



2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

GROW | INNOVATE | EDUCATE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Guadalupe Guerrero

Portland Public Schools Superintendent

CHAIR-ELECT

Marcia Andrews

Palm Beach County School Board

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Sonja Brookins Santelises

Baltimore City Public Schools CEO

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

Kelly Gonez

Los Angeles School Board

ANNUAL REPORT PREPARED BY:

Joanne Coley

Communications Manager

Tonya Harris

Director of Communications

Kalin Hicks

Communications Specialist

Tanya Borman-Voit

Graphic Design Consultant

Alex Jones and Clarence Tabb

Photographer

MEMBERS

Jerry Almendarez

Santa Ana Superintendent

Jill Baker

Long Beach Superintendent

Sabrina Bazzo

San Diego School Board

Brandon Craig

Cincinnati School Board

Stephanie Kneed

Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board

Valerie Davis

Fresno School Board

Stephanie Elizalde

Dallas Superintendent

Susan Enfield

Washoe County Superintendent

Lewis Ferebee

District of Columbia Chancellor

Joe Gothard

St. Paul Superintendent

Shavonna Holman

Omaha School Board

Jesus Jara

Clark County Superintendent

Rodney Jordan

Norfolk School Board

Roger León

Newark Superintendent

Alex Marrero

Denver Superintendent

Christina Martinez

San Antonio School Board

Diane Porter

Jefferson County School Board

Mary Skipper

Boston Superintendent

Joyce Wilkerson

Philadelphia School Board

Stacey Woolley

Tulsa School Board

Ex Officio

Deborah Shanley

Dean/Professor Emerita
Brooklyn College-CUNY

Sharon Contreras

CEO, The Innovation Project
North Carolina Central University

Photo Credits/Details:

Cover Photo: Students from Dallas Independent School District

Contents Page Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools

Page 4 Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools

Page 6 Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools

Page 8 Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools

Page 24 Photo: Student from Des Moines Public Schools



Table of Contents

2

Messages

4

About the Council

6

Vision

8

Organizational
Structure

9

Characteristics &
Conferences

10

Fall Conference

11

Legislative/Policy
Conference

12

Highlights

18

Awards

20

Michael Casserly
Institute

21

Sponsors

23

Publications

24

Council Staff

MESSAGE from the CHAIR

“We, the Council, are committed to creating a new narrative for the 7.8 million children in our nation’s big cities. Our persistence and deliberate actions demonstrate the power of our organization every day. ”



— GUADALUPE GUERRERO

In my opening address at the Council’s Fall Conference in San Diego, California, I highlighted the remarkable achievements of the Council of the Great City Schools and each of our 78 member districts. We, the Council, are committed to creating a new narrative for the 7.8 million children in our nation’s big cities. Our persistence and deliberate actions demonstrate the power of our organization every day. We hold ourselves to a higher standard. We are the Council of the Great City Schools.

In 2023-2024, the Council of the Great City Schools demonstrated great efforts and incredible accomplishments across various domains to support our member districts. On the legislative front, the Council successfully advocated for preserving federal education program funding and developed resources to help schools comply with the Supreme Court’s ruling on race in college applications.

The communications team issued numerous press releases, managed media inquiries from major outlets, kept us updated via the *Urban Educator* newsletter, and released a guidebook on crisis communications.

Organizationally, the Council conducted financial audits, transitioned to new accounting software, facilitated staff collaboration, and coordinated multiple in-person and virtual conferences.

To support English learners (EL), the Council hosted monthly technical support calls, responded to various information requests, and developed professional development courses on foundational literacy and writing.

For management services, regular calls and in-person meetings across various administrative roles fostered knowledge sharing and collaboration. We conducted strategic reviews for several school districts and developed a K-12 AI Readiness Checklist.

As the trusted source of study to improve student achievement in our classrooms and schools, the Council coordinated monthly research meetings to discuss Covid-19 recovery needs, analyzed and reported on key performance indicators (KPIs).

Professional development initiatives involved launching curriculum improvement projects, conducting academic and special education reviews, and collaborating with external partners to address educational standards and the effective use of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. Through these comprehensive efforts, the Council has made significant strides in enhancing students’ educational experiences and outcomes in urban public schools. This impressive body of work is testament to the leadership of Dr. Ray Hart, and the entire team, who remain dedicated to transforming student outcomes.

As educational leaders, we must ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive and succeed. Let us remain committed to supporting one another, sharing promising practices, demonstrating progress, and achieving success. I feel tremendous gratitude for all of you as my colleagues. As courageous Superintendents and Board members, you are making an impact. I appreciate you for remaining in the arena.

In large cities all across America, our member districts are demonstrating remarkable counternarratives about what is possible when we remain student-centered, foster supportive conditions in our schools, and focus on engaging our students and enriching their learning experience. As educational leaders, we must ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive and succeed. We must remain strong advocates for public education, utilizing our moral imperative, knowledge, and ability to create the school systems our students deserve. This shared responsibility sits squarely with us. Remember, we are the Council.

Guadalupe Guerrero
Chair of the Board, 2023-2024



“The Council had another extraordinary year. To support current and rising leaders, we provided coaching and technical assistance to school boards, superintendents, and district leadership teams across the country.”

MESSAGE from the DIRECTOR

—RAY HART

I am proud to present this annual report to the membership on the activities of the Council of the Great City Schools during the 2023-24 program year.

The Council had another extraordinary year. To support current and rising leaders, we provided coaching and technical assistance to school boards, superintendents, and district leadership teams across the country.

We embarked on our second year building our school board coaching cohorts, graduated the first cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute for Superintendents, and launched our second cohort of future leaders. The Council had the opportunity to showcase this governance and leadership work at the SXSW EDU Conference in Austin.

We continued to support districts with guidance and technical assistance on the strategic use of federal dollars in preparation for the sunset of Covid-19 pandemic relief funds. We provided resources and a forum for information sharing in the aftermath of recent Supreme Court rulings on the role of race in college admissions, and submitted multiple sets of comments and detailed policy recommendations to the U.S. Department of Education, Federal Communications Commission, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Trade Commission.

The Council published its annual reports on both instructional and operational key performance indicators and provided hands-on technical assistance to members with Strategic Support Team visits and reviews in the areas of instruction, special education, organizational management, IT, finance, human resources, transportation, and school safety and security.

To support districts with emerging technology needs, the Council partnered with the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) to develop a K-12 Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Readiness Checklist and piloted a GenAI Maturity Model in a handful of member districts.

In the area of curriculum and instruction, the Council provided in-person and online professional learning opportunities on foundational literacy skills, hosted quarterly instructional spotlights featuring district use of the Council's Supporting Excellence curriculum framework, and co-hosted a Mathematics Summit with federal departments and agencies.

We continued to develop the Professional Learning Platform with new courses on supporting English learners in writing, and published an award-winning report, *Between the Lines*, analyzing data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) over the last 20 years. The Council also highlighted member district achievements through our award-winning online newsletter, the *Urban Educator*, and released an award-winning guide on planning for and managing communications during crises.

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

I thank Guadalupe Guerrero for his leadership this year as Chair, and Marcia Andrews for stepping into her role as Chair early. Finally, I 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

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.





Education Secretary Miguel Cardona speaks with Council Chair-elect Marcia Andrews (middle) and Council Secretary-Treasurer Sonja Brookins Santelises (right) at the Legislative/Policy Conference.



Former Rep. Liz Cheney addresses urban educators at the Fall Conference in San Diego.



Civil rights activist Sylvia Mendez is honored at the Fall Conference in San Diego for her role in desegregating the nation's public schools. She is congratulated by Council Chair Guadalupe Guerrero, left, and Council Executive Director Ray Hart.

OUR VISION



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 students and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our institutions.
- To bolster the public's confidence in urban public education and build a supportive community for raising our children and enhancing their future.

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.



At the Legislative/Policy Conference Council Executive Director Ray Hart, left, discussed with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Superintendent Tricia McManus and The School District of Philadelphia Schools Superintendent Tony Watlington how students in their districts have made progress in math and reading after the pandemic.



(left to right) Denver Schools Superintendent Alex Marrero, Dallas Schools Superintendent Stephanie Elizalde, and Seattle Schools Superintendent Brent Jones attend the Board of Directors meeting at the Fall Conference in San Diego.

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 **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 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, bilingual 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

- 44% Hispanic
- 26% African American
- 18% White
- 7% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 1% Alaskan/Native American/Other



Number of Schools



Student-Teacher Ratio



Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility



English Language Learners



Total Number of Teachers



Students With Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

CONFERENCES

Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Leaders Conference

Portland, OR

July 10-13, 2023

Public Relations Executives Meeting

St. Louis, MO

July 13-15, 2023

67th Annual Fall Conference

San Diego, CA

October 25-29, 2023

Directors and Chiefs of Finance, Purchasing, Risk Management, and Internal Auditors Meeting

Phoenix, AZ

November 6-9, 2023

Chief Human Resource Officers Meeting

Louisville, KY

February 5-8, 2024

Legislative/Policy Conference

Washington, DC

March 16-18, 2024

Chief Operating Officers and Directors of Facilities, Child Nutrition, Safety & Security, and Transportation Meeting

Phoenix, AZ

April 15-21, 2024

Bilingual, Immigrant, & Refugee Education Directors Meeting

Minneapolis, MN

May 6-11, 2024

Chief Information Officers Conference

Portland, OR

June 4-7, 2024

FALL CONFERENCE

“If somebody doesn't touch you on the shoulder and say you are worthwhile, you don't know you are worthwhile. You don't know that you can achieve things until somebody outside of yourself tells you that.”

— JOHN LEGUIZAMO



Council Chair Guadalupe Guerrero interviews actor John Leguizamo.



Journalist Jemele Hill discusses the importance of educators.



Big-city students participate in Town Hall discussion on gun violence and school safety.

Under the banner, “Sailing Into the Future of Urban Education,” big-city school superintendents, board members, senior administrators, and college deans of education assembled in San Diego for the Council of the Great City Schools’ 67th Annual Fall Conference, October 25-29, hosted by the San Diego Unified School District.

During a national town hall meeting moderated by Sequoia Carrillo, a K-12 education reporter for National Public Radio, eight students from urban schools across the country discussed pressing issues such as gun violence and school safety. “A significant national issue impacting my school is gun violence — we’ve experienced two traumatic events in the past year,” said Kate Todd, a senior from Denver Public Schools. The student panel also addressed the need for gun reform, the challenges teachers face, overwhelmed school counselors, and the importance of supportive communities and extracurricular activities.

In her keynote address, former U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney, who served on the House Select Committee investigating the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, urged education leaders to consider running for office. “If you have any inclination at all, and if you believe in the Constitution — that’s key — please, please think carefully about how you might contribute,” Cheney said to big-city school leaders.

Cheney represented Wyoming in the U.S. House from 2017 to 2023 and told conferees that Americans cannot take for granted that democracy will always function. “I think our democracy is based on a two-party system that can engage in debate about the issues that matter most.”

Jemele Hill, a graduate of the Detroit Public Schools Community District, told urban educators that in her 2022 book, “Uphill: A Memoir,” she made it a point to thank several of her teachers, particularly her journalism teacher. The Emmy Award-winning journalist underscored the importance of educators amidst challenges in education, thanking them for their dedication to public schools and the invaluable impact they have on students’ lives.

Council Chair Guadalupe Guerrero interviewed actor and comedian John Leguizamo, who shared how a high school teacher’s advice changed his life, guiding him toward a career in acting. He emphasized the crucial role teachers play as mentors, especially for students who come from impoverished backgrounds.

“If somebody doesn’t touch you on the shoulder and say you are worthwhile, you don’t know you are worthwhile,” said Leguizamo. “You don’t know that you can achieve things until somebody outside of yourself tells you that.”

He also drew attention to the lack of Latino representation in curriculum and textbooks, advocating for greater diversity in storytelling as well as for increased Latino representation in the film and television industry.

LEGISLATIVE/POLICY CONFERENCE



Political analyst Amy Walter discusses presidential politics.



Education Secretary Miguel Cardona praises the progress urban schools are making.



White House official Neera Tanden addresses the issue of absenteeism in schools.

Big-city school educators converged in the nation's capital March 16-19 for the Council of the Great City Schools' Legislative/Policy Conference.

In a conversation with Council Secretary/Treasurer Sonja Brookins Santelises, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona underscored the Biden Administration's commitment to tackling community violence affecting schools and said educators shouldn't have to sacrifice staff to address safety needs.

Cardona praised how the nation's school districts have utilized funds from the American Rescue Plan to make educational improvements and urged Congress to make greater investments in education. The education secretary also highlighted efforts to increase the number of FAFSA applications, which will enable more students to access federal financial aid. "The good news is that over 600,000 more students can now be eligible for up to \$7,400 in federal dollars," Cardona said. "That's going to be a net plus for schools, for students, and most important, for our country."

Neera Tanden, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, discussed the White House's focus on helping states and school districts ensure students attend school regularly. She highlighted that chronic absenteeism significantly impacts post-pandemic test scores, with up to 27 percent declines in math and 45 percent in reading linked to absenteeism. Tanden stressed that high absenteeism rates are a nationwide problem and

called for a collaborative approach, urging educators to set clear goals, engage community support, and implement effective interventions.

"[Absenteeism] is a problem throughout the country," she said. "It's in red states and blue states, rural, urban, and suburban."

Also addressing the conference was political analyst Amy Walter, who discussed the upcoming 2024 presidential election, a rematch between Joe Biden and Donald Trump. She recalled the historical rarity of a sitting president running against a previous opponent and predicted another close race.

Despite the stability and volatility in U.S. politics, Walter expressed hope due to America's resilience and the engagement of educators advocating for their communities. "So, continue to be engaged, telling people why it's important to stay engaged," urged Walter. "It matters very, very much in this entire process."

As the conference came to a close, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) was named the recipient of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Award for Educational Courage and Justice. The annual award, which is sponsored by Curriculum Associates, recognizes an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the field of urban education across grades K-12. Sen. Schumer was recognized for his advocacy and work on issues relating to educational justice and equity.

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 2023-24 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 the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Education Week*, *Chalkbeat*, *Boston Globe*, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.
- Released a guidebook on crisis communication to help communication directors in urban school districts proactively plan for, and be ready to manage communications during a crisis, such as a school shooting.
- Organized two sessions at the SXSW EDU Conference in Austin on training the next generation of urban school leaders and navigating politics in urban school boards.
- Secured the three keynote speakers—former congresswoman Liz Cheney, journalist Jemele Hill, and actor John Leguizamo—and coordinated a national town hall meeting featuring an all-student panel, moderated by Sequoia Carrillo, a K-12 education reporter for National Public Radio, for the Annual Fall Conference.
- Produced and disseminated eight issues of the Council's award-winning digital newsletter, the *Urban Educator*.
- Coordinated the CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships Program and the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Scholarship for Educational Courage and Justice.
- Hosted the 23rd Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in St. Louis.
- Managed the Council's Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group.
- 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.
- Actively participated in meetings with the Coalition to Advance Future Student Success to highlight member districts' successes to ensure American Rescue Plan funds are spent effectively and efficiently.

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 2023-24, the Council—

- Successfully worked to preserve level funding for federal education programs in Fiscal Year 2024, despite strict spending caps instituted by the 2023 debt ceiling agreement and a House appropriations proposal that cut Title I by 80% and eliminated funding for teacher effectiveness and English learner programs.
- Developed a Q&A document with a working group of CGCS general counsels to help high school college advisors and guidance counselors understand and apply the Supreme Court's ruling in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* when counseling students about the use of race in college applications.
- Hosted multiple discussions and presentations from member district superintendents, Chief Financial Officers, federal program directors, and other leaders to highlight the expiration of federal COVID relief funding, address the requirements for ensuring the on-time obligation of funds, minimize the fiscal cliff after funds have been expended, and initiate discussions with states about requesting an extension of the liquidation period.
- Convened the CGCS general counsels for a pre-meeting before the 2023 Annual Fall Conference addressing topics such as: Office for Civil Rights investigations in special education; lawsuits against state agencies; digital accessibility and ADA compliance; social media litigation; and U.S. Justice Department resolutions regarding English Language Learners.
- Advocated for, and supported the adoption of the first cybersecurity pilot program for K-12 schools from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and filed multiple sets of comments with the agency to help school districts address the growing cybersecurity needs in K-12 schools.
- Provided multiple briefings on the regulations for Title IX and created a detailed side-by-side comparison of the previous and updated Title IX regulations for use by urban school district general counsels and Title IX coordinators.
- Launched a survey on urban school districts' investments from the American Rescue Plan's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) pandemic assistance grant program to highlight how Council members effectively used funds to re-open schools, support student and staff health and safety issues

that emerged during the pandemic, and boost student achievement.

- Submitted public comments to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on their proposed rule to implement the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), working with a group of school district general counsels and information technology administrators to strengthen student privacy protections.
- Actively opposed federal Parents Bill of Rights legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives, which included overly prescriptive and unnecessary requirements regarding curriculum, library materials, and budget information, as well as harmful provisions that would hinder a district's ability to deploy educational technology and perform needed health and wellness screenings.
- Hosted a series of legal webinars with the law firm Husch Blackwell on issues affecting urban school districts, including the use of race in college admissions, religious accommodations for students and employees, challenges to diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, state vs. local control, and updated Title IX regulations.
- 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 2024 Annual Legislative/Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., with remarks from U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and White House Domestic Policy Advisor Neera Tanden, as well as legislative briefings and Q&A sessions with staff from Congress and the U.S. Department of Education.
- Held monthly meetings with school district general counsels to provide updates on pending federal and state education litigation, discuss common issues of concern, and disseminate new federal regulations and guidance.
- Fielded scores of legislative, legal, and regulatory questions to resolve various district problems and intercede 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 2023-24, the Council—

- Convened monthly research, evaluation, and assessment meetings with member districts to discuss pandemic

recovery trends and data, as well as best practices in conducting research in urban school districts.

- Convened a series of Chief Performance and Accountability Officer meetings with member districts to discuss best practices in driving systemic data use in urban school districts.
- Convened regular meetings with member districts who use three formative assessments (NWEA, Curriculum Associates, and Renaissance) in Research/Assessment Consortia. These consortia are designed to allow space for sharing of information, best practices, and data among users of these assessments.
- 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.
- Analyzed NAEP and Academic KPI data to assess the progress of young men and women of color across Council member districts and to understand the disproportionality of young men and women of color. The analysis was shared at the Council's Black and Latino Young Men and Boys Task Force meeting, Black and Latina Young Women and Girls Task Force meeting, and in the Annual Academic Key Performance Indicators report.
- Updated the online data dashboard for the Council's Academic KPIs to allow districts to examine longitudinal and district comparison data.
- Continued the Council's work with RAND Corporation on the administration of two American School District Panel national surveys. The two surveys administered in 2023-24 focused on topics such as superintendency, COVID and recovery funding, math instruction, principal preparation and support, and project-based learning. Through this partnership, reports were produced that compared CGCS districts to national responses.
- Updated interactive NAEP dashboards for TUDA districts with results from the 2003-2022 administrations at grades four and eight in both mathematics and reading. Published these interactive tools on the Council website.
- Launched an enrollment dashboard that allows districts to track enrollment from 2012 through 2023 overall, by grade level, by race/ethnicity, and by students with disabilities and English learner student groups.
- Convened two meetings of the Trial Urban District Assessment 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 providing recommendations and feedback on the development and operation of the TUDA program.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the National Assessment Governing Board; National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships; American Education Research Association, Harvard Strategic Data Project, National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education, and NAEP Validity Studies Panel.
- Responded to numerous member requests for statistical information and research assistance.
- Provided technical assistance to member districts on assessments, student information systems, and data visualizations and dashboards.
- 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.
- Released *Between the Lines, Large City Performance on NAEP Over the Last 20 Years (2002-2022)*, a report that looks at data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to understand differences in student performance between large cities and students nationally over the last 20 years. The research team received the American Education Research Association Division H Outstanding Publication in Assessments and Accountability Award for their work on this publication.
- In partnership with American University's Education Policy and Leadership program, developed a brief on turnover and attrition among superintendents/chief executives in Council districts.
- curriculum framework. Topics also included improving reading for older students, implementing equitable MTSS using a systemic approach, and integrating data science and literacy across the curriculum.
- Convened a virtual meeting of Chief Academic Officers, Research Directors, and Chiefs of Schools on Outcomes-Based Contracting (OBC) in February 2024, providing an overview and learning from two member districts about their experiences to date.
- Continued collaboration with Student Achievement Partners on the implementation and field testing of the e2 Essential and Equitable Walkthrough Tools in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- 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 in publications and presentations.
- Convened the annual Curriculum, Research, and Instructional Leaders Conference in July 2023 in Portland.
- Provided academic updates and presented at the Achievement and Professional Development Task Force meetings at the 2023 Annual Fall Conference and 2024 Legislative Conference.
- Provided technical support to districts by reviewing and providing feedback on their curriculum guidance using the Council's curriculum framework.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council's most important priorities. In 2023-24, the Council—

- Convened virtual monthly meetings with instructional staff and leaders, including core content directors, Chief Academic Officers, Chiefs of Equity, Special Education Leaders, Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Leaders, Social-Emotional Learning Leaders, Mental Health Leaders, and Restorative Justice leaders, on topics and issues pertaining to their field.
- Convened bi-monthly meetings with Early Learning Leaders, Principal Supervisors, and Chiefs of Schools on topics and issues pertaining to their field.
- Launched a new role-alike group, Early Learning Leaders (Birth-PreK), to support children's transition to school and continuity during the early years of school.
- Convened quarterly Instructional Spotlight webinars to highlight and support district implementation of the
- Collaborated with leading mathematics, science, history/ social science, and literacy organizations to surface and share perspectives from policymakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders on emerging issues and trends in teaching and student learning.
- Collaborated with the Institute of Educational Sciences, the National Science Foundation, the Council of Chiefs State School Officers, the National Assessment Governing Board, and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to facilitate a virtual national Mathematics Summit.
- Planned and coordinated Strategic Support Team visits to three Council districts to review special education programming and services, report findings, and provide recommendations to senior district leadership.
- Designed a needs assessment survey for Chief Academic Officers and Chiefs of Schools to help CGCS staff better understand district priorities and refine our assistance to these groups in role-alike sessions as well as through cross-collaborative joint meetings.

- Continued to meet and attend convenings with Gates Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, and Wallace Foundation to align the Academic team's work with respective grant goals.
- Represented CGCS at conferences of national organizations such as the National Academy of Education, Just Equations, the Coalition to Advance Future Student Success, and the Reading League.
- Coordinated with the CGCS General Counsel to host virtual monthly meetings with Special Education Legal Counsels and Directors addressing both compliance and instructional implications of passing legislation as well as assist in navigating current challenges they are facing with their systems.
- Co-facilitated an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Maturity Matrix workshop in April 2024 with the CGCS Director of Management Services in the Clark County School District to assist them with creating a cross-functional team to begin drafting AI policy and guidelines.
- Coordinated with the CGCS General Counsel to present on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion national cases and implications to address district programs, initiatives, and potential legislative impact.
- Created and disseminated the 2024 Instructional Materials Survey to all member districts to ascertain the materials being used in the core content areas from Birth through Grade 12. Results will be aggregated and de-identified in preparation for the 2024-2025 school year, where member districts will be able to connect and collaborate within networks related to the materials they are using.
- Designed a Needs Assessment Survey for Chief Academic Officers and Chief of Schools to help CGCS staff better understand their needs and priorities and refine our assistance to these groups in role-alike sessions and cross-collaborative joint meetings.
- Presented to the Coalition for Advancing Student Success to share plans and updates about the National Mathematics Summit as well as facilitated a special session about the second edition of *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum*.
- Created and disseminated a Mathematics Area of Interest Survey to transition the mathematics role-alike group to work groups where a small group of district directors can engage in deep learning around a strategy or initiative and receive continuous feedback and support on implementation.
- Continued to meet and attend convenings with Gates Foundation, Hewlett Foundation and Wallace Foundation

to align the Academic team's work with respective grant goals.

- Represented CGCS at the following events: Steering Committee for the National Academy of Education, NAED project, Addressing Educational Inequities in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic; Virtual conference hosted by Just Equations and facilitated a session on disrupting tracking in mathematics; Planning committee tasked with the design and implementation of a national Summit on Data Science in February 2025; Presentation at the 2024 Bilingual Immigrant Refugee Conference on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support; and Panel discussion for the Reading League Summit on Foundational Literacy for English Language Learners.

BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT, AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2023-24, the Council—

- Convened regular virtual meetings with English learner (EL) program directors and staff to share information and provide mutual assistance to address EL needs.
- Planned and led the English Language Learners and Bilingual Education Task Force meetings at the 2023 Annual Fall Conference and 2024 Legislative Conference.
- Hosted a meeting of the National EL Roundtable with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Education Language Acquisition to bring together national advocacy organizations for ELs and immigrant-origin students.
- Made numerous presentations on the Council's foundational literacy skills framework document, including to the EL Collaborative of the Council of Chief State School Officers, Florida Association of Bilingual and ESOL Supervisors, and the California Association for Bilingual Education.
- Responded to member requests for information on issues and policies related to serving ELs and immigrant children and youth in Council-member districts.
- Established a partnership with the Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society at the City University of New York to co-develop an educational background questionnaire to support districts in appropriately placing newcomer students who lack transcripts or have interrupted formal education. Through this partnership, the Council is also involved in developing a native language literacy assessment piloted by five Council-member districts.
- Supported Council member districts with professional development through the Council's Professional Learning Platform (PLP) courses. Also provided district staff with support from course experts to review units of study, discuss implementation, and provide training to teachers.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Established a 28-member working group to review foundational literacy skills instructional materials for ELs across a subset of 13 Council member districts. The group met in Washington, D.C., in July, to review materials from four publishers, who then received confidential and anonymous feedback from the review.
- Hosted the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education (BIRE) Meeting in May 2024 in Minneapolis for approximately 230 attendees. Experts from Council-member districts, academia, and other organizations discussed pressing topics such as fostering language development in STEM, implementing dual language programs, accelerating learning for newcomers, and incorporating best practices in language instruction.
- Designed and conducted a new interactive exercise at BIRE 2024 which offered time, space, and support for EL program staff to examine a challenge of practice and develop pertinent responses.
- Hosted virtual professional learning sessions for member district staff with experts on oral language development (Jeff Zwiers) and understanding the mental health needs of newcomer students (Alejandra Murray).
- Launched a pilot with five districts and continued development of writing courses in partnership with the Pathway to Academic Success Project at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), funded by an Education Innovation and Research (EIR) expansion grant.
- As a part of the University of California Irvine project, co-developed professional learning courses with the National Writing Project, which were shared at various UCI conferences.
- Provided support to several Council superintendents and cabinet members through a cadre of coaches.
- Developed nine-month professional development programs for new school board members, school board chairs, school board secretaries, and school board coaches.
- Graduated the first cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Program for Superintendents in October and launched the second cohort in February.
- Convened 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 meetings for Chief Finance Officers, Chief Human Resource Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Child Nutrition Directors, Facilities Directors, Purchasing Directors, Risk Management Directors, Safety & Security Directors, Transportation Directors, and Internal Auditors.
- Convened the Leadership, Governance, Management, and Finance Task Force at the 2023 Annual Fall Conference and the Legislative Conference in March 2024.
- Planned and coordinated eight strategic support team visits to review programming, report findings, and provide recommendations to senior district leadership in areas including Facilities, Finance, Human Resources, Informational Technology, Organizational Structure, Safety and Security, and Transportation.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

The Task Force on Leadership, Governance, Management, and School Finance address the quality and tenure of leadership and management in and funding of urban schools. In 2023-24, 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 as a part of the Annual Fall Conference to provide additional technical assistance and support to new and experienced superintendents.
- Co-hosted with Harvard University the Accelerating Board Capacity Institute for over 60 representatives from 12 member districts in July.
- Provided on-site and virtual technical assistance, professional development, and coaching to school boards in over 30 districts.
- 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.
- Worked in partnership with the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) and Amazon Web Services to develop a K12 Generative AI (GenAI) Readiness Checklist Questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed to identify key factors for K12 school districts to consider before implementing Gen AI technologies.
- Piloted a Gen AI Maturity Model in consultation with Chicago Public Schools, Clark County School District, and Fresno Unified School District.

- Launched a Safety & Security Taskforce to establish guidelines and best practices for enhancing safety measures and implementing effective security protocols to ensure the well-being of students, staff, and faculty across urban school settings.
- Launched an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Task Force to establish guidelines and best practices for successful ERP implementations tailored specifically to the unique context of large urban school districts. Members of the Task Force include CFOs, CHROs, CIOs, COOs, Chief Academic Officers, Superintendents, and industry partners.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council works to manage its resources and ensure that integrity of its programs. In 2023-24, the Council—

- Conducted an all-virtual external audit of the organization's 2022-23 spending and received unqualified audit results for FY2022-23.
- Completed the first year of using new accounting software (Sage Intacct) while maintaining the previous software MS Dynamics SL historical comparison.
- Continued to oversee the transition from the current database system (Impak) and information management system (Lyris) to Higher Logic and Salesforce, facilitating enhanced communication through "CGCS Communities." The new CGCS Communities platform will allow Council and member district staff to share information, track online discussions, store documents, and organize conference materials.
- Conducted a three-day summer staff retreat to advance organizational communication and collaboration.
- Hired a new Chief of Academics and General Counsel.
- Coordinated travel to member districts for over 30 school board retreats and 13 Strategic Support Team visits.
- Managed financials for four board governance cohorts, two Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute cohorts, various board retreats, superintendent coaching, Strategic Support Team reviews, five grant projects, 10 programs, and 11 in-person conferences.
- Facilitated the logistics and planning for in-person conferences, including the Public Relations Executives Meeting in St. Louis, Annual Fall Conference in San Diego, Joint Chief Finance Officers and Chief Operating Officers Conference in Phoenix, Chief Human Resources and Chief Financial Officers Conference in Louisville, Legislative/Policy Conference in Washington, DC, Chief Operating Officers Conference in Phoenix, Bilingual Directors Meeting in Minneapolis, and Chief Information Officers conference in Portland. In addition, Executive Committee meetings were held in Washington, D.C., in July 2023 and in Long Beach in January 2024, a third Board Governance Training was held in Louisville in February 2024, and seven Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute meetings were held throughout the year in Portland, Dallas, San Diego, Louisville, Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, and Portland.
- Renewed contracts with Design Data and Allied Communications Services to support staff technology needs.
- Initiated the elimination of landline phones in the office and implemented Microsoft Teams Telephony to allow the use of phones remotely through Microsoft Teams via desktop, laptop, or mobile devices.
- Reviewed options for the renewal of medical, dental, life, and disability insurance.

“People ask why do we do what we do. And I always say we never do it for the pay or the praise. But we face those tough decisions. And...we must remember why we do this., whose lives we impact.”

— MICHAEL O'NEILL

AWARD PROGRAMS



Boston School Committee member Michael O'Neill, second from right, holds his 2023 Green-Garner Award, which he received at the 67th Annual Fall Conference in San Diego. Right bottom photo: Julie Cyprien, a 2024 East Boston High School graduate, was presented with a Green-Garner \$10,000 college scholarship at a school board meeting.

GREEN-GARNER AWARD

During the Annual Fall Conference, the Council honors a past or present member district superintendent or board of education member with the Green-Garner Award. 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, the award was bestowed upon a school board member for 2023.

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

Michael O'Neill, school board member of Boston Public Schools and former chair of the Council's Board of Directors, was presented the award at the 2023 Fall Conference in San Diego.

A graduate of Boston Public Schools, O'Neill has served on the Boston School Committee for 15 years. During his tenure, the district invested in strategic priorities, including early childhood education and increased social-emotional support for students.

“People ask why do we do what we do,” said O'Neill upon receiving the award. “And I always say we never do it for the pay or the praise. But we face those tough decisions. And... we must remember why we do this, whose lives we impact. And how together we can improve the educational opportunities for the millions of students the Council serves.”



QUEEN SMITH AWARD FOR COMMITMENT TO URBAN EDUCATION

Christina Kirk, a teacher in Oklahoma City 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 2023 Annual Fall Conference in San Diego. The award is presented to a teacher in a Council member district who has made significant contributions to education and the community.



DR. MICHAEL CASSERLY SCHOLARSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL COURAGE AND JUSTICE

Janice Alexis, a 2024 graduate of the New York City Department of Education, was the recipient of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Scholarship for Educational Courage and Justice. Sponsored by Curriculum Associates, Alexis will use the \$10,000 college scholarship to pursue a degree in biomedical engineering at Syracuse University. The scholarship is part of the Dr. Michael Casserly Legacy Award for Educational Courage and Justice, named after the Council's former executive director.

Congratulations!

2024 CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship Recipients



Alyssa Almaguer
Charleston County School District



Angel Gabriel Hernández Hernández
Puerto Rico Department of Education



Emerie McCann
Houston Independent School District



Joshua McLeod
Norfolk Public Schools

2024 CGCS-BERNARD HARRIS MATH AND SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Four graduating high school seniors were awarded the 2024 CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship. Each scholar will receive \$5,000 for continued education in a STEM-related field. Now in its sixth 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.



The first graduating cohort, pictured at the 67th Annual Fall Conference in San Diego.



Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education Cindy Marten addresses the cohort.

MICHAEL CASSERLY URBAN EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

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. Other facets of the program include individual coaching and mentoring, case studies, and shadowing successful urban school superintendents. Headed by Michael Hinojosa, the Council's Superintendent-in-Residence and a former Dallas Independent School District superintendent, the Institute is designed to prepare the next generation of urban school leaders. The program graduated its first cohort in 2023, and the 2024 cohort features five men, five women, and seven educators of color. Participants were nominated by current or past superintendents and underwent a rigorous selection process.



Superintendent-in-Residence Michael Hinojosa and Los Angeles Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho talk to the cohort.



Cohort 2, with Council faculty members, pictured at their initial meeting in February.

THE COUNCIL THANKS THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN 2023-2024

SPONSORS

2023 Curriculum and Research Directors Meeting

Age of Learning
Amplify
Branching Minds
Code.org
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
Edmentum
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Illustrative Mathematics
Imagine Learning
Just Right Reader
Kami
Learning Ally
Modern Classrooms Project
NWEA
Once
Paper
Public Consulting Group
Qualtrix
Reconstruction
Renaissance
RethinkEd
Safari Montage
Savvas Learning Company
SchoolMint
ST Math
ThinkCERCA
Varsity Tutors
Zearn

2023 Public Relations Executives Meeting

Apptegy
Finalsite

K12 Insight
ParentSquare
SchoolMint
Peachjar
SchoolMessenger

2023 Fall Conference

Abl Schools
Age of Learning
AllHere Education
Allovue
Amplify Education, Inc.
Apple
Audio Enhancement
BetterLesson
Blocksi
BloomBoard
Bluum
BMG Money
Branching Minds
Carrier Corporation
CENTEGIX
ClassLink
Clever
Code.org
College Board
Concentric Educational
Solutions
Coursemojo
CrowdComfort
Curriculum Associates
Defined Learning, LLC
Discovery Education
DreamBox Learning
Edmentum
Elevate K-12

Enome, Inc. (Goalbook)
EPI-USE America, Inc.
ESS
Evolv Technology
F3 Law
FEV Tutors
Finalsite
First Student, Inc.
Give Better Group
Google
Great Minds
Hazel Health, Inc
Hellas
Highstreet IT
HopSkipDrive
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
iboss
IXL Learning
Johnson Controls
Just Right Reader
K12 Insight
Kami
Kelly Education Staffing
KinderCare Education LLC
Lightspeed Systems
McGraw Hill
Meticulous
Modern Classrooms Project
Mountain Vector Energy
National Geographic
Learning/Cengage
Navigate360
Newslea
NWEA
Panorama Education
Paper

PowerSchool
Proximity Learning
Public Consulting Group
Qualtrics
Renaissance Learning
RethinkEd
Riverside Insights
Robo Wunderkind Inc.
Sanalife
Savvas Learning Company
Scholarus Learn
Scholastic
SchoolMint
Skanska USA Building Inc.
SmartStart Education
ST Math, Created by MIND
Stride Learning Solutions
Subject
Swing Education
TalkingPoints
Teaching Strategies
The Princeton Review &
Tutor.com
ThinkCERCA
ThinkingNation
ThoughtExchange
Tyler Technologies
Varsity Tutors for Schools
Virtual Enterprises
International
Vista Higher Learning
Woolpert
Zearn

BLUE RIBBON CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP

Age of Learning
Amplify
Bluum
Centegix
ClassLink
Curriculum Associates
Dreambox
Finalsite
First Student
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Imagine Learning
Just Right Reader
K12 Insight
Kelly Education
McGraw Hill
NWEA
Public Consulting Group
Qualtrics
Renaissance
Riverside Insights

Savvas Learning Company
Scholastic
SchoolMint
The Harris Institute
ThinkCERCA
ThoughtExchange
Varsity Tutors

THE COUNCIL THANKS THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN 2023-2024

SPONSORS

2023 Chief Financial and Chief Operating Officers Meeting

Allvue
Amazon Business
AST
Carr Riggs & Ingram
CLASSWALLET
E&I Cooperative Services
Energia
Gallagher
GFOA
IBM
Oracle
Plante Moran
Public Consulting Group
RSM
Sourcewell

2024 Chief Human Resources Meeting

BetterUp
BMG Money
CENTEGIX
Elevate K-12
ESS
Highstreet
IBM
K12 Insight
Kelly Education
LEADLINE
LinkedIn
NASDTEC
Oracle
Public Consulting Group
Qualtrics
Tyler Technologies
UPBEAT

2024 Legislative/Policy Conference

Amplify
Allhere
Benchmark Education
Branching Minds
CENTEGIX
Concentric Educational
Solutions
Curriculum Associates
Energia
EveryDay Labs

Fliplok
Gaggle
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Just Right Reader
K12 Insight
Public Consulting Group
Renaissance
Riverside Insights
Savvas Learning Company
SchoolLinks
SchoolMint
SmartStart Education
Gaggle
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Just Right Reader
K12 Insight
Public Consulting Group
Renaissance
Riverside Insights
Savvas Learning Company
SchoolLinks
SchoolMint
SmartStart Education
ThinkCERCA
Varsity Tutors
Wilson Works

2024 Chief Operating Officers Conference

4Mativ
Audio Enhancement
Centegix
Edulog
E&I Cooperative Services
Energia
EverDriven
Evolv
First Student
FlipLok
Gaggle
Hellas
Hop Skip Drive
Jacobs
Kaiterra
Matthews Bus Alliance Inc.
McKinstry
Mountain Vector Energy
Public Consulting Group
Rifled Air Conditioning
Thomas (Built Busses)
Tyler Technologies

Verra Mobility
Woolpert
Zum

2024 Bilingual, Immigrant, & Refugee Education Directors Meeting

Amplify
Benchmark Education
Curriculum Associates
Ellevation Education
engage2learn
English Learners Success
Forum
Just Right Reader
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Imagine Learning
Intervene K-12
Off2Class
Renaissance
Riverside Insights
Savvas Learning Company
The Princeton Review® &
Tutor.com
National Geographic
Learning
ST Math
TalkingPoints
ThinkCERCA
Velazquez Press

2024 Chief Information Officers Meeting

AllHere
Bluum
Centegix
ClassLink
Clever
66 Degrees
Education Analysis
E-Rate Elite Services, Inc.
Finalsite
Focus School Software
Gaggle
Google for Education
IBM
iboss
Identity Automation
Incident IQ
Infosys

Innive K12 360
Intuit for Education
K12 Insight
Lightspeed Systems
Linewize
SchoolMint
Syntropy Partners
Varsity Tutors
Vivacity Tech
Qualtrics

2024 CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship Program

Dr. Bernard Harris
Peters Pharis Foundation
Savvas Learning Company

PUBLICATIONS



Crisis Communication: Before, During, and After a Crisis or Active Shooter Event

December 2023

This guidebook was created to help communication directors proactively plan for and be ready to manage communications during any crisis that raises extreme anxiety over school safety, threatens the lives of children and staff, or halts routine school operations.

Building Safer Schools and Communities: Findings and Recommendations from the Joint Task Force on School Safety and Justice

November 2023

This document proposes new and innovative approaches to reducing incidents of violence in schools and communities. It focuses on shifting mindsets and reframing relationships and practices related to schools, police, and communities.

Academic Key Performance Indicators, 2023 Report

October 2023

The 2023 report presents an updated set of data for the school year 2021-22. It presents several different ways that member districts can analyze the data themselves, including disaggregating results, showing trends, and combining variables.

Between the Lines: Large City Performance on NAEP Over the Last 20 Years (2002-2022)

October 2023

This brief aims to understand differences in student performance between large cities and students

nationally over the last twenty years, from 2002 through 2022, as well as after the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. The document details possibilities of large city performance in the years to come.

Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2023, Results from Fiscal Year 2021-2022

October 2023

In 2002, the Council of the Great City Schools and its members set out to develop performance measures that could improve business operations in urban public school districts.

The Role of Race in College Admissions Applications Q&A

October 2023

In the aftermath of the United States Supreme Court ruling on race in college admissions, this document provides tips for counselors and other school staff who support students in the college admissions process.

Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

September 2023

The second edition of this report, the first one was released in 2017, is designed to help districts determine the quality and alignment of curriculum guidance to clarify the district's learning expectations at each grade level, with a focus on student assets and diverse learners.

COUNCIL STAFF



ADMINISTRATION

Ray Hart, Executive Director
Alka Pateriya, Director of Strategy and Partnerships
Delisa Nunez, Partnership Specialist
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
Partnerships
Gregory Bacon, Administrative and
Conference Specialist
Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant
Michael Casserly, Strategic Advisor

COMMUNICATIONS

Tonya Harris, Director of Communications
Joanne Coley, Communications Manager
Kalin Hicks, Communications Specialist

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Farah Assiraj, Chief of Teaching and Learning
Robin Hall, Chief of Schools
Nicole Mancini, Chief of Academics
Denise Walston, Chief of Curriculum

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Manish Naik, Director of Legislation
Mary Stablein Lawson, General Counsel
Moses Valle-Palacios, Manager of Legislative Services
Gabriela Uro, Director of ELL Policy and Research
David Lai, ELL Policy Manager

GOVERNANCE

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

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

2023-2024 COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBER DISTRICTS

(AS OF MARCH 2024)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SUPERINTENDENT	BOARD MEMBER	SCHOOL DISTRICT	SUPERINTENDENT	BOARD MEMBER
Albuquerque	Scott Elder	Courtney Jackson	Long Beach	Jill Baker	Douglas Otto
Anchorage	Jharrett Bryantt	Margo Bellamy	Los Angeles	Alberto Carvalho	Kelly Gonez
Arlington	Matt Smith	Melody Fowler	Memphis-Shelby	Marie Feagins	Kevin Woods
Atlanta	Danielle Battle	Erika Michell	Miami-Dade County	José Dotres	Steve Gallon
Aurora	Michael Giles, Jr.	Anne Keke	Milwaukee	Keith Posley	Marva Herndon
Austin	Matias Segura	David Kauffman	Minneapolis	Lisa Sayles-Adams	Ira Jourdain
Baltimore	Sonja Brookins Santelises	Khalilah Slater Harrington	Nashville	Adrienne Battle	Berthena Nabaa-McKinney
Birmingham	Mark Sullivan	Jason Meadows	New Orleans	Avis Williams	Olin C. Parker
Boston	Mary Skipper	Michael O'Neill	New York City	David Banks	N/A
Bridgeport	Carmela Levy-David	Christine Baptiste-Perez	Newark	Roger León	Hasani K. Council
Broward County	Howard Hepburn	Allen Zeman	Norfolk	Sharon Byrdsong	Rodney Jordan
Buffalo	Tonja Williams	Sharon Belton-Cottman	Oakland	Kyla Johnson-Trammell	Jorge Lerma
Charleston	Anita Wiggins	Vacant	Oklahoma City	Sean McDaniel	Paula Lewis
Charlotte-Mecklenberg	Crystal Hill	Stephanie Sneed	Omaha	Matthew Ray	Shavonna Holman
Chicago	Pedro Martinez	Jianan Shi	Orange County	Maria F. Vazquez	Teresa Jacobs
Cincinnati	Shauna Murphy	Brandon Craig	Palm Beach County	Mike Burke	Marcia Andrews
Clark County	Brenda Larsen-Mitchell	Evelyn Garcia Morales	Philadelphia	Tony Watlington	Joyce Wilkerson
Cleveland	Warren Morgan II	Denise Link	Phoenix Union	Thea Andrade	Ceyshe Napa
Columbus	Angela Chapman	Christina Vera	Pinellas County	Kevin Hendrick	Carol Cook
Dallas	Stephanie Elizalde	Sarah Weinberg	Pittsburgh	Wayne Walters	Gene Walker
Dayton	David Lawrence	Chrisondra Goodwine, J.D.	Portland	Sandy Husk	Andrew Scott
Denver	Alex Marrero	Carrie Olson	Providence	Javier Montañez	Erlin Rogel
Des Moines	Ian Roberts	Kimberly Martorano	Puerto Rico	Yanira Raices Vega	N/A
Detroit	Nikolai Vitti	Angelique Peterson-	Richmond	Jason Kamras	Stephanie Rizzi
		Mayberry	Rochester	Demario Strickland	Cynthia Elliott
District of Columbia	Lewis Ferebee	N/A	Sacramento	Lisa Allen	Christina Pritchett
Duval County	Dana Kriznar	Darryl Willie	St. Louis	Keisha Scarlett	Antoinette "Toni" Cousins
East Baton Rouge	Adam Smith	Carla Powell	St. Paul	John Thein	Jim Vue
El Paso	Diana Sayavedra	Israel Irrobali	San Antonio	Jaime Aquino	Christina Martinez
Fayette County	Demetrus Liggins	Tyler Murphy	San Diego	Lamont Jackson	Sabrina Bazzo
Fort Worth	Angelica Ramsey	Camille Rodriguez	San Francisco	Matt Wayne	Jenny Lam
Fresno	Misty Her	Valerie Davis	Santa Ana	Jerry Almendarez	Katelyn Brazer Aceves
Guilford County	Whitney Oakley	Bettye Jenkins	Seattle	Brent Jones	Liza Rankin
Hawaii	Keith Hayashi	Capsun Poe	Toledo	Romules Durant	Polly Taylor-Gerken
Hillsborough County	Van Ayers	Jessica Vaughn	Tulsa	Ebony Johnson	Stacey Woolley
Houston	Mike Miles	Rolando Martinez	Washoe County	Kristen McNeill	Elizabeth Smith
Indianapolis	Aleesia Johnson	Diane Arnold	Wichita	Kelly Bielefeld	Hazel Stabler
Jackson	Erick Greene	Barbara Hilliard	Winston-Salem/	Tricia McManus	Deanna Kaplan
Jefferson County	Marty Pollio	Gail Logan Strange	Forsyth County		
Kansas City (MO)	Jennifer Collier	Kandace Buckner			
Little Rock	Jermall Wright	Michael Mason			

MEMBERS

ALBUQUERQUE • ANCHORAGE • ARLINGTON • ATLANTA • AURORA • AUSTIN • BALTIMORE • BIRMINGHAM
BOSTON • BRIDGEPORT • BROWARD COUNTY • BUFFALO • CHARLESTON COUNTY • CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG
CHICAGO • CINCINNATI • CLARK COUNTY • CLEVELAND • COLUMBUS • DALLAS • DAYTON • DENVER
DES MOINES • DETROIT • DUVAL COUNTY • EAST BATON ROUGE • EL PASO • FAYETTE COUNTY • FORT WORTH
FRESNO • GUILFORD COUNTY • HAWAII • HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY • HOUSTON • INDIANAPOLIS • JACKSON
JEFFERSON COUNTY • KANSAS CITY • LITTLE ROCK • LONG BEACH • LOS ANGELES • MEMPHIS-SHELBY
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY • MILWAUKEE • MINNEAPOLIS • NASHVILLE • NEW ORLEANS • NEW YORK CITY • NEWARK
NORFOLK • OAKLAND • OKLAHOMA CITY • OMAHA • ORANGE COUNTY • PALM BEACH COUNTY • PHILADELPHIA
PHOENIX UNION • PINELLAS COUNTY • PITTSBURGH • PORTLAND • PROVIDENCE • PUERTO RICO • RICHMOND
ROCHESTER • SACRAMENTO • SAN ANTONIO • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO • SANTA ANA • SEATTLE
ST. LOUIS • ST. PAUL • TOLEDO • TULSA • WASHINGTON, D.C. • WASHOE COUNTY • WICHITA
WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY



1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1100N

Washington, DC 20004

tel: 202-393-2427 www.cgcs.org

