



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

"The Council is instrumental in each of our districts for providing a high-quality public education to the children and families we are privileged to serve."

— KELLY GONEZ



June 30, 2023

It's been another landmark year for the Council of the Great City Schools and its 78 member districts. More than two years after COVID-19 upended typical operations, this year brought the successful return to full in-person programming, with the Council's hallmark Fall Conference in Orlando, Florida, its Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., and job-alike meetings with school district leadership finally convening in-person once more.

Whatever the format, the Council continues to provide unparalleled support for urban school districts across all facets of our work. By predicting trends, publishing research and guidance, resolving issues with federal agencies, expanding leadership training, and convening senior leaders for ongoing collaboration, the Council is instrumental in each of our districts for providing a high-quality public education to the children and families we are privileged to serve. While there are many achievements this year, allow me to highlight just a few.

The Council remains committed to equity and excellence. This spring, the Council released an update to "Supporting Excellence: Framework for Developing, Implementing and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum", a resource which provides essential instructional guidance and includes models from member districts across key areas. The Council supported the Trial Urban School Districts (TUDA) on the release of their 2022 assessment results by contextualizing and communicating the results and by creating interactive data visualization tools of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data to deepen understanding.

Monthly meetings with equity leaders allowed for shared strategies to embed equity throughout the work of districts. The Council analyzed NAEP data with a particular focus on unearthing the acute impact of the pandemic on our young men and women of color. Additionally, the recent publication on considerations of dyslexia screening for English learners shines a light on the needs of that population as well as real implementation challenges with ensuring that all students are appropriately screened.

The Council has continued to work directly with districts across the country in Strategic Support Teams to provide recommendations to senior leadership in support of academic growth and operational excellence.

In our ongoing post-pandemic recovery efforts, the Council continued to provide guidance on using American Rescue Plan and Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief (ESSER) dollars strategically and effectively and has supported member districts with utilizing curriculum and professional development to address unfinished learning. With the largest influx of public school funding in our lifetimes, the strategic use of these funds to accelerate achievement is not just a critical opportunity for our school districts but a moral imperative for our students and their families.

The Council logged several major legislative victories tied to public education funding, an ongoing need for member districts. The legislative team supported the passage of an additional \$850 million in Title I appropriations, which amounts to one of the largest single-year increases in more than twenty years. That funding will provide critical resources to our students in need. The Council successfully advocated for the inclusion of more than \$2 billion in funding for school safety and mental health in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, an especially important investment as we grapple with trauma and increased social, emotional, and mental health needs of students post pandemic. The team also advocated for the passage of the Keep Kids Fed Act, which provided additional funding for school meals programs, after the sunset of funding that provided free meals to all students during the pandemic.

I'm also excited to look ahead to the future work of the Council, in particular a virtual national Mathematics Summit this fall, developed in collaboration with several partners including the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, focused on combating recent declines in math proficiency. Math achievement poses a significant challenge for many member districts, and the summit will no doubt provide valuable strategies and approaches for making a positive impact on student outcomes, particularly for our most at-risk students.

With so many achievements to celebrate and so much to look forward to, I want to extend my gratitude to the leadership of the Council of the Great City Schools, including Dr. Ray Hart, and the entire team for their unwavering and excellent support for member districts. And, of course, I am so thankful to my colleagues across the country – the Superintendents and Board Members of our member districts – for your commitment to collaborating and learning together, in the service of equity and opportunity for our students, families, and communities.

Kelly Gonez
Chair of the Board, 2022-23



"To support current and rising leaders, we continued to provide coaching and technical assistance to school boards, superintendents, and district leadership teams. "

—RAY HART

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

June 30, 2023

I am proud to present this annual report to the membership on the activities of the Council of the Great City Schools during the 2022-23 program year.

The Council had another extraordinary year. We worked to support districts with guidance and technical assistance on the strategic use of federal relief funds and launched a marketing campaign to highlight district successes and promising strategies for addressing pre- and post-pandemic unfinished learning and building lasting, equitable systems of teaching and learning. At the same time, the Council successfully advocated for the passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which included more than \$2 billion in additional funding for school safety and school mental health professionals, to address the community violence impact on our students. We also supported the successful passage of an additional \$850 million in Title I appropriations, one of the largest single-year increases, and submitted multiple sets of comments and detailed policy recommendations to the U.S. Department of Education, Federal Communications Commission, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

To support current and rising leaders, we continued to provide coaching and technical assistance to school boards, superintendents, and district leadership teams. We embarked upon our second year building our school board coaching cohorts and launched the initial Michael Casserly Urban School Executive Leadership Institute Aspiring Superintendent cohort.

In October, the Council supported participating member districts with the release of the 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Trial Urban District Assessment results in reading and mathematics. In addition to providing context for urban school achievement at the release event, Council staff supported districts with the local and national release of their results. Throughout the year, the Council highlighted member district achievements through our online newsletter, the Urban Educator.

In addition to a successful Annual Fall Conference hosted by Orange County Public Schools, the Council held its full line-up of in-person job-alike convenings for district leaders and staff, as well as over 1,000 webinars for Great City Schools superintendents, school board members, chief academic officers, chief financial officers, chief operating officers, bilingual education directors, equity directors, special education directors, general counsels, mental health staff, research directors, chiefs of schools, core curriculum coordinators, transportation and food service directors, facilities directors, chief information officers, safety and security directors, and others to provide members with the opportunity to connect with their peers across the country.

The Council published its annual reports on both instructional and operational key performance indicators and provided Strategic Support Team reviews to member districts in the areas of instruction, special education, finance, human resources, English language learners, transportation, and school safety and security. The Council also released three key publications to support academic outcomes for all students: "Framework for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction for English Learners: Instructional Practice and Materials Considerations"; "District Considerations for Universal Dyslexia Screening: Ensuring Appropriate Implementation and Instruction for English Learners"; and "Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum."

I thank Kelly Gonez for her extraordinary leadership in chairing the board of directors and executive committee this year. Finally, I want to thank the Council's exceptional staff for the dedication and expertise they put into their work on behalf of our students every day. Thank you for a great year.

Ray Hart
Executive Director



Council Chair Kelly Gonez held a Q&A session with U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona at the Legislative/Policy Conference.



Baltimore Schools CEO Sonja Brookins Santelises, center, discusses how the district is using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding at a session at the Legislative Policy Conference. She was joined at the session by Clark County Schools Superintendent Jesus Jara, left, and St. Paul Schools Superintendent Joe Gothard, right.



Left to right, Philadelphia school board president Joyce Wilkerson and Council Strategic Advisor Michael Casserly listen to Makenzie Riggins, a senior at Evans High School in Orange County Public Schools, at the Council's Town Hall Meeting moderated by Education Week Editor-in-Chief Beth Frerking.

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 problems in big-city schools. The organization does this through legislation, communications, research, and technical assistance.

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

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

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.





Council Secretary-Treasurer Marcia Andrews and Council Chair-Elect Guadalupe Guerrero attend the Board of Directors meeting at the Legislative/Policy Conference.



Boston School Committee member Michael O'Neill and Boston Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper listen at a session at the Legislative/Policy Conference.



Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon asks a question as District of Columbia Schools Chancellor Lewis Ferebee looks on at the Legislative/Policy Conference.

OUR VISION



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

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

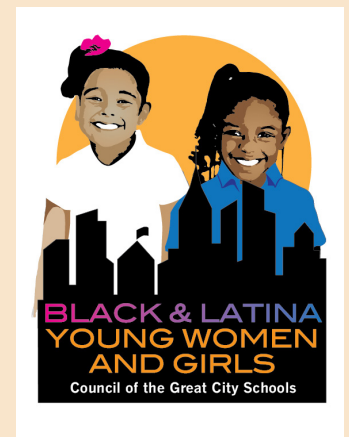
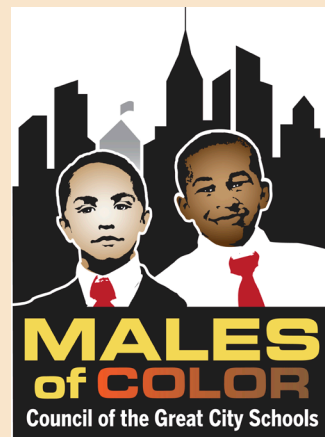
OUR MISSION

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

OUR GOALS

- To educate all urban school students to the highest academic standards.
- To lead, govern and manage our urban public schools in ways that advance the education of our children and inspire the public’s confidence.
- To build a confident, committed and supportive urban community for raising the achievement of urban public schoolchildren

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



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

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

The board of directors has established five special task forces to address major issues facing the membership. These include the **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. The **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 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.

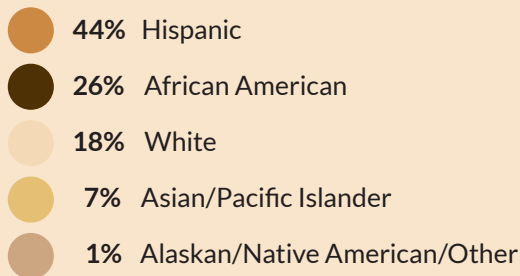
CHARACTERISTICS

OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT



7.84M



FREE/REDUCED PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBILITY



72%

TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHERS



434,000

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS



14,000

STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO



17:1

16%

English Language Learners

16%

Students With Individualized Education Plan (IEP's)

CONFERENCES

Curriculum and Research Directors Meeting
Columbus, OH

July 10-14, 2022

Public Relations Executives Meeting
Chicago, IL

July 14-16, 2022

66th Annual Fall Conference
Orlando, FL

October 19-23, 2022

Chief Operating Officers Conference
New Orleans, LA

November 8-11, 2022

CHRO & CFO Joint Meeting
Los Angeles, CA

February 14-17, 2023

Legislative/Policy Conference
Washington, DC

March 18-21, 2023

Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee
Education Directors Meeting
Greensboro, NC

May 2-6, 2023

Chief Information Officers Meeting
Denver, CO

June 5-9, 2023

FALL CONFERENCE

"If education is a calling, then you've agreed to answer that call and specialize in the wholly impossible."

— BRITTANY PACKNETT CUNNINGHAM



Sanjay Gupta



Brittany Packnett Cunningham



Jose Antonio Vargas

For the first time in two years, the Council of the Great City Schools' Annual Fall Conference was held in person. Hosted by Orange County Public Schools, the five-day conference was held in Orlando, Fla., October 19-23 under the banner "Destination to Success: Innovation for a New Era in Public Education."

In a town hall meeting moderated by Beth Frerking, the editor-in-chief for Education Week, several urban education leaders discussed the issues of politics and public education. The town hall panel also featured a student: Mackenzie Riggins, a senior at Evans High School in Orange County Public Schools, who voiced her concern about the lack of transportation for students to attend after-school programs. "They can't try to better their education, and they can't try to get the help they need from their teachers," said Riggins. "They're forced to go home because of limited resources. So, I feel as if that's an issue that needs to be talked about and brought up in the conversation."

In her keynote address, social justice activist Brittany Packnett Cunningham praised the work of educators as "not just a job, not just a vocation" but a calling. "If education is a calling, then you've agreed to answer that call and specialize in the wholly impossible," Cunningham told big-city school leaders.

Also addressing the conference was Jose Antonio Vargas, the author of "Dear America, Notes of an Undocumented Citizen", who talked about his experience as an undocumented immigrant and how educators can play a vital role in the national conversation on immigration by ensuring schools are welcoming, supportive places for students and their families.

Conferees also heard from CNN chief medical correspondent and neurosurgeon Sanjay Gupta. He said that among the many lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic was that there needs to be a robust and comprehensive pandemic preparedness plan like that established by President George W. Bush. That plan included virus hunters the world over and support for universal vaccines, but it faded in the years before COVID-19 emerged. According to Gupta, "There's an obligation for every individual, as well – to take care of ourselves as best we can, physically, mentally and spiritually. We have more evidence than ever that it works."

LEGISLATIVE/POLICY CONFERENCE



Miguel Cardona



LeVar Burton



John Harwood

Urban educators assembled in the nation's capital March 18-21 for the Council of the Great City Schools' Legislative/Policy Conference.

U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona addressed the conference, urging educators to seize the moment and focus on key priorities, including support for student well-being, school safety, and efforts to hire and retain teachers and other school staff. "Over the last two years, despite unique challenges, leaders like you have challenged the status quo of complacency and neglect in education," said Cardona. "You've invested in programs that truly raise the bar."

Cardona credited the American Rescue Plan (ARP), which has a spending deadline of Sept. 30, 2024. He noted ARP funds were aimed at the safe and speedy reopening of schools in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic – with a focus on academic recovery, attention to mental health issues, and fixing such issues as faulty ventilation in schools. But, he said, ARP was not meant to "address decades of underinvestment in education."

The question, he said, is "how do we make sure we can sustain what we started?" The answer in large measure, he said, lay in effective advocacy. "We need to paint the picture of how ARP helped our kids."

Actor, director, and children's literacy advocate LeVar Burton joined documentary filmmaker Jenny Mackenzie and reading advocate Kareem Weaver in a discussion of Mackenzie's recent documentary "The Right to Read,"

which follows Weaver's quest to improve literacy rates using evidence-based literacy tools and explicit and direct reading instruction. Burton believes it is difficult, if not impossible, to reach one's full potential if you can't read. "You may be successful—maybe even beyond your wildest imaginings successful," he stressed. "But you will not have reached your full potential in life."

For Weaver, literacy is a civil rights issue, an extension of protests fighting racism and segregation in the 1960s. "Our kids can sit at the lunch counter today, but they can't read the menu," Weaver said. "The right to read is really the right to engage in society."

Also addressing the conference was veteran political journalist John Harwood, who alerted educators to their integral role as the nation moves toward becoming a majority-minority country over the next two decades. "You guys are on the front lines of that transition because a majority of students in public schools in the United States are no longer white," Harwood told conferees. "That's where the next generation of Americans is going to be forged, and there's going to be some fires to go through."

As the conference came to a close, Lily Wong Fillmore, a distinguished linguist and educator, received the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Award for Educational Courage and Justice. Sponsored by Curriculum Associates, the award came with a \$10,000 scholarship to a graduate from a Council member school district.

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 2022-23 the Council—

- Participated in the release of the 2022 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) results in reading and mathematics.
- 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 the New York Times, Washington Post, Education Week, Boston Globe, USA Today, Associated Press, and U.S. News and World Report.
- Redesigned the Council's website to provide an easy-to-navigate, more user-friendly visual experience.
- Launched a marketing and digital campaign to communicate the success of the Council's member districts in using ARP funds to address learning needs and accelerate interventions in response to COVID-19.
- Actively participated in meetings with the Coalition to Advance Future Student Success, an effort to ensure ARP funds are spent effectively and efficiently.
- Coordinated a national town hall meeting on politics and public education moderated by Beth Frerking, the editor-in-chief for Education Week.
- Participated in a panel at the Education Writers Association Conference and attended the South by Southwest EDU conference.
- Hosted the 22nd Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in Chicago.
- Coordinated the CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships Program.
- Emailed eight issues of the Council's award-winning digital newsletter, Urban Educator, which received the 2023 Award of Excellence from the National School Public Relations Association.
- Coordinated the Green-Garner Award ceremony, honoring the nation's top urban educator.

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 2022-23, the Council—

- Successfully advocated for the passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which included more than \$2 billion in additional funding for school safety and school mental health professionals, to help address community violence and its impact on our students and staff.
- Submitted public comments on the U.S. Department of Education's proposed changes to both Title IX regulations and its athletics component, highlighting the importance of protecting students from sex-based discrimination and outlining students' rights to participate in athletics regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Supported the successful passage of an additional \$850 million in Title I and an additional \$850 million in IDEA for federal FY 2023, one of the largest single-year increases in more than twenty years for both programs.
- Filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in higher education admissions cases, urging the Court to retain the currently allowed race-conscious admissions procedures due to the persistent role segregation and educational inequality have played in creating and maintaining racial and ethnic achievement gaps among K-12 students.
- Advocated for the successful passage of the Keep Kids Fed Act, which provided additional funding for every school breakfast and lunch served in the 2022-23 school year.
- Filed multiple sets of comments encouraging the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to leverage the E-Rate program to address growing cybersecurity needs in K-12 schools.
- Disseminated information to member school districts about the opportunities for increased revenue through the school-based Medicaid program for special education services provided to eligible students with disabilities.
- Submitted public comments to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the proposed revisions to meal pattern standards for Child Nutrition Programs, highlighting the need for flexibility in providing attractive, healthy, and nutritious meals to students.
- Hosted a series of legal webinars with Husch Blackwell on issues affecting urban school districts, including the impact of higher education affirmative action cases on K-12 schools and district strategies for mitigating and responding to student injuries and death.
- Launched a major survey on urban school districts' investments to improve learning environments and support students' academic and social-emotional needs using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.
- Participated in a working group with the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance to provide the perspective of urban schools in building

safe school environments and the need to support students through mental health challenges.

- Provided dozens of briefings to CGCS school boards, superintendents, chief financial officers, government relations directors, general counsels, and other senior district officials on the status of federal COVID-19 funding, including Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds; congressional proposals affecting curriculum, notification, and data privacy requirements; and updates to federal agency guidance, regulations, and waivers.
- Hosted the 2023 Annual Legislative/Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., with remarks from U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and actor and education activist LeVar Burton, as well as legislative briefings and Q&A sessions with staff from Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Fielded scores of legislative and regulatory questions and interceded for member school districts to resolve problems with various federal agencies.

RESEARCH

Timely data collection and analysis allow the Council to prepare comprehensive reports, predict trends, and assess the effects of various policies, reforms, and practices on student performance. In 2022-23, the Council—

- Convened monthly research, evaluation, and assessment meetings with member districts to discuss strategies for advancing academic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and best practices in leading research in urban school districts.
- Convened monthly equity leader meetings with member districts to discuss district strategies for addressing gaps in academic achievement and opportunity.
- Launched a series of Chief Performance and Accountability Officer monthly meetings with member districts to discuss best practices in leading accountability programs and driving the systemic use of data in urban school districts.
- Convened monthly consortia meetings with member districts who use three formative assessments (NWEA, Curriculum Associates, and Renaissance) to promote the sharing of information, best practices, and data among users of each assessment.
- Supported TUDA districts with analyzing and interpreting 2022 NAEP results and trends during a NAEP pre-release workshop and provided follow-up assistance to specific districts as needed.
- Developed interactive data visualization tools designed to provide users with streamlined information on NAEP results. These dashboards were designed for use by district leaders in Council districts participating in TUDA, although they are public dashboards that can be used by any group of stakeholders.
- Co-developed a NAEP communication guide, in partnership with the National Assessment Governing Board and with the input of

several communication and research directors from Council member districts, to help TUDA districts best contextualize, understand, and communicate NAEP results.

- Analyzed NAEP and Academic KPI data to assess the progress of young men and women of color across Council member districts and to document disproportionality in academic and behavioral outcomes for young men and women of color. The analysis was shared at the Council's Males of Color Task Force Meeting, Meeting of the Black and Latina Young Women and Girls Task Force, and in the Annual Academic Key Performance Indicators report.
- Continued the organization's partnership with the RAND Corporation through the administration of two American School District Panel national surveys designed to capture and convey the perspective of urban district superintendents and leaders from across the country on topics of importance in the field.
- Collected, analyzed, and reported on the Council's Academic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on student achievement levels, attendance, suspensions, course participation, AP attainment, graduation rates, special education trends, English language learner performance, and principal and teacher demographic data.
- Updated the online data dashboard for the Council's Academic KPIs that contains longitudinal and district comparison data.
- Convened two meetings of the TUDA Task Force to advise the National Assessment Governing Board and the National Center for Education Statistics. The Task Force consists of 10 representatives from Council member districts and provides recommendations and feedback on the development and operation of the TUDA program.
- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the National Assessment Governing Board; National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine; National Network of Education Research—Practice Partnerships; National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education, and NAEP Validity Studies Panel.
- Provided technical assistance to member districts on assessments, student information systems, data visualizations, and data dashboards, and responded to numerous member requests for statistical information and research assistance.
- Partnered with formative assessment vendors to produce reports on students' academic recovery from the pandemic using member district data. Data from these CGCS-specific reports were shared with member districts and the board of directors.
- Analyzed and reported the results from the Council's first ARP investment survey administered to districts in 2022.
- Completed a literature review on the impact of different grade-level configurations on student outcomes.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council's most important priorities. In 2022-23, the Council—

HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- Convened monthly meetings for Chief Academic Officers, Chiefs of Schools, core content area directors, and other instructional leaders to provide member districts with the opportunity to hear from notable guest speakers and confer with their peers on current issues impacting teaching and learning.
- Convened monthly Instructional Spotlight webinars to build a shared understanding of the key features of a high-quality curriculum.
- Hosted a series of virtual meetings for districts on how to address unfinished learning through curriculum guidance and professional development.
- Facilitated district discussions on the issue of master scheduling, including specialty areas at the elementary level as well as scheduling content area pathways at the high school level.
- Convened a special meeting of CAOs and Chiefs of Schools to discuss the effective use of federal relief funding.
- Convened a committee of CAOs, content directors, and experts in the field to update and revise "Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum."
- Continued collaboration with Student Achievement Partners in the design and implementation of the Text Analysis Toolkit. Recruited Directors of English Language Arts and Literacy to provide feedback to refine criteria that would foster more rigorous and relevant literacy instruction.
- Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners to review and provide feedback in the development of culturally-responsive tasks for mathematics instruction. Recruited Directors of Mathematics to provide feedback on how these tasks could be used in their districts.
- Continued to elevate and leverage the work of member districts that have shown substantial gains on NAEP and state assessments among disadvantaged students and students of color to share characteristics, strategies, and lessons learned.
- Convened the Achievement and Professional Development Task Force at the 2022 Annual Fall Conference and the Legislative Conference in March 2023 to update district leaders on newly released publications, trends in national and district data, and strategies for addressing unfinished learning.
- Provided virtual support to districts in designing and implementing curriculum initiatives using the Council's *Supporting Excellence* framework and its accompanying rubric.
- Planned and coordinated Strategic Support Team visits to review the instructional programming of member districts and to provide findings and recommendations to district leadership teams.
- addressing the needs of English learners and newcomer students.
- Regularly provided follow-up information requested by EL directors during these calls, including information on supporting newcomers, details on various policies regarding translation and interpretation services, information on master planning, and guidance on foundational skills instruction.
- Analyzed and reported results of a member district survey on newcomer instruction and support to highlight how member districts currently serve such students and to identify the technical assistance that would best serve member districts in this area.
- Convened a working group of EL educators and experts to develop and release a framework for foundational skills instruction for ELs and related instructional materials criteria.
- Continued to provide implementation support for the Council's Professional Learning Platform (PLP) courses designed to elevate instruction for English learners in ELA/ELD and mathematics. In addition to online course content, provided districts with technical assistance from course experts in reviewing and implementing units of study and providing training to teachers.
- Developed a series on writing instruction for English learners in collaboration with the Pathway to Academic Success Writing Project at the University of California, Irvine. Launched pilot with five Council districts and continued development of additional writing courses.
- Established a network of Council district staff who are experienced in the Learning, Language, and Literacy (3Ls™) framework to provide ongoing virtual support and feedback for planning and implementing 3Ls™ courses.
- Updated the Council's online dashboard with data on English learners using the Council's Academic KPI data, allowing districts to examine their EL student performance on academic indicators over time and in comparison to other districts and CGCS as a whole.
- Hosted the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education (BIRE) Meeting in May 2023, bringing together experts from Council-member districts, academia, and other organizations to discuss pressing topics such as social-emotional support for immigrant students, improving writing instruction for ELs, and best practices in language instruction programming.
- Surveyed member districts to collect and provide information, as requested, on multiple issues and policies related to serving ELs and immigrant children and youth.
- Planned and coordinated Strategic Support Team visits to review the EL programming of member districts and to provide findings and recommendations to district leadership teams.
- Released District Considerations for Universal Dyslexia Screening: Ensuring Appropriate Implementation and Instruction for English Learners, a guide that documents potential challenges associated with universal dyslexia screening for English learners and provides recommendations for ensuring English learners are appropriately screened.

BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT, AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2022-23, the Council—

- Convened monthly meetings for English learner (EL) directors and staff to share information and provide mutual assistance in

- Released "A Framework for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction for English Learners" to provide guidance to EL educators, as well as members of instructional materials selection committees, in providing appropriate instruction and selecting materials that address the unique literacy development needs of English learners.
- Briefed staff members from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition on the "A Framework for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction for English Learners: Instructional Practice and Materials Considerations."

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 2022-23, the Council—

- Convened monthly meetings for Council member Superintendents, School Board Representatives and Board Chairs, School Board support staff, Chiefs of Staff, Directors of Facilities, 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 to foster collaboration and peer-to-peer support networks.
- Hosted the 2022 Harvard/CGCS Accelerating Board Capacity Institute, providing professional development and governance training to delegations of urban school boards and district leaders.
- Launched four training cohorts to provide guidance to new board members, board chairs, board support staff, and board coaches in supporting Student Outcomes-Focused Governance.
- Launched the inaugural cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute for Aspiring Superintendents under the direction of the Council's Superintendent-in-Residence. The cohort met in person in February, March, May, and June, and will meet in July, September, and October.
- Provided hands-on coaching support to several Council member district superintendents and leadership teams at their request.
- Provided board coaching and training, including multi-day school board retreats, in over 30 districts.
- Hosted in-person job-alike meetings for Chief Information Officers, Chief Finance Officers, Chief Human Resource Officers, Purchasing Directors, Risk Management Directors, and Internal Auditors.
- Planned and coordinated Strategic Support Team visits to review the operational, safety and security, human resources, transportation, information technology, and finance functions of member districts and providing findings and recommendations to district leadership teams.
- Expanded the Michael Casserly Urban School Executive Leadership Institute to prepare future leaders to take on the challenges facing

large urban school districts.

- Managed the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's Operational KPIs, and released the annual "Managing for Results" report.
- Coordinated an effort to provide technical assistance to 20 Council member districts to help them strengthen their technology interoperability, with efforts to expand the program.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council works to manage its resources and ensure that integrity of its programs. In 2022-23, the Council—

- Conducted an all-virtual external audit of the organization's 2021-22 spending and received unqualified audit results for FY2021-22.
- Initiated conversion of the accounting software system from Microsoft Dynamics SL to Sage-Intacct with Go-Live scheduled on July 1, 2023.
- Continued transition from current database system (Impak) and information management system (Lyris) to Higher Logic and Salesforce.
- Conducted the first in-depth, three-day summer staff retreat.
- Hired a new Superintendent-in-Residence, a new Partnership Specialist, a new Chief of Teaching and Learning, and a English Language Learner Policy and Research Fellow.
- Coordinated travel to 21 districts for School Board Governance Support and to 14 districts for Strategic Support Team reviews.
- Managed financials for Board Governance Support and Strategic Support Team visits, 9 grant projects, 15 programs, and 10 in-person conferences.
- Managed financials for 4 Board Governance Cohort groups and the Casserly Institute Aspiring Superintendent cohort.
- Hosted the Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Leaders Meeting in Columbus, OH, Public Relations Executives Conference in Chicago, Annual Fall Conference in Orlando, Chief Operating Officers Conference in New Orleans, Joint Chief Human Resources and Chief Financial Officers Conference in Los Angeles, Legislative/Policy Conference in Washington, DC, Bilingual Directors Conference in Greensboro, and Chief Information Officers conference in Denver. In addition, Executive Committee meetings were held in the summer and winter, a second Board Governance Training was held in February 2023 in Los Angeles, and four Casserly Institute Aspiring Superintendent Cohort Meetings were held in Los Angeles, Atlanta and Denver, Washington, D.C.
- Maintained the online conference registration for all meetings and conferences.
- Coordinated the July 2022 Harvard Accelerated Board Capacity Institute.
- Reviewed options for renewal of medical/dental/life/disability insurances.

AWARD PROGRAMS

"If we don't have strong-willed school board members, strong-willed superintendents that believe in children, fight for children, problem solve for children ... and just stay focused on what's best for children, then many of our kids don't have that chance."

— NIKOLAI VITTI



Detroit Schools Superintendent Nikolai Vitti gives his acceptance speech after receiving the Green-Garner Award at the Council's 67th Annual Fall Conference.



Khrist Ramsey, left, and Maiya Pickett, 2023 graduates from Detroit Public Schools Community District, were honored at a school board meeting for winning the 2023 Green-Garner college scholarship. Ramsey will attend Adrian College and Pickett will attend the University of Michigan.

GREEN-GARNER AWARD

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

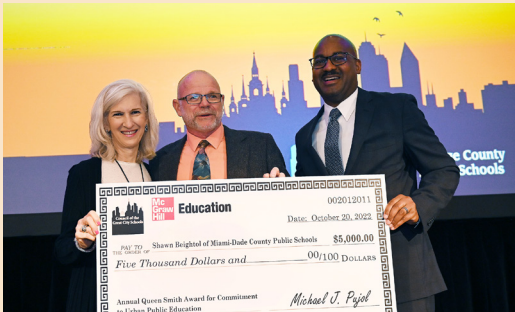
The award, sponsored by Scholastic, includes a \$10,000 college scholarship presented to a senior in the winner's school system.

Nikolai Vitti, the superintendent of the Detroit Public Schools Community District since 2017, was presented the award at the 2022 Fall Conference in Orlando.

Under his leadership, the district has experienced improvement for the first time in decades in the areas of enrollment and financial management; student achievement; and student attendance.

Upon accepting the award, Vitti urged the audience of big-city school leaders to continue to be equity warriors and fighters for public education.

"If we don't have strong-willed school board members, strong-willed superintendents that believe in children, fight for children, problem solve for children ... and just stay focused on what's best for children, then many of our kids don't have that chance," said Vitti.



QUEEN SMITH AWARD FOR COMMITMENT TO URBAN EDUCATION

Shawn Beightol, a veteran science and chemistry teacher at John A. Ferguson Senior High School in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, was the recipient of the Queen Smith Award for Urban Education. The \$5,000 award is named in honor of the late vice president of urban programs for Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Company. Beightol has served the students of Miami-Dade County for nearly three decades, igniting a passion for science, technology, chemistry, and outdoor educational programming for thousands of children—particularly among at risk children.



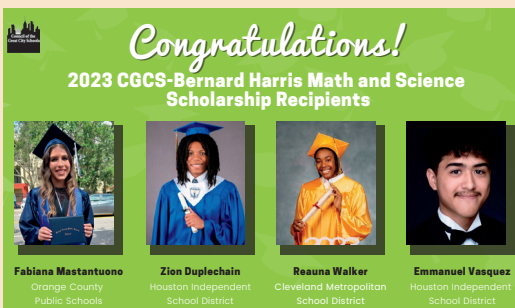
DR. MICHAEL CASSERLY SCHOLARSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL COURAGE AND JUSTICE

America Gomez-Torres, a 2023 graduate of California's Oakland Unified School District, was the recipient of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Scholarship for Educational Courage and Justice. Sponsored by Curriculum Associates, the \$10,000 college scholarship will be used by Gomez-Torres to pursue a career in teaching at the College of Alameda. The scholarship is part of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Award for Educational Courage and Justice, named after the Council's former executive director. The annual award, now in its third year, is presented to a person who has made outstanding contributions in the field of K-12 urban education by taking a courageous and passionate stance on the issue of educational justice and equity. This year's awardee was Lily Wong Fillmore, a distinguished linguist and educator who worked with educators in urban school districts to improve academic language and literacy instruction for English and multilingual learners.



RICHARD M. ROBINSON LITERACY CHAMPION AWARD

Portland Public Schools was the winner of the Richard M. Robinson Literacy Champion Award, sponsored by Scholastic in collaboration with the Council. The annual award is named in honor of the late Scholastic Chairman and CEO, Richard (Dick) Robinson and recognizes a Council member school district for demonstrated progress in advancing reading achievement. As the Richard M. Robinson Literacy Champion Award-winner, Portland Public Schools selected Jason Lee Elementary School to receive the grand prize, which was 13,878 new books and a library makeover.



CGCS-BERNARD HARRIS MATH AND SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Four graduating high school seniors were recently awarded the 2023 CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship. Each scholar will receive \$5,000 for continued education in a STEM-related field. Now in its fifth year, the scholarship was created by former NASA astronaut Dr. Bernard A. Harris, Jr., the first African American to walk in space, to encourage and assist promising students of diverse backgrounds who plan to pursue STEM studies after high school.

MEMBERSHIP DUES



38%

GRANTS & CONTRACTS



25.7%

SPONSOR CONTRIBUTIONS



22%

CONFERENCES & MEETINGS



25.8%

CATEGORICAL PROJECTS



39.7%

REVENUE

	AUDITED REPORT FY 21-22	ESTIMATE FY 22-23
Membership Dues	\$3,399,510	\$3,687,427
Grants & Contracts	5,155,279	2,490,081
Sponsor Contributions	1,185,500	2,129,175
Registration Fees	556,530	1,048,820
Interest and Dividends	1,010,868	341,508
Royalties and Other Income	99,271	0
Net Gain on Investments	(2,459,405)	0
Total Revenue	\$8,947,553	\$9,697,011

EXPENSES

	AUDITED REPORT FY 21-22	ESTIMATE FY 22-23
Public Advocacy	\$167,530	\$257,003
Legislative Advocacy	721,932	508,137
Research	133,784	258,665
Curriculum & Instruction	44,574	173,381
Executive Leadership	647,382	906,643
Member Management Services	131,495	302,425
Admin & Financial Management	509,216	916,021
Fundraising Activities	19,294	36,732
Conferences & Meetings	1,177,592	2,507,134
Categorical Projects	3,914,547	3,858,194
Total Expenses	\$7,467,346	\$9,724,336

Change in Net Assets	\$1,480,208	(\$27,324)
Net Assets, Beginning	\$12,789,542	\$14,269,750
Net Assets, Ending	\$14,269,750	\$14,242,425

THE COUNCIL THANKS THE FOLLOWING
CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN 2022-2023

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Apple
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ClassLink
Code.org
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Dreambox Learning
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Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Illuminate Education
Imagine Learning
K12 Insight
Learn Platform
Learning Ally
Mastery Prep
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Renaissance
Riverside Insights
Savvas Learning Company
Scholastic
SchoolMint
The Harris Institute
ThinkCerca
Thought Exchange
Varsity Tutors
Waterford
Wilson Language Training
Zearn

2022 Curriculum and Research Directors Meeting

Amplify
AVID
Branching Minds
ClassLink
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
Dreambox Learning
Hazel Health
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Imagine Learning
IXL
LearnPlatform
Mastery Prep
NWEA
PAPER
Public Consulting Group
Reconstruction US
Rhithm
Saga Education
Savvas Learning Company
Speak Agent, Inc.

Think Cerca
Varsity Tutors for Schools
Waterford.org
XanEdu

2022 Public Relations Executives Meeting

Blackboard
Finalsite
Gaggle
Intrado
K12 Insight
ParentSquare
Parsons TKO
Peachjar
SchoolMint
Snap! Mobile
Talking Points
ThoughtExchange
Waterford.org

2022 Fall Conference

Amplify Education, Inc.
Apple Inc.
Care Solace
ClassLink
Clever
Curriculum Associates
Edmentum
ESS
Evov Technology
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Imagine Learning
IXL Learning
K12 Insight
Kindercare Education LLC
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LearnPlatform
Linq
MasteryPrep
McGraw Hill
NWEA
PAPER Education Company
PowerSchool
Renaissance Learning
RethinkEd
Savvas Learning Company
Stride
Talking Points
ThinkCerca
ThoughtExchange
Varsity Tutors for School
Waterford Research Institute
Wilson Language Training
Zearn

2022 Chief Operating Officers Conference

Active Pure
Audio Enhancement
Carrier
Centegix
Cooperative Strategies
DLR Group
EDULOG
Energia
EqualLevel
Everdriven
Evolv
Gaggle
Hellas
Hop Skip Drive
K12 Insight
McKinstry
Mountain Vector Energy
Plante Moran
Public Consulting Group
SFE
Skanska
Sodexo

2023 CHRO & CFO Joint Meeting

Allovue
Amazon Business
AST
Centegix
ClassLink
Energia
EqualLevel
IBM
Indeed
K12 Insight
Kelly Education
Nimble
Oracle
PFM Asset Management
Power School
RSM
Tyler Technologies
UKG
Upbeat

2023 Legislative/Policy Conference

All Here
Amplify
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Edmentum
Energia
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
K12 Insight

Kelly Education
NWEA
PAPER Education Company
Public Consulting Group
Riverside Insights
SchoolLinks
SchoolMint
STEMScopes
Trusted Capital Group (TCG)
Wilson Language Training

2023 Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee Education Directors Meeting

Amplify
Apple
Benchmark Education
Curriculum Associates
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Off2Class
Polylino
Renaissance
Riverside Insights
Speak Agent
ST Math
Talking Points
ThinkCerca
Zearn

2023 Chief Information Officers Meeting

AWS
Artic Wolf
AST
Audio Enhancement
Bluum
Centegix
ClassLink
Docusign
Dell Technologies
ENA
Finalsite
Gaggle
Highstreet
Howard Edu
iboss
Identity Automation
Innive K12 360
K12 Insight
Learn Platform
Lightspeed Systems
Linewise
Linq
Syntropy Partners
Technogen
Oracle
Varsity Tutors for Schools

PUBLICATIONS



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Ray Hart, Executive Director
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 Delisa Nunez, Partnership Specialist
 Teri Trinidad, Director of Administration,
 Finance & Conferences
 Alisa Adams, Finance Manager
 Alexis Vann, Manager of Conferences
 Michell Yorkman, Manager of Conferences and
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 Gregory Bacon, Administrative and
 Conference Specialist
 Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant
 Michael Casserly, Strategic Advisor

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 Joanne Coley, Communications Manager
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 Ricki Price-Baugh, Senior Advisor

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 David Lai, ELL Policy Manager

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 Cindy Elsbernd, Manager of Governance Services

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 Robert Carlson, Senior Advisor for
 Management Services

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 Brian Garcia, Research Manager
 Chester Holland, Research Manager
 Sam Whitsett, Research Intern

SPECIAL PROJECTS

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

2022-2023 COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBER DISTRICTS

(AS OF MARCH 2023)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SUPERINTENDENT	BOARD MEMBER	SCHOOL DISTRICT	SUPERINTENDENT	BOARD MEMBER
Albuquerque	Scott Elder	Yolanda Montoya-Cordova	Long Beach	Jill Baker	Douglas Otto
Anchorage	Jharrett Bryant	Margo Bellamy	Los Angeles	Alberto Carvalho	Kelly Gonez
Arlington	Steven Wurtz	Melody Fowler	Miami-Dade County	José Dotres	N/A
Atlanta	Lisa Herring	Erika Mitchell	Memphis-Shelby	Tutional Williams	Kevin Woods
Aurora	Michael Giles	Debbie Gerkin	Milwaukee	Keith Posley	Robert Peterson
Austin	Matias Segura	David Kauffman	Minneapolis	Rochelle Cox	Sharon El-Amin
Baltimore	Sonja Santelises	Ronald McFadden	Nashville	Adrienne Battle	Berthena Nabaa-
Birmingham	Mark Sullivan	Neonta Williams			McKinney
Boston	Mary Skipper	Michael O'Neill	New Orleans	Avis Williams	N/A
Bridgeport	Alyshia Perrin	Bobbi Brown	New York City	David Banks	N/A
Broward County	Earlean Smiley	Lori Allhadeff	Newark	Roger León	Dawn Haynes
Buffalo	Tonja Williams	Louis Petrucci	Norfolk	Sharon Byrdson	Rodney Jordan
Charleston	Eric Gallien	N/A	Oakland	Kyla Johnson-Trammell	Sam Davis
Charlotte-Mecklenberg	Crystal Hill	Elyse Dashew	Oklahoma City	Sean McDaniel	Paula Lewis
Chicago	Pedro Martinez	Sendhi Revuluri	Omaha	Cheryl Logan	Shavonna Holman
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Clark County	Jesus Jara	Lola Brooks	Palm Beach County	Mike Burke	Marcia Andrews
Cleveland	Eric Gordon	Denise Link	Philadelphia	Tony Watlington	Joyce Wilkerson
Columbus	Angela Chapman	Jennifer Adair	Phoenix Union	Thea Andrade	Naketa Ross
Dallas	Stephanie Elizalde	Justin Henry	Pinellas County	Kevin Hendrick	Carol Cook
Dayton	Elizabeth Lolli	Chrisondra Goodwine	Pittsburgh	Wayne Walters	Sala Udin
Denver	Alex Marrero	Xóchitl Gaytán	Portland	Guadalupe Guerrero	Amy Kohnstamm
Des Moines	Ian Roberts	Kimberly Martorano	Providence	Javier Montañez	N/A
Detroit	Nikolai Vitti	Angelique Peterson-	Puerto Rico	Eliezer Ramos Parés	N/A
		Mayberry	Richmond	Jason Kamras	Stephanie Rizzi
District of Columbia	Lewis Ferebee	N/A	Rochester	Carmine Peluso	Cynthia Elliott
Duval County	Diana Greene	Kelly Koker	Sacramento	Jorge A. Aguilar	Christina Pritchett
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Little Rock	Jermall Wright	Michael Mason			

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