

# Annual Report 2024- 2025



# Executive Committee

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*Cover Photo: Clockwise*

*Students from Tulsa Public Schools*

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*Contents Page Photo: Students from Tulsa Public Schools*

*Page 4 Photo: Student from Des Moines Public Schools*

*Page 6 Photo: Left photo: Student from Miami-Dade Public  
Schools, Right Photo: Students from Tulsa Public Schools*

*Page 17: Students from Atlanta Public Schools*

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# MESSAGE *from the* CHAIR

*“In large cities all across America, our districts are demonstrating what is possible when we remain student-centered and focused.”*

—MARCIA ANDREWS

As the Council of the Great City Schools, we represent 7.8 million students. We are committed to building a legacy for our students that is built on a world-class education that they so richly deserve.

This noble and important goal can be complicated by the many obstacles we face in public education. Whether it's attendance and chronic absenteeism, keeping our schools safe, finding a better way forward on discipline, adjusting to new technologies, or simply finding the money, the issues can be unrelenting.

But in large cities all across America, our districts are demonstrating what is possible when we remain student-centered and focused. All of us in the Council are unified in a common objective. In Palm Beach County, we think of it as educating, affirming, and inspiring our students. But each of our member districts knows that, no matter what we call it, our goal remains student success for all.

Our achievements aren't by accident. They are the result of holding ourselves and our students to a higher standard. We focus on enriching the learning experience at every level. What we do every single day is centered on building that legacy. That includes our firm commitment to representing the interests and being the voice of our member schools when it counts the most.

Faced with the prospect of steep cuts to federal funding, the Council's legislative team and its member lobbyists aggressively advocated against those reductions and won the release of nearly \$7 billion in federal education funding that the US Department of Education withheld from school districts in July 2025.

That number is more than just a dollar amount. It represents lives changed and opportunities created by federal funding of important programs—opportunities the Council worked hard to protect. That is proof that when we combine the national leadership of the Council with focused, local support, we create the school systems our students deserve.

As Council members, you are making this kind of impact every single day in your own communities. That's why the Council makes a point to support current and rising leaders by providing Student Outcomes Focused Governance coaching and technical assistance to district leadership teams across the country.

I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude for all of you. Thank you for staying the course and never giving up on our children. Let's continue to support one another, share what works, and prove what's possible.

Never forget that we are the Council of the Great City Schools. We should all be proud of the work we have been doing for almost 70 years. That is truly an enduring commitment to improving public education.

Make It Happen!

Marcia Andrews  
*Chair of the Board, 2024-25*

# MESSAGE *from the* DIRECTOR

*“Despite the pace of events over the past months, we have remained steadfast in representing your voices and interests with the federal executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government.”*

—RAY HART



I am proud to present this annual report on the activities of the Council of the Great City Schools during the 2024-25 program year.

It has been a challenging year for Great City Schools and the students, families, and communities we support. The Council has endeavored to help its member districts make sense of the array of legal and policy developments impacting their work and mission, keeping districts informed about potential implications of federal funding changes, Medicaid reimbursements, private school voucher proposals. Despite the pace of events over the past months, we have remained steadfast in representing your voices and interests with the federal executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government.

The Council's legislative team successfully lobbied against proposed cuts to Title I funding and advocated for the immediate release of almost \$7 billion in federal education funding withheld from states and school districts in the summer of 2025. We compiled and drafted resources for districts on responding to requests by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to access school grounds and ICE enforcement authority at schools and provided regular updates to staff on U.S. Supreme Court and federal court cases affecting education.

To support current and rising leaders, we provided Student Outcomes Focused Governance coaching and technical assistance to school boards, superintendents, and district leadership teams across the country. We embarked on our third year of school board coaching cohorts and launched the third cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute for Superintendents.

Among the many reports and tools released over the course of the year, the Council published reports on both instructional and operational key performance indicators and a guide for districts on managing leadership transitions. The Council supported the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) districts with the release of the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results in reading and mathematics and helped highlight trends and academic recovery in urban districts. In addition, Council staff provided hands-on technical assistance through Strategic Support Team reviews in the areas of instruction, special education, human resources, facilities, transportation, and procurement.

In the area of curriculum and instruction, the Council offered in-person and online professional learning on a variety of topics such as foundational literacy, mathematics pathways, artificial intelligence, and curriculum design and assessment. We continued to develop the Professional Learning Platform, created a Dual Language Immersion Playbook focused on English learners with disabilities, and finalized guidance on identifying and supporting newcomer students.

In addition to a successful Annual Fall Conference hosted by the Dallas Independent School District, the Council held a full line-up of job-alike convenings throughout the year.

I thank Marcia Andrews for her leadership this year as Chair. Finally, I thank the Council's exceptional staff for the dedication and the expertise they put into their work on behalf of our students every day. Thank you for a great year!

Ray Hart  
*Executive Director*

# 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 and productive members of society.

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

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

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

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

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





*Top photo: Former U.S. Court of Appeals Judge David Tatel discusses the changing public schools legal landscape at the Legislative/Policy Conference.*

*Middle photo: Science pioneer Katya Echazarreta emphasizes the vital role of educators at the Fall Conference in Dallas.*

*Bottom photo: Political analyst Chuck Todd, second from left, poses with Council leadership, left to right, Secretary/Treasurer Valerie Davis, Chair Marcia Andrews, Chair-elect Sonja Brookins Santelises, and Council Executive Director Ray Hart.*

# Vision



## Vision of the Great City Schools

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.

We commit ourselves to the work of advancing empathy, equity, justice, and tolerance, and we vow to do everything we can to vigorously resist the forces of ignorance, fear, and prejudice as we teach and guide our students. We will keep our commitments, and with society's support, cities will become the center of a strong and equitable nation with urban public schools successfully teaching our children and building our communities.

## Mission of the Great City Schools

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.

## Goals of the Great City Schools

- 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 enhance the effectiveness of and efficiency of our institutions.
- To bolster the public's confidence in urban public education.



*Top photo: Detroit Schools Superintendent Nikolai Vitti addresses conferees attending the Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Leaders Conference in Detroit.*

*Middle photo: New York City Public Schools Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos gives a presentation at the Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Leaders Conference in Detroit.*

*Bottom photo: Philadelphia Schools Superintendent Tony Watlington, right, shares his views at a session at the 68th Annual Fall Conference in Dallas. He was joined at the session by, left to right, Boston school board member Michael O'Neill and Fresno school board member Valerie Davis.*

# Organizational Structure

School districts located in cities with populations over 250,000 and student enrollments over 25,000 are eligible for membership in the Council of the Great City Schools. Membership is also open to those districts serving a state's largest city, depending on its urban characteristics.

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

The board of directors has established five special task forces to address major issues facing the membership. These include **English Language Learners and Bilingual Education Task Force** to focus on issues around the education of English language learners.

A **Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development** was established to eliminate gaps in the academic achievement of students by race. A **Task Force on Leadership, Governance, Management, and Finance** addresses concerns about issues surrounding urban school leadership and management. **Black and Latino Young Men and Boys Task Force** works to implement the pledge the membership took to improve conditions and outcomes for these students. And the organization has recently initiated a **Black and Latina Young Women and Girls Task Force** to strengthen its commitment to equity.

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

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

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

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

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

# Demographics

**17:1**

Student-Teacher Ratio

**14k**

Number of Schools

**7.2M**

Total Student Enrollment

**72%**

Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility

**16%**

English Language Learners

**434k**

Total Number of Teachers

**16%**

Students With Individualized Education Plan (IEP's)

## Total Student Enrollment

**44%** Hispanic

**26%** African American

**18%** White

**7%** Asian/Pacific Islander

**1%** Alaskan/  
Native American/Other

# Conferences

## July 9–11, 2024

Curriculum, Research,  
Instructional Leaders Conference  
*Chicago, IL*

## July 11–13, 2024

Public Relations Executive Meeting  
*Bellevue, WA*

## October 16–20, 2024

68th Annual Fall Conference  
*Dallas, TX*

## November 19–22, 2024

Meeting of Directors and Chiefs of Finance,  
Purchasing, Risk Management, and  
Internal Audit  
*West Palm Beach, FL*

## February 4–7, 2025

Chief Human Resources  
Officers Conference  
*Baltimore, MD*

## March 22–25, 2025

Legislative/Policy Conference  
*Washington, DC*

## April 8–11, 2025

Chief Operating Officers, and Directors of  
Facilities, Child Nutrition, Safety & Security,  
and Transportation Conference  
*Charlotte, NC*

## May 13–17, 2025

Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee Education  
Directors Meeting  
*Baltimore, MD*

## June 10–13, 2025

Chief Information Officers Conference  
*Chicago, IL*

# Fall Conference

*“So, it can be said that the first Black woman to win a Pulitzer Prize in journalism came out of public schools.”*

— ISABEL WILKERSON

Urban school superintendents, school board members, senior administrators, and college deans of education attended the Council of the Great City Schools' 68th Annual Fall Conference in Dallas, Oct. 16-20, hosted by the Dallas Independent School District.

During her keynote address, best-selling author Isabel Wilkerson praised public schools and highlighted her own background as a graduate of the District of Columbia Public Schools. “So, it can be said that the first Black woman to win a Pulitzer Prize in journalism came out of public schools,” Wilkerson stated.

She told conferees that in everything she does, she thinks about her ancestors who survived the Middle Passage and endured the unimaginable horrors of slavery so that America could exist.

In his address to urban educators, political analyst Chuck Todd called for the “revitalization of local news.” According to Todd, the biggest problem in the nation’s information ecosystem is the decline of local news coverage and the tendency to nationalize local issues, which leads to polarization.

“By improving communication and distribution of information at the local level,” Todd said, “we can debunk and diffuse the anger out there and get people to stop consuming national points of view and trying to apply it locally.”

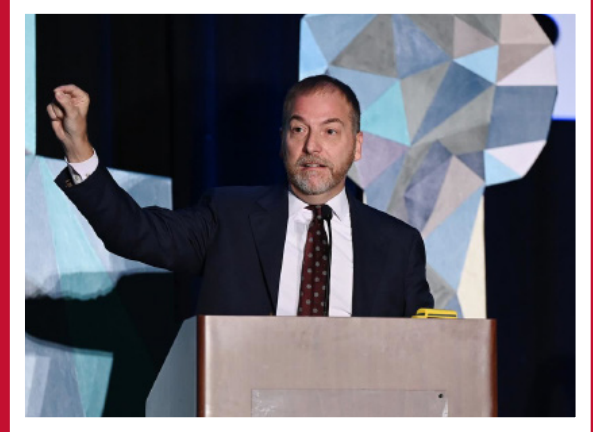
Todd also moderated the national town hall featuring a panel of students from Council member districts. Carolina Carchi, a senior from Chicago Public Schools, expressed that young people often feel disconnected from the political process and that many feel the two political parties do not truly represent their interests.

“We view them as ‘two wings of the same bird,’ each promoting distinct values but ultimately supporting policies—such as continued involvement in wars—that do not align with our vision for the future,” said Carchi.

Also addressing the conference was science pioneer Katya Echazarreta, who recalled moving to San Diego at age eight and not speaking any English. Yet her teacher, who spoke no Spanish, would sit with her every day and teach her individually.

“It is thanks to her that within one year I was already speaking English, within two years I was reading and writing English, and within three years, I’m now in the sixth grade, reading, writing, and speaking at an eighth grade level,” said Echazarreta.

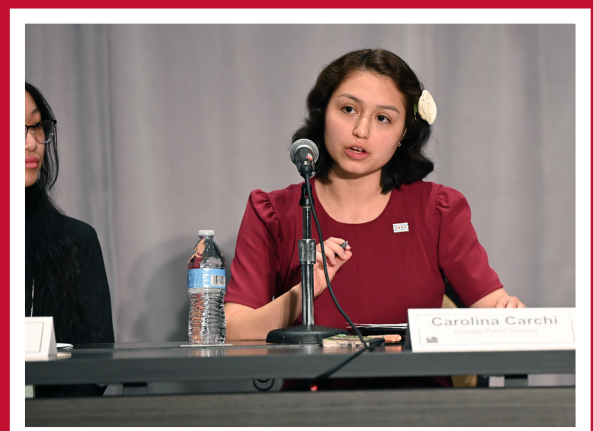
The first Mexican-born woman to travel to space, Echazarreta said her experience shows what can happen when educators invest in their students and spend the time required to get them up to par, “instead of just pushing them aside and hoping everything is going to turn out ok for them.”



*Political Analyst Chuck Todd discusses the importance of local news.*



*Author Isabel Wilkerson is interviewed by District of Columbia Schools Chancellor Lewis Ferebee.*



*Chicago student Carolina Carchi shares her views at the Town Hall.*

# Legislative/Policy Conference

Big-city educators assembled in the nation's capital to attend the 2025 Council of the Great City Schools' Legislative Policy Conference, March 22-25.

CNN Chief Congressional Correspondent Manu Raju offered sound advice to educators: Press your case for public education both to Congress members and to local journalists.

"Develop a relationship with reporters, describe the story, describe the challenges," advised Raju. "Helping the reporter understand the impact at the local level can go a long way in selling him or her on covering the issue."

Political commentator Tara Setmayer called herself a "proud, proud, product of New Jersey Public Schools" and criticized efforts to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education, calling such actions to be a direct threat to the future of students, teachers, and the nation's economic and democratic stability.

"If history teaches us anything, it is when education is under attack, democracy itself is at stake," Setmayer said during an insightful address to urban educators assembled for the Legislative/Policy Conference.

In light of ongoing attacks on public education, she encouraged educators to remain resilient, to advocate fiercely for their students, and to refuse to let misinformation dictate what happens in their classrooms.

Civil rights attorney and former U.S. Court of Appeals Judge David Tatel discussed how the current presidential administration's attempts to use civil rights law against protected groups present vulnerabilities for public school students.

In the absence of a federal Department of Education, Tatel noted that school districts will shoulder all responsibility for protecting vulnerable children, along with state governments "in the blue states."

Also addressing the conference was Josh Cowen, professor of education policy at Michigan State University. He warned conferees about the aggressive expansion of school vouchers occurring across the country and urged leaders to call them what they are: a deliberate effort to defund public schools. Instead of vouchers, Cowen advocated for investments in proven strategies such as teacher training, universal pre-K, school meals, and tutoring programs.

The professor framed the fight against vouchers as a broader battle over the future of public education. "Where our treasure is, there our hearts will be also," he concluded. "If we treasure public education, we have to fight for it."



*CNN Chief Congressional Correspondent Manu Raju gives advice to educators.*



*Political commentator Tara Setmayer addresses the issue of democracy.*



*Michigan State University Professor Josh Cowen discusses vouchers.*

# Highlights of Council Activities

## COMMUNICATIONS

**The Council of the Great City Schools works to give the public and the press a balanced and accurate view of the challenges, developments, and successes of urban public schools. In 2024-25 the Council—**

- Issued more than a dozen press releases on Council activities, as well as statements on critical current events impacting the lives of urban schoolchildren.
- Fielded scores of inquiries from national and regional media outlets such as *Education Week*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the 74, *The Baltimore Sun*, and the *Louisville Courier Journal*.
- Released the *Leadership Transition Guide*, a publication that highlights best practices and lessons from school communication directors on managing changes in district leadership. The publication received the top award from the National School Public Relations Association.
- Organized a session at the SXSW EDU Conference in Austin on why high standards are a key to academic success, moderated by Council Executive Director Ray Hart.
- Hosted the 68th Annual Fall Conference, featuring political analyst Chuck Todd, science pioneer Katya Echazarreta, and best-selling author Isabel Wilkerson as keynote speakers and a national town hall meeting with an all-student panel.
- Emailed eight issues of the Council's award-winning digital newsletter, the *Urban Educator*.
- Coordinated the CGCS Math and Science Scholarships Program and the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Scholarship for Educational Courage and Justice.
- Hosted the 24th Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in Washington, DC.
- Coordinated the Green-Garner Award ceremony, honoring the nation's top urban educator.
- Worked with Scholastic to present the winner of the Richard M. Robinson Literacy Champion Award, recognizing a Council member school district for progress in advancing reading achievement.
- Organized a virtual event on the results of the 2024 Nation's Report Card sponsored by the Council, Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Governors Association.

## LEGISLATION

**In voicing its proposals and ideas to Congress and other federal policymakers, the Council helps shape legislation to strengthen the quality of schooling for the nation's urban children. In 2024-25, the Council—**

- Successfully lobbied against federal education funding cuts in Fiscal Year 2025, withstanding threats that included strict budget spending caps and a House appropriations proposal to cut Title I by 25% and eliminate funding for teacher effectiveness and English learner programs.
- Advocated for the immediate release of almost \$7 billion in federal education funding that the White House and U.S. Department of Education withheld from states and school districts prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year.
- Provided detailed briefings to CGCS school boards, superintendents, and other senior district officials immediately following the November 2024 elections on the education priorities of the incoming administration and the potential implications for federal funding, Medicaid reimbursements, private school voucher proposals, and immigration action at school locations.
- Compiled and drafted resources for Council member legal departments on responding to requests by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to access school grounds and ICE enforcement authority at schools.
- Established a working group of general counsels to develop a legal risk assessment matrix to be used by Council member legal departments in evaluating Title VI programs.
- Briefed member district Chief Information Officers on the application requirements for the Federal Communications Commission's cybersecurity pilot program for K-12 schools. Submitted comments to the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to strengthen reporting requirements and help school districts address growing cybersecurity needs.
- Filed an amicus brief in the U.S. District Court of Colorado case *Denver Public Schools v. Noem*, asserting that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities should not occur in "protected areas" like schools.

- Joined amicus briefs filed in the U.S. Supreme Court cases: *Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board v. Drummond* (religious charter schools); *A.J.T. v. Osseo Area Schools, Independent School District No. 279* (standard for Section 504 discrimination); *Federal Communications Commission v. Consumers' Research* (E-Rate funding); and *Mahmoud v. Taylor* (curriculum opt-outs on religious grounds).
- Provided regular updates to Council member legal departments on U.S. Supreme Court and federal court cases affecting education.
- Provided updates to Council member legal departments, federal program directors, and other district leaders on new guidance, interpretations, and compliance requirements issued by the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Justice, as well as various White House Executive Orders affecting education.
- Co-hosted legal webinars for Council districts with the law firm Husch Blackwell on the Impact of Federal Immigration Policy Shifts on Public School Districts and the U.S. Department of Education's Dear Colleague Letter on Race in Education.
- Consulted with experts in the D.C. legal community to explore options for Council member districts regarding the Department of Education's withholding of federal title funds, cancellation of grant funds, and revocation of waivers extending funds liquidation.
- Initiated multiple discussions and fielded dozens of questions from member district superintendents, chief financial officers, federal program directors, and other leaders regarding the federal COVID relief funding deadline in September 2024, addressing the requirements for the on-time obligation of funds and sharing information about the potential for extensions of the liquidation period.
- Convened the Council member district general counsels for a pre-meeting before the 2024 Annual Fall Conference in Dallas, TX, addressing topics such as the October 2023 and 2024 Supreme Court terms and their potential impact on public education, social media litigation, the fiscal impact and the segregative effect of charter schools, the Office for Civil Rights' "voluntary" resolution agreement process, sexual abuse negligence claims against school districts, and other legal issues.
- Hosted the 2025 Annual Legislative/Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., with remarks from CNN Chief Congressional Correspondent Manu Raju and legislative briefings and Q&A sessions with staff from Congress and education policy and political messaging experts.
- Held monthly meetings with general counsels and special education legal counsels to provide updates on pending federal and state education litigation, discuss common issues of concern, and disseminate new federal regulations and guidance.
- Convened regular meetings with the Council members' government relations directors to provide updates on congressional action and sent multiple alerts regarding the need for district outreach to Capitol Hill regarding education funding, budget reconciliation, and other legislative proposals.

## RESEARCH

**Timely data collection and analysis allow the Council to prepare comprehensive reports, predict trends, and assess the effects of various policies, reforms, and practices on student performance. In 2024-25, the Council—**

- Convened monthly research, evaluation, and assessment meetings with member districts to address district needs, share best practices in urban education research, and support continued recovery from the pandemic and efforts to close performance gaps.
- Convened quarterly Chief Performance and Accountability Officer meetings to address district needs and challenges, while building a community of practice to advance the strategic use of data in urban school districts.
- Convened regular Assessment Consortium meetings with member districts using NWEA, Curriculum Associates, and Renaissance assessments, creating a forum to share data, best practices, and implementation strategies and challenges.
- Supported member districts during the release of the 2024 NAEP results by providing key data points and trend analyses to inform local communications. Provided on-site assistance during the NCES pre-release workshop and ongoing support throughout the release period.
- Continued the Council's partnership with RAND Corporation to administer two American School District Panel national surveys, gathering superintendent and district leader perspectives on critical issues including the superintendency, staffing, math and civics instruction, cell phone policies, and the use of artificial intelligence.
- Collected, analyzed, and reported on the Council's most recent Academic Key Performance Indicator (KPI) study (2022-23).
- Updated the Council's Academic KPI dashboards, adding longitudinal and cross-district comparisons to strengthen district leaders' data use and decision-making. This included updating our dashboards specifically for English Learners and Students with Disabilities, enabling districts to track performance trends within these groups and benchmark against other districts and CGCS overall.
- Responded to requests from district leaders and Council staff with customized reports on Council Operational KPIs as well as federal operations and staffing data.

- Developed guidance on the use of data and the role of research directors in strategic planning processes.
- Updated the Council's interactive NAEP dashboards with 2024 NAEP results, enabling TUDA district leaders to examine fourth and eighth grade math and reading trends across 2002–2024 administrations.
- Updated the Council's enrollment dashboards with the most recently available membership data from the National Center for Education Statistics, enabling districts to track enrollment trends from 2012–2024 by grade level and race/ethnicity, with additional dashboards for Students with Disabilities and English Learners updated through 2023.
- Convened two meetings of the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) Task Force to provide feedback and recommendations to the National Assessment Governing Board and the National Center for Education Statistics on the development and operation of the TUDA program.
- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the National Assessment Governing Board; Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness; American Education Research Association, Harvard Strategic Data Project, National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education, AIR-RESTART Network, and the NAEP Validity Studies Panel.
- Delivered technical assistance and responded to member district requests by providing statistical analyses and research support, delivering timely data and insights to inform decision-making.
- Partnered with formative assessment vendors to produce and disseminate reports on students' academic recovery from the pandemic using member district data.
- Developed and produced the study, *Urban District Superintendents: Characteristics, Tenure, and Salaries (9th Report)*.
- Analyzed and supported member districts in interpreting and sharing results from the 2024 Education Recovery Scorecard study.
- Convened bi-monthly meetings with Early Learning Leaders, Principal Supervisors, Chief Academic Officers, and Chiefs of Schools on issues pertaining to their field.
- Convened monthly meetings with district core content directors to address shared challenges and build a professional learning community.
- Convened quarterly *Instructional Spotlights* to highlight district use of the *Supporting Excellence Framework* to assess the quality of curriculum guidance and revise accordingly.
- Convened a virtual meeting of Chief Academic Officers and Chiefs of Schools on artificial intelligence and data science.
- Supported several member districts participating in and presenting at the Outcomes-Based Contracting (OBC) Convening in Austin, TX.
- Continued collaboration with Student Achievement Partners, in the implementation and field testing of the e2 Essential and Equitable Walkthrough Tools in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Collaborated with external strategic partners to support urban districts with standards implementation, how to accelerate student learning, and the effective use and sunset of ESSER funds.
- Provided technical support to districts by reviewing and providing feedback on their curriculum guidance using the Council's resource *Supporting Excellence, Second Edition: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum*.
- Collaborated with leading mathematics, science, history/social science, and literacy organizations to share perspectives from policymakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders on emerging issues and trends in teaching and learning, including designing high school mathematics pathways, teaching history using multiple perspectives, and teaching reading to older students.

## ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council's most important priorities. In 2024-25, the Council—**

- Convened monthly meetings with instructional leaders, Equity Leaders, Special Education Leaders, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Leaders, Social-Emotional Learning Leaders, Mental Health Leaders, and Restorative Practice Leaders on issues pertaining to their field.
- Conducted strategic support team reviews in the areas of academic and special education programming for Hillsborough County Public Schools, Memphis-Shelby County Schools, and Minneapolis Public Schools. Shared findings and provided recommendations to district senior leadership.
- Surveyed Chief Academic Officers and Chiefs of Schools to gauge their needs and priorities and refine the Council's services, convenings, and resources for these groups.

- Convened a network of districts to develop common criteria on prioritizing middle school content, considering what is required for deep understanding, addressing unfinished learning, and leveraging the district's curriculum guidance along with high-quality instructional materials for mathematics.
- Hosted the 2024 July Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Conference in Chicago, IL, featuring Former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan as a keynote speaker.
- Worked with College Board on a webinar on national Advanced Placement (AP) data, providing member districts with aggregated Council data and information on Professional Learning opportunities to help support teachers. Member districts also had the opportunity to request their own data.

## BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT, AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

**America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2024-25, the Council—**

- Convened monthly meetings with EL program directors and staff to support professional learning, share information, and provide mutual assistance on topics such as foundational literacy, SLIFE supports, oral language development, and translation/interpretation services.
- Continued development of writing courses in partnership with UC Irvine's Pathway to Academic Success Project.
- Hosted a facilitator training in Washington, D.C., for the Council's professional development courses on teaching writing to English learners.
- Concluded the piloting of the Educational Background Questionnaire (EBQ) and Spanish literacy screener with five districts and gathered feedback from intake managers and pilot coordinators to refine the tools.
- Finalized a comprehensive guidance document on identifying and supporting newcomer students, co-developed with CUNY's Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society (RISLUS). The document includes an Educational Background Questionnaire (EBQ) and protocols.
- Analyzed trends in EL enrollment, languages spoken, chronic absenteeism, special education identification, AP course participation, Algebra I completion, English proficiency, and ninth-grade course failures using the Council's Academic Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data and federal data sources.
- Conducted a survey on professional development and staffing to support English learners in Council-member districts.
- Compiled analyses of EL demographics and performance, as well as English learner program professional development and staffing, for a forthcoming update to the *2019 English Language Learners in America's Great City Schools* publication.
- Launched the development of a Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Playbook focused on English learners with disabilities (dually identified students), with participation from 12 Council-member districts.
- Secured a \$20,000 grant from the Oak Foundation to support the companion Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Playbook project to expand access to language learning opportunities for students with learning differences.
- Updated and expanded a curated set of immigration-related resources for districts, including sample board resolutions, family letters, FAQs, and legal guidance, in response to post-election policy concerns.
- Collaborated with the National EL Roundtable, consisting of roughly 20 national organizations, to advocate for the timely allocation of FY2025 federal funds to support English learner programs and other policy-related priorities.
- Supported districts in implementing professional development via the Council's Professional Learning Platform (PLP), including courses on teaching writing to ELs and *Complex Thinking and Communication* in ELA/ELD and mathematics.
- Hosted the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education (BIRE) Meeting on May 13–17, 2025, in Baltimore for 202 attendees from 30 Council-member districts and other organizations. Sessions addressed welcoming newcomers, multilingualism, foundational skills, and systemic supports.
- Presented the 2025 Valeria Silva Award for Outstanding Contributions to English Learner Achievement, recognizing a district administrator or principal for significant and lasting impact on EL academic success. The award, presented at the BIRE Meeting in Baltimore, included a \$1,000 prize and full travel and registration reimbursement, supported by Curriculum Associates.
- Designed and facilitated Challenge of Practice sessions at BIRE 2025, enabling district teams to collaboratively address persistent issues with expert guidance. Participants reported strong intentions to implement new strategies and continue collaboration.
- Responded to numerous member district queries on EL-related issues, including newcomer enrollment, ELPA planning, multilingual pathways, and the use of devices and artificial intelligence in translation.

## LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

**The Task Forces on Leadership, Governance, Management, and School Finance address the quality and tenure of leadership and management in and funding of urban schools. In 2024-25, the Council—**

- Conducted bi-monthly calls with both Superintendents and Board Representatives to provide information and updates on topics of interest and allow for sharing across member districts.
- Hosted a superintendent-only convening at the 2024 Annual Fall Conference in Dallas, TX to provide additional technical assistance and support to new and experienced superintendents.
- Provided on-site and virtual support to new and experienced Council superintendents and cabinet members through the Superintendent-in-Residence and a cadre of coaches.
- Graduated the second cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Program for Superintendents in October 2024 and launched the third cohort in February 2025.
- Convened quarterly meetings for Council member School Board support staff and Chiefs of Staff
- Facilitated three learning cohorts supporting board members, district central office staff, and aspiring board coaches with training, guidance, and opportunities for collaboration in Student Outcomes-Focused Governance.
- Provided hands-on coaching support to Council member district board members, superintendents, and leadership teams at their request.
- Provided board governance coaching and training, including multi-day school board and/or staff retreats in over 22 districts.
- Held regular calls with Directors of Facilities and Plant Operations, Chief Financial Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chief Human Resource Officers, Procurement Directors, Risk Management Directors, Emergency Managers, Chiefs of Police/Safety and Security Officers, Food Service Directors, Transportation Directors, and Internal Auditors fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among district leaders.
- Hosted in-person job-alike conferences for Chief Finance Officers, Chief Human Resource Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chief Operating Officers, and Child Nutrition Directors, Facilities Directors, Purchasing Directors, Risk Management Directors, Safety & Security Directors, Transportation Directors, and Chief Internal Auditors.

- Conducted strategic support team reviews for the Anchorage School District (Finance), Broward County Public Schools (Procurement), Duval County Public Schools (Human Resources), Milwaukee Public Schools (Human Resources), Orange County Public Schools (Building Construction), Portland Public Schools (Human Resources), and the San Antonio Independent School District (Gen AI Workshop). Shared findings and provided recommendations to district senior leadership.
- Managed the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's Operational KPIs.

## ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

**The Council works to manage its resources and ensure that integrity of its programs. In 2024-25, the Council—**

- Conducted an all-virtual external audit of the organization's 2023-24 financials and received clean and unqualified audit results for FY2023-24.
- Completed a second year of using new accounting software (Sage Intacct) while maintaining the previous software MS Dynamics SL for look back.
- Terminated the Council's use of the (Impak) database system and (Lyris) information management system and officially transitioned to the Higher Logic and Sales Force Systems for the full year.
- Conducted multi-day Staff Retreats during the summer and winter of 2024.
- Coordinated travel for 30 School Board Retreats and 20 Strategic Support Teams.
- Managed financials for Board Retreats, Superintendent Coaching and Strategic Support Teams, 7 grants and contracts, 10 programs, and 11 in-person conferences and meetings.
- Managed financials for four Board Governance Cohort groups, and Casserly Institute Aspiring Superintendent Cohort groups.
- Coordinated on-site logistics and provided planning and support for the Council's annual line-up of job-alike meetings and conferences, summer and winter meetings of the Executive Committee, a fourth Board Governance training, and seven Casserly Institute Superintendent Cohort Meetings.
- Maintained the online conference registration for all meetings and conferences.
- Coordinated the Summer 2024 Harvard Accelerated Board Capacity Institute at Harvard University.
- Renewed contract with Design Data and Allied Communications Services.

- Implemented an infrastructure upgrade including installation of new firewalls, replacing Switches and Wireless Access Points (WAPs) and new on prem utility server.
- Implemented Microsoft Teams Telephony to allow use of phones remotely through the MS Teams app or any mobile device.
- Reviewed options for renewal of medical/dental/life/disability insurances.



# Awards

## GREEN-GARNER AWARD

During the Annual Fall Conference, the Council of the Great City Schools honors a past or present member district superintendent or board of education member with the Green-Garner Award in recognition of exceptional contributions to urban schools and students. The award is named in tribute to the memory of Richard R. Green, former Minneapolis superintendent and New York City Public Schools chancellor, and Edward Garner, a businessman and former school board president for Denver Public Schools.

Sponsored by the Council and Scholastic, the award includes a \$10,000 college scholarship presented to a graduating senior in the winner's respective school system.

Romules Durant, superintendent of Toledo Public Schools in Ohio, was presented with the 2024 Green-Garner Award at the 68th Annual Fall Conference in Dallas.

A graduate of the Toledo school system, Durant has served 11 years as superintendent. Under his leadership, the district has had five successful levy campaigns, increased graduation rates, and expanded gifted services for elementary students, and Advanced Placement courses for high school students.

"I want to thank my staff and the board," said Durant upon accepting the award. "Great work can't happen without a great board. And at the end of the day, them investing in you and supporting you makes a huge difference in your success."

*"Great work can't happen without a great board. And at the end of the day, them investing in you and supporting you makes a huge difference in your success."*

— ROMULES DURANT



Toledo Public Schools CEO/Superintendent Romules Durant was named the 2024 Green-Garner Award winner at the 68th Annual Fall Conference in Dallas.



Jermel Bolden, left, and Nathan Sadowski, 2024 graduates from Toledo Public Schools, were presented with a \$5,000 Green-Garner college scholarship. Bolden will attend Bowling Green State University, and Sadowski will attend Lourdes University.

## DR. MICHAEL CASSERLY SCHOLARSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL COURAGE AND JUSTICE

Andrew Cruz Mendez Troncoso, a 2025 graduate of Boston Public Schools, was the recipient of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Scholarship for Educational Courage and Justice. Sponsored by Curriculum Associates, Troncoso will use the \$10,000 college scholarship to pursue a degree in finance at Bentley University in Massachusetts. The scholarship is part of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Award for Educational Courage and Justice, named in honor of the Council's former executive director.



## QUEEN SMITH AWARD FOR COMMITMENT TO URBAN EDUCATION

Mona Al-Hayani, a teacher at Toledo Early College in Toledo Public Schools, was the recipient of the Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education. Named in honor of the late vice president of urban programs for Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, the \$5,000 award was presented at the 2024 Annual Fall Conference in Dallas. Al-Hayani, a 29-year Toledo educator and National Board-Certified Teacher, founded Youth Creating Change, a student-led group promoting kindness, social justice, and advocacy on issues from human trafficking to identity and student voice.



## MICHAEL CASSERLY URBAN EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

The Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute for Superintendents is an eight-month program designed to train a diverse group of current and aspiring superintendents to successfully lead large urban school districts. Named after the Council's longtime former executive director, the program provides participants with sessions on effective leadership, school board relations, academics, media relations, operations, finances, and labor relations. The program graduated its first cohort in 2023 and its second cohort in 2024. The third cohort of the Institute began in February, 2025.

### 2025 COHORT



**Dr. Tashanda Brown-Cannon**  
Chief Academic Officer  
Orange County Public Schools



**Dr. Kathy Dodd**  
Deputy Superintendent  
Tulsa Public Schools



**Dr. Corey D. Grubbs**  
Chief of Transformation and Leadership  
Columbus City Schools



**Jusmar Rodriguez Maness**  
Chief Academic Officer  
Gulfport County Schools



**Shaylia McRae**  
Deputy Superintendent  
Hillsborough County Public Schools



**Pedro Salcido**  
Deputy Superintendent  
Los Angeles Unified School District



**Dr. Anthony Smith**  
Deputy Superintendent  
Denver Public Schools

# Financials

## MEMBERSHIP DUES



35.6%

## GRANTS & CONTRACTS



20.6%

## SPONSOR CONTRIBUTIONS



25%

## CONFERENCES & MEETINGS



27.3%

## CATEGORICAL PROJECTS



26.2%

## REVENUE

|                            | AUDITED REPORT<br>FY 23-24 | ESTIMATE<br>FY 24-25 |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Membership Dues            | \$3,952,912                | \$3,885,039          |
| Grants & Contracts         | 5,898,155                  | 2,247,344            |
| Sponsor Contributions      | 2,416,225                  | 2,722,925            |
| Registration Fees          | 1,362,363                  | 1,192,800            |
| Interest and Dividends     | 527,496                    | 784,927              |
| Royalties and Other Income | 145,794                    | 79,000               |
| Net Gain on Investments    | 912,859                    | 0                    |
| Total Revenue              | \$15,215,804               | \$10,912,036         |

## EXPENSES

|                              | AUDITED REPORT<br>FY 23-24 | ESTIMATE<br>FY 24-25 |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Public Advocacy              | \$403,201                  | \$465,714            |
| Legislative Advocacy         | 829,032                    | 690,302              |
| Research                     | 284,550                    | 417,325              |
| Curriculum & Instruction     | 92,523                     | 55,327               |
| Executive Leadership         | 1,046,444                  | 1,436,304            |
| Member Management Services   | 304,269                    | 349,823              |
| Admin & Financial Management | 1,333,615                  | 1,262,670            |
| Fundraising Activities       | 59,484                     | 36,596               |
| Conferences & Meetings       | 3,172,429                  | 2,763,417            |
| Categorical Projects         | 3,964,353                  | 2,649,836            |
| Total Expenses               | \$11,489,899               | \$10,127,314         |

|                       |              |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Change in Net Assets  | \$3,725,905  | 784,722      |
| Net Assets, Beginning | \$14,822,290 | \$18,548,195 |
| Net Assets, Ending    | \$18,548,195 | \$19,332,917 |

## THE COUNCIL THANKS THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN 2024–2025

# Sponsors

### 2024 Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Leaders Meeting

Abre  
Age of Learning  
All Here  
Amplify  
Bluum  
Branching Minds  
College Board  
Curriculum Associates  
Discovery Education  
Elevate K-12  
Everyday Labs  
HMH  
Imagine Learning  
Intervene K-12  
Intuit for Education  
IXL  
Just Right Reader  
Leading Educators  
Magic School  
Make Music Count  
Public Consulting Group  
Qualtrics  
RethinkEd  
Renaissance  
Riverside Insights  
Saga Education  
Savvas Learning Company  
School Kit  
SchoolLinks  
Smart Start Education  
ThinkCERCA  
The Princeton Review &  
Tutor.com  
Zearn

### 2024 Public Relations Executives Meeting

Apptegy  
Barbara Griffith Consulting  
Finalsite  
K12 Insight  
ParentSquare  
Peachjar  
PowerSchool  
Qualtrics  
SchoolMint  
Target River  
The Grayson Agency

### 2024 Annual Fall Conference

Abre  
ACT  
Age of Learning  
Amplify  
Apptegy  
Audio Enhancement, Inc.  
Boclips  
Branching Minds  
CENTEGIX  
ClassLink  
Clever  
CollegeBoard  
CORE Construction  
CrowdComfort  
Curriculum Associates  
Discovery Education  
Edmentum  
Edupoint  
Elevate K-12  
engage2Learn  
Enrollwise  
ESS

Facing History & Ourselves  
Finalsite  
FlipLok  
Gaggle  
GoNoodle  
Great Minds  
Harmony Academy at  
National University  
HeyTutor  
Hoot Reading  
Imagine Learning  
Incident IQ  
Ingram Content Group  
Education Services  
Intuit for Education  
IXL  
Just Right Reader  
Kami  
K12 Insight  
Lion Electric  
MagicSchool  
Marsh McLennan Agency  
Mountain Vector Energy  
McGraw Hill  
McKinstry  
MGT  
NAF  
National Geographic  
Learning  
National University/  
Harmony Academy  
Navigate360  
NoRedInk  
NWEA  
Otus  
Panorama Education  
ParentSquare  
Participate Learning

Prometric  
Proximity Learning  
PowerSchool  
Public Consulting Group  
Qualtrics  
RethinkED  
Renaissance  
Riverside Insights  
Sandy Hook Promise  
Safari Montage  
Saga Education  
Savvas Learning Company  
SchoolKit  
SchoolLinks  
SchoolMint  
STAR Autism Support  
Teaching Strategies  
ThinkCERCA  
Turnover & Townsend Heery  
Tutored by Teachers  
Varsity Tutors for Schools  
Vista Higher Learning  
Wilson Language Training  
Xello  
Yourway Learning  
Zearn  
zSpace  
Zum

### 2024 Meeting of Directors and Chiefs of Finance, Purchasing, Risk Management, and Internal Audit

Allovue  
Amazon Business  
Classwallet  
Corebridge Financial

## BLUE RIBBON CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP

Amplify  
Centegix  
CollegeBoard  
Curriculum Associates  
Discovery Education  
Dreambox  
Elevate K-12  
Finalsite  
Harmony Academy

HMH  
Imagine Learning  
K12 Insight  
Kelly Education  
Lightspeed  
Magic School  
McGraw Hill  
NWEA  
PowerSchool

Public Consulting Group  
Renaissance  
Riverside Insights  
Savvas Learning Company  
Scholastic  
SchoolMint  
ThinkCERCA

# Sponsors

E&I Cooperative Services  
Energia  
EUNA Solutions  
Gallagher  
Jacobs  
Kelly Education  
Oracle  
PeopleOne Health  
Plante Moran  
The Beacon Group, Inc.  
Trane Technologies  
Tyler Technologies  
United Healthcare

## **2025 Chief Human Resource Officers, Conference**

Better People  
CGI  
Elevate K-12  
Engage2Learn  
ESS  
GEOVISIONS  
IBM  
Kelly Education  
Oracle  
PCG University Instructors  
PowerSchool  
Qualtrics  
SchoolMint  
Scoot Education  
SmartStart Education  
Upbeat  
Worldgate  
Zen Educate

## **2025 Legislative/Policy Conference**

Age of Learning  
Amplify  
Benchmark Education  
Branching Minds  
CharacterStrong  
Curriculum Associates  
CENTEGIX  
Discovery Education  
Edmentum  
EveryDay Labs  
HMH  
Imagine Learning  
K12 Insight  
LightSpeed  
PowerSchool  
Prometric  
Public Consulting Group  
Renaissance  
Rethink Education  
Riverside Insights  
Sandy Hook Promise  
Savvas Learning Company  
SchoolMint

SmartStart Education  
ThinkCERCA  
University Instructors LLC  
Wilson Language Training  
World Book

## **2025 Chief Operating Officers, and Directors of Facilities, Child Nutrition, Safety & Security, and Transportation Conference**

4mativ  
AmTab  
Athena  
Attune  
BusPatrol  
Cal/Amp K-12  
Carrier  
CENTEGIX  
CrowdComfort  
Collaborative Student Transportation  
E&I Cooperative Services  
Education Logistics  
Energia  
Everdriven  
Evolv  
Facilitron  
FIRSTstudent  
FMX  
Gaggle  
GDI Integrated Facility Services  
Highland  
Incident IQ  
Intellis Lab  
Jacobs  
K12 Insight  
Lightspeed  
McKinstry  
Mountain Vector Energy  
North American Central School Bus  
Public Consulting Group  
Raptor Technologies  
RNA Facilities Management  
Transfinder  
Turner & Townsend  
Tyler Technologies  
Vera Mobility  
Zum

## **2025 Bilingual, Immigrant, & Refugee Education Directors Meeting**

Age of Learning  
Amplify  
Benchmark Education  
Books del Sur  
Curriculum Associates  
Discovery Education

Ellevation Education  
Engage2Learn  
FigStar Learning  
Harmony Academy  
HMH  
Imagine Learning  
Intervene K-12  
McGraw Hill  
National Geographic Learning  
Participate Learning  
Renaissance  
Riverside Insights  
Savvas Learning Company  
Talking Points  
ThinkCERCA  
Translate Live  
Velazquez Press

## **2025 Chief Information Officers Conference**

Accenture  
Alma  
Amazon Web Services  
Amplify  
Apptegy  
ClassLink  
Clever  
Cloud Unity  
Doowii  
Focus School Software  
Finalsite  
Gaggle  
Gartner  
Google for Education  
HMH  
IBM  
iboss  
Identity Automation  
Incident IQ  
Infor  
K12 Insight  
Lightspeed  
Lightspeed Systems  
Magic School  
Oracle  
Panorama Education  
RL Canning  
Safari Montage  
Sentinel  
Senturo  
Syntropy Partners  
The Craft Education Company  
Workday  
Worldgate

# Publications

## URBAN DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS: Characteristics, Tenure, and Salaries

NINTH REPORT  
March 2025

Chester Holland, Ph.D.  
Akisha Osei Sarfo, Ph.D.  
Mary M. Oewel  
Casey A. Crews  
Kyuna Sims  
Brian Garcia  
Ray Hart, Ph.D.

## LEADERSHIP TRANSITION GUIDE



## ACADEMIC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Council of the  
Great City Schools

REPORT  
2024

## Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools

2024

RESULTS FROM FISCAL YEAR 2022-23



A REPORT OF THE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND BENCHMARKING PROJECT  
OCTOBER 2024

### Urban District Superintendents: Characteristics, Tenure, and Salaries

March 2025

This study focuses on understanding the racial and gender demographics of superintendents, trends in superintendent tenure, and the prevalence of turnover within demographic groups as well as the relationship between superintendent and district characteristics and base salaries.

### Leadership Transition Guide

October 2024

The naming of a new superintendent can be an opportunity to build goodwill and community partnerships or, it can spark unwarranted coverage for a school district. This document shares best practices and lessons from several communications professionals regarding changes in district leadership.

### Academic Key Performance Indicators, 2024 Report

October 2024

The 2024 report presents an updated set of data through school year 2022-23. It presents a number of different ways that member districts can analyze the data themselves by disaggregating results, showing trends, and combining variables.

### Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2024, Results from Fiscal Year 2022-2023

October 2024

In 2002, the Council of the Great City Schools and its members set out to develop performance measures that could be used to improve business operations in urban public school districts. The Council launched the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project to achieve these objectives.

## URBAN DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS: Characteristics, Tenure, and Salaries

NINTH REPORT

March 2025

Chester Holland, Ph.D.  
Akisha Osei Sarfo, Ph.D.  
Mary M. Oewel  
Casey A. Crews  
Kyuna Sims  
Brian Garcia

# Council Staff

## ADMINISTRATION

Ray Hart, Executive Director  
Alka Pateriya, Director of Strategy  
and Partnerships  
Delisa Nunez, Manager of Strategic Initiatives  
Teri Trinidad, Director of Administration,  
Finance & Conferences  
Alisa Adams, Finance Manager  
Olivia Shaw, Operations Administrative Specialist  
Alexis Vann, Conference Manager  
Michell Yorkman, Manager of Conferences and  
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Conference Specialist  
Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant  
Michael Casserly, Strategic Advisor

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Kalin Hicks, Communications Specialist

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Robin Hall, Chief of Schools  
Nicole Mancini, Chief of Academics  
Denise Walston, Chief of Curriculum

## LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Manish Naik, Director of Legislative Services  
Mary Stablein Lawson, General Counsel  
David Lai, Director of English  
Language Learner Policy and Research

## GOVERNANCE

AJ Crabill, Director of Governance  
Cindy Elsbernd, Manager of Governance

## MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Willie T. Burroughs, Director of Management Services  
Robert Carlson, Senior Advisor for  
Management Services

## RESEARCH

Akisha Osei Sarfo, Director of Research  
Brian Garcia, Research Manager  
Chester Holland, Research Manager

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

Amanda Rose Corcoran, Special Projects Manager  
Michael Hinojosa, Superintendent-in-Residence  
Eric Vignola, Manager of Software Engineering



# 2024–2025 COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBER DISTRICTS

(AS OF MARCH 2025)

| SCHOOL DISTRICT       | SUPERINTENDENT            | BOARD MEMBER                | SCHOOL DISTRICT   | SUPERINTENDENT        | BOARD MEMBER            |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Albuquerque           | Gabriela Blakely          | Courtney Jackson            | Little Rock       | Jermall Wright        | Joyce Walker Wesley     |
| Anchorage             | Jharrett Bryantt          | Margo Bellamy               | Long Beach        | Jill Baker            | Douglas Otto            |
| Arlington             | Matt Smith                | Justin Chapa                | Los Angeles       | Alberto Carvalho      | Kelly Gonez             |
| Atlanta               | Bryan Johnson             | Erika Mitchell              | Memphis-Shelby    | Roderick Richmond     | Joyce Dorse Coleman     |
| Aurora                | Michael Giles             | Anne Keke                   | Miami-Dade County | José Dotres           | Steven Gallon III       |
| Austin                | Matias Segura             | David Kaufmann              | Milwaukee         | Brenda Cassellius     | Marva Herndon           |
| Baltimore             | Sonja Brookins Santelises | Khalilah Slater Harrington  | Minneapolis       | Lisa Sayles-Adams     | Sharon El-Amin          |
| Birmingham            | Mark Sullivan             | Jason Meadows               | Nashville         | Adrienne Battle       | Berthena Nabaa-McKinney |
| Boston                | Mary Skipper              | Michael O'Neill             | New Orleans       | Fateama Fulmore       | Olin Parker             |
| Bridgeport            | Royce Avery               | Christine Baptiste-Perez    | New York City     | Melissa Aviles-Ramos  | N/A                     |
| Broward County        | Howard Hepburn            | Allen Zenman                | Newark            | Roger León            | Hasani Council          |
| Buffalo               | Tonja Williams Knight     | Sharon Belton-Cottman       | Norfolk           | Sharon Byrdsong       | Tanya Bhasin            |
| Charleston            | Anita Huggins             | Keith Grybowski             | Oakland           | Kyla Johnson-Trammell | Jennifer Brouhard       |
| Charlotte-Mecklenberg | Crystal Hill              | Stephanie Sneed             | Oklahoma City     | Jamie Polk            | Paula Lewis             |
| Chicago               | Pedro Martinez            | Jessica Biggs               | Omaha             | Matthew Ray           | Shavonna Holman         |
| Cincinnati            | Shauna Murphy             | Brandon Craig               | Orange County     | Maria Vazquez         | Teresa Jacobs           |
| Clark County          | Brenda Larsen-Mitchell    | Irene Bustamante Adams      | Palm Beach County | Mike Burke            | Marcia Andrews          |
| Cleveland             | Warren Morgan             | Sara Elaquad                | Philadelphia      | Tony Watlington       | Joyce Wilkerson         |
| Columbus              | Angela Chapman            | Michael Cole                | Phoenix Union     | Thea Andrade          | Ceyshe Napa             |
| Dallas                | Stephanie Elizalde        | Sara Weinberg               | Pinellas County   | Kevin Hendrick        | Lisa Cane               |
| Dayton                | David Lawrence            | Chrisondra Goodwine         | Pittsburgh        | Wayne Walters         | Gene Walker             |
| Denver                | Alex Marrero              | Carrie Olson                | Portland          | Kimberlee Armstrong   | Michelle DePass         |
| Des Moines            | Ian Roberts               | Kimberly Martorano          | Providence        | Javier Montañez       | Ty'Relle Stephens       |
| Detroit               | Nikolai Vitti             | Angelique Peterson-Mayberry | Puerto Rico       | Eliezer Ramos Parés   | N/A                     |
| District of Columbia  | Lewis Ferebee             | N/A                         | Richmond          | Jason Kamras          | Stephanie Rizzi         |
| Durham                | Anthony S. Lewis          | Millicent Rogers            | Rochester         | Demario Strickland    | Camille Simmons         |
| Duval County          | Christopher Bernier       | Darryl Willie               | Sacramento        | Lisa Allen            | Taylor Kayatta          |
| East Baton Rouge      | LaMont Cole               | Shashonnie Steward          | St. Louis         | Millicent Borishade   | Karen Collins-Adams     |
| El Paso               | Diana Sayavedra           | Israel Irrobali             | St. Paul          | Stacie Stanley        | Jim Vue                 |
| Fayette County        | Demetrus Liggins          | Tyler Murphy                | San Antonio       | Jaime Aquino          | Christina Martinez      |
| Fort Worth            | Karen Molinar             | Camille Rodriguez           | San Diego         | Fabiola Bagula        | Sabrina Bazzo           |
| Fresno                | Misty Her                 | Valerie Davis               | San Francisco     | Marie Su              | Supriya Ray             |
| Guilford County       | Whitney Oakley            | Bettye Jenkins              | Santa Ana         | Jerry Almendarez      | Alfonso Alvarez         |
| Hawaii                | Keith Hayashi             | Ken Kuraya                  | Seattle           | Brent Jones           | Sarah Clark             |
| Hillsborough County   | Van Ayers                 | Jessica Vaughn              | Toledo            | Romules Durant        | Bob Vasquez             |
| Houston               | Mike Miles                | Michelle Cruz Arnold        | Tulsa             | Ebony Johnson         | Stacey Woolley          |
| Indianapolis          | Aleesia Johnson           | Allissa Impink              | Washoe County     | Joe Ernst             | Elizabeth Smith         |
| Jackson               | Errick Greene             | Barbara Hilliard            | Wichita           | Kelly Bielefeld       | Hazel Stabler           |
| Jefferson County      | Marty Pollio              | Gail Logan Strange          | Winston-Salem/    | Tricia McManus        | Deanna Kaplan           |
| Jersey City           | Norma Fernandez           | Noemi Velazquez             | Forsyth County    |                       |                         |
| Kansas City (MO)      | Jennifer Collier          | Monica Curls                |                   |                       |                         |

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