Keeper). Because of the Council's established relationships and strategic work with urban districts and its willingness to question and confront the status quo, the organization is uniquely positioned to create the host infrastructure to identify potential leaders who would most likely benefit from this support.

FORMAT:

The format for the project includes a blended model of webinars and face-to face network meetings and 1:1 on site and virtual coaching. The districts will have access to relevant research; participate in contextual assessments and strategic reviews; receive technical assistance and resources to address their specific needs. Through its existing K-12 educator network and the College of Education Deans, the CGCS has the capacity and experience to customize services and match the needs of district leaders and selected facilitators and resources.

SERVICES PROVIDED:

Districts participating in the program will receive the following services:

1. Mentoring support from leaders with urban superintendent or executive level personnel with experience in leading and developing complex organizations.
2. Coaching, technical assistance and support from retired leaders from education, business, legislative or other related fields.
3. Participate in job-alike opportunities, bi-annual meetings, and networking hosted by Council of Great City Schools.
4. Research support from Council of Great City Schools Urban Dean's Advisory group and selected case studies of district leadership Challenges (Harvard/PELP)
5. Develop a network of support for increasing the pool of under-represented leaders (race, gender, etc.).

LEADING AMERICA CONTENT /COACHING MANUAL

Over the next year, a set of modules and a coaching manual which represent key leadership components for this program will be developed. Among the topics to be included are the following:

INTERNALLY FOCUSED:

- Team Building: Entry Planning and Assembling a Diverse Team
- Human Capital and Executive Level Leadership
- Vision and Direction: Communication Within the District
- Operations and Infrastructure: The Nuts and Bolts of Facilities, Nutritional Services, and Transportation
- Labor Relations: Getting to Win

- Management Development- Principals and Middle Management Professional Growth
- Equity and Academic Excellence for All
- Fiscal management, equitable funding models, federal funds, fund raising
- Creating a Culture of Innovation and Reform
- Academic Focus and Rigor: Standards, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- Activating Teachers' Voices
- Authentic Parent and Community Engagement – Creating Meaningful Opportunities to Involve Parents and Community in Educating Students

EXTERNALLY FOCUSED:

- Maximizing Organizational Resources – Council of Great City Schools, AASA, NSBA, NPTA, CUBE, Local and Regional Organizations
- Partnering with the Community – Developing and Sustaining Partnerships Focused on District Priorities
- Working with Policymakers: Legislative, Legal and Public Policy Issues
- Media Relations and Communications – Telling the District's Story
- Competition: Learning from Charters, Private Schools and Schools that Work
- Governance: School Board Development, Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Dilemmas
- Creating a Customer Oriented and Family Focused Organization
- Accountability for Performance – Superintendent's Evaluation and Public Confidence.

STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSTITUENT ANALYSIS:

The target audiences for these services are newly appointed superintendents and their leadership teams. School boards (elected and appointed) seek competent and consistent leadership and they will see the benefit of these leaders receiving ongoing coaching support and technical assistance from experienced leaders as they successfully direct and guide high-performance district teams.

The entire community shares the responsibility of educating its children. The economic well-being and vitality of the city depend on a well-educated workforce. Families often make housing decisions based on the perceived quality of the schools and the confidence they have in teachers and school leaders. The entire community becomes a stakeholder in the success of the schools and the confidence the community places in district leaders. It is difficult for the business community, civic leaders, families and educators to have confidence in the school community with the constant turnover in district leadership. The investments, new initiatives and relationship building necessary to create high-performing schools in our most vulnerable urban communities in particular, are less likely to be fully developed with frequent leadership changes. This project will need to engage:

1. Urban school district leaders;
2. School Board members and policy makers;
3. Philanthropy/foundations;
4. Education organizations

RESISTANCE AND FORCES OF INERTIA:

The major resistance will be the tendency to believe “that’s just the way it is and there’s nothing we can do to alter the current state”. This can be a huge hurdle since many school board members and superintendents when confronted with conflicts or political issues view the necessity for frequent changes as a simple mismatch between the superintendent and the local school board and not the result of a lack of more carefully developed strategies on both sides for problem solving in a more collaborative way. Overcoming the resistance requires a careful examination of the data given the current environment. A key strategy will be to examine the school district leaders that have served for over a decade and have had a proven track record and evidence of success. Examples might include: Long Beach, CA, Hillsborough/Tampa, FL, and Omaha Nebraska

PILOT-PROOF OF CONCEPT AND SCALING

Discussions are underway and two (2) pilot sites are being explored.

1. State specific – Tennessee
2. National – urban districts Council of Great City Schools

STATE:

The eight (8) largest districts in the state of Tennessee represent over 50% of the students in the state. The largest populations reside in these four (4) districts: Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville and Chattanooga. For the entire state to improve, these four districts representing the greatest diversity in the state must make substantial and sustained progress. The Tennessee Department of Education has recently created a new division, specifically designed to reach out and support the district leaders and schools in these large districts.

NATIONAL:

The average tenure of current school superintendents in the nation’s largest urban school districts dipped again in 2014 from three point six to three point two. Urban districts with changes expected in the next six months include: Albuquerque, Birmingham, Boston, Charlotte, Nashville and Los Angeles. A preliminary project plan has been submitted to the Council of Great City Schools for further discussion and review.

MEASURES AND INDICATORS:

While creating greater stability and a sustained academic agenda can be measured by longevity in the superintendents’ position, and appear to be worthy goals, the ultimate goal is not just about how long the Superintendent serves, but also ensuring that the stability and continuity of leadership will lead to improvements in the academic performance of students and closing of the access and opportunity gaps that result in some students achieving and succeeding, while others fail. The following data points will contribute to our understanding and strategy:

1. This project will use district level data to identify experienced mentors and coaches most likely to add value in supporting the superintendents and their leadership teams as they work on school and student performance.
2. This project will collect data when possible on the reasons for the short tenure and assess what contributes or works against superintendents' short or long term tenure in urban school districts.
3. This project will annually collect data on the superintendent turnover in the largest urban districts and determine if the school districts with greater leadership longevity produce better and more sustained academic results.

120 DAY TIMELINE:

September-December, 2014:

Develop and submit to CGCS project proposal;
Solicit feedback from select individuals regarding the viability of proposed strategy;
Develop fiscal proposal for initial startup;
Make initial contact with key state and national stakeholders;

January 2015 to March 2015

Develop an advisory committee to further develop and support the project;
Work with the Tennessee Department of Education to identify key support strategies for largest urban districts;
Review results and key characteristics/elements in place in districts with decade-long leadership stability;
Develop curriculum modules for leadership professional development;
Submit proposal to the Council of Great City Schools executive board for consideration;
Develop initial list of prospective mentors and coaches;
Gather feedback from key stakeholders, current Superintendents and recent retirees;

April 2015 to June 2015

Revise and finalize complete proposal including fiscal plan and implementation timeline;
Develop and begin contacting a list of prospective funders;
Convene first official advisory committee;
Secure funding and identify staff and operational resource needs to commence the project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Public schools have been the primary vehicle for educating America's students, closing achievement gaps and ensuring access to educational opportunity for all. Urban schools are disproportionately challenged to educate the most economically, racially and linguistically diverse student populations. Less than 25% of urban school superintendents remain in their leadership roles more than 5 years. The result has been frequent turnover and sometimes unnecessary turmoil in the very district school communities with the greatest need for stability, forward thinking and sustained leadership.

Few superintendent preparation programs are specifically designed for urban school leaders, and few newly appointed urban superintendents have access to a network of experienced leaders who can provide the ongoing support and technical assistance to increase the likelihood that they will remain in place long enough to develop and execute a theory of action for sustainable improvement. “Leadership for America’s Urban Schools” is designed to connect newly appointed school district leaders to experienced leaders, to provide direct and contextualized entry-support and avoid the predictable traps that often derail and shorten the tenure of urban school superintendents.

Every new leader redefines priorities, assembles a new district team, and schools and teachers are left with incomplete or fragmented initiatives, conflicting messages, and confusion about the districts’ direction. The many starts and stops associated with leadership changes leave people within the organization wondering if they should trust the new direction. External partners and potential business investors outside of the organization are less willing to step up and make needed commitments when leadership stability seems uncertain and the direction seems to shift every couple of years. In meeting the needs of a more diverse student population, we must also recruit and develop a more diverse pool of leaders (and teachers) to address growing disparities and gender and race under-representation in our educator workforce.

“Leadership for America’s Urban Schools” will assist district leaders to focus on their academic agenda and to navigate and better understand the community and political context, as well as the fiscal challenges they face through a system of guided support and networking opportunities. If urban school district leaders were provided early mentoring support and guidance, and assisted to build leadership teams and supportive networks focused on developing human capital and creating schools of excellence and equity, they will be able to provide concentrated and sustained leadership, thereby resulting in improved student performance and the closing of achievement gaps.

Embedded in this list are crucial elements for fostering the conditions for school district success and a guiding principle of this project is that school district leaders through personalized coaching, shared network experiences, and real time authentic entry supports will be better prepared to effectively lead our most challenging school districts to be accountable places where academic progress is sustained overtime and all students succeed.

There is no more important work in America today than the education of its children. The school-age population is growing and becoming more diverse and we as a nation must provide competent, caring and stable leadership equipped with the tools to ensure that all, not just some, of our citizens are educated well and succeed in life. This is ultimately about “Saving America”.

References:

Bryk, Anthony S., et al, Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago, 2010

Center for American Progress (NSBA) Closing the racial achievement gap could expand America's economy by trillions: Robert Lynch and Patrick Oakford, 2014

Chenoweth, Karen, It's Being Done: Academic Success in Unexpected School, 2007

Council of Great City Schools, Annual Report, 2013-2014

Council of Great City Schools, Urban School Superintendents, characteristics, tenure, salary, 2014

Waters, J.T. and Marzano, R.T. School District Leadership That Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement, 2009

URBAN SCHOOL EXECUTIVE PROGRAM



Urban School Executive Program
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004

The Council of the Great City Schools' *Urban School Executives (C'USE) Program* is designed for mid-level managers who meet the highest professional standards and have the attributes, if given the opportunity, to assume senior executive positions in Council member districts. The *C'USE Program* is based on the lessons learned from reviews that the Council has conducted that illustrate the political, strategic, organizational, leadership, management and operational issues and challenges that Council member districts face.

The *C'USE Program* has two strands for 2015.

The *C'USE Program* for 7 mid-level managers from Albuquerque, Boston, Fresno, Hillsborough County, Houston, Oakland and Miami-Dad mid-level managers who aspire to assume senior executive positions as Chief Information Officers.

The *C'USE Program* for 11 mid-level managers from Baltimore, Boston, Broward County, Cleveland, Dallas, Norfolk, Rochester, and Sacramento. mid-level managers who aspire to assume senior executive positions as Chief Financial Officers.

The CIO candidates attended the June 2014 meeting of Chief Information Officers and the CFO candidates attended the November 2014 meeting of Chief Financial Officers to participate in discussions and work session on current issues. The candidates are currently participating in monthly group discussions that relate to these issues and are required to present their strategic business plans that address the systemic issues and challenges at this year's meetings of Chief Information Officers and Chief Financial Officers.

C'USE Certificates of Achievement will be presented to those judged by subject-matter experts as qualified to assume senior executive positions as Chief Information Technology or Chief Financial Officers and references will be provided when those positions become available.

For More Information Contact:



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Director, Management Services
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**CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICERS AND
PERSONNEL DIRECTORS MEETING**



**1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004**

**Chief Human Resources Officers
Annual Meeting
Sonesta Hotel
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
February 4-6, 2015**

**Working Agenda
Wednesday, February 4**

7:00 - 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	Welcome & Introductions
8:45 - 9:30 a.m.	HR Challenges and Environmental Scanning
9:45 - 10:00 a.m.	Break
10:15 - 11:00 a.m.	Enterprise Risk Management
11:15 - 12:00 Noon	Common Core and HR Implications
12:00 - 1:00 Noon	Luncheon
1:00 - 1:45 p.m.	Common Core Breakout Sessions
2:00 - 2:45 p.m.	Work Force Analytics
3:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Break
3:30 - 4:15 p.m.	Interpreting the Research
4:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Wrap Up
5:30 -	Reception: Welcome to Fort Lauderdale

Thursday, February 5

7:00 - 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:15 - 9:00 a.m.	Principal Pipeline Programs
9:15 - 10:00 a.m.	Teacher Preparation Programs
10:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Break
10:45 - 11:30 a.m.	Professional Development Aligned to District Performance Goals
11:45 - 12:00 Noon	Wrap Up

For Service or More Information Contact:



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**1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004**

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Luncheon
1:00 - 1:45 p.m.	Performance Pay for Principals and Teachers
2:00 - 2:45 p.m.	Total Rewards
3:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Break
3:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Empowering & Developing Leaders
4:15 - 5:00 p.m.	Moving HR From Compliance to School Support
5:15 -	Wrap Up

Friday, February 6

7:00 - 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Round Robin Forum: HR Issues & Challenges
10:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Break
10:45 - 11:45 a.m.	Round Robin Forum: HR Issues & Challenges
12:00	Luncheon & Departures

For Service or More Information Contact:



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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND BILINGUAL
EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education

2014-2015

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

Keith Oliveira, Providence School Board
Valeria Silva, St. Paul Superintendent

ELL PROJECTS SUMMARY

Spurring Improvement of Instruction for ELLs

The Council of the Great City Schools is currently coordinating a number of major projects to spur the improvement of instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs). These projects, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Televisa Foundation, and the Helmsley Charitable Trust, coordinate three significant and interrelated initiatives/areas of focus: 1) the establishment of a framework that increases expectations and instructional rigor for ELLs, 2) the improvement of instructional materials for ELLs, and 3) the creation of a cyber-enabled professional development tool to increase instructional capacity and agency for teachers of ELLs and students performing below grade level.

ELD 2.0 Framework

The new instructional framework for English Language Development, called **ELD 2.0**, was published in August 2014 within a document entitled ***A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners***. This document also includes an exploration of how the framework fits into different district **program models/instructional delivery systems**. The tool then offers a comprehensive set of **ELL considerations** aligned to the new Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET) developed by the Student Achievement Partners. These three key elements combine to offer member districts a clear, step-by-step road map for choosing the best possible CCSS-aligned instructional materials for ELLs in their districts.

CGCS member districts that participated in the development of ELL considerations include Albuquerque, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, District of Columbia, Denver, Fresno, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, Oakland, Palm Beach, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Ana, and Seattle.

Instructional Materials Project

A second ELL-focused grant, funded by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Televisa Foundation, supports a collaborative project to improve the quality of instructional materials, aligning them closely to the rigor of the Common Core State Standards and setting clear expectations around text complexity, grade-level content, and other key considerations. A “Call for Participation” was communicated to publishers in the spring of 2014, inviting them to participate in this project. In May of 2014, thirteen proposals were submitted and evaluated, and four publishers moved forward with the project: Amplify, Benchmark Education, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and National Geographic Learning/Cengage.

In June and September of 2014, meetings of publishers/CGCS member districts were convened to discuss the new instructional framework and specific ELL considerations/needs relative to instructional materials. Districts that participated in the review of publisher proposals (May) and the collaborative discussion around instructional materials and prototypes (June and

September) included Albuquerque, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Denver, District of Columbia, Fresno, Los Angeles, Oakland, Palm Beach, San Diego, San Francisco, and Seattle.

Among the improvements noted in subsequent iterations of the instructional materials are an enhanced focus on including and interacting with complex text, more opportunities for high-level academic discussions, a stronger balance between language input and output, and vocabulary development and grammar instruction that are increasingly rich and contextual.

In early March of 2015, pilot units were presented by all four participating publishers to a CGCS-convened team that included district thought leaders, ELL experts, and CGCS staff. Participating member districts included Albuquerque, Boston, Buffalo, Dallas, Denver, District of Columbia, El Paso, Los Angeles, New York City, Oakland, Palm Beach, and San Francisco. Districts evaluated and ranked the pilots according to their preference to pilot, and are subsequently being matched with pilot materials to be implemented between March-June 2015. Evaluation data and other feedback will be gathered and studied, and an overall report of results will be shared in the summer of 2015.

Cyber-enabled Professional Development Project

Our long-term goal for this project, funded by the Helmsley Charitable Trust, is to create a cyber-enabled professional-development platform that will help teachers support English Learners and students performing below grade level in the complex forms of communication and thinking required by the Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics. Through our recently completed planning project, we specified key elements of tools we hope to fully develop in a subsequent project: tools that districts could use with teachers in face-to-face sessions, online study groups, and professional-learning communities.

Advisory Teams were identified in Fall 2014 to:

- a. Prioritize professional-development content/needs in English Language Arts and mathematics, aligned with key instructional shifts in the Common Core and other new standards
- b. Develop guiding principles and a conceptual framework that would articulate the necessary environment and experience for professional-development offerings to be successful
- c. Discuss a pilot professional-development platform and suite of tools to ensure that its delivery mechanisms would be immediately usable by districts

These Council-led teams included content experts, academicians, and district practitioners. Individuals were selected who were knowledgeable in second language acquisition, language development, mathematics, and supports needed to accelerate learning for students performing below grade level. These teams and participants included the following (*member district representatives in italics*):

ELA Advisory Team:

Lily Wong Fillmore, University of California, Berkeley

Alfred Tatum, University of Illinois, Chicago
*Maryann Cucchiara, consultant
*Veronica Gallardo, Seattle
*Genevieve Murray, Newark
Margarita Pinkos, Palm Beach
Cherissa Kreider, San Diego
Alison Pickering, Los Angeles
Melissa Collins, Student Achievement Partners Core Advocate

Mathematics Advisory Team:

Harold Asturias, University of California, Berkeley
Judit Moschkovitz, University of California, Santa Cruz
Bill McCallum, Illustrative Math
*Julio Moreno, San Francisco
*Jennifer Yacoubian, Denver
Liz Gamino, Fresno
Alfreda Jernigan, Norfolk
Joseph Almeida, Student Achievement Partners Core Advocate
Ryan Redd, Helmsley Charitable Trust Teacher/Adviser

Delivery Advisory Team:

Sarah Michaels, Clark University
Cathy O'Connor, Boston University
Jeff Zwiers, Stanford University
Kenji Hakuta, Stanford University
Ryan Kelsey, Helmsley Charitable Trust

*Also participated on Delivery Advisory Team

During the planning phase, the following virtual and face-to-face work sessions were convened:

- September 5, 12: Virtual work sessions (Content + Delivery)
- October 3: Virtual work session (Content + Delivery)
- October 20: Content teams meet face to face in Milwaukee
- November 7: Virtual work session
- November 19-21: Delivery team meets face-to-face in Boston
- January 7, 2015: Final webinar

Discussions were framed around the following questions:

- What are the differences between the needs of ELLs and those of students in general, and how do those differences inform the pedagogical needs of teachers? How do needs overlap and what does that convergence suggest for instructional practice with ALL students?

- What do we know about how to accelerate students academically up to grade level, particularly ELLs and other disadvantaged students, who are already behind?
- What does effective scaffolding look like when implementing the high expectations and grade-level rigor assumed in the common core?
- What does professional development look like when it is built to improve teachers' instructional practice and quality, boost ownership and use, and use student work samples in an actionable and effective way?

After each discussion, Council staff compiled and edited notes, then shared them with all participants (*via* email and an "EdWires" website), inviting modifications as necessary. Then, Council staff synthesized vast quantities of input from all 25 participants - each of whom had a unique perspective on the standards and related needs. Subsequently, staff outlined a proposed framework and design narrative. Team members were invited to review and contribute to each iteration of these documents, arriving at a final set of guiding principles, a content map, and design narrative.

In the final planning stages, Council staff created an implementation timeline (see outcomes below) and a projected budget, reaching out to advisory team members for support in identifying key milestones, and in costing out proposed tasks and resources required to meet these milestones.

Throughout the grant period, the Council shared its work with member districts and key constituents, including at the members' Curriculum and Research Directors meeting in Los Angeles in July 2014; our annual Fall Conference in Milwaukee in October 2014; and a Southern Regional meeting in Atlanta in December 2014. We will present updates on the work at our annual Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education (BIRE) meeting in May 2015, our Curriculum and Research Directors meeting in July 2015, and our annual Fall Conference in October 2015. In addition, we are in the process of developing a position paper outlining the key learnings from our research and discussions around cyber-enabled, standards-aligned professional development. We hope to publish this paper in Fall, 2015.

HELMSLEY PROJECT

Creating Cyber-enabled, Standards-aligned Professional Development for Teachers of English Language Learners, Students Performing Below Grade Level, and Economically Disadvantaged Students:

Recommendations and a Proposed Development Plan

Prepared by the Council of the Great City Schools for the Helmsley Charitable Trust

This document outlines recommendations for the development and implementation of a cyber-enabled professional development tool to support teachers who are working with ELLs, students performing below grade level, and economically disadvantaged students (hereinafter referred to as “high-needs students”). The goal of this effort is to ensure that these students build the critical knowledge and skills they need to meet the demands of the Common Core State Standards/College and Career-Ready standards.

I. Introduction

The adoption of new, more rigorous standards requires fundamental changes in teaching, as the new standards require considerably higher levels of language and cognitive functioning across the curriculum than before. Teachers across all content areas expected more than ever to boost the depth of their students’ understanding of content while also addressing students’ “unfinished” learning. This creates a complex web of challenges and an urgent need for new teacher professional development that will provide teachers with new ways of supporting academic language and literacy development across content areas.

Our long-term goal is to create an open-source professional development platform that will help teachers support high-needs students in the complex forms of communications and thinking required by the Common Core. Through this project, we will design and specify the elements of cyber-enabled professional development tools we hope to fully develop in a subsequent project: tools that districts could use with teachers in face-to-face sessions, online study groups, or professional learning communities.

II. Synopsis of Activities

Advisory Teams were identified in Fall 2014 to—

- a. Prioritize professional development content in ELA and mathematics aligned with the key instructional shifts of the Common Core and other new standards
- b. Develop guiding principles and a conceptual framework for articulating the desired environment and experiences for successful professional development
- c. Design a pilot project to test the professional development platform and suite, ensuring that delivery mechanisms are immediately usable by districts

These Council-led teams included academicians and district practitioners. Individuals were selected who were knowledgeable in second language acquisition, language development, mathematics, and supports needed to accelerate learning for students performing below grade level:

ELA Advisory Team	Mathematics Advisory Team	Delivery Advisory Team
Lily Wong Fillmore, UC Berkeley	Harold Asturias, UC Berkeley	Sarah Michaels, Clark University
Alfred Tatum, UI Chicago	Judit Moschkovitz, UC Santa Cruz	Cathy O'Connor, Boston University
*Maryann Cucchiara, consultant	Bill McCallum, Illustrative Math	Jeff Zwiers, Stanford University
* <i>Veronica Gallardo, Seattle</i>	* <i>Julio Moreno, San Francisco</i>	Kenji Hakuta, Stanford University
* <i>Genevieve Murray, Newark</i>	* <i>Jenn Yacoubian, Denver</i>	Ryan Kelsey, Helmsley
<i>Margarita Pinkos, Palm Beach</i>	<i>Liz Gamino, Fresno</i>	
<i>Cherissa Kreider, San Diego</i>	<i>Alfreda Jernigan, Norfolk</i>	
<i>Alison Pickering, Los Angeles</i>	Joseph Almeida, SAP Core Advocate	
Melissa Collins, SAP Core Advocate	Ryan Redd, HCT Teacher/Adviser	

*Also participated on Delivery Team

Ital = CGCS District Practitioner

During the planning phase, the following virtual and face-to-face work sessions were convened.

- September 5, 12: Virtual work sessions (Content + Delivery)
- October 3: Virtual work session (Content + Delivery)
- October 20: Content teams meet face to face in Milwaukee
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- November 19-21: Delivery team meets face to face in Boston
- January 7, 2015: Final webinar

Discussions were framed around the following questions:

- What are the differences between the needs of ELLs and those of students in general, and how do those differences inform the pedagogical needs of teachers? How do needs overlap and what does that convergence suggest for instructional practice with ALL students?
- What do we know about how to accelerate students academically up to grade level, particularly ELLs and other disadvantaged students, who are already behind?
- What does effective scaffolding look like when implementing the high expectations and grade-level rigor assumed in the common core?
- What does professional development look like when it is built to improve teachers' instructional practice and quality, boost ownership and use, and use student work samples in an actionable way?

These discussions resulted in a **vision statement** (Section III), a set of **guiding principles** (Section IV) and a **design narrative** (Section V) describing the proposed set of professional development tools that would be aimed at providing critical ELA and math skills for teachers working with high-needs students. These documents delineate key elements of professional development, the competencies required in each content area for targeted grade levels, and high-leverage practices to accelerate achievement for students currently performing below grade level. The Advisory Teams also articulated outstanding questions and issues that needed to be addressed as implementation moves forward.

III. Vision Statement

We envision a research-based, cyber-enabled 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. The proposed resources will help remove systemic “silos” in district operations by accommodating and connecting diverse audiences across roles and content areas (e.g., teachers, instructional coaches, principals, district administrators), and will provide a safe environment for developing professional capacity and reflecting on practice outside any formal evaluative protocols.

The Council recognizes the extraordinary diversity that exists among educators in experience and context, so the proposed resource will offer all users a common entry point (*via* a “Foundations” unit for all users), followed by customizable pathways (based on educators’ background/experience and a pre-assessment of their needs). The tools will also include protocols to assess engagement in the training and outcomes.

Finally, the Council recognizes that time for professional learning is limited, so the standards-aligned instruction will be delivered in **user-friendly, flexible modules**, and will work within any adopted curriculum or district initiative:



1. **Learn** (*includes multiple dimensions of learning*)
2. **Plan**
3. **Apply** (*includes teach & assess*)
4. **Reflect** (*on teacher practice & student work*)

IV. Guiding Principles

Project advisory teams have agreed on the following set of guiding principles for the proposed professional development. Each has been organized around major elements of the work: The first set of principles relates to students and articulates the importance of knowing who the students are, what they need to achieve success, and the importance of setting high expectations. The second set relates to educators and the instructional practices they need to employ in order to facilitate high achievement. The final two principles articulate priorities around the content and delivery platform.

Guiding Principles re: STUDENTS

- All levels and typologies of ELLs must be considered
 - Newcomers
 - Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE)
 - Long-term English Learners (LTEs)
 - Fully proficient
 - High achieving

- Underserved/high-needs students of all backgrounds must be considered equally
 - Performing below grade level
 - Experiencing reading difficulties
 - Unfinished learning in ELA or mathematics
 - Little exposure to rigorous content
- Must consider students' race, culture, language, gender
- Must be approached through the lens of student empowerment
 - Acknowledging students' assets (cognitive, cultural, and linguistic)
 - Focus on needs rather than "deficits"
 - Developing agency, authority, identity
- Must clearly articulate high expectations, and hold students and other accountable for clearly-stated measurable outcomes

Guiding Principles re: EDUCATORS/INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES (across content areas)

- Strategically employs differing grouping practices (including - where appropriate - small group & peer-to-peer, PLCs) both job-alike and cross-functional: teacher, administrator, coach, etc.
- Establishes protocols for rich, productive/academic conversations (e.g., talk moves)
- Promotes development and extension of academic and discipline-specific vocabulary in context, always striving to move beyond word level to phrase/text level
- Encourages daily routines that are content-agnostic, but language productive (e.g., sentence extension, "juicy" sentences, different talk moves, e.g., exploratory talk, constructive conversations such as creating, clarifying, and fortifying student discourse)
- Engages students *via* multiple modalities (visual-auditory-kinesthetic)
- Provides opportunities for educator & student reflection
- Coaches educators in using appropriate scaffolds and importance of productive struggle
- Provides opportunities for educators to look at student work, the different ways students approach a task, and misconceptions encountered (particularly in mathematics and conceptual understanding).
- Clearly articulates high expectations, and holds educators accountable for measurable outcomes.

Guiding Principles re: CONTENT

- Is research-based
- Is based on increased rigor, high expectations, and grade-level content
- Engages educators by focusing on central ideas in an active way
- **Includes three connected pathways:**
 - **(Required) Foundational pieces that are relevant to all participants, crossing the entire trajectory of learning**
 - **(Required) Study groups/PLCs on common challenges of practice (facilitated on-site)**
 - **(Optional) Self-study modules to close individual gaps (on-demand)**
- Offers pre- and post-evaluations and/or surveys (for student outcomes and professional development tools)
- Prioritizes:
 - Instructional shifts in CCSS/CCR standards
 - Helps educators triangulate language, literacy, and content: Every lesson begins with a **content** goal (e.g., literacy, mathematics, science, social studies), and includes related **language** goals

- In ELA: Focuses on building academic language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening with complex materials aligned with the CCSS/CCR standards
 - In mathematics: Focuses on the identified mathematical progressions and 8 mathematics practices, and specifically addresses the language demands of mathematics
 - Attends to vertical and horizontal alignment across grade levels/spans and content areas; some pieces may be grade level/span-specific; others may be PreK-12
 - Balances “input” and “output” in all elements (defines protocol for establishing “balance”)
- (See Appendix I for additional content priorities established by advisory teams)*

Guiding Principles re: DELIVERY

- Can be approached in a series of 10-15 minute “chunks,” but can also be approached in a sustained fashion over a significant period of time.
- Incorporates:
 - A “pre-module” section (logistics, log-in, navigation)
 - Live/facilitated video AND on-demand videos
 - Teachers (planning, teaching, reflecting, looking at student work)
 - Students (learning, demonstrating and explaining their thinking, reflecting)
 - Expert discussions – where thought leaders refine or expand on lesson content
 - Downloadables/printables
 - A bank of instructional strategies, practices
 - A glossary to ensure common understandings/definitions
 - Student exemplars
 - Guiding questions and templates for planning and reflection
 - Resources for facilitators
 - Research links/readings (required and recommended)
 - Polling, “live” chat, post-webinar discussion boards, “breakout” rooms
 - Existing materials that have been vetted (videos, student work, etc.)
 - Assessment tools for each module (informal)
 - The ability for district leadership to turn on/off certain elements (chats, blogs) and pathways
 - Versatility to integrate with PLCs; varied exemplars (self-selected or chosen by facilitator/district) with guiding questions

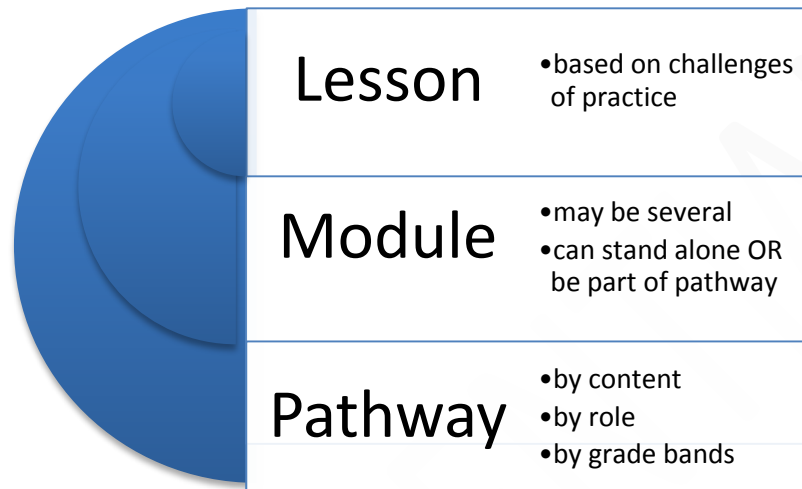
V. Design Narrative

This tool offers instruction in high-leverage practices that accelerate development of the language, literacy, and learning needed to master grade-level content and achieve the new expectations in the CCSS.

All participants are first required to complete three “**Foundations**” modules to build meta-language and meta-understandings in key overlapping/targeted areas, such as those represented by Tina Cheuk’s Venn diagram. **(See Appendix III.)** The entire Foundations pathway should require no longer than 3 hours total, and can be completed at once or in parts.

I. Foundations: An Introduction
II. Foundations: Academic Conversations (choose ELA/ELD or Mathematics strand)
III. Foundations: Complex Text (choose ELA/ELD or Mathematics strand)

Completion of the entire **Foundations** pathway (**Introduction, Academic Conversations, Complex Text**) will open subsequent pathways for learning, as identified by pre-assessments/surveys and/or district leadership. These pathways will explore high-leverage practices that support readers in augmenting knowledge through careful scrutiny of and attention to language. Each **pathway** will consist of connected **modules**, which will be made up of connected **lessons** identified by research and/or a panel of expert advisors, and future phases will include Science and Social Studies-related modules as well.



THE SCENARIO

The following exemplar will describe experiences encountered by an elementary/general education classroom teacher, **Ms. A**, who has been with a district for at least three years. She works in a Title I school (high-needs setting), and her students have varying levels of academic language or English proficiency, unfinished learning, and diverse schooling experiences. Access and equity are important to her districts' strategic plans and district leadership has determined that this professional development initiative will help operationalize and document district progress towards addressing the plan. Leadership was motivated by the convergence of CCSS instructional shifts, the emergence of new language needs, and shifting demographics. Ms. A acknowledges that she lacks deep familiarity with the shifts of the CCSS and their implications for classroom instruction, and she recognizes that significant gaps are emerging in the academic language and literacy skills of her students.

In the next section, we describe how Ms. A might use the proposed tool in a study group or professional learning community (PLC) to develop her new knowledge while allowing greater reflection on her practice.

SETTING THE STAGE: FOUNDATIONS: AN INTRODUCTION

Ms. A commits (or is committed) to this program; she receives an email with a link to sign on. She clicks the link, which leads her to the professional development module. The module has a welcoming (graphic) greeting, and a button labeled “**Step One: Click [HERE](#) for an Introductory Video.**” She clicks on the button, and a Video Greeter pops up, welcoming her and offering a brief overview of the “nuts and bolts” of the program: rules and norms for the online community, etiquette and protocols, how to upload homework, participate in chat rooms, etc. At the end of the video, she is invited to “join” her

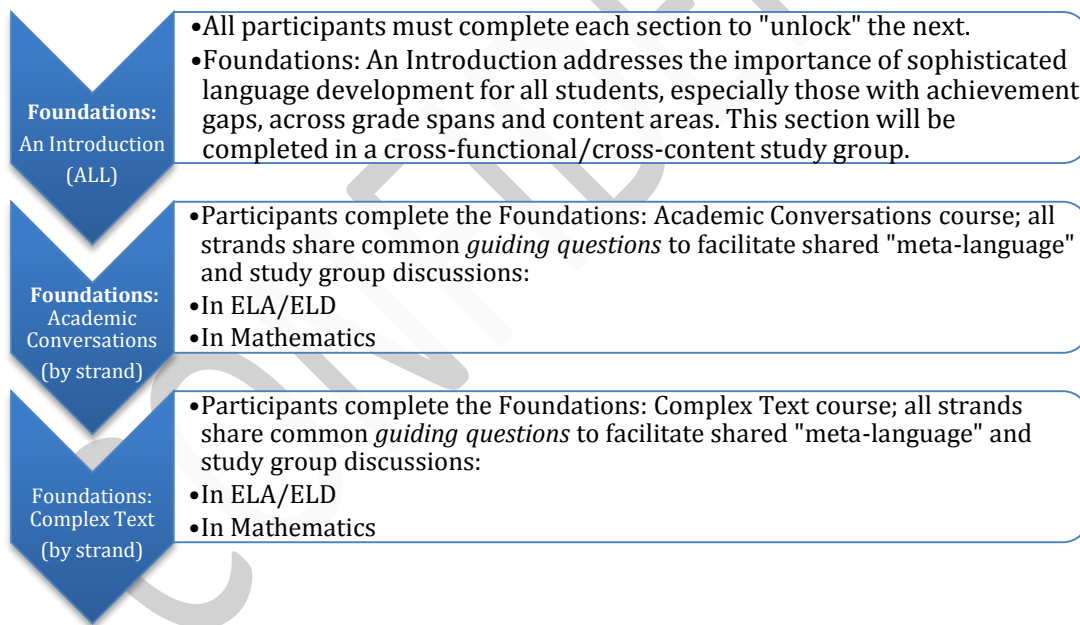
new (virtual) community, which may be self-selected or pre-ordained by district/instructional leadership. When the video concludes, the professional development tool takes her to “**Step Two: Click [HERE](#) to Join Your Virtual Community**”

A poll pops up that will ask:

- What is your state/location? (Participation in the poll brings up a map that populates with numbers/participants from across the country)
- A multiple choice question on personal motivation – perhaps choosing from a set of motivations that can allow comparisons? (Participation in the poll brings up a graph/pie chart sharing aggregated results.)
- Other questions to establish a community of practice (TBD)

Note: Data will be gathered from poll results, assessment instruments, and other tools deemed pertinent by the research team. These data would be accessible *via* a (password locked) administrative link, could be used to monitor participation and outcomes, and might inform further development plans.

At the end of this polling exercise, the tool takes her to “**Step Three: Click [HERE](#) for a Pre-assessment.** An instrument pops up (with questions TBD but whose purpose would be to: get a sense of what she knows about language development, academic conversations, and complex text). Ms. A completes the pre-assessment, which “**unlocks**” **Foundations: An Introduction**, setting off the following *sequence:



***Important note regarding the sequence:** ALL participants are required to complete **Foundations: An Introduction** as part of a study group (face-to-face or virtual), so that they can build a shared understanding of the theory of action and research underpinnings of this offering, and can develop a common vocabulary or shared understanding across roles, content areas, and grade spans. The completion of the introductory course will unlock content-specific Academic Conversations and Complex Text courses. For these, participants will choose the video sequence that best fits their own context, e.g., a mathematics teacher will likely choose to watch the mathematics videos. Nonetheless, ALL

participants will regroup to discuss guiding questions and build a common understanding of how to connect these high-leverage practices throughout the instructional day.

FOUNDATIONS: AN INTRODUCTION

Ms. A progresses to the welcome screen for **Foundations: An Introduction**.

As before, there is a (graphic) greeting and a brief (written) introduction to the content and objectives of the module; at the end of this section there would be a button labeled “Click **HERE** to Begin **Foundations: An Introduction**.” She clicks on the button, and a brief video pops up, featuring a teacher sharing the challenge at hand (*e.g., students with varying levels of academic language or English proficiency, unfinished learning, or diverse schooling experiences - all required to meet the same rigorous grade-level standards using increasingly sophisticated academic registers*).

When the video concludes, a polling window pops up: “Are you experiencing this in YOUR classroom?”

Facilitation Options:

Note: Selection of facilitators who are well-regarded and well-versed in adult learning is key; all facilitators are required to complete a “Facilitator Training” experience in preparation for leading discussion groups.

- “**Live**” facilitator: the facilitator pauses between each clip and leads the study group in discussion, using a facilitation guide with downloadable questions that have specific suggestions for different audiences: role, student group/needs, and grade span

- “**Virtual**” facilitator: participant is encouraged to pause between video segments to react and respond to guiding questions via a discussion thread or message board.

Upon completion, Ms. A clicks the **NEXT** button, which brings up a brief video of an “expert.” (**Learn**):

- Setting goals for this section: this is what we’re going to address
- Sharing research behind the practices and approaches (links to research, white papers, bibliography) and why they’re critically important/effective with high-needs students
- Illuminating a theory of action
- Explaining that you get a number of high-leverage practices designed to meet the diverse needs of students *vis-a-vis* the common core language demands

At the end of this video, Ms. A clicks **NEXT**

A window pops up that presents an easily navigated series/sequence of clips and exemplars:

Clip One (Plan): Shows teachers/PLCs discussing the challenge and planning a solution

Resources/links: research base, guiding questions/note-taking journal (used throughout)

Clip Two (Apply): Shows teacher implementing one solution/strategy with students of diverse needs in her classroom

Resources/links: complex text, related instructional tools/materials

Clip Three (Reflect): Shows teacher, students, and PLC reflecting on the lesson and its outcomes (*via a close analysis of student work*)

Resources/links: Rubrics on the specific behaviors that one would want to see (with respect to teacher and students) in a ELA/mathematics/content classroom; student work that reflects diverse levels of language and literacy, and a guide for analyzing and discussing student work

Between each clip, experts reflect on the content, linking the planning phase (video one), teacher practice (video two), and student discussion (video three), explaining that each pathway offers numerous exemplars of high-leverage strategies/practices that will illustrate how new practices in participants' classrooms would work before returning to discuss outcomes in the study group.

Facilitation Options:

- "Live" facilitator: The facilitator pauses between each clip and leads the study group in discussion, using a facilitation guide with downloadable guiding questions that have specific suggestions for different audiences: role, student group/needs, and grade span
- "Virtual" facilitator: Participant is encouraged to pause between video segments to react and respond to guiding questions via a discussion thread or message board.

Completion of **Foundations: An Introduction** unlocks **Foundations: Academic Conversations**.

FOUNDATIONS: ACADEMIC CONVERSATIONS

As an elementary teacher, Ms. A teaches all subjects in a self-contained classroom. She decides to follow the ELA pathway, thereby viewing video exemplars from an elementary ELA class. (Others may choose a different experience reflecting their own context and/or priorities.) Each pathway offers a parallel experience.

Foundations: Academic Conversations opens with a (graphic) greeting, and a button labeled **Click [HERE](#) to Begin Foundations: Academic Conversations in ELA/ELD**. She clicks on the button, and a brief video pops up, featuring a teacher sharing a challenge (*e.g., students with varying levels of academic language or English proficiency, one word answers, many not participating in classroom discussions*).

When the video concludes, a polling window pops up: "Are you experiencing this in YOUR classroom?" The graphic shows real time poll results (if working in facilitated group) or aggregated results (if working in an on-demand situation)

Facilitation Options:

- "Live" facilitator: The facilitator pauses between each clip and leads the study group in discussion, using a facilitation guide with downloadable questions that have specific suggestions to adapt to different audiences: role, student group/needs, and grade span
- "Virtual" facilitator: Participant is encouraged to pause between video segments to react and respond to guiding questions via a discussion thread or message board.

Upon completion, Ms. A clicks the **[NEXT](#)** button, which brings up a brief video of an "expert."**(Learn)**

- Setting up goals for this section: this is what we're going to address

- Sharing research behind the practices and approaches (links to research, white papers, bibliography) and why they are critically important/effective with high-needs students
- Illuminating a theory of action
- Explaining that when you choose this pathway to study, you will get additional high-leverage practices related to academic conversations/complex text designed to meet the diverse needs of students

At the end of this video, Ms. A clicks **NEXT**. A window pops up that presents an easily navigated series/sequence of clips and exemplars:

Clip One (Plan): Shows teachers/PLCs discussing the challenge and planning a proposed solution

Resources/links: research base, guiding questions/note-taking journal (used throughout)

Clip Two (Apply): Shows teacher implementing one solution/strategy with students of diverse needs in her classroom

Resources/links: complex text, related instructional tools/materials

Clip Three (Reflect): Shows teacher, students, and PLC reflecting on the lesson and outcomes (via a close analysis of student work)

Resources/links: Rubrics re: the specific behaviors that one would want to see (with respect to teacher and students) in the ELA/mathematics/content classroom; student work that reflects diverse levels of language and literacy, a guide for analyzing and discussing student work

Between each clip, experts reflect on the content, linking the planning phase (video one), teacher practice (video two), and student discussion (video three), explaining that subsequent pathways will offer a deeper exploration of challenges with numerous exemplars of high-leverage strategies/practices, and opportunities for teachers to see more videos and post more feedback.

Facilitation Options:

- “Live” facilitator: The facilitator pauses between each clip and leads the study group in discussion, using a facilitation guide with downloadable guiding questions that have specific suggestions to adapt to different audiences: by role, by student group/needs, by grade span

- “Virtual” facilitator: Participant is encouraged to pause between video segments to react and respond to guiding questions via a discussion thread or message board.

Completion of **Foundations: Academic Conversations** unlocks **Foundations: Complex Text**; above cycle repeats.

VI. Implementation Plan & Milestones			
*Q	*Q1 = Apr-Jun, 2015	Lead	Notes
STAFFING, SYSTEMS, DUE DILIGENCE			
1	Define responsibilities for project specialist and systems operations specialist		
1	Recruit/secure project specialist and systems operations specialist		
1-2	Identify/recruit (5) module teams, each including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Content Expert • 1 Elementary Practitioner • 1 Secondary Practitioner • (Council Staff) 		
1-2	Identify/recruit "pool" of experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carol Olsen (writing) • Sarah Michaels • Cathy O'Connor (math, academic convos) • Jeff Zwiers • Lily Wong Fillmore • Alfred Tatum (text) 		
1-2	Secure commitment of module teams		
1-2	Establish cadence for team meetings (virtual and f2f) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule/ facilitate initial conversations with module teams • Schedule/plan f2f meeting 		
1-2	Research/review the world of currently available videos for potential inclusion (Teaching Channel, Lily, Maryann, other); identify and reconcile any permission issues		
PLATFORM			
2	Identify tech consultant; define responsibilities		
2	Secure videographer		
2	Schedule/Plan Initial meeting w/videographer		
2	Identify critical elements to be included in a "Platform RFP"		
2	Complete Platform RFP		
2	Publish Platform RFP		
3	Deadline for Platform RFP submissions		
3	Review submissions; select platform		
3	Initial meeting with platform developer		
3	Establish cadence for review/discussion		
3	Establish protocols for QC/feedback loop		
4	Platform/development period for Foundations Module		
4	Identify critical elements to be included in demo video		
4	Create script/storyboard for demo video		
4	Finalize/develop demo video		
5	Launch platform		
6	Platform/development period for ELA/ELD modules		
6	Platform/development period for mathematics modules		

FOUNDATIONS: AN INTRODUCTION Module			
1	Meetings to discuss/develop content for module (#, dates)		
2	Schedule taping sessions (expert and classroom)		
2-3	Storyboard desired video assets/flow		
3	Secure permission/rights (district, teachers, students)		
3-4	Conduct taping sessions (expert and classroom)		
4	Review and select artifacts to link to lesson		
4	Provide Foundations content to platform developer		
5	Launch Foundations: An Introduction module		
DISTRICT PILOTS (5) FOR FOUNDATIONS: AN INTRODUCTION only			
2-3	Identify critical elements to be included in a “Pilot RFP”, to ensure a transparent selection process, maximize leadership and organizational support for the pilot in key districts		
2-3	DRAFT school district pilot plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing • Numbers • Roles/responsibilities • Training Evaluation (pre- and post-assessment, survey)		
3	Complete pilot RFP		
3	Publish Pilot RFP Include: Participating school districts’ contribution toward the effort: How districts can leverage revenue streams (in-kind and funding for professional development) and professional development time to support the platform?		
4	Deadline for Pilot RFP submissions		
4	Establish review panel for RFP submissions		
4	Review RFP submissions; select participants		
4	Finalize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilot plan • training plan • assessment instruments 		
5	Launch Pilot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Pre-assessment • Implementation period • Post-assessment • Survey 		
6	Publish/communicate results		
6	Study/discuss outcomes/implications/learnings to determine next steps re: evolution of PD offering		
ELA/ELD MODULES (Launch Q7-8)			
3	Meetings to discuss/develop content for modules (#/dates)		
3	Schedule taping sessions (expert & classroom)		
3-4	Storyboard desired video assets/flow		
3-4	Secure permission/rights (district, teachers, students)		
4	Conduct Academic Convo taping sessions (expert & classroom)		

5	Conduct Complex Text taping sessions (expert & classroom)		
5-6	Review and select artifacts to link to lesson		
6	Provide ELA/ELD content to platform developer		
MATH MODULES (Launch Q7-8)			
3	Meetings to discuss/develop content for modules (#/dates)		
3	Schedule taping sessions (expert & classroom)		
3-4	Storyboard desired video assets/flow		
3-4	Secure permission/rights (district, teachers, students)		
4	Conduct Academic Convo taping sessions (expert & classroom)		
5	Conduct Complex Text taping sessions (expert & classroom)		
5-6	Review and select artifacts to link to lesson		
6	Provide mathematics content to platform developer		

VII. Projected Budget

RESOURCE	Projected Cost/Notes:
<p>CGCS Staffing (Salary + benefits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gabriela Uro, the Council’s Director for English Language Learner Policy and Research, will lead the work on this project. Debra Hopkins, the Council’s ELL Project Coordinator, will coordinate and facilitate project-related activities. Denise Walston, the Council’s Director of Mathematics, will assist with mathematics content development. Ray Hart, the Council’s Director of Research, will assist in conducting the evaluation of the project. Ricki Price-Baugh, the Council’s Director of Academic Achievement, will ensure coordination with the Council’s other academic achievement projects and efforts. A (to-be-hired) Project Specialist will coordinate logistics and accounting functions. A (to-be-hired) Systems Operations Specialist will coordinate platform development and maintenance functions. 	<p>GUro: 10% DHopkins: 75% DWalston: 10% RHart: 10% RPrice-Baugh: 10% Project Specialist: 100% Systems Operations Specialist: 100%</p> <p>Salaries = \$285,000 Benefits = \$92,500 Total = \$377,500</p>
<p>Content Module Teams (five teams): Stipends for content practitioners (2 per team: Elementary and Secondary)</p>	<p>10 x \$700 = \$7,000</p>
<p>Stipends for “pool” of practitioners</p>	<p>5 x \$600 = \$3,000</p>
<p>Stipends for content experts/team leaders (1 per team)</p>	<p>5 x \$10,000 = \$50,000</p>
<p>Stipends for “pool” of experts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to initial Advisory meeting (1 meeting = 25 participants + 5 Council staff) Subsequent meetings virtual? 	<p>30 x \$2500 = \$75,000</p>
<p>Additional CGCS staff travel related to recruiting/vetting team members</p>	<p>10 x \$2500 = \$25,000</p>
<p>Production (range per estimates received; for more detail, see Appendix II)</p>	<p>\$300,000 - \$450,000</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CGCS staff travel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expert tapings (5 trips x 2 people @\$2500 = \$25,000) ○ Classroom tapings (10 trips x 2 people @\$2500 = \$50,000) 	\$75,000
Content research/curator (existing videos, assets)	\$10,000
Content curator/advisor (new videos)	\$7500 (lead) + \$2500 (asst.) = \$10,000
Reviewer(s) for ongoing quality control/consulting	\$10,000
Ongoing Classroom Consultant (to support continuous growth)	\$25,000
Marketing Consultant (contract/outreach to non-member districts)	\$50,000
Platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes planning, design, development, and IT support for the first year, including a “soft launch”/pilot of the Beta version (cost drops significantly for sustainment in subsequent years) 	\$300,000 - \$500,000
Development of “How-To” demo	\$25,000
Pilot project—costs related to (5) district participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation for teachers’ time (school covers/in kind) • Coordinator 5 x \$500 = \$2500 • Training/Travel 10 x \$2000 = \$20,000 • Other = \$2500 	\$25,000
Subtotal	\$1,382,500 - \$1,732,500
Indirect costs related to Council overhead (10%)	\$138,250 - \$173,250
Total Range	\$1,520,750 - \$1,905,750

VIII. Sustainability Plan

The Council is exploring multiple ways to sustain this project beyond the grant period.

One way to sustain the initiative would be to generate revenue from non-Council member districts who wish to implement this professional development tool. We are exploring a fee structure or subscription rate for districts throughout the country that may need professional development for teachers of English learners and students performing below grade level. We are also exploring a fee system whereby member districts might receive a basic level of services for free, but pay for enhanced or extended service options. Districts should be able to use Title funds and/or external grants for this purpose.

A second way of sustaining this project would involve additional funding and/or in-kind services from other charitable foundations and groups, including the Televisa Foundation, Understanding Language, West Ed, and the Teaching Channel, all of whom have assets that could, in combination with this project, create synergy around the effort.

We hope that these potential sources of revenue would support such ongoing expenses as the central hosting and support of the platform, the evolution of existing models, and the creation of new modules to meet the needs of teachers and students in Council member districts and beyond.

IX. Council's Statement of Commitment

The Council continues to advance its work in support of the Common Core as a central part of its strategy to improve urban education, ensuring equal access to quality education for millions of children, including English Language Learners, students with special needs, children living in poverty and others who are performing below grade level. In 2014, the Council laid out four main priorities around the Common Core:

- a) Ensuring that our Common Core implementation efforts reach all members of the Council that are located in states that have adopted the Common Core
- b) Vetting and sharing tools among member districts
- c) Supporting a network of districts doing the implementation work
- d) Evaluation the effectiveness of the organization's work

The HCT-funded project to plan for a hybrid, cyber-enabled professional learning experience was a central component of the Council's 2014 portfolio of work, particularly priorities 2 and 3. The development process brought together a stellar group of experts and practitioners who evolved into a powerful network of like-minded educators committed to advancing rigor for ELLs and students performing below grade level. The resulting design was a robust, relevant, and timely professional development tool for sharing information and knowledge across 400,000 teachers in the Council-member districts.

The larger portfolio of Council work in 2014 provided ample evidence of the organization's commitment to the Common Core and the development of relevant tools for students in need--

- Development of a new framework for English Language Development (ELD 2.0) that guides districts to re-think their ELL programs to align to the Common Core
- Development of criteria and rubrics for the selection of instructional materials aligned to the Common Core--the ELL criteria and the Grade-by-Grade rubrics
- An RFP-driven project partnering with publishers to revise/develop improved instructional materials for ELLs that meet the demands of the Common Core
- Development of Academic KPIs to allow urban districts to benchmark against each other based on commonly defined indicators of academic progress among students in need
- Targeted support to regions (such as the Southern Education Foundation) and individual districts to implement new standards and improve instruction

In 2015, the Council's leadership has expressed strong support and enthusiasm for the Council's efforts with struggling students and ELLs, and full supports ongoing projects and proposals that advance earlier efforts. The enthusiasm translates into districts stepping up to pilot instructional materials; districts willing to devote significant hours to pilot the academic KPI data collection; and dozens of district staff participating in Council-led efforts to implement new, more rigorous standards. The Council recognizes that a cyber-enabled professional learning platform could be an important and effective tool in providing ongoing support to a large number of educators across our districts and beyond. Consequently, the Council will remain fully committed to the development and sustainability of this initiative.

APPENDICES

I. Content Priorities Established by Advisory Teams

ELA/ELD:

- How do teachers bring focus to structures of language (not just vocabulary) e.g., nominalization, counter-factual conditional “If I hadn’t; if it were not for, had it not ...” (grocery bag exemplar from CCSS 6-8)
- How do teachers support students in:
 - navigating between simple and complex text? (input)
 - communicating with simple language, then reconstructing with more precise, high-level language? (output)
- How do teachers support early-level ELLs with complex text?
- How do educators establish a “Litmus Test” for choosing appropriately rich, complex text; instructing with this text?

Mathematics:

- (K-2) Early Number
- (3-5) Fractions
- (6-7) Ratio and Proportional Reasoning
- (8-12) Algebra and Functions
- TRU Math Conversation Guide - (Teach for **R**obust **U**nderstanding of **M**athematics; a framework for developing a community of mathematical learners)

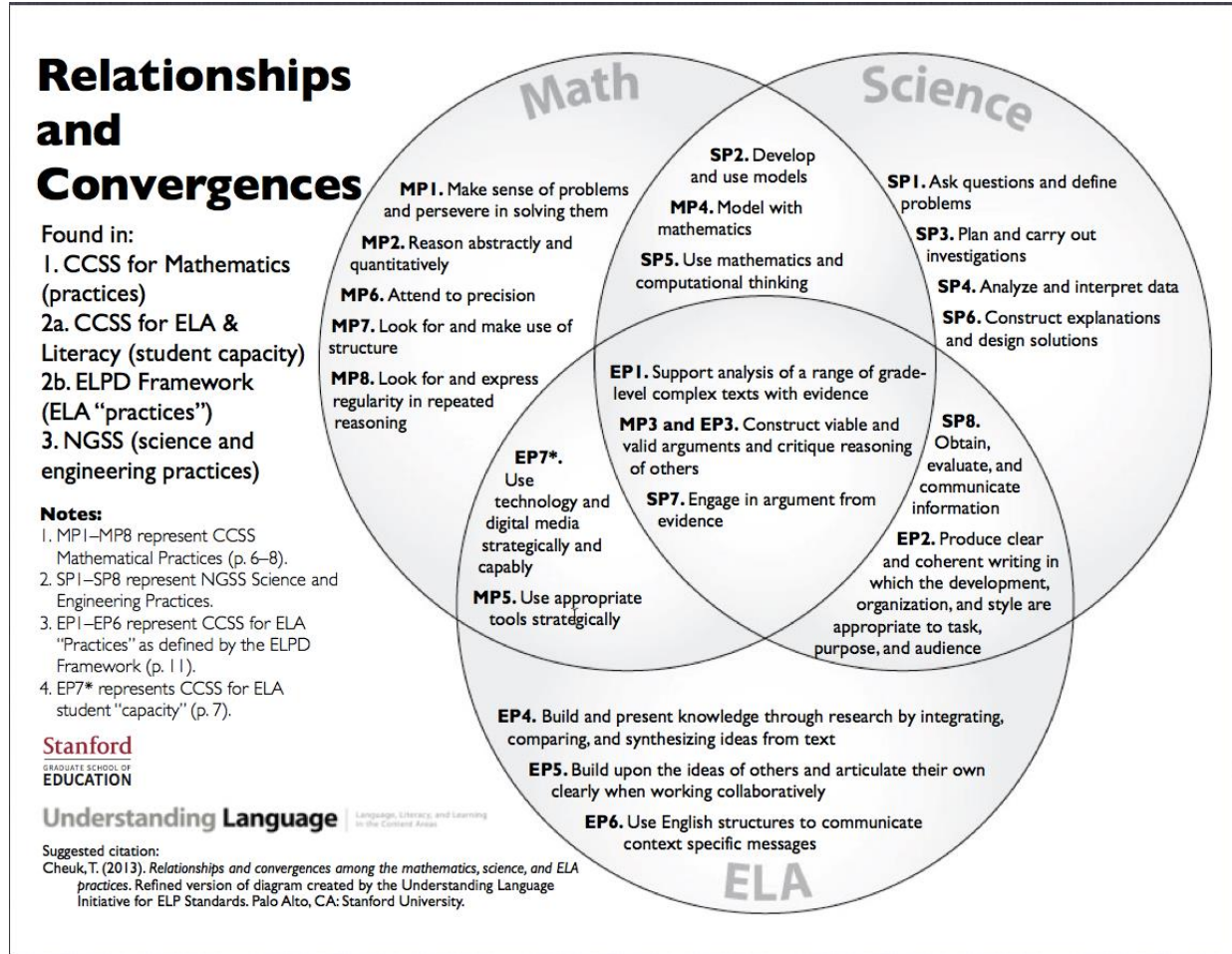
Both:

- Routines (content agnostic and language enriching) for ELA and mathematics, e.g., talk moves, sentence extensions (see Alison’s example) or “Three Reads” (Harold)
- Protocols for academic conversations in ELA (e.g., supporting arguments) and mathematics (e.g., expressing mathematical reasoning)
- Accelerating expansion of academic vocabulary (in the context of content-specific texts and registers)
- Brief on-demand video modules for self-study (expert + video + related readings) – *can be unlocked by completion of foundation module*

II. Breakdown of Budget Estimates: Production

Line Item	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Production Crew, Equipment, Supplies	175,000	325,000
Editing & Master Output	75,000	75,000
Post Production	20,000	20,000
Travel/meals	30,000	30,000
Total estimate	300,000	450,000

III. Tina Cheuk's Venn Diagram



IV. Additional Considerations

"Big Questions" to Consider

How we:

- Make it difficult for our students – and professional developments participants – to fail?
- Determine what texts and tasks are "worthy" and prioritize them?
- Create something new that changes the narrative?
- Stop missing the mark with large numbers of students?
- Help educators connect and transfer professional development learnings across content areas?
- Facilitate and encourage discussion threads, blogs, or chat rooms to promote exchange of ideas and different perspectives?
- Honor multiple languages and use language as an asset?
- Determine effectiveness of PD and impact on changing teacher practice?
- Build in a feedback loop to be sure of student impact (Include student artifacts?)
- Gather baseline data to show growth, and use data responsibly?

- Build a system that allows for research in practice, and that can be used for continual improvement of the PD offering?
- Set us a system to facilitate incentivizing via Continuing Ed Units or Contact Hours?
- Provide tech support and craft tech specs and FAQs?
- Educate ourselves about required protocols and permissions re: student privacy (images and work)?
- Rise above the “noise” and differentiate our offering ... creating a compelling message that attracts educators to this tool? How do we make it inviting for teachers who have competing PD offerings?
- Guarantee that all materials developed through the project would be open-source and available to districts throughout the country

Additional Considerations:

- ✓ Diverse classrooms and students, with teachers discussing the common challenges
- ✓ Opportunities to process/chat, whether “real-time” or virtually
- ✓ Different situations, all employing high leverage practices, with common guiding questions
- ✓ Discussion focused on student work; how to potentially move student learning forward (explicitly uncovering student misconceptions revealed by student explanations and student work)
- ✓ Videos across roles: teachers, administrators, coaches
- ✓ Teacher assignments to analyze their own practice and the needs of kids in their district; opportunities to connect to your OWN classroom/practice, exploring shifts in perception and observation
- ✓ Observation/reflection log; guiding questions that drive teachers to complex text, academic discourse
- ✓ Case study, readings, artifacts (e.g. complex text) downloaded with linked discussion questions
- ✓ Opportunities for productive struggle – so participants “feel it in your gut”
- ✓ Study group determines/commits to next steps in their own instructional practice, to make the learning continuous (returning to discuss outcomes at next meeting)
- ✓ Questions for participants to respond to between virtual or face-to-face sessions
- ✓ A place where educators post and revisit frequently (videos, lessons, additional tasks, questions about challenges that were experienced in their classrooms)

Online Proposal Submission (v16)

Purpose

The adoption of new, more rigorous college and career-ready standards requires a fundamental change in teaching, as these standards require considerably higher levels of language and cognitive functioning across the curriculum than ever before.

Teachers across all content areas are being pressed to boost the depth of their students' understanding of content while also addressing students' "unfinished" learning. This creates a complex web of challenges and defines an urgent need for new models of professional development, one that provides teachers with new ways of supporting academic language and literacy development across content areas.

Many members of the Council of the Great City Schools have expressed a critical need for better professional development, and some Council member districts have already developed offerings of their own to address this need (e.g., Seattle is customizing "MOOCS"; Oakland developed a series of classroom videos and a suggested online professional-learning 'playlist' for its educators; and San Francisco and Oakland held joint professional learning sessions in hopes of creating an online community to share best practices).

Our long-term goal as large urban public school systems is to create a cyber-enabled professional-development platform that will help teachers support English Learners and students performing below grade level in the complex forms of communication and thinking required by the Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics. Through our planning project, we specified and designed the elements of tools we hope to fully develop in a subsequent project: tools that districts could use with teachers in face-to-face sessions, online study groups, and professional-learning communities.

The Council has 67 member urban school districts and a board of directors that includes the superintendent and one school board member from each city. Some seven million inner-city school children attend school in these urban school systems, including 30 percent of the nation's poor, English Language Learners, African American, and Hispanic students.

The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in improving their leadership, instruction, and public confidence. Consequently, a project focused on professional development designed to improve instruction and academic outcomes for English learners and students performing below grade level is an excellent fit with the mission and work of the Council. This project to develop a cyber-enabled professional-learning experience was a central component of the organization's portfolio of work in 2014 and, for 2015, the group's leadership has voiced its full support and continued enthusiasm. This enthusiasm translates into dozens of district staff participating in Council-led efforts to create tools and assist each other in implementing new, more rigorous standards. The Council recognizes that this professional-learning platform will be an

important tool for providing ongoing support to a vast number of educators across our network and beyond. Thus, the Council will remain fully committed to its development and sustainability. (See attached file, p. 15 “Council’s Statement of Commitment” for more detail).

Activity

Advisory Teams were identified in Fall 2014 to:

- a. Prioritize professional-development content/needs in English Language Arts and mathematics, aligned with key instructional shifts in the Common Core and other new standards
- b. Develop guiding principles and a conceptual framework that would articulate the necessary environment and experience for professional-development offerings to be successful
- c. Discuss a pilot professional-development platform and suite of tools to ensure that its delivery mechanisms would be immediately usable by districts

These Council-led teams included content experts, academicians, and district practitioners. Individuals were selected who were knowledgeable in second language acquisition, language development, mathematics, and supports needed to accelerate learning for students performing below grade level. These teams and participants included the following:

ELA Advisory Team:

Lily Wong Fillmore, University of California, Berkeley
Alfred Tatum, University of Illinois, Chicago
*Maryann Cucchiara, consultant
*Veronica Gallardo, Seattle School District
*Genevieve Murray, Newark School District
Margarita Pinkos, Palm Beach School District
Cherissa Kreider, San Diego School District
Alison Pickering, Los Angeles School District
Melissa Collins, Student Achievement Partners Core Advocate

Mathematics Advisory Team:

Harold Asturias, University of California, Berkeley
Judit Moschkovitz, University of California, Santa Cruz
Bill McCallum, Illustrative Math
*Julio Moreno, San Francisco School District
*Jennifer Yacoubian, Denver School District
Liz Gamino, Fresno School District
Alfreda Jernigan, Norfolk School District
Joseph Almeida, Student Achievement Partners Core Advocate
Ryan Redd, Helmsley Charitable Trust Teacher/Adviser

Delivery Advisory Team:

Sarah Michaels, Clark University

Cathy O'Connor, Boston University

Jeff Zwiers, Stanford University

Kenji Hakuta, Stanford University

Ryan Kelsey, Helmsley Charitable Trust

*Also participated on Delivery Advisory Team

During the planning phase, the following virtual and face-to-face work sessions were convened:

- September 5, 12: Virtual work sessions (Content + Delivery)
- October 3: Virtual work session (Content + Delivery)
- October 20: Content teams meet face to face in Milwaukee
- November 7: Virtual work session
- November 19-21: Delivery team meets face-to-face in Boston
- January 7, 2015: Final webinar

Discussions were framed around the following questions:

- What are the differences between the needs of ELLs and those of students in general, and how do those differences inform the pedagogical needs of teachers? How do needs overlap and what does that convergence suggest for instructional practice with ALL students?
- What do we know about how to accelerate students academically up to grade level, particularly ELLs and other disadvantaged students, who are already behind?
- What does effective scaffolding look like when implementing the high expectations and grade-level rigor assumed in the common core?
- What does professional development look like when it is built to improve teachers' instructional practice and quality, boost ownership and use, and use student work samples in an actionable and effective way?

After each discussion, Council staff compiled and edited notes, then shared them with all participants (*via* email and an "EdWires" website), inviting modifications as necessary. Then, Council staff synthesized vast quantities of input from all 25 participants - each of whom had a unique perspective on the standards and related needs. Subsequently, staff outlined a proposed framework and design narrative. Team members were invited to review and contribute to each iteration of these documents, arriving at a final set of guiding principles, a content map, and design narrative.

In the final planning stages, Council staff created an implementation timeline (see outcomes below) and a projected budget, reaching out to advisory team members for support in identifying key milestones, and in costing out proposed tasks and resources required to meet these milestones.

Throughout the grant period, the Council shared its work with member districts and key constituents, including at the members' Curriculum and Research Directors meeting in Los Angeles in July 2014; our annual Fall Conference in Milwaukee in October 2014; and a Southern Regional meeting in Atlanta in December 2014. We will present updates on the work at our annual Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education (BIRE) meeting in May 2015, our Curriculum and Research Directors meeting in July 2015, and our annual Fall Conference in October 2015. In addition, we are in the process of developing a position paper outlining the key learnings from our research and discussions around cyber-enabled, standards-aligned professional development. We hope to publish this paper in Fall, 2015.

Challenges and Obstacles

Rather than forming one advisory group, we formed three distinct teams: an ELA content team, a mathematics content team, and a design/delivery team.

This configuration worked extremely well, but it also presented a number of challenges, beginning with how to schedule discussions among advisors with many commitments and time demands. Our solution was to alternate virtual sessions with face-to-face sessions; record sessions for those who could not attend sessions; and establish a website site where team members could access notes, recordings, and other pertinent files relevant to the shared work.

Related challenges included reaching consensus among the diverse group of 25 individuals who had vastly different experiences with, and perspectives on, college and career ready content standards, progressions, and priorities. It was then difficult to narrow content to a manageable scale for initial and subsequent phases of the work. And, it was a challenge to ensure that each of the advisors felt their input was incorporated into the final product, and felt affirmed as a team member.

Rather than finalizing an initial distance-learning platform, the work focused on establishing priority content and a virtual environment that would best deliver that content. The advisory teams created a design narrative that described the desired professional development experience that teachers and others would have. This narrative will then anchor an RFP process that will allow us to determine the best possible platform mechanism and provider.

The original proposal suggested a two-phase/two-year pilot process in which module development and a five-district pilot would take place in Year One, and 10 additional districts would pilot in Year Two. However, our final report recommends an alternative approach: As we constructed the development timeline, we determined the need for an 18-month window for developing and piloting Foundations: An Introduction (target launch of "Beta" version: April 2016). We will use information gathered from pilot evaluations to inform refinements and subsequent development of Foundations: Academic Conversations and Foundations: Complex Text for both ELA/ELD and mathematics. We anticipate that all three Foundations modules would be available to all (67) member districts by October 2016

- achieving much broader impact than if we only did the ten-district pilot, as originally proposed.

Finally, our original intent was to create a professional development tool that was completely “open source” and available to districts at no charge whatsoever. However, as we learned more about the expenses associated with developing, maintaining, supporting, and evolving a cyber-enabled professional development tool that was scalable up to a half million educators, we realized that we would need to explore economic models that created some revenue flow to sustain the work beyond the initial grant.

Outcomes

Output (1)a: Advisory Teams established consensus around content priorities in ELA and mathematics, and defined a "Foundations" pathway designed to develop shared understandings and vocabulary around key instructional shifts of the Common Core. (See attached p. 4 “Guiding Principles: Content”, pp. 5-6 “Design Narrative”, Appendix I: “Content Priorities”)

Output (1)b: Teams developed guiding principles that articulated key instructional skills and strategies teachers need to support struggling students in meeting the demands of the standards. Specifically, advisory teams recommended a focus on building academic vocabulary in context, promoting academic conversations, working with complex text, and scaffolding strategically. Mathematics instruction would address the importance of building conceptual understanding and filling gaps in mathematical progressions. (See attached pp. 2-3 “Vision Statement”, p. 4 “Instructional Practices”)

Output (1)c: The guiding principles informed a design narrative that described the most effective approach for delivering professional development content, and illustrated the experience we expect to create with this tool. The design will facilitate development of professional-learning communities with expert guidance, job-embedded learning, and reflection on outcomes and instructional implications. (See attached pp. 5-10 “Design Narrative”)

Output (1)d: The teams proposed that initial modules be made available to Council member districts at no charge, with an option for expanded or enhanced modules at a nominal fee. Districts will demonstrate their commitment through an “in-kind” investment in teacher time. Time commitment will be flexible according to district needs; and the tool offers a modular approach that accommodates a variety of scenarios that can be accomplished in shorter or longer sequences.

Output (2): An implementation plan with key milestones (see attached pp. 11-13 “Implementation Plan & Milestones”) to address content development, selection of an optimal approach, an RFP process for both the platform development and the pilot processes, a preliminary budget, options for evaluation, and sustainability scenarios.

Major milestones in the implementation plan include:

- Recruit/secure project specialist and systems operations specialist
- Identify/secure experts, practitioners
- Conduct project-related research
- Secure videographer and team
- Publish platform RFP, select developer
- Establish protocols for quality control and user feedback
- Plan and storyboard content
- Schedule and conduct taping sessions; secure permissions
- Select assets to link to lessons
- Publish pilot RFP; establish selection committee
- Create pilot plan and assessment/feedback instruments
- Identify (5) pilot districts
- Plan/schedule pilot training, implementation
- Launch pilot - Foundations: An Introduction (April 2016)
- Gather, process, and communicate results
- Launch Foundations: ELA/ELD and Mathematics courses (October 2016)

Major categories for the proposed budget include:

- Staffing (salaries, benefits) = \$377,500
- Stipends (experts/practitioners) = \$75,000
- Consultant travel = \$100,000
- *Production = \$300,000 - \$450,000
- Production travel (staff) = \$75,000
- Content curation = \$20,000
- Ongoing Quality Control = \$10,000
- Ongoing Classroom Consultant = \$25,000
- Marketing = \$50,000
- *Platform development, IT consulting, travel = \$200,000 - \$300,000
- Demo video = \$25,000
- Pilot costs = \$25,000
- *Indirect costs/CGCS overhead (10%) = \$138,250 - \$173,250
- * Total Range = \$1,520,750 - \$1,905,750
- * Predicted range; see attached file pp. 13-14 "Projected Budget" for detail

Regarding evaluation: The pilot process, along with an embedded feedback loop, will be one avenue for evaluation. In addition, we will collaborate with the Council's research team to create quantitative/qualitative evaluation measures, and inform continuous improvement.

Regarding sustainability: We are exploring the creation of a fee structure or subscription rate for any district in the country that may need professional development for teachers of English learners and students performing below grade level. Therefore, we have added a "marketing" line item to the projected budget. We are also exploring a fee system whereby Council member districts might receive a basic level of services for free, but must pay to

receive enhanced or extended service options. Districts may also be able to access Title funds and/or grants that authorize professional development.

We will explore additional funding and/or in-kind assets or services from other charitable foundations; for example, Televisa is now considering supporting the next phase of the project. The Council will also scan online resources and identify existing materials that could be integrated into module content as the tool evolves, e.g., materials or videos that have been developed by Understanding Language, Academic Language Development, NGSX, and the Teaching Channel.

We hope that these additional sources of revenue and digital assets will support ongoing hosting, support, and evolution of the platform, whether by CGCS or another partner.

Budget Narrative

PERSONNEL AND BENEFITS

Six months personnel time is distributed as follows: Director of ELL Policy and Research = 20%, ELL Policy Specialist = 100%. Fringe benefits are calculated at 37.9% of direct salaries. Total Personnel and Benefits for six months was budgeted at \$53,523; actual expenditures were \$65,099. Higher personnel costs reflect staff time devoted to finalizing the planning and report during the no-cost extension through 1/31/15.

TRAVEL AND ACCOMODATIONS

Travel budget includes travel cost related to two meetings. Total Travel and Accommodations for six month were budgeted at \$42,400; actual expenditures were \$38,809. Lower expenses reflect the scheduling conflicts that arose with some experts, who were unable to travel to meetings.

SUPPLIES, WEBINAR, CONFERENCE CALLS

A total of \$4,000 was budgeted to cover the costs of supplies, webinars and conference calls for the six-month period; actual expenditures were \$40.19. Actual costs were substantially lower because the Council absorbed virtually all costs related to supplies, webinars and conference calls.

TRAINING/ MEETINGS

A total of \$13,161 was budgeted for conferences and meetings, including expenses for materials, audiovisual, meeting room expenses, and food and beverage for two meetings. Actual expenditures during the six-month planning period were \$3,549. We realized significant savings by coordinating meetings with the Council's annual fall conference, and by securing meeting space at Boston University.

CONSULTING

A budget of \$32,000 was set aside for honoraria provided to content area experts and consultants. Actual consulting expenditures totaled \$37,931. The increased costs are related to compensation for Council staff on contract as a consultant (33 days); Council

absorbed compensation related to additional time spent on the project as an in-kind contribution.

Indirect Cost Allowed for 501(c)(3) organizations w/10% IDC maximum is \$14,508; actual expenses were \$14,572.

Total projected budget for the project was \$160,000; actual expenditures to date are \$160,001.

See attached budget spreadsheet for more detail.

ELL TASK FORCE AGENDA



COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
LEGISLATIVE & POLICY CONFERENCE
MAYFLOWER HOTEL  WASHINGTON, DC

Task Force on English Language Learners and Bilingual Education
Saturday * March 14, 2015 * 3:30-5:00 pm
Meeting Agenda

3:30 pm Meeting Convenes

- I. Introduction of Task Force Members and Council Staff
 - Chair—Valeria Silva, Superintendent, St. Paul Public Schools
 - Co-Chair—Keith Oliveira, Chair, Providence School Board
 - Council staff

- II. Common Core Standards Implementation Update
 - Bill and Melinda Gates & Televisa Foundation Grant—ELD 2.0 and Improving Instructional Materials for ELLs
 - Helmsley Charitable Trust Foundation—Online/Virtual PD for Teachers
 - Scaffolding Project

- III. Legislative Update
 - ESEA Reauthorization & Unaccompanied Minors
 - Budget & Appropriations

- IV. 2015 Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education Directors Meeting
 - May 13-16, 2015
 - The Westin Charlotte
 - 601 South College Street
 - Charlotte, NC 28202

- V. New Business

5:00 pm Meeting Adjourns

**BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT, AND REFUGEE
EDUCATION DIRECTOR'S MEETING**

2015 BIRE Meeting Charlotte, NC

The annual meeting of the directors of Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education programs of the Council's member districts will take place in Charlotte, NC at the Westin Hotel from Wednesday, May 13 through Saturday, May 16. The English Language Learners department of the school district is inviting participants to visit Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools on May 13. The Council is building an agenda that is responsive to the most critical issues that have been raised throughout the year, including:

- *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instruction Rigor for English Language Learners*—Working Session
- OCR Guidance for ELLs—Discussion with the U.S. Department of Education
- Refugee & Unaccompanied Minors—Education Initiatives
- ELLs with Special Needs—Updates and Working Session
- Legislative Update—Including ESEA Reauthorization
- Effective SEA/LEA relations on behalf of ELLS
- CGCS ELL Project Updates
- Celebration of the *Award for Outstanding Contributions to ELL Achievement*, sponsored by McGraw-Hill Education

School Visits (Only for school districts)

WEDNESDAY, May 13, 2015

9:00am - 2:00pm	Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Visits
5:00pm – 6:30pm	Debriefing after school visits Light refreshments

Preliminary Meeting Agenda

THURSDAY, May 14, 2015

7:00am – 5:00pm	Formal meeting program
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Tour/Reception Dinner at The Levine Museum of the New South

FRIDAY, May 15, 2015

7:00am – 5:00pm	Formal meeting program
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SATURDAY, May 16, 2015

8:00am – 10:00am	Breakfast and Debriefing
10:00am	Adjourn

**LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT
TASK FORCE**

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
**Task Force on Urban School Leadership, Governance,
and Management**

2014-2015

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 Co-Chairs

Jose Banda, Sacramento Superintendent
Bill Isler, Pittsburgh School Board

ANCHORAGE FACILITIES REPORT



Review of the Facilities Operations of the Anchorage School District

December 2014

The Anchorage School District (ASD) Board of Education requested that the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) provide a high-level management review of the district's facilities operations.¹ Specifically, the board requested that the Council—

- Review and evaluate the leadership and management, organization, and operations of the district's facilities operations, including the Facilities Department and the Maintenance & Operations Departments.
- Develop recommendations that would help the facilities operations achieve greater operational efficiencies and effectiveness.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team (the team) of senior managers with extensive experience in facilities operations from other major urban school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Attachment A provides brief resumes for each of the 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

John Dufay
Executive Director, Maintenance & Operations
Albuquerque Public Schools

Joe Edgens
Executive Director, Facility Services (Retired)
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

¹ The Council has conducted over 250 instructional, management, and operational reviews in over 50 big-city school districts over the last several 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.)

Karin Temple
Associate Superintendent, Operations and Facilities
Fresno Unified School District

Jaime Torrens
Chief Facilities Officer
Miami-Dade Public Schools

Steve Young
Chief, Facilities Management (Retired)
Indianapolis Public Schools

The team conducted its fieldwork for the project during a four-day site visit to Anchorage on December 2-5, 2014. The general schedule for the site visit is described below. (The Working Agenda for the site visit is presented in Appendix B.)

The team met with two members of the school board on the evening of 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 to conduct interviews with staff members and other individuals (a list of individuals interviewed is presented 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 Appendix D).² The final day of the site visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and recommendations.

The Council sent a draft of this document to team members for their review to ensure the accuracy of the report and to obtain their concurrence with the final observations and recommendations. This management letter contains proposals that have been designed by the team to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's facilities functions.

The Anchorage School District Facilities Operations

The Anchorage School District (ASD) district is the largest public school system in Alaska and the 93rd largest system in the United States. The district operates more than 100 schools with approximately 48,000 students and nearly 5,000 staff members.

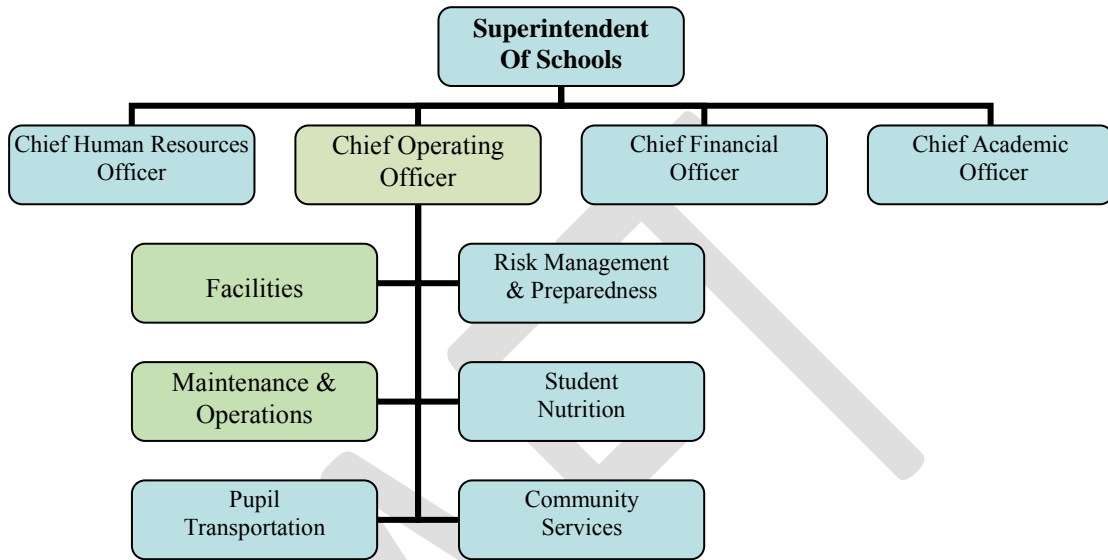
ASD is a dependent school system, as it is a component unit of the municipality of Anchorage. The district is governed by a seven member Board of Education, which is elected at-large from the community. The ASD Superintendent is hired by and acts under the direction of the board and is responsible for running the day-to-day district activities.

Exhibit 1 below displays the overall District organization and the direct reports to the Superintendent which include the Chief Operations Officer (COO), the Chief Financial Officer

² The Council's peer reviews are based on interviews with school district staff and others, a review of documents provided by the district, the development or review of comparability data, and the teams' professional judgments. In conducting interviews the teams must rely on the willingness of those being interviewed to be factual and forthcoming, but cannot always judge the accuracy of their statements.

(CFO), Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The COO's direct reports include Facilities, Maintenance & Operations, Pupil Transportation, Risk Management & Preparedness, Student Nutrition, and Community Services Departments.

Exhibit 1. ASD Organization Chart – May 2014



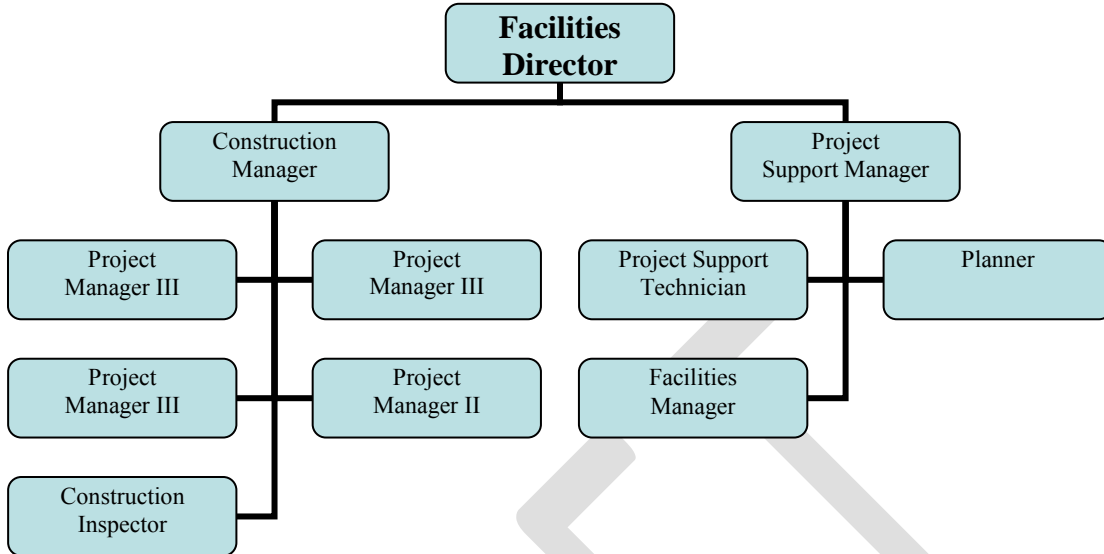
Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the ASD

The Facilities Department is headed by the Facilities Director (See Exhibit 2 below) with two direct reports--the Construction Manager and the Project Support Manager. The Facilities Director position has been vacant for approximately three years and, as a result, the day-to-day management and supervision of the department has been assumed by the COO.

The Construction Manager has a staff of approximately 17 (including five direct reports) regular Project Managers, Construction Inspectors, and Engineering Assistants who oversee the district's various new construction, renovation, and major deferred maintenance projects. (The Construction Manager's organization also includes five temporary positions not shown in the chart below.)

The Project Support Manager, who has a regular staff of five (including three direct reports), provides planning, design, budgetary, and reporting support to the Project Managers in Construction Branch of the Facilities Department. (The Project Support Manager's organization also includes four temporary positions not shown in the chart below.)

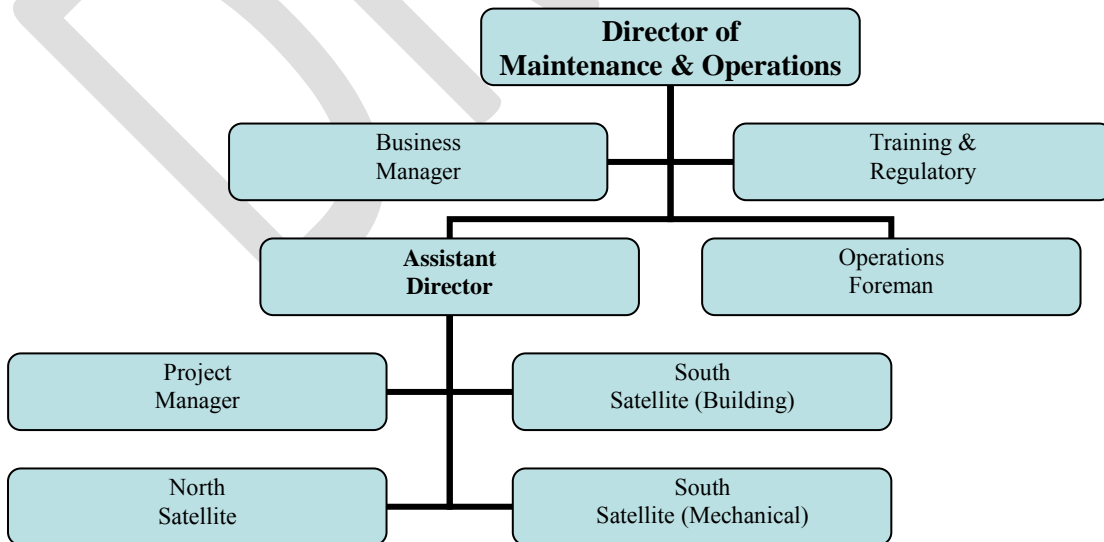
Exhibit 2. Facilities Department Organization Chart



Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the ASD

The Maintenance & Operations Department has almost 200 employees and is headed by the Director (See Exhibit 3 below). The Director of Maintenance & Operations has four direct reports, including the Assistant Director, a Business Manager, the Training and Regulatory Manager, and the Foreman of Operations. Under the Assistant Director are the Supervisors of the North Satellite, the South Satellite – Building, and the South Satellite - Mechanical. The Assistant Director also has a Project Manager reporting to him. Each of the Satellite Supervisors has a cadre of skilled crafts, including carpentry, electrical, glass, HVAC, plumbing, lock & key, welding, painting, roofing, fire/security alarms, and general maintenance.

Exhibit 3. Maintenance & Operations Department Organization Chart



Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the ASD

The FY 2015 General Fund operating budget amounts to approximately \$567.6 million. In addition, \$12.3 million is budgeted in a separate Capital Projects fund. About \$38.0 million of the General Fund is allocated to the Maintenance & Operations Department including approximately \$20.0 million for maintenance personnel, supplies and equipment, and \$18.0 million to provide custodial services. The costs of the Facilities Department are allocated to projects on a time and materials basis estimated as a percentage of the overall project cost.

Findings and Observations

The Council's Strategic Support Team findings and observations are organized into four general areas: Commendations, Leadership and Management, Organization, and Operations. These finding and observations are followed by a series of corresponding recommendations.

Commendations

- The district has a Strategic plan that includes a goal that all departments will rank in the top quartile for operational efficiency.
- The staff members of the Facilities and the Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Departments were found to be competent, hard-working, and dedicated to their assigned tasks and responsibilities.
- The district has a Facility Condition Index that reports the physical status of each of the district's sites.
- The district has a rolling Six-Year Facilities Plan.
- The district has comprehensive educational specification documents for elementary, middle, and high schools that describe design requirements for both new schools and renewal projects.
- School principals generally expressed satisfaction with service levels and response times of the M&O Department and the Facilities Department.
- The M&O Department has established a robust Preventive Maintenance program.
- The Planning Unit of the Facilities Department demonstrated in-depth institutional knowledge and perspective.
- The M&O Department appeared to have vigorous training programs, including safety, certifications, and compliance.
- The Facilities and Purchasing Departments appear to have achieved a well-integrated working relationship.
- The leadership of the M&O Department appears to be capable and well-equipped to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's maintenance and custodial services.

Leadership and Management

- The district’s capital program is primarily driven by an annual bond-levy process that, because of its limited one year cycle, does not readily support larger, multi-year projects.
- The Facilities Department has endured an extended period (three years) without dedicated leadership because of the vacancy in its Director position. As a result –
 - The department does not have an executive with facilities expertise to champion capital projects and maintenance issues.
 - Organizational stovepipes have developed that hinder communications and impede effectiveness.
 - Management bottlenecks have developed that impact timely decision-making and organizational responsiveness.
- The school board has recently embarked on a unique project management model for capital projects in the West High School/Romig Middle School complex that consists of an *ad hoc* steering committee (composed of three board members and several community representatives) that blurs lines of governance, administration, and management—and may create risks for the district in terms of performance and fiscal accountability. Specifically –
 - The team was unable to determine whether this steering committee has a board-approved charter that would define its membership, duties, responsibilities, accountability, budget, timelines, and scope.
 - The steering committee has engaged (under a district contract) a project management firm for a 9½ month period (11/14/14 thru 8/1/15) for \$221,295 to perform certain project-management (P/M) tasks with which the team has the following concerns –
 - The services of the contracted project manager apparently exclude a standard P/M task of cost estimation. (The team was advised that the cost-estimating task would be performed by the project architect, contrary to industry best practices, and as a result could create a conflict of interest).
 - The P/M tasks performed by the contractor are not likely to relieve the internal staff’s workload and may result in duplicative work and additional cost.
 - The projects envisioned for the West High/Romig Middle School complex, if funded, are likely to require the total resources of the annual bond levy for several years, at the expense of all other district projects.
- The team noted several significant gaps in strategic thinking and forward planning in the facilities and capital program areas. For example –
 - The team saw no evidence of strategic business plans for the Facilities and M&O Departments.

Review of the Facilities Operations of the Anchorage School District

- It was unclear whether capital projects were driven by the scope of work or by funding.
- There appears to be little connection between the Six Year Facilities Plan and the legislative facilities requests (as listed on the district's web-site).
- Capital-grant requests to the State are not prioritized by the district and are not consistently monitored or managed centrally.
- There is no formal process that identifies, prioritizes, and funds deferred maintenance projects.
- The Facilities Department's Project Managers and M&O's Supervisors do not have a formal process for coordinating project planning and design review.
- The Facilities and the M&O Departments are not data-driven organizations. For example—
 - Analytical tools and techniques (such as return on investment, cost benefits, total cost of ownership, life cycle costing, risk analysis, repair vs. replace analysis, and business case justification) are not always used to drive decision-making.
 - The team saw little evidence that management has developed systems that use data related to the backlog of maintenance work orders or employee workloads to develop staffing allocations among the skilled crafts.
 - The team saw little indication that standards have been established to measure cleanliness, functionality, or response time.
 - There are no service-level agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for specific projects between principals and the facilities departments' managers.
 - Employee productivity is not measured (e.g., there is no attempt to distinguish productive work time from time spent traveling to/from job sites).
- The 'soft' costs of designing and engineering ASD capital projects approximate 30 percent of total project cost (with 70 percent going to actual construction), which appears to be high based on the team's experience. Specifically, architectural costs for ASD projects appear to be almost double industry standards. For example, based on the 2014 CGCS KPI reporting project³ –
 - The district reported its Design-to-Construction Cost Ratio at 22.6 percent for major maintenance projects, compared to a median of 7.1 percent among CGCS districts.
 - The district reported its Design-to-Construction Cost Ratio at 25.0 percent for renovation projects, compared to a median of 12.6 percent among CGCS districts.

³ *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, A Report of the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project, Results from Fiscal Year 2012-13, Council of the Great City Schools, October, 2014.*

Review of the Facilities Operations of the Anchorage School District

- The district did not report its Design-to-Construction Cost Ratio for new construction projects; however, staff estimated it to be between 15 and 20 percent, compared to a median of 8.2 percent among CGCS districts.
- Internal and external communications issues were identified both within and between the Facilities and the M&O Departments. For example –
 - The district does not appear to actively promote its achievements and improvements in the facilities area.
 - It was reported to the team that the status of capital projects (including the scope, schedules, and budgets) are not clearly communicated to the school board, schools, or the community.
 - There appears to be no formal process for reporting budgeted vs. actual expenditures, along with relevant explanations, for bond or legislative grant projects.
 - Principals do not receive regular status reports on open M&O work orders.
 - There is no customer sign-off on completed work orders or capital projects.
 - Neither the Facilities nor the M&O Department uses customer surveys to gauge perceptions of their performance.
 - The M&O Department does not maintain a presence on the district's web-site that includes FAQs and other useful information.
 - There has been insufficient coordination between Facilities and M&O during the planning, development, and execution of construction projects.
 - Principals indicated they often do not know whether to call Facilities or M&O with questions, concerns, and problems.
- The Facilities Department lacks formal training programs for the development of management skills or the improvement of technical competences among its employees.
- It was reported to the team that staff morale was low in both the Facilities and the M&O Departments. This situation could be attributed to -
 - Salary levels and pay scales that are not competitive with other arms of the municipality or the private sector
 - Budget uncertainties that create job insecurity
 - A general sense of not being appreciated or respected.

Organization

- There is no School Board-level Facilities Committee or other School Board sub-committee with a dedicated focus on facilities construction, renewal, and maintenance issues.
- The district has no Chief Facilities Officer or other single position that focuses exclusively on the full range of facilities issues.
- The roles of Project Managers and Construction Inspectors are not clearly differentiated and tend to overlap in practice.
- The assignment of multiple Project Managers to the various capital projects at an individual school creates confusion, weak coordination, and unneeded disruption.
- The team heard concerns related to the lack of quality controls on work due to vacancies and increased workloads.
- The overall staffing of custodial personnel appears to be reasonable based on a comparison with peer districts. For example, ASD reported an average of one custodian for every 26,593 square feet, compared to the mean square footage per custodian among CGCS districts of 25,501.⁴

Operations

- The team did not always see standard procedures in either the Facilities Department or the M&O Department to support School Board Policies. For example --
 - The team did not see guidelines regarding the appropriate use of alternative contracting methods, such as Design/Build and Construction Management at Risk.
 - The District does not use Master Specifications and for its capital projects.
- District contracts do not appear to hold architects and engineers accountable for design errors, and construction contractors do not appear to be assessed liquidated damages for delays.
- The thresholds for approval of construction change-orders appear to higher than typical. For example --
 - Change orders for up to \$100,000 can be approved by the Facilities Director.
 - Change orders for up to \$250,000 can be approved the Superintendent.
- The district's work-order system is outdated, inadequate, and underutilized. For example –

⁴ *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, A Report of the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project, Results from Fiscal Year 2012-13, Council of the Great City Schools, October, 2014.*

Review of the Facilities Operations of the Anchorage School District

- The system does not provide for adequate description of the work being requested.
- School administrators are unable to track the status of open work orders.
- Customers are unable to prioritize outstanding work requests.
- Actual costs are not automatically or routinely compared to cost estimates.
- The system does not produce productivity reports or cost summaries by craft or school location.
- The district does not have an archival function for building plans, does not maintain a current set of as-built drawings for each structure, and available plans have not been fully digitized.
- Formal evaluations of work done previously by architects, engineers, and contractors are not used in the assessments of their responses to RFPs and bids.
- The team heard concerns about the ability of the Facilities Department to accurately estimate the cost of capital projects. For example --
 - Project Managers indicated they include a 10 percent to 15 percent contingency allowance in estimates for unforeseen conditions.
 - A limited review of six bid documents by the team found that district estimates were approximately 35 percent higher than the related bids.
 - Principals indicated that Facilities Department estimates for legislative grant projects often understate the eventual cost.
- The team was advised that tasks associated with commissioning are not included in the concept-to-completion continuum.
- The team noted a number of processes and procedures that inhibited the efficiency of maintenance workers. For example --
 - The Department does not make use of Open Purchase Orders or Requirements Contracts to reduce workers' travel time in obtaining supplies and parts.
 - The Department does not utilize multi-craft mobile maintenance methods to address the backlog of lower priority work orders.
 - Maintenance personnel do not make effective use of P-Cards.
 - Maintenance staff report to central or satellite locations at the beginning and end of each work day, rather than going directly to/from the locations of their assigned work.
- Facilities-related KPIs indicate the district generally exceeds the median of other CGCS districts, which may reasonably be due to its geographic and environmental uniqueness. (See

Exhibit 4 below, which displays selected KPIs from the CGCS annual report: *Managing for Results in America’s Great City Schools*⁵ for 2014.)

Exhibit 4. Comparison of Selected CGCS KPIs

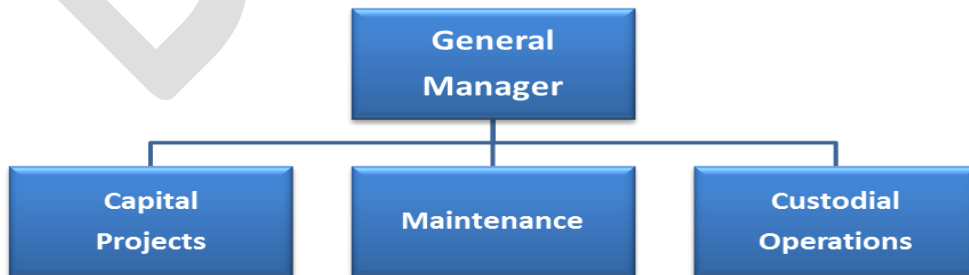
KPI	Anchorage	CGCS Median	CGCS 1 st Quartile
M&O Cost per Student	\$1,193	\$1,080	\$770
M&O Cost Ratio to District Budget	9.5%	9.3%	6.7%
Work Order Completion Time	23	9	4
Routine Maintenance cost per square foot	\$1.47	\$1.06	\$0.85

Recommendations

1. Establish a Board Facilities Committee with a dedicated focus on facilities funding, construction, renewal, and maintenance issues.
2. Merge all facilities related departments, offices, and programs into a new Facilities Department. including --
 - a. The current Facilities Department (capital program functions)
 - b. The Maintenance & Operations Department (including skilled crafts and custodial operations)

The new Facilities Department should to be headed by a General Manager of Facilities or a Chief Facilities Officer. The following organization chart (Exhibit 5) displays a high level sample of a functional organization recommended by the team.

Exhibit 5. Sample New Facilities Organization Overview



Prepared by CGCS

⁵ *Managing for Results in America’s Great City Schools, A Report of the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project, Results from Fiscal Year 2012-13, Council of the Great City Schools, October, 2014.*

3. Fill all critical facilities personnel vacancies on a timely basis.
4. Clarify the roles and responsibilities of staff positions and determine that the right people with the appropriate skill sets are in the proper positions in the new facilities organization.
5. Review funding stream options for the capital program to assess the viability of a more stable, longer-term financing mechanism that would accommodate larger, multi-year projects.
6. Clearly define the scope and responsibilities of any capital project steering committees so that lines of governing authority, management performance, conflict of interest guidelines, and fiscal accountability are precisely delineated.
7. Develop a comprehensive strategic business plan for the new Facilities Department, including –
 - a. A departmental vision
 - b. Achievable goals and objectives linked to the district’s strategic plan
 - c. Implementation timelines
 - d. Identified responsibilities and accountabilities
 - e. Defined performance measures, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and industry standards, for each of the organization’s units.
8. Create a data-driven organization by adopting a decision-making model that relies upon fact-based and analysis-centric business-case justifications, including the use of tools and techniques such as –
 - a. Full life-cycle costing
 - b. Return on investment and cost-benefit analysis
 - c. Repair vs. replace (using service-record data in the maintenance work-order system) and buy vs. build analysis.
 - d. Sustainability analysis
9. Create an ongoing program to review, evaluate, update, document, and disseminate service-level standards and employee productivity measures.
10. Centralize, coordinate, and prioritize all capital funding requests to ensure that limited resources are dedicated to the most critical projects.
11. Create a deferred-maintenance backlog report for use in prioritizing projects.

12. Establish formal processes for project managers and M&O supervisors to coordinate activities, project planning, and design reviews.
13. Devise strategies to address the high ratio of architectural and engineering “soft” costs, including standardized designs and expanded provider competition.
14. Expand internal and external communications efforts, including-
 - a. publicizing and disseminating facilities improvements and achievements
 - b. Enhancing status reports on capital projects
 - c. Providing explanations of variances between budget and actual project expenditures
 - d. Providing status reports on open work orders
 - e. Obtaining customer sign-off on completed projects and work orders
 - f. Utilizing surveys to gauge customer satisfaction
 - g. Establishing web presence for the maintenance and custodial operating units.
15. Establish formal training and professional development programs to enhance management skills and technical competences of facilities employees.
16. Compare the competitiveness of facilities salary levels and pay scales with other arms of the municipality and other employers.
17. Develop standard operating procedures and manuals for the new facilities organization.
18. Enhance contract language to hold contractors accountable for errors and delays.
19. Review the appropriateness of change-order approval thresholds.
20. Enhance or replace the current work order system so that –
 - a. The cost and status of jobs can be easily tracked
 - b. Customers can prioritize requests
 - c. Cost data are linked to actual payroll information and vendor invoices
 - d. Resources utilization by location, craft, and project types can be readily evaluated.
21. Establish an archival function for building plans and ‘as built’ drawings utilizing digital technology.
22. Establish standards and processes for the evaluation of contractors’ performance.
23. Enhance estimation techniques to ensure the accuracy of project-cost projections.

Review of the Facilities Operations of the Anchorage School District

24. Include commissioning tasks in the concept-to-completion continuum.
25. Better utilize modern procurement tools, including P-cards, master contracts, open purchase orders, term bids, and Job Order Contracting, to expedite repairs and improve productivity.
26. Consider the advantages of mobile maintenance strategies to address the back-log of maintenance work orders.
27. Review the time-saving advantages of having workers report directly to job-sites rather than to maintenance yards.
28. Improve the coordination of site work by assigning projects to Project Managers based on location.

DRAFT

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 masters 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 W. Koch

David Koch is the former Chief Administrative Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The LAUSD is the nation's second largest public school system, with more than 700,000 students in grades K-12, an annual budget of more than \$9 billion, and more than 80,000 full- and part-time employees. Mr. Koch's responsibilities encompassed virtually all non-instructional operations of the district, including finance, facilities, information technology, and all of the 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.

John Dufay

John Dufay is the Executive Director, Maintenance & Operations for the Albuquerque Public Schools.

Joe Edgens

Joe A. Edgens is the retired Executive Director of Facilities Services for the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. Mr. Edgens was born in Nashville and graduated from the Nashville Public Schools. He graduated from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville with a Bachelor of Architecture degree as a member of the first graduating class from the School of Architecture at the University of Tennessee. Mr. Edgens has been licensed to practice architecture since 1974. He spent fourteen years in private architectural practice, the last three of which he had his own practice. In 1983 Mr. Edgens sold out of his private practice. He then worked for a contractor/developer for six years as Director of Planning and Construction. Mr. Edgens

accepted the position of Director of Planning and Construction with the Metro Board of Public Education in March of 1989. In 1995 Joe was appointed to the position of Executive Director of Facility Services. The Departments under his supervision are Planning and Construction, Maintenance, Operations (custodians and grounds), Facility Use, and ADA Compliance. These Departments have over 900 employees and operating budgets exceeding \$43,000,000. Capital facility projects completed during his tenure with the Nashville School District exceed one billion dollars.

Karin Temple

Karin Temple is the Associate Superintendent, Operations and Facilities for the Fresno Unified School District. Fresno Unified is the fourth largest school district in California with enrollment of approximately 73,000 students. In addition to facilities management and planning and maintenance and operations, Ms. Temple is responsible for food services, purchasing/warehouse, safety/security, and student transportation. She manages 1300 employees and \$175 million in operating budgets, and is overseeing implementation of a \$280 million bond program. Ms. Temple has served Fresno Unified since 2006. Prior to joining the District, she worked as a management consultant for a national firm providing performance improvement and interim management services to public agencies. She started her public service career in local government finance and budget administration positions. Ms. Temple received a Master of Public Affairs degree from Indiana University, Bloomington, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Duke University.

Jaime Torrens

Jaime Torrens is the Chief Facilities Officer for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). Mr. Torrens is responsible for facilities planning, construction, maintenance, operations and inspections at the fourth largest school system in the nation serving over 340,000 students. As a member of the Superintendent's Cabinet, he manages a staff of nearly 1,500 professional, technical and trades personnel responsible for all aspects of 4,000 buildings comprising 45 million square feet on over 400 school campuses and ancillary facilities. Mr. Torrens has served M-DCPS since 1985. He is charged with leading the district's multi-billion dollar five-year capital program which, since 2006-07, has opened over 70,000 new student stations, including 35 new schools and 47 additions and K-8 conversions. Mr. Torrens holds a Master of Science in Management and a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Florida International University and he is a LEED Accredited Professional.

Steve Young

Steve Young retired as the Chief, Facilities Management with Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) in 2012. IPS is the largest school district in Indiana with a student enrollment of over 32,000. The Facilities Management Division is comprised of over 200 craft and administrative employees responsible for the maintenance and repair of 98 district buildings. IPS recently completed a 10-year, \$648 million Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The CIP included the construction of 7 new elementary schools and the renovation of an additional 49 schools in the district. Prior to coming to IPS in 1998, Mr. Young was the Manager of Facilities at Fort Sam Houston, the U.S. Army Medical Command Headquarters and Training Center in San Antonio,

Texas. He has also served as a Manager of Military Construction for the Army Corps of Engineers in San Antonio. He began working for the Corps of Engineers in 1984 after serving for 12 years in the U.S. Air Force as a Fighter Pilot and Flight Training Instructor.

DRAFT

RICHMOND HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT



Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

December 2014

Dr. Dana Bedden, Superintendent of the Richmond Public Schools (RPS), requested that the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) provide a high-level management review of the school district's Human Resources operations.¹ Specifically, he requested that the Council—

- Review and evaluate the leadership and management, organization, and operations of the district's Human Resources Department
- Develop recommendations and proposals that would help the Human Resources organization achieve greater operational efficiencies and effectiveness and enhance its strategic value to the District.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team of senior managers with extensive experience in human resources from other major urban school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Attachment A provides brief resumes for each of the 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

Karen R. Jackson
Human Resources Director
Milwaukee Public Schools

¹ The Council has conducted over 250 instructional, 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 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.)

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

Parker McKenna
Chief Human Resources Officer
Springfield (MO) Public Schools

Susan Thompson
Chief Officer, Human Capital
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Naomi Wyatt
Chief Talent Officer.
School District of Philadelphia

The team conducted its fieldwork for the project during a four-day site visit to Richmond on November 2-5, 2014. The general schedule for the site visit is described below. (The working agenda for the site visit is presented in Appendix B.)

The team met with the Superintendent on the evening of 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 to conduct interviews with staff members (a list of individuals interviewed is included in Attachment C), to review documents, reports, and data provided by the district (a list of documents reviewed by the team is presented in Appendix D), and to observe the district's Human Resources operations.

The final day of the visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and recommendations, and to briefing the Superintendent on the team's preliminary findings.

The Council sent a draft of this document to team members for their review in order to ensure the accuracy of the report and 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 efficiency and effectiveness of the district's Human Resources functions and to enhance their strategic value to the school system.

The Richmond Public Schools Human Resources Department

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) is one of the largest public school systems in Virginia. The district operates 48 schools with approximately 23,000 students. About 4,500 students qualify for special education services and 76.9 percent of RPS students receive subsidized meals under the Federal school lunch program. The school district employs approximately 3,500 people, of which almost 2,000 are teachers.

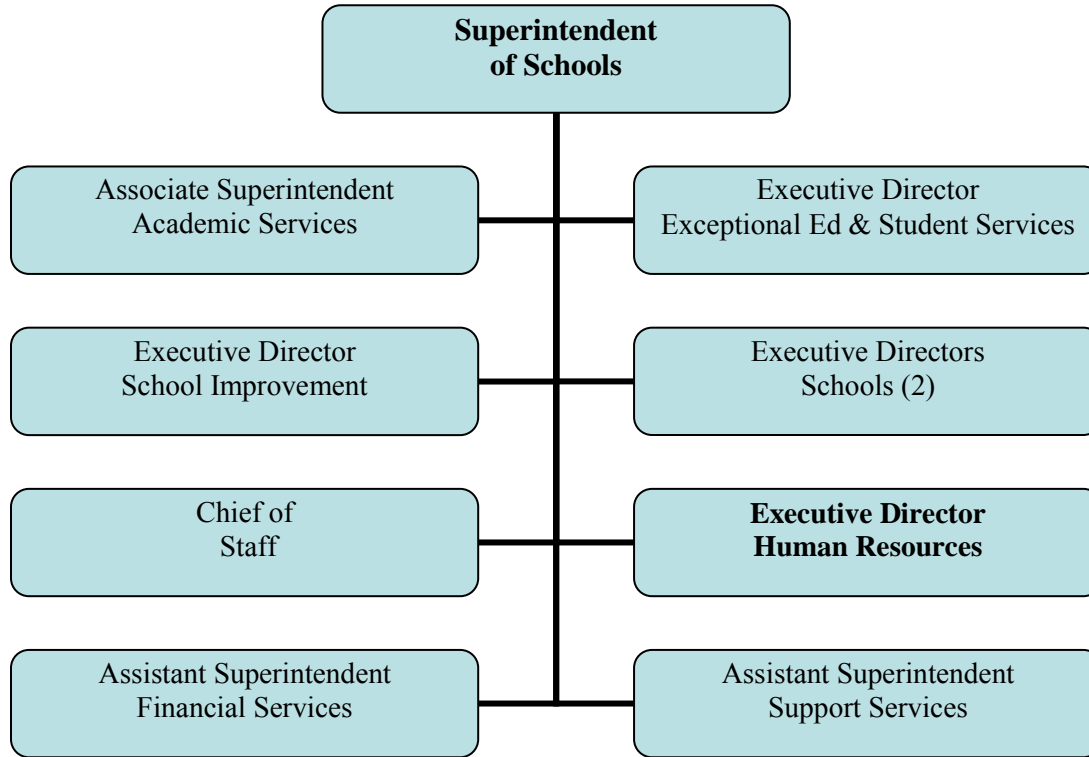
Richmond Public Schools is a fiscally dependent school division of the City of Richmond pursuant to state law. As a fiscally dependent school division, the Richmond Public Schools does not levy taxes or issue debt. RPS's operating budget amounts to approximately \$320 million, which is funded primarily by city appropriations from local

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

taxation, state revenue based on student populations, supplemental federal funds targeted to specific needs, and other revenues such as school cafeteria sales, tuition, and building rental fees.

Exhibit 1 below displays an overview of RPS's organizational structure. The Superintendent has nine direct reports. These direct reports include the Executive Director of Human Resources.

Exhibit 1. Richmond Public Schools - Organizational Chart

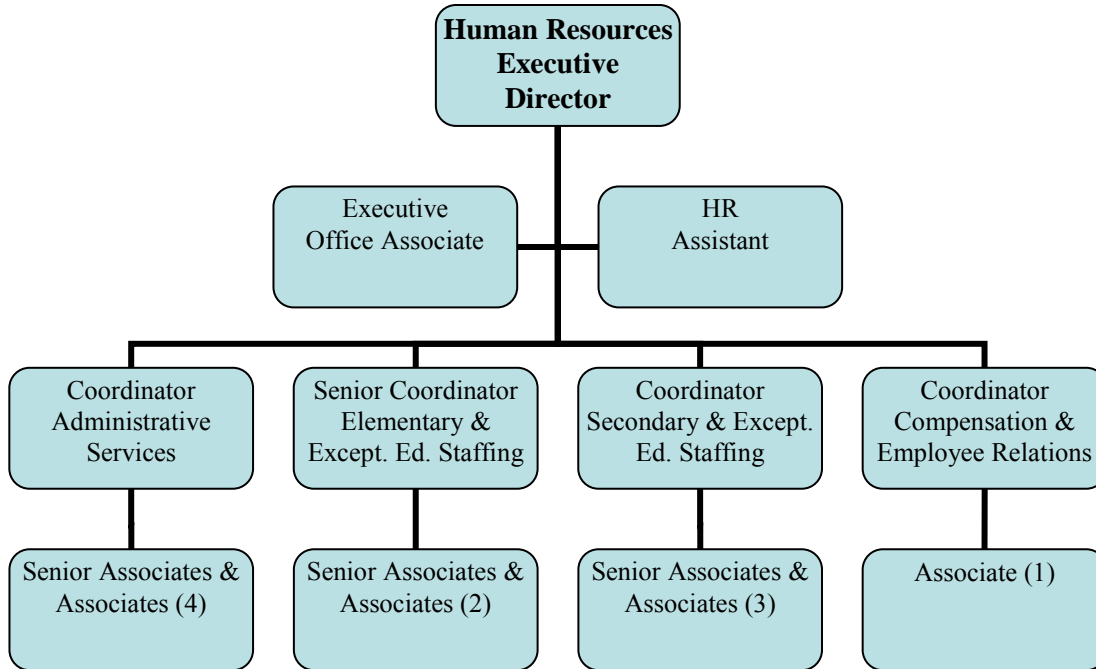


Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the RPS

Exhibit 2 below shows the organizational structure of the Human Resources Department (HR). The Executive Director of HR has four direct reports in addition to his administrative staff, which is composed of an Executive Office Associate and an HR assistant.

These direct reports include two Coordinators responsible for school staffing, a Coordinator for Compensation and Employee Relations, and a Coordinator of Administrative Services. The chart below does not reflect a new Coordinator for Exceptional Education staffing or an additional position for employee relations, which have been authorized but were not filled at the time of the team's site visit.

Exhibit 2. Human Resources Organization Chart



Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the RPS

Exhibit 3 below shows the Human Resources budget for the 2014 fiscal year, broken down by object of expenditure. The \$2.2 million budget provides funds for 20 positions, over \$110,000 in advertising, \$49,730 for supplies and printing, and \$65,000 for recruitment and travel associated with recruitment.

Exhibit 3. Human Resources Budget – FY 2014

<u>Object of Expenditure</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Salaries (20 positions)	\$1,173,544
Employee Benefits	598,878
Purchased Services	166,600
Advertising & Communications	111,025
Supplies & Printing	49,730
Travel & Awards	65,500
Capital Outlay	0
Total Human Resource	\$2,165,277

Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the RPS

Findings and Observations

The findings and observations from the team are organized into four general areas: Commendations, Leadership and Management, Organization, and Operations. These findings and observations are followed by a series of related recommendations.

Commendations

- Staff members of the HR Department were found to be hard working and dedicated to their assigned tasks.
- School principals engage in the teacher recruitment effort by participating in job fairs and campus visits.
- School principals were generally satisfied with services and response times provided by the HR Department (with notable exceptions identified below).
- The district has implemented a mandatory automated payroll deposit system for all employees.

Leadership and Management

- The leadership of the HR Department has not established a vision or direction for the organization and there is a general lack of foresight and planning. For example--
 - The department does not have a strategic business plan with objectives, activities, and milestones that are aligned with the district's overall strategic goals.
 - There is no performance-management process in place to hold HR personnel accountable for desired outcomes.
 - There is no recruitment, selection, and placement master plan to ensure schools are staffed with the best teacher applicants on a timely basis.
 - The Department does not have a recruitment calendar that establishes timelines for actions, activities, and events and assigns responsibilities.
 - There are no staff-retention strategies for teachers or other staff.
 - The department has no plan to deal with compliance issues related to health and medical coverage under the Affordable Care Act for substitutes and part-time employees.
- The department appears to suffer from a culture of complacency, stifles new ideas, and protects the status quo, all of which is compounded by a defeatist

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

attitude that suggests that RPS is the “employer of last resort,” as one interviewee put it.

- HR staff members expressed concerns that they were overworked, which may in fact be the case. Still, there are no service-level standards, employee productivity is not measured, and there is no attempt to distinguish or identify efforts that add value to the enterprise.
- The HR department is bogged down in transactional activities and its systems, processes, and workflows have not been analyzed to improve operational efficiency, and effectiveness. As a consequence –
 - Many workflows are unclear, resulting in redundancies and other inefficiencies.
 - Decision points are not well defined.
 - Authorities and responsibilities are not clearly identified and do not appear to be delegated to the appropriate levels.
 - Certain functions, including licensure and background checks, create bottlenecks in the hiring process.
 - The Executive Director’s time is consumed with processing disciplinary actions.
- The HR Department is not a data-driven organization. For example –
 - Data are not used to actuate decisions.
 - Basic HR statistical and management information was not readily available, such as –
 - Number of employees by job classification
 - Turnover rates by job classification
 - Absentee rates by location and job classification
 - Substitute usage and cost by job type and location
 - Overtime usage and cost by job type and location
 - Vacancy rates by job classification and location
 - Number and location of out-of-field certified staff
 - Recruitment data (e.g., number of applicants by field, location, source, gender, ethnicity, and education level).

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

- Analytical tools and techniques (such as cost/benefit analysis, risk assessment, and business case justification) are not used. For example –
 - The cost effectiveness of specific recruitment activities has not been analyzed.
 - A business case for improved workplace technology has not been developed and the department continues to believe that additional personnel are the only way to address their workload issues.
- The department does not perform any type of root-cause analysis to address the operational problems that it encounters.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) developed by the Council of the Great City Schools or others are not used to measure and compare the performance and effectiveness of the department or its sub-units with other districts.
- The HR Department's internal and external communications are inadequate. For example –
 - There are no HR communications plans to inform employees of HR services or district personnel policies.
 - The department does not use surveys or exit interviews to evaluate employee satisfaction.
 - District staff expressed confusion about the rules governing salary schedule placement and compensation determination, leave policies, and promotional opportunities.
 - There are no collaborative efforts with instructional management to set professional standards, establish qualifications for new teachers, or define the responsibilities of various job classifications.
 - The HR Department does not make use of social media in its recruitment efforts.
 - There are no handbooks for new employees.
 - The HR department does not have regular staff meetings that include two-way communications between management and staff to resolve issues.
- The district has not considered alternative HR service-delivery models, such as analyzing the potential benefits of outsourcing the provision of substitute employees.

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

- The HR department does not have a structured staff-development or training program. For example –
 - Staff members have reportedly been placed in positions without adequate preparation, training, or support.
 - There is no cross-training or succession planning for the continuance of critical HR functions.
 - The department has no program for coaching or mentoring staff.

Organization

- Contrary to staff perceptions, the head count of staff in the HR department appears to be reasonable if one compares the unit to school districts of similar size and scope. Exhibit 4 below displays the HR staffing levels at selected CGCS districts of comparable size.²

Exhibit 4. Comparison of Human Resources Staffing Levels at Selected CGCS Districts with Between 20 and 30 Thousand Students

<u>School District</u>	<u>HR Staffing level</u>
Bridgeport, CT	4
Jackson, MS	10
Des Moines, IA	11
Birmingham, AL	11
Salt Lake City, UT	11
Richmond, VA	17*
Springfield, Mo	17
Providence , RI	20
Toledo, OH	20

*While the HR budget allocates 20 positions, the HR department has 17 filled positions and two additional positions have been authorized that could bring the total to 19.

Prepared by CGCS

- The department is not structured to reflect the employment life cycle of staff on-boarding (recruitment, selection, hiring, and placement), retention (servicing, development, and promotion), and discharging (retirement, termination, and out-placement).
- The HR job titles and job descriptions provided to the team had little relationship to reported responsibilities and duties. For example, staff with

² It should be noted that varying HR staffing levels among these districts may result from the assignment of differing functions and responsibilities (such as employee benefits administration or staff training and development).

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

“employee relations” or “compensation” in their titles had little to do with either.

- It was unclear whether there has been any effort by the HR Department to determine if the right people with the applicable skill sets are in appropriate positions.
- The team noted a number of instances where functions were misaligned, bifurcated, or redundant. For example -
 - The position control system, as it exists, is managed by the HR Department rather than more appropriately administered by the finance office.
 - The benefits function is fragmented between Risk Management, which sits in Finance, and HR, which provides benefits information.
 - Inquiries about State retirement system (VRS) eligibility, scheduled benefits, and filing processes are responded to by the district’s HR department, which may lack the necessary expertise.
 - HR provides substitute teachers to schools while support departments, such as food service, pupil transportation, and custodial operations, operate their own substitute systems.

Operations

- While general personnel policies approved by the Board of Education can be viewed on-line at the district’s web site, these policies are not supported by procedural manuals and HR staff did not demonstrate a clear understanding of current policies, procedures, and practices.
- New hires do not receive an employment packet to facilitate the on-boarding process.
- RPS does not have a regular, formalized, and documented process for adjusting (“leveling”) school staff to reflect changes in enrollment.
- The personnel evaluation process is a *pro forma* exercise and evaluation tools are inadequate. For example -
 - The team was told that teacher performance documentation is inconsistent because principals do not have uniform coaching on how to conduct the process.
 - Evaluation instruments are not differentiated by type of position.

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

- Evaluation tools do not incorporate agreed upon performance expectations or contain linkages to professional growth strategies.
- The department does not utilize its technology to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness. For example-
 - The district’s web site does not include an employee self-service component or a selection of HR e-forms.
 - There is no formal training program of staff on existing automated systems.
 - There is a lack of systems connectivity and coordination in the workflow between HR and payroll.
 - Principals are unable to view the personnel applicant pool on-line.
 - The HR Department does not have an automated call-management system.³
 - The HR director does not participate in an IT governance committee to establish system priorities.
- The substitute teacher ‘fill-rate’ is low, which may be attributable to the low rate of pay for these positions (the pay rate for a “degreed substitute teacher” is \$10.29 per hour, which is less than a substitute clerk or attendance helper).
- The investigative function reportedly impedes the timeliness of disciplinary actions.

Recommendations

In an effort to improve HR Department leadership and management, organization, and operations, and its strategic value to the district, the Council offers the following recommendations:

1. Re-structure the HR Department to reflect the employment life cycle of on-boarding (recruitment, selection, hiring, and placement), retention (servicing, development, and promotion), and discharging (retirement, termination, and out-placement).
2. Relocate the position-control function to the Financial Services Department.
3. Consolidate employee benefits administration into a single unit.

³ Automated call-management systems route incoming calls to specific groups of personnel based on customer need, reduce incoming call time, and allow callers to service themselves.

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

4. Consider alternative HR service-delivery models, such as the potential benefits of outsourcing the provision of substitute employees.
5. Update HR job titles and job descriptions to provide a more realistic portrayal of duties, responsibilities, and expectations.
6. Ensure that HR functions have qualified people, with applicable skill sets, in the appropriate positions.
7. Require and hold HR leadership accountable for establishing a vision and direction for the organization and changing the departmental culture to one focused on the successful achievement of goals and objectives.
8. Develop a strategic business plan for the HR Department, with the participation of staff and other stakeholders, which is specifically linked to the district's strategic plan, and contains measurable goals, objectives, and accountabilities.
9. Create a teacher recruitment/selection/placement master plan that includes –
 - a) A clear definition of the qualifications and attributes desired of applicants
 - b) A personnel cycle calendar identifying key dates and milestones for annual workforce forecasting, the early identification of needs and allocations, and timely authorization for the issuance of new contracts
 - c) Centralized vetting of applicants for quality assurance and to improve the efficiency of the selection process
 - d) Clearly defined procedures and processes for the selection and placement of teaching staff.
10. Develop and execute an HR communications plan that provides for –
 - a) Dissemination of federal and state laws, School Board Policies and administrative procedures relating to staffing formulas, recruitment, salary schedule placement, leave programs, required training, promotional opportunities, and employee benefits in a clear and user-friendly manor
 - b) Collaboration with customer organizations to set professional standards, establish qualifications, and define the responsibilities of various job classifications
 - c) Surveys of employee satisfaction and exit interviews
 - d) Collection of inquiry data and the posting of FAQs on the Department's web site
 - e) Use of social media in the recruitment effort
 - f) Handbooks and orientation materials for new employees

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

- g) Regular two-way internal communications at meetings of HR management and staff.
11. Comprehensive review of systems, processes, procedures, and workflows of the HR Department to eliminate redundancies and improve operational efficiency.⁴
 12. Develop procedure manuals to document HR systems and procedures.
 13. Establish service-level standards and employee productivity measures.
 14. 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 –
 - Basic HR statistics, metrics, and management information (e.g., turnover rates, absentee rates, substitute usage, vacancy rates, out-of-field certified staff, Highly Qualified Teachers, and recruitment data)
 - Cost/benefit analysis, risk assessment, and business case justification
 - Root cause analysis to address operational problems
 - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as those developed by the Council of the Great City Schools, to measure and compare performance and effectiveness with other urban school districts.
 15. Enhance the training of school based and central staff on HR technologies and systems, including cross-training of central staff to ensure the continuance of critical HR functions.
 16. Re-vamp the employee evaluation instruments and processes to incorporate expectations and performance measures, and train department and school-based supervisors on the effective and consistent use of these tools.
 17. Analyze and correlate employee evaluation data with school performance to provide direction for district-wide professional development programs.
 18. Establish a regular process for “leveling” of school staff to reflect enrollment changes.
 19. Review and evaluate the salary levels of substitute teachers to ensure they are competitive and adequate to ensure coverage of daily absences.
 20. Reassess the resources allocated to the investigative function to ensure the timely processing of disciplinary actions.

⁴ Based on CGCS inquiries, a review and documentation of current HR flows could be accomplished in about 100 hours by an independent consultant.

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

21. Acquire and implement an automated call-management system for the HR Department.

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 masters 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 W. Koch

David Koch is the former Chief Administrative Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The LAUSD is the nation's second largest public school system, with more than 700,000 students in grades K-12, an annual budget of more than \$9 billion, and more than 80,000 full- and part-time employees. Mr. Koch's responsibilities encompassed virtually all non-instructional operations of the District, including finance, facilities, information technology, and all of the 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.

Karen R. Jackson

Karen R. Jackson is the Chief Human Capital Officer for the Milwaukee Public Schools. In this role she is responsible for Employment Relations, Employee Rights and Administration, Talent Management, Benefits and Retirement Services. Dr. Jackson is an experienced administrator who has worked with six highly regarded urban and suburban school districts and county government. Among her many accomplishments, she has directed the development the District employee handbook, established the New Educator Mentoring Center and initiated the Project Metro Teacher Residency program for MPS. Dr. Jackson has a Ph.D. in Urban Education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Parker McKenna

Parker McKenna is the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Springfield Public Schools. Mr. McKenna leads Springfield Public School's strategic initiatives related to human capital. He

Review of the Human Resources Department of the Richmond Public Schools

is responsible for the District's strategic initiatives related to human capital. In addition, Mr. McKenna is accountable for the Human Resources Division including employment, labor relations, compensation, benefits, and talent management. Joining Springfield Schools in 2005, Mr. McKenna began his tenure with the District managing the employee benefits function. In 2007, his responsibility expanded to include human resources operations and service delivery to the nearly 5,000 employees of the District. In 2011, Mr. McKenna was selected to serve as the head of the District's HR Division and a member of the executive team. Prior to his time with Springfield Schools, Mr. McKenna held a variety of HR and operational roles within the retail industry, managing recruitment, staffing, and the implementation of organizational change. Mr. McKenna holds a B.S. Degree in Business Management with an emphasis in Human Resources and an M.B.A with a concentration in Organizational Development, both from Missouri State University. He is a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and teaches as an adjunct faculty member at a local university.

Susan Thompson

Susan Thompson is the Chief Officer, Human Capital for the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). MNPS is a district of 85,000 students with an annual budget of approximately \$760 million with 13,000 certified and support employees. Ms. Thompson leads a Human Capital Division of 54 employees with responsibilities for operations (payroll, benefits, employee relations, HRIS) and talent strategy (acquisition, substitutes, onboarding, performance). Prior to MNPS Ms. Thompson served in a variety of leadership roles in Texas (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, High School Administrator, Central Office Coordinator, Regional Senior Leadership Specialist). She is a graduate of Western Illinois University, University of Texas at Tyler and doctoral studies at Sam Houston State University

Naomi Wyatt

Naomi Wyatt is the Chief Talent Officer for the School District of Philadelphia. She serves as the cabinet-level executive responsible for employee relations, benefits, recruiting, and human capital development for the District's 18,000 person workforce. Prior to joining the District Ms. Wyatt served as the Deputy Executive Director of a healthcare non-profit where she was responsible for the organization's strategic planning, operational and administrative functions, and board management. Ms. Wyatt also served on the cabinet of Governor Edward Rendell as the Secretary for Administration. In this position Ms. Wyatt was responsible for information technology, human resources, public safety radio, travel, diversity, continuity of government and cost savings operations for 40+ state government agencies, boards and commissions, and for the 80,000+ employee workforce. Ms. Wyatt earned her B.A. degree in English from Yale College and her J.D. from the University of Colorado.

BIRMINGHAM HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT



Review of the Human Resource Operations of the Birmingham City Schools

September 2014

Dr. Craig Witherspoon, Superintendent of the Birmingham City Schools (BCS), requested that the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) conduct a high-level management review of the school district's Human Resources operations.¹ Specifically, he requested that the Council—

- Review and evaluate the leadership and management, organization, and operations of the district's Human Resources Department
- Develop recommendations that would help the Human Resources department achieve greater operational efficiencies and effectiveness and enhance its strategic value to the school district.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team of senior managers with extensive experience in human resource operations from other major urban school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Attachment A provides brief resumes for each of the 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

Dan Cochran
Associate Superintendent, Human Resources (Retired)
Broward County (Florida) School District

Amanda Bailey
Chief Human Resources Officer
Broward County (Florida) Public Schools

¹ The Council has conducted over 250 instructional, 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 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.)

Ann Chan
Assistant Superintendent, Academic Operations
Boston Public Schools

Dawn Huckaby
Chief Human Resources Officer
Washoe County (Nevada) School District

Kim Mecum
Associate Superintendent, Human Resources/Labor Relations
Fresno Unified School District

The team conducted its fieldwork for the project during a four-day site visit to Birmingham on September 16-19, 2014. The general schedule for the site visit is described below. (The Working Agenda for the site visit is presented in Appendix B.)

The team met with the superintendent on the evening of the first day of the site visit to discuss the expectations and objectives for the review and to make final adjustments to the work schedule. The team used the second and third days to conduct interviews with staff members (a list of individuals interviewed is included in Attachment C); to review documents, reports, and data provided by the district (a list of documents reviewed by the team is presented in Appendix D); and to observe district Human Resource operations.

The final day of the visit was devoted to synthesizing and refining the team's findings and recommendations, and to briefing the superintendent on the team's preliminary findings.

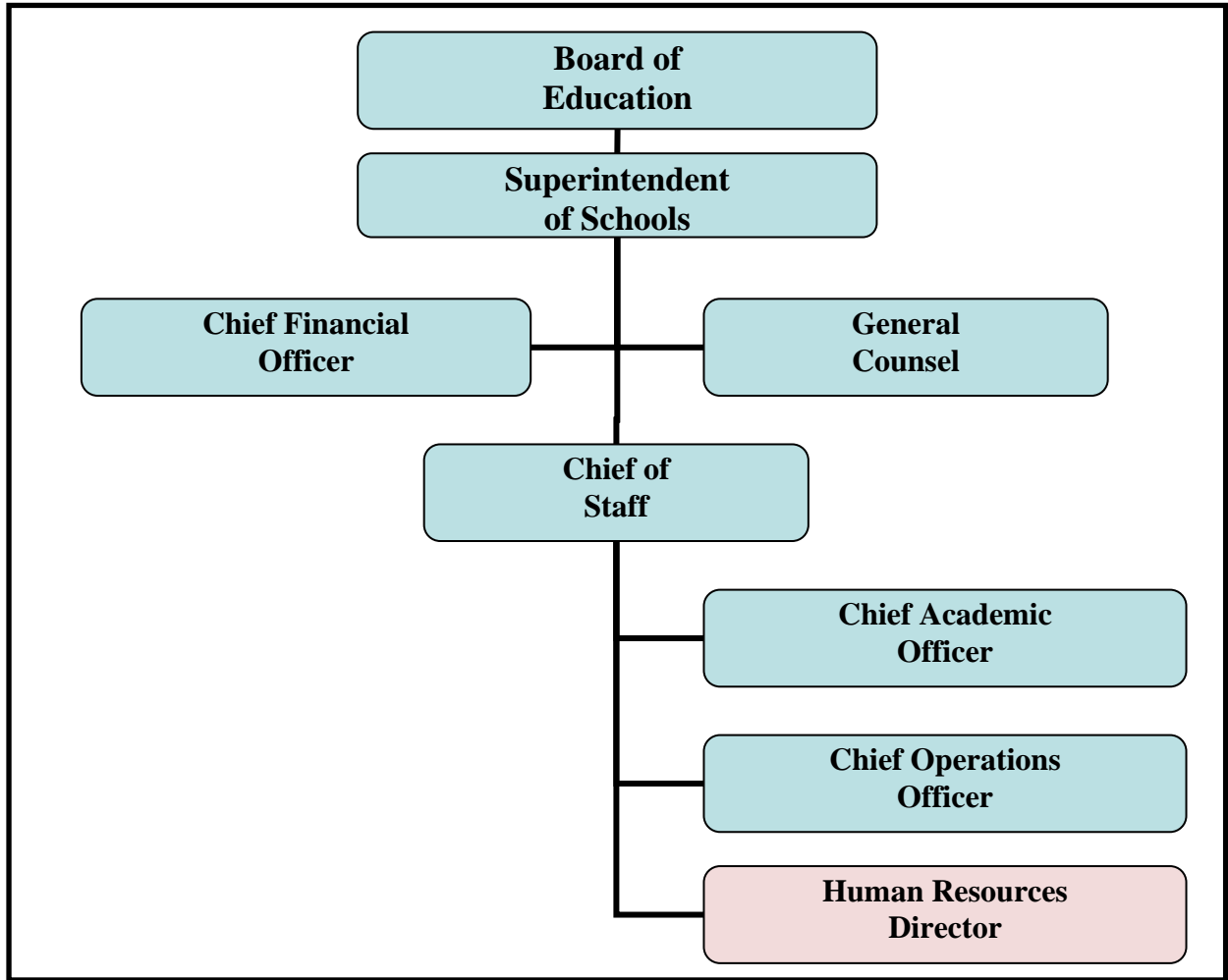
The Council sent a draft of this document to team members for their review in order to ensure the accuracy of the report and obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations. This management letter contains the findings and recommendations that have been designed by the team to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the school district's Human Resource functions and to enhance their strategic value to the district.

The Birmingham City Schools Human Resources Department

The Birmingham City School District (BCS) is the fourth largest public school system in Alabama. The district operates 44 schools with approximately 24,000 students. The district's operating budget totals approximately \$280 million and the school system employs over 2,800 certified and support workers.

Exhibit 1 below presents an overview of BCS's organizational structure. In addition to the Chief Financial Officer and the General Counsel (who have fiduciary reporting relationships to the Board of Education), the superintendent has three direct reports through the Chief of Staff position (which was vacant at the time of the team's visit). The direct reports include the Chief Academic Officer (with direct line authority for schools), the Chief Operations Officer (responsible for most support functions), and the Director of Human Resources.

Exhibit 1. BCS Organization Chart

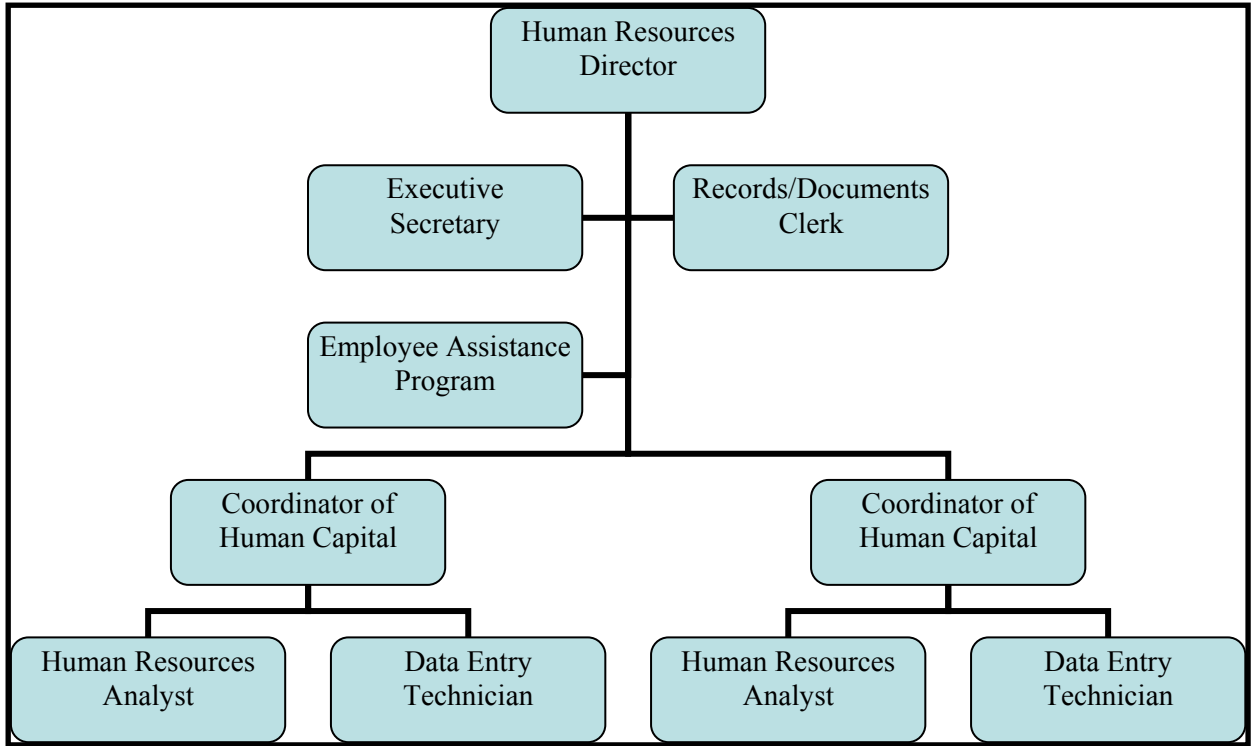


Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the BCS

Exhibit 2 below presents the organizational structure of the Human Resources Department (HR). The HR Director has three direct reports in addition to her administrative staff consisting of an Executive Secretary and a Records/Documents Clerk. These direct reports include a Counselor for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and two Coordinators of Human Capital, who, in turn, each have a Human Resources analyst and a Data Entry Technician.

The Coordinators and their staffs are each responsible for providing HR services to up to 22 schools. The team was told that a third analyst's position is in the HR budget (See Exhibit 3. Human Resources Budget--2015 below), but that the position was on loan to another department.

Exhibit 2. Human Resources Organization Chart



Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the BCS

Exhibit 3 below displays the Human Resources budget for the 2015 fiscal year, broken down by object of expenditure. The Personnel Cost budget provides for salaries and benefits of eleven positions described above, as well as \$21,584 for Substitute costs and \$25,074 for Overtime payments.

The non-salary budget of HR includes \$112,000 for Equipment & Service Contracts, which include software-maintenance agreements. The next two largest non-salary budget lines, Professional Development & Travel at \$21,500 and Advertising & Purchased Services at \$18,000, contain allocations associated with the district’s recruitment efforts.

Exhibit 3. Human Resources Budget – 2015

<u>Object of Expenditure</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Personnel Cost (11 positions)	\$1,005,859
Office Supplies	15,000
Health, Contract Services	15,000
Equipment & Service Contracts	112,000
Prof. Development & Travel	21,500
Advertising & Purchased Services	18,000
Other	<u>12,000</u>
Total Human Resource	\$1,199,359

Source: Prepared by CGCS based on information provided by the BCS

Findings and Observations

The Council's Strategic Support Team findings and observations are based on this question: "***Does the HR Department add strategic value to the District?***" The findings and observations to answer this question are organized around four general areas: Commendations, Leadership and Management, Organization, and Operations.

Commendations

- The staff of the HR Department were found to be hard working and dedicated to their assigned tasks.
- School principals were generally satisfied with services and response times provided by the HR Department (although the team speculated that satisfaction levels could be the result of undefined expectations).
- The team was impressed with the professionalism of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services being provided for district staff.
- Payroll processing appears to operate with a high degree of accuracy, based on the small number of payments that must be recalculated each pay period.

Leadership and Management

- While the department has developed a strategic plan with objectives and milestones that are generally aligned with the district's overall strategic vision, it is ineffectual because --
 - The plan was not developed in collaboration with HR staff or other stakeholders
 - It has not been embraced by HR management and staff
 - No action has been taken to implement the plan
 - There is no performance management process in place to hold HR accountable for desired outcomes.
- Turnover in HR leadership in recent years (it currently has its third director in as many years) has impeded the organization's ability to recognize and address the issues and challenges it faces, such as building interdepartmental collaboration, defining procedures, or managing the department's people and processes.
- The district culture lacks a sense of urgency and suffers from inertia. For example, while the team was told that many projects, practices, and problems are "being studied" or "being worked on," in reality it appeared to the team that little action was actually being taken on many.
- The HR Department is not a data-driven organization. For example –

Review of the Human Resource Operations of the Birmingham City Schools

- Data are not used to actuate decisions
- Basic HR statistical and management information are not available, such as data on –
 - Turnover rates by job classification
 - Absentee rates by location and job classification
 - Substitute usage and cost by job type and location
 - Vacancy rates by job classification and location
 - Number and location of out-of -field certified staff
 - Recruitment data (e.g., number of applicants by field, location, source, gender, ethnicity, and education level)
 - The number Highly Qualified Teachers, as defined by and required by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Analytical tools and techniques (such as cost/benefit analysis, risk assessment, and business case justification) are not used.
- The department does not perform any type of root-cause analysis to address the operational problems that it encounters.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are not used to measure and compare the performance and effectiveness of the department or its sub-units.
- 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.
- There is no recruitment, selection, and placement master plan to ensure schools are staffed with the best teacher applicants on a timely basis. For example –
 - The team was told that new teacher contracts were not offered until July, although data on allotments and vacancies are available in March and April. (Earlier hiring would afford the district a greater opportunity to recruit the most qualified candidates.)
 - Neither the HR Department nor the Academics Division vet teacher applicants to help ensure the quality of new hires and reduce the workload of principals who are presented with hundreds of applications.
 - While teacher screening and interviewing is done by school principals, the process of selection and approval is unclear and is not documented.

Review of the Human Resource Operations of the Birmingham City Schools

- There is no districtwide professional development plan or program that encompasses the district’s strategic goals and engages all employees. For example --
 - There is no coordinated employee-development effort for the orientation of new hires, the continued improvement of employee skills, or for the preparation for promotional opportunities.
 - According to school principals, the professional development that is provided for classroom teachers is not considered relevant and has resulted in morale issues among staff.
 - Classified support personnel do not receive any district-level training or development.
 - HR is not responsible for, nor does it track, required training on such topics as sexual harassment, mandatory reporting of child abuse, or workplace safety.
- The HR Department’s communications with district staff was seen by the team as inadequate. For example –
 - There is no HR communications plan to inform employees of HR services or district personnel policies.
 - The department does not use customer surveys or exit interviews to evaluate employee satisfaction.
 - No one interviewed by the team could articulate the state formulas that drive most school staffing.
 - District staff expressed confusion about the rules governing salary schedules, how compensation was determined, leave policies, and promotional opportunities.
 - FAQs are not posted on the HR web page.
- The HR department is bogged down in a quagmire of transactional activities and its systems, processes, and workflows have not been analyzed to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. As a consequence –
 - Many work flows are unclear and inefficient.²
 - Decision points are not well defined.
 - Authorities and responsibilities are not identified.
 - There are no procedure manuals.

² The team noted instances where electronic data was printed, copied and distributed, only to be scanned back into an electronic format and re-filed.

- HR data bases have not been purged of extraneous information.³

Organization

- The district has not considered alternative HR organizational and service delivery models. For example, the district has not analyzed the potential benefits of –
 - Developing the HR Department into a matrix organization, where Coordinators and Analysts would be assigned specialties (e.g., staff development, recruitment) in which they would be expected to develop in-depth expertise, as well as having general responsibilities for specific groups of schools, and to continue the benefits of a single-point-of-contact for customers
 - Placing the HR Department under the Chief Operations Officer who has experience in the management of HR functions
 - Moving selected teacher-related HR functions into the Academics Division (e.g., staffing allocations, applicant vetting, teacher selection, and the on-boarding process)
 - Outsourcing certain HR functions, such as the provision of substitute employees.
- The head count of staff in the HR department appears to be appropriate based on a comparison with other school districts of similar size and the scope of the department’s work. Exhibit 4 below displays the HR staffing levels at selected Great City School districts of comparable size.⁴

Exhibit 4. Comparison of Human Resources Staffing Levels at Selected CGCS Districts with Between 20 and 30 Thousand Students

<u>School District</u>	<u>HR Staffing level</u>
Bridgeport, CT	4
Jackson, MS	10
Des Moines, IA	11
Birmingham, AL	11
Salt Lake City, UT	11
Richmond, VA	16
Providence , RI	20
Toledo, OH	20

- Many people who have been hired into the department did not have previous HR experience and there is no structured program to develop HR expertise. This has resulted in a lack of vision about what the HR Department might aspire to be and a lack of specific skill-sets needed to execute technical work on a daily basis. As an example, this

³ The team was told that the substitute pool contains over 900 names, while substantially fewer are actually used.

⁴ It should be noted that varying HR staffing levels among these districts may be the result of departments with differing functions and responsibilities.

lack skill sets was particularly apparent in the administration of leaves, such as The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

- It was unclear whether there had been any effort by the department to determine whether the right people with the applicable skill sets were in the appropriate positions.
- The HR job titles and job descriptions provided to the team had little relationship to the observed responsibilities and duties. For example, there is no actual analysis in the day-to-day activities of the Analysts.

Operations

- While general personnel policies are contained in the Birmingham Board of Education Policy Manual (adopted 1-14-2014), these policies are not supported by procedural manuals and HR staff does not seem to have a clear understanding these policies.
- The district has no position control system to help ensure that only those positions that are budgeted are filled, as noted in a previous CGCS reviews of BCS.⁵
- The personnel evaluation process is a *pro forma* exercise that does not incorporate agreed upon performance expectations and does not contain linkage to professional growth strategies.
- Teacher performance documentation is inconsistently applied because principals do not have uniform coaching in how to conduct the process.
- Teacher evaluations are not readily available to Instruction Directors for use in their administrative duties.
- The department does not utilize its technology to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness. For example-
 - HR rolled out a new substitute system during the first few weeks of the school year without sufficient training or communication with system users.
 - There is no on-going program to train school-based personnel on HR computer systems.
 - The HR Department does not have an automated call-management system.
- HR has not established pipeline programs with local university partners to develop pre-service teachers.
- New employees must navigate multiple departments to complete the on-boarding process.

⁵ This deficiency was noted in the CGCS review of Facilities Operations, November 2010, and in the Review of the Administrative Structure and Resource Allocations, November 2007.

- The team noted that the file room containing personnel records did not appear to be adequately secured and temporary employees were allowed access to confidential files.

Recommendations

In an effort to improve HR leadership and management, organization, and operations and to improve HR's strategic value to the district the Council offers the following recommendations:

1. Explore alternative organizational and service delivery models to improve accountability and enhance the strategic contribution of HR functions to the district. Considerations should include –
 - Development of a matrix organization that encourages specialization in specific areas of expertise and provides a single-point-of-contact to enhance the customer experience.
 - Placement of the HR Department under the Chief Operations Officer who has experience in the management of HR functions.
 - Placement of selected teacher-related HR functions in the Instruction Division, such as the school-staffing process, applicant vetting, teacher selection, and the on-boarding process for new hires.
 - Outsourcing certain HR functions, such as the provision of substitute employees.
2. Update HR job titles and job descriptions to provide a more realistic portrayal of duties, responsibilities, and expectations.
3. Ensure that HR functions have qualified people, with the applicable skill sets, in appropriate positions.
4. Develop a strategic business plan for the department, with the participation of staff and other stakeholders, which is specifically linked to the District's Strategic Plan, and contains measureable goals, objectives, 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 –
 - Basic HR statistics, metrics, and management information (e.g., turnover rates, absentee rates, substitute usage, vacancy rates, out-of -field certified staff, Highly Qualified Teachers, and recruitment data)
 - Cost/benefit analysis, risk assessment, and business case justification
 - Root cause analysis to address the operational problems
 - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure and compare performance and effectiveness. (See CGCS indicators)

6. Establish service-level standards and employee-productivity measures.
7. Create a teacher recruitment/selection/placement master plan that includes –
 - Centralized vetting of applicants to help ensure quality and improve the efficiency of the selection process
 - A personnel cycle calendar that provides an annual workforce forecasting process, the early identification of needs and allocations, and the timely authorization for the issuance of new contracts
 - Clearly defined procedures and processes for the selection and placement of teaching staff.
 - Establish relationships and maintain pipeline programs with local university partners to better develop pre-service teachers.
8. Assign responsibility for a districtwide professional development plan that engages all employees and includes a comprehensive orientation and job specific on-boarding for new hires and provides on-going professional development to enhance job skills and promotional opportunities for continuing employees.
9. Develop and execute an HR communication plan that provides for –
 - Dissemination of federal and state laws, Board Policies and administrative procedures relating to staffing formulas, recruitment, salary schedule placement, leave programs, required training, promotional opportunities, and employee benefits in a clear and user-friendly manor
 - Surveys of employee satisfaction and exit interviews
 - Collection of inquiry data and the posting of FAQs on the department’s web site.
10. Conduct a comprehensive review of the systems, processes, procedures, and workflows of the HR Department.
11. Establish a districtwide automated position control system.
12. Re-vamp the employee evaluation instrument and process to incorporate expectations and performance measures and train supervisors on the effective use of evaluations.
13. Analyze and correlate employee evaluation data with school performance to provide direction for districtwide professional development programs.
14. Establish a process whereby school directors and senior managers can readily access personnel evaluations and other information needed to perform their responsibilities.

Review of the Human Resource Operations of the Birmingham City Schools

15. Enhance the training of school-based and central staff on the use of HR technology and systems.
16. Acquire and implement an automated call-management system for the HR Department.
17. Streamline the on-boarding process for new hires.
18. Re-examine and improve the security of personnel files.

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 masters 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.

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David Koch is the former Chief Administrative Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The LAUSD is the nation's second largest public school system, with more than 700,000 students in grades K-12, an annual budget of more than \$9 billion, and more than 80,000 full- and part-time employees. Mr. Koch's responsibilities encompassed virtually all non-instructional operations of the District, including finance, facilities, information technology, and all of the 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.

Amanda Bailey

Amanda Bailey is the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Broward County Public Schools, the sixth largest school district in the nation. In this role, Ms. Bailey oversees Human Resources functions for over 30,000 full- and part-time employees. Ms. Bailey has previously served as the Director of Employee & Labor Relations and led negotiations for all represented employees comprising 90% of the school district's employee population. Ms. Bailey has nearly twenty years of Human Resources experience in all HR functions specifically in Talent Acquisition, Employee/Labor Relations, EEO Compliance, and Training/Employee Development. Ms. Bailey has served in HR Leadership roles for various private- and public-sector employers such as American Express, Sun-Sentinel Publishing Company, University of Rhode Island, and the National Labor Relations Board, Region 1. She earned a graduate degree from the University of Rhode Island in HR Management/Labor & Industrial Relations and earned a bachelor's degree in English Literature from Florida Atlantic University.

Ann Chan

Ann Chan is the Assistant Superintendent, Academics Operations for Boston Public Schools (BPS). Previously, Ms. Chan was the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for BPS. She was also Chief Talent Officer for the Seattle Public Schools as well as Director of Human Resources Operations with the Chicago Public Schools. In these roles, she managed the strategic alignment of all human resources functions to the core goals of the school district. Prior to joining the public sector, Ms. Chan worked for the Sheraton Hotel chain in Chicago, covering all functions of human resources from hiring to benefit plans to employee relations with a focus on customer service toward all employees.

Dan Cochran

Dan Cochran is a veteran Human Resources professional who has served during recent years in a variety of assignments with the Los Angeles Unified School District, the San Diego Unified School District and the Houston Independent School District. In each school district he has helped implement strategic planning, workflow process reengineering and customer focused service delivery within the Human Resources Division. In addition, he has participated in a number of on-site evaluations of Human Resources Departments in large urban school districts across the nation. Mr. Cochran is the former Associate Superintendent of Human Resources for the School Board of Broward County, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. In that position, he was responsible for all Human Resources functions including Labor and Employee Relations, Administrative Human Resources Procedures, Recruitment and Staffing of all employee groups, Wage and Salary Administration, Insurance and Benefits Administration as well as Risk Management. Before taking the Broward position, Mr. Cochran served for a number of years as the Executive Director of Personnel Services for the Fulton County and Cobb County Public Schools in the Atlanta, Georgia area.

Dawn Huckaby

Dawn Huckaby has an extensive 20 year career in Human Resources management. She previously worked in private sector HR management and has been with the Washoe County School District for 11 years in Human Resources, most recently as Chief Human Resources Officer for the past three years. Ms. Huckaby has a Master's degree in Speech Communication and is a member of Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Northern Nevada Human Resources Association (NNHRA), Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA) and the American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA). Ms. Huckaby has participated in a number of on-site reviews of Human Resources Departments in large urban school districts. Her article "Hiring For Attitude" was published in the American Association of School Administrator's (AASA's) magazine *School Administrator* in the fall 2012 and was included in an article featured in *District Administration* magazine in March 2014

Kim Mecum

Kim Mecum is the Associate Superintendent, Human Resources/Labor Relations for the Fresno Unified School District. Her entire career has been in education at both the college level and K-12 level. Ms. Mecum served on the California State Task Force which was formed by Secretary

of Education, Tom Torlakson to address fundamental questions about the education profession: how to recruit the best people into the profession, how to develop their skills before they begin work and throughout their careers, and how to provide useful feedback, including using measurements of learning to improve teaching. In addition, she currently serves on the state Human Resource Council for the Association of California School Administrators and is on the lead team for Fresno Unified for the NCLB waiver received by the California Office to Reform Education (CORE). In these roles, she leads and partners with various institutions to strategically align human resource functions to the improving outcomes at both the local and state level.

HISTORY OF STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

**History of Strategic Support Teams Conducted by the
Council of the Great City Schools**

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
Anchorage		
	Finance	2004
	Communications	2008
	Math Instruction	2010
	Food Services	2011
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Facilities (Pending)	2014
Atlanta		
	Facilities	2009
	Transportation	2010
Austin		
	Special Education	2010
Baltimore		
	Information Technology	2011
Birmingham		
	Organizational Structure	2007
	Operations	2008
	Facilities	2010
	Human Resources	2014
Boston		
	Special Education	2009
	Instruction	2014
	Food Services	2013
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
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
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
Greensboro		
	Bilingual Education	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Facilities	2004
	Human Resources	2007
Hillsborough County (FLA)		
	Transportation	2005
	Procurement	2005
	Special Education	2012
Houston		
	Facilities Operations	2010

	Capitol Program	2010
	Information Technology	2011
	Procurement	2011
Indianapolis		
	Transportation	2007
	Information Technology	2010
	Finance	2014
Jackson (MS)		
	Bond Referendum	2006
	Communications	2009
Jacksonville		
	Organization and Management	2002
	Operations	2002
	Human Resources	2002
	Finance	2002
	Information Technology	2002
	Finance	2006
Kansas City		
	Human Resources	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Finance	2005
	Operations	2005
	Purchasing	2006
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Program Implementation	2007
	Stimulus Planning	2009
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 Levels	2009
Memphis		
	Information Technology	2007
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
Nashville		
	Food Service	2010
	Bilingual Education	2014
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
Orange County		
	Information Technology	2010
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	2013
Pittsburgh		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Technology	2006
	Finance	2006
	Special Education	2009
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 (Pending)	2014
Rochester		
	Finance and Technology	2003
	Transportation	2004
	Food Services	2004
	Special Education	2008
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

COO MEETING BROCHURE

About the Council



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, productive members of society.

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Albuquerque | East Baton Rouge | Oakland |
| Anchorage | Fort Worth | Oklahoma City |
| Atlanta | Fresno | Omaha |
| Austin | Greensboro | Orange County |
| Baltimore | Hawaii | Palm Beach |
| Birmingham | Houston | Philadelphia |
| Boston | Indianapolis | Pittsburgh |
| Bridgeport | Jackson | Portland |
| Broward County | Jacksonville | Providence |
| Buffalo | Louisville | Richmond |
| Charleston | Kansas City | Rochester |
| Charlotte | Little Rock | Sacramento |
| Chicago | Long Beach | San Diego |
| Cincinnati | Los Angeles | San Francisco |
| Clark County | Miami-Dade | Santa Ana |
| Cleveland | Milwaukee | Seattle |
| Columbus | Minneapolis | Shelby County |
| Dallas | Nashville | St. Louis |
| Dayton | New Orleans | St. Paul |
| Denver | New York City | Tampa |
| Des Moines | Newark | Toledo |
| Detroit | Norfolk | Washington, DC |
| | | Wichita |



Chief Operating Officer, Chief of Security and Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services Annual Meeting



April 21-24, 2015

**Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel
3400 Paradise Road
Las Vegas, NV 89169
(702) 784-5700 or (800) 750-0980**

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CHIEF OF SECURITY,
DIRECTORS OF FACILITIES, TRANSPORTATION, PROCUREMENT
AND FOOD SERVICES ANNUAL MEETING**

DRAFT Agenda

Tuesday Morning, April 21, 2015

General Session

- COOs, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Round Robin, KPIs, etc.

Tuesday Afternoon, April 21, 2015

Breakout Sessions

- COOs, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Issues and Challenges (Discussions, Presentations and Panels)

Wednesday Morning, April 22, 2015

Joint Session

- COOs and Directors of Transportation – Best Practices in Student Transportation (Panels and Discussion)

Breakout Sessions

- Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Procurement and Food Services – Issues and Challenges (Discussions, Presentations and Panels)

Wednesday Afternoon, April 22, 2015

Joint Session

- COOs and Directors of Facilities – Best Practices in Building Maintenance and Operations (Panels and Discussion)

Breakout Sessions

- Chief of Security, Directors of Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Issues and Challenges (Discussions, Presentations and Panels)

Thursday Morning, April 23, 2015

Joint Session

- COOs and Chief of Security – Best Practices in Safety and Security (Panels and Discussion)

Breakout Sessions

- Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Issues and Challenges (Discussions, Presentations and Panels)

Thursday Afternoon, April 23, 2015

Joint Session

- COOs and Directors of Procurement – Best Practices in Purchasing and Supply Chain (Panels and Discussion)

Breakout Sessions

- Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Issues and Challenges (Discussions, Presentations and Panels)

General Session

- COOs, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Wrap up

Friday, April 24, 2015

General Session

- COOs, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Legislative, Policy and Regulatory Issues Impacting Food and Nutritional Services
- COOs, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services – Reversing the Deterioration in the Nation’s Public School Buildings
- COOs, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement and Food Services Annual Meeting – Round Robin Discussions

Wrap Up and Departures

FOOD SERVICES DIRECTORS MEETING

DRAFT Agenda

Wednesday, April 22 - Thursday, April 23, 2015

Food Service (Food Service Directors)

(School District Members ONLY)

- Implementing the Community Eligibility Option (CEO)
- Guidelines for Competitive Foods
- Best practices for procurement
- Harnessing non-profitable and charitable resources

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CHIEF OF SECURITY,
DIRECTORS OF FACILITIES, TRANSPORTATION,
PROCUREMENT AND FOOD SERVICES ANNUAL MEETING**

April 21 - 24, 2015

Register for the COO CONFERENCE online at www.cgcs.org

\$150 Council School District Member
\$200 Non-Member District/Non Profit
\$575 Additional person from company sponsoring
\$1,000 Company not sponsoring (Per Person)

Platinum Level

\$5,500 -- Presentations
(3 FREE Registrations)

Gold Level

\$3,500 -- Attend Entire Meeting
(2 FREE Registrations)

\$75 Additional late registration fee after March 24, 2015

REFUND AND CANCELLATION POLICY:

All cancellations or substitutions must be in writing and emailed to abarrera@cgcs.org. Registration cancellations received on or before March 7, 2015 will receive a full refund, and a 50% refund if received March 8-March 24. Cancellations received after March 24 or no-shows on April 21 will not receive a refund and will be billed the full amount. Purchase orders will not be accepted for those registering on-site.

HOTEL INFORMATION:

Please make Hotel reservations directly with the Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel, (702) 784-5700 or (800) 750-0980, Mention: Chief Operating Officers. All reservations must be confirmed with a credit card. The cutoff date for the group rate is March 31, 2015. Room rates are \$139.00/per night, for a single and double, plus 12% tax. Support CGCS and secure your guest rooms within the official headquarter hotel. (Rooms are limited).

Who Should Attend?

Chief Operating Officers, Chief of Security, Directors of Facilities, Transportation, Procurement, Food Services and support services staff are invited to attend to share concerns, solutions, and to discuss what works in their school districts.



FINANCE TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Urban School Finance

2014-2015

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
Larry Feldman, Miami-Dade County School Board

**AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT**



Council of the Great City Schools

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004
(202) 393-2427 ♦ (202) 393-2400 (fax)
<http://www.cgcs.org>

January 8, 2015

Dr. Meria Joel Carstarphen
Superintendent
Atlanta Public Schools
130 Trinity Avenue, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-3624

Dr. Carstarphen:

The Council of the Great City Schools is pleased to announce that the Atlanta Public Schools meets the criteria for the Award for Excellence in Financial Management. This is a significant achievement by the Board of Education, the Superintendent, the Chief Finance Officer, and the entire administrative staff whose efforts demonstrate excellence in financial accountability and controls that are needed to safeguard and protect the fiscal integrity of the school district.

The Council convened a team of highly respected subject-matter experts from major school systems across the county to review the school district's application and supporting documentation. The organization also conducted a site visit to interview administrative staff and to review additional materials.

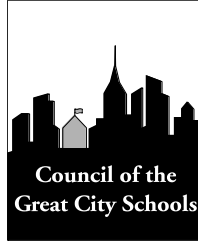
The team concluded that the Atlanta Public Schools complied with the management practices that represent the highest standards in financial accountability and control in nine specified areas: General Financial Management; Internal Controls; Budget; Strategic Planning and Management; Internal and Financial Auditing; Capital Assets Management; Debt Management; Risk Management; and Purchasing.

This is a significant milestone for the Atlanta Public Schools, which now joins only the Broward County Public Schools, the Houston Independent School District and the Miami-Dade Public Schools as the only recipients of the award since its inception in 2008. The Council presents this award only when its school systems meet the designated criteria.

I would be pleased to come to Atlanta on behalf of the Council of the Great City Schools to personally present this award to the district's leadership and look forward to hearing from you about when such a presentation would be most convenient. Thank you and congratulations.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director



The Council of the Great City Schools

presents this

**AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

to the

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ABACUS

The Award of Excellence in Financial Management recognizes the Atlanta Public Schools for supporting the highest standards in financial accountability and controls that are needed to safeguard and protect the financial integrity of the district. This effort reflects an extraordinary dedication to excellence in financial management and demonstrates outstanding stewardship of taxpayer dollars with the ultimate beneficiaries being the children of the city.

*Presented to the Atlanta Public Schools
March 2, 2015*

RECURRING FINANCIAL OPERATIONS ISSUES



**1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004**

WHITE PAPER: SUMMARY OF RECURRING FINANCIAL OPERATIONS ISSUES

Urban public school districts are under enormous pressure to increase the effectiveness of their instructional programs, as well as the efficiencies in their financial and business operations. The Council of the Great City Schools, an organization representing the nation's largest urban school districts, has been addressing these challenges over the years by conducting strategic reviews of the organizational and administrative structures of its members, along with the instructional, financial, business, human resources, information technology, and other services of its member districts.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Of the over 250 instructional, management, and operational reviews the Council has conducted in some 50 of its member districts over the last 15 years, 168 of them have involved reviews of financial, organizational, business services, human resources, information technology and other support services. This White Paper summarizes some of the recurring issues that the organization has found in the area of financial operations. Cumulatively, most of the issues can be linked to leadership and the result of weak planning, coordination, and analysis of results to inform practice.

Leadership and Strategic Direction

- ★ The overall goals, priorities, and major initiatives of districts are not supported by business plans or detailed action steps to guide efforts.
- ★ Departmental mission statements, goals, or objectives, if there are any, are not aligned with those of the districts.
- ★ Budgets do not clearly reflect and support the goals or major priorities of districts.
- ★ The long-term cost implications of goals are not recognized as part of districts' budget processes.
- ★ Proper planning, including the identification and monitoring of milestones, cost drivers, target completion dates or owners responsible for the completion of projects, is not a requirement for allocating resources.
- ★ Priorities and resource allocations are not based on evaluations of program effectiveness, analyses of cost-benefits or return-on-investments from previous year decisions.



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Washington, DC 20004**

- ★ Resources are not strategically and equitably distributed either because there are no well-defined allocation policies and formulas, or because districts do not have the ability or the data to determine if resources are appropriately distributed.
- ★ Recovery plans are not developed to deal with different contingencies and to ensure business continuity.
- ★ Organizational and administrative structures are not regularly reviewed or adjusted to address current or emerging issues.

Communications

- ★ There is no formal or effective use of cross-functional communications channels to coordinate plans, goals, priorities, major initiatives, programs or procedures.
- ★ Lower management and support staff are not informed of nor are they given a voice in decisions and, therefore, do not feel they are an equal part of the team.
- ★ There are limited opportunities for staff to raise concerns to senior management.
- ★ Departmental staff meetings are intended to share information, not to solve problems.

Management and Operations

- ★ “Crisis management” often distracts staff from the primary job functions for which they are responsible
- ★ Project management methodologies and techniques, collaborative decision-making processes, and cross-functional teams are not used to develop, agree on, or monitor overall strategies; to address multi-dimensional issues associated with major initiatives; or to resolve inter-departmental issues.
- ★ A “silo” mentality and cultures of “information hoarding” are fostered because activities and operations are not well integrated, operate independently, or are not transparent.
- ★ Long-standing practices are not challenged or re-examined for their value-added contributions.
- ★ Over-specialization of staff creates information islands that complicate interactions and communications within and between offices.



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- ★ The ability to report progress towards achieving goals or measuring productivity is limited because performance metrics, benchmarks, or targets are poorly defined or non-existent.
- ★ It is difficult to assess performance and hold staff accountable because personnel evaluations, where they exist, are not tied to district, departmental or divisional goals and objectives.
- ★ Reporting lines do not match organizational charts, and job titles and descriptions do not match assigned functions and responsibilities.
- ★ There are no succession plans for replacing key personnel or cohesive plans for the timely filling of positions with the right people and right skill sets.
- ★ Policies and procedures are not enforced and there are no consequences for failing to take action or for inappropriate action.
- ★ Business processes and procedures are not documented in easy-to-use handbooks or on-line guides.
- ★ User manuals are not regularly reviewed or revised to reflect changes in policies and operating procedures.
- ★ Risk-averse environments discourage innovation, the adoption of best practices and regular peer comparisons with other districts.
- ★ There is no vigorous follow-up to determine causes when initial efforts to solve problems have been unsuccessful.
- ★ Data flow and work processes are not well defined nor are they portrayed in a manner that enables staff to understand their purposes.
- ★ Risky and inefficient “work around” methods are developed to compensate for slow and cumbersome processes.

Technology

- ★ There is no unified management effort to ensure districts have a cohesive and integrated technology strategy.
- ★ Districts lack uniform direction when they acquire Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, data warehouses or student management systems.



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- ★ Districts lack uniform direction when they acquire ERP systems, data warehouses, or student management systems.
- ★ Unified and integrated management efforts are not used to implement the full functionality of ERP system into district operations.
- ★ Business processes are not reengineered to take advantage of the functionality of ERP systems.
- ★ The limited proficiency of staff to use ERP systems prohibits the maximization of these systems.
- ★ Staff do not embrace new technologies and perpetuate old practices without consequences, e.g., some tasks continue to be done manually or with spreadsheets in spite of the capabilities of the ERP systems.

Training

- ★ Senior management staff members are not committed to train personnel to fill positions from within the district.
- ★ There are few formalized training programs for new employees or on-going staff development opportunities for existing employees, including school-level administrative staff.
- ★ Business often grinds to a halt when key individuals are absent because there is little cross-training on key functions.
- ★ Professional development related to the use and operation of ERP systems is inadequate.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The Council is committed to helping its member districts as they strive to improve their operational effectiveness and to be accountable for the results they achieve. The organization believes that recognizing the challenges large urban school districts share is the first step toward addressing them. The next step is to mobilize the collective resources of the Council member districts, including tapping into the pool of highly respected leaders and senior managers from across the country who have confronted these challenges and adopting the “best practices” that have already been developed.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AUDIT

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on Audit

2014-2015

Subcommittee Goal

To review and report on Council budgetary matters, and ensure the proper management of Council revenues.

Chair

Felton Williams, Long Beach School Board

Members

Richard Carranza, San Francisco Superintendent

Michael Hanson, Fresno Superintendent

Bill Isler, Pittsburgh School Board

Keith Oliveira, Providence School Board

Ex Officio

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Oakland School Board

2013-2014 AUDIT REPORT

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

FOR

FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014

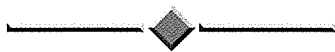
ENDING JUNE 30, 2014



Financial Statements and Supplemental Information

For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

(With Summarized Financial Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2013)



**and
Report Thereon**



COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

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For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

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Supplemental Schedule of Project Revenue and Expenses	15



Certified Public Accountants

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of the
Council of the Great City Schools

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Council of the Great City Schools (the Council), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2014, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council of the Great City Schools as of June 30, 2014, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Continued

Other Matters

Report on Summarized Comparative Information

We have previously audited the Council's 2013 financial statements, and we expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those audited financial statements in our report dated January 27, 2014. In our opinion, the summarized comparative information presented herein as of and for the year ended June 30, 2013, is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which it has been derived.

Report on Supplemental Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental schedule of project revenue and expenses on page 15 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Raffa, P.C.

Raffa, P.C.

Washington, DC
January 29, 2015

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
June 30, 2014
(With Summarized Financial Information as of June 30, 2013)

	2014	2013
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 4,069,729	\$ 3,070,138
Accounts receivable	60,453	49,253
Grants, contributions and contracts receivable, net	1,102,435	1,774,932
Prepaid expenses	137,919	61,273
Investments	5,941,375	3,754,279
457(b) and 457(f) plan assets	354,253	262,604
Furniture and equipment, net	24,531	25,794
Deposits	26,944	22,775
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 11,717,639	\$ 9,021,048
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 374,341	\$ 266,496
Accrued expenses	114,472	143,762
Deferred compensation plan liability	354,253	262,604
Deferred membership dues	426,593	421,866
Deferred sponsorships and other	87,970	126,040
Deferred rent liability	18,559	35,046
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,376,188	1,255,814
Net assets		
Unrestricted	6,004,158	5,125,284
Temporarily restricted	4,337,293	2,639,950
TOTAL NET ASSETS	10,341,451	7,765,234
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 11,717,639	\$ 9,021,048

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

(With Summarized Financial Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2013)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2014 Total	2013 Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT				
Grants and contracts	\$ 464,929	\$ 3,660,196	\$ 4,125,125	\$ 1,655,452
Membership dues	2,524,579	-	2,524,579	2,521,135
Sponsorships	1,032,000	25,000	1,057,000	1,159,745
Registration fees	444,171	-	444,171	462,096
Interest and dividends	229,638	-	229,638	111,866
Royalties and other income	46,958	-	46,958	33,967
Net assets released from restriction:				
Satisfaction of program restrictions	1,987,853	(1,987,853)	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	6,730,128	1,697,343	8,427,471	5,944,261
EXPENSES				
Program services	5,150,422	-	5,150,422	5,092,214
Management and general	1,114,175	-	1,114,175	1,016,699
Fundraising	45,075	-	45,075	29,577
TOTAL EXPENSES	6,309,672	-	6,309,672	6,138,490
Change in net assets before net gains on investments	420,456	1,697,343	2,117,799	(194,229)
Net gains on investments	458,418	-	458,418	142,047
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	878,874	1,697,343	2,576,217	(52,182)
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	5,125,284	2,639,950	7,765,234	7,817,416
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 6,004,158	\$ 4,337,293	\$ 10,341,451	\$ 7,765,234

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

(With Summarized Financial Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2013)

Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in net assets	\$ 2,576,217	\$ (52,182)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	7,793	8,894
Realized gains on sales of investments	(2,701)	(5,958)
Unrealized gains on investments	(455,717)	(136,089)
Change in provision for doubtful accounts	50,000	10,000
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
Accounts receivable	(11,200)	3,191
Grants, contributions and contracts receivable	622,497	1,205,198
Accrued interest receivable	-	2,332
Prepaid expenses	(76,646)	64,719
Deposits	(4,169)	(9,181)
Accounts payable	107,845	(396,423)
Accrued expenses	(29,290)	36,378
Deferred membership dues	4,727	(110,344)
Deferred sponsorships and other	(38,070)	(23,410)
Deferred rent liability	(16,487)	(9,318)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	<u>2,734,799</u>	<u>587,807</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchases of furniture and equipment	(6,530)	(3,622)
Purchases of investments	(1,980,805)	(516,442)
Proceeds from sales of investments	<u>252,127</u>	<u>406,815</u>
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>(1,735,208)</u>	<u>(113,249)</u>
NET INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	999,591	474,558
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>3,070,138</u>	<u>2,595,580</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 4,069,729</u>	<u>\$ 3,070,138</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

1. Organization and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Organization

The Council of the Great City Schools (the Council) is a coalition of 67 of the nation's largest urban public school systems. Founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, the Council is located in Washington, DC, where it works to promote urban education through legislation, research, media relations, instruction, management, technology and other special projects designed to improve the quality of urban education. The Council serves as the national voice for urban educators, providing ways to share promising practices and address common concerns. These activities are funded primarily through membership dues, grants, contracts and sponsorships.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

The Council considers money market and sweep funds to be cash equivalents.

Accounts Receivable and Grants, Contributions and Contracts Receivable

Accounts receivable and grants, contributions and contracts receivable are stated at net realizable value. Receivables that are past due are individually analyzed for collectability. When all collection efforts have been exhausted, the account is written off against an allowance account. Management provides an allowance for those receivables it believes to be uncollectible.

Investments

Investments consist of mutual funds, money market funds and investments in the deferred compensation plans. These investments are recorded in the accompanying statement of financial position at fair value based on quoted market prices. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. For disclosure of the inputs used to measure fair value and related valuation techniques, see Note 4. Interest and dividend income is recorded as earned. Unrealized gains or losses are determined by comparison of cost to fair value at the beginning and end of the reporting period. Realized gains or losses on sales of investments are recorded on the trade date of the transactions. All such gains and losses are included in investment income in the accompanying statement of activities and considered non-operating revenue. Interest and dividends are shown as a separate line item in the accompanying statement of activities and considered to be operating revenue.

Fair Value Measurements

Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurements*, defines fair value, establishes a framework for measuring fair value in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and requires disclosures about fair value measurements for assets and liabilities measured at fair value on a recurring basis. The ASC emphasizes that fair value is a market-based measurement, not an entity-specific measurement, and therefore, a fair value measurement should be determined based on the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability. As a basis for considering market participant assumptions in fair value measurements, the ASC established a

Continued

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

1. Organization and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Fair Value Measurements (continued)

fair value hierarchy based upon the transparency of the inputs to the valuation of an asset or liability. These inputs may be observable, whereby market participant assumptions are developed based on market data obtained from independent sources, and unobservable, whereby assumptions about market participant assumptions are developed by the reporting entity based on the best information available in the circumstances.

The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

Level 1 – Inputs based on quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities accessible at the measurement date.

Level 2 – Inputs other than quoted prices included in Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly, such as quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets.

Level 3 – Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability, including the reporting entity's own assumptions in determining the fair value measurement.

As of June 30, 2014, the Council's assets that are measured at fair value on a recurring basis are described in Note 4 of these financial statements.

Furniture and Equipment and Accumulated Depreciation

Furniture and equipment are stated at cost and are depreciated using the straight-line method over estimated useful lives of three to seven years, with no salvage value. The cost of furniture and equipment retired or disposed of is removed from the accounts along with the related accumulated depreciation and any gain or loss is reflected in income or expense in the accompanying statement of activities. Expenditures for major repairs and improvements are capitalized; expenditures for minor repairs and maintenance costs are expensed when incurred.

Classification of Net Assets

The net assets of the Council are reported as follows:

- Unrestricted net assets represent the portion of expendable funds that are available for support of the Council's operations.
- Temporarily restricted net assets represent funds that are restricted by donors for specific programs or use in future periods.

Revenue Recognition

The Council reports cash and other assets received as restricted support if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of the donated assets. When a donor-imposed restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the accompanying statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

1. Organization and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Revenue Recognition (continued)

Unrestricted grants are reported as revenue in the year in which payments are received and/or unconditional promises are made. Revenue recognized on grants that have been committed to the Council, but have not been received, is reflected as part of the grants, contributions and contracts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Contract revenue is recognized as costs are incurred on the basis of direct costs plus allowable indirect expenses at a provisional rate. Revenue recognized on contracts for which billings have not been presented to or collected from the awarding agency is included in grants, contributions and contracts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Membership dues are recognized in the year to which the membership dues relate. Membership dues paid in advance of the membership period are reported as deferred membership dues in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Sponsorship and registration fees received for conferences and meetings are deferred upon receipt and are recognized as revenue in the year in which the conferences or meetings are held.

Functional Allocation of Expenses

The costs of providing various programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the accompanying statement of activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the programs and supporting services benefited based on direct costs.

Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

2. Grants, Contributions and Contracts Receivable

As of June 30, 2014, grants, contributions and contracts receivable consist of unconditional promises to give, sponsorships for conferences that have already taken place and work conducted by the Council under the strategic support teams initiative. All amounts are due to be collected within one year. The Council has established an allowance for doubtful accounts of \$100,000. Grants, contributions and contracts receivable is broken down as follows:

Grants receivable	\$ 676,474
Strategic support teams	275,059
Sponsorships receivable	195,000
Other receivables	<u>55,902</u>
Total	\$ 1,202,435
Less: Allowance for Doubtful Account	<u>(100,000)</u>
Grants, Contributions and Contracts Receivable, Net	<u>\$ 1,102,435</u>

Continued

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

3. Investments

Investments, at fair value, consisted of the following as of June 30, 2014:

Equity mutual funds	\$ 3,479,352
Bond mutual funds	2,422,931
Money market funds	<u>39,092</u>
Total	<u>\$ 5,941,375</u>

Investment returns are summarized as follows for the year ended June 30, 2014:

Interest and dividends	\$ 229,638
Realized gains	2,701
Unrealized gains	<u>455,717</u>
Total	<u>\$ 688,056</u>

For the year ended June 30, 2014, investment fees incurred were \$32,153 and are included in management and general in the accompanying statement of activities.

4. Fair Value Measurements

The following table summarizes the Council's investments measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of June 30, 2014, aggregated by the fair value hierarchy level within which those measurements were made:

	<u>Total Fair Value</u>	<u>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets/ Liabilities (Level 1)</u>	<u>Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)</u>	<u>Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)</u>
Assets:				
Investments:				
Mutual funds:				
Equity funds:				
Large growth	\$ 834,471	\$ 834,471	\$ -	\$ -
Moderate allocation	488,987	488,987	-	-
Large value	464,157	464,157	-	-
Foreign large value	407,125	407,125	-	-
Diversified emerging markets	308,829	308,829	-	-
Small cap growth	264,125	264,125	-	-
Small Value	174,627	174,627	-	-

Continued

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

4. Fair Value Measurements (continued)

<i>(Continued)</i>	<u>Total Fair Value</u>	<u>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets/ Liabilities (Level 1)</u>	<u>Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)</u>	<u>Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)</u>
Assets:				
Investments:				
Mutual funds:				
Equity funds:				
Commodity broad basket	\$ 172,474	\$ 172,474	\$ -	\$ -
Mid cap blend	136,237	136,237	-	-
Mid cap growth	135,729	135,729	-	-
Real estate	<u>92,591</u>	<u>92,591</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Equity Funds	<u>3,479,352</u>	<u>3,479,352</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Bond funds:				
World bond	1,292,019	1,292,019	-	-
Intermediate term	911,229	911,229	-	-
Non-traditional	122,485	122,485	-	-
High yield	85,904	85,904	-	-
Intermediate government	<u>11,294</u>	<u>11,294</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Bond Funds	<u>2,422,931</u>	<u>2,422,931</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Money market funds	<u>39,092</u>	<u>39,092</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Investments	<u>5,941,375</u>	<u>5,941,375</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
457 (b) and 457 (f) plan assets:				
457(b) plan assets:				
Cash surrender value life insurance policy	167,596	-	167,596	-
Exchange traded funds	104,128	104,128	-	-
Mutual funds	1,427	1,427	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents	1,395	1,395	-	-
457(f) plan assets:				
Exchange traded funds	70,309	70,309	-	-
Mutual funds	7,666	7,666	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>1,732</u>	<u>1,732</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total 457 (b) and 457 (f) Plan Assets	<u>354,253</u>	<u>186,657</u>	<u>167,596</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 6,295,628</u>	<u>\$ 6,128,032</u>	<u>\$ 167,596</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

4. Fair Value Measurements (continued)

The Council used the following methods and significant assumptions to estimate fair value for assets recorded at fair value:

Mutual funds and exchange traded funds – Valued at quoted market prices for identical assets in active markets.

Cash surrender value of life insurance policies – Cash surrender value of life insurance policies is based upon the reserve value, which is the face amount of the contracts discounted at a specific rate of interest according to the insured's life expectancy.

Money market funds – Money market funds are valued at the net asset value (NAV) of shares held, as reported in the active market in which the individual security or fund is traded.

Interest-bearing cash deposits – The carrying value of interest-bearing cash deposits, including cash held within the 457(b) and 457(f) plan assets and approximates fair value as the cash earns interest at prevailing market interest rates.

5. Furniture and Equipment and Accumulated Depreciation

The Council held the following furniture and equipment as of June 30, 2014:

Furniture and equipment	\$ 457,152
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(432,621)</u>
Furniture and Equipment, Net	<u>\$ 24,531</u>

Depreciation expense was \$7,793 for the year ended June 30, 2014.

6. Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

As of June 30, 2014, temporarily restricted net assets are available for the following projects which are part of the categorical grants program:

Gates Foundation Project	\$ 3,502,861
Hewlett Foundation Project	324,432
Wallace Foundation Project	300,000
Helmsley Foundation Project	160,000
Southern Education Foundation Project	<u>50,000</u>
Total	<u>\$ 4,337,293</u>

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014**

7. Commitments and Contingencies

Operating Lease

The Council leases office space under a noncancelable operating lease which will expire July 14, 2015. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$20,782 in the first year and \$22,212 in the second year, with annual increases thereafter equal to 2.5% of the previous year's payment for the remainder of the lease. The Council is also required to pay its pro rata share of increases in real estate taxes and operating expenses. Under accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, all fixed rent increases are recognized on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. The difference between the required cash payments for rent and the rent expense in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles is reflected as deferred rent liability in the accompanying statement of financial position.

As of June 30, 2014, future minimum lease payments are due as follows:

For the Year Ending June 30,	
2015	\$ 301,260
2016	<u>6,283</u>
Total	<u>\$ 307,543</u>

Rent expense totaled \$280,620 for the year ended June 30, 2014.

Concentration of Cash

The Council maintains its cash and cash equivalents with certain commercial financial institutions, which aggregate balance, at times, may exceed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insured limit of \$250,000 per depositor per institution. As of June 30, 2014, the Council had approximately \$4,197,000 composed of demand deposits, which exceeded the maximum limit insured by the FDIC by approximately \$3,447,000. The Council monitors the creditworthiness of these institutions and has not experienced any credit losses on its cash and cash equivalents.

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

8. Functional Expenses

The costs of providing various programs and other activities have been allocated among the programs based on direct costs and an allocated portion of shared costs. The Council's program service expenses were as follows for the year ended June 30, 2014:

Categorical Grants	\$ 1,988,349
Meetings and Conferences	1,208,686
Legislative Advocacy	482,308
Public Advocacy	411,119
Strategic Support Teams	260,095
Policy Research	255,549
Member Services	200,522
KPI and Common Core Project In-kind	153,208
Curriculum and Instruction	59,188
Special Projects Account	47,102
Urban Deans	31,322
KPI Business Plan	27,974
Exxon Mobil Bernard Harris Scholarship	<u>25,000</u>
Total Program Services	<u>\$ 5,150,422</u>

9. Pension Plans

The Council sponsors a defined contribution pension plan, which is available to all full-time employees who have completed one year of service. The Council contributes 5% of each eligible employee's gross salary into the plan annually. For the year ended June 30, 2014, pension expense totaled approximately \$117,449.

In addition, the Council offers its Executive Director an opportunity to defer his compensation pursuant to Sections 457(b) and 457(f) of the Internal Revenue Code. The funds are funded by voluntary employee salary deferrals in accordance with regulations established under Sections 457(b) and 457(f) of the Internal Revenue Code. As of June 30, 2014, the 457(b) plan had assets of \$274,546 and the 457(f) plan had assets of \$79,707, which represent the cumulative amount of contributions to the plans and accumulated earnings and losses since inception.

10. Income Taxes

The Council is exempt from the payment of taxes on income other than net unrelated business income under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. No provision for income taxes is required for the year ended June 30, 2014, as the Council had no net unrelated business income.

The Council follows the authoritative guidance relating to accounting for uncertainty in income taxes included in ASC Topic Income Taxes. These provisions provide consistent guidance for the accounting for uncertainty in income taxes recognized in an entity's financial statements and prescribe a threshold of "more likely than not" for recognition and derecognition of tax positions

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

10. Income Taxes (continued)

taken or expected to be taken in a tax return. The Council performed an evaluation of uncertain tax positions for the year ended June 30, 2014, and determined that there were no matters that would require recognition in the financial statements or that may have any effect on its tax-exempt status. As of June 30, 2014, the statute of limitations for tax years ended June 30, 2011 through June 30, 2013 remains open with the U.S. federal jurisdiction or the various states and local jurisdictions in which the Council files tax returns. It is the Council's policy to recognize interest and/or penalties related to uncertain tax positions, if any, in income tax expense. As of June 30, 2014, the Council had no accruals for interest and/or penalties.

11. Summarized Financial Information

The financial statements include certain prior year summarized comparative information in total but not by net asset class and functional area. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with the Council's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2013, from which the summarized information was derived.

12. Subsequent Events

In preparing these financial statements, the Council has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through January 29, 2015, the date the financial statements were available to be issued. There were no subsequent events that require recognition of, or disclosure in, the financial statements.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE OF PROJECT REVENUE AND EXPENSES
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

	Meetings and Conferences	Exxon Mobil Bernard Harris Scholarship	Strategic Support Teams	Special Projects Account	Southern Education Foundation Project	Hewlett Foundation Project	KPI Business Plan	Carnegie Foundation Project	Helmsley Foundation Project	Urban Deans	Shirley Schwartz Urban Impact Award	Gates Foundation Project	KPI and Common Core Project In-Kind	Wallace Foundation Project	Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT															
Grants and contracts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 294,929	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 160,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,600,196	\$ -	\$ 470,000	\$ 4,125,125
Sponsorships	1,020,500	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500	-	-	-	1,047,000
Registration fees	444,171	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	444,171
Royalties and other income	608	-	-	-	-	-	45,990	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46,598
Membership dues	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,500	-	-	-	-	14,500
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	1,465,279	25,000	294,929	-	50,000	500,000	45,990	50,000	160,000	14,500	1,500	2,600,196	-	470,000	5,677,394
EXPENSES															
Salaries and fringe benefits	111,587	-	-	-	-	8,343	18,689	-	-	24,530	-	795,859	133,224	18,640	1,110,872
Outside services	141,139	20,600	150,625	32,074	-	121,421	1,981	44,500	-	769	-	591,492	-	-	1,104,601
Travel and meeting expenses	817,053	187	40,581	15,028	-	10,649	1,105	-	-	1,243	-	89,387	-	780	976,013
Expenses allocated to projects	100,000	3,931	68,889	-	-	35,114	5,595	5,500	-	4,086	-	226,602	19,984	6,033	475,734
Copying and printing	26,023	282	-	-	-	26	215	-	-	-	-	25,899	-	-	52,445
Postage and shipping	10,839	-	-	-	-	-	82	-	-	399	-	2,378	-	-	13,698
Dues, subscriptions, and publications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,347	-	-	4,347
Telephone	2,045	-	-	-	-	15	307	-	-	295	-	1,321	-	43	4,026
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,208,686	25,000	260,095	47,102	-	175,568	27,974	50,000	-	31,322	-	1,737,285	153,208	25,496	3,741,736
Change in Net Assets	256,593	-	34,834	(47,102)	50,000	324,432	18,016	-	160,000	(16,822)	1,500	862,911	(153,208)	444,504	1,935,658
Excess Cost (Revenue) Transferred to Completed Programs	(300,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	153,208	(144,504)	(291,296)
Project Balances, Beginning of Year	731,130	-	-	250,233	-	-	(53,654)	-	-	34,966	18,426	2,639,950	-	-	3,621,051
Project Balances, End of Year	\$ 687,723	\$ -	\$ 34,834	\$ 203,131	\$ 50,000	\$ 324,432	\$ (35,638)	\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 18,144	\$ 19,926	\$ 3,502,861	\$ -	\$ 300,000	\$ 5,265,413



January 29, 2015

To the Audit Committee of the
Council of the Great City Schools

Professional standards require us to advise those charged with governance of the following matters relating to our recently completed audit of the Council of the Great City Schools (the Council) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014. The matters discussed herein are those that we have noted as of January 29, 2015, and we have not updated our procedures regarding these matters since that date. This letter is solely for the internal use of the Audit Committee, the Board of Directors, and management and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

ITEMS TO BE COMMUNICATED

The Auditor's Responsibility under Auditing Standards Generally Accepted in the United States of America. The auditor is responsible for obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance are free of material misstatements, whether caused by error or fraud. An audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS) provides reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance or guarantee of the accuracy of the financial statements and is subject to the inherent risk that errors or fraud, if they exist, have not been detected. Such standards also require the auditor to obtain a sufficient understanding of the organization's internal controls to plan the audit for the purpose of determining the auditor's procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal controls.

Planned Scope and Timing of the Audit. The auditor should communicate with those charged with governance an overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit.

AUDITOR'S RESPONSE

Communicated in our engagement letter dated July 2, 2014, and our opinion on the financial statements. Our audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities.

A discussion was held with the Treasurer/Secretary of the Board of Directors regarding the planned scope and timing of the audit, the intention of which was to assist those charged with governance in understanding better the consequences of our audit work on their oversight responsibilities along with assisting us in understanding the Council and its environment.

ITEMS TO BE COMMUNICATED

AUDITOR'S RESPONSE

Qualitative Aspects of Significant Accounting Practices. Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The auditor should advise those charged with governance about the appropriateness of accounting policies and their application and disclosures.

The significant accounting policies are described in the notes to the financial statements. The application of significant existing policies was not changed during the year. We have reviewed the accounting policies and disclosures that management has identified to be the most critical and concur with management's assessment. We noted no significant transactions entered into by the Council during the year that were unusual or transactions for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance.

Management Judgments and Accounting Estimates. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ markedly from management's current judgments.

We believe that the Council's allocation of expenses and allowance for doubtful accounts represent particularly sensitive accounting estimates. We have evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop these estimates and believe they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Significant Difficulties Encountered. The auditor should inform those charged with governance of any significant difficulties encountered in dealing with management related to the performance of the audit.

We are pleased to inform you that there were no significant difficulties encountered during the course of the audit. All records and information requested by Raffa were freely available for inspection. Management and other personnel provided full cooperation.

Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements and Financial Statement Disclosures. The auditor is required to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that we believe are trivial, and to communicate such misstatements to the appropriate level of management. The auditor should also communicate with those charged with governance corrected and uncorrected misstatements and the effect that these misstatements have on the financial statements.

During our audit, we proposed an adjustment to record additional allowance for doubtful accounts. The adjustment was approved by management and properly recorded. In addition, management also proposed and recorded adjustments subsequent to the commencement of our audit. A copy of all adjustments made as part of the audit process is attached. (See attachment).

There were no waived audit adjustments.

ITEMS TO BE COMMUNICATED

AUDITOR'S RESPONSE

Disagreements with Management. The auditor should discuss with those charged with governance any disagreements with management, whether or not satisfactorily resolved, about matters that, individually or in the aggregate, could be significant to the Council's financial statements or the auditor's report.

We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

Management Representations. The auditor must inform those charged with governance of the representations required from management.

We have requested certain representations from management in the management representation letter. This letter is attached.

Management's Consultation with Other Accountants. When the auditor is aware that management has consulted with other accountants about accounting and auditing matters, the auditor should discuss with those charged with governance his or her views about significant matters that were the subject of such consultation.

We are not aware of any consultations by management with other accountants on the application of generally accepted accounting principles.

Significant Issues Discussed with Management prior to Our Retention. The auditor should communicate with those charged with governance any significant issues that were discussed or were the subject of correspondence with management prior to our retention.

There were no major accounting or other issues of concern discussed with management prior to our being retained as auditor for the 2014 audit.

Independence. GAAS requires independence for all audits. Relevant matters to consider in reaching a conclusion about independence include circumstances or relationships that create threats to auditor independence and the related safeguards that have been applied to eliminate those threats or reduce them to an acceptable level.

We are not aware of any circumstances or relationships that would impair our independence.

Material Alternative Accounting Treatments Discussed with Management. The auditor must inform those charged with governance of discussions with management regarding alternative accounting treatments.

During the past year, there were no discussions with management concerning material alternative accounting treatments.

ITEMS TO BE COMMUNICATED

AUDITOR'S RESPONSE

Other Significant and Relevant Issues Arising from the Audit. The auditor must inform those charged with governance of findings or issues arising from the audit that are, in the auditor's professional judgment, significant and relevant to those charged with governance regarding their oversight of the financial reporting process.

As part of the audit process, we discussed with the Council's management a grant award received from a foundation in which the Council is required to track the income earned from the grant funds and use this interest to cover expenses related to the project funded by the grant award. Although the estimated income from the grant funds was not material during the year ended June 30, 2014, it is important that management establish procedures to track the income earned on the grant funds to comply with the grant agreement. There were no other issues arising from the audit that we consider significant and relevant to those charged with governance.

Internal Control Matters. The auditor must communicate, in writing, to management and those charged with governance all significant deficiencies and material weaknesses identified during the audit.

We did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses.

Council of the Great City Schools

Attachment

Year End: June 30, 2014

Adjusting Journal Entries

Date: 7/1/2013 To 6/30/2014

Number	Date	Name	Account No	Debit	Credit
1	6/30/2014	Investments - Fidelity	1025-10	186.69	
1	6/30/2014	Investments - Fidelity	1025-10	140.84	
1	6/30/2014	Accounts Receivable	1040-10		5,500.00
1	6/30/2014	Interest Income	4020-10		186.69
1	6/30/2014	Unrealized Gain (Loss)	4042-10		140.84
1	6/30/2014	Sponsor Contribution	4032-20-C	5,500.00	
PBC- Various closing entries after the trial balance was provided.					
2	6/30/2014	Miscellaneous - Clearing	1032-10		4,451.38
2	6/30/2014	Flexible Annuity	1088-10	4,451.38	
PBC- Additional closing entry to correct recording in the proper account.					
3	6/30/2014	Deferred Office Rent	2052-10	16,487.00	
3	6/30/2014	Office Rent	5091-10		16,487.00
PBC - To adjust deferred rent liability and rent expense.					
4	6/30/2014	Allowance for Bad Debt	1071-10		25,000.00
4	6/30/2014	Uncoll Revenue	5003-10	25,000.00	
Raffa - Adjustment to increase the allowance for doubtful accounts.					
				51,765.91	51,765.91



Council of the
Great City Schools
TM

Albuquerque
Anchorage
Atlanta
Austin
Baltimore
Birmingham
Boston
Bridgeport
Broward County
Buffalo
Charleston County
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Chicago
Cincinnati
Clark County
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
Dayton
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
Duval County
East Baton Rouge
El Paso
Fort Worth
Fresno
Guilford County
Hillsborough County
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Jackson
Jefferson County
Kansas City
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Miami-Dade County
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
Nashville
Newark
New Orleans
New York City
Norfolk
Oakland
Oklahoma City
Omaha
Orange County
Palm Beach County
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Portland
Providence
Richmond
Rochester
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
Santa Ana
Seattle
Shelby County
St. Louis
St. Paul
Toledo
Washington, D.C.
Wichita

Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004
(202) 393-2427 ♦ (202) 393-2400 (fax)
<http://www.cgcs.org>

January 29, 2015

Raffa, PC
1899 L ST NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of the Council of Great City Schools, which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2014, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements, for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States (U.S. GAAP).

Certain representations in this letter are described as being limited to matters that are material. Items are considered material, regardless of size, if they involve an omission or misstatement of accounting information that, in light of surrounding circumstances, makes it probable that the judgment of a reasonable person relying on the information would be changed or influenced by the omission or misstatement. An omission or misstatement that is monetarily small in amount could be considered material as a result of qualitative factors.

We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, as of **January 29, 2015**, the following representations made to you during your audit.

Financial Statements

- We have fulfilled our responsibilities, as set out in the terms of the audit engagement letter dated July 2, 2014, including our responsibility for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements.
- The financial statements referred to above are fairly presented in conformity with U.S. GAAP.
- We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
- We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
- Significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
- Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of U.S. GAAP.
- All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which U.S. GAAP requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed. No events have occurred subsequent to the statement of financial position date and through the date of this letter that would require adjustment to or disclosure in the aforementioned financial statements.

- We are not aware of any pending or threatened litigation, claims, or assessments or unasserted claims or assessments that are required to be accrued or disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with *FASB Accounting Standards Codification 450, Contingencies*, and we have not consulted a lawyer concerning litigation, claims, or assessments.
- Material concentrations have been appropriately disclosed in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
- Guarantees, whether written or oral, under which the organization is contingently liable, have been properly recorded or disclosed in accordance with U.S. GAAP.

Information Provided

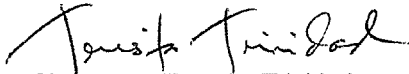
- We have provided you with:
 - Access to all information, of which we are aware, that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, such as records, documentation, and other matters.
 - Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit.
 - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
- We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- We have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud that affects the organization and involves:
 - Management,
 - Employees who have significant roles in internal control, or
 - Others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- We have no knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the organization's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, grantors, regulators, or others.
- We have no knowledge of any instances of noncompliance or suspected noncompliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.
- We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation, claims, and assessment whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.
- We have disclosed to you the identity of the organization's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- The organization has satisfactory title to all owned assets, and there are no liens or encumbrances on such assets nor has any asset been pledged as collateral.
- We are responsible for compliance with the laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements applicable to us; and we have identified and disclosed to you all laws, regulations and provisions of contracts and grant

agreements that we believe have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts or other financial data significant to the audit objectives.

- The Council of the Great City Schools is an exempt organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Any activities of which we are aware that would jeopardize the Organization's tax-exempt status, and all activities subject to tax on unrelated business income or excise or other tax, have been disclosed to you. All required filings with tax authorities are up-to-date.
- We acknowledge our responsibility for presenting the Schedule of Project Revenue and Expenses in accordance with U.S. GAAP, and we believe the Schedule of Project Revenue and Expenses, including its form and content, is fairly presented in accordance with U.S. GAAP. The methods of measurement and presentation of the Schedule of Project Revenue and Expenses have not changed from those used in the prior period, and we have disclosed to you any significant assumptions or interpretations underlying the measurement and presentation of the supplementary information.



Signature: Michael Casserly
Title: Executive Director



Signature: Teresita Trinidad
Title: Director of Finance and Administration

2014-2015 BUDGET

**GENERAL OPERATIONS
BUDGET REPORT**

FOR

SECOND QUARTER ENDING

ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2014

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
FY 2014-15 Membership Dues

STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP DUES AS OF March 3, 2015

DISTRICT	NOT PAID	PAID	Date Rec'd FY14-15	Date Rec'd FY13-14	Date Rec'd FY12-13	Date Rec'd FY11-12	
1 Albuquerque		\$41,793	7/21/2014	7/22/2013	6/19/2012 ***	6/21/2011 ***	
2 Anchorage		\$36,571	6/3/2014 ***	7/2/2013	6/14/2012 ***	7/7/2011	
3 Atlanta		\$36,571	8/11/2014	7/16/2013	6/15/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
4 Austin		\$41,793	3/2/2015	6/11/2013 ***	6/14/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
5 Baltimore		\$41,793	7/23/2014	8/13/2013	7/18/2012	7/11/2011	
6 Birmingham		\$36,571	6/30/2014 ***	5/30/2013 ***	2/27/2013	6/16/2011 ***	
7 Boston		\$41,793	8/11/2014	8/7/2013	8/24/2012	8/9/2011	
8 Bridgeport		\$29,548	6/26/2014 ***	6/17/2013 ***	3/20/2012 ***		
9 Broward County		\$53,983	9/23/2014	8/2/2013	9/6/2012	9/14/2011	
10 Buffalo		\$36,571	8/18/2014	8/6/2013	10/24/2012	9/16/2011	
11 Charleston County		\$36,571	3/2/2015	8/6/2013	3/13/2013	9/9/2011	
12 Charlotte-Mecklenburg		\$47,016	6/13/2014 ***	6/7/2013 ***	6/19/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
13 Chicago		\$53,983	2/17/2015	10/4/2013	11/14/2012	6/23/2012	
14 Cincinnati		\$36,571	2/10/2015	10/23/2013	7/12/2012	1/11/2012	
15 Clark County		\$53,983	7/31/2014	2/11/2014	7/24/2012	7/7/2011	
16 Cleveland		\$36,571	6/30/2014 ***	6/17/2013 ***	7/30/2012	11/15/2011	
17 Columbus		\$41,793	8/29/2014	7/22/2013	9/12/2012	3/22/2012	
18 Dallas		\$47,016	7/21/2014	7/19/2013	6/19/2012 ***	6/2/2011 ***	
19 Dayton		\$36,571	9/18/2014	4/4/2014	8/24/2012	8/9/2011	
20 Denver		\$41,793	8/4/2014	7/22/2013	7/12/2012	8/29/2011	
21 Des Moines*		\$29,548	6/17/2014 ***	7/16/2013	7/18/2012	11/30/2011	
22 Detroit		\$47,016	11/21/2014	5/23/2014	1/3/2013	10/14/2011	
23 Duval County		\$47,016	8/4/2014	9/3/2013	8/8/2012	8/29/2011	
24 East Baton Rouge		\$36,571	8/8/2014	10/7/2013	did not pay	did not pay	
25 El Paso		\$41,793	2/17/2015	4/22/2014	not a member		
26 Fort Worth		\$41,793	2/25/2015	10/7/2013	8/31/2012	3/8/2012	
27 Fresno		\$41,793	9/3/2014	8/27/2013	8/24/2012	9/14/2011	
28 Greensboro(Guilford Cty)		\$41,793	10/3/2014	10/23/2013	8/14/2012	5/15/2012	
29 Hawaii		\$47,016	11/25/2014	new	not a member		
30 Hillsborough County (Tampa)		\$47,016	7/23/2014	7/22/2013	7/24/2012	8/9/2011	
31 Houston		\$53,983	7/7/2014	7/19/2013	8/14/2012	8/2/2011	
32 Indianapolis		\$36,571	7/7/2014	11/6/2013	7/12/2012	7/11/2011	
33 Jackson, MS		\$36,571	8/11/2014	2/10/2014	did not pay	did not pay	
34 Jefferson County		\$41,793	8/4/2014	8/13/2013	8/6/2012	8/12/2011	
35 Kansas City, MO		\$36,571	9/15/2014	3/19/2014	8/31/2012	5/31/2011 ***	
36 Long Beach		\$41,793	8/11/2014	9/10/2013	8/1/2012	8/12/2011	
37 Los Angeles		\$53,983	8/8/2014	3/13/2014	3/15/2013	3/26/2012	
38 Miami-Dade County		\$53,983	8/4/2014	7/22/2013	8/24/2012	8/9/2011	
39 Milwaukee		\$47,016	6/23/2014 ***	7/31/2013	6/19/2012 ***	6/21/2011 ***	
40 Minneapolis		\$36,571	9/18/2014	11/6/2013	9/25/2012	9/7/2011	
41 Nashville		\$41,793	7/23/2014	8/1/2013	7/24/2012	7/14/2011	
42 New Orleans	\$41,793		did not pay	did not pay	did not pay	did not pay	
43 New York City		\$53,983	10/1/2014	2/24/2014	1/18/2013	12/23/2011	
44 Newark		\$36,571	2/6/2015	11/26/2013	12/16/2013	4/26/2012	
45 Norfolk		\$36,571	9/15/2014	4/4/2014	2/27/2013	9/9/2011	
46 Oakland		\$36,571	6/19/2014 ***	7/16/2013	9/17/2012	2/3/2012	
47 Oklahoma City		\$36,571	8/12/2014	did not pay	8/14/2012	8/12/2011	
48 Omaha		\$36,571	6/20/2014 ***	6/25/2013 ***	7/13/2012	6/7/2011 ***	
49 Orange County, FL		\$47,016	6/2/2014 ***	6/4/2013 ***	7/31/2012	6/7/2011 ***	
50 Palm Beach County		\$47,016	2/10/2015	2/18/2014	9/12/2012	3/13/2012	
51 Philadelphia		\$53,983	2/12/2015	10/4/2013	9/28/2012	11/18/2011	
52 Pittsburgh		\$36,571	7/11/2014	5/24/2013 ***	6/28/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
53 Portland		\$36,571	6/20/2014 ***	7/11/2013	6/14/2012 ***	5/31/2011 ***	
54 Providence*		\$29,548	1/21/2015	2/18/2014	9/18/2012	7/25/2011	
55 Richmond		\$36,571	6/11/2014 ***	3/31/2014	6/15/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
56 Rochester		\$36,571	6/11/2014 ***	6/11/2013 ***	6/14/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
57 St. Louis		\$36,571	8/11/2014	3/27/2014	8/13/2013	did not pay	
58 St. Paul		\$36,571	7/3/2014	7/5/2013	6/15/2012 ***	5/25/2011 ***	
59 Sacramento		\$36,571	8/1/2014	10/15/2013	8/8/2012	7/25/2011	
60 San Diego		\$47,016	8/1/2014	8/1/2013	3/1/2013	8/26/2011	
61 San Francisco		\$41,793	7/31/2014	8/1/2013	8/17/2012	7/27/2011	
62 Santa Ana		\$41,793	8/11/2014	3/4/2014	8/8/2012	not a member	
63 Seattle		\$36,571	7/23/2014	6/4/2013 ***	3/1/2013	6/27/2011 ***	
64 Shelby County		\$47,016	8/11/2014	did not pay	8/24/2012	8/29/2011	
65 Toledo		\$36,571	8/11/2014	7/18/2013	8/14/2012	9/9/2011	
66 Washington, D.C.		\$41,793	7/23/2014	7/5/2013	9/27/2012	5/30/2012	
67 Wichita		\$36,571	6/17/2014 ***	6/17/2013 ***	6/19/2012 ***	6/16/2011 ***	
Total	\$41,793	\$2,730,360		14	11	14	17

*Largest city in the state
*** Prepaid members

01/12/15
 (2ND QTR Report.xls)

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
 FOR FY 2014-15

BY FUNCTION

	AUDITED REPORT FY13-14	REVISED BUDGET FY14-15	2ND QTR REPORT FY14-15
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$2,510,078.50	\$2,730,360.00	\$2,256,755.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	10,000.00	40,000.00	30,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	229,638.40	425,000.00	415,228.96
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	361.23	300.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$2,750,078.13</u>	<u>\$3,195,660.00</u>	<u>\$2,701,983.96</u>
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES			
ADMIN AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	\$1,097,913.69	\$1,172,883.66	\$572,036.55
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP	\$491,994.63	570,198.35	245,000.06
FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	\$45,075.20	48,000.00	5,596.67
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY	\$482,306.96	511,062.39	238,956.80
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	\$59,187.37	149,000.00	64,589.00
PUBLIC ADVOCACY	\$411,118.96	492,178.29	205,752.64
MEMBER MANAGEMENT SERVICES	\$200,521.30	231,413.49	68,718.54
POLICY RESEARCH	\$255,549.17	251,563.82	55,370.92
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	<u>(\$475,733.72)</u>	<u>(830,640.00)</u>	<u>(368,950.10)</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$2,567,933.56</u>	<u>\$2,595,660.00</u>	<u>\$1,087,071.08</u>
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$182,144.57</u>	<u>\$600,000.00</u>	<u>\$1,614,912.88</u>
ADJUSTMENTS:			
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	\$7,765,234.25		
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	\$1,935,654.75		
NET GAIN/(LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	<u>\$458,417.55</u>		
ENDING BALANCE	<u><u>\$10,341,451.12</u></u>		

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
 FOR FY 2014-15

BY EXPENSE LINE

	AUDITED REPORT FY13-14	REVISED BUDGET FY14-15	2ND QTR REPORT FY14-15
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$2,510,078.50	\$2,730,360.00	\$2,256,755.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	10,000.00	40,000.00	30,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	229,638.40	425,000.00	415,228.96
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	361.23	300.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,750,078.13	\$3,195,660.00	\$2,701,983.96
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES			
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	\$1,888,295.84	\$2,150,000.00	\$851,105.92
OTHER INSURANCE	17,829.86	20,000.00	12,954.35
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	62,243.69	70,000.00	34,810.32
GENERAL SUPPLIES	21,605.04	30,000.00	11,895.19
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	19,054.75	20,000.00	11,786.63
COPYING & PRINTING	130,589.71	150,000.00	61,221.81
OUTSIDE SERVICES	376,311.10	498,000.00	231,117.24
TELEPHONE	37,865.69	40,000.00	17,608.04
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	5,983.40	10,000.00	4,598.89
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEPRECIATION	14,767.82	20,000.00	9,713.17
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	280,620.38	318,300.00	159,209.62
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	188,500.00	100,000.00	50,000.00
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	(475,733.72)	(830,640.00)	(368,950.10)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$2,567,933.56	\$2,595,660.00	\$1,087,071.08
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$182,144.57	\$600,000.00	\$1,614,912.88
ADJUSTMENTS:			
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	\$7,765,234.25		
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	\$1,935,654.75		
NET (GAIN)/LOSS ON INVESTMENT	\$458,417.55		
ENDING BALANCE	\$10,341,451.12		

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
 REVISED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-15

	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	\$470,283.66	\$512,698.35	\$47,000.00	\$377,362.39	\$0.00	\$335,678.29	\$182,413.49	\$224,563.82	\$2,150,000.00
OTHER INSURANCE	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	2,500.00	42,500.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	3,000.00	6,000.00	70,000.00
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	3,500.00	20,000.00
COPYING & PRINTING	500.00	5,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.00	130,500.00	1,000.00	10,000.00	150,000.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	205,100.00	3,000.00	0.00	100,000.00	149,000.00	\$0.00	39,900.00	1,000.00	498,000.00
TELEPHONE	4,500.00	6,500.00	500.00	10,000.00	0.00	7,500.00	5,000.00	6,000.00	40,000.00
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	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	318,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	318,300.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	(830,640.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(830,640.00)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$342,243.66	\$570,198.35	\$48,000.00	\$511,062.39	\$149,000.00	\$492,178.29	\$231,413.49	\$251,563.82	\$2,595,660.00
	\$830,640.00								
	\$1,172,883.66								

(01/09/15)
 (2nd Qtr Report.xls)

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
 FOR FY 2014-15
 EXPENSES FOR QUARTER ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2014

	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)	2ND QUARTER TOTAL (7/1/14-12/31/14)
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	\$194,019.92	\$224,507.15	\$5,567.18	\$182,135.19	\$0.00	\$143,395.59	\$57,863.40	\$43,617.49	\$851,105.92
OTHER INSURANCE	12,954.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,954.35
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	8,839.23	13,691.16	0.00	924.18	0.00	1,355.75	10,000.00	0.00	34,810.32
GENERAL SUPPLIES	11,895.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,895.19
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	1,109.00	0.00	0.00	3,598.33	0.00	3,415.45	0.00	3,663.85	11,786.63
COPYING & PRINTING	792.41	126.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	54,628.80	0.00	5,674.30	61,221.81
OUTSIDE SERVICES	113,092.53	2,264.30	0.00	50,433.91	64,589.00	737.50	0.00	0.00	231,117.24
TELEPHONE	8,665.52	2,904.33	29.49	1,545.19	0.00	1,566.95	855.14	2,041.42	17,608.04
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	1,745.61	1,506.82	0.00	320.00	0.00	652.60	0.00	373.86	4,598.89
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	9,713.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,713.17
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	159,209.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	159,209.62
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00
INDIRECT EXPENSES FROM PROJECTS	(368,950.10)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(368,950.10)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$203,086.45	\$245,000.06	\$5,596.67	\$238,956.80	\$64,589.00	\$205,752.64	\$68,718.54	\$55,370.92	\$1,087,071.08
	\$368,950.10								
	\$572,036.55								

1/9/15

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
FY 14-15 INVESTMENT SUMMARY

INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS	Beginning Balance		Purchases	Sales-Procd	RG(Loss)	URG(Loss)	Ending Balance	
	Fair Market Value 6/30/2014						Fair Market Value 12/31/2014	
1 Amer Cen Mut Funds	369,456.21		73,602.23	(17,659.20)	-	(56,087.55)	369,311.69	
2 Artisan FDS Inc Sm Cap	174,626.53		-	(169,474.22)	28,296.73	(33,449.04)	-	
4 Dodge & Cox Intl Stock Fd	230,530.11		10,778.83	(9,518.60)	1,634.14	(22,419.56)	211,004.92	
5 Dreyfus Emerging Mkts FD	222,364.70		14,301.22	(8,024.73)	(477.50)	(28,686.59)	199,477.10	
6 Eaton Vance Inc Fd	85,903.83		6,046.23	0.00	0.00	(4,118.59)	87,831.47	
7 Eaton Vance Large Cap Val Fd	464,157.19		126,553.08	(23,586.11)	6,710.55	(120,818.90)	453,015.81	
8 First Eagle Fds Sogen Overseas	176,595.34		12,476.72	0.00	0.00	(21,498.82)	167,573.24	
9 Goldman Sach TR Treas Instr	39,092.13		6,469.25	0.00	0.00	-	45,561.38	
10 Goldman Sachs TRUST Strat Inc Fd	122,484.48		13,246.12	0.00	0.00	(2,784.30)	132,946.30	
11 Harbor Fund Cap Appr	465,014.80		28,524.74	(35,372.39)	16,178.97	(20,168.07)	454,178.05	
12 Harris Assoc Invt Tr Oakmk Equity	488,968.65		42,645.53	0.00	0.00	(33,778.63)	497,835.55	
14 Janus Invt Fd Flex Bd-CL1	168,021.80		180,372.93	0.00	0.00	(1,519.80)	346,874.93	
15 JPMorgan Core Bd Fd Selct	288,999.22		102,946.36	-	-	1,293.92	393,239.50	
16 Victory Portfolios Munder MIDCAP Core	135,729.41		13,991.23	(5,206.97)	2,259.93	(9,903.51)	136,870.09	
17 Nuveen INVT Fds Inc Real Est Secs	92,591.46		193.99	0.00	1,782.41	2,333.51	96,901.37	
18 PIMCO Fds PAC Invt Mgmt	249,858.33		19,560.75	(267,674.52)	3,963.34	(5,707.90)	(0.00)	
19 PIMCO Fds SER COMM REAL	172,473.59		5,437.22	(26,450.91)	(9,192.17)	(30,880.11)	111,387.62	
Inv Mgrs Pioneer Oak Ridge Sm Cp	173,729.95		17,156.46	-	-	(6,584.27)	184,302.14	
22 Royce Value Plus Fd CL	90,395.16		16,610.19	(584.13)	269.09	(16,993.56)	89,696.75	
Victory Portfolios Sm Co Oppty	-		195,114.08	-	-	(10,480.96)	184,633.12	
23 Virtus Emerging Mkts Opportunities	86,463.68		47,148.73	0.00	0.00	(7,886.97)	125,725.44	
24 Crm WT Mut Fd MidCap	136,237.37		30,391.06	(2,165.92)	228.41	(29,023.48)	135,667.44	
25 Alliance Bernstein GLO Govt Inc Trst A	1,292,019.39		42,151.15	0.00	0.00	(12,237.55)	1,321,932.99	
26 Alliance Bernstein US Govt-Class A	113,090.32		1,921.20	0.00	0.00	(913.19)	114,098.33	
27 Alliance Bernstein US Govt-Class C	91,259.06		1,282.67	0.00	0.00	(736.37)	91,805.36	
28 Fidelity	11,294.06		203.29	0.00	0.00	(102.89)	11,394.46	
TOTAL INVESTMENTS PER GL A/C	5,941,356.77		1,009,125.26	(565,717.70)	51,653.90	(473,153.18)	5,963,265.05	

Components of Operational Expense Types

Salaries and Fringe Benefits

- Basic salaries
- Life and disability insurance
- 403 (b) employer contribution
- Health benefits
- Unemployment compensation
- Employment taxes
- Paid absences

Other Insurances

- Officers and Directors Liability
- Umbrella Liability
- Workmen's Compensation

Travel and Meetings

- Staff Travel (unreimbursed)

General Supplies

- Paper
- Letterhead
- Mailing labels
- Envelops
- Folders
- Binders
- Computer supplies

Subscriptions and Publications

- New York Times
- USA Today
- Education Weekly
- Education Daily
- Committee for Education Funding membership
- AERA membership
- NABJ membership
- Bank card

Copying and Printing

- Report printing
- Urban Educator printing

Outside Services

- Auditing Services
- Technology and internet support
- Database maintenance
- Corporate registration
- Banking services and charges
- Temporary services
- Editing services
- Legal services
- ADP payroll services
- Transact license
- Ricki Price-Baugh
- Julie Wright-Halbert
- Strategic Support Team Member expenses

Participant Support Costs

- SubGrantee Expenses

Telephone

- Monthly telephone
- Conference calls
- Cell phones

Postage and Shipping

- Mailings
- Messenger services
- Federal Express
- UPS

Equipment Lease, Maintenance and Deprecation

- Postage meter
- Copier Maintenance
- Computers
- Printers
- Fax machine

Office Rent and Utilities

- Office rent
- Off-site storage

Project In-kind Contribution

- Matching

Expenses Allocated to Projects

- Indirect costs

**CATEGORICAL PROJECTS
BUDGET REPORT**

FOR

SECOND QUARTER ENDING

ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2014

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT
 2ND QUARTER (7/1/14 - 12/31/14)

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS
 PAGE 1 OF 2

	MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES (20)	STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS (21)	SPECIAL PROJECTS ACCOUNT (22)	SEF GRANT (24)	HEWLETT COMMON CORE GRANT (27)	KPI BUSINESS PLAN (29)	GATES SOLUTIONS TO COMMON CORE (32)	HELMSLEY GRANT (34)	URBAN DEANS NETWK (40)
OPERATING REVENUE									
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
GRANTS & CONTRACTS	0.00	65,623.25	0.00	17,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	564,820.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
REGISTRATION FEES	432,920.00	0.00	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	0.00
ROYALTIES & OTHER INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	14,853.33	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$997,740.00	\$65,623.25	\$0.00	\$17,000.00	\$0.00	\$14,853.33	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	\$67,816.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,560.87	\$88,363.78	\$0.00	\$53,850.92	\$26,232.72	\$11,917.32
OTHER INSURANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSES	407,336.33	20,563.00	16,934.15	1,131.16	5,539.47	0.00	16,107.23	9,721.84	0.00
GENERAL SUPPLIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40.19	0.00
DUES, SUBSCR & PUBLICATION	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
COPYING & PRINTING	43,155.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	162,958.01	56,121.55	6,162.79	12,581.72	26,375.45	27,266.91	492,525.92	31,040.27	0.00
TELEPHONE	1,370.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	86.68
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	6,500.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	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
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	103,370.63	23,772.21	0.00	6,054.75	30,069.67	6,816.73	84,372.61	10,055.25	\$1,800.60
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	\$792,508.19	\$100,456.76	\$23,096.94	\$36,328.50	\$150,348.37	\$34,083.64	\$646,856.68	\$77,090.27	\$13,804.60
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$205,231.81	(\$34,833.51)	(\$23,096.94)	(\$19,328.50)	(\$150,348.37)	(\$19,230.31)	(\$646,856.68)	(\$77,090.27)	(\$13,804.60)
CLOSEOUT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS	\$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
CARRYOVER BALANCE 6/30/14	\$687,721.92	\$34,833.51	\$203,130.90	\$50,000.00	\$324,432.14	(\$35,637.80)	\$1,863,069.86	\$160,000.00	\$18,144.02
ENDING BALANCE 12/31/14	\$892,953.73	(\$0.00)	\$180,033.96	\$30,671.50	\$174,083.77	(\$54,868.11)	\$1,216,213.18	\$82,909.73	\$4,339.42

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT
2ND QUARTER (7/1/14 - 12/31/14)

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS
PAGE 2 OF 2

	S Schwartz Urban Impact Award (41)	GATES FOUNDATION COMMON CORE (45)	IN-KIND COMMON CORE (45-IK)	GATES FOUNDATION ELL GRANT (47)	GATES FOUNDATION ELL MATERIALS (47-A)	GATES FOUNDATION KPI GRANT (48)	WALLACE FOUNDATION GRANTS (51/52)	WALLACE FOUND-SURVEY GRANT (53)	2ND QUARTER TOTALS (7/1/14-12/31/14)
OPERATING REVENUE									
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$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	299,805.00	0.00	0.00	250,000.00	\$ 632,428.25
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 565,420.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 432,920.00
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	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 14,853.33
TOTAL REVENUE	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$299,805.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250,000.00	\$ 1,645,621.58
OPERATING EXPENSES									
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	\$0.00	\$241,143.93	\$64,963.16	\$53,601.42	\$71,903.69	\$24,824.09	\$4,899.69	\$3,779.91	\$ 729,857.73
OTHER INSURANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	\$ -
TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSES	0.00	21,128.00	0.00	0.00	6,756.59	\$0.00	527.94	0.00	\$ 505,745.71
GENERAL SUPPLIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$264.38	0.00	0.00	\$ 304.57
DUES, SUBSCR & PUBLICATION	0.00	474.00	0.00	0.00	64.19	\$437.73	0.00	0.00	\$ 975.92
COPYING & PRINTING	0.00	5,849.55	0.00	297.47	297.47	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 49,599.86
OUTSIDE SERVICES	0.00	75,708.58	0.00	3,310.33	48,757.80	\$54,281.33	0.00	0.00	\$ 997,090.66
TELEPHONE	0.00	99.38	0.00	244.67	0.00	\$95.24	0.00	0.00	\$ 1,896.84
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	0.00	358.06	0.00	182.47	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 7,041.26
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	51,714.22	9,744.47	8,645.45	19,166.96	11,985.42	814.12	566.99	\$ 368,950.10
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	\$0.00	\$396,475.72	\$74,707.63	\$66,281.81	\$146,946.70	\$91,888.19	\$6,241.75	\$4,346.89	\$ 2,661,462.64
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$600.00	(\$396,475.72)	(\$74,707.63)	(\$66,281.81)	\$152,858.30	(\$91,888.19)	(\$6,241.75)	\$245,653.11	\$ (1,015,841.06)
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	\$74,707.63	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 74,707.63
CARRYOVER BALANCE 6/30/14	\$19,926.50	\$779,965.38	\$0.00	\$66,281.81	\$492,833.01	\$300,710.27	\$300,000.00	\$0.00	\$ 5,265,411.52
ENDING BALANCE 12/31/14	\$20,526.50	\$383,489.66	\$0.00	(\$0.00)	\$645,691.31	\$208,822.08	\$293,758.25	\$245,653.11	\$ 4,324,278.09

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FY 2015-2016

(01/07/15)

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 702, Washington, D.C. 20004
Tel (202) 393-2427 Fax (202) 393-2400 Web Page: <http://www.cgcs.org>



MEMBERSHIP DUES STRUCTURE BY TIERS

	2014-2015 DUES	WITH 1.32% INCREASE 2015-2016 DUES
Largest city in the state TIER I	\$29,548.00	\$29,938.00
Based on enrollment		
TIER II 35,000 TO 54,000	\$36,571.00	\$37,054.00
TIER III 54,001 TO 99,000	\$41,793.00	\$42,345.00
TIER IV 99,001 TO 200,000	\$47,016.00	\$47,637.00
TIER V 200,001 PLUS	\$53,983.00	\$54,696.00

(01/07/15)

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
FY 2015-16 Membership Dues

District	2013-14 Dues	2014-15 Dues	1.32% increase 2015-16 Dues
1 Albuquerque	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
2 Anchorage	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
3 Atlanta	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
4 Austin	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
5 Baltimore	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
6 Birmingham	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
7 Boston	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
8 Bridgeport	\$29,186	\$29,548	\$29,938
9 Broward County	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
10 Buffalo	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
11 Charleston County	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
12 Charlotte-Mecklenburg	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
13 Chicago	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
14 Cincinnati	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
15 Clark County	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
16 Cleveland	\$41,281	\$36,571	\$37,054
17 Columbus	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
18 Dallas	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
19 Dayton	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
20 Denver	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
21 Des Moines*	\$29,186	\$29,548	\$29,938
22 Detroit	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
23 Duval County	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
24 East Baton Rouge	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
25 El Paso	\$0	\$41,793	\$42,345
26 Fort Worth	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
27 Fresno	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
28 Greensboro (Guilford Cty)	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
29 Hawaii	\$0	\$47,016	\$47,637
30 Hillsborough County	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
31 Houston	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
32 Indianapolis	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
33 Jackson, MS	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
34 Jefferson County	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
35 Kansas City, MO	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
36 Long Beach	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
37 Los Angeles	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
38 Miami-Dade County	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
39 Milwaukee	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
40 Minneapolis	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054

41	Nashville	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
42	New Orleans	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
43	New York City	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
44	Newark	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
45	Norfolk	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
46	Oakland	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
47	Oklahoma City	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
48	Omaha	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
49	Orlando	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
50	Palm Beach County	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
51	Philadelphia	\$53,322	\$53,983	\$54,696
52	Pittsburgh	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
53	Portland	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
54	Providence*	\$29,186	\$29,548	\$29,938
55	Richmond	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
56	Rochester	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
57	Sacramento	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
58	San Diego	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
59	San Francisco	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
60	Santa Ana	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
61	Seattle	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
62	Shelby County (Memphis)	\$46,440	\$47,016	\$47,637
63	St. Louis	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
64	St. Paul	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
65	Toledo	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
66	Washington, D.C.	\$41,281	\$41,793	\$42,345
67	Wichita	\$36,123	\$36,571	\$37,054
<hr/>				
	Total		\$2,772,153	\$2,808,766

*Largest city in the state

(01/12/15)
 (Budget-Jan 2015)

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET

BY FUNCTION

	AUDITED REPORT FY13-14	REVISED BUDGET FY14-15	PROPOSED BUDGET FY15-16
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$2,510,078.50	\$2,730,360.00	\$2,627,034.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	10,000.00	40,000.00	35,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	229,638.40	425,000.00	425,000.00
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	361.23	300.00	300.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,750,078.13	\$3,195,660.00	\$3,087,334.00
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES			
ADMIN AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	\$1,097,913.69	\$1,172,883.66	\$1,197,380.28
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP	491,994.63	570,198.35	686,505.46
FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	45,075.20	48,000.00	26,000.00
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY	482,306.96	511,062.39	542,383.38
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	59,187.37	149,000.00	100,000.00
PUBLIC ADVOCACY	411,118.96	492,178.29	479,579.43
MEMBER MANAGEMENT SERVICES	200,521.30	231,413.49	224,326.16
POLICY RESEARCH	255,549.17	251,563.82	626,653.93
ALLOWANCE FOR OFFICE MOVE	0.00	0.00	315,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	(475,733.72)	(830,640.00)	(795,494.63)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$2,567,933.56	\$2,595,660.00	\$3,402,334.00
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$182,144.57	\$600,000.00	(\$315,000.00)
ADJUSTMENTS:			
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	\$7,765,234.25	\$10,341,451.12	\$10,941,451.12
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	\$1,935,654.75		
NET GAIN/(LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	\$458,417.55		
ENDING BALANCE	\$10,341,451.12	\$10,941,451.12	\$10,626,451.12

(01/12/15)
 (Budget-Jan 2015)

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET

BY EXPENSE LINE

	AUDITED REPORT FY13-14	REVISED BUDGET FY14-15	PROPOSED BUDGET FY15-16
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$2,510,078.50	\$2,730,360.00	\$2,627,034.00
GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00
SPONSOR CONTRIBUTION	10,000.00	40,000.00	35,000.00
REGISTRATION FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	229,638.40	425,000.00	425,000.00
ROYALTIES AND OTHER INCOME	361.23	300.00	300.00
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$2,750,078.13</u>	<u>\$3,195,660.00</u>	<u>\$3,087,334.00</u>
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES			
SALARIES & FRINGE BENEFITS	\$1,888,295.84	\$2,150,000.00	\$2,643,328.63
OTHER INSURANCE	17,829.86	20,000.00	20,000.00
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	62,243.69	70,000.00	70,000.00
GENERAL SUPPLIES	21,605.04	30,000.00	30,000.00
SUBSCRIPTION & PUBLICATIONS	19,054.75	20,000.00	20,000.00
COPYING & PRINTING	130,589.71	150,000.00	125,000.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	376,311.10	498,000.00	496,000.00
TELEPHONE	37,865.69	40,000.00	35,000.00
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	5,983.40	10,000.00	10,000.00
EQPT LEASE MAINT & DEP	14,767.82	20,000.00	15,000.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	280,620.38	318,300.00	318,500.00
ALLOWANCE FOR OFFICE MOVE	0.00	0.00	315,000.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	188,500.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	<u>(475,733.72)</u>	<u>(830,640.00)</u>	<u>(795,494.63)</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$2,567,933.56</u>	<u>\$2,595,660.00</u>	<u>\$3,402,334.00</u>
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$182,144.57</u>	<u>\$600,000.00</u>	<u>(\$315,000.00)</u>
ADJUSTMENTS:			
OPERATIONS CARRYOVER BALANCE	\$7,765,234.25	\$10,341,451.12	\$10,941,451.12
CATEGORICAL PROG NET REVENUE	\$1,935,654.75		
NET (GAIN)/LOSS ON INVESTMENT	<u>\$458,417.55</u>		
ENDING BALANCE	<u><u>\$10,341,451.12</u></u>	<u>\$10,941,451.12</u>	<u>\$10,626,451.12</u>

(01/12/15)
 (Budget-Jan 2015)

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS
 GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-16

	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	\$483,680.28	\$631,505.46	\$25,000.00	\$388,683.38	\$0.00	\$349,579.43	\$165,226.16	\$599,653.93	\$2,643,328.63
OTHER INSURANCE	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
TRAVEL & MEETINGS	2,500.00	42,500.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	3,000.00	6,000.00	70,000.00
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	3,500.00	20,000.00
COPYING & PRINTING	500.00	5,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.00	105,500.00	1,000.00	10,000.00	125,000.00
OUTSIDE SERVICES	221,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	120,000.00	100,000.00	\$1,000.00	50,000.00	1,000.00	496,000.00
TELEPHONE	4,500.00	4,000.00	500.00	10,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	6,000.00	35,000.00
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	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00
OFFICE RENT & UTILITIES	318,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	318,500.00
ALLOWANCE FOR OFFICE MOVE	315,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	315,000.00
ALLO FOR UNCOLLECTED REVENUE	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00
EXPENSES ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS	(795,494.63)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(795,494.63)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$716,885.65</u>	<u>\$686,505.46</u>	<u>\$26,000.00</u>	<u>\$542,383.38</u>	<u>\$100,000.00</u>	<u>\$479,579.43</u>	<u>\$224,326.16</u>	<u>\$626,653.93</u>	<u>\$3,402,334.00</u>
	\$795,494.63								
	\$1,512,380.28								

<http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpid1411.pdf>

Subtract Index for CPI Nov of past year from CPI of Nov of current year
(November data is released 2nd week of December therefore this is used for
budget to be submitted to the Exec Committee in January).

Divide result by the CPI of past year to get the percent change

Percent Change will be used for dues increase of upcoming fiscal year

i.e. 1999 CPI = 168.3
 1998 CPI = 164
 $168.3 - 164 = 4.3 / 164 \times 100 = 2.62\%$

DATA USED:

	CPI	% Increase
Nov-95	153.6	2.60%
Nov-96	158.6	3.26%
Nov-97	161.5	1.83%
Nov-98	164.0	1.55%
Nov-99	168.3	2.62%
Nov-00	174.1	3.45%
Nov-01	177.4	1.90%
Nov-02	181.3	2.20%
Nov-03	184.5	1.77%
Nov-04	191.0	3.52%
Nov-05	197.6	3.46%
Nov-06	201.5	1.97%
Nov-07	210.2	4.31%
Nov-08	212.4	1.07%
Nov-09	216.3	1.84%
Nov-10	218.8	1.14%
Nov-11	226.2	3.39%
Nov-12	230.2	1.76%
Nov-13	233.1	1.24%
Nov-14	236.2	1.32%

Table 24. Historical Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): U. S. city average, all items-Continued

(1982-84=100, unless otherwise noted)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1970	37.8	38.0	38.2	38.5	38.6	38.8	39.0	39.0	39.2	39.4	39.6	39.8
1971	39.8	39.9	40.0	40.1	40.3	40.6	40.7	40.8	40.8	40.9	40.9	41.1
1972	41.1	41.3	41.4	41.5	41.6	41.7	41.9	42.0	42.1	42.3	42.4	42.5
1973	42.6	42.9	43.3	43.6	43.9	44.2	44.3	45.1	45.2	45.6	45.9	46.2
1974	46.6	47.2	47.8	48.0	48.6	49.0	49.4	50.0	50.6	51.1	51.5	51.9
1975	52.1	52.5	52.7	52.9	53.2	53.6	54.2	54.3	54.6	54.9	55.3	55.5
1976	55.6	55.8	55.9	56.1	56.5	56.8	57.1	57.4	57.6	57.9	58.0	58.2
1977	58.5	59.1	59.5	60.0	60.3	60.7	61.0	61.2	61.4	61.6	61.9	62.1
1978	62.5	62.9	63.4	63.9	64.5	65.2	65.7	66.0	66.5	67.1	67.4	67.7
1979	68.3	69.1	69.8	70.6	71.5	72.3	73.1	73.8	74.6	75.2	75.9	76.7
1980	77.8	78.9	80.1	81.0	81.8	82.7	82.7	83.3	84.0	84.8	85.5	86.3
1981	87.0	87.9	88.5	89.1	89.8	90.6	91.6	92.3	93.2	93.4	93.7	94.0
1982	94.3	94.6	94.5	94.9	95.8	97.0	97.5	97.7	97.9	98.2	98.0	97.6
1983	97.8	97.9	97.9	98.6	99.2	99.5	99.9	100.2	100.7	101.0	101.2	101.3
1984	101.9	102.4	102.6	103.1	103.4	103.7	104.1	104.5	105.0	105.3	105.3	105.3
1985	105.5	106.0	106.4	106.9	107.3	107.6	107.8	108.0	108.3	108.7	109.0	109.3
1986	109.6	109.3	108.8	108.6	108.9	109.5	109.5	109.7	110.2	110.3	110.4	110.5
1987	111.2	111.6	112.1	112.7	113.1	113.5	113.8	114.4	115.0	115.3	115.4	115.4
1988	115.7	116.0	116.5	117.1	117.5	118.0	118.5	119.0	119.8	120.2	120.3	120.5
1989	121.1	121.6	122.3	123.1	123.8	124.1	124.4	124.6	125.0	125.6	125.9	126.1
1990	127.4	128.0	128.7	128.9	129.2	129.9	130.4	131.6	132.7	133.5	133.8	133.8
1991	134.6	134.8	135.0	135.2	135.6	136.0	136.2	136.6	137.2	137.4	137.8	137.9
1992	138.1	138.6	139.3	139.5	139.7	140.2	140.5	140.9	141.3	141.8	142.0	141.9
1993	142.6	143.1	143.6	144.0	144.2	144.4	144.4	144.8	145.1	145.7	145.8	145.8
1994	146.2	146.7	147.2	147.4	147.5	148.0	148.4	149.0	149.4	149.5	149.7	149.7
1995	150.3	150.9	151.4	151.9	152.2	152.5	152.5	152.9	153.2	153.7	153.6	153.5
1996	154.4	154.9	155.7	156.3	156.6	156.7	157.0	157.3	157.8	158.3	158.6	158.6
1997	159.1	159.6	160.0	160.2	160.1	160.3	160.5	160.8	161.2	161.6	161.5	161.3
1998	161.6	161.9	162.2	162.5	162.8	163.0	163.2	163.4	163.6	164.0	164.0	163.9
1999	164.3	164.5	165.0	166.2	166.2	166.2	166.7	167.1	167.9	168.2	168.3	168.3
2000	168.8	169.8	171.2	171.3	171.5	172.4	172.8	172.8	173.7	174.0	174.1	174.0
2001	175.1	175.8	176.2	176.9	177.7	178.0	177.5	177.5	178.3	177.7	177.4	176.7
2002	177.1	177.8	178.8	179.8	179.8	179.9	180.1	180.7	181.0	181.3	181.3	180.9
2003	181.7	183.1	184.2	183.8	183.5	183.7	183.9	184.6	185.2	185.0	184.5	184.3
2004	185.2	186.2	187.4	188.0	189.1	189.7	189.4	189.5	189.9	190.9	191.0	190.3
2005	190.7	191.8	193.3	194.6	194.4	194.5	195.4	196.4	198.8	199.2	197.6	196.8
2006	198.3	198.7	199.8	201.5	202.5	202.9	203.5	203.9	202.9	201.8	201.5	201.8
2007	202.416	203.499	205.352	206.686	207.949	208.352	208.299	207.917	208.490	208.936	210.177	210.036
2008	211.080	211.693	213.528	214.823	216.632	218.815	219.964	219.086	218.783	216.573	212.425	210.228
2009	211.143	212.193	212.709	213.240	213.856	215.693	215.351	215.834	215.969	216.177	216.330	215.949
2010	216.687	216.741	217.631	218.009	218.178	217.965	218.011	218.312	218.439	218.711	218.803	219.179
2011	220.223	221.309	223.467	224.906	225.964	225.722	225.922	226.545	226.889	226.421	226.230	225.672
2012	226.665	227.663	229.392	230.085	229.815	229.478	229.104	230.379	231.407	231.317	230.221	229.601
2013	230.280	232.166	232.773	232.531	232.945	233.504	233.596	233.877	234.149	233.546	233.069	233.049
2014	233.916	234.781	236.293	237.072	237.900	238.343	238.250	237.852	238.031	237.433	236.151	-

See footnotes at end of table.

INVESTMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Council of The Great City Schools

Statement of Investment Policy and Guidelines

June 29, 2006

Purpose

Council of The Great City Schools (hereafter CGCS) must invest its resources prudently. The following guidelines will define the investment policy and guidelines for CGCS. It will identify a set of investment objectives, guidelines and performance standards. The objectives have been created in response to:

- The anticipated financial needs of CGCS
- CGCS risk tolerance; and
- The need to document and communicate objectives, guidelines, and performance standards to the investment managers

This policy is to be communicated to the investment managers for their use in developing an appropriate program and to the Finance & Investment Committee (Committee) and CGCS Management (Management) for their use in exercising fiduciary responsibility. This document will also be used as the basis for investment performance measurement and evaluation.

Investment Objective

The primary goals of the investment policy are the preservation and growth of capital resources and the generation of current income to provide sufficient funds for the payment of CGCS obligations and mission-related expenses, administrative expenses, and the growth of CGCS financial surplus.

Over the long-term, CGCS objective is to optimize its net worth, and increase the capital value of the investment portfolio. In meeting this objective, Management and the Committee seek to achieve a high level of total investment return with a prudent level of portfolio risk. Objectives include:

1. Earning a competitive rate of total return versus appropriate benchmark over a normal market cycle of three to five years.
2. Integrating investment portfolio into overall corporate objectives, including asset-liability management, liquidity, and income requirements

The investment managers should be advised prior to each fiscal year on the strategy and constraints with regard to realized capital gains or losses for the upcoming year. Year-to-date quarterly realized capital gains and losses should not exceed the pre-determined constraints, unless previously agreed to by Management.

Asset Allocation

The Investment Committee has the responsibility of approving CGCS overall investment strategy. The Council's strategy will reflect long-term financial goals, dividend policy and tax consequences within the current business and economic climate. Due to the heavy portfolio weighting in fixed income obligations, the strategy will be oriented towards optimization of returns in different interest rate environments.

The strategic and tactical bands for the portfolio based on market values are as follows.

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Strategic Target (%)</u>	<u>Tactical Range Change (%)</u>
Fixed Income	38.0	40.0 – 60.0
Large Cap Equity	25.0	10.0 – 15.0
Small/Mid Cap Equity	10.0	5.0 – 14.0
International Equity	15.0	10.0 – 15.0
Cash Equivalents	2.0	1.0 – 20.0

Liquidity is required only to meet defined expenses and obligations needs, unless the investment managers are otherwise advised by the Committee and Management.

It is Management's responsibility to monitor the overall allocation. It is understood that there may be deviations from the strategic targets as a result of market impact or from short-term timing decisions made by Management. If a manager deems an asset structure outside the strategic target to be appropriate, the manager may deviate from these guidelines only with Committee approval.

Any permanent changes to these guidelines must be approved by the Committee.

Investment Guidelines

In complying with the following investment guidelines, the investment manager must make investment decisions with care, skill, prudence and diligence under circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person, acting in a like capacity and familiar with such matters, would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and with such aims.

FIXED INCOME GUIDELINES*

Types of Securities Debt securities of any U.S. entity denominated in U.S. dollars, and not otherwise prohibited, U.S. dollar denominated sovereign and supranational bonds (Yankee bonds), and CMOs except as prohibited.

Diversification The maximum investment in securities of any one institution or borrower shall not exceed 10% of the total portfolio at the time of the purchase. There shall be no limit on U.S. Treasury obligations, or the obligations of agencies of the U.S. Government. The following guidelines apply for diversification of the total portfolio at book value:

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
U.S.Treasury/Agencies	0%	100%
Corporates	0%	75%
Mortgage-Backeds	0%	50%
Municipals	0%	100%
Preferred Stocks*	0%	20%

Up to 20% of the portfolio, at cost, may be invested in fixed income securities issued pursuant to SEC ruling 144a.

* A maximum of 10% may be invested in issues without sinking fund provisions

Quality Corporate and tax-exempt fixed income obligations are primarily restricted to those which are rated "A" or better by Moodys or Standard & Poors, with preferred stocks restricted to those whose senior debt is rated "A" or better by Moodys or Standard & Poors at time of purchase. However, a maximum of 20% of the portfolio's assets may be invested in Baa/BBB rated bonds and/or preferred stock. A maximum of 10% of the portfolio's assets may be invested in Ba/BB rated bonds. If a security has a split rating of BBB/Ba or Baa/BB, the lower of the two ratings shall be considered for the purposes of meeting minimum quality standards. Securities that are split BB/B are not allowed.

Maturity/Duration

The maturity of any individual investment should not exceed 30 years. However, debt holdings of foreign governments and international companies will be permitted although limited to maturities not to exceed 10 years. The target duration for the portfolio is the Lehman Brothers Aggregate Bond Index. Investment managers are allowed to increase or decrease the average duration of the portfolio +/- 0.5 years of the Lehman Brothers Aggregate Bond Index.

Exclusions

Without written consent of Management, the following investments are prohibited.

- Letter stock
- Limited partnerships
- Uncovered options
- Engaging in short sales
- Engaging in margin transactions
- inverse floaters
- capped floaters
- interest-only CMO tranches
- principal-only CMO tranches
- support CMO tranches
- swap contracts
- other derivatives (see below)

Where written consent is given for investment in any of these categories, Management will require the investment manager to adhere to specific safeguards.

Derivatives

Derivatives generally refer to financial instruments that derive their values from underlying cash market investments. Examples of derivatives include, but are not limited to, financial futures, forwards, options, options on futures, collateralized mortgage obligations and swaps. Futures for hedging purposes on non-leveraged securities are allowed. Any uses of derivatives must be expressly authorized by Management, who will require an analysis of the risk factors and a demonstration of the prudence of a proposed investment.

CMOs backed by pools of mortgages guaranteed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government or any agency thereof, or agency obligations such as the Federal National Mortgage Association and Federal Home Loan Corporation, are acceptable investments. CMOs backed by whole loan mortgages are acceptable as well.

Under no circumstances should a portfolio manager take positions in derivative securities that leverage the portfolio or materially increase a portfolio's stated or implied risk as characterized by the manager's investment style.

Sale of Securities Sales of securities shall be based upon Management's capital gain or loss objective for each fiscal year.

***Pooled Funds** It is understood that investing through a pooled fund vehicle means that the investments will be governed by the fund's own set of guidelines and restrictions. While it is the intent to invest, in funds which meet the general intent of these guidelines, there may, in fact, be instances in which funds' guidelines differ in a number of ways. In such cases, the pooled fund guidelines and restrictions will supersede those outlined above. For that reason, investments in pooled funds may be made only with the prior approval of the Committee with the recommendation of Management. The investment manager shall provide Management with a copy of the prospectus of any pooled funds that it proposes to use, and shall specifically identify any guidelines and restrictions that differ from those outlined above.

CONVERTIBLE BOND GUIDELINES

Types of Securities Publicly traded U.S. and Canadian dollar-denominated convertible corporate fixed income securities, principal protected trust certificates, synthetic convertible securities and not otherwise prohibited, U.S. dollar denominated sovereign and supranational bonds, and CMOs except as prohibited. Private placement convertible securities issued under Rule 144A are permissible in accordance with the investment guidelines.

Diversification No single issue is to represent more than 5% of the portfolio's value, at cost. No more than 20% of the portfolio will be in any single industry as defined by the Merrill Lynch Investment Grade Bond Index.

Convertible preferred stock holdings are not to exceed 30% of the market value of the portfolio.

Privately-placed securities may not exceed 10% of the portfolio; this does not pertain to 144a securities, which are permitted.

Equity holdings as the result of conversions in the portfolio are limited to 5% and are not to be held in excess of 60 days. All equity positions must be liquidated by November 30th.

Treasury securities with maturities of one-year or less are limited to a maximum of 20% of the portfolio at cost.

Quality

Convertible securities will be rated at least Baa by Moody's or BBB by Standard & Poor at time of purchase. Issues not rated by Moody's or Standard & Poor must be rated by at least one other nationally-recognized statistical rating organization (NRSRO). Appropriate unrated issues may account for a maximum of 10% of the market value of the portfolio at any given time. A maximum of 10% of the portfolio's assets may be invested in Ba/BB rated convertible bonds. If a security has a split rating of BBB/Ba or Baa/BB, the lower of the two ratings shall be considered for purposes of meeting the minimum quality standards. Securities that are split BB/B are not allowed.

Maturity/Duration

The minimum and maximum modified adjusted durations of the entire fixed income portfolio are 90% to 110% of the duration of the Merrill Lynch Investment Grade Convertible Bond Index.

Exclusions

Without the written consent of the Board, the following investments are prohibited.

- Inverse floaters
- Capped floaters
- Interest-only CMO tranches
- Principal-only CMO tranches
- Support CMO tranches
- Swap contracts
- Emerging market securities
- Defaulted or deferred pay securities
- Non-related marketable fixed income or preferreds
- High Risk CMO's (see below)

Where written consent is given for investment in any of these categories, the Committee will require the investment manager to adhere to specific safeguards.

- High Risk CMO's** As defined by the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC). A Collateralized Mortgage Obligation (CMO) is not defined as high risk by FFIEC if it meets the following three criteria: i.) Average Life Test ii.) Average Life Sensitivity Test and iii.) Price Sensitivity Test.
- Sale of Securities** Sales of securities shall be based upon Management's capital gain or loss objective for each fiscal year.

EQUITY GUIDELINES**

- Types of Securities** Common and preferred stocks, and issues convertible into common stocks, of both domestic and international corporations and American Depository Receipts (ADRs).
- Diversification** The securities of any one issuer are limited to 5% at cost and 10% at market of each portfolio. Broad industry diversification is desirable. For international equities, both industry and country diversification are desirable.
- Quality** Only equity securities which are broadly classified as institutional quality issues are eligible for inclusion in the portfolio. All securities held in the portfolio should be publicly traded and have sufficient marketability to permit prompt, orderly liquidation under normal circumstances. Stock selection should emphasize quality with due regard to risk. The manager is restricted from investing in any stock with a market capitalization less than \$100 million.
- Exclusions** Without written consent of Management, the following investments are prohibited.
- Short naked call options,
 - Short put options,
 - Commodities including all futures contracts,
 - Swaps*, and
 - Other derivatives*
- Where written consent is given for investment in any of these categories, Management will require the investment manager to adhere to specific safeguards.

* does not apply to the use of equity collars on long positions

** Please refer to "Fixed Income Guidelines" for "Pooled Fund" guidelines.

CASH EQUIVALENTS*

Types of Securities Debt securities of any U.S. entity denominated in U.S. dollars, and not otherwise prohibited, U.S. dollar denominated sovereign and supranational bonds (Yankee bonds) with maturities less than one year.

Diversification	<u>Security</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
	Certificates of Deposit (CDs)	10%
	Commercial Paper	35%
	Corporate Bonds	35%
	Single Issuer for Commercial Paper and Corporate Bonds	5%

Quality	<u>Security</u>	<u>Minimum Rating</u>
	Asset Backeds	A
	CDs	A1/P1
	Commercial Paper	A1/P1
	Corporate Bonds	AA-, Aa3

Exclusions Without written consent of Management, the following investments are prohibited.

- Floating rate notes with maturities under two years that have any embedded leverage or optionability (e.g., caps, floors, multiple reset features, etc.)
- Floating rate notes with maturities over two years
- Structured notes
- Swaps
- Other derivatives

Where written consent is given for investment in any of these categories, Management will require the investment manager to adhere to specific safeguards.

- Please refer to "Fixed Income Guidelines" for "Pooled Fund" guidelines

Performance Standards

Standards used to measure investment performance will be set forth in context with the established objectives. Each standard shall apply independently to the portfolio of each investment manager and are expected to be achieved net of investment management fees and expenses.

TOTAL FUND PERFORMANCE STANDARD

The objective for the Total Fund is to exceed the benchmark blended in correspondence with the overall asset allocation. The following allocations and benchmarks will be used to gauge Total Fund performance.

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>% Allocation</u>	<u>Performance Benchmark</u>
Fixed Income	38.0	Lehman Brothers Intermediate Govt/Credit
Large Cap Equity	25.0	S&P 500
Mid Cap Equity	10.0	Russell Midcap
Small Cap Equity	10.0	Russell 2000
International Equity	15.0	MSCI EAFE
Cash Equivalents	2.0	Citigroup T-Bills

FIXED INCOME MANAGER STANDARDS

The fixed income managers will be required to meet the following objectives. If, at any time, Management feels that the investment managers have not met one, two or three of the objectives, then the investment manager will be expected to make a formal presentation to Management as to the reasons behind the shortfall.

1. Over rolling five-year periods, the performance of the fixed income portfolio should exceed the return of an appropriate benchmark, as defined by Management.
2. Over rolling five-year periods, the annualized standard deviation of the fixed income portfolio's quarterly rate of return shall be no greater than 110% of that of an appropriate benchmark, as defined by Management.
3. Over rolling three-year periods, the performance of the fixed income portfolio should exceed the median of a universe of other fixed income managers, as defined by Management.

As stated above, failure to meet any of the above objectives will require formal presentation of the reasons to Management.

EQUITY MANAGER STANDARDS

The equity managers will be required to meet the following objectives. If, at any time, Management feels that the investment managers have not met one, two or three of the objectives, then the investment manager will be expected to make a formal presentation to Management as to the reasons behind the shortfall.

1. Over rolling five-year periods, the performance of the equity portfolio should exceed the return of an appropriate benchmark, as defined by Management.
2. Over rolling five-year periods, the annualized standard deviation of the equity portfolio's quarterly rate of return shall be no greater than 125% of that of an appropriate benchmark, as defined by Management.
3. Over rolling three-year periods, the performance of the equity portfolio should exceed the median of a universe of other equity managers, as defined by Management.

As stated above, failure to meet any of the above objectives will require formal presentation of the reasons to management.

Administration

Documentation - The investment managers are requested to submit a written statement to Management describing their proposed investment strategy for achieving the investment goals and objectives that are required in this Policy. They should also submit requests for permission to deviate from this Policy whenever their strategy changes significantly as a result of changing market conditions or other factors. In addition, monthly reports (unless otherwise noted) should be submitted showing:

1. Asset mix, at book and market values, for each major class of security, including derivatives and cash equivalents.
2. Position, by individual securities and/or by described units of collective funds, showing both book and market values of individually invested securities, and the unrealized gain or loss on each position.
3. Transactions effected in the account, categorized by purchases, sales, and accrued income, including realized gains or losses on each position. These reports need to be delivered to Management by the seventh day following the close of the month.
4. Formal quarterly notification letter, verifying that the manager's statement has been reconciled with the custodian. Any discrepancies between the manager and the custodian must be identified and explained
5. Performance of the portfolio, compared to the relevant benchmark defined by Management, on a quarterly basis
6. All transactions in descriptive detail

Annual Review Meeting - The investment manager may be expected to meet once per annum with the Committee and Management. The agenda for these meetings shall include at least:

1. A presentation of investment results in light of the stated objectives
2. A discussion of the manager's investment strategies
3. Communication of material changes in policy, objectives, investment strategies, staffing or business condition of the investment manager

SUBCOMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on By-Laws

2014-2015

Subcommittee Goal

To define the mission, responsibilities and composition of the Council's structural components within the framework of applicable laws and regulations.

Chair

Kaya Henderson, District of Columbia Chancellor

Members

Jose Banda, Sacramento Superintendent
Meria Carstarphen, Atlanta Superintendent
Larry Feldman, Miami-Dade County School Board
Eric Gordon, Cleveland CEO
Michael O'Neill, Boston School Committee
Airick West, Kansas City School Board
Paula Wright, Duval County School Board

Ex Officio

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Oakland School Board

CURRENT BY-LAWS

**BY-LAWS
OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS**

ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1.01 Name. 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 Purpose. 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 Mission. 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 Principal Office. The principal office of the Corporation shall be at 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest, Suite 702, 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 Membership. 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 5.01 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 Task Forces of the Board of Directors. 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 Nominations Committee.

(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 Spring Directors Meeting. 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 Notices of Meetings. 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 Quorum. 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 Organization. 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 Press Policy. 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 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be from July 1st of each year to June 30th of the succeeding year.

Section 8.02 Audit. 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 Bond. 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 Financial Support. 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 Grants. The Board of Directors shall be empowered to receive grants from foundations or other sources tendered to the Corporation.

Section 9.03 Receipts. 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 Checks, Drafts, and Order for Payment of Money. 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 Disbursements. 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 Contracts and Conveyances. 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 Borrowing. 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 Amendments. 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 Rules of Order. 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, 1974 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 15, 1992 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.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MEMBERSHIP

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Subcommittee on Membership

2014-2015

Subcommittee Goal

To review criteria and applications for membership, and recruit and retain members.

Chair

Pam Knowles, Portland School Board

Members

Cecelia Adams, Toledo School Board
JoAnn Brannon, Nashville School Board
Terry Grier, Houston Superintendent
Shanaysha Sauls, Baltimore School Board
Valeria Silva, St. Paul Superintendent

Ex Officio

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Oakland School Board

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Membership by Region

March 2, 2015

East (E)	Midwest (MW)	Southeast (SE)	West (W)
Boston	Austin	Atlanta	Albuquerque
Bridgeport	Chicago	Baltimore	Anchorage
Buffalo	Dallas	Baton Rouge	Fresno
Cincinnati	Denver	Birmingham	Hawaii
Cleveland	Des Moines	Broward County	Las Vegas
Columbus	El Paso	Charleston	Long Beach
Dayton	Ft. Worth	Charlotte	Los Angeles
Detroit	Houston	Greensboro	Oakland
Newark	Indianapolis	Jackson	Portland
New York City	Kansas City	Jacksonville	Sacramento
Philadelphia	Milwaukee	Louisville	San Francisco
Pittsburgh	Minneapolis	Memphis-Shelby Cty	Seattle
Providence	Oklahoma City	Miami-Dade County	San Diego
Rochester	Omaha	Nashville	Santa Ana
Toledo	St. Louis	New Orleans	
	St. Paul	Norfolk	
	Wichita	Orlando	
		Richmond	
		Palm Beach	
		Tampa	
		Washington	
15	17	21	14

**LETTER OF INTEREST FROM ARLINGTON
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**



Arlington
 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
More Than a Remarkable Education

November 24, 2014

Michael Casserly
 Council of Great City Schools
 1301 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Ste. 702
 Washington, DC 20004

Dear Michael:

We are pleased to submit this letter formally requesting membership in the Council of Great City Schools. As the 11th largest school district in Texas, we serve more than 64,000 students, prekindergarten through high school, from diverse backgrounds and have more than 8,000 employees. We have 75 campuses – six high schools, four alternative high schools, 12 junior highs, one alternative junior high, 51 elementaries one prekindergarten center, and community-based prekindergarten classes in 17 independent child-care centers. Our mission to empower and engage all students to be contributing, responsible citizens reaching their maximum potential through relevant, innovative and rigorous learning experiences matches closely with the mission of the Council of Great City Schools, and membership in this organization would help us further our academic efforts.

Arlington ISD demographics:

Total student enrollment:	64,046
Hispanic:	44%
Black:	24%
White:	22%
Asian:	6%
American Indian:	0%
Hawaiian:	0%
Two or more:.....	3%
Free & reduced-price eligibility:	67%
English-language learners:.....	26%
Special education students:	8%
Number of teachers:	4,276
Student:teacher ratio:	16.1:1

Academic opportunities abound for AISD students. More than 52 percent of secondary students are enrolled in the career and technical education program, which includes 16 career clusters in the health sciences, computer programming, engineering and more, certification programs, and technical dual-credit courses. One highlight in the CTE area is the AISD Fire Academy. Through a partnership with the Arlington Fire Department and Tarrant County College, students enrolled in

the two-year AISD Fire Academy receive fire and EMT certifications and can go directly into the workforce or continue their education further. The first graduating class in 2013 has four students working for the AFD. The district recently began the AISD Police Academy, which is a partnership with the Arlington Police Department and the University of Texas at Arlington. The district offers the International Baccalaureate World School Programme at Arlington, Bowie, Lamar and Sam Houston high schools. Students may earn 30 or more college credit hours through the district's Advanced Placement program. The AISD partners with Tarrant County College to offer dual-credit high school and college courses at each of its high schools.

In addition to academic programs, the AISD has award winning athletics and fine arts programs and extracurricular opportunities for our students. Athletics saw many teams advance to the playoffs, state winners in wrestling and track, and national winners in cheerleading. The district was named to the 2014 Best Communities for Music Education list by the NAMM Foundation. Martin High School was named a National GRAMMY Signature School by the GRAMMY Foundation. With an objective to have 100 percent of students actively involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, opportunities start as early as elementary with World Languages after-school programs and Elementary UIL A+ and go through the high school level with students winning national awards through step team, Academic Decathlon and Business Professionals of America competitions.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely,



Dr. Marcelo Cavazos
Superintendent



Bowie Hogg
Board President

Key Statistics on Arlington, TX

	Council By-laws Criteria	Arlington Independent School District
Population of city	250,000	379,577
School district enrollment	35,000	64,046
Free/reduced price lunch	Urban characteristics	67%
Percent African American	Urban characteristics	24%
Percent Hispanic	Urban characteristics	44%

**LETTER OF INTEREST FROM
DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



September 25, 2014

Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Suite 702
Washington, DC 20004



Dear Mr. Casserly:

Durham Public Schools is excited to apply for membership in the Council of the Great City Schools and add our voice to the public school districts fighting for educational opportunity and attainment for our nation's urban students.

We serve the children of the City of Durham and Durham County, North Carolina. The former county and city school districts merged in 1992 to become Durham Public Schools. While our county's perimeter is rural, the heart of Durham Public Schools is urban. In 2013-14 our student population of 33,311 was 49.56 percent African-American, 25.24 percent Hispanic/Latino, 18.90 percent White, 3.24 percent multiracial, 2.45 percent Asian and the remainder Native American or Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Almost 65 percent of our students received free or reduced-price lunch. The City of Durham's population was 242,810 in January 2014, with approximately 40,000 more residents in the outlying county.

DPS's graduation rate in 2014 rose for a sixth consecutive straight year to 81.5 percent. Three of our specialty high schools celebrated 100-percent graduation rates. We offer innovative magnet programs across our district and partner with higher education to offer early college opportunities. Our Universal Free Breakfast program feeds every child at every school, and out of 25 North Carolina schools to win National Healthy School Awards from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, 12 came from Durham Public Schools. Along with our accomplishments, however, we recognize that we still have a distance to travel to become the school district our students and community deserve. We face achievement gaps and performance shortcomings common to many urban districts which we are determined to rectify.

We feel we have much to share with and learn from our fellow urban districts in the Council of the Great City Schools. We look forward to taking advantage of the research, professional development and consulting services available to Council members and to being a part of the national conversation that will uplift all of our urban schools, including Durham Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Heidi Carter, Chair
Durham Public Schools Board of Education

Bert L'Homme, Ph.D., Superintendent
Durham Public Schools

Key Statistics on Durham, NC

	Council Bylaws Criteria	Durham Public Schools
Population of city	250,000	242,810
School district enrollment	35,000	33,311
Free/reduced price lunch	Urban characteristics	65.0%
Percent African American	Urban characteristics	49.6%
Percent Hispanic	Urban characteristics	25.2%

**DISTRICT APPLICANTS DENIED MEMBERSHIP,
2009-2014**

District Applicants Denied 2009-2014

District	Year	Status
Rockford (IL)	2009	Denied
Socorro (TX)	2009	Denied
Salem (OR)	2009	Denied
Clayton County (GA)	2009	Denied
Durham Public Schools (NC)	2010	Denied
Washoe County	2010	Denied
Pinellas County (FL)	2010	Denied
Michigan Education Achievement Authority	2011	Denied
Durham Public Schools (NC)	2011	Denied
Dekalb County (GA)	2011	Denied
Eugene (OR)		Denied
Knox County (TN)		Denied
Fort Wayne (IN)	2012	Denied
Portland (ME)	2012	Denied
District U-46 (Elgin, IL)	2012	Denied
Newport News (VA)	2012	Denied
Sweetwater Union High School District (CA)	2013	Denied
Grand Rapids (MI)	2014	Denied
Dallas County Intermediate	2014	Denied
Savannah Chatham County	2014	Denied
Jennings (MO)	2014	Denied

STRATEGIC AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

FINAL PARTHENON REPORT



Council of the Great City Schools

Succession Planning in the Context of the Council's Mission and Strategic Direction: Final Report

July 20, 2012



THE PARTHENON GROUP
Boston • London • Mumbai • San Francisco

Agenda, Objectives and Proposed Discussion Format

TOPIC	OBJECTIVE	TIMING
1 Project Background	Provide an overview of the succession planning project conducted for the Executive Committee and the Council	8:20 – 8:30
2 Mission, Goals and Strategies	Review summary findings from field research and potential implications of the research on the Council’s mission, goals, key activities and impact measures	8:30 – 9:15
3 Organization and Budget	Discuss organizational and budget recommendations related to succession planning	9:15 – 10:00
4 Succession Planning Process	Discuss recommendations around succession planning processes to put in place (starting as soon as possible)	10:00 - 11:00
5 Criteria / Characteristics (Key Positions)	Review and gather additional feedback on key skill sets and capabilities to seek in the Council’s senior leadership team, and on proposed pipelines of candidates by type of position	11:00 – 12:00
Short Break (12:00 – 12:15)		
6 Working Lunch / Discussion	In-depth discussion of issues and implications for the Council: Clarify any questions, respond to concerns, and reach preliminary consensus where possible	12:15 – 2:00



High-Level Project Overview

The strategic planning and succession planning project spanned 9 weeks

	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9
	2/27	3/5	3/12	3/19	3/26	4/2	4/9	4/16	4/23
(1) Strategic Context and Organizational Mission (Weeks 1-3)	█	█	█						
• Conduct internal (CGCS staff) and external (member district) interviews	█	█	█						
• Hold working sessions to clarify mission and strategic goals			█	█					
(2) Programmatic and Policy Strategy (Weeks 2-7)		█	█	█	█	█	█		
• Evaluate current services and offerings relative to CGCS's mission		█	█	█					
• Evaluate offerings relative to member district needs (survey)			█	█	█	█	█		
• Determine optimal balance of activities through Core Team sessions				█	█	█	█		
• Agree on optimal impact measures for the Council					█	█	█		
(3) Organizational and Financial Requirements (Weeks 5-8)					█	█	█	█	
• Conduct a detailed review of organizational capacity and finances					█	█			
• Determine role of partnerships in the Council's overall strategy						█	█		
• Estimate incremental organizational / budget needs required to execute against the mission in a sustainable way							█	█	
(4) Succession Planning Recommendation Development (Weeks 6-9)						█	█	█	█
• Define skill sets and capabilities needed across senior leadership team							█		
• Benchmark senior leadership compensation against comparable orgs							█	█	
• Identify pipelines of candidates by position and sample orgs by pipeline								█	█
• Establish a succession planning framework (process) for the future								█	█
Project Kick-Off, Interim and Final Presentations									



High-Level Project Overview

The project's Core Team was instrumental in providing overall guidance to the project, and reviewing and reacting to initial findings and recommendations

- **Winston Brooks**, Superintendent, Albuquerque Public Schools, CGCS Executive Committee Chair
- **Michael Casserly**, Executive Director, CGCS
- **Amanda Corcoran**, Manager of Special Projects, CGCS
- **William Isler**, Board Member, Pittsburgh Public Schools, CGCS Executive Committee Member
- **Carol Johnson**, Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, CGCS Executive Committee Immediate Past Chair
- **Sharon Lewis**, Director of Research, CGCS
- **Candy Olson**, School Board Chair, Hillsborough County Schools
- **Ricki Price-Baugh**, Director of Academic Achievement, CGCS
- **Eileen Cooper Reid**, Board Member, Cincinnati Public schools, CGCS Executive Committee Member
- **Teri ValeCruz**, Director of Administration, Finance and Conferences, CGCS
- **Eugene White**, Superintendent, Indianapolis Public Schools, CGCS Executive Committee Secretary-Treasurer



High-Level Project Overview

Over 40 qualitative interviews with staff, current members (superintendents and school board members) and former members informed the work along the way

CGCS Internal Staff

1. **Bob Carlson**, Director of Management Services
2. **Michael Casserly**, Executive Director
3. **Amanda Corcoran**, Special Projects Manager
4. **Henry Duvall**, Director of Communications
5. **Robin Hall**, Director of Language Arts and Literacy
6. **Sharon Lewis**, Director of Research
7. **Manish Naik**, Legislative and Research Manager
8. **Ricki Price-Baugh**, Director of Academic Achievement
9. **Jeff Simering**, Director of Legislative Services
10. **Gabriela Uro**, ELL Policy & Research Manager
11. **Teri ValeCruz**, Director of Administration, Finance & Conferences
12. **Denise Walston**, Director of Mathematics

Follow-up / Working Sessions:

1. **Academic Achievement / Research:** Ricki Price-Baugh & Sharon Lewis
2. **Advocacy:** Manish Naik
3. **Communications:** Henry Duvall
4. **Operations:** Bob Carlson

Districts: Current Members

District Senior Leadership

1. **Alberto Carvalho**, Superintendent, Miami-Dade
2. **Carol Comeau**, Superintendent, Anchorage
3. **Lawrence Feldman**, School Board Vice-Chair, Miami-Dade
4. **Jerrelle Francois**, Board Member, Baltimore City School District
5. **Carlos Garcia**, Superintendent, San Francisco Unified School District
6. **Eric Gordon**, CEO, Cleveland Metropolitan School District
7. **Cecily Harsch-Kinnane**, Board Member, Atlanta Public School District
8. **Carol Johnson**, Superintendent, Boston Public Schools
9. **Dwight Jones**, Superintendent, Clark County
10. **Candy Olson**, School Board Chair, Hillsborough County Schools
11. **Nancy Sebring**, Superintendent, Des Moines
12. **Felton Williams**, Board Member, Long Beach Unified School District

District Line Management

1. **Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger**, Chief Accountability Officer, Baltimore Public Schools
2. **Russell Brown**, Deputy Chief, Organizational Accountability, Cleveland Metropolitan School District
3. **Nora Carr**, Chief of Staff, Guilford County School District
4. **Linda Chen**, Deputy Chief Academic Officer, Boston Public Schools
5. **Maria Crenshaw**, Director of Instruction, Richmond Public Schools
6. **Jeffrey Eakins**, Director of Federal Programs, Hillsborough Public Schools
7. **Michael Eugene**, COO, Orange County
8. **Richard Hinds**, CFO, Miami-Dade
9. **Brian Pick**, Deputy Chief Academic Officer, District of Columbia Public Schools
10. **Robert Rodosky**, Executive Director of Accountability, Research, and Planning; Jefferson County Public Schools
11. **Teresa Walter**, Director, Office of Language Acquisition, San Diego Unified School District

Districts: Past Members

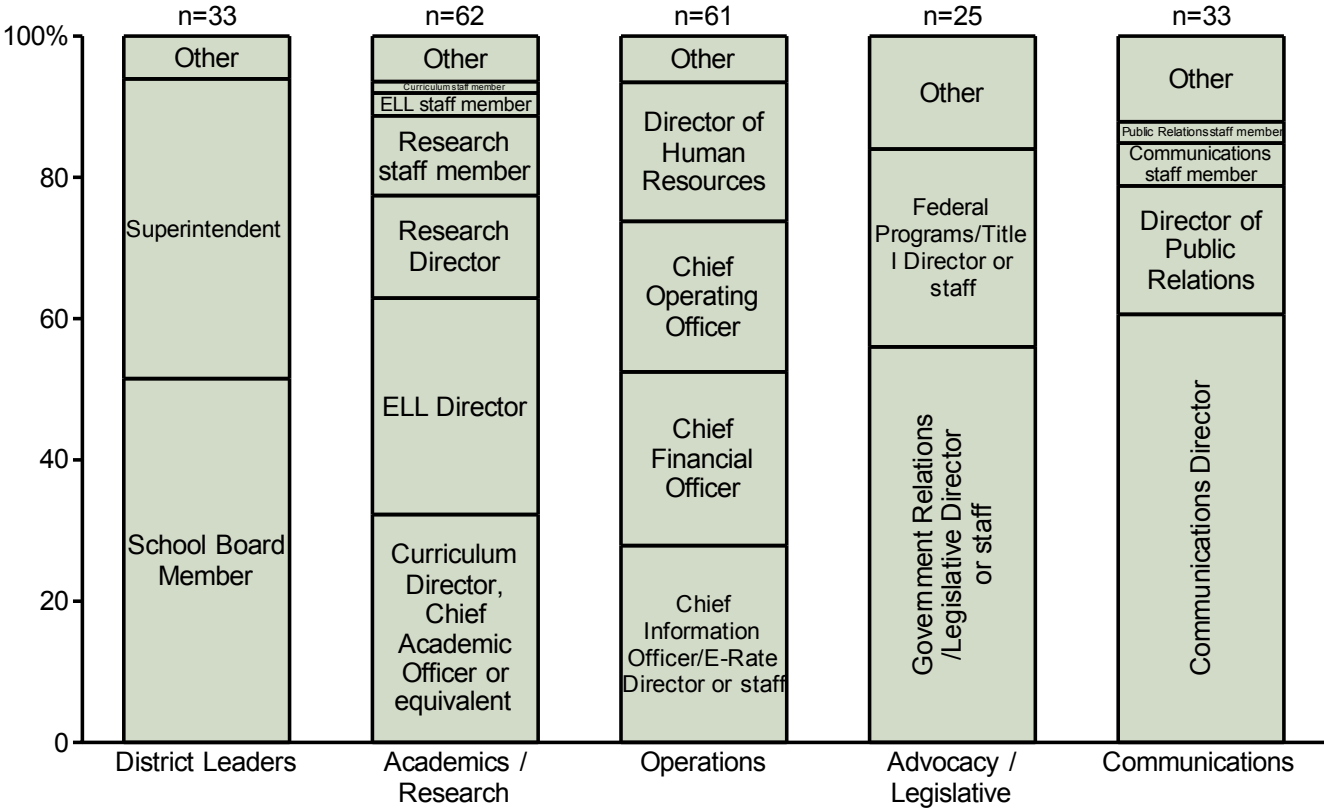
1. **Marcia Lyles**, Superintendent, Christina School District, DE
2. **John Pedicone**, Superintendent, Tucson Unified School District
3. **McKell Withers**,⁷³⁵ Superintendent, Salt Lake City School District



High-Level Project Overview

Five separate surveys (district leadership and four line management groups) yielded 214 responses and were a critical complement to the interviews

Q: What is your role in your school district?



Key Strategic Plan / Succession Plan Components

Mission, Goals and Strategies

1

Mission, Goals and Strategies

- What is the Council's mission and goals?
- What set of strategic levers will the Council utilize to make progress against these goals?
- What activities should the Council focus on within these strategic levers?
- How far should the Council's role extend in terms of helping districts implement change?
- Are there partnerships that can help the Council remove barriers for member districts to implement educational reforms?
- How should the Council measure its impact?

2

Organization and Budget

- What organizational capabilities and structure need to be in place to enable the Council to execute agreed upon strategies and activities?
- What do field interviews and surveys tell us about member district needs relative to the Council's current offerings and capacity?
- What additional capacity, if any, might be needed for the Council to best serve member districts?
- What are the financial implications of any potential changes to current organizational capacity?

3

Succession Planning Process

- How much succession planning can be done ahead of time and what must occur over time, given the succession planning horizon?
- What succession scenarios should we plan for?
- What processes need to be in place to ensure that succession planning (each of the scenarios above) is being addressed systematically over the next 3-6 years?
- What level of internal "institutionalizing" of knowledge and processed needs to happen over the next few years to make any transitions smoother?

4

Criteria, Characteristics and Pipelines

- What beliefs, attributes and skills are important across the entire leadership team?
- What skills and capabilities are important for a future Executive Director to bring to the position?
- What skills and capabilities are important at the Director(s) level?
- What potential pipelines exist, by position type?

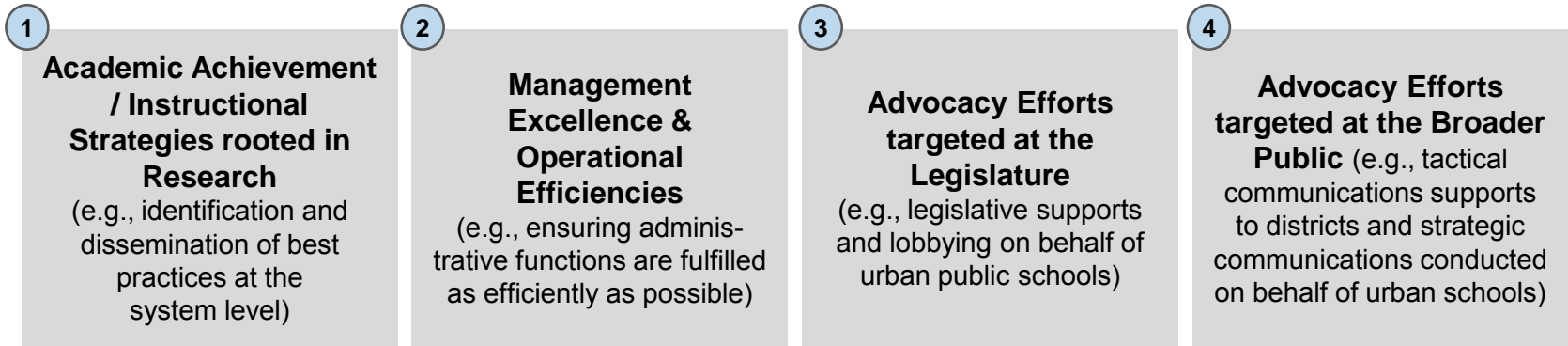
Mission, Goals and Strategies

The Council focuses on four key areas to advance three long-term goals

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

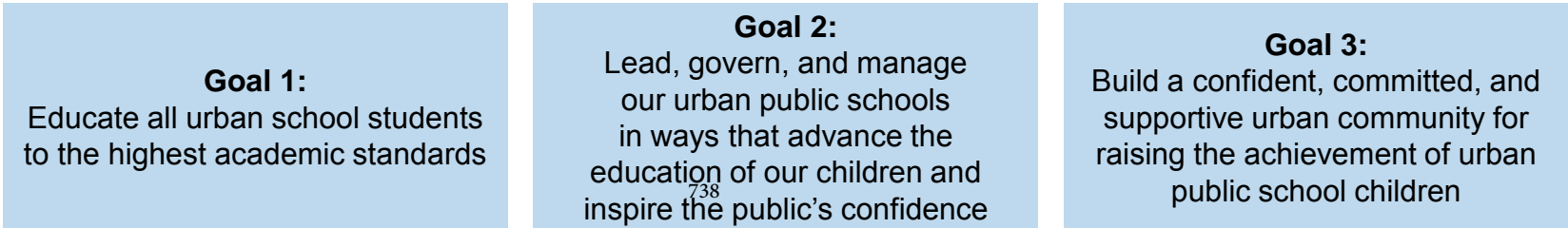
CORE AREAS OF FOCUS



BALANCE ACROSS AREAS

While each of the four areas listed above is an important piece of the overall “puzzle,” the Council’s stated **primary** focus area will continue to be **Academic Achievement & Research**.

GOALS

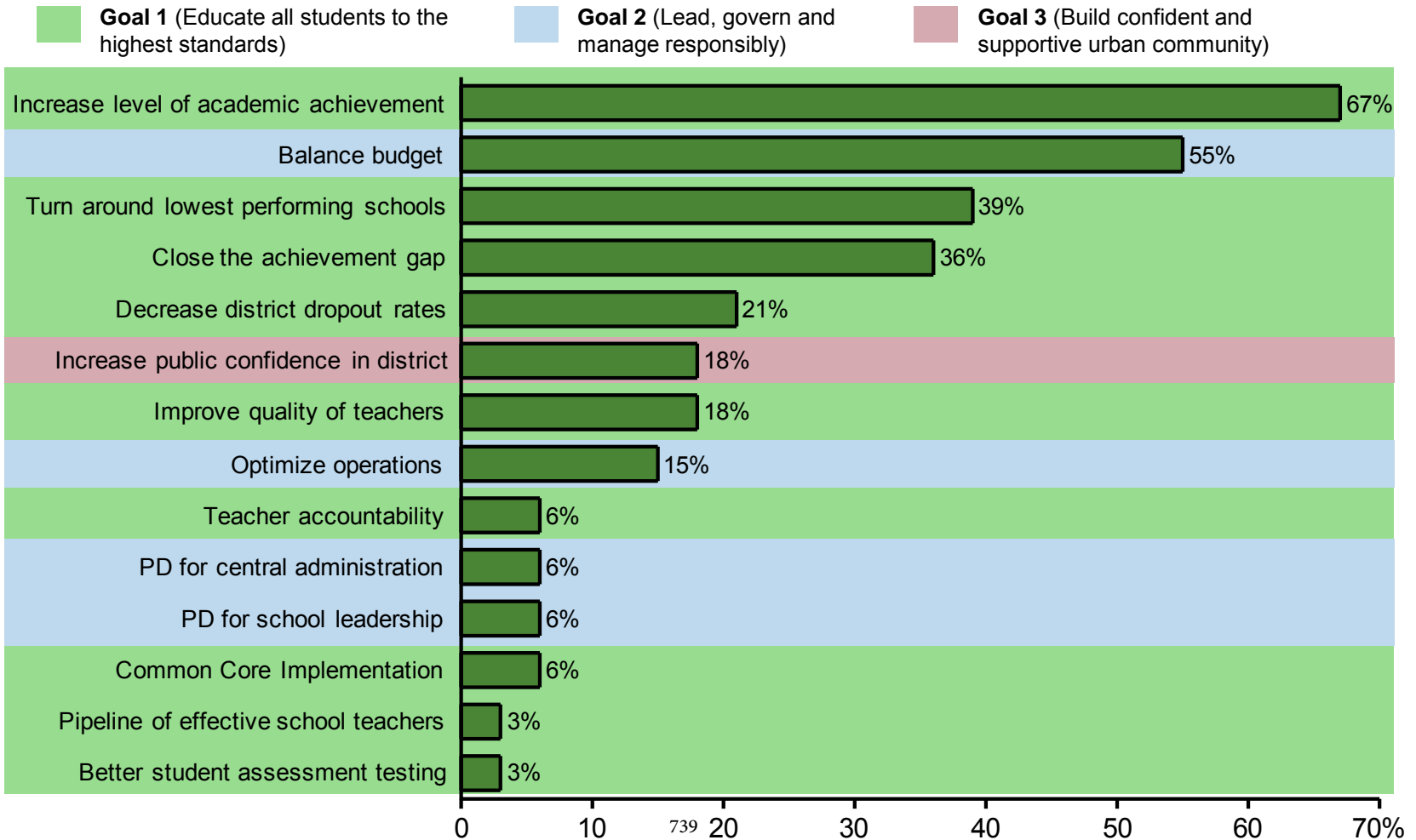


Mission, Goals and Strategies

The Council's goals align with what districts leaders have identified as the most pressing needs within their districts

District Leaders (Superintendents and School Board Members)

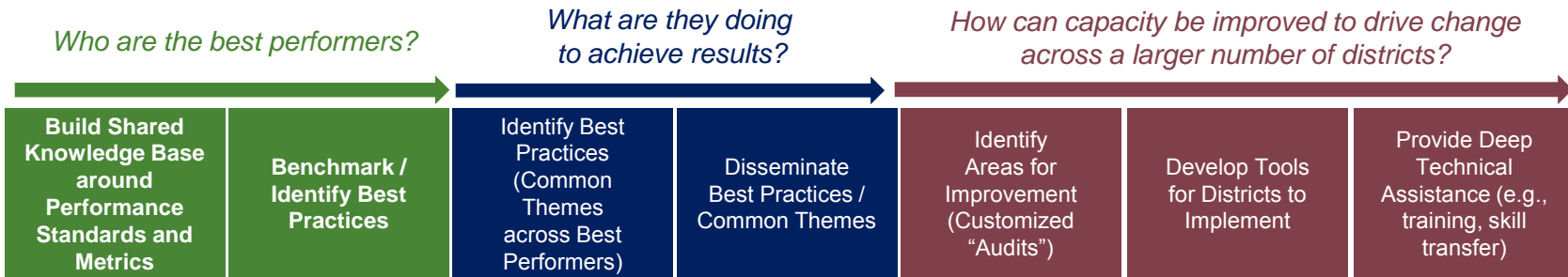
Q: Please select the three most pressing needs your district is facing (% of respondents)



Source: Council's district leadership survey launched week of 3/28/12

Mission, Goals and Strategies

The Council sees its role as helping inform change within districts and removing barriers to improvement rather than driving actual implementation



1 Academic Achievement / Instructional Strategies rooted in Research

Inform change and remove barriers to implementation

The Council **brings member districts together in a variety of settings** (conferences, job-alike meetings, listserv exchanges) to create shared knowledge re: what is happening nationally in the area of education.

Drive Implementation / Implement

2 Management Excellence & Operational Efficiencies

The Council **contributes to the development of standards** (e.g., Common Core State Standards) and **develops and tracks performance metrics** (e.g. KPIs) to identify best performers and to enable districts to compare their performance to a group of peers.

While the Council and its members **do NOT view this area as services that should be incorporated into the Council's mission**, given the Council's lean staffing model, the Council does – on occasion – go as far as developing tools for districts to use (to build capacity and facilitate implementation). Examples include:

3 Advocacy Efforts targeted at the Legislature

The Council **conducts research studies** to determine what distinguishes best performers and **synthesizes findings into common themes and lessons** that can be applied by districts (with appropriate degree of customization to account for differences in local contexts).

The Council **conducts "audits" or strategic support teams** to evaluate specific functions within districts or to answer specific questions raised by member districts. The recommendations of each strategic support team are customized to the needs and context of each district, and are practical and action-oriented.

- **Academic:** NAEP TUDA (district-level NAEP assessment) and Common Core tools (Math progression PD modules and text-dependent questions)

4 Advocacy Efforts targeted at the Broader Public

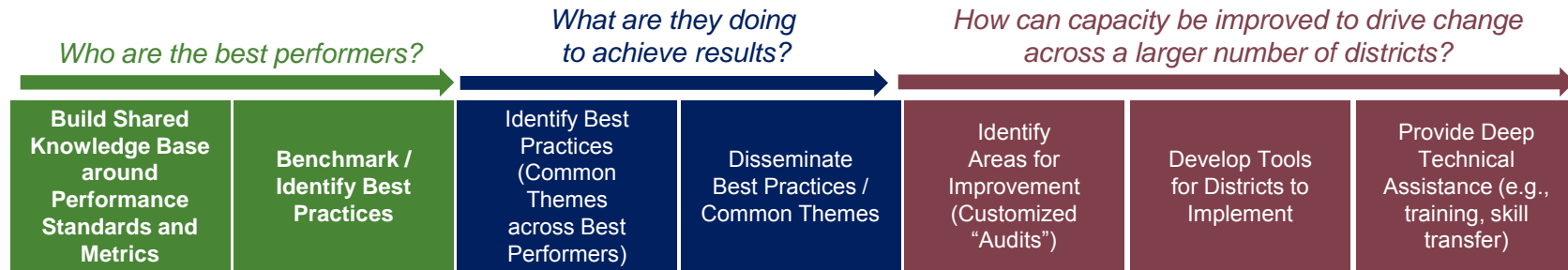
The Council **supports its members in a variety of other ways**, including ad hoc requests for information.

- **Operations:** KPIs have become a tool widely used by operational department heads



Mission, Goals and Strategies

Certain types of partnerships can help the Council remove barriers to implementation of reforms within members districts



The partnerships listed below are meant to be illustrative only and not comprehensive of all partnerships

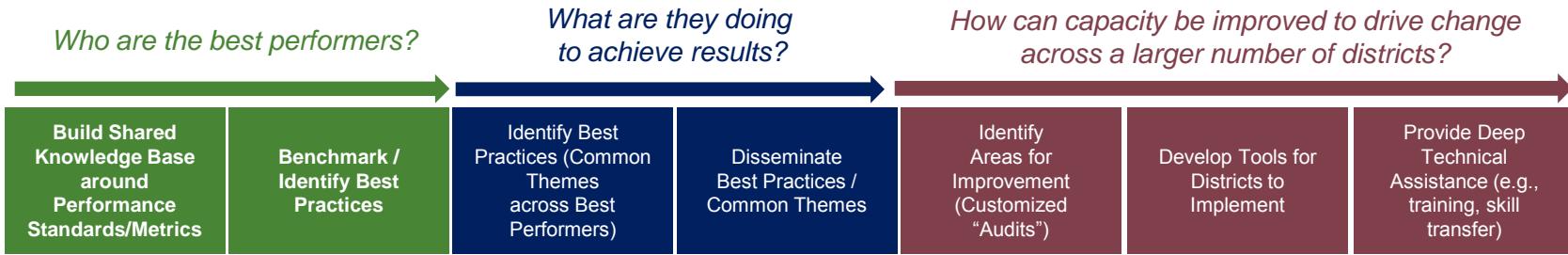
<p>1 Academic Achievement / Instructional Strategies rooted in Research</p>	<p>Examples of current partnerships around the implementation of Common Core State Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACHIEVE • Student Achievement Partners • Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Foundation (Black Male Initiative) • CCSSO – <i>In light of states taking on new (increased) responsibilities, the Council's leadership and Executive Committee may wish to pursue / discuss a deeper relationship with CCSSO .</i>
<p>2 Management Excellence & Operational Efficiencies</p>	<p>Examples of current partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERS (implementation of budget-related recommendations) • TransACT (Council's IT provider; large potential role in productizing KPIs to broader set of non-member districts)
<p>3 Advocacy Efforts targeted at Legislature</p>	<p>Examples of current partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee for Education Funding (ongoing) • All other "partnerships" in this space are issue-based
<p>4 Advocacy Efforts targeted at the Broader Public</p>	<p>Examples of current partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA TODAY Education Forum • Exxon Mobil (scholarships)

- The Council pursues ad hoc and tactical partnerships based on the issues at hand.
- The Executive Committee may want to discuss the Council's partnerships and relationships on an ongoing basis – review and propose with which organizations the Council could partner and why.



Mission, Goals and Strategies

The Council pursues a variety of activities along the implementation spectrum, incl. data collection & benchmarking, facilitation of meetings, and strategic audits



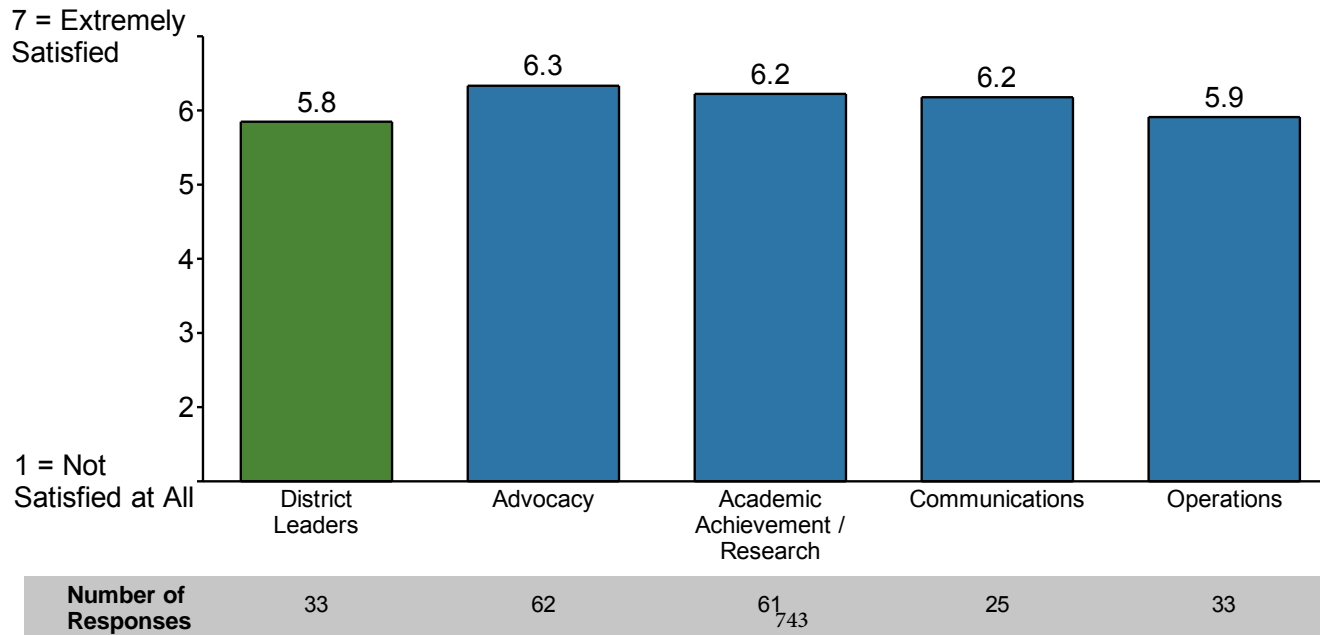
<p>1 Academic Achievement / Instructional Strategies rooted in Research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular research reports & special research reports Common Core implementation meetings (e.g. developing math progression PD modules and text dependent reading questions) Job-alike meetings (Bilingual Directors, Curriculum and Research Directors) SSTs in curriculum and instruction, special education and ELL Utilizing job-alike listserves to collect and synthesize information in response to ad hoc district requests Dissemination of information/findings/recommendations via website, email, newsletter, etc. 	
<p>2 Management Excellence & Operational Efficiencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of shared definitions (underlying the KPI work) through advisory groups in various functional areas Utilizing operational KPIs to identify best performers and to identify areas for improvement within a particular district Job-alike meetings (e.g., COOs, CFOs, CIOs, HR and Personnel Directors) SSTs in a variety of areas including Finance, Facilities, Food Services, Procurement, Transportation Pilot professional development program targeted at succession planning (developing next generation of leaders in Finance) Electronic library of resources on the EduPortal 	
<p>3 Advocacy Efforts targeted at the Legislature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct legislative and regulatory advocacy Assistance with interpreting new and proposed legislation Advice to districts on how to implement legislation or comply with specific federal guidance/regulations SSTs in the area of federal programs Getting information from or connecting with other urban districts Conference calls on federal legislation, guidance, regulations, and/or proposed rules Annual fall conference and annual legislative conference 	
<p>4 Advocacy Efforts targeted at the Broader Public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with press releases or opinion pieces on district developments Media assistance around release of NAEP scores Monthly newsletter – the Urban Educator SSTs in the area of communications Exchanging information via the public relations executives listserve Annual fall conference and Public Relations Executives meeting 	

Mission, Goals and Strategies

District Leaders and Line Managers are very satisfied with services provided by the Council

- Overall satisfactions levels with the Council’s services are high across the board (with District Leaders at 5.8 on average and line managers ranging from 5.9 for Operations to 6.3 for Advocacy).
 - **District Leaders:** 15 out of 18 services scored 6.0 or higher.
 - **Advocacy:** 10 out of 12 specific Advocacy services scored 6.0 or higher.
 - **Academic / Research:** 7 out of 8 specific Academic / Research areas scored 6.0 or higher.
 - **Communications:** 7 out of 11 specific Communications services scored 6.0 or higher.
 - **Operations:** Respondents in this area were tougher graders overall. 3 out of 10 services scored 6.0 or higher.

Overall Satisfaction with the Council’s Services



Mission, Goals and Strategies

District Leaders and Line Managers suggested a few potential service improvement opportunities for the Council to consider in the future

“What Works”

- District leaders and line managers alike are interested in **more best practice identification** and in **proactive sharing of these practices** on the part of the Council
- Given current information overload, they are looking for “bite size” pieces – crisp summaries of “what works” (what accounts for superior performance in some districts)

Shorter Turnaround Time on Reports

- Districts are looking for **faster turnaround on reports**
- This can be accomplished either through adding more resources to focus on report writing or through shortening reports (e.g., make short reports the norm and long / comprehensive reports the exception)

Institutionalizing Operational Activities

- Institutionalizing the operational work may require adding more staff to the Council in the short term. The arrangement with TransACT to “productize” the KPIs and distribute them to non-member districts has potential, but revenue is uncertain and will likely require some time (e.g., several years) to grow to the point where it can cover the costs of additional FTEs

Establishing Academic KPIs

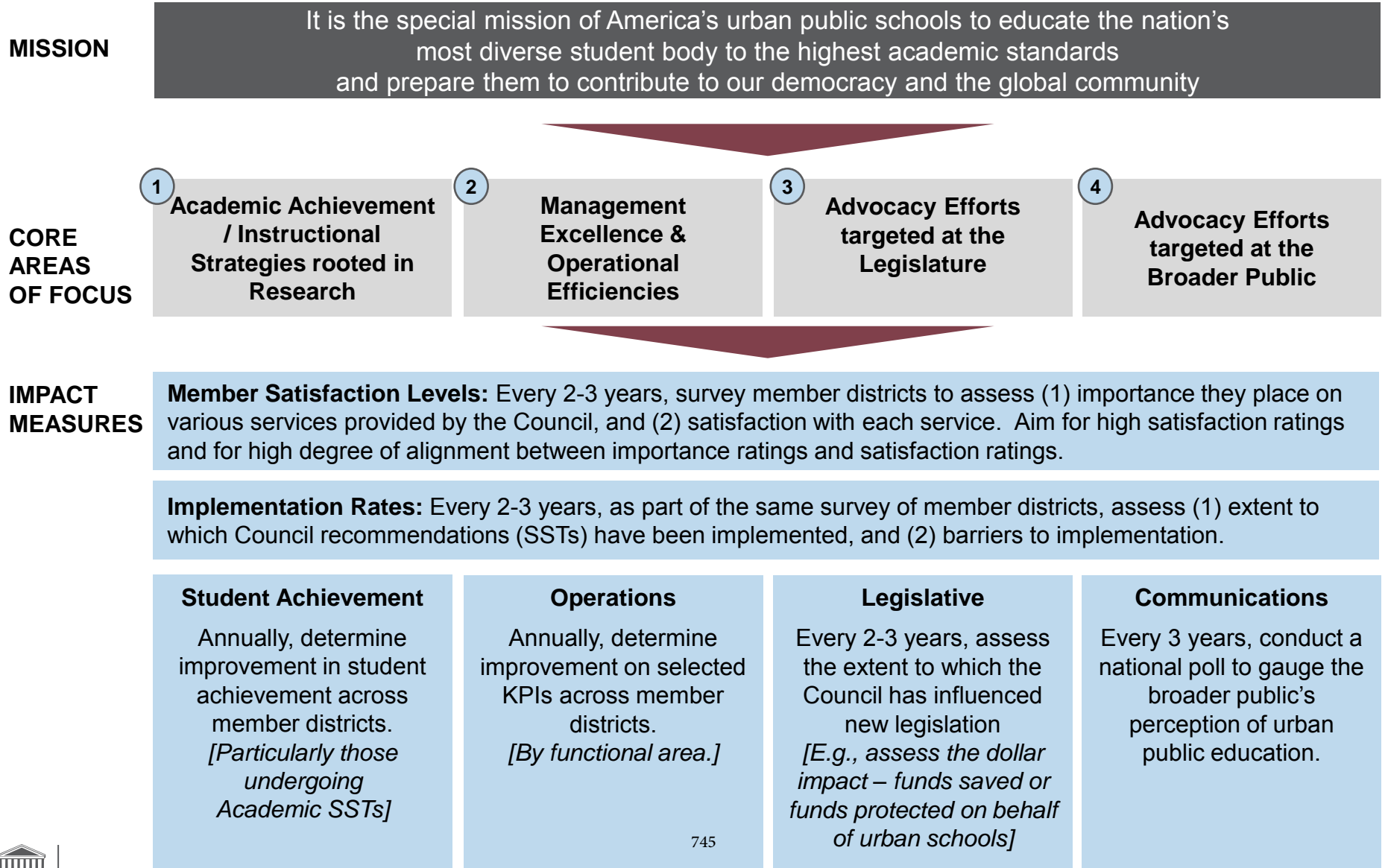
- District leaders and Academic/Research staff expressed high levels of interest in the Council developing a set of academic KPIs (e.g., key leading indicators)
- This will require some additional effort on the part of the Council (facilitating meetings with advisory groups, reaching agreement on shared definitions, etc.). However, the volume of academic KPIs will be much lower than the volume of operational KPIs (e.g., 15-30 vs. 300-400)

Strategic Communications Targeted at Broader Public

- Respondents also expressed an interest in the Council pursuing more strategic communications on behalf of urban public schools (e.g., writing more op-ed pieces, utilizing mass media more effectively, etc.).

Mission, Goals and Strategies

Going forward, the Council can measure its impact on the field in several ways



Key Strategic Plan / Succession Plan Components

Organization and Budget

1

Mission, Goals and Strategies

- What is the Council's mission and goals?
- What set of strategic *levers* will the Council utilize to make progress against these goals?
- What *activities* should the Council focus on within these strategic levers?
- How far should the Council's role extend in terms of helping districts implement change?
- Are there partnerships that can help the Council remove barriers for member districts to implement educational reforms?
- How should the Council measure its impact?

2

Organization and Budget

- What organizational capabilities and structure need to be in place to enable the Council to execute agreed upon strategies and activities?
- What do field interviews and surveys tell us about member district needs relative to the Council's current offerings and capacity?
- What additional capacity, if any, might be needed for the Council to best serve member districts?
- What are the financial implications of any potential changes to current organizational capacity?

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3

Succession Planning Process

- How much succession planning can be done ahead of time and what must occur over time, given the succession planning horizon?
- What succession scenarios should we plan for?
- What processes need to be in place to ensure that succession planning (each of the scenarios above) is being addressed systematically over the next 3-6 years?
- What level of internal "institutionalizing" of knowledge and processed needs to happen over the next few years to make any transitions smoother?

4

Criteria, Characteristics and Pipelines

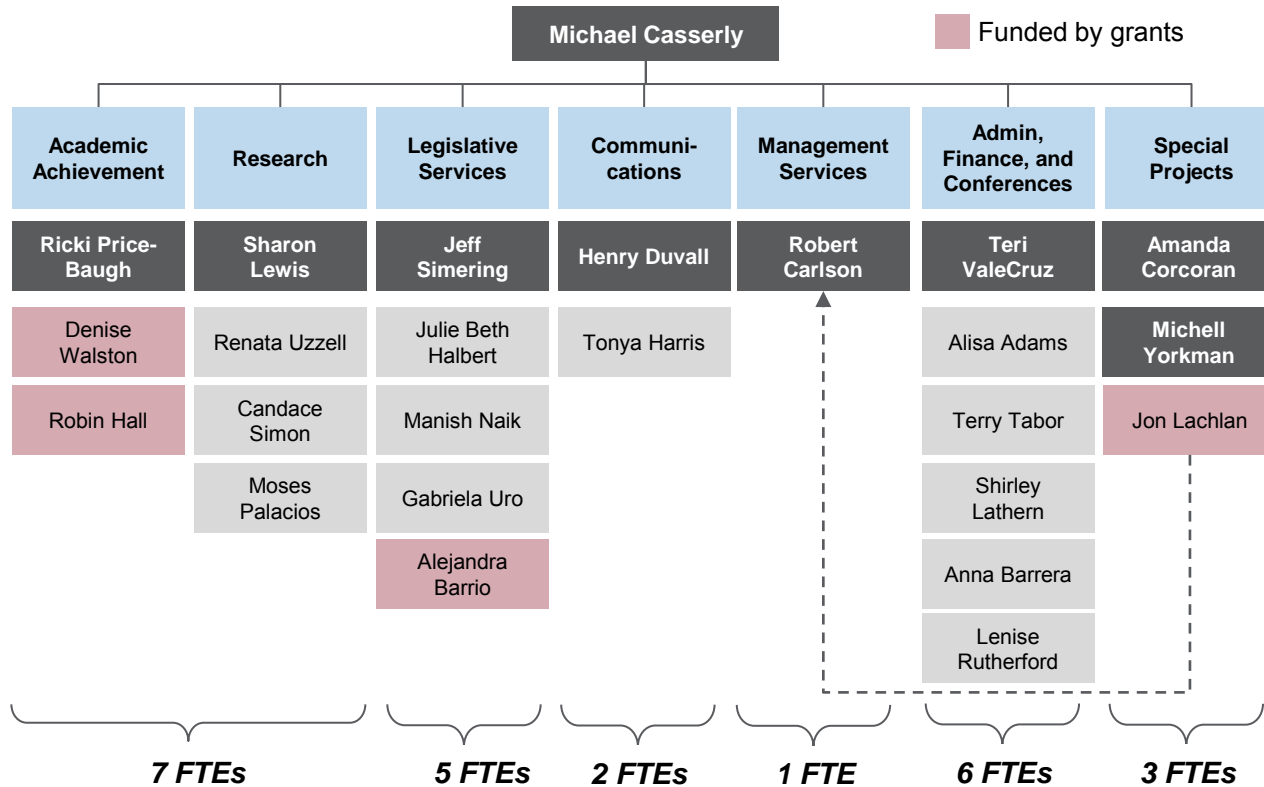
- What beliefs, attributes and skills are important across the entire leadership team?
- What skills and capabilities are important for a future Executive Director to bring to the position?
- What skills and capabilities are important at the Director(s) level?
- What potential pipelines exist, by position type?



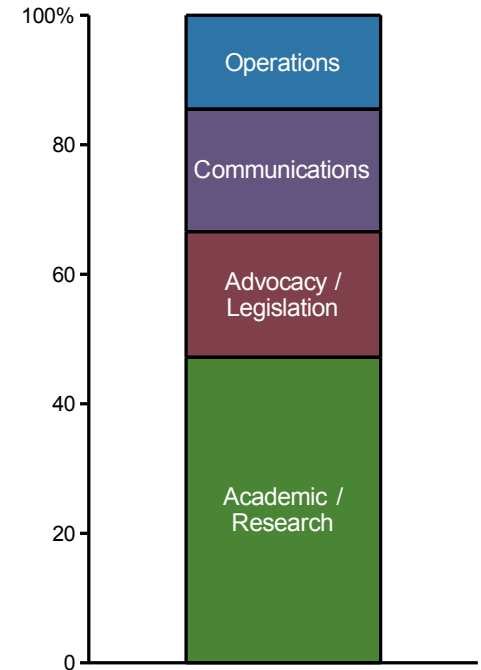
Organization and Budget

The Council counts 25 FTEs overall, with Academics/Research as the largest area of focus (in terms of time and staff resources)

The Council's Organizational Structure (25 FTEs)



Share of Staff Time by Core Strategic Area as indicated by Staff Survey*



- The Academic/Research area is the largest “consumer” of staff resources, which aligns with the Council’s core mission and the desire to treat the academic goal “Educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards” as the first among equals.
- One potential vulnerability to note is that 2 out of the 7 FTEs dedicated to Academic/Research are grant-funded.
- The grant-funded position within Special Projects has been supporting primarily the Management Services area, which has no permanent staff besides the Director.



Organization and Budget

The “opportunities for improvement” highlighted earlier (suggested by District Leaders and Line Management) have some resource implications

	Description	Likely Impact on Staff / Budget
1	<p>Academics / Research - “What Works”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More best practice identification and proactive sharing on the part of the Council, in “bite size” pieces – crisp summaries of “what works” (e.g., what accounts for superior performance in some districts) 	<p>+ Will likely require more staff time (unless something else can be removed from staff responsibilities)</p>
2	<p>Shorter Turnaround Time on Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This could be accomplished through shortening reports (e.g., make short reports the norm and long / comprehensive reports the exception) 	<p>— Will free up some staff time (primarily in the Academics / Research function where reports are the longest and most time consuming)</p>
3	<p>Institutionalizing Operational Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes: (1) Stabilizing the KPIs (quality checking of KPIs, statistical analysis of KPIs, etc.); (2) Proactive sharing of “what works” (best practices and common themes); and (3) Making the EduPortal more user-friendly 	<p>+ Will likely require adding 2 FTEs to the Council’s current operational staff in the short to medium term</p>
4	<p>Establishing Academic KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will develop a set of academic KPIs (e.g., key leading indicators). This will require Council staff to facilitate meetings with advisory groups to develop shared definitions / calculation methodologies. Volume of academic KPIs will be lower than volume of operational KPIs (e.g., 15-30 vs. 300-400) 	<p>+ Depending on timeframe, may require an additional resource in Academic / Research or re-alignment of priorities within Academic / Research</p>
5	<p>Strategic Communications Targeted at Broader Public*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More strategic communications activities on behalf of urban public schools could include: (1) Establishing closer relations with the News Media; (2) Increasing contact with Council Public Relations Executives (at member districts); (3) Coordinating Council website content; and (4) Exploring new avenues of Communications 	<p>+ Would likely require an additional full-time staff person and a budget for mass media communications</p>



Note: *A more detailed description of proposed Communications activities is included in Appendix – Slide 39

Organization and Budget

Adoption of all suggested changes would require ~4 additional employees and additional resources for the Communications function

	Likely Impact on Staff / Budget (Annual)	Key Assumptions
1 Academics/Research - "What Works"	+ 1.0 FTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and disseminating "what works" best practices will require staff time to collect data from districts, synthesize findings and write reports
2 Shorter Turnaround Time on Reports	- 0.5 FTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time spent on SST activities is approx. equal to 2 FTEs ~50% of staff time spent on SST activities is related to report writing (workload survey) ~50% of staff time spent on SST report generation will be reduced by writing "short-version" reports
3 Institutionalizing Operational Activities	+ 2.0 FTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated 3 full-time staff needed to conduct core operations work (including the current Director of Operations)
4 Establishing Academic KPIs	+ 0.5 FTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing academic KPIs will require Council staff time to facilitate advisory group meetings, get agreement around definitions and methodology, and work with districts to overcome any data collection / reporting challenges
5 Strategic Communications Targeted at Broader Public*	+ 1.0 FTE + \$50K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 additional FTE will be required for communications activities related to: Common Core implementation, op-ed pieces, Council website etc. A national perception poll will be administered every three years at a cost of \$150K for each poll



Organization and Budget

Implementing all proposed changes would require \$386K in additional Council funds annually

	Base Cost	Fringe Benefits	Total Cost
Operations Specialist (1 FTE)	\$60K	41%	\$85K
Operations Manager (1 FTE)	\$90K	41%	\$127K
Communications Specialist (1 FTE)	\$60K	41%	\$85K
Academics Specialist (1 FTE)	\$60K	41%	\$85K
National Perception Poll (Allocation)	\$50K	N/A	\$50K
Total			\$432K

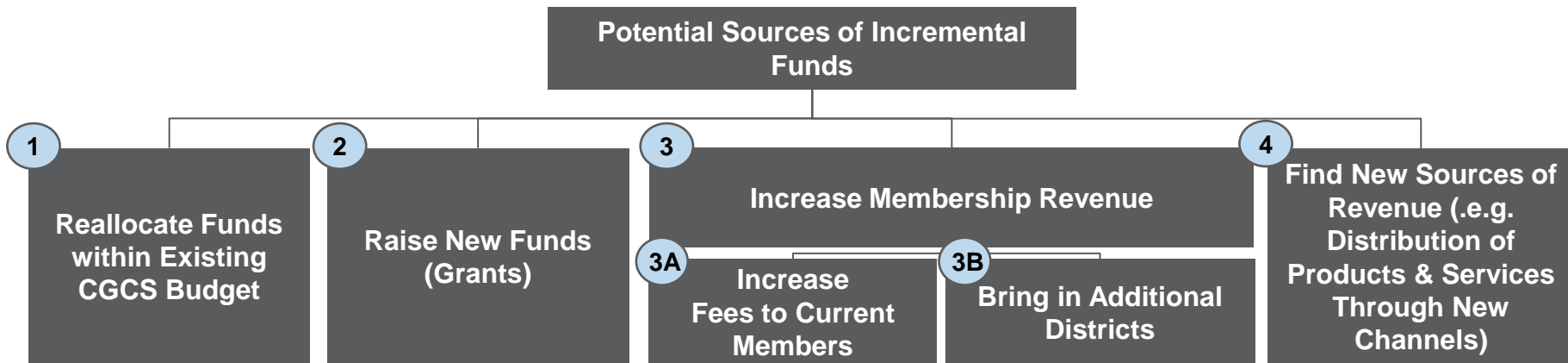


- Should all changes be adopted simultaneously or phased-in over time?
- If phased in, what order should they be prioritized?



Organization and Budget

How might we cover the incremental costs associated with these proposals?



- PROS**
- Budget neutral – No need to raise additional funds
 - Membership fees remain the same

- No impact to existing services
- Membership fees remain the same

- No impact to existing services
- Continuous funding stream

- No increase in cost to current member districts
- Larger network of member districts to include in best practice identification and SST staff sourcing

- No increase in cost to current member districts
- Improve products and services to existing members

- CONS**
- Some existing services must be scaled-back or eliminated (but surveys indicate that member districts do not want to eliminate / scale back existing services)

- Funding stream may not be sustainable over the long-term

- Creates additional financial burden on member districts at a time of significant financial constraints

- Risk that new members will utilize disproportionate share of Council resources/ services (at least over some transition period)

- Risk of reduced focus on core mission
- Paying districts may require disproportionately more assistance initially, “distracting” from member districts



Organization and Budget

New member districts could contribute ~\$420K in incremental revenue by Year 5

3B Incremental Revenue from Potential New Member Districts

District	Enrollment	Estimated Dues
Wake County	140,558	\$45,637
Mesa	67,471	\$40,567
El Paso	63,378	\$40,567
Tucson	55,369	\$40,567
San Antonio	55,327	\$40,567
Riverside	42,696	\$35,498
Tulsa	41,493	\$35,498
Corpus Christi	38,196	\$35,498
Stockton	38,141	\$35,498
Bakersfield	37,928	\$35,498
Lexington	36,988	\$35,498
Total		\$420,893



Year	Fiscal Year	Revenue from New Districts
1	FY13	\$84K
2	FY14	\$168K
3	FY15	\$253K
4	FY16	\$337K
5	FY17	\$421K

Note: The revenue forecast assumes that it will take the Council up to 5 years to recruit the 11 eligible districts. Annual revenue estimates above are based on “straight-lining” revenue from Year 1 to Year 5 based on steady state (Year 5) amount of \$421K. Actual revenue will vary based on when a particular district joins the Council (district dues will vary based on their enrollment levels).

Note: New member district revenue is based on 2012-2013 dues by tier and NCES district enrollment.



Organization and Budget

Productizing KPIs (at a subscription fee to non-member districts) could generate between \$186K and \$745K of additional annual revenue for the Council

4 New Sources of Revenue: KPI Product / Service Offering Implemented Beyond Members Districts

Potential Market Segments	Scenario 1 (Conservative)	Scenario 2 (Moderate)	Scenario 3 (Aggressive)
Primary Market Size	1,079 Districts	1,079 Districts	1,079 Districts
Market Penetration	5%	10%	20%
# of Customer Districts	54	108	216
Average Purchase Order (Annual)	\$6,275	\$6,275	\$6,275
Total Revenue	\$338,850	\$677,700	\$1,355,400
CGCS (55%) Revenue	\$186K	\$373K	\$745K

The “Act Point KPI Standard” service **primarily targets large school districts (>10K students).**

Secondary markets include:

- Small to medium school districts (<10K students)
- State Departments of Education
- Education Service Agencies



Given the current economic environment for school districts, Scenario 1 seems the most plausible

Organization and Budget

Additional sources of revenue potentially exist, but would require more in-depth market analysis to quantify / evaluate

4 New Sources of Revenue: Other Ideas

1. **Productizing Strategic Support Teams** for implementation in non-member districts
2. **Academic KPIs** as an enhancement to the operational KPIs offering that is being productized through TransACT
3. **Leadership development training** to member and non-member districts, targeted at growing the next generation of leaders within districts, by functional area (service provided at a fee)
4. **Productizing Common Core tools** (e.g., professional development modules, complex text-dependent questions, etc.) for distribution to non-member districts



Sizing of market opportunity and quantification of potential revenue streams from the above concepts would require further research/analysis of market needs



Key Strategic Plan / Succession Plan Components

Succession Planning Process

1

Mission, Goals and Strategies

- What is the Council's mission and goals?
- What set of strategic *levers* will the Council utilize to make progress against these goals?
- What *activities* should the Council focus on within these strategic levers?
- How far should the Council's role extend in terms of helping districts implement change?
- Are there partnerships that can help the Council remove barriers for member districts to implement educational reforms?
- How should the Council measure its impact?

2

Organization and Budget

- What organizational capabilities and structure need to be in place to enable the Council to execute agreed upon strategies and activities?
- What do field interviews and surveys tell us about member district needs relative to the Council's current offerings and capacity?
- What additional capacity, if any, might be needed for the Council to best serve member districts?
- What are the financial implications of any potential changes to current organizational capacity?

3

Succession Planning Process

- How much succession planning can be done ahead of time and what must occur over time, given the succession planning horizon?
- What succession scenarios should we plan for?
- What processes need to be in place to ensure that succession planning (each of the scenarios above) is being addressed systematically over the next 3-6 years?
- What level of internal "institutionalizing" of knowledge and processed needs to happen over the next few years to make any transitions smoother?

4

Criteria, Characteristics and Pipelines

- What beliefs, attributes and skills are important across the entire leadership team?
- What skills and capabilities are important for a future Executive Director to bring to the position?
- What skills and capabilities are important at the Director(s) level?
- What potential pipelines exist, by position type?



Succession Planning Process

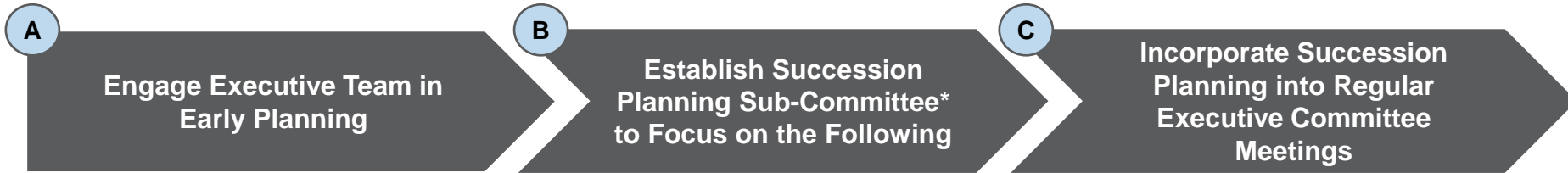
Guiding Principles

1. **Be holistic with respect to succession planning:** Consider the entire senior leadership team, not just the Executive Director position. Prioritize those positions that do not have strong internal candidates and where external pools are limited.
2. **Make succession planning a core priority** for the organization, by incorporating specific activities, updates and decisions into regular Executive Committee meetings.
3. **Plan for multiple Executive Director scenarios** (e.g., emergency situation, short-to-medium term, medium-to-long term). The ideal transition time would be 3-6 years to allow for early identification, mentoring, grooming and transition of candidates. The Council could identify some likely candidates (internal or external) and place them in meaningful “interim” positions to test skills/capabilities and to build Council capacity.
4. **Be transparent with staff** re: overall succession planning process and selection criteria.
5. **Establish appropriate internal processes (documentation, databases of contacts, etc.)** to ensure that transitions are as smooth as possible when they start occurring.
6. **When determining skill sets and capabilities, do not think about the Executive Director vs. Directors as isolated hires and job descriptions.** Start by determining what complementary set of skills needs to exist across the entire leadership team to sustain the organization. Then, determine which skills/capabilities are most needed within an Executive Director vs. other members of the leadership team.
7. **Establish as “deep” a pool as possible** for each type of position by being open to considering a variety of possible sources of candidates.



2 Succession Planning Process: Core Priority for the Executive Team

There are several meaningful and important ways for the Executive Committee to be engaged in the succession planning process



**Note: The Executive Committee may choose to forgo the formation of a sub-committee and participate fully in all Succession Planning activities*




● Agreement on succession planning scenarios (emergency, medium-term, 6 year)	● Refine criteria / characteristics by position	● The sub-committee and the Executive Director prepare updates and discussion topics for regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings
● Agreement on initial criteria / characteristics that the future Executive Director should bring to the organization in each succession planning scenario	● Evaluate internal candidates for Director-level positions, as needed	
● Identification of possible pipelines of candidates	● Review/update pools of candidates	
● Identification of quality search firms with solid track records in education		
● Creation of preliminary job descriptions for senior leadership roles (including the Executive Director role)	● Refine / update recruitment, hiring and training timeline (by key position)	
		● Executive Committee solicits input on characteristics, potential candidates, etc, from broader membership (either directly through Succession Planning Subcommittee or through search firm). Will need to balance engagement / transparency with efficiency / confidentiality

● Will be completed by the end of the Parthenon project	● Will have made substantial progress by the end of the Parthenon project	● Will start after the Parthenon project is over
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3 Succession Planning Process: Multiple Scenarios

The Executive Committee should consider the scenarios outlined below

	A Emergency Situation [0-1 year]	B Short-Term Situation [1-3 years]	C Medium-Term Situation [3-6 years]
Example Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Something happens to current Executive Director; the Executive Committee has not had time to groom any internal or external candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director decides to leave within a few years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director stays for 2 more terms, giving the Executive Committee ample time to plan for succession at multiple levels of the organization
Other "Side Effects"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All or large portion of senior leadership staff will likely stay for a transition period (e.g., up to a year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some portion of senior leadership will likely exit the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large portion of senior leadership will likely exit the organization Roles become available / can be filled with potential ED candidates
Type of ED Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Ready to go" candidate Has most of the desired skills and capabilities already 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Front-runners" (ready in 2-3 years) Have many of the desired skills and capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Rising contenders" (need to be developed and monitored) Have the raw potential and some of the desired skills and capabilities
	 MOST LIMITED POOL (likely not someone on staff but ideally someone who knows the organization well)	 WIDER POOL (but may be the trickiest to "get right" – may not have sufficient time to hire internally into an interim position, in which case revert to Scenario A)	 WIDEST POOL (may be able to hire candidate into meaningful Director-level role and then groom for several years)



3 Succession Planning Process: Multiple Scenarios

There are three potential paths to hire an ED candidate into the Council

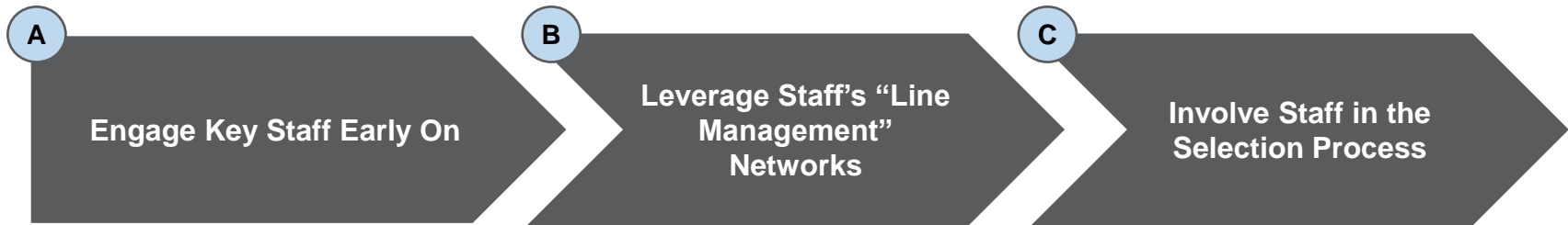
Potential Paths to Executive Director	A Emergency Situation [0-1 year]	B Short-Term Situation [1-3 years]	C Medium-Term Situation [3-5 years]
	← Considerations →		← Considerations →
1 Hire Directly into Executive Director Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely an interim role while the search for a longer-term successor continues through the use of a search firm Someone who knows the organization well and has the full “tool-kit” (e.g., current /former members) Candidates would likely be sourced / hired directly by the Executive Comm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring an external candidate directly into the Executive Director position presents a higher risk than first hiring into a lower-level position and then grooming 	
2 Hire into a Director Position, if one Becomes Available, and Groom for Executive Director Position	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifications / skill sets required for a Director of Management Services may not be the right match for an Executive Director The Director of Legislative Services role might be a good training ground for the ED role The Director of Academic Achievement or Research pathway may be ideal since these are core priorities for the Council and it takes time/experience to understand how education works Candidates can be sourced through the Council’s network and a search firm 	
3 Create a New Position, Deputy Director, as a Training Position for Executive Director	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option offers the most flexibility since it does not depend on any of the Directors retiring in the short term, but increases costs since it is an incremental position Creation of such a position would need a careful yet meaningful split of responsibilities with the Executive Director and is contingent on current ED being interested in pursuing this particular solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates can be sourced through the Council’s network and a search firm

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4 Succession Planning Process: Involve Staff

Being transparent with staff and involving them in succession planning will strengthen the overall process and increase likelihood of staff staying on



- Key staff members can provide an important perspective on the most important skills and capabilities that a future Executive Director and anyone in a particular Director-level position should have

- Staff have wide-reaching networks developed over years of working with member districts' line management (in their respective functional areas)
- Staff also have networks that reach beyond member districts and include contacts in academia, research organizations, government, consulting firms, and other non-profit organizations

- Staff can be part of succession planning by participating in formal interviews and providing their input to the Executive Committee
- Staff can also serve as a "sounding board" for contacts in the field interested in learning more about the Council and the particular roles

• **This is already underway. We have interviewed a number of the Directors and other staff members to get their perspectives**

• **The strength of relationships developed by staff in education over the last 20-30 years will be a strong asset in the search process**

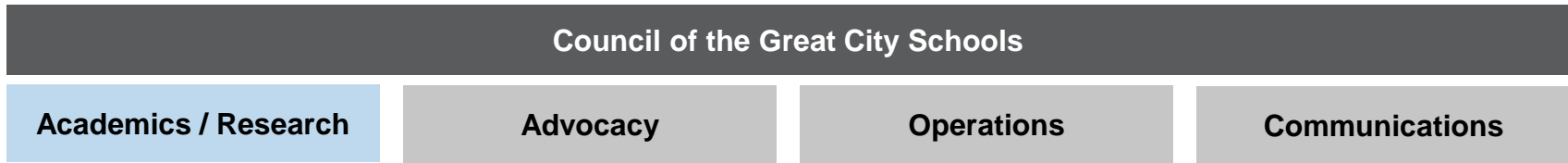
• **Senior staff may be more likely to stay if they have gotten to know leading candidates through the selection process**

• **Need to establish a mechanism through which staff perspectives are regularly fed back to the Executive Committee – staff need to feel like they have a voice / are being heard**



5 Succession Planning Process: Internal Processes

Documentation of existing processes at the “enterprise” and “functional” levels will enable a smoother transition and help institutionalize practices



The following examples are meant to be illustrative only

Example Documentation for SSTs in Curriculum and Instruction	Example Documentation for Research Studies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are member district requests for SSTs processed and scheduled? 2. What is the selection process for SST team members? 3. What pre-work needs to be completed prior to the SST event? 4. What logistical items need to be handled by the Council vs. the member district? 5. What is the standard on-site agenda for an SST in Curriculum? 6. What are the steps involved in creating a report summarizing the SST findings? 7. What is the standard report format? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are topics for research studies identified and prioritized? 2. What are the steps involved in reaching out to member districts for data collection purposes? 3. What is the network of vendors (research organizations) with whom the Council works? 4. What is the protocol for reviewing initial analysis results with participating districts and for incorporating feedback? 5. What is the protocol for reviewing and finalizing the report? Who reviews internally? Are external stakeholders involved? 6. How are results of a research study published and communicated?

Need a directional “roadmap,” not a detailed book covering all minute details. Key processes should be identified and prioritized for documentation to ensure the most efficient use of scarce staff resources / time



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6 Criteria / Characteristics: Overall

Core personal beliefs and attributes
(Entire Senior Leadership Team, including the Executive Director)

Beliefs

- **Deep commitment** to public education and to urban children
- **Strong commitment to the mission of the organization**
- **Deep belief that the public education system can improve**, with appropriate supports
- **Deep belief that a proactive stance is more conducive to achieving results than a defensive stance:** People and organizations should take issues head on and be “part of the solution” rather than see themselves them as victims / targets of criticism

Personal
Attributes

- **Sound judgment** to understand when to take policy positions (in any functional area), with the goal of helping member districts get better and better over time, and **courage to take those positions**
- **Strong customer service orientation** (accessible, responsive, proactive)
- **Ability to combine a sense of urgency** (need for reform) **with pragmatic approach** (to enable reform)
- **Strong orientation towards implementing reforms that work** (e.g., based on research) rather than pursuing change for the sake of change
- **Ability to put member districts and the organization first** (primary affirmation of value comes from member district actions and improvement over time rather than from being “in the spotlight” or getting credit for ideas)
- **Ability to build consensus among senior level executives** with strong (and sometimes differing) points of view
- **Ability to create a healthy dialog among members** (diverse membership comprised of superintendents and school board members) and **enable decision-making based on “what works” rather than emotions**
- **Strong work ethic, flexibility, willingness to “roll up one’s sleeves”** (given size of organization and relatively flat structure)
- **Strong personal skills** to work with functional staff in member school districts
- Strong **team player, respectful** of other Council (and member district) staff, values diversity of the organization, recognizes and leverages strengths that others bring to the table



6

Criteria / Characteristics: Executive Director

“Must-have” vs. “nice-to-have” skills and attributes

	Must-Have	Nice-to-Have
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong political instincts • Knowledge of DC politics (on a national level) • Credibility with both political parties • Existing network on Capitol Hill (or proven ability to build it) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously involved in urban school districts • Policy contacts outside of education • Familiarity with urban social issues • Knowledge of DC politics (at a local level)
Education / Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong knowledge of education and key issues facing urban public schools • Sound knowledge of district instructional systems (how to move school districts forward in improving overall student achievement and closing the student achievement gap) • Extensive knowledge of federal education policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with education research (e.g. best practices for English Language Learners) • Familiarity with translational research (ability to translate directly into action)
Leadership / Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to manage (and work with) large Executive body • Ability to craft a vision and build consensus around that vision among senior level executives • Ability to balance needs of various groups (e.g., race, gender) • Ability to create a culture of trust and support, both among member districts and within the organization • Strong sense of what is right for the organization and ability to protect it from other “agendas” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to lead and manage a range of styles • Willingness to empower senior leadership team • Ability to generate ideas for initiatives that will keep the agenda moving forward • Ability to identify and attract talent
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong communication skills, written and spoken • Track record of representing his/her previous organization in public forums, including with the media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective public speaker • Good fundraising skills • Deep knowledge of how to handle the media
Personal Attributes *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong sense of personal accountability for the success of the Council and member districts • Ability to listen and tease out what is really important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even temperament • Sense of humility



* In addition to what is listed on prior slide

6 Criteria / Characteristics: Senior Leadership Team

Expertise and core skills required

Academic	Research	Operations	Advocacy	Communications
Knowledge / Expertise of the Following Areas				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective instructional practice, with a focus on ELL, Special Ed, Reading and Math instruction • Common Core State Standards • Instructional intervention systems • Effective professional development strategies in districts • Major commercial instructional programs and packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design, methodology and statistical techniques • NAEP • Educational testing and assessment • Conducting survey research and writing reports • Creating and maintaining educational databases • Knowledge of federal research agencies, people, and procedures (e.g., IES, NCES, NAS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban school governance systems • Urban school budget and finance systems and procedures • Personnel operations and IT systems • District business services (e.g., transportation, food services, maintenance and operations) • Council's Performance Management System (KPIs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal education legislation and programs, especially Title I, Title II, Title III, IDEA, Medicaid, E-Rate, Vocational Education, School Nutrition • Federal education regulations, guidance, and policy letters • House and Senate committee and floor parliamentary procedures • Federal court procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualizing, writing and placing opinion pieces in major media outlets • Handling of emergency communications and media problems • Publishing a regular (monthly) communications publication for the membership • Website management / utilizing web presence to tell the organization's story • Using public service announcements, ads and ideas to promote issue
Function-Specific Skills / Capabilities				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong analytics • Ability to analyze a district's instructional programs, materials, and procedures, and determine ways to improve student achievement • Ability to develop or coordinate the development of tools for use in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to recognize where research is needed and initiate it • Ability to translate complex research findings for school practitioners • Ability to develop or coordinate the development of tools for use in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong data analysis skills • Ability to analyze a district's operational / functional areas and determine ways to make operations more efficient • Ability to develop or coordinate the development of tools for use in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong political skills • Ability to analyze effect of proposed legislation on school districts • Ability to form legislative and political coalitions as needed • Ability to write and advocate legislation, regulations, and policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding writing skills • Ability to identify topics of relevance / interest to member districts and to broader public • Ability to "message" urban schools before the national media and the public • Ability to develop or coordinate the development of tools for use in the field

Skills / Capabilities Common Across Functions

- Strong communication skills (written and verbal); ability to effectively communicate with member districts (information sharing, response to requests, recommendations, etc.)
- Ability to identify patterns, synthesize common themes, and help districts translate those themes into customized applications within a district
- Ability to organize and manage technical assistance teams for member school districts
- Ability to manage a small internal team of staff (and potentially external vendors)

6 Criteria / Characteristics: Senior Leadership Team

Ideal background: Experience and education by functional area

Academic	Research	Operations	Advocacy	Communications
<p><u>Experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven track record of having improved student achievement in a major urban school district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior level experience in a research setting (district, academic, research organization, non-profit, government) • Proven track record of utilizing research for improvement purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban school experience in running major operating systems • Track record of operational improvement while in role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience with House and Senate committee and floor parliamentary procedures • Experience with the federal legislative process • Hill experience not necessary • Litigation skills not necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience with national and big-city media outlets • Experience working with polling companies, ad agencies and other communications companies • Experience managing websites • Not necessary to have been a reporter
<p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctoral-level degree in curriculum and instruction or education psychology helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctoral-level degree in psychology, sociology, economics, or educational research and statistics helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master’s degree in management, business administration or related field helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law degree or graduate degree in public policy helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate degree in journalism or communications helpful
<p><u>Network</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive network of contacts (e.g., senior curriculum and instruction staff across school districts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive network of contacts (e.g., senior researchers across the country in a variety of areas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive network of contacts (senior operations staff across school districts – finance, budget, IT, HR, transportation, food services, facilities, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DC contacts (e.g., Departments of Education, agriculture, Labor, FCC, HHS and others; House and senate committees), various non-profit and advocacy organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive network of contacts in national and big-city media outlets



7 Potential Pipelines of Candidates

Preliminary assessment of pipelines for those positions that do not have strong internal candidates

Council Positions	Executive Director	Director, Academics / Research	Director, Management Services	Director, Administration & Finance
Overall Availability of Candidates	Limited	Somewhat Limited (Academics) / Strong (Research)	Strong	Moderate / Strong
Potential Pipelines	Member Districts (including former members)	Member Districts (including former members)	Member Districts (including former members)	Member Districts (including former members)
	Non-Member Districts	Non-Member Districts	Non-Member Districts	Non-Member Districts
	Academia / Academic Centers	Academia / Academic Centers	Academia / Operational Roles	Academia / Finance Roles
	Government Agencies	Government Agencies	Government Agencies	Government Agencies
	OTHER: Non-Profit Organizations, ideally in Education	OTHER: Research Organizations	OTHER: Non-Profit Organizations	OTHER: Non-Profit Organizations
	Private Sector (with past K12 experience)	Private Sector (with past K12 experience) ⁷⁶⁷	Private Sector (with past K12 experience)	Private Sector (with past K12 experience)



7 Potential Pipelines of Candidates

Sample organizations (list will continue to be refined over time)

Districts	Academia	Government	Other
<p>Executive Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendents • Board Members <p>Dir, Academics/Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Academic Officer • Director of Research • Director of Curriculum <p>Dir, Management Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Operating Officer • Chief Financial Officer • Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources <p>Dir, Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Public Relations • Communications Director <p>Dir, Legislative Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Relations / Legislative Director 	<p>K12-related Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortium for Policy Research in Education (Penn, Teacher’s College, Harvard, Stanford, Univ. of Michigan, Northwestern, Wisconsin-Madison) • Harvard’s Public Education Leadership Project • University of Wisconsin’s Wisconsin Center for Education Research • University of Chicago’s Consortium on Chicago School Research <p>Colleges / Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former/Retired University Presidents • Former/Retired University Deans <p>Council of the Great City Colleges of Education (~85)</p>	<p>Members of Congress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a source of information for finding potential candidates <p>U.S. Department of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (political leadership) • Office of the Secretary of Education (political leadership) • Institute of Education Sciences <p>State Education Agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chiefs or staff members of SEAs with urban experience <p>Municipal leaders</p>	<p>Research Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIR • McREL • RAND Corporation • WestEd <p>Philanthropy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carnegie • Gates • Hewlett • Wallace <p>Non-Profits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACHIEVE • Center for Reform of School Systems (operations?) • Education Trust • NAACP • National Council of La Raza <p>Associations</p> <p>For-Profits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing (has recruited former superintendents) • Ed Tech • K12 Consulting

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7 Potential Pipelines of Candidates

As part of overall succession planning, we also benchmarked compensation of key Council positions against similar non-profit positions in the market

Salary Benchmarking							
Large Urban Districts		Associations		Foundations		COUNCIL	
<i>Examples:</i> Los Angeles, New York, Houston		<i>Examples:</i> NGA, ACHIEVE, NSBA, CCSSO, AASA		<i>Examples:</i> HP, Wallace, Joyce, Gates, Broad			
Superintendent	\$200K - \$300K	Executive Director	\$300K - \$400K	CEO / Managing Director	\$300K - \$500K	Executive Director	\$280K
COO	\$150K - \$250K	Associate Executive Director	\$200K - \$250K	CFO	\$200K - \$250K	Directors	\$120K - \$160K
CAO	\$150K - \$200K	Director (COO / CFO)	\$150K - \$200K	Corporate Secretary*	\$200K - \$250K		
Research / Curriculum Director	\$100K - \$150K	Director (other)	\$150K - \$200K	Director (other)	\$150K - \$250K		

- The Council’s compensation structure is generally at the lower end of comparable positions in Large Urban Districts and other Associations.
- Should the Council’s senior leadership team’s compensation be adjusted upward when the time comes to hire into these positions?

Note: The corporate secretary position is a C-level executive position responsible for board governance and communication
 Source: District websites; Non-profit 990-PF forms



IN SUMMARY: REVENUE & COST PROJECTIONS

If all the proposed changes were implemented, the Council would need to find incremental sources of revenue (or deprioritize some of the identified needs)

	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5
Revenue					
New Member Districts	\$84K	\$168K	\$253K	\$337K	\$421K
KPIs	\$37K	\$75K	\$112K	\$149K	\$186K
Total Revenue	\$121K	\$243K	\$365K	\$486K	\$607K

Cost					
Academics Specialist (1 FTE)	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K
Operations Specialist (1 FTE)	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K
Operations Manager (1 FTE)	\$127K	\$127K	\$127K	\$127K	\$127K
Communications Specialist (1 FTE)	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K	\$85K
National Perception Poll (Allocation)	\$50K	\$50K	\$50K	\$50K	\$50K
Compensation Adjustments (ED and Directors)				\$148K	\$148
Incremental Positions at time of transition *					\$197K
Total Cost (excl. comp adjustments)	\$432K	\$432K	\$432K	\$580K	\$777K

NET	(\$311K)	(\$189K)	(\$67K)	(\$94K)	(\$170K)
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Potential Impact on Membership Fees (if considered increasing to meet gap)

Average per Member District	\$4,622	\$2,801	\$981	\$1,384	\$2,525
Implied Percentage Increase (on average)	13%	8%	3%	4%	7%



* Equivalent to 1 Deputy / Chief of Staff or 2 other FTE positions – Manager / Specialist.⁷⁷⁰ In response to feedback (from interviews) that may need these positions at time of transition. Current positions are not necessarily 1:1 replacements, given staff's workload and increasing needs / demands of member districts)
Source: Internal Data. All compensation costs include a 41% benefit load factor

Appendix: Communications

The Communications Team offered ideas for additional programs and activities to advance the Council’s communications efforts

	Activity	Description
Expanding Existing Activities	Expanding Communications Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Communications personnel capacity to match increased workload – publications production, media and public relations, news reporting and editing, graphic arts, advertising, public service announcements, press conferences, etc.
	Establishing and Cultivating Closer Relations with the News Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightening contact with working journalists, columnists, news managers, bloggers, etc. to sensitize them to the challenges in urban education as well as to inform them of measurable improvements
	Increasing Contact with Council Public Relations Executives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a unified force to develop universal messages for urban education nationally and locally and to provide proactive assistance to their external and internal communications operations
	Increasing the Frequency of the National Perception Poll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every 3 years (currently every 6 years), conduct a national poll to gauge the broader public’s perception of urban public education. Evaluate extent to which public perception has improved / worsened.
	Coordinating Council Web Site Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the Council website current and organized
New Activities	Spearheading the Creation of an Urban School Television Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help capable member districts to produce urban school TV programming for distribution to member districts with public or education access channels, which have a huge appetite for quality urban school programming – especially if they have 24 hours of airtime
	Exploring New Avenues of Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore new avenues of communications through Internet sites and programs, New Media, new publications and cable and commercial television programming in addition to radio broadcast opportunities, webinars and video streaming
	Exploring the Possibility of Launching Other New Ventures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possibility of producing a communications vehicle that features advertisements, sponsoring an awards program for responsible urban education reporting, or staging an annual State of Urban Education address at the National Press Club
	Considering Avenues of Communications Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gauge the success of Council communications products, services and campaigns



OFFICE MOVE

INTRODUCTION

Council of the Great City Schools (“CGCS”) is currently in occupancy of 6,501 rentable square feet of office space at 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 702 (“Building”) under a certain Sublease set to expire on June 30, 2016. CGCS has been subleasing its space from National League of Cities since 1993.

Di Renzo Realty, LLC (“DiR”) has been retained by CGCS to act as its exclusive real estate broker. DiR has prepared the following Strategic Overview, which will discuss the following goals and objectives:

- To assess the impact of business activities at CGCS for its future office space requirements
- To determine if CGCS may remain at the Building
 - CGCS MUST RELOCATE EFFECTIVE JULY 2016
- To fully evaluate the scenario of BUY vs. LEASE and the potential for joint ownership and occupancy with any CGCS partner or like-minded organizations
 - CGCS IS PURSUING A LEASE-ONLY STRATEGY
- The identification and evaluation of competing market alternatives
- The negotiation and execution of the leasehold interest including the preparation and presentation of all required deliverables
- The competitive procurement and management of all soft and hard elements related to the project

In order to accomplish these goals and objectives, DiR offers a comprehensive Strategic Real Estate Plan as a prelude to transaction implementation; the goal is to properly align CGCS’s real estate with its underlying business plan. Using the strategic overview as a foundation we look forward to working with CGCS.

State of the Market

The Washington, DC metropolitan area maintains a plethora of commercial office space tenants. The industries represented varies from A to Z.

What is unique to the Washington area is a minimal industrial component; there is very little 'made' in this town except for policy. We are not a blue-collar / union town and with a few small exceptions, the business of Washington revolves around the political lifecycle. So long as bills are introduced AND laws passed (and appropriated!), the myriad of organizations who feed off of the political lifecycle will continue to perform.

The challenge to the Washington business community is the congressional stalemate and political brinkmanship being witnessed over the past few years.

From a non-partisan position, if our elected leaders are not providing a 3-5 year target for our business leaders to hit, then how can our business leaders guide their organizations over the same term?

Post Lehman collapse (2008), the Washington Region experienced a significant rate of growth, which was fueled mainly by the Federal Government. From a real estate perspective, investment grade properties were able to trade at all-time highs due to the perceived 'stability' as seen from the Washington Region. In turn, we have seen upward pressure on leasing rates in order to support the appreciated costs of commercial real properties.

Given the results of mid-term elections, the 'reds' were able to gain control of Congress. However, any economic path forward is yet to be determined. Plus, we are now in a bona-fide presidential election cycle. Just recently, the President submitted a 2015 FY Budget and as of the writing of this document, partisan politics seems to be gripping Washington again...

**Current Situation at
1301 Pennsylvania
Avenue, NW**

CGCS Sublease Abstract

- Sublease Agreement between CGCS and National League of Cities (Sublandlord)
- Dated June 9, 1993
- 3,429rsf according to WDCAR
- **Term: 7/15/1993 – 7/14/2003**
- Renewal Option:
 - One five (5) year term
 - 95% at market
 - 12 months prior written notice to exercise
- Rent:
 - Years 1-5: \$25.00prsf
 - Years 6-10: \$27.00prsf
 - Increased at 30% of CPI
 - Capped at 2.5% per year
- Additional Rent:
 - Proportionate share of Operating Costs beginning in 2nd year
- Security Deposit of \$7,143.75
 - To be placed in an **interest bearing account**
 - TO be returned upon sublease expiration date
- Sublease / Assignment
 - With Tenant's consent, not to be unreasonably withheld, conditioned or delayed
- Right of First Offer
 - Adjacent suite of 3,072rsf
- Signatory
 - Signed on behalf of CGCS by Michael Casserly, Executive Director on June 14, 1993

CGCS Sublease Abstract

RENEWAL OPTION EXERCISED

- Sublease Agreement between CGCS (Subtenant) and National League of Cities (Tenant)
 - Renewal option exercised by CGCS
- Dated March 4, 2003
- 6,501rsf according to (not defined, but assumed to still be WDCAR)
- **Term: 7/15/2003 – 7/14/2008**
- Renewal Option: N/A
- Rent:
 - \$31.19prsf
 - Increased at 30% of CPI
 - Capped at 2.5% per year
- Additional Rent:
 - Proportionate share of Operating Costs continue
- Security Deposit of \$7,143.75
 - To be placed in an **interest bearing account**
 - To be returned upon sublease expiration date
- Sublease / Assignment: as-is from sublease
- Right of First Offer: N/A
- Signatory
 - Signed on behalf of CGCS by Michael Casserly, Executive Director on March 11, 2003

CGCS Sublease Abstract

SECOND AMENDMENT TO SUBLEASE

- Sublease Agreement between CGCS (Subtenant) and National League of Cities (Tenant)
 - Second Amendment to Sublease
- Dated July 15, 2008
- 6,501rsf according to (not defined, but assumed to still be WDCAR)
- **Term: 7/15/2008 – 7/14/2013**
- Renewal Option: N/A
- Rent:
 - 1st year: \$38.36prsf
 - 2nd Year: \$41.00prsf
 - Increased at 30% of CPI
 - Capped at 2.5% per year
- Additional Rent:
 - Proportionate share of Real Estate Taxes Operating Costs continue
- Security Deposit of \$7,143.75
 - To be placed in an **interest bearing account**
 - To be returned upon sublease expiration date
- Sublease / Assignment: as-is from sublease
- Right of First Offer: N/A
- Signatory
 - Signed on behalf of CGCS by Michael Casserly, Executive Director on July 8, 2008

CGCS Sublease Abstract

AMENDED AND RESTATED SECOND AMENDMENT TO SUBLEASE

- Sublease Agreement between CGCS (Subtenant) and National League of Cities (Tenant)
 - Amended and Restated Second Amendment to Sublease
- Dated October 10, 2008
- 6,501rsf according to (not defined, but assumed to still be WDCAR)
- **Term: 7/15/2008 – 7/14/2015** (**amended and restated sublease expiration date**)
- Renewal Option: N/A
- Rent:
 - 7/15/2008 to 7/31/2008 = \$36.17prsf
 - 8/1/2008 to 7/14/2009 = \$38.36prsf
 - 7/15/2009 to 7/14/2010 = \$41.00prsf
 - Each rental cycle will escalate at 2.5%
 - **However, document still calls for increases at 30% of CPI with a cap at 2.5% per year that seems to be in addition to the 2.5% annual increase**
- Additional Rent:
 - Proportionate share of Real Estate Taxes Operating Costs continue
- Security Deposit of \$7,143.75
 - To be placed in an **interest bearing account**
 - To be returned upon sublease expiration date
- Sublease / Assignment: as-is from sublease
- Right of First Offer: N/A
- Signatory
 - Signed on behalf of CGCS by Michael Casserly, Executive Director on November 24, 2008

CGCS Sublease Abstract

THIRD AMENDMENT TO SUBLEASE

- Sublease Agreement between CGCS (Subtenant) and National League of Cities (Tenant)
 - Third Amendment to Sublease
- Document not dated
- 6,501rsf according to (not defined, but assumed to still be WDCAR)
- **Term: 7/15/2015 – 6/30/2016** (**new sublease expiration date**)
- Renewal Option: N/A
- Rent:
 - \$44.07prsf
 - **However, document still calls for increases at 30% of CPI with a cap at 2.5% per year that seems to be in addition to the 2.5% annual increase**
- Additional Rent:
 - Proportionate share of Real Estate Taxes Operating Costs continue
- Security Deposit of \$7,143.75
 - To be placed in an **interest bearing account**
 - To be returned upon sublease expiration date
- Sublease / Assignment: as-is from sublease
- Right of First Offer: N/A
- Signatory
 - Signed on behalf of CGCS by Michael Casserly, Executive Director on November 5, 2014

Transaction Overview

A. Data gathering

In this first phase, DiR will begin to discover and document the unique requirements of CGCS. DiR will identify critical issues that are important to CGCS's business strategy, vision, mission, goals and objectives, and how its real estate must support these goals moving forward. If applicable, a thorough review of CGCS's current working environment at 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue NW to include any "likes" and "dislikes" will be noted as we begin to challenge and / or break down current assumptions or paradigms and introduce new strategies and potential solutions worthy of consideration.

Team Integration, Organization & Communication Strategies

DiR and the designated CGCS representatives – along with other consultants as appropriate – will meet to define roles and responsibilities, determine the scope of work, project methodology, establish reporting protocol, schedule regular project meetings, schedule deliverable dates, presentation dates, and focus group/staff or department interview dates (as appropriate).

B. Transaction Drivers

Business

- Review of published strategies / goals / mission materials. As appropriate, DiR will review and summarize any written materials that describe the strategies, goals and mission of CGCS.
- Review of the key elements of CGCS's business plan. DiR will review appropriate business documents and speak with designated staff about the key elements of the current business plan, including the review of the financial statements (see below), marketing plans for various CGCS business development initiatives, operational divisions and field office (existing and planned), staffing strategies outreach and grant initiatives, etc. DiR will also document any perceived threats to specific CGCS projects and resulting impact on staff and facility requirements.
- Gather organizational charts, employee counts (historical, current and projected).
- Executive / Board of Director Briefings. As appropriate, DiR will interview senior executives and/or Board Members at CGCS to understand their vision of the future of the organization, including the opportunities and challenges it may face. DiR will also try to understand the perception of the role that real estate has in CGCS's future.

Financial Drivers

- Review income statements and balance sheet to understand the impact of real estate and occupancy costs on CGCS's financial profile.
- Real estate costs. Obtain and review historical real estate costs for CGCS's current location, including operating costs and real estate taxes.
- Review potential financing objectives. Work with CGCS and/or its financial advisors, define its financing objectives (e.g., term of financing, fixed or variable rate, covenants, hedge agreements, debt capacity, capital campaign objectives, etc.).
- Depending on the location selected, DiR will identify any potential tax credits or other local incentives that would encourage sustainable development.

Space/Facility Drivers

- DiR will coordinate an on-site inspection and evaluation of the current facilities. DiR will work with CGCS to develop an internal quantitative "Baseline Program". This Program will include a validation of current macro office space efficiency and utilization ratios for material benchmarking measures on a "per person" or "per seat" basis.
- DiR will also jointly develop with CGCS an outline statement of the future facility requirements, including:
 - Technical and facility requirements, including telecom (voice and data), electrical power, plumbing and mechanical, floor loading, parking, HVAC, etc.
 - Macro programming and floor layout concepts as they relate to square footage standard and ratios, foot print vs. site massing analysis, construction cost of interiors, finish levels, etc.
 - CGCS's projected head count growth (both housed and non-housed) correlated to future square footage requirements based on CGCS's space standards and on industry bench marking to comparable organizations.

Locational Drivers

- Research potential requirements of CGCS regarding proximity to key institutions, amenities, access to public transportation and a reasonable distance to the equipment warehouse.

- Zip code analysis of employee location (by job function if possible).
- DiR will investigate market comparables in the ancillary areas of Downtown to include Navy Yard, Ballpark District and NoMa.
- DiR, working in concert with CGCS will also develop of geographic sensitivity analysis relative to general and key staff “churn” on a location by location basis.

Marketplace Drivers

- DiR will evaluate and track market trends in each applicable market for the types of space required by CGCS, including: future office space availability for both existing and planned developments; office space to be vacated; purchase opportunities; market conditions for construction trades; local green construction initiatives and legislation; and political climate with respect to municipal cooperation.
- Presentation of findings. DiR will summarize the findings, including critical issues and priorities, and present to appropriate CGCS personnel.

C. Analysis and Recommendations

DiR will evaluate multiple scenarios with specific market alternatives and compare them to the overall goals and objectives of CGCS. DiR recognizes that such an evaluation is iterative in nature as the goals and objectives established at the outset of the project often change at times causing a shift in which scenarios and alternatives are to be evaluated. At the conclusion of the second phase, DiR will prepare an executive briefing for consideration by the real estate committee.

Status Quo Scenario

DiR will construct a Status Quo scenario incorporating financial analysis representing the cost, function and utility of maintaining its current facilities in substantially the current configuration over a 10 to 15 year horizon. The Status Quo will serve as an objective basis of comparison to use against all the Alternate Strategies (defined below).

Alternate Strategies

Using the information obtained above as a foundation, DiR will create a variety of alternatives for consideration and validation by CGCS. Scenario options will include financial and qualitative evaluation of the following:

- Stay vs. Move (if stay option is applicable)
- Lease vs. Purchase (if purchase option is applicable)
- Financing Options (Purchase)
- Capital Costs (Lease)
- Geographic Options - D.C. and suburban submarkets (if applicable)

Define Transaction Structures Specific to CGCS

Based on the alternatives identified, DiR will define transaction structures, weighing the benefits and risks in order to determine the best outcome for CGCS.

Presentation of Findings & Final Recommendation

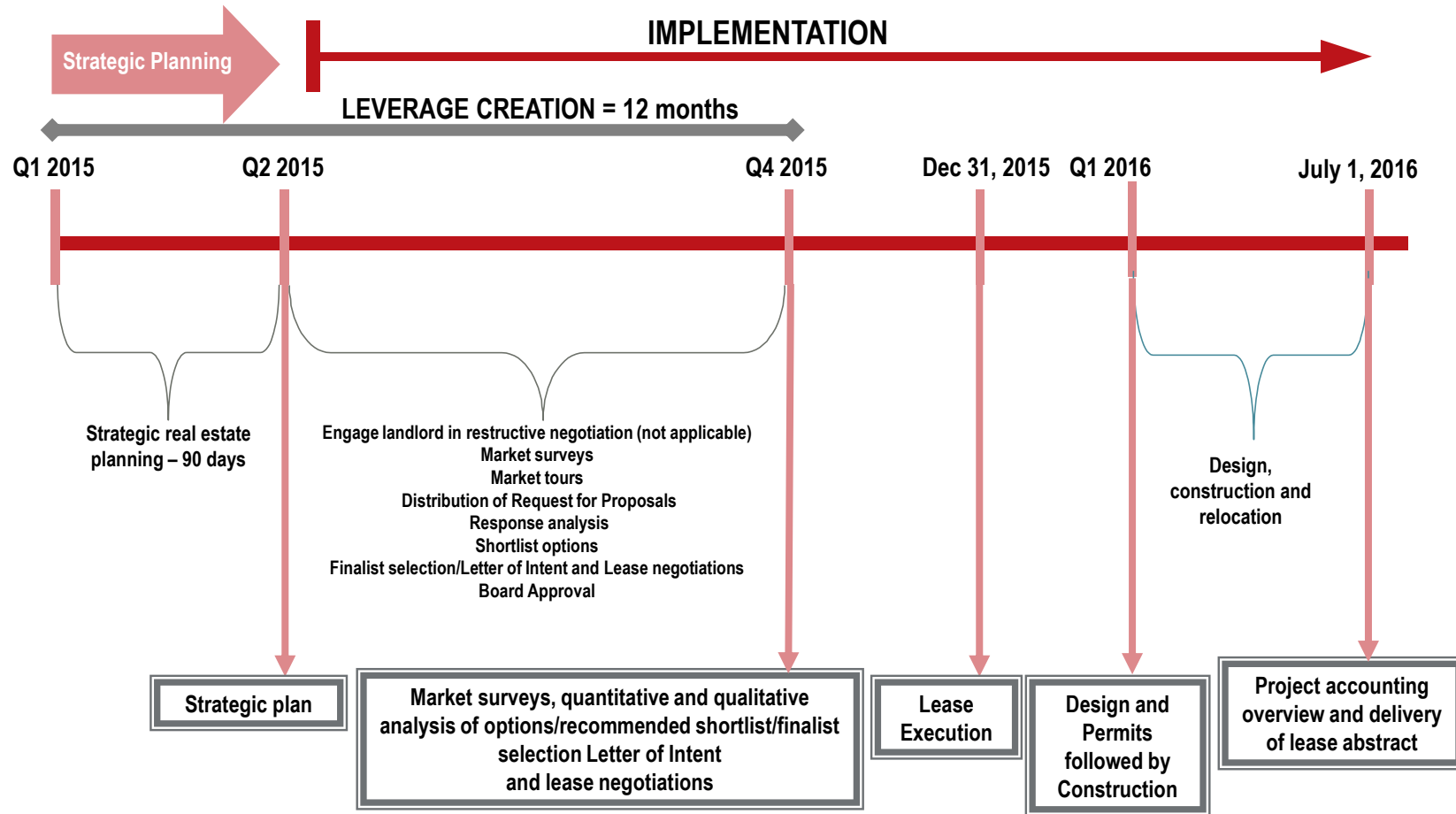
After working with the CGCS representatives on the final report and recommendation, DiR will present the business case for the recommended strategy for appropriate executive or Board of Director's approval.

Summary & Justification

At CGCS's election, DiR will summarize the recommendations in an executive-level report, which may be presented by DiR at the Board level.

Conceptual Relocation Schedules

The Path Forward – Relocation Effective July 2016



Preliminary Space Program



Preliminary Space Program - February 25, 2015

	Move In July 2016				
Current Staff/Needs	Staff	Workspace	Unit SF	Req'd Sqft	Workspace Type
Executive Director	1	1	240	240	Private Office - Window Required
Directors	8	8	120	960	Private Office - Window Required
Managers	7	7	100	700	Private Office - Window Optional
Staff Persons 1-7	7	7	75	525	Cubicles / Workstations
Consultants	4	4	64	256	Workstations
GROWTH - Manager's Offices	3	3	100	300	
Subtotal Personnel & USF	30	30	699	2,981	
SUPPORT SPACE - OFFICE AREA FUNCTIONS		Workspace	Unit SF	Extd SF	Comments
Reception Area (Staff Assistant/Receptionist)		1	200	200	Seating for 2 Guests
Kitchen		1	200	200	Eat-in Kitchen / Pantry
Large Conference Room		1	500	500	To seat 16 -20 at a table with side chairs
Small Conference Room		1	250	250	To seat 8-10 at a table with side chairs
Copy/Work Room		1	300	300	Copy, Fax, Mail
LAN Room		1	100	100	Lockable with supplemental HVAC?
Storage/Files		1	150	150	Misc. Storage and Files
Coat Closet		1	10	10	
Printer/Fax Stations		3	6	18	
SUBTOTAL SUPPORT SPACE - OFFICE AREA FUNCTIONS		11	1716	1,728	
Circulation (35%) - estimated				35%	
Total Usable Square Feet				6,357	
Core Factor (20%) - estimated				20%	
Estimated Total Rentable Square Feet				7,629	